Healing for America

Catholics & Politics
Barometers to Your Health
Whatever Happened to Managed Care?

Winter 2001
About the Cover

The Creighton community participated in one of many religious services held across the country as part of the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance on Sept. 14. The large gathering outside St. John’s Church prayed for the victims of the attacks and for world peace.
Creighton University Magazine’s Purpose

Creighton University Magazine, like the University itself, is committed to excellence and dedicated to the pursuit of truth in all its forms. The magazine will be comprehensive in nature. It will support the University’s mission of education through thoughtful and compelling feature articles on a variety of topics. It will feature the brightest, the most stimulating, the most inspirational thinking that Creighton offers. The magazine also will promote Creighton, and its Jesuit Catholic identity, to a broad public and serve as a vital link between the University and its constituents. The magazine will be guided by the core values of Creighton: the inalienable worth of each individual, respect for all of God’s creation, a special concern for the poor, and the promotion of justice.

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The tree, silent and majestic, limbs stretching toward the heavens, leaves dancing in the wind, reveals the power and wonder of God, writes Creighton’s John Scott, S.J.

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Conception is the miracle

As a former student of Dr. Allen Schlesinger’s, I really enjoyed his article “Nancy” in the Fall 2001 magazine. However, if the issue with the notion that the fictional embryo “Nancy” existed prior to her conception. To quote Dr. Schlesinger, speaking as Nancy, “The fact that before I was an embryo I was very small and was in two parts doesn’t mean that I didn’t exist. ...

My DNA, I repeat, my DNA, has been in existence before I was ‘discovered.’”

To simply state that Nancy, or any embryo, is simply a pile of DNA, a “continuation of the living state,” is to miss a far greater and more important mystery concerning human life. An egg cannot survive on its own, and will soon die after ovulation. Similarly, a sperm cannot survive long on its own. However, at the moment of conception, a miracle happens: A new life is born, and a new soul created. This soul has not been in existence, waiting in line in heaven for a body. A new life, and new souls with God’s ever-present role in the miracle of creation.

Summarizing, Nancy rhetorically asks, “When did my life begin?” and then answers: “From my point of view I have been a continuum. I’ve never been dead. I am a continuation of the living state.”

This ideology is contrary to Catholic teaching regarding God’s act of creation and the human soul. I believe Dr. Schlesinger’s argument that life is present at conception is right on. However, personalizing Nancy as a soul in existence as a separate egg and sperm prior to conception ignores God’s role in the act of creation, the creation of a new immortal soul that changes the universe forever.

Peter W. Zimmer, M.D., BS’89
Montgomery, Ala.

Thanks to Dr. Schlesinger

Dr. Schlesinger’s article in the fall issue of Creighton University Magazine was great. Having delivered some 2,000 “Nancys,” the article reminds one of the awesome miracle of it all. Dr. Schlesinger was the chairman of the Biology Department when I was at Creighton (1968-71) and invigorated my interest in biology and ultimately medicine at the University of Missouri, residency at Creighton and practice in Madison, Wis.

Thank you, Dr. Schlesinger, for your influence on my choice of profession.

Ed Kramper, M.D., BS’71
McFarland, Wis.

Report offers answers

It was with great interest that I read the cover stories in the Summer 2001 Creighton University Magazine about the state of health care in the United States. Dr. Donald Frey outlined several of the criticisms of the current health care system with a special emphasis on the funding mechanisms for U.S. health care. For sure, the current mix of public and private financing that provides incomplete health insurance coverage for all Americans is inadequate. The 1990s experiment with managed care as a solution for our health care woes has failed for a number of reasons including its singular focus on cost control, irrespective of the effect...
of the financing structure on access and quality. Too often, this drive to control costs resulted in impaired access to necessary services. While we are considering what should be done to improve our health care delivery and financing system, we can learn from the 2001 Institute of Medicine report “Crossing the Quality Chasm.” This report advocates for the development of financing structures that reward providers for both high-quality and cost-effective health care services. The incorporation of “evidence-based practice” and improved quality measurement in the daily delivery of health care is an important long-term objective for our health care system, regardless of the payor mechanism. (Reference: Institute of Medicine, “Crossing the Quality Chasm,” Washington D.C.: National Academy Press, 2001.)

Robert Sandstrom, Ph.D., PT
Associate Professor, Interim Chair
Creighton Department of Physical Therapy

Kudos to Dr. Frey

Compliments to you and Dr. Frey on the publication of the article on “Is America Ready for Universal Health Care?” The answer is probably not for awhile, but eventually.
James Monen Sr., JD’57
Omaha

Canadian system ‘in crisis’

In January of 2000, a poll of Canadians found that 78 percent considered their health care system “in crisis,” and 60 percent did not think that their provincial government had a good plan for managing the health care system. Is this the ideal that Dr. Donald Frey aspires to for the U.S. health care delivery system? (“Is America Ready for Universal Care?” Summer 2001).

These poll results point to some of the flaws in Dr. Frey’s arguments. For instance, Dr. Frey states that Canada spends less than 1 percent of its gross domestic product on health care, while the U.S. spends approximately 15 percent. However, Canadian expenditures are limited by government appropriation, and the Canadian system is woefully underfunded. Hospitals have closed, equipment is outdated, there are personnel shortages and Canadians must wait weeks or months for key services such as diagnostic testing, radiation therapy and heart or orthopedic surgery.

The GDP figure would be larger if it weren’t illegal for Canadians to spend their own money on health care. Perhaps that’s why Canadians spend an estimated $1 billion a year for health services in the United States.

Despite a strong cultural commitment to their single-payor system, the Canadian government has not adequately funded its health care system. Given the reluctance of Congress to address health care issues in a timely manner, I question Dr. Frey’s confidence in governmental funding for the system he proposes. One only has to look at the multi-year political battles that have raged in Congress over providing prescription drugs to seniors or the so-called patient’s rights legislation. Now consider the gridlock that would ensue if all of our health care financing were dependent on Congress and state legislatures.

While I do not doubt Dr. Frey’s good intentions, I would question the judgment of anyone who suggests that our health care system be entrusted to the government.

Michael L. Smart, BS’76, JD’83
Omaha

Surprised at reaction

I read with surprise and disappointment the harshness of the editorial responses to the article concerning universal health care. To assert that you will no longer recommend that your grandchildren attend the University based on your opinion of one article in a university magazine seems a bit of an overreaction to me. Fr. Schlegel did not author that article. The Board of Trustees did not sign it. It is the opinion of one professor. If the University is failing in its mission to teach (I do not believe that it is), the failure is not in the area of economics; it is apparently in the area of logic and open-mindedness.

I fancy myself an economically conservative, free-trading capitalist. I firmly believe that government involvement in economic issues nearly always results in reduced efficiency and misallocation of resources. But there is no denying, I feel, that the cost of medical care in this country is out of control, perhaps disastrously so. Our small company was presented this week with a 32 percent increase in our group health insurance premium costs for the upcoming year. This follows a 20 percent increase last year. We are not alone in this situation and, like many others, we cannot continue on this course indefinitely. If there are answers to this problem, and I hope that there are, we need to find them!

I view with suspicion any solution that promotes increased government involvement. But our current approach, which I think is fundamentally a private sector approach, does not appear to be working. I clearly do not embrace Dr. Frey’s “socialistic” proposal in its entirety, nor do I foresee some of the outcomes he predicts. But I do appreciate his helping to frame the debate, a debate that must be conducted and acted upon soon. I applaud your willingness to publish one viewpoint of the argument, no matter how controversial.

Thank you for the great work you do with the magazine. I am as proud of it as I am of being an alumnus of this great University!

Steven E. Pribrnow, JD’86
Ames, Neb.

Add to the list

It was shocking to have such a socialist approach exhibited in a publication from Creighton University. Please add my name to the list of alumni who are against more socialism in America. In the fall 2001 edition of Creighton University Magazine, William J. Egan, BA’52, Col. Wayne Grabow, DDS’78, and Matthew Tucker, BSBA’92, expressed my sentiments very well.

I was also thoroughly disgusted with the article by Dr. Frey advocating a socialist system of health care. There is no evidence that collecting money from taxpayers and creating a “single payor” (the federal government) would reduce the cost of health care. It will increase the cost and the patients will receive less care (just like the “managed care” plans have, only worse). The patient (consumer) should be in charge again, and the best approach to this would be “Medical Savings Accounts.” A high deductible insurance for disaster should accompany this plan. Eliminating the gigantic bureaucracy would be the greatest saving of all.

J. Paul Thomassen, MD’50, FACS
Anaheim, Calif.
Article provides needed perspective

I was impressed with Dr. Donald Frey’s thoughtful article, “Is America Ready for Universal Health Care?” in the summer edition, but equally distressed by two letters in the fall magazine harshly criticizing Dr. Frey’s perspective and even the University for publishing it.

One respondent was “disgusted” by Dr. Frey’s “liberal” views, questioned his motives and intelligence, and vowed to discontinue support of the University. Apparently only certain views — those akin to the letter writer’s — should be allowed at his alma mater.

Another respondent stigmatized Dr. Frey’s article as “a shameless rant” and “a ridiculously biased piece of leftist propaganda.” Although “shocked” that an allegedly “conservative” university like Creighton would publish such views, at least he did not threaten to withhold his support.

I believe the intemperate language of these letters speaks for itself, as does the illogic of attributing one faculty author’s views to that of the University as a whole. Needless to say, there is nothing in Creighton’s Mission Statement that names the University as either conservative or liberal. What it does say is that Creighton is committed to “an atmosphere of freedom of inquiry ... and to the promotion of justice.” It is committed to doing so through “faculty and staff (who) stimulate critical and creative thinking and provide ethical perspectives for dealing with an increasingly complex world.” I suspect the vast majority of readers appreciated Dr. Frey’s article in exactly this spirit.

Some readers may not be aware, however, that Creighton’s Catholic identity does give it a particular way of approaching such issues as health care. As Pope John XXIII first affirmed in his great encyclical Pacem in Terris (1963) and as Pope John Paul II (Laborem Exercens, 1981) and the U.S. bishops (several documents) have reaffirmed, access to health care is a universal human right.

Thus Dr. Frey is on solid ethical footing when he treats the fact that 44 million U.S. citizens do not have health insurance as a matter of social injustice. Whether or not a Canadian-style single-payor system is the best remedy for this infringement of God-given human dignity is a matter of debate. I happen to believe that Dr. Frey is right on this point. But one of Dr. Frey’s more basic points is that our nation has not yet undertaken this debate extensively or seriously. Creighton University Magazine and the University itself should be commended — not attacked — for attempting to “stimulate critical and creative thinking and provide ethical perspectives” on the increasingly complex question of access to health care.

As Dr. Frey argued, our present health care “system,” in its partiality and by denying equal access to one out of seven Americans, is patently unjust. This evaluation is made not by the standards of liberalism or socialism but by the moral norms of the Catholic Church. I respectfully submit that efforts to find solutions will only be successful in “an atmosphere of freedom of inquiry” and mutual respect and not in an atmosphere poisoned by ideological closed-mindedness and name-calling.

Roger Bergman
Director
Justice & Peace Studies Program
Creighton College of Arts & Sciences

Article was informative

My daughter is a graduate of Creighton. Your magazine is excellent, and I look forward to receiving it. I am writing to you about Dr. Donald Frey’s article regarding health care, and some of the responses that were published regarding the article. My opinion of Dr. Frey’s article was that it was very informative, and raised issues that need to be addressed. What he said in his article needed to be said. Some of the responses to his article included very good comments to which I hope Dr. Frey will respond. However, I was surprised at the apparent implication in some of the responses that everyone should be completely financially responsible for their own health care. Yes, ideally people should be responsible; however, it must be realized that there are circumstances that occur for which people through no fault of their own can not cope with the magnitude of their problems. We should not deny adequate medical care to anyone. People should be able to choose their doctors, doctors should make the medical decisions, and measures should be in place to ensure a high level of care and to prevent fraud.

Remember the words, “I assure you, as often as you did it for one of my least brothers, you did it for me.” I would hope that graduates from Catholic colleges would reflect on this and have compassion for those in need. I believe that there are many problems with our current system that should be addressed. I would encourage Dr. Frey to continue to write about the problems with health care and respond to appropriate comments that have been made on his article.

Thank you, Dr. Frey, for the wonderful article.

Joseph Hutter
Marmora, N.J.

Prescription drug article on target

Congratulations to Creighton University Magazine and to Drs. Makoid and Garis for the informative article on the cost structure of prescription drugs. This is a subject that touches the lives of most of us, and yet one that few of us are in a position to understand. The recently interposed layer of middlemen between the major manufacturers and the retail pharmacists seems to be an example of the law of unintended consequences. Instead of reducing the cost of prescription drugs, these newcomers have simply squeezed the already modest profit of the retail pharmacist and pocketed the difference for themselves.

One point of clarification may be in order. While the authors clearly recognize and describe the time lag between introduction of a new drug and the possibility of a generic equivalent, one might gather the impression from the article that the dominance of brand name drugs in the revenue stream is largely a function of advertising and promotion. However, in many fields, such as osteoporosis (my own), approved therapies have been available for such a short time that there are no generics yet available. It is not a question of new diseases, but of significant advances in ability to treat old diseases. When that occurs — and the public surely wants it to occur — brand name drugs, and the revenues associated with them, are bound to dominate the market.

Robert P. Heaney, MD’51
John A. Creighton University Professor

Proud of articles

I’m very proud of you for the courage to print those pieces on health reform and Rx drug cost in your summer and fall 2001 issues. I hope it makes an impact.

Sam Ruben, MD’79
Brookings, Ore.
Waite Gift Funds New Business Leadership Center at Creighton

The College of Business Administration (CoBA) at Creighton University is leading by example with the addition of the Anna Tyler Waite Center for Leadership. An inaugural ceremony for the Center was held Sept. 25. The center is made possible thanks to a $1.1 million gift from Donald L. Waite, BSC’54, executive vice president and chief administrative officer, Seagate Technology, Inc. Named for Anna Tyler Waite, the wife of Don Waite, the center will offer two scholarships each fall to students in the program. The first scholarships were awarded to Michael Potthoff, a junior from Carroll, Iowa, and Emily Pratt, a senior from Bellevue, Neb.

The Anna Tyler Waite Center for Leadership offers a four-year program that will give undergraduate students in CoBA the opportunity to study and practice leadership in a college setting. The Anna Tyler Waite Scholars will participate in a series of activities that will explore the philosophies and actions of leaders in varied settings and circumstances. These activities will develop the skills and values needed for students to become effective leaders in a socially responsible environment.

Robert H. Moorman, Ph.D., associate professor of management in the College of Business Administration and holder of the Robert B. Daugherty Chair in Management, is the director of the center.

Whipple Named Jacobson Chairholder

The chair of Creighton University’s Department of English, Robert D. Whipple Jr., Ph.D., has been named holder of the A.F. Jacobson Chair in Communication. Established in November of 1980, the Jacobson Chair was the first chair to be endowed in the College of Arts and Sciences at Creighton. It was endowed by an anonymous gift to honor the late A.F. Jacobson, former president of Northwestern Bell Telephone Co. and a member of the Creighton University Board of Directors. Jacobson was a visionary who oversaw regional expansion of the telephone company. He also was a leader in setting community priorities and committing the private sector to public activity. Whipple, an associate professor of English and chair of the Department of English for the past two years, has been with Creighton since 1990. He teaches courses in writing and in technology and literacy.

