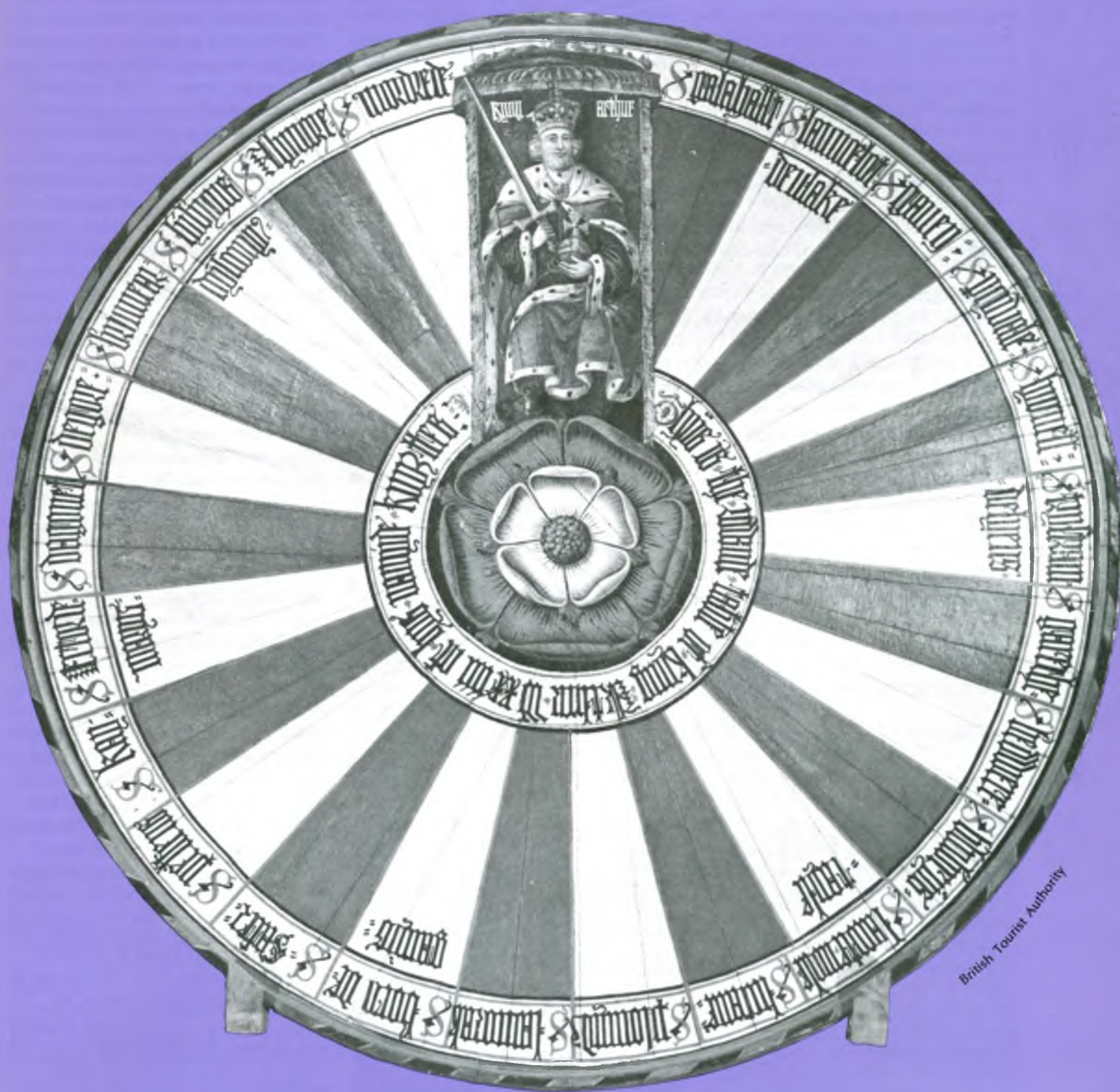


# Humanities

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British Tourist Authority

## Arthur



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One of the most often quoted lines from the 800-year-old written tradition of Arthurian literature comes not surprisingly from Tennyson in "The Passing of Arthur," the twelfth and last chapter of *The Idylls of the King*. After King Arthur has been mortally wounded, he whispers comfort to Bedevere, "The old order changeth, yielding place to new." His words carry the paradox of the Arthurian tradition: an old order rooted in ancient mythology, loved, and preserved, yet reconsidered and adapted from age to age. In a descriptive guide to the modern Arthurian novel, John Conlee of the College of William and Mary demonstrates in this issue both the persistence of Arthurian lore and its adaptability to current artistic and moral concerns. Stephen G. Nichols of the University of Pennsylvania explains in an essay describing the difference between the Arthur of romance and the Arthur of medieval *historia* how the artistic achievement of Chrétien de Troyes has contributed to the legend's power to last.

Is King Arthur more than legend? David Whitehouse reviews the documentary and scant archaeological evidence for what Geoffrey Ashe asserts as "the Arthurian Fact." Whether fact or fiction, Arthur still claims the attention of historians, novelists, archaeologists, artists, literary scholars, and readers who know him, if not through Chrétien or Geoffrey of Monmouth then through Tennyson or T. H. White.



While this issue of *Humanities* was in production, Lynne V. Cheney was sworn in as NEH chairman. A biography appears on page 36.

—Linda Blanken

## Humanities

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*Cover: The Round Table in the hall of Winchester Castle. The Tudor rose in the center and the twenty-four alternating spokes in white and green (Tudor Colors) demonstrate the Tudor claim to descent from Arthur. Eighteen feet in diameter, the oaken table is first mentioned by the chronicler Hardyng in 1450.*



# Images of Arthur

Not long ago, standing in front of a richly colored fifteenth-century tapestry, I unexpectedly found myself pondering the complex link between literature, history, and art in the legend of King Arthur.