Race, Technology Divide Explored in Book by CU’s Mack

Raneta Lawson Mack, professor of law at the Creighton University School of Law, explores how the advancement of technology is leaving an ever-increasing gap between the “haves” and the “have-nots” in her new book, The Digital Divide: Standing at the Intersection of Race and Technology. Mack looks at the racial “digital divide” and highlights some historical reasons why minority communities might fear technological advancements and are unlikely to immediately embrace computer technology, even if it is made available on a widespread basis. She also discusses the legacy of slavery and how it is a contributing factor to the current technology gap.

“The digital divide is one area where understanding the role that history plays in our current situation is the key to shaping workable solutions,” Mack said.

According to Mack, “this retrospective approach provides context and furthers understanding and is not about blaming.” She says the digital divide is everyone’s problem. “If the premise behind e-commerce is access to global markets, then that idea doesn’t work unless a majority of those markets have access to relevant technology.”

The book offers several examples of corporate and community efforts aimed at narrowing the divide. Although government can play a role in reducing the divide by educating the public, Mack prefers to focus on corporate and community based solutions, because each community is different. However, she says that resolving the digital divide doesn’t simply mean putting high-speed computers in everyone’s home. Instead, it means educating those who are not aware of the benefits of technology, designing content that is relevant to those communities and increasing access.
McCullough Delivers Governor’s Lecture, Visits Campus

Award-winning author David McCullough delivered the Annual Governor’s Lecture in the Humanities on Sept. 20 and visited the Creighton University campus on Sept. 21. More than 1,000 people attended the lecture held at the Joslyn Art Museum. Creighton University was the co-host of this event, along with the Nebraska Humanities Council. Bryan Le Beau, Ph.D., John C. Kenefick Chair in the Humanities at Creighton and chair of the Nebraska Humanities Council, helped organize the event. Fr. John P. Schlegel, S.J., was Creighton’s host.

At the open forum held on campus on Sept. 21, McCullough answered questions from Le Beau and the audience about his lecture on “First Principles.” His talk was largely based on lessons learned during the public life of U.S. President John Adams. McCullough is well-known as the author of one of the most popular and well-respected biographies in recent memory, the Pulitzer-Prize-winning *Truman* (1992), which spent 43 weeks on the *New York Times* bestsellers list in hardcover and 24 weeks in paperback. His works also include *The Johnstown Flood* (1968), *The Great Bridge* (1972), *The Path Between Seas* (1977), *Mornings on Horseback* (1981) and *Brave Companions* (1991). In addition, McCullough has served as the narrator of several television shows, including Ken Burns’ *The Civil War*, and is the host of *The American Experience*, both on PBS. A graduate of Yale University, McCullough has served as both a writer and editor for *Time* magazine, and held several university teaching positions. His most recent book is *John Adams*.

Alumni Honored with Alumni Merit Awards

**College of Business Administration**

Michael Philip Boyle, BSBA’79, JD’83, LL.M., received the Alumni Merit Award from the College of Business Administration (CoBA) on Sept. 10. Boyle joined the Microsoft Corporation in 1986. For several years, Boyle has directed Microsoft’s worldwide tax and internal audit functions, and was named vice president in May 2000. In September 2000, he was among the attorneys listed as petitioner in the U.S. Tax Court case, *Microsoft v. I.R.S.* Boyle has chaired the Tax and Finance Committee of the American Electronics Association, served on the board of the National Foreign Trade Council and is a member of the Tax Foundation Policy Council. He is an active member of the Seattle Alumni Club and has served on CoBA’s Advisory Board. Boyle and his wife, Rosemary (Kellen), BSPhy’85, MS’86, have three children — Elizabeth, Connor and Kiernan.

**Graduate School**

Kenneth D. Rice, MBA’84, received the Alumni Merit Award from the Graduate School on Sept. 10. Rice is chairman and CEO of Enron Broadband Services. He began his career in the energy industry as a project engineer with InterNorth, one of the pipeline companies that merged to form Enron in 1985. Throughout his tenure with Enron, Rice has held various positions in engineering, marketing, transportation and executive management. Prior to joining Enron Broadband Services, Rice was chairman and CEO of Enron Capital & Trade Resources — now Enron North America, the largest, most diverse energy merchant in North America. Today Rice oversees the development of Enron’s emerging communications business, which includes an 18,000-mile nationwide fiber optic network dedicated to high bandwidth. Rice and his wife, Teresia Duryea Rice, have four children — Nicole, Kirsten, Alex and Erin.

**School of Medicine**

The School of Medicine presented its 2001 Alumni Merit Award to Wayne F. J. Yakes, MD’79, on Sept. 28. After graduating from Creighton University’s School of Medicine in 1979, Yakes served in the U.S. Army for 12 years, including service in Operation Desert Storm in the Gulf War. He is the first radiologist ever to complete fellowship training in both Interventional Radiology and Interventional Neurovascular Surgery. As a fellow at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., Yakes developed a new approach for treating vascular malformations without using open surgery. He published his technique in 1986 and has since authored numerous articles and textbook chapters on the subject. In 1991, Yakes established the Vascular Malformation Center at Swedish Medical Center in Englewood, Colo. It is the only center in the world totally dedicated to the management of vascular malformations. Patients from all over the world are referred to Yakes. He and his wife, Nona (Kaezor) Yakes, have two children, Eric and Alexis.

**School of Pharmacy and Allied Health Professions**

Gomer V. Taylor, BSpPha’85, received the Alumni Merit Award from the School of Pharmacy and Allied Health Professions on Oct. 5. Taylor is the district pharmacy supervisor for Omaha Walgreens, a position...
CU Pathologist Publishes Book on Learning Disabilities


The book is targeted to physicians, parents and educators. It provides the basis for recognizing and managing common learning disabilities. The book emphasizes brain functions of language, both verbal and nonverbal, necessary for learning and communication.

From obtaining a detailed family history to pinpointing specific disabilities, the guide provides a wealth of information in an easy-to-use format. The book’s authors define particular skills, describe normal development, describe behavior associated with skill deficits and offer clinical snapshots of children who experience a particular skill deficit.

The book is a result of a lengthy research collaboration between Brumback and Warren A. Weinberg, M.D., an expert in pediatric neurology and learning. Weinberg is a professor of neurology and pediatrics at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas. Caryn R. Harper, faculty associate in neurology, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, is the third author.

The book will be distributed through the Learning Disabilities Associations of Nebraska and Texas. It also is available through the publisher BC Decker.

Brumback is the editor of the *Journal of Child Neurology,* the leading journal in its field. He conducts research in Alzheimer’s disease as well as in pediatric neurology and neuropathology. Brumback joined Creighton last year from the University of Oklahoma, where he held positions in pathology, geriatrics, orthopedic surgery, psychiatry and behavioral sciences, and pediatrics.

The book, *Attention, Behavior and Learning Problems in Children: Protocols for Diagnosis and Treatment,* is available through publisher BC Decker, Inc., 20 Hughson Street South, P.O. Box 620, L.C.D. 1, Hamilton, Ontario L8N 3K7. It also is available by calling 1-800-568-7281 or by e-mailing info@bcdecker.com. Its publication was made possible by a donation from the Cimarron Foundation to the Creighton University School of Medicine.

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**School of Law**

The School of Law presented its 2001 Alumni Merit Award to Michael D. McKay, JD’76, on Oct. 19. McKay is an attorney/partner with McKay Chadwell, PLLC, in Seattle. From 1976-1981, McKay was a member of the King County, Washington, Prosecuting Attorney’s Office. While in that position, he worked with young victims of sexual assault, pioneering the protocols for working with young victim witnesses in juvenile court. His efforts were so successful that his techniques were filmed and used around the country to train police officers, prosecutors, rape relief workers and others involved with victims of sexual assault.

In 1981, McKay and Jose Gaitan founded McKay & Gaitan. This firm had a strong *pro bono* policy reflecting McKay’s commitment to service by giving roughly 10 percent of the firm’s time to *pro bono* work. In 1989, McKay was sworn in as United States Attorney for the Western District of Washington. Long active in state and national politics, McKay ran then Gov. George W. Bush’s presidential campaign in the Seattle area. He has served as vice president and president of the Creighton University Seattle Alumni Club and as president of the National Alumni Board in 1988. McKay and his wife, Christy Ann (Cordwin), BSN’75, have three children — Kevin, Kathleen and John.
Med Students Organize Project CURE

Outreach stretches from Omaha to India and Peru

Working at a hospital in the poor, rural village of Oddanchatram, located near the southern tip of India, Creighton medical student Kumar Desai found himself even more drawn to his chosen profession.

“There is so much we can do,” said Desai, who, along with 14 other Creighton medical students, served the poor and the sick at sites in India and Peru this summer.

“We can reach out and make a difference in the world through the education we are receiving here at Creighton,” Desai said.

The trips were part of a larger effort by Desai and his fellow medical school classmates to reach out to those in need.

Desai helped form Project CURE (CreightonMed United in Relief Efforts). The group is for first-year Creighton medical students and is designed to get them involved in outreach early in their medical education. In addition to visiting India and Peru for five weeks in June and July, the students took part in service projects in Omaha during the academic year.

But it was the trips abroad — which were arranged and financed solely by the students — that really touched these doctors in training.

“It was the most fulfilling way that I could have spent the summer,” Desai said. “I hope this is the first step in a career of these types of activities.

“This really affirmed why I wanted to go into medicine,” he continued. “I now realize that this is what I want to do, and I want to be good at it.”

Of the 15 students who took part in the trips, eight traveled to India and seven went to Chimbote, Peru. In India, the students shadowed doctors at the Christian Fellowship Hospital in Oddanchatram and visited local schools, talking about the importance of proper hygiene and general health. In Peru, the students assisted at a local health clinic. They also did a lot of education on public health issues, such as proper hygiene and dental care and the importance of vaccinations. In addition, they developed a calendar with monthly health tips.

“These people had nothing,” said Tim Issac, one of the students who went to Peru. “But they had to be the most loving people I have ever been around. That was the most powerful message. I've never seen this excitement and love for life.”

“I've gained a deep sense of respect for people who are struggling every day,” said Neha Sanghvi, another of the students who went to Peru. “We're lucky to have been born in the United States. If you have this much, you should do something with it.”

Steve Schechinger, who traveled to India, was impressed by the compassion of the doctors at the hospital.

“One doctor would hold the patients’ hands every time they met. That impressed me,” Schechinger said. “It really opened my eyes as to what helping people is all about.”

Desai, now a second-year medical student, has passed the Project CURE torch to this year’s freshman class.

“They are already out in the community helping with local health issues and trying to raise money for the greater global cause,” Desai said.
Creighton Family Pharmacy Serves South Omaha

By Eugene Curtin

There is a 91-year-old woman who has good reason to be grateful that Creighton University purchased an existing South Omaha clinic and pharmacy in June 2000.

On those days when she doesn’t feel up to the four-block walk to Creighton Family Pharmacy at 25th and L streets, the pharmacy comes to her, in the form of a delivery van. She also can count on a call from Sheila Santiago should she fail to pick up her monthly refills.

Santiago, a native of Puerto Rico and a graduate of Purdue University, is the chief pharmacist, entrusted by Creighton’s School of Pharmacy and Allied Health Professions with the important task of reaching out to South Omaha’s rapidly expanding Hispanic community.

The pharmacy offers extensive patient counseling. Santiago places high priority on sitting down with her patients and taking the time to explain fully the meaning and importance of their medications.

“It’s incredible how much you can help a patient understand their medicines, and encourage them to comply with their schedule, just by sitting down with them,” Santiago said.

Currently, her counseling is done at a table in a public area. That will soon change, as renovations add a private counseling room to the pharmacy. That privacy also will make it easier to develop outreach programs. Santiago has already initiated programs dealing with diabetes and hypertension, two diseases known to strike Hispanics particularly hard.

Santiago also has plans for prevention programs dealing with high cholesterol, osteoporosis and asthma. She wants to continue joining forces with other agencies to provide free school physicals, visual and hearing tests, blood pressure tests and immunizations.

Creighton University’s presence in South Omaha, which includes a medical clinic next door to the pharmacy, is an attempt to improve health among the immigrant population, according to Sid Stohs, Ph.D., dean of the Creighton University School of Pharmacy and Allied Health Professions.

“I truly believe we are in a position to help improve the general health care in that area,” he said.

In addition, Stohs said, the pharmacy will prove an invaluable teaching tool for Creighton’s pharmacy students.

“This allows us to provide our students with exposure to a very diverse population so they can gain experience with other cultures,” he said. “One of Creighton’s goals, not just in pharmacy but throughout the school, is to prepare our students to deal with diverse populations.”

About the author: Eugene Curtin is a free-lance writer working in Bellevue, Neb.

OT Pioneer Receives Honorary Alumna Citation

Virginia G. Gessert received an Honorary Alumna Citation from the School of Pharmacy and Allied Health Professions on Oct. 5.

Gessert received her bachelor of science degree in occupational therapy from Washington University in St. Louis in 1959. She came to Omaha in 1963. Gessert served on the committee that led to the formation of the Occupational Therapy Program at Creighton University and was one of its founding faculty members. Since that time, Gessert has served the students and faculty as an adviser and a contributed service faculty member. She also funded the occupational therapy program’s first endowed scholarship.

Gessert has served and provided leadership for the Nebraska Occupational Therapy Association, the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging and the Midwest Area Congress on Aging. Much of her work relates to restorative care, geriatric occupational therapy and related areas that support the independence of the frail elderly. She also was a delegate to the White House Conference on Domestic Issues. In 1975, Gessert was the first occupational therapist to establish a non-traditional private practice in Nebraska.

In addition, she was the first non-physician to serve as a member of the Nebraska Arthritis Foundation Medical and Scientific Committee, and the first non-nurse, non-physician on the Omaha American Red Cross Home Service Advisory Board.

Gessert and her husband, Carl Frederick Gessert, have two married sons, Steven and John, and a granddaughter, Greta.
Creighton Offers Native American Studies Major

A first among Jesuit and Nebraska schools

Creighton University became the first American Jesuit university and the first university in the state of Nebraska to offer a major in Native American Studies with the initiation of its new Native American Studies Program this fall.

The program was developed with the cooperation of the Native American community and Creighton faculty. Classes stretch across several academic disciplines, including sociology, anthropology, theology, fine and performing arts, social work and journalism. Students are required to participate in foundational courses that offer an awareness of Native American history, culture, views and values. A service-learning component also is being developed, through which students will be required to use what they have learned in the classroom to connect with Native American communities.

“The program is not about just learning about Native Americans, their tribal government, native languages, literature, etcetera,” said Herb Grandbois, D.S.W., chair of the Department of Social Work and director of the program. “The program is about being a part of a larger community. We want to be involved in projects that are of value to Native Americans.”

The written goals of the program are to:

- Promote awareness and appreciation for cultural diversity, principally Native American peoples, through the academic, research and service functions of the University and College of Arts and Sciences.
- Link with area Native American organizations and peoples to assist in identifying and alleviating social problems and issues.
- Promote cross-cultural understanding and reconciliation/healing between American and Native American communities.
- Support and encourage scholarship/research about, with and for Native American communities.

The Jesuits, especially those at Creighton, have a long tradition of serving Native American populations. Creighton Jesuits have been especially active on the Rosebud and Pine Ridge reservations in South Dakota. The Morrison Scholarship Fund, named in honor of former Creighton President the Rev. Michael G. Morrison, S.J., provides scholarships for Native American students. Creighton also offers a Red Cloud Indian Mission Scholarship, and diversity scholarships are available for Native Americans.

“There are a large number of Jesuits who have spent time on the reservations and have a commitment to the Native American people,” said the Rev. Ray Bucko, S.J., a professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology and one of several architects of the Native American Studies Program.

Fr. Bucko added that Creighton’s new program could serve to both sensitize and train Jesuits wanting to work in union with the Native American population.

In addition, program graduates can pursue graduate-level education in Native American studies or related areas; work in fields such as tribal government, human rights and indigenous issues, employment and related services, and education; or serve as consultants to non-Native American programs. The program also can serve those students interested in health science careers.

“The goals and objectives of the Native American Studies Program mirror the University’s mission statement,” Grandbois said. “It engages students and faculty in the pursuit of truth and the promotion of justice.”

New Book Explores Cultural Impact of Currier and Ives

The mass production of visual images was dramatically changed by the publishing business of Currier and Ives. They also contributed to the creation of a national public memory, according to Creighton University History Professor Bryan F. Le Beau, Ph.D., in his new book, Currier and Ives: America Imagined.

The book, published by the Smithsonian Institution Press, examines the way the publishing company of Nathaniel Currier and his partner James Ives changed the landscape of visual images in the mid-1800s, selling millions of copies of lithographs that adorned countless homes and even barns.

The Currier and Ives catalog included more than 7,000 works by dozens of artists, accounting for 95 percent of all lithographs sold across the country.

Le Beau says Currier and Ives played a role in American culture beyond simply making these images affordable. Their popular historical images covering politicians, the American Revolution, the Civil War and life on the frontier contributed to the creation of a national public memory. But he says that’s not all that people get from them. The political cartoons represented not only the enthusiasms and fantasies of 19th century Americans, they also reflected their biases, ambitions and fears.

“Currier and Ives created a historical record of 19th century America, but not as conscious historians. They did not necessarily picture America as it existed, but rather as Americans imagined it to be,” Le Beau said.

Le Beau is the John C. Kenefick Faculty Chair in the Humanities and chairman of the Department of History at Creighton University. He also is the host and co-producer of the public radio program, Talking History. His previous books include Religion in America to 1865 and The Story of the Salem Witch Trials.
CU Professors Resurrect Enigmatic ‘Voice of Sanity’

By Brian Kokensparger

He loved peace, yet designed bombs. He protected an innocent colleague from McCarthy’s political lynch mob, yet listed coordinates targeting thousands of innocent civilians.

Who is this man who tirelessly produced calculations for the Manhattan Project, yet was hailed as a “voice of sanity” when appointed to the Atomic Energy Commission?

Eileen Dugan, Ph.D., associate professor of history, and Randy Crist, Ph.D., assistant professor of mathematics, are trying to determine just that as they conduct research aimed at reintroducing the enigmatic genius John von Neumann.

“John von Neumann is the smartest guy you’ve never heard of,” said Crist, as he and Dugan began recounting their last few months of discoveries regarding one of the most influential men of the Cold War generation, yet one of the least known of ours.

Crist and Dugan first decided to research von Neumann (pronounced von noyman) when they agreed to team-teach a senior perspective course, “Mathematical History, Philosophy, and Ethics.” One of the textbooks for the course, William Poundstone’s Prisoner’s Dilemma, discusses von Neumann’s contribution to game theory, and its influence on Cold War politics.

“Although the textbook is interesting,” Crist said, “it really doesn’t have enough material about John von Neumann. It doesn’t dig far enough into how his work shaped a world that was to become embroiled in Cold War politics for some 30 years. Eileen and I decided that we needed to do some of our own research to fill the gaps.”

Those gaps were much wider than the two expected. “Recent scholarship on the Atomic Age has virtually forgotten John von Neumann,” Dugan said. “He was, in fact, a central figure not only in the creation of nuclear weapons, but also in the formulation of national policy regarding such weapons.”

Dugan believes that the gaps exist because few have dared undertaking the daunting task of sorting through the mountains of material von Neumann left behind. Dugan and Crist recently accepted the challenge, spending a few days wading through 57 boxes of material in the Library of Congress, and finding notes that chronicled every phase of von Neumann’s career. “And that was just the unclassified material,” said Crist, who hopes to gain access soon to von Neumann’s classified documents.

Their efforts proved fruitful. “He was an incredible note keeper,” said Dugan. Amidst notes about quantum mechanics were drawings of bombs and missiles, including a detailed design of the “Fat Boy” bomb.

Among his notes were letters from some of the most influential people of his time. Crist remembers holding a letter written by Albert Einstein — in Einstein’s telltale hand. “It was fascinating handling a letter that was personally written by Albert Einstein.”

Dugan and Crist also met with von Neumann’s daughter, Marina Whitman (a professor of management at the University of Michigan) and brother, Nicholas (who, at 87, is an attorney in the Philadelphia area).

The researchers’ efforts are now focused on pulling the documents together, in an attempt to reintroduce that same voice of sanity that captured the ears of military leaders, mathematicians, economists, meteorologists, biologists, physicists, and electrical engineers (to name just a few of the areas in which he had significant influence).

Dugan and Crist are each preparing journal articles based on their research thus far, and have begun work on a book, which they hope will help fill the void of accurate materials covering the life and times of this enigmatic voice of sanity.

About the author: Brian Kokensparger is a free-lance writer for Creighton University Magazine. He can be reached via e-mail at bkoken@creighton.edu.
Irish Studies
Program Opens Students’ Eyes

What you have seen is beyond speech, beyond song, only not beyond love; remember it, you will remember it.
— Eavan Boland

The words of noted Irish-born poet Eavan Boland best capture the reflections of Creighton students who spent a month in Ireland this past summer as part of Creighton’s Irish Summer School. The summer school is housed in Trinity College in Dublin, and provides students with an intensive and challenging program of study of Irish literature and cultural history. “It also teaches them a lot about who they are and how to live in a diverse world,” said David Gardiner, Ph.D., the program’s director.

One student wrote in her journal after the trip: “I caught a glimpse of something I hadn’t seen before — maybe it was myself.”

The students also visited Queen’s University in Northern Ireland’s capital of Belfast. Gardiner said Creighton’s program is the first among American Catholic universities to visit Queen’s.

The students toured the violence-ravaged neighborhoods of Belfast, as Gardiner received intelligence reports to ensure the group’s safety. Two weeks later, the city would erupt in the worst nationalist riot in years.

“We may have possibly been the last group of students this summer to visit the city of Belfast,” Gardiner later told his students.

By taking a bus tour of the neighborhoods, Gardiner said the group was making a statement as “delegates for a normal life.”

“We were testifying to those who have gone on in the face of radical groups on both sides,” Gardiner said.

In addition to visiting Belfast, students in the program listened to noted speakers from a variety of disciplines. Guest lecturers included Katie Donovan, features editor for The Irish Times; Bill Flynn, chairman and CEO of Mutual of America and recipient of the 1997 Initiative for Peace Award for his work in the Northern Ireland peace process; and Noel Cuthbert Mitchel, author of Ireland’s National Trust Guides.

The Irish Summer School is operated through Creighton’s Department of English and has been in existence for more than a decade. Students earn college credit through the program, which is open to both Creighton students as well as students from other universities throughout the United States and Europe.

“Ireland is something they think they already know,” Gardiner said. “It’s an entirely different world than what they expected.”
Creighton Offers Wireless Web

Creighton University’s window to the world just got a little bigger.

Creighton students can now search the Internet while lounging outside on the campus mall or while working in the physics lab or while sipping an espresso at the Java Jay.

Creighton University is one of a select number of universities in the United States offering students on-campus wireless Internet capabilities.

The system, which was installed last spring, was up and running as students returned for the fall semester. With a special adapter card and the proper software (which can be purchased for $150 at Creighton’s One PC Plaza), students can connect to the Internet at various locations, or zones, on campus without plugging into a data port.

Students also can check out a laptop, with the software and adapter card already installed, at the Reinert Alumni Memorial Library on campus.

“Our goal is to enhance learning by making the network available wherever students study or collaborate,” said Con Dietz, vice president for Information Technology.

In addition to the new wireless system, all of Creighton’s residence halls are wired for Internet access.

Goss Earns Award For Internet Study

Ernie Goss, Ph.D., MacAllister Chair in Regional Economics at Creighton University, received the National Association of Business Economics (NABE) Edward A. Mennis Award on Sept. 9 in New York City.

The award was presented to Goss for his study on the Internet and U.S. productivity. Entitled “The Internet’s Contribution to U.S. Productivity Growth,” Goss’ paper discusses the link between the high productivity of growth per worker and the use of the Internet. In his paper, he explains that the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics productivity data show output growth per worker (since 1995) to be approximately doubling the rate achieved over the preceding two decades. This period of high productivity growth also is the period in which the use of the browser and Internet technology became widespread. The study also concluded that Internet usage added a quarter percent annually to productivity growth.

NABE is an association composed of individuals who have an interest in business economics, and who want to utilize the latest economic data and trends to enhance their ability to make sound business decisions. There are approximately 3,000 members representing more than 1,500 businesses and other organizations from around the world. Since its founding in 1959, NABE has continued to attract the attention of the most influential and prestigious economic leaders in business.

CU Receives $29 Million in Grants

Creighton University received $29 million in externally sponsored grants for research and educational projects in 2000-01, a 5 percent increase over last year. Federal sources accounted for 54 percent of the funds received, while 24 percent came from industries and corporations, 14 percent from foundations and associations, and 8 percent from the state. The School of Medicine received the most grants, 606, for a total of more than $22 million.

Catch the Jays

Follow all the exciting Creighton Bluejays sports action and sign up for a free, electronic Creighton athletics newsletter at www.gocreighton.com.

The Creighton men’s basketball team shoots for its fourth straight 20-win season and fourth consecutive NCAA Tournament appearance in 2001-2002.

The Jays’ 2001-2002 schedule includes four teams that advanced to the NCAA Tournament in 2001: Western Kentucky, BYU, Xavier and Indiana State. Creighton — winner of the Missouri Valley Conference regular-season title last year — opens conference play Dec. 16 at home against Indiana State. Creighton fans helped the Jays to a perfect 14-0 home record last season.

The 2001-2002 schedule for the Creighton women’s basketball team includes opponents from the Big Ten, Big 12 and SEC. The women’s team is looking to improve on last season’s 17-11 record and advance to the postseason for the first time since 1998-99.

The men’s team travels to St. Louis, Mo., and the Savvis Center for the Missouri Valley Conference Tournament, March 1-4. The women’s conference tournament runs March 7-9.

For more schedule and ticket information, visit the Creighton athletics website at www.gocreighton.com, or call the Creighton Athletics Office at (402) 280-2720. Go Jays!
Creighton Blossoms

Bright colors and beautiful plantings were everywhere this summer and fall. Photos on these pages show the coming-to-life of President John P. Schlegel’s vision for a campus with a garden-like atmosphere.

All photos by Bob Guthrie, unless otherwise noted.
*Photo by Nick Constantino, BSBA ’00
“Bread feeds the body, indeed, but flowers feed the soul.”
— The Koran

Top, from left: law school entrance, near the fountain looking toward the Kiewit Physical Fitness Center’s east entry, looking east across the mall from near the Humanities Building, in front of the Administration Building.

Bottom, from left: near the Humanities Building, east campus mall looking west toward the Administration Building, in front of the Skutt Student Center*, near Ignatius House, in front of McGloin Hall, looking toward Brandeis Hall between Deglman and Swanson residence halls.
Creighton University and Creighton University Magazine remember all those who died and all those who mourn the loss of family, friends and colleagues from the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11.

These attacks — as Creighton President the Rev. John P. Schlegel, S.J., said in an address to the Creighton community — will be forever “seared on our memories.” In this issue, we share the stories of terror and kindness revealed by Creighton alumni living and working in New York City. We examine the reaction of the Creighton community. We search for the essence of the American spirit, with an essay by award-winning Creighton author Brent Spencer, Ph.D. We remember two Creighton alumni who died in the attacks — retired Lt. Col. Gary Smith, BA’68, and Michael Tinley, BA’67. And we explore — through essays by Creighton’s Bert Thelen, S.J., and Richard Hauser, S.J. — the question, Where is God in these troubled times?

Alumni see terror ... and kindness

On the morning of Tuesday, Sept. 11, at about 8:55 a.m., Dennis Kadian, BA’90, was just exiting the PATH train, six floors beneath the World Trade Center, north tower, and heading for his office on the 68th floor. Luckily, he never made it.

“As I got nearer the parking garage, there was some smoke and it looked like an evacuation going on in the building. I thought it was just another grease fire in the deli and planned to ignore it. But there was a great deal more smoke in the sub-grade passageways ... and I knew it was something more.” Kadian decided at that moment to exit and took the main escalator instead.

As he left the building, he was right below when the second plane hit, this time striking tower two at 9:03. “I called my wife, Elizabeth, right away to let her know I got out of the building. She always knows the news before I do — and she was really worried. I’m glad I called her then, because after that the cell phones were of no use.”

Kadian, father of 4-year-old Juliana and soon-to-be-father of a second child, started walking away. He would walk 13 miles.

“On the streets, Kadian saw people surging away from ground zero, but it
was a crowd generally marked by order and helpfulness. “People behaved in a mannerly way; there was no pushing or shoving.”

Kadian, a law clerk for the Port Authority, later learned that he had lost six immediate colleagues in his office, plus many more from the Port Authority and its police force. “They were helping people get out,” he said. “One of the greatest things about working there was that people took care of each other.”

Kadian recently recalled a conversation that took place the day before the attack. “We looked out and saw a rainbow, just about at eye-level, and we all commented on how fortunate we were to be able to look out at something so beautiful from the towers. And the next day, everything was gone.”

Currently officing in Newark and attending law school at Seton Hall, the Creighton alumnus says he feels so lucky to be alive.

“We’ve had so many calls from friends we seldom see. It’s wonderful to feel their concern and kindness.”

It may be possible for Maggie Schneider, BA’97, a systems security analyst for the German investment bank Commerzbank AG, to return to work at Two World Financial Center in about a year. Following the attacks, her company moved from the World Trade Center complex to a disaster recovery site in Westchester, N.Y., and she’s grateful to be away from downtown Manhattan.

“I need to get used to the idea of going back to work downtown. I don’t think I’m ready for that today,” she said.

Schneider witnessed the hellish scene at the World Trade Center as images of crashing airplanes, falling bodies and imploding buildings shocked the world.

“At first, I thought it was thunder,” she said. “We hadn’t received any announcements. It looked like a tickertape parade. I saw paper floating down and then I looked closely and saw fire, debris and parts of what I thought was a plane. I saw the first person jump and that was when the second plane hit. After that, there was no doubt about what was happening.”

Following the orderly evacuation of her building, Schneider and co-workers walked to Washington Square. “We weren’t in tears, we were in shock,” she said. “We didn’t know if there were other targets for attack.”

After making sure a co-worker with foot problems would have a ride home, Schneider walked from Manhattan to her apartment in Queens. Amid the unbelievable destruction, she began to feel lucky.

“I just feel so fortunate, every time I think of this, that I’m alive. You never know when you are going to die. I think every day when I get up, how grateful I am. A lot of things were working for us,” she said. “The rescue crews were guardian angels. They kept everyone calm. It was really moving to see every religion, every race, the entire city working together. It was an unfortunate way to see the good side of a lot of people.”