The deep hues of dark green, scarlet, blue, and gold of the tapestry in the Historisches Museum in Basel, Switzerland, depict the nine worthies credited in the Middle Ages with having shaped the destiny of Western civilization. Resplendent in medieval court dress, in groups of three, the nine included first the "good" pagans: Hector of Troy, Alexander the Great of Macedon, and Julius Caesar, emperor of Rome; then a trio of great warriors of the Old Testament: Joshua, David, and Judas Maccabaeus; and, finally, three leaders of recent history: King Arthur, Charlemagne, and Godfrey of Bouillon (one of the founders of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem).

A portion of the left side of the Basel tapestry—the part that contained the three virtuous pagans, Joshua, and half of King David—is missing, but in the large, intact section, the remaining worthies stand out boldly against a green background of flowering vines. Framing each hero, a banderole in Middle High German sets forth his principal virtue. Arthur's stresses his might and military prowess.

In keeping with the belief of the period that Arthur had died in 542 A.D., he serves as the transitional figure between the Old Testament heroes and their "modern" Christian counterparts. He is shown facing Charlemagne and Godfrey with his back to Joshua, David, and Judas Maccabaeus. Attached to the lance in Arthur's left hand, a heraldic banner displays three gold crowns representing his kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Brittany, while his right hand points to heaven to acknowledge the reciprocal nature of the power of the three Christian rulers. Divinely sanctioned, they must, in return, uphold the faith.

Facing Arthur, Charlemagne

holds a lance with a banner showing the German imperial eagle and the fleurs de lys of France. Together, they symbolize the ideals of political hegemony of a Christian Europe, as Godfrey of Bouillon symbolizes the extension of that order back into the Holy Land from which it traced its divine authority.

The Basel tapestry of the nine worthies, or its counterparts elsewhere (such as the one at the Cloisters in New York), I realized, is not simply a beautiful work of art from another era. The five-hundred-year-old images of still familiar heroes also testify to the gulf that lies between our view of medieval culture and that of the period itself. More than any other, the figure of King Arthur summarizes this lesson of historical discontinuity. For the perfectly commonplace claim that Arthur was one of the "founding fathers" of European civilization, on a par with Julius Caesar and Charlemagne, clashes with our most commonly held view of him as the somewhat ineffectual, but benign husband of Guinevere, the mistress of Lancelot du Lac.