“It is amazing to see evil in the raw,” said Chris (Galigiuri) Davis Ruland, BA’60, who toured the site of the World Trade Center devastation nearly two weeks after the attack. Ruland’s husband, Don, is a retired New York City fire chief, who lost many friends and colleagues when the two 110-story buildings crashed to the ground.

“The sight is far beyond what stills or TV pictures are able to show. The devastation is beyond belief. There are not only buildings that fell, but others burnt out. There are windows blown out for blocks around. We looked up and stories above, there were still flames breaking out — 13 days after the attack,” Ruland said.
Ruland was heartened to see firefighters from across the country — Phoenix, Colorado Springs, California, New Jersey, to name a few — assisting with the clean-up and rescue effort. She also was struck by the sight of a prayer tent set up for the rescue workers. “So many people are contributing to the effort,” she said. “The workers on site will need our prayers for a long time to come.”

A Community of Hope and Prayer

Creighton University, true to its mission, was a community of prayer, a community of hope and a community in conversation in the wake of the horrific terrorist attacks on Sept. 11. About 1,000 people filled St. John’s Church for the noon Mass on the day of the attacks to pray for the victims of the tragedy, for the nation and for world peace.

Creighton President the Rev. John P. Schlegel, S.J., told those gathered that the tragic events of that morning would be forever “seared on our memories.” “No words can encapsulate the scope of the human and material tragedy,” Fr. Schlegel said. “No one can give a rational interpretation of these events. All of us have confronted the fragility of human life. All of us, from whatever religious tradition, see the need for a comforting and peace-giving God.”

More than 500 people gathered around the fountain in front of St. John’s Church later that evening for a multi-faith prayer service, which included prayers from a variety of religious faiths and traditions.

The noon Mass that Friday was part of the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance commissioned by President George W. Bush. The bells of St. John’s were tolled at 12:30 p.m., so that all on campus could observe a moment of silence, and afterward, a prayer service — again incorporating multiple faiths — was held outside the church.

A message board was soon erected in front of St. John’s, so passersby could share their thoughts and hopes for peace. White ribbons were distributed. Students began collecting donations for the Red Cross. More than $500 was collected from donation boxes on the steps of the church.

Creighton counselors, University Ministry staff and residence hall leaders reached out across the campus to help students in need of emotional support.

Several question-and-answer sessions, featuring faculty experts from a wide variety of disciplines, were held on campus, as members of the University community probed for answers and wrestled with the implications of the attacks.

“A small minority of people (in the world) are celebrating (the attacks),” John Calvert, Ph.D., said during a panel discussion just days after the tragedy. Calvert is an assistant professor of history at Creighton and an expert on Middle East affairs. “The mood in Amman and Cairo is solemn and bleak,” he said, “and filled with a sense of foreboding.”

At the same discussion, Terry Clark, Ph.D., associate professor of political science, warned that international terrorism is actively pursuing the destruction of Western capitalism. “This was not a symbolic strike,” he said. “It was an attempt to destabilize world capitalist markets so thoroughly as to put them on the brink of collapse.”

The end of the Cold War left Western liberal democracy dominant, Clark said, and threatened to create a single global social system hated by radical Islamic terrorists.

“They want an end to the international system as it currently exists, and that carries enormous consequences for all of us,” he said, “a degree of anarchy in which we do not want to live.”

The Creighton experts, like many, grappled with what would be an appropriate American response. “I pray that we do not turn into that which attacked us — vigilantes,” said
Kenneth Wise, Ph.D., associate professor of political science and international studies.

Fr. Schlegel, in a message to the campus, wrote: “As a community Creighton must respond to these events in a positive and responsive manner. We are a community who cares about its many parts. This is a time to listen, to hold, to help and to heal one another. ... So let us remain the wonderful unified community that we are.

“... Let us be a community of prayer and a community of hope.”

**On Shattered Wings**

By Brent Spencer, Ph.D.

It was a few days after the Sept. 11 attack. My wife and I had planned to take part in a celebration of the tallgrass prairie sponsored by the local branch of the Audubon Society. Like most Americans, we weren’t in the mood to celebrate anything so soon after that black day. We hoped the Audubon event would be canceled, but no such luck. What we wanted was to stay home on our farm and do what we had done for hour after hour — stare with shock, grief and rising waves of panic at the television news. But the organizers informed us that the celebration was still on, and deciding that maybe it was for the best, we climbed into the car and set off down the back roads of Nebraska, the backroads of America.

America. The word, so burdened with hype and hope, has been a problematical one throughout our history. We in the United States can’t lay exclusive claim to the name, as countries to the north and south remind us. And yet its use persists, perhaps because it has more poetry — more unity, even — than the corporate sound of “United States.” From the beginning, the name “America” has been used and abused, praised and pilloried, bent to the needs of each passing moment. What would it mean now? And what would it come to mean in the weeks and months ahead?

The sky hung heavy with dark clouds. A wet wind buffeted the car. It had been raining on and off throughout the morning, as if God himself were telling us that today was not a day meant for celebration. We drove in silence, the wet pavement uncoiling in front of us, the damp fields drifting past.

I found myself wondering what it means to be an American. And what is the spirit of America? Too often in our past, the spirit of America has been invoked to justify every degree of rage, hatred and small-mindedness. Is this, too, American? Who are we as a nation, and what do we stand for? Freedom. Yes, freedom. A noble word. But our history has taught us that one person’s freedom is another person’s prison. And now our new history, the era beginning Sept. 11, has changed whatever we thought we knew about ourselves.

After a while, we drove past a small handmade sign reading “Prairie” with an arrow beneath. We were getting close. What was once a measureless ocean of grasses so vast that pioneers would lose their way is now so localized it has an address. This way to the prairie, up the road a mile or so, the second driveway on your left. Watch where you park.

We pulled the car up next to a new barn, got out, and walked the lane to the old barn, where the main events of the celebration were to be held.

Out in the fields, a half-hearted rain fell on the tents that had been set up. Under each, a lonely figure in a rain slicker set out stacks of fliers and brochures on a table, weighing them down with stones. But no one wanted to brave the rain. What little crowd there was took shelter in the barn.

The anthems tell us the spirit of America is alive and well in the mountains and valleys, from sea to shining sea. And it’s easy to believe that in times of safety and prosperity. As I took my seat in the old barn, I wasn’t sure what those words meant. What was the spirit of America now? All I could picture were the crumbled pilings of New York and the charred girders of the Pentagon. All I could see were the thousands of faces staring from handmade fliers. Who were they? What had become of them? And what will become of us? There are no adequate answers to these questions.

Not now, not yet. Perhaps not ever. On Sept. 11 we awoke to a world we never imagined. There are no words to adequately describe what lies on our hearts as we stumble through this darkness.

The Audubon program started, though not many of us had come out on this somber day. We sat in the old barn listening to thoughtful speakers and gazing out at the wet fields. Rain pattered against the tin roof as the speakers told us about the need to honor the land you come from and the land as it used to be. And each of us was thinking not only of the lost prairie but of the lost city, of a ragged skyline, and of a people who would never be the same.

Then a small woman stepped forward with a cardboard carryall, as if she’d just come from the mall with a new pet. She had planned to do this out in the field, she explained, but because of the rain and the small crowd, she’d decided to do it in the barn. She was Betsy Finch from Raptor Recovery Nebraska, a program of the Wachiska Audubon Society, and she was there to release a red-tailed hawk back to the wild. It had been hit by a car, its wing broken, she said, and now, after surgery and weeks of care, it was ready to be released. When she opened the box and brought out the hawk, I found it hard to...
breathe. With its serrated wings half extended, the bird was huge, brown and white, its black pupils rimmed with gold, its head cocked back, its hooked beak open wide, ready for attack. The bird turned to show the four-foot wingspan and the ruddy tail as broad and ornate as an antique fan. She led us outside, carrying the bird past me, where I could look deep into its shining eyes, somehow at once both fearsome and fearful.

We gathered in a ragged half-circle around her. In a quiet voice choked with tears, she said, “Today’s release is dedicated to the memory of those who died in the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.” Then she released the bird, hoisting it high into the cloudy sky. As it rose and wheeled away, the light shone red through its tail feathers like the sun through a church window. A few strong wingbeats and the bird disappeared into the trees, gone in an instant. I stayed a while in the rain, watching the treetops. I wanted something but couldn’t say what or why. Surely there was more to the moment than this.

And then, just as I was about to give up, I got my wish. From a hidden branch at the top of a tree, the hawk took off, broad wings lifting effortlessly, the hawk veering along the treeline, heading west. I stood staring, my face filled with rain. Hope filled me, too, with each stroke of the strong wings carrying the bird forward through the gray, slanting rain. The injured hawk, made well again by kind hands and heart, was flying bravely toward its destiny. The sight of that strong bird flying free was a sort of answer for all my questions, a truth as deep as blood and bone, a vision of the spirit of America.

About the author: Dr. Brent Spencer is an associate professor of English at Creighton and author of the books The Lost Son and Are We Not Men?

Attacks Claim the Lives of Two Creighton Alumni

Creighton University has learned of two alumni — retired Lt. Col. Gary F. Smith, BA’68, and Michael Tinley, BA’67 — who died in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on America. We share their stories below, and mourn the loss of all those who died in this tragic event.

Pentagon Attack Takes Gary F. Smith

Tuesday, Sept. 11, promised to be an ordinary morning for retired Lt. Col. Gary F. Smith, chief of U.S. Army Retirement Services.

Gary, BA’68, sent a quick e-mail to his brother Mark, Arts’73, before leaving his office in Alexandria, Va., for the Pentagon. It would be the last word that any family member would have from the father of four.

By 9:45 a.m., Gary’s meeting in the conference room of the Army’s Chief of Staff for Operations was only minutes under way, but in the split seconds that followed, Gary and all in attendance would perish in the fiery crash of American Airlines Flight 77 as it slammed into the Pentagon. The conference room at the E-Ring Second Floor lay in the direct path of the oncoming 757.

It was days until the fates of Gary and others in the path of the crashed airliner were known, as rescue crews ultimately failed to unearth survivors in the Pentagon’s rubble. As a result of the attack, 125 people were killed in the Pentagon strike or remain unaccounted for, not including the 64 passengers on the plane.

Former Creighton University Alumni Relations Director Mason Smith, BA’66, MA’75, remembers his brother Gary as a person whose life was filled with humor, compassion, warm family ties and a “great affinity for Creighton. He was a person for others.”

Young Gary Smith attended Creighton on one of the University’s first ROTC scholarships. Following graduation and his wedding to Ann Smagacz of Omaha, he began his 23-year military career. It was a career that saw action in Vietnam and earned Gary the Soldier’s Medal for heroism when he rescued a fellow soldier from the wreckage of his downed helicopter.

By the time Gary retired from the military in 1991, he had achieved the rank of lieutenant colonel. He then began his civilian job as chief of Army Retirement Services. “We used to joke,” said Mason, “that I was alumni director for Creighton — and he was alumni director for the Army!”

In his civilian post, Gary was responsible for coordinating the retirement benefits for U.S. Army personnel. Ironically, his last meeting at the Pentagon was called to help coordinate proposed legislation to ease the burden of loss upon families of deceased former servicemen and women.

Even with a vibrant career, Gary made time for serving his community and enjoying his family and friends.

As a coach, he was a “natural.” Following a Creighton baseball career, Gary became a coach at Omaha’s Holy Name High School, where he teamed up with then-baseball coach Frank Solich, now head football coach for the Nebraska Cornhuskers.

Another special love was soccer. Parents and former players note that few Saturdays ever passed without “Coach Smith” at the sidelines of local soccer matches. The Washington Post reported: “He was just the sort of soccer coach you dream about having for your kid. He was funny and patient and kind.” Gary also followed Creighton sporting events with great enthusiasm, his brother said.

He was active with his church, the Parish of the Good Shepherd in Mount Vernon, where parishioners got used to seeing Gary delivering a load of furniture for the church housing project in his “little red truck.”

Gary’s loss leaves a great void in his family. He is survived by his wife, Ann, of Alexandria, Va., his mother, Dorothy,
of Vienna, Va., and four daughters: Natalie Smith (Selfridge), Nicole Amato, and Kristi and Tracy Smith. Siblings include Mason and Mark. Gary’s father, Daugherty M. Smith, who attended Creighton before enrolling in West Point, precedes him in death.

Gary and all those Department of Defense members who died in the Pentagon attack will be awarded the Defense of Freedom Medal by Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld, it was announced Sept. 27.

Mike Tinley Had Strong Ties to Creighton

The morning of Sept. 11, Creighton alumnus Michael Tinley, BA’67, was on the 100th floor of One World Trade Center chatting on the phone with his sister Suzanne, a 1980 Creighton graduate.

Suzanne, her husband Charles Fishkin and their two young children live a mere seven blocks north of New York’s famed Twin Towers. (Charles’ parents, Arthur and Jane Fishkin, both work at Creighton.)

Tinley teased his 7-year-old nephew, Henry, that he could see him from the building’s window. They ended their phone conversation, as Suzanne hurried Henry off to school.

Thirty minutes later, American Airlines Flight 11 ripped through the north tower. It was the first of two hijacked airliners that would eventually reduce the World Trade Center to rubble. Mike Tinley is believed to have died in the attack. He was 56 years old.

Mike Tinley was a third generation Creighton graduate. His maternal grandparents, Wenceslaus James Stech and Cecilia Bessie (Durham) Stech, both graduated from the Creighton School of Medicine in 1913. His grandfather practiced medicine in Nebraska and Council Bluffs, Iowa, and his grandmother practiced in Council Bluffs.

Mike’s parents also graduated from Creighton. His father, Emmet, received both his undergraduate degree (BA’38) and law degree (JD’41) from Creighton. His mother, the late Jeanne (Stech) Tinley, earned a bachelor’s degree from Creighton in 1941.

Mike grew up in Council Bluffs the second oldest of eight children. Six of the eight children, including Michael, would graduate from Creighton. The others were Emmet Tinley III, BSBA’68, MPA’84, Kathy (Tinley) Payne, BA’68, and Chris Tinley, JD’86, all of Council Bluffs; Mary Ann (Tinley) Smith, BS’71, of Valley, Neb.; and Suzanne Tinley Fishkin, BA’80, of New York. Michael is also survived by sister Jeannie Gilmore of Omaha, and predecead in death by a brother, Tim Tinley, who died in an industrial accident in 1973.

Being from a large family, Mike was blessed with 24 nieces and nephews, including six of whom are Creighton graduates or current students.

“He was the favorite uncle,” said sister-in-law Susan (Ternus) Tinley, BSN’66, MSN’84, a genetics nurse specialist at Creighton’s Hereditary Cancer Institute. “He ran interference with the parents when some of them became teen-agers.”

Mike was a vice president with insurance broker Marsh USA, which had offices in both World Trade Center towers. While he lived in Dallas, his job often took him to New York.

His daughters, Lisa Kennedy, 29, and Jenna Tinley, 25, who live in Southern California, said their father loved New York. “He absolutely loved the theater, the many restaurants, and the hustle and bustle among the lights and excitement of New York City,” Lisa said.

The daughters received a call from one of Mike’s friends and colleagues shortly after the attack. “Apparently, he (the friend) was supposed to be in the meeting, but he ran down to the first floor to get something to eat,” Susan Tinley said.

In another tragic twist of fate, Mike Tinley and Lt. Col. Gary Smith, BA’68, who is believed to have died in the strike on the Pentagon, both attended Creighton in the mid-’60s. The two families, Susan said, have been in contact.

At a memorial service in Council Bluffs on Sept. 26, Mike was remembered as a loving son, brother and father, who was quick to share a warm smile. As the mourners left the church, red, white and blue balloons were released into the air.

Memorial services in California and at New York’s St. Patrick’s Cathedral also have provided comfort to the family.

“We’ll sure miss him,” said his brother Emmet. “September 11th will forever be etched in all of our memories.”

Where Is God?

By Bert Thelen, S.J.

Where was God when terrorists turned airplanes filled with kidnapped passengers into deadly missiles that toppled buildings and killed thousands of people?

Does our faith in God offer any answers to this agonizing question?

It does, but it requires us to dig deep into the sources of the Judeo-Christian revelation, to accept the darkness of terror, loss and grief as part of the human condition, and to trust unreservedly in the promises of God.

What do the Bible and tradition tell us?

God lets the sun shine and the rain fall on the good and the bad alike.
Unlike us, God does not interfere with human choices and plans, nor does God punish evil deeds and reward good deeds in this life.

Does “God bless America” more than other nations? Of course not. Every human being, without exception, is infinitely precious in the eyes of God, and God wills the salvation of every person, created as we are in God’s own image and likeness. All of us are beloved children of God regardless of our race, color, culture, sex, age or behavior. This also happens to be the foundation of our country: the God-given dignity and eternal destiny of human beings.

But God “hates” (a manner of speaking) injustice, cruelty, violence and murder. From the death of Abel, the first victim, through the crucifixion of Jesus, The Divine Victim, until now, in the recent mass murder in our own country, “your brothers’ and sisters’ blood cries out to me from the soil.” Like us, God deplores and mourns the death of beloved daughters and sons. If God has any preference at all (and I believe God does, in a human manner of speaking), it is for victims. Salvation and prophetic history clearly reveal that.

For the first time in decades, we Americans are the victimized instead of the victimizers. And so we can truly say now, “God is on our side.” It is no accident that we now have the world’s sympathy rather than resentment. Something new for us! We deserve it, for we have taken a crushing blow to our sense of well being and our way of life. I think God now looks at us, especially those whose lives and families and communities have been shattered by this deliberate and senseless mass murder, with preferential compassion and special healing.

Do you need evidence? Look at the unbelievable outpouring of heroism, generosity, empathy, mercy, help and companionship that has been part of the response to this atrocity! And experiencing our vulnerability so painfully has also helped us realize how valuable we are to one another, as well as how precious we are in the eyes of God. Hopefully, it will also teach us solidarity with ALL who suffer.

It has taken a long time, in our Judeo-Christian-Muslim tradition to replace the God that inflicts violence with the true God who only suffers violence. We have now a golden opportunity to live out the truth of the Prophets, realized perfectly in Jesus: Non-violent love is the only truly revelatory (religious) power because it escapes from the spirit of revenge, recrimination and retaliation that keeps human beings from their true dignity and destiny as sons and daughters of the One, True, Living God.

Does this mean we are not to respond? No, but we are not to respond in kind. A recent prayer of Archbishop Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee says it very well:

“We come to beg gifts of wisdom and prudence, a sense of justice, and a desire for peace as we respond to this tragic moment in the life of our nation. We ask you (God) to bless in a particular way all those who must now be engaged in that just response, who must be concerned about our safety and security, about the safety and security of all on this globe. Root out any sense of vengeance or hatred from our hearts and from the hearts of all called to serve our nation, lest we or they, through passion and uncontrolled zeal, fall into the same kind of evil acts against innocent people that we set out now to combat.”

We need this prayer if we want God on our side.

About the author: Fr. Thelen is director of campus ministry at Creighton and pastor of St. John’s Church. He has been at Creighton for five years and is former provincial of the Wisconsin Province of the Society of Jesus.

Where Is Your God? A Reflection
By Richard J. Hauser, S.J.

My tears have become my bread,
By night, by day,
As I hear it said all the daylong:
“Where is your God?”
— Psalm 42

A few days after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, I was accosted by a very troubled woman who steadfastly asserted: “There are no accidents. God’s plan is perfect. Everything happens for a reason.” Then she waited for my assent to her declarations.

What to say? How can I respond in a way that speaks to the suffering of this woman? Her faith is the foundation of her life. And her faith teaches her that God is not only all-loving but also all-powerful. Doesn’t this mean that everything that happens in this world is somehow willed by God? Don’t these events — terrible as they are — also fall within Divine Providence?

As I look at this good woman I am
touched. Nothing in her life is more important than faith. She clings to it even though it leads to a terrible conclusion: God — somehow or other in a perfect plan — wanted this to happen. Her world view is being pushed to the breaking point, but she will not give up her faith. I admire her!

I begin responding tentatively, wanting to help but fearful of upsetting her further. Yes, I too believe that God is all-loving and all-powerful. But I don’t believe God wanted this to happen. God did not cause the events of Sept. 11; people did.

God created us in God’s own image, making us “a little less than gods crowned with glory and honor” (Ps 8). And God, all-powerful and all-loving, blessed us with the gift that makes us most like God: freedom. And from the very beginning of creation God allowed us to use this gift as mature adults, absolutely, not like puppets manipulated on a string. God doesn’t limit human freedom.

But, sadly, from the very beginning human beings have abused this gift of freedom and rebelled against God’s commandments. Humans sinned in the Garden of Eden — Adam and Eve. Humans sinned in New York and Washington on Sept. 11. And so this lovely planet, God’s Garden of Paradise, becomes a Vale of Tears.

Throughout history, when confronting suffering, non-believers have taunted believers justifying non-belief with the Psalmist’s painful lament: “Where is your God?” But believers confronting the same suffering, reaching deep within their hearts, have come to a different conclusion: Our God is with us in suffering, indeed, especially in suffering!

So Rabbi Harold Kushner finally concluded as he struggled to reconcile his belief in an all-loving and all-powerful God with the premature death of his son at age 12. God was not to blame.

“Maybe God does not cause our suffering. Maybe it happens for some reason other than the will of God. The psalmist writes, ‘I lift mine eyes to the hills; from where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, maker of Heaven and earth’ (Ps 121). He does not say, ‘My pain comes from the Lord,’ or ‘My tragedy comes from the Lord.’ He says, ‘My help comes from the Lord.’

Could it be that God does not cause the bad things that happen to us? ... Could it be that ‘How could God do this to me?’ is really the wrong question?” (When Bad Things Happen to Good People, Avon Books, 1981).

So Paul concluded reflecting on his experience of coping with his “thorn in the flesh.” Paul discovered to his complete astonishment that his weakness (which some scholars believe was encroaching blindness) did not indicate God’s absence but actually occasioned a fuller manifestation of God’s presence.

“There this thing [the thorn], I have pleaded with the Lord three times for it to leave me, but he has said, ‘My grace is enough for you; my power is at its best in weakness.’ So I shall be very happy to make my weakness my special boast so that the power of Christ may stay over me, and that is why I am quite content with my weaknesses, and with insults, hardships, persecutions, and the agonies I go through for Christ’s sake. For it is when I am weak that I am strong” (2 Cor 12:7-10).

Later facing martyrdom in Rome, Paul exulted, “Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Trial, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or the sword? ... I am certain that neither death nor life ... nor any other creature, will be able to separate us from the love of God that comes to us in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 8:35, 39).

And so Jesus discovered on Easter Morning after the ordeal of Good Friday: His most dear Father, never abandoning him, had raised him from the dead — transfigured and glorified.

Where was our God during our national tragedy? Our God in Christ was with us! With us in the hearts of our grieving, praying nation. With all working to alleviate suffering of fellow citizens, neighbors, friends. With the soot-covered, exhausted rescue workers. With the firemen laying down their lives.

The Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins in his poem “Kingfishers” catches the mystery of our God’s presence to us in Christ, especially in suffering:

For Christ plays in ten thousand places,
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his
To the Father through the features of men’s faces.
John Cavanaugh, JD’72, a former Democratic congressman from Omaha, and John McGraw, BSBA’84, a former chair of the California Republican Party, are practicing Catholics who disagree with both their parties and the U.S. bishops on some political issues.

Cavanaugh supported his longtime friend Al Gore for president in 2000 despite the fact Cavanaugh is pro-life and Gore is pro-choice. Cavanaugh also opposes the death penalty, which Gore supports.

Cavanaugh said he remains a Democrat because of the party’s efforts to protect workers, the elderly and the environment and to promote civil rights and equal rights, stands generally consistent with Catholic social teachings.

McGraw of Santa Clara, Calif., supported President George W. Bush despite the fact that he disagrees with Bush’s support for the death penalty. He cited their mutual opposition to abortion and their common conservatism as reasons for his support.

McGraw said he agrees with many Church aims on social justice issues but disagrees with many bishops on the best means to achieve them.

Cavanaugh and McGraw are far from alone, Creighton experts said.

Church stands on political issues don’t fit conventional American political divisions, creating dilemmas for Catholics whose religious values influence their votes.

“An American Catholic who takes the whole Church (political) program seriously is a conflicted voter,” said Law Professor Richard Shugrue, a political analyst and commentator.

Even Catholics who agree with Church positions in theory often disagree with Church applications of the theories and/or its priority on opposition to abortion, said Andy Alexander, S.J., vice president for University Ministry. This sometimes leads to clashes between Catholics in politics and Church officials.

Cavanaugh is acutely aware of this. In 2000, he wrote a newspaper editorial disagreeing with Omaha Archbishop Eledn Curtiss’ assertion that opposition to abortion was the most important issue for Catholic voters to consider.

Cavanaugh outlined the dilemmas Catholic voters face.

“It is clear that there is not a single acceptable and conflict-free answer,” Cavanaugh wrote. “Both the Democratic and Republican parties have embraced public policies which are in conflict with basic Roman Catholic moral teachings. What does seem clear is that Catholics do have a moral and civic duty to participate in the American political process.”

Catholics have trouble finding candidates who fully support Church views, he said.

The way millions of Catholics resolve such questions can determine the outcome of elections. Catholics are the nation’s key swing voters. In seven of the last eight presidential elections, a majority of Catholic voters have voted with the winner.
Catholic Political Statistics

• There are 62.3 million Catholics in the U.S., including 44 million registered voters — 33 percent of all registered voters.
• 40 percent of Catholics who voted in 2000 identified themselves as registered Democrats, 35 percent as Republican and 22 percent as Independents.

(Sources: Catholic Almanac 2001 and Voter News Service Poll)

Religion and Politics at Creighton

Creighton mirrors the split political personality of the American Catholic community and is strongly marked by its Jesuit charism of trying to change the world for the good, said Andy Alexander, S.J., vice president for University Ministry. Political/religious/social activism and service at Creighton reflect the vision of St. Ignatius that “all of us are called into the mindset of basing our lives on finding God and seeing service of our neighbors as our identity,” he said. He cited these examples:

• Students have had “immersion weekends” in North and South Omaha, including visiting a packing plant.
• President John Schlegel, S.J., is a strong advocate of racial justice and has hosted a conference for business leaders on workplace diversity.
• A busload of Creighton students joined students from other Jesuit universities protesting at Fort Benning’s School of the Americas on the 10th anniversary of the assassination of the Jesuits in El Salvador.
• A student pro-life group annually puts up a display of crosses to commemorate victims of abortion.

Catholic voters are avidly courted by both parties and heavily analyzed by reporters who sometimes have difficulty moving beyond stereotypes such as “ethnic, blue-collar, conservative Catholics.”

Shugrue said that understanding Catholic voting patterns begins with analyzing the complexities of the diverse groups which comprise the Catholic population.

For starters, most American Catholics say the Church has little impact on how they vote, said Shugrue. A survey firm that tracks Catholic voters found that only 25 percent said the bishops’ views were important in making a voting decision. This firm found that Catholic voters’ views on abortion and stem-cell research mirror those of the general public.

Researchers also have found significant differences in the voting patterns of churchgoing and non-churchgoing Catholics, Catholics of different racial and ethnic groups and Catholic men and women.

For example, a 1996 voter exit poll found that 59 percent of Catholic women had voted for Clinton vs. 47 percent of Catholic men, both percentages higher than Clinton received from all female and all male voters. Black and Hispanic Catholics voted for Clinton at much higher rates than white Catholics with higher percentages of minority Catholic women voting for him than minority Catholic men. Black Catholic women gave Clinton 89 percent of their votes — his highest percentage among Catholics.

In 2000, Gore received 49 percent of the votes of all Catholics but only 43 percent from churchgoing Catholics, compared with Bush’s overall percentage of 47 percent and 57 percent of churchgoers, according to federal regulation of packinghouses tend to result in immigration raids and deportations.

He also said Creighton’s Jesuit identity gives students global ties and outlooks on issues they would otherwise lack.

For example, Jon Cortina, S.J., a member of the Jesuit community of El Salvador who was away from home the night of the massacre, spoke at Creighton last year. Cortina was the guest of his seminary classmate, Charles and Mary Heider Endowed Jesuit Faculty Chairholder Don Doll, S.J.

Creighton has a Center for the Study of Religion and Society. A senior perspective course taught by Drs. Sue Crawford of political science and Julia Fleming of theology focuses on faith and political action. Dr. Bette Novit Evans of the Political Science Department is the author of a book, Interpreting the Free Exercise of Religion: The Constitution and American Pluralism.

Alexander said Creighton’s policies mirror its social justice values. For example, the University has found that contracting some services to outside firms wouldn’t save much money if workers received health insurance — something Creighton insists on as a justice issue.
Sample Issues that the Bishops Support

According to a July 18 Wall Street Journal article, U.S. bishops’ stands on issues range widely across the conventional political spectrum. Here are examples of the bishops’ viewpoints:

- Opposition to abortion.
- Support for use of faith-based institutions to deliver more social services.
- Opposition to the death penalty.
- Rejection of mandatory-minimum sentences and three-strikes-and-you’re-out laws as “simplistic solutions” to crime.
- Support for ending the economic boycott of Cuba.
- Opposition to permanently normalizing trade status with China until it improves its human rights record.
- Opposition to the 1996 welfare reform act.

“What ties all these views together?” the Journal asked. “Put simply, America’s bishops think it’s their responsibility to argue for society’s weakest and most vulnerable, and that includes the unborn, the poor, the elderly, immigrants and those who can’t afford fancy lawyers. That kind of social conscience is bound to make almost everybody, including practicing Catholics, squirm from time to time. That’s what makes the bishops’ views powerful. It’s also what makes them hard to be used in the political arena.”

About the author: Dr. Wirth is chair of Creighton’s Department of Journalism and Mass Communication.
California Street Sketches

By Allen B. Schlesinger, Ph.D.

Editor's note: It's been cut off, paved over and trampled on. But California Street (now California Plaza or “The Skinner Mall”), once a bustling thoroughfare, remains at the heart of the Creighton campus. Come along with Creighton Professor Emeritus Allen Schlesinger as he takes a trip down memory lane.

When I stand on California Plaza, it is not the sights of yesterday that first return to me but its sounds.

I hear streetcars, jammed with passengers, rattling atop steel rails. I hear the constant background rumble of hundreds of automobiles and trucks traveling across the bricks. I hear the shrieks of children running to St. John’s School. I hear the buzz of activity at corner drug stores, taverns and barbershops.