In the Middle Ages, both views existed, but not in the same degree of importance and not in the same literary forms. The strong Arthur of history derives from a genre called *historia*, which we may, somewhat inaccurately, translate as "history," while the other Arthur, who serves principally as a figurehead for the stories of the knights of the Round Table, belongs to the realm of romance. Because romance feels comfortable to us today, thanks to its kinship with the modern psychological novel, we have come to emphasize Arthurian romance at the expense of Arthurian *historia*. Perhaps this is so because we find it more profound and more interesting to trace the inner dimensions and emotional development of individuals, than to learn about the deeds of kings and nation-states.

But the Basel tapestry and others like it remind us that in choosing to

focus our attention on the Arthurian world of romance, we may have seriously lost touch with the way in which Arthurian *romance* existed and made its meanings. We have introduced a disjunction between *historia* and romance, rather than taking them together as part of the same continuum of literary expression. The Arthur and his world of *historia* provided a spatial and temporal framework in which the stories of individual heroes could assume a larger significance. From the standpoint of twelfth-century authors, romance was a way of focusing on one episode in a larger canvas whose existence was assumed to be familiar to the audience. The larger canvas was the *historia*; the episodic narrative, the romance.

King Arthur is rarely the central figure of romance. Instead, the genre seeks to explore the human dimension of life within the Arthurian world that Arthur's heroism made possible in the first place. It is this connection between Arthur's *historia* and individual romance that we have tended to ignore, thereby giving us a fragmented and partial literary history. As the illustrations of the nine worthies show us, however, it is the presence of Arthur's *historia*, stretching like a horizon around the individual romances, that authorizes so much of the allegorical and symbolic meaning we associate with romance. For it was through the person of Arthur that the world of romance linked directly to the classical and biblical literary tradition. And it was the role of *historia* to make those links clear.

The illustrations of Arthur as one of the nine worthies show how these links were meant to work, and how his *historia* authorized them. Behind such representations (and they were not particularly rare) lies the authority of written texts, preeminently the Bible, of course, but also of *historia* in Latin and epic in the vernacular. Charlemagne, for example, figures both in the Latin versions of the *Historia Karoli Magni*



Detail from *Le Livre des vertueux faix de plusieurs nobles chevaliers*, Walter Map, Rouen, 1488.



*et Rhotolandi* ("History of Charlemagne and Roland") as well as in such vernacular epics as the late eleventh-century *Song of Roland* which opens with the verse: "Charles the King, our great emperor." The nine worthies might be seen as incarnating a reading list of "great books," because each of these figures has an extensive medieval literary existence.

What has made the presence of Arthur in this company so difficult for moderns to comprehend is his largely fictional status. All of the worthies were subjects of *historiae* marked by fictional elaboration—Julius Caesar was never emperor of Rome, for example, nor did Charlemagne obtain rights to the Holy Land as eleventh-century Western accounts claimed. But the others at least had some degree of historical authenticity. Alone among them, Arthur may be said to be an entirely fictional creation and thus to exemplify Borges's ironic dictum, "that history should have imitated history was already sufficiently marvelous; that history should imitate literature is inconceivable."

And this is precisely what Geoffrey of Monmouth seemed to have accomplished when, in 1136, he published his Latin prose, *History of the Kings of Britain*, the first work to give a full-fledged picture of Arthur and his fabulous reign. Taking his cue from Vergil's *Aeneid*, which traced the wanderings of the Trojan hero Aeneas to Italy where his descendants would eventually found Rome as the fulfillment of a divine prophecy, Geoffrey traced the founding of Britain to a great-grandson of Aeneas named Brutus, whence the name Britain. Geoffrey's *History*, like the Basel tapestry, synthesizes classical and scriptural history as it moves towards the birth of Arthur. Geoffrey reports that Brutus's founding of "New Troy," which ultimately became London, took place "at the time the priest Eli was ruling in Judea and the Ark of the Covenant was captured by the Philistines." Brutus will thus have the same relation to Arthur as that of Alexander and Julius Caesar in the tapestry.