As I stand on “The Mall,” remembering when I first came to Creighton in 1952, there are no high-rise residence halls, no sprawling Kiewit Center, no Skutt Student Center, no Criss buildings, no Rigge Science building, no Reinert Alumni Library, no Eppley building. There is the Administration Building, St. John’s Church, then a squat, terribly ugly Auditorium. Beyond that is a series of homes and duplexes and rearing up out of their backyards, the Law School (now the Hitchcock Building). Then the School of Dentistry (now the Humanities Building). Beyond that, the neighborhoods stretch west. With no Rigge and Eppley, I see again the stadium, reminding me that football was once a passion on the Hilltop.

University students, grade school children and high school students all dodge streetcars and automobiles to get to class. It’s a tumultuous environment, in which lectures are sometimes momentarily suspended as the shriek of streetcar wheels overwhelms all but the most bull-throated professors. Around this street a campus blossomed and many fond, and amusing, memories were formed.

Mail call

Faculty mail was delivered to a small room on the first floor of the Administration Building. When I last looked, that room had been converted into a bathroom. But in 1952, everyone assembled daily in that tiny room to retrieve their mail. I remember one particular visit with biology colleague John Sheehan. John rifled through his mail, and after reading one letter, he handed it to me. It was an InterOffice Memo.

TO: John Sheehan
FROM: Creighton President
Carl Reinert, S.J.

SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE. Your continuing substandard teaching and scholarly performance is a disgrace to this institution. You will be terminated at the end of the present semester.

There were scrawled initials. My hands were shaking, rattling the paper. I turned in shock to John. He was calmly reading the rest of his mail. Without looking up he said, “Leo Kennedy.” Kennedy and Sheehan, colleagues and friends for a lifetime, exchanged such messages to assure one another of their continued combative affection.

The building that refused to fall

California Street witnessed one of its most bizarre events in 1959. Following that year’s baccalaureate ceremony in St. John’s Church, the entire graduating class, faculty and guests were paraded out onto California Street. We were to watch as the adjacent Creighton Auditorium — a squat, red-brick building — was sacrificed for construction of the Reinert Alumni Memorial Library. A crane was drawn up in front of the Auditorium, its diesel engine idling menacingly. The wrecking ball hung from its cable, slowly rotating in the soft evening light. Fr. Reinert climbed into the crane’s cabin, where he donned a hard hat and stood next to the crane operator. The diesel roared and black smoke belched.

The ball gained amplitude and momentum as the operator increased its arc until finally, with a satisfying thud, it struck the building. The ball bounced off without a single brick being dislodged. There was a moment of silence and then laughter arose from the assembled students. The crane swung again, a much longer arc, with the ball racing toward the building and a massive thud that shook the ground. Not a brick stirred. A cheer arose from the students, who were now rooting for the old building. In the cab, Fr. Reinert was hanging on for dear life as the crane pivoted viciously to give the ball maximum energy. A third time the ball swung, resulting in only a small shower of dust. Wilder cheering from the students. The crane cab swung back in a huge arc and then raced forward as the operator delivered his next shot with a
ferocity that revealed that the battle had turned nasty. The ball dislodged 10 or 12 bricks that tumbled to the ground. Fr. Reinert signaled that the building had been defeated and the diesel quieted to a rumble. Not so the students. They cheered mightily. The next day it was learned that the Auditorium walls were solid brick, at least four courses thick.

Dining was the pits

The term Faculty Dining Room has been applied to several locations. The worst was in the Old Beanery, located in the basement of a residence hall. I remember very little of this place (having rarely eaten there) other than it had the most inappropriate wallpaper ever installed in an eating establishment. The wallpaper was a garish representation of New York City skyscrapers as seen from above at an improbable angle. The result was a tipped view that triggered instant vertigo. One glance and you gripped the table to keep from reeling uncontrollably. That wallpaper, added to the abominable food, made eating at nearby Walt Beal’s Cafe, in comparison, an experience in haute cuisine.

One Friday during Lent, Sheehan and I visited Beal’s. We sat down at the counter; Walt Beal glowered at us. We each ordered a grilled cheese sandwich and coffee. We watched Walt flip the sandwiches on his oil-soaked grill. He wrapped the sandwiches, put them on the counter, and drew two mugs of coffee. He stared at the sandwiches for a moment, a coffee mug in each hand. Putting down the mugs, he tucked one sandwich under each arm, picked up a mug in each hand and came toward us. Raising one arm and then the other, he dropped the sandwiches in front of us. Sheehan slowly pushed the sandwich away and, in a weak voice, said, “I guess I’ll just have a cookie.”

That’s the ticket

The transformation of California Street into today’s Mall began with the construction of the high-rise dormitories — the early manifestations of the “brick and mortar” Reinert years. Fr. Reinert served as Creighton’s president from 1950-1962 and deserves a great deal of credit for the transformation of the campus.

I met Carl Reinert in 1952 under somewhat strained conditions. I taught General Biology at 8 a.m. in the basement of the Old Dental Building. I had an assigned parking place immediately adjacent to the building, but on this day someone had taken it. This left me driving wildly around the neighborhood trying to find a spot. No luck. It was 7:58. In Room D-7, 120 students were assembling. I pulled my car onto the sidewalk in front of the building and raced to class. When I returned, I found a ticket for illegally blocking the sidewalk. I was in a state of absolute outrage. I went to the top.

I walked into Fr. Reinert’s office; he was dictating a letter to his secretary. The two of them looked up to see this madman waving his arms and shouting about an outrageous fine. Fr. Reinert gently separated me from the ticket, assured me that he would take care of it and out I went. I assume he asked his secretary to make sure that I never entered the office again. If he did, it didn’t work. I entered his office constantly, not for ticket-fixing but for a much more expensive purpose. I hounded the man ceaselessly for the construction of a science building.

Knobs and hinges and valves, oh my!

I discovered that dreaming about a science building is a lot more fun than building one. I complained to Fr. Reinert that the Leo Daly architects designing Rigge were, in my view, not consulting the science faculty sufficiently as to laboratory details. He said he’d call Leo. A few days later, the project’s lead architect asked me to meet with him. Explaining that his boss had chastised him, he led me into a room filled with blueprints and catalogs. He explained that my job was to identify the thousands and thousands of hardware items called for on the blueprints and select, from the catalogs, doorknobs, hinges, drawer pulls, faucets, toilet valves, wall switches, electrical outlets, well, you get the idea. Accepting that I had been outfoxed, I told the architect that I had absolute confidence in his selection of these items and withdrew. About a month later, while working in my backyard, I looked over my back hedge to find that my new neighbor was the very same architect.

Reminiscing about California Street, I have a reverie in which I imagine myself standing on today’s Mall on a beautiful spring day. Throngs of students pass by deeply involved with one another and in the wonderful experience of being at college. One student, noticing an elderly man at the side of the Mall leaves her group and asks thoughtfully, “Can I be of help, sir?” “Thank you for your kindness,” I reply, “I’m waiting for the streetcar.”

A Road Well-Traveled:
California Street

• California Street was part of the original map of Omaha in 1854.
• It was so-named because it was seen as a westward route to California.
• The first streetcars began operating on California Street in 1889.
• California Street’s bricks were covered with asphalt sometime after the streetcars stopped running in 1955.
• Construction of the I-480-North Freeway interchange between 1968 and 1971 cut off California Street between 27th and 30th streets.
• California Street’s evolution to a campus mall began in 1978 with construction of the piazza and fountain in front of St. John’s Church.
• Degelman Circle (the traffic circle at 24th and California) was created in 1980, along with the walkway and benches in front of the Administration Building.
• Soon thereafter, the asphalt was removed from the section extending from the fountain to Gallagher Hall, revealing again California Street’s shiny rails and ruddy bricks.
• In 1982, the campus mall was named in honor of Creighton benefactors Lloyd E. and Kathryn G. Skinner. Lloyd, a 1936 Creighton graduate, served as president of the family-owned Skinner Macaroni Co.
LouAnn Evans of Council Bluffs, Iowa, had her 15 minutes of fame last April, but it undoubtedly was not packaged the way she would have wished. You see, she made the news because of her teeth.

After losing three teeth in four weeks, she called the Creighton University School of Dentistry clinic. When Scott DiLorenzo, D.D.S., assistant professor of prosthodontics, saw an entire row of missing or blackened teeth, he called in Dennis Nilsson, D.D.S., associate professor of prosthodontics. (Prosthodontics deals with the restoration of missing teeth and other complex treatments.) Nilsson asked Evans if she lived in an old house and if she had been having headaches. After she said yes to both questions, he suggested she have the carbon-monoxide level in the house checked.

Indeed, her house had dangerous levels of carbon monoxide when the furnace was on. And Evans' chronic exposure to that poisoning caused headaches, abscessed teeth and multiple root canal fillings. Still, the levels were not high enough to cause death.

Certainly, this is an interesting story, but what may be most curious — for the layperson at least — was Nilsson's on-target identification of the problem. “This patient had no history of trauma and/or decay,” he said, by way of explanation, “so we began searching for a different diagnosis, a systemic cause, by asking questions.”

Furthermore, Evans’ condition reminded Nilsson of a case described to him when he was a resident at an Air Force facility years ago. So Nilsson the dentist became Nilsson the sleuth and, luckily for Evans, he was able to identify the culprit.

While a carbon monoxide diagnosis is not all in a day’s work for Nilsson, that sleuthing part is. That's because teeth — along with eyes and skin — serve as windows to the body. More often than we realize, health professionals can look at our teeth, eyes and skin, and tell much about our body’s overall, or systemic, health.

About Our Teeth

“Unusual conditions in and around the mouth tell a lot about what’s going on elsewhere in the body,” Nilsson said. “For example, when the tongue’s surface lacks normal papillae or taste buds, that condition can indicate nutritional problems or anemia. Xerostomia (zero-stoh-me-a) or dry mouth can lead to decay around the gum line and may be caused by medications prescribed for other problems. Sjogren’s (show-grin) syndrome is a condition in which a patient’s own immune system targets mucous-producing glands, causing dry mouth, eyes and vagina.”

While there is no known cure for Sjogren’s syndrome, over-the-counter and prescription medications can treat symptoms. Early diagnosis and treatment are important for preventing complications, according to the New York-based Sjogren’s Syndrome Foundation.

Often, the dentist’s diagnosis comes as a surprise to the patient. “Certainly, that happens with diabetes,” Nilsson said. “There’s a reciprocal cause-effect relationship between diabetes and periodontal disease, with one leading to the other or making the other worse. Sometimes, a patient comes to us because of periodontal disease,” he continued. “If the patient’s hygiene is reasonably good, we ask questions and may move on to find that the patient’s condition is because of diabetes.”

For the dentist, this connection is not surprising. Said Nilsson, “Certain biochemical events connect diabetes with periodontal disease. That’s something we have intuitively known for some time, but now, it’s scientific fact.”

Still, he adds, the presence of diabetes comes as a surprise to the patients, who are referred to their physician for tests to confirm the diagnosis. In fact, if any systemic disease is suspected, a referral is made.

Another diagnosis that dentists can make may surprise patients: Bad teeth
Panoramic dental X-rays, like the one above, can detect blocked carotid arteries. The blockage is circled in red.

Because people often see their dentist on a more regular basis than they see their doctor, the dentist may be the first one to identify a problem. In fact, we encourage dentists to take patients’ blood pressure because it provides a baseline for the whole body. Frequently, people are unaware that they have high blood pressure.

Cheryton dentist Dennis Nilsson, D.D.S.

Can be caused by methamphetamine use. Said Nilsson, “Unfortunately, we see a lot of abusers with horrible dental problems — patients in their late teens or early 20s with every tooth destroyed. You would not normally expect that to happen today with fluoride and good water supplies, and I don’t think the patient makes the correlation between use of meth and tooth problems.”

Methamphetamine use destroys tooth enamel. Meth users also may crave sweets, lack proper hygiene and fail to eat nutritiously — all of which can lead to poor dental health. “We have also noticed (among meth users) a lowered pain threshold with over-reaction to minimal stimuli that most others tolerate without objection,” Nilsson said.

Some of these patients state that they are recovering drug users and are receiving treatment; some simply deny using illegal drugs. If a Creighton dentist suspects a patient is abusing drugs, the dentist will provide that patient with a list of local drug treatment organizations.

Dentists also pick up on eating disorders such as bulimia and anorexia nervosa because vomiting and regurgitation soften and destroy the enamel on the tongue side of the teeth. “Often,” said Nilsson, “the patients don’t know they have a problem with their teeth or with an eating disorder until their teeth begin being overly sensitive to cold beverages. We usually get them into a psychological and nutritional support group.”

Dentists can connect dental problems with rheumatoid arthritis, autoimmune diseases and even the potential for stroke. Tarnjit (Bob) Saini, D.D.S., and Thomas Meng, D.D.S., of Creighton’s School of Dentistry discovered that a patient was at high risk for stroke after a panoramic X-ray during a routine check-up showed severely blocked carotid arteries. The patient subsequently underwent an emergency procedure to clear the arteries.

Said Nilsson, “Oral disease and systemic disease are not necessarily distinct entities. Dentists are trained to recognize both, and as experts on the former, are critical members of the health care team.”

The Skin

As with dentists, dermatologists diagnose medical conditions that are seemingly unrelated to visual problems such as a skin rash. “An experienced dermatologist can see from a skin condition that something is going on internally,” said Christopher Huerter, M.D., head of the division of dermatology at Creighton’s School of Medicine. “We might look at the skin condition and, without doing anything else, say, ‘Let’s check out this patient’s kidney function,’ or, ‘Let’s get a chest X-ray to rule out certain underlying causes.’”

“In other words,” he continued, “a skin exam can provide clues as to a more serious, underlying disorder — a systemic disease. You will have to go somewhere else to cure or solve the skin problem.”

One of the most common problems seen by dermatologists is pruritus or itching. The itching can be caused by...
skin disorders such as psoriasis, xerosis, atopic eczema, a drug reaction, scabies or fungal infections. But the itching can also signal a serious — and sometimes fatal — condition such as iron deficiency anemia, viral hepatitis, multiple sclerosis, Hodgkin’s disease, lymphoma, AIDS or kidney failure.

“I have patients come in with scratch marks all over themselves,” Huerter said. “They’ll say, ‘I’m crawling out of my skin. I am itching so much.’ In many of these patients — particularly the elderly — a diminished kidney function may be the cause. Then, a simple blood test helps sort things out. If necessary, a referral is made to a kidney specialist.”

Other times, diagnosis isn’t that easy, and that’s when the dermatologist turns sleuth. “I’ll see a young person who has always been healthy, but he comes in itching like crazy. He’ll say, ‘I’m itching to the bones. I’ve got bruises on my skin from scratching so hard. And I haven’t slept for a week,’” Huerter said. “So you ask questions to find out what else is going on. Eventually, you learn that the patient is losing weight and waking up in the middle of the night soaking wet.

This can be a manifestation of Hodgkin’s lymphoma, so you get a chest X-ray and examine the lymph nodes. If there is cancer present, you send the patient to the oncologist.”

That scenario has happened a handful of times in Huerter’s career, and he calls it “dramatic.”

Sleuthing can lead the dermatologist in all sorts of directions. Consider Huerter’s story about telogen effluvium, a condition that results in unusual hair loss. (Dermatologists treat skin, hair and nail problems.)

A bit of background here: Basically, 90 percent of the hair on a person’s head is in a growing phase and 10 percent is falling out. But when some people experience stress — perhaps from surgery, a broken bone, childbirth, a death, divorce or severe illness — the body reacts. One reaction may be that the percent of hair falling out goes up to 20 or 30 percent. This loss of hair begins about 90 days after the stressful event occurred and can persist for several months. That can mean hair is coming out in clumps a full three months after the event.

“So you have this woman in your office asking, ‘What’s going on?’ as she gives you a handful of hair,” Huerter said. “I ask what happened in her life three months ago and she says, ‘I was in the hospital with pneumonia,’ or, ‘I was in a car wreck,’ or, ‘My mother died.’ In most instances, you can back up and tell her what the cause is and that she will slowly get better.”

Like the dentist, the dermatologist also can identify signs of diabetes. Huerter tells of a young girl who came to him with a skin lesion called necrobiosis lipoidica diabeticorum. “Most physicians would look at it and say, ‘I don’t know what that is. You better see a dermatologist,’” Huerter says. “When I learned there was a history of diabetes in her family, I knew right away that’s what she had.”

Her lesions leave permanent marks on the skin, which, Huerter admitted, was disappointing for his young patient. “Still,” he said, “that disappointment was offset by early detection of diabetes, and early detection may make a difference in her life expectancy and quality of life.”

The underlying causes of some skin problems can run the gamut. Consider acanthosis nigricans (ak-an-thosis nigri-kanz), which causes the skin under the arms and/or around the neck to take on a velvety texture and brown discoloration. This is associated with conditions ranging from stomach cancer to obesity. “This disease is not as common as many we see,” said Huerter, “so you have to take a patient history. In the end, the cause may be as simple as obesity in children. Then, your message is, ‘Mom, Junior needs to lose about 80 pounds, because the underlying cause of his rash is obesity, and the rash won’t go away until we get rid of the cause.’”

The Eyes

“Every time I look at a patient’s eyes, I can tell what that person has done in the past,” said Creighton ophthalmologist Sade Kosoko, M.D.

For some patients, that may be a scary thought. Indeed, Kosoko — Creighton’s associate vice president for Multicultural and Community Affairs and
associate professor of ophthalmology — can tell if someone has had syphilis or gonorrhea or has done drugs simply by looking into their eyes. But those eyes can also alert an ophthalmologist to the possibility of such systemic diseases as heart trouble, diabetes, anemia, osteoporosis, cancer or hypertension. Those indicators come from any number of sources — the blood vessels around the retina, the cornea or even discharge within the eye.

“Also,” Kosoko added, “the eye is connected to the brain via the optic nerve, so in a way, ophthalmologists are brain surgeons because the eye is an ‘out-pouching’ of the brain.”

Perhaps the most common systemic disease seen is hypertension or high blood pressure, which is present in approximately 50 million Americans over age 18. Of those, about 70 percent have mild hypertension, but even they warrant therapy. “We know that high blood pressure has an effect on the eye,” Kosoko said. “We can see it in the blood vessels around the retina. I’ll ask the patient, ‘Do you have history of high blood pressure?’ If the patient says no, I reply, ‘Well, someone needs to check your blood pressure because I see signs of hypertension in the eye.’”

While it is true that the eyes tell an ophthalmologist much about what is going on inside the body, diagnosis isn’t as simple as one-two-three. Like Nilsson and Huerter, Kosoko must become a sleuth. This is especially true for those patients who come to the clinic for a regular eye exam.

“If we think we see something that might indicate a medical problem, we depend upon the process of asking questions,” Kosoko said. “We may find that the patient has been taking medications such as birth control pills or arthritis medication over a long period of time. In such cases, the medication is absorbed by the blood vessels and is carried to different parts of the body, including the eye, where changes occur. “We also can tell when a patient’s medicine is causing negative side effects, or notice when a physician may have prescribed certain medication without knowing about that patient’s additional medications.”

Other times, the ophthalmologist’s questions may lead to the discovery of a systemic health problem such as diabetes. “We see patients who may have had symptoms of diabetes, for example, but they weren’t paying attention to those symptoms,” Kosoko said. “So a diagnosis of diabetes is surprising to them.”

It’s different when patients are referred for ophthalmology counseling by a primary care physician. “Then, you might be dealing with a patient who has had diabetes for a long time,” Kosoko said. “Now this person comes in with blurry vision and we must determine if the vision is beginning to be affected by the diabetes or if it is caused by something else.”

Kosoko constantly advises patients with chronic medical problems such as high blood pressure and diabetes to make sure they get eye exams at least once a year. The same is true for those who are taking steroids because of a chronic condition. “They should have their eyes checked every three to six months because steroids can induce glaucoma and cataracts as well as other problems in the body,” Kosoko said.

“My advice is to make sure you are looking out of both eyes every day. We assume we are doing that, and we assume that both eyes are functioning well. But we need to be sure that each eye is contributing its share. So every day, you should close one eye and then the other to make sure you are seeing well out of both eyes.”

Creighton ophthalmologist Sade Kosoko, M.D.
Editor’s note: This is the last in a yearlong series on health care in the United States.

Whatever Happened to Managed Care?

By Eugene Rich, M.D.
Tenet Professor and Chair of the Department of Medicine

When managed care burst onto the United States health care scene in the early 1990s, it was heralded as a way to control our nation’s spiraling health care costs while providing consumers more choice and more efficient care through increased competition.

Indeed, in the early to mid-’90s, as Health Maintenance Organizations, or HMOs, sprung up across America, health insurance premiums plummeted and the nation’s escalating health care costs were seemingly halted.

But by the end of the decade, the promise of managed care had given way to a chorus of consumer and physician complaints regarding limits and restrictions on care and patient choice. When the Senate passed its version of a Patients’ Bill of Rights this past summer, Sen. Edward Kennedy called the legislation, “a giant step forward in giving power to the powerless, the victims of exploitation by HMOs.”

So what happened to managed care?

Managed care is born

In the 1960s, when overall U.S. medical expenditures were relatively low (less than 7 percent of the Gross Domestic Product, or GDP), lawmakers began to tackle the problem of providing affordable medical care for the elderly, the disabled and impoverished children. Through this effort, the federally sponsored health insurance programs, Medicare and Medicaid, were born.

Over the next 20 years, Medicare and Medicaid eased the financial barriers for the elderly and poor. But the United States’ health care bill grew rapidly, outpacing inflation. By 1990, health care expenditures accounted for more than 12 percent of our GDP.

In response, businesses explored ways of restructuring their employee health insurance programs and lawmakers sought reforms of state and national public health insurance.

Employees, stunned by the rising cost of their own insurance premiums, seemed willing to accept less choice over their physicians or hospitals in order to save money. Entrepreneurs saw new opportunities for profit by developing new types of health insurance and new ways of managing the delivery of care. All of these factors contributed to an emerging market for managed care.

Managed care’s alphabet soup: HMOs, IPAs, PPOs

The first, and perhaps best known, managed care organization was the HMO. The term HMO was coined during the Nixon administration with the passage of federal legislation enabling the establishment of prepaid systems of medical care. Policymakers had in mind the example of prepaid medical group practices that had existed in a few U.S. cities since World War II. These groups of physicians were reimbursed through fixed periodic payments from a prepaid pool of funds.
payments made on behalf of each person or family enrolled; these physician organizations were committed to providing all necessary health care services to their prepaid patients. Thus these prepaid group practices were reimbursed on the basis of per member (or capitation) payments. Obviously, health plan members had to use the prepaid group of physicians in order for care to be covered.

These early prepaid medical groups were organized in a fundamentally different way than most other physician practices at the time. Typical physician practices were supported by reimbursements directly from patients (or from their indemnity insurance coverage) under the age-old tradition of fee-for-service. Early research suggested, however, that prepaid medical groups could provide high-quality care at reduced cost. It appeared the savings resulted from additional investments in preventive care and in efforts to avert serious illnesses and costly hospitalizations — hence the name health maintenance organization.

Employers, insurers and government officials, however, had difficulty replicating these early HMOs on a large scale. Therefore, regulations allowed HMO-type health insurance to be established through arrangements that were very different from the original prepaid medical group practices. One strategy was Independent Practice Associations (IPAs), which were insurance networks of traditional medical groups that received HMO-type capitation incentives to care for IPA members. Preferred Provider Organizations (PPOs) were another. PPOs attempted to save costs for employers (and plan members) by negotiating preferred rates from physicians and hospitals. Both PPOs and IPAs required physicians and hospitals to participate in insurance company-run utilization management programs, which were developed to hold down costs.

These programs included many of the burdensome managed care features so disliked by physicians and consumers. Patients had to get approval from a designated physician (or gatekeeper) in order to have insurance coverage for ER visits, specialized physician services, expensive testing or hospitalizations. Physicians had to obtain approval from insurance companies before performing expensive tests and procedures. Some health plans monitored and had to approve hospital admissions and continued hospital stays. Others required second opinions prior to elective surgery.

From the late ‘80s to mid-‘90s, local health insurance markets consolidated, and only a few dominant HMOs survived. Physician-Hospital Organizations (PHOs) developed, teaming physician practices with hospitals. Alliances formed between medical groups and health insurance companies. Health care financing shifted from traditional fee-for-service to new HMO-style capitation payments. By the early 1990s, many U.S. health care experts confidently predicted that the health care market would mature to a situation called managed competition. Each city, it was believed, would have a few dominant HMOs, which would contract with medical groups and hospitals for delivery of care. Each system would price its services based on an annual

### Health Insurance Premium Increases Compared With Other Indicators, 1988-2001

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cost per member, and employers and health plan members would make choices based on cost and overall quality of care.

Managed care backlash

By 1998, however, the predicted evolution of health care markets to managed competition was slowing, and a very different environment was taking hold.

In the mid-’90s, a growing U.S. economy and low unemployment forced employers to offer attractive health care benefits to recruit and retain workers. That was coupled with several years of slow health insurance premium growth, reducing employer demand for the strictest forms of managed care. Health plan and hospital entrepreneurs found that creating the organizational infrastructure to help physicians succeed in capitated medical care was much more difficult than expected. The result was severe financial hardship for many capitated provider networks and very public financial collapse for some large, highly visible health care systems.

Even more distressing to patients, however, were increasing concerns regarding the quality of health care delivered by these rapidly growing HMOs. A 1998 Kaiser-Harvard-Princeton survey showed that 60 percent of respondents from highly managed care health plans were worried that their plan was more concerned about saving money; only 30 percent trusted their health insurance plan to “do the right thing for their care.” A New York Times survey the same year showed that 50 percent of respondents believed managed care harmed health care quality.

Many physicians were concerned that reimbursements based on capitation were just “paying doctors to do less.” Not surprisingly, community-tracking surveys conducted by the Center for Studying Health System Change (CSHSC) showed that members of tightly managed care organizations had significantly less trust in their physicians. Physicians and consumers joined in pressing for a national Patients’ Bill of Rights to protect citizens from what were perceived as dangerously powerful managed care corporations. The legislation has been delayed by the war on terrorism.

In the absence of convincing information on the quality of care, consumers wanted greater choice of providers and greater control over the care process.

Managed care changes tracks

As a result, the late 1990s saw a rapid increase in open access types of managed care organizations, which allow patients greater choice of providers and greater ability to obtain care without prior authorization. New variations of PPOs and HMOs (called Point of Service plans) have emerged, wherein patients can access a wide network of hospitals and physicians, albeit at some increased cost. Insurance companies have also been revamping traditional cost-control efforts, repositioning themselves as “kinder and gentler” health plans. Gone are the gatekeepers and the myriad approvals for referrals, medical tests and procedures. Capitation is being phased out in many communities, and physicians are often negotiating higher fee-for-service payments. Finally, health plans have been discontinuing marginally profitable product lines like Medicare HMOs and managed Medicaid.

These strategies result in less insurance company regulation of physician practice, elimination of HMO-type capitation payments and increased choice for consumers. Not surprisingly, the results include higher insurance premiums, fewer affordable options for health insurance and the disappearance of many managed Medicare and Medicaid plans.

Sophisticated health insurance companies are providing services like case management and care coordination, which have been shown to improve the cost and quality of health care in a number of settings. Case management involves the identification of patients at risk for costly illnesses (such as diabetes and heart failure) or complicated disabilities (such as trauma). These programs use a clinically skilled case management team to assist the patient and the patient’s regular physician in accessing special services, adhering to complicated medication regimens and monitoring the status of often-dynamic illnesses. Some managed care plans have developed robust patient information systems, which include 24-hour telephone advice lines and regularly scheduled outreach telephone calls. Plans are experimenting with e-mail, telephonic monitoring devices and sophisticated uses of the Internet to assist patients in coordinating care.

What comes after managed care?

New problems on the horizon, however, threaten to burden employers, consumers and taxpayers with additional health care costs. Open-access plans allow consumer choice by adding new out-of-pocket costs, such as co-pays and co-insurance. The recent
dramatic rise in pharmaceutical costs is another new and important factor.

In the 1970s, the cost of prescription drugs grew much more slowly than overall U.S. health care expenditures. By the mid-1990s, that had reversed. Analysts expect medication costs to continue to rise for at least the next decade, with prescription drug costs projected to increase 10 percent annually.

Health plans have tried to control their expenses for prescription drugs by changes in members’ benefits. Those on Medicare are particularly affected. While Medicare recipients can buy supplementary drug coverage, rising costs have so complicated this form of insurance that a large majority of recipients currently have no prescription drug coverage. Previous research has shown that such underinsured individuals often defer needed services, such as buying medications to control chronic diseases. Approximately 45 million Americans have no form of health insurance; when combined with the estimated 40 million underinsured and the 38 million in Medicare, almost half of Americans may be struggling with rising, and, if neglected, potentially unhealthy, out-of-pocket expenses for medical care.

In addition, over the next 20 years, the Baby Boom generation will transition from employment-based health insurance to Medicare. Some projections suggest by the year 2015 Medicare payments for health care services could exceed revenue by almost 30 percent.

Faced with these cost pressures, employers may further reduce their management of employee health benefits by shifting toward a “defined contribution” rather than the current “defined benefit” type of health insurance. In the defined contribution model, the employer simply specifies the dollar value of the employee’s health insurance benefit and facilitates employees securing health insurance from an array of options, each offering different benefits and costs to the employee. Both employee choice and financial liability are greater while employer costs are predictably contained. Many members of a 1999 bipartisan congressional committee recommended similar changes for Medicare.

These trends are worrisome to many public health professionals. Research from the 1970s demonstrates convincingly that, for lower income workers, even modest co-payments for chronic disease management and preventive services reduce patient receipt of life-prolonging care. This concern is compounded by numerous anecdotes from physicians’ offices about patients seeking expensive, highly advertised lifestyle medications while skimping on their purchase of needed drugs to control diabetes or hypertension. Nonetheless, these trends may be consistent with the consumerization of health care that has been predicted by health policy futurists. These pundits see the next generation of health care consumers as highly educated, sophisticated and computer literate, and anticipate a shift of the health care system to meeting these consumers’ demands for more information and more personal choice.

Other health policy experts, however, are deeply concerned that life-prolonging health care services represent a public good that should be equally available to all citizens. Perhaps important health care decisions do not lend themselves to marketplace models of consumer choice as easily as do refrigerators or automobiles. These health policy experts are concerned that patients may be reluctantly forced into the role of empowered consumers as health care financing shifts from an insurance model to an out-of-pocket model. If this analysis is correct, then the current trend toward consumerization of health care will likely be followed by public demand for sweeping health system reform. For
the present, though, neither U.S. voters nor politicians appear ready to promote any of the various systems for universal access to health care. The U.S. managed care revolution has provided many powerful and helpful new ideas for how to manage our increasingly complex health care system.