What makes Geoffrey's history at once so powerful as a legend and so suspect to historians is the aura of mystery and the supernatural in

which he shrouds Arthur's birth and death. He sets Arthur apart from the other kings of Britain by the agency of the magician, Merlin. Like the Sybil in Virgil's epic, Merlin presides over the past and the future by controlling memory and prophecy. It is Geoffrey who tells us that Merlin created the Stonehenge at Salisbury at the request of King Aurelius to make a fitting commemorative monument for the great men of Britain. And Geoffrey, too, has Merlin predict the coming of Arthur as part of a long series of prophecies about the future of Britain.

In Geoffrey's schema, Arthur represents the apogee of British power and prestige. Long before Charlemagne, Arthur conquered and united Europe under his leadership, even to the point of defeating the Roman forces. But if Arthur represents the height of prestige for the Britons, he also illustrates why the British can never be ruled for long by one of their own, even Arthur.

The allegory of Arthur conveyed by Geoffrey is the familiar one of a "a house divided. Arthur conquered the world; he had the most perfect knights, and was himself the epitome of political astuteness and virtue. But his own people, like the querulous Hebrews in the desert while Moses was on Mt. Sinai, could not refrain from internal strife. In Arthur's case, the treachery comes from within his own family: his wife, Queen Guinevere, and his nephew, Mordred, betray him doubly in their adultery and attempted usurpation of the throne. Arthur's last battle thus pits nephew against uncle, and initiates the final decadence of the Britons. "Arthur, himself, our renowned King, was mortally wounded and was carried off to the Isle of Avalon, so that his wounds might be attended to." The ambiguity of his ending wrapped Arthur in a shroud of mystery, opening the possibility of a return at some future time.

*The History of the Kings of Britain* repeatedly illustrates the disastrous effects of civil unrest and internal dissension on good government. It places the Arthurian *historia* squarely in the arena of politics by its clearly articulated lesson on the necessity of a strong centralized monarchy: roughly equivalent to the politics of the Norman Kings of England in the

first half of the twelfth century. It also implicitly argues, for those who could make the connection, that the Norman conquest should not be seen as a foreign invasion. It represented, rather, a return of the vigorous Arthurian line of heroes to their homeland. For according to Geoffrey, after subduing Gaul, Arthur held court in Paris rewarding his noble followers with French provinces. The only two mentioned by name are precisely Normandy and Anjou, the French provinces most closely associated with the Norman conquerors: "It was then that he gave Neustria, now called Normandy, to his Cup-Bearer Bedevere, and the province of Anjou to his Seneschal Kay." The Normans and Angevins, for those who accepted Geoffrey's account, were more directly linked with the Arthurian world than the Saxons whom they conquered. For in Geoffrey, the Saxons always play the role of traitors and villains.

With Geoffrey, the main lines of Arthur's story have been fixed: preeminent hero, strong king and maintainer of universal order in Europe, on the one hand, myth- and mystery-shrouded figure, on the other. Yet we miss certain familiar attributes of the Arthurian myth in Geoffrey: the Round Table with its ideal of service and chivalry, themes like the Grail quest, love and its attendant complications, and a strong contingent of knight-heroes, like Lancelot, Perceval, or Galahad who do not simply reflect Arthur's glory and prowess, but exemplify chivalry on their own.

These accretions to the legend come later in the twelfth century and reveal the creative tension between *historia* and romance, which might also be cast as a tension between Arthur and Merlin, or, more concretely, between conflicting interests of kings, with their concern for a strong central monarchy, and barons, whose tastes ran rather to a benign monarch reliant upon his barons and undisposed to interfere with their perquisites.

The invention of the Round Table allowed Arthurian romance to shift from the single emphasis of *historia*, where Arthur played the most significant role, to a multidimensional format where anyone of Arthur's knights might be the subject of the



narrative. The emphasis thus shifts subtly from the exploits of the leader, to those of the community, the court, over which he and his queen preside (hence the title of "courtly romance"). In this literature, politics play a less obvious role than in the history proper, because the issues raised focus on philosophical and religious questions.

Chrétien de Troyes, for example, the foremost writer of Arthurian romance in the twelfth century—to whom we owe such additions to Arthurian literature as the quest motif, the Grail, the character of Lancelot, and the love affair between Lancelot and Guinevere—devoted three of his romances to reconciling love, duty, and marriage. The period of Chrétien's romances, like those of his successors, is that of the "peace of Arthur," that rare interlude of peace and social order that Arthur achieved for Europe, according to Geoffrey. It was precisely such a peace which the Church sought to create in Europe during the twelfth century, the "peace of God."

In the social order accompanying a world free from large-scale warfare, attention can be paid to the quality of life, to larger questions of meaning. This is how Chrétien construed the Arthurian world: as a metaphor for human existence itself, an existence fraught with enigma and frightening apparitions. This world had to be confronted on two levels: physically, in the form of hostile knights or monstrous apparitions like the hideous giant which Geoffrey tells us that Arthur faced and slew on Mont Saint Michel. Or it might take a more troubling, inner form of self-doubt, awakened perhaps, by the tears of a young bride falling on her knight's chest, as Enide's tears fall on Erec's chest in Chrétien's *Erec and Enide*.

Both pit the individual against a world as impenetrable and full of wonders as the mysterious Breton forest of Brocéliande. Brocéliande is where one finds adventures, events that take the measure of the knights. The adventure is the romance equivalent of the battles fought by Arthur in the *historia*, but, unlike epic battles, the adventure, as a literary phenomenon, introduces the dimension of the unexpected, the unforeseen. It is perhaps Chrétien's most profound contribution to the romance, as Paul

Zumthor recently observed; for with the introduction of the unforeseen, with the eruption of the unexpected awaiting the knight and his reader around the next bend in the narrative, romance is free to leave *historia* behind to become literature.

But we may well ask whether indeed romance does leave *historia* behind or does it not, instead, transform it? Arthur's story was in the vernacular rather than in Latin. Geoffrey of Monmouth claimed to have been translating his history into Latin from the old British language of "a very ancient book," but we know that the choice of Latin, rather than Old French as the target language of his translation was dictated by a desire to make the *historia* authoritative. Latin was the language of power, the language of law, the language of Scripture. But the vernacular was the language of the people, including the nobility. Chrétien did not simply translate or adapt the Latin *historia* as Wace had done. Rather, he used it as a kind of deep structure, a poetic unconscious for his own romances. Instead of

shaping his stories in accordance with the *historia*, he created a new Arthurian syntax and vocabulary through which the shade of the old language may be discerned just barely. Chrétien's genius was to have used the Arthurian *historia* to acquire for Old French literature an authoritative status previously reserved for Latin.

This was an extraordinary achievement, without a doubt, and it was so successful at capturing the modern imagination that the other image of Arthur—the youthful Arthur of *historia* on the nine worthies tapestry—has all but faded from public consciousness. But it has not faded entirely, certainly not on the tapestry where we find a vigorous image of a resilient myth.

—Stephen G. Nichols

Mr. Nichols is professor of Romance languages at the University of Pennsylvania. His book, *Romanesque Signs: Early Medieval Narrative and Iconography* (Yale University Press, 1983) won the MLA James Russell Lowell Prize in 1984.



Courtesy of Stephen G. Nichols

The Nine Worthies Tapestry, fifteenth century. Detail: King Arthur and Charlemagne. Historisches Museum, Basel, Switzerland.



# Quest for *le Mot Juste*

**I** feel like an explorer who goes off into the jungle in search of beauty, and when I find it my concern is how to bring it out of the jungle with me and into another world."

Dorothy Gilbert's search for beauty is a quest for *le mot juste* in translating the twelfth-century French romance, *Erec et Enide*, into English. Gilbert has set herself the task of translating the 6,878-line poem by Chrétien de Troyes into English verse, creating the first English version to preserve the work's original literary form, octosyllabic rhymed couplets.

*Erec et Enide*, the first of five romances written by Chrétien, is the oldest extant Arthurian romance. Gilbert, a scholar of medieval English literature, became interested in the work of Chrétien de Troyes while tracing French influences on Chaucer. She describes Chrétien as "an excellent example of the 'abstruse' cultural figure whose influence has been pervasive. His influence extends to Chaucer, to the author of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, to Malory Spenser, Tennyson, and Robinson Jeffers. He is little known in the Anglo-Saxon world because he has been so inadequately translated into English.

The only English version of *Erec et Enide* is W.W. Comfort's prose translation published in 1914; but the charm, sophistication, and suppleness that captivated Gilbert in the Old French were lacking in Comfort. When Gilbert taught survey of medieval literature courses, her students also complained that Comfort's representation of Chrétien's work was stiff and lifeless, and they wondered aloud whether the poet was simply a dull, prolix figure whose work they were obliged to read because of its influence on other writers. Gilbert hopes that her translation will put to rest such speculation about Chrétien's literary merit.

Using an edition that was not available in Comfort's time—Mario Roques's series, *Classiques Françaises du Moyen Âge*—Gilbert is creating a verse translation of *Erec et Enide* in a form as close as possible to the original. As a poet, Gilbert feels strongly that Chrétien's work is best served by a translation in rhymed, octosyllabic couplets: a form that is, she admits, more difficult in English than in French. "Octosyllabics in English can have what George Saintsbury called a 'fatal fluency,'" she explains. "At the same time, the short line with the demands imposed by the rhyme that occurs at relatively short intervals can limit possibilities and create a rigidity in thought and diction. I am using more half-rhymes, or inexact rhymes, which is only fair, since my language is less 'rhyme rich' than Chrétien's. I try to avoid inversions of syntax and archaic expressions, and I try to make each line correspond as much as possible to its original. I'm also eschewing a jolting, jarring 'contemporary' style that, while it seems immediate and arresting to some readers, trivializes and demens the original poem." Gilbert is striving to make the octosyllabic form appealing to contemporary readers by a *juste* exploitation of Chrétien's ideas, nuances, and sense of high style.

The felicity of Gilbert's verse is most easily illustrated to those who do not read old French by comparing her couplets with Comfort's prose. The opening lines of the romance demonstrate the advantages of a verse translation:

*The rustic's proverb says that many a thing is despised that is worth much more than is supposed. Therefore he does well who makes the most of whatever intelligence he may possess. For he who neglects this concern may likely omit to say something which would subsequently give great pleasure. So Chrétien de Troyes maintains that one ought to study and strive to speak well and teach*

*the right; and he derives from a story of adventure a pleasing argument whereby it may be proved and known that he is not wise who does not make liberal use of his knowledge so long as God may give him grace.*

Compare Gilbert's verses with Comfort's prose:

*The peasant says in tales and saws that a poor scorned thing may have cause to be a prize and a windfall; so, if a man is shrewd at all, he turns to advantage what he knows. If he's assiduous, he shows he doesn't miss a thing that might give entertainment and delight; and so, Chrétien de Troyes maintains that each of us should use his brains constantly, watch, think, work; and each perform with skill, and with skill, teach. He'll tell a tale of aventure, a marvellously joined structure; and when he does, he'll make his suit that one is not at all astute to hide his genius that God made or his light, in a bushel's shade.*

Working with several Old French dictionaries and multiple versions of the poem, Gilbert must often choose among meanings that are contradictory, and she has grown particularly wary of false cognates. For example, in a passage in which Enide anticipates the joys that will come with her marriage to Erec, Comfort translated the Old French word *riche* as "rich." The actual derivation of the word is from the Frankish *riki* meaning "formidable" or "noble." Thus, Comfort's translation, based on a false cognate, adds a mercenary note totally at odds with Chrétien's characterization of Enide as a sensitive, innocent young girl.

In other cases it is impossible to know Chrétien's intention. The word *viele* occurs in the original in a list of the instruments played at Erec and Enide's wedding feast. In a note to his Old French edition, Roques says that this is the modern *vielle* or "hurdy-gurdy." It is also likely, though, that it is a kind of fiddle. The translator's dilemma, then, is to decide whether "the joyful noise/ of the hurdy-gurdy's voice" is consonant with "the tuneful twang of organ barrels."

Such decisions are important in determining the tone and texture of the translation. Beyond these line-



by-line considerations, Gilbert must faithfully convey a sense of the romance as a whole. Like other romances of the period, in *Erec et Enide* there is an idealization of adventure and love, along with a belief in marriage as an institution that safeguards spiritual joy and development. At the heart of the work lies the conflict between the obligations of marriage—especially of love in marriage—and the obligations of knightly *aventure*. During