Hospitals and physician offices have reorganized to provide enhanced services at lower cost. Chronic disease management programs and care coordination systems have proven important enhancements to traditional episodic medical care. Health insurance companies are working with physicians and patients to investigate how information systems and the Internet can improve health outcomes. These are all important advances that might not have developed as quickly under the old methods of fee-for-service and indemnity insurance. Americans have built the world’s most extensive, effective and

A Patient’s View: Medical Care in the Past, Present and Future

Fictional patient John Smith, 50, is experiencing chest pains. How would Mr. Smith be treated — and what would he pay — under traditional fee-for-service, managed care and some future system we’ll call empowered, connected health care consumer? Below are possible scenarios.

Traditional fee-for-service (1970s)

Mr. Smith arrives at the emergency room, where he is found to have high blood pressure but no evidence of a heart attack. Mr. Smith visits his internal medicine physician, Dr. Jones, who prescribes a high blood pressure medication and arranges for radiographic tests, which are performed at Dr. Jones’ hospital. Dr. Jones diagnoses the chest pains as symptomatic of gallstones and refers Mr. Smith to a general surgeon, Dr. Adams, who performs the gallstone surgery at her usual hospital.

Note that Mr. Smith went to the emergency room and internal medicine physician of his choice. Dr. Jones recommended the surgeon, Dr. Adams. Dr. Jones and Dr. Adams obtain radiographic studies and arrange surgery at their hospitals of choice. The hospital bills (for charges for the emergency room, radiographic studies and surgery) and the bills for physician fees (for Dr. Jones and Dr. Adams) are sent to the patient’s home. Mr. Smith either pays these bills directly and requests reimbursement from his indemnity-style health insurance company, or he submits the bills to the insurance company, which reimburses the physicians and hospitals based on customary fee schedules.

Cost: The Smiths pay 20 percent; their health insurance pays 80 percent.

Managed care to the max (1990s)

Mr. Smith arrives at the emergency room and, while he is being evaluated, his wife learns that the hospital does not participate with their HMO and that their insurance may not cover the cost of the visit. (In the coming weeks, the Smiths appeal the insurance decision and, ultimately, the ER visit is covered.)

Mr. Smith later visits his primary care physician, Dr. Jones, who tries to schedule the radiographic studies at his usual hospital. But Mr. Smith’s HMO won’t cover tests there, so he makes special arrangements at a radiology center across town. Meanwhile, Mr. Smith learns that the medication Dr. Jones prescribed is not on his HMO’s preferred drug list. Dr. Jones calls the pharmacist and eventually the prescription is filled.

Dr. Jones tries to refer Mr. Smith to the general surgeon, Dr. Adams. But Dr. Adams is not on the HMO’s list of participating physicians, so Dr. Jones refers Mr. Smith to a physician he is unfamiliar with but who is on the list, Dr. Baker. Dr. Baker calls the HMO to approve the surgery, but the HMO asks for more information. A week later, the surgery is finally scheduled and performed.

Cost: The Smiths pay 10 percent; their HMO, 90 percent.

The empowered, connected health care consumer (2010)

When Mr. Smith gets chest pains, he consults his Managed Care Organization’s (MCO) membership card and calls the card’s emergency 800 number. A nurse asks Mr. Smith some questions, recommends a visit to the emergency room and provides costs on the different hospitals in town. After the ER visit, the MCO’s care coordinator e-mails Mr. Smith, inquiring about his health and his care. She tells Mr. Smith about the MCO’s website, which includes the names of several internal medicine physicians, along with their average costs and patient satisfaction ratings. Mr. Smith selects Dr. Jones, whom he has seen before.

After recommending antihypertensive drug therapy and radiographic testing, Dr. Jones directs Mr. Smith to a patient education computer, where he selects a prescription that fits his budget from a list of recommended medications. Mr. Smith also reviews the cost and quality of the radiographic centers and makes an appointment online — selecting a more expensive center convenient to his work.

Dr. Jones e-mails Mr. Smith with the test results and recommends a visit to a general surgeon. Mr. Smith goes online and reviews the list of general surgeons affiliated with his MCO. Dr. Jones recommends Dr. Adams, a more expensive, but better rated, surgeon on the MCO’s list. Mr. Smith schedules the appointment online.

The MCO’s care coordinator e-mails Mr. Smith before the surgery — which Dr. Adams schedules at her usual hospital — and suggests checking the MCO website for an online education program to prepare for the operation.

Cost: The Smiths pay 40 percent; their MCO, 60 percent.
technically advanced system of medical care. Our continuing challenge is determining the best way to pay for it.

About the author: Dr. Rich is professor and chair of the Department of Medicine at Creighton University and holder of the Tenet Healthcare Endowed Chair. He also directs Creighton’s Center for Practice Improvement and Outcomes Research. A widely published author of studies of medical care, Rich was part of a team of scholars recently honored with the “Article of the Year” award from the Academy for Health Services Research and Health Policy. The article — titled “The Effects of Medical Group Practice and Physician Payment Methods on Costs of Care,” published in the August 2000 issue of the journal Health Services Research — describes the relationships between the structure of physician practices, payment methods to physicians and costs of patient care.
Creighton University Faculty and Staff Go the Extra Mile

When Gerard Pfannenstiel, assistant director of University Relations Information Systems, opens his monthly pay stub, he finds listed among various tax, health insurance and parking deductions a record of his contribution back to his employer. A longtime supporter of the University, Pfannenstiel believes that working at the University involves more than showing up at work in the morning. It involves actively taking part in a dynamic Jesuit community.

“Creighton University has given me a great opportunity to develop my talents,” Pfannenstiel said. “I would like to help ensure that other Creighton community members have the same chance to benefit from all that the University has to offer.”

Through his generosity, Pfannenstiel and many others are making a difference in the lives of thousands.

“Creighton provides a working environment not easily found elsewhere. Supporting the institution is an easy decision for me since I have experienced firsthand the extraordinary care extended between colleagues. I want to perpetuate the mission beyond my individual daily efforts to touch the lives of students, community members and employees,” Pfannenstiel said.

Every year, Creighton employees like Pfannenstiel go above and beyond the call of the morning alarm clock, making an impact throughout the University. Contributing tens of thousands of dollars each year to the Annual Fund, they ensure that Creighton continues to expand its programs and services for Creighton students and the greater community.

New Endowment Honors Dr. Urban

The School of Dentistry is pleased to announce the establishment of a new endowment to create the Dr. T.J. Urban Memorial Lecture Series.

Theodore J. Urban, Ph.D. (1926-1990), joined Creighton in 1954 and was a faculty member, chair of oral biology and associate dean in the School of Dentistry. He received the University’s Distinguished Service Award in 1984, and was honored four times as Outstanding Teacher of the Year.

Urban was a tireless advocate and mentor to his students. He never failed to offer a guiding hand for the personal welfare and professional development of all his students.

Through this newly established endowment, his memory will be permanently preserved through an annual lecture, part of the continuing education program at the School.

The Dr. T.J. Urban Memorial Lecture Series was founded by the generous support of one of Urban’s former students. Additional contributions are welcome.

The first lecture was held this fall on Nov. 9. John Kanca III, D.M.D., presented a lecture on “Adhesive Dentistry for the New Millennium.”
Zarlengo Gift Celebrates Family Commitment to Catholic Education

Roland Zarlengo, MD'44, of Denver recalls his parents’ mantra, “It is better to leave your children with an education than with money.” His father, an Italian immigrant who did not attend school beyond the fifth grade, and his mother, whose education stopped with high school, fostered in him a profound respect for the opportunity to attend college.

Large families and Catholic education were integral to Zarlengo’s childhood. With eight brothers and sisters of his own and an aunt and uncle who were also raising nine kids just two blocks away, family was at the core of their lives. As the next generation of Zarlengos was born, reunions between the families grew to a crowd of 125.

A 1969 Rocky Mountain News profile of the families reported that, starting in 1917, there was at least one Zarlengo in a Denver-area Catholic high school or college every year for a span of 50 years.

Zarlengo will celebrate his family’s lifelong commitment to Catholic education by funding a gift annuity to Creighton in memory of his late wife, Cecilia “Peggy” (Kaminski) Zarlengo, SCN’43. The gift annuity will ultimately benefit the Schools of Nursing and Medicine.

Edeth Kitchens, Ph.D., dean of the School of Nursing, said because of today’s nursing shortage, scholarships are very important recruitment tools.

“Students who may not have the funds to consider going into nursing may do so when scholarships are available,” Kitchens said.

Roland and Peggy had six children, two of whom, David, PharmD’76, and Suzanne, BA’71, attended Creighton.

He said his parents’ example encouraged him to provide Catholic education for his children.

“It was just understood that religion was one of the main facets of family life,” he said.

By setting up a charitable gift annuity, Zarlengo will receive an income for life, realize income tax benefits and will direct the proceeds from his gifts to his areas of interest. If you would like more information about gift annuities or charitable giving to Creighton University, please contact Steve Scholer or Robert Skrydlak in the Office of Estate and Trust Services at (402) 280-2885 or (800) 334-8794.

“Creighton is where I met my wife,” Zarlengo said. “I figure, in that alone, they gave me more than I gave them.”

Year-end Charitable Gift Planning Guidelines

By Steve Scholer, JD’79,
Director of Estate & Trust Services

The events of Sept. 11, 2001, defied description, but so too has the response of the American people. As a community united, Americans freely gave of themselves — a response that was not only of much needed assistance but also of tremendous symbolic significance.

In my role at Creighton, I am reminded on a daily basis of the generosity and goodness of people. Alumni, friends, parents, faculty and staff, corporations and foundations continually and freely give of their time, talent and treasure to the University. Their gifts help to support Creighton’s mission, which seeks to instill in its graduates a deep desire to use their education and Creighton experiences in service to others. Please be assured that your generous gifts are deeply appreciated and well spent helping to shape the future leaders of our country and the world.

Here are some general guidelines to assist you with your year-end charitable gift planning:

- Gifts made by check and credit card continue to be the most popular way to support Creighton. Please note that only gifts completed by Dec. 31 can be used to reduce your tax bill in April of 2002. Your gift is generally considered complete upon the date of mailing.

- Gifts of stocks and mutual funds to Creighton have grown dramatically over the years. For gifts of appreciated stock owned more than one year, you are entitled to deduct the fair market value of the stock without having to report the capital gains you would have realized had you sold the investment. If stock you own has decreased in value, you should consider selling the stock and giving the net proceeds as your gift. Then, you may be able to claim a loss on the stock and also claim a charitable contribution deduction from the same transaction. Please call our office at (402) 280-2885 or (800) 334-8794 for the necessary forms and guidance on how to transfer stock and mutual funds to the University.

- If you are interested in converting cash, securities or land into a life income arrangement with Creighton, please call or write for a personalized proposal. Charitable remainder trusts and gift annuities can be ideal for individuals who want to explore ways to increase their annual income, realize immediate income tax benefits and also make a deferred gift to the University.

In early February, the University will send you a summary receipt listing the total amount of your support for the year and if you received “any goods or services” in exchange for your gifts. Generally speaking, the IRS requires you to have this receipt as proof of your tax deductible contribution.

On behalf of the students, faculty and staff of Creighton University, thank you for your continued and steadfast support. Your gifts are making a real difference.
When the Rev. Avery Dulles, S.J., was created a cardinal by Pope John Paul II at a consistory in Rome last February, some people may have been surprised to learn that at one time Dulles had neither belief in God nor his own soul.

Dulles, 82, a theology professor at Fordham University in New York, is widely regarded as the dean of American Roman Catholic theologians. In 1946, Dulles wrote a little book about his conversion, titled *A Testimonial to Grace*. Thanks to the kindness of the publisher (Sheed and Ward), I have permission to share with you this fascinating story.

In 1936, Dulles entered Harvard University. One February afternoon, he was in the Widener Library reading a chapter from St. Augustine’s *City of God*.

“On an impulse,” Dulles wrote, “I closed the book. I was prompted to go out into the open air. It was a bleak rainy day, rather warm for this time of the year. The slush of melting snow formed a deep mud along the banks of the River Charles which I followed down toward Boston. I enjoyed the cool rain on my face and the melancholy of the scene.

“As I wandered aimlessly, something impelled me to look in a spirit of contemplation at a young tree. In its frail branches were young buds eagerly awaiting the spring which was at hand.

“While my eyes rested on them, the thought came to me suddenly with all the strength and novelty of a revelation, that these little buds followed a rule, a law of which I as yet knew nothing.

“How could it be,” Dulles asked himself, “that this delicate tree sprang up, grew erect, and knew when to bring forth leaves and blossoms?”

By a process of reasoning, Dulles realized the truth expressed by the poet Joyce Kilmer, “Only God can make a tree.”

Through the thoughtful contemplation of a tree, Dulles came to admit that there is a God who rules the world. He became a Catholic and then a Jesuit priest and, most recently, the first U.S. theologian and first American Jesuit to be named to the College of Cardinals.

If you are as observant as Dulles and Kilmer, trees reveal God’s power and wonder. Tree branches in the winter may appear as dead as broomsticks. But look at them again in spring and behold the miracle! The “sticks of wood” are pushing delicate green leaves into the sunlight or, in some instances, are blossoming with juicy, fuzzy-chinned peaches, delicious apples, plump plums, golden oranges and appetizing apricots.

The broomstick in your closet may speak of that day when it, too, was a magic wand in the hand of God and wore a handsome batch of leaves, clothed in snug-fitting bark, and whispered its secrets to the gentle zephyrs.

In a delightful poem by the Rev. James J. Daly, titled *Spring Magic*, a winter chorus of barren trees intones, “You think we’re dead: trust not your eyes — life quivers in our veins.” The poem ends with the author returning to the woods in the spring:

“... Oh, the surprise
The wizard trees had sprung!

“Their outstretched arms were laden now
With green new leaves of tender hue.
And whence they came, or why, or how,
I cannot tell, can you?

“'What magic, say, is it that weaves
This miracle?' I asked each tree,
It only shook its million leaves
And chuckled gleefully.”

Indeed, there is more magic in a tree branch than we can shake a stick at. When the golden rays of the sun shake hands with the pigment (chlorophyll) in a leaf, magic is in the making. The green chlorophyll takes energy from sunlight, the energy it needs to change water and carbon dioxide into food. This process is known as photosynthesis or “building with sunlight.”

Every time you drink a glass of orange juice, you are bending your elbow in a toast to the trees. And when you peel an orange, notice how cleverly the contents are divided into sections that you can pry apart and eat one by one. How did the tree ever figure out such a homework assignment in long division and packaging?

The answer, of course, is that every phase of “Operation Orange” shows God’s guiding hand behind each tree. Every time you bite into an orange (or apple or pear) it is God, Himself, who is feeding you. Not directly, of course, but through the cooperation of our friends, the trees. No wonder Kilmer wrote: “I think that I shall never see, a poem lovely as a tree. Poems are made by fools like me, but only God can make a tree.”

About the author: Fr. Scott is a former high school physics teacher living in the Jesuit community at Creighton and the author of numerous books.
Come celebrate the 16th annual Christmas at Creighton on Thursday, Nov. 29. The celebration begins at 5 p.m. with a tree-lighting ceremony near St. John’s Church. A special dinner and Christmas concert will follow in the Skutt Student Center. The concert includes performances by Creighton’s symphony orchestra and jazz ensemble, as well as an audience sing-along. For ticket information, call the Lied ticket office at (402) 280-1448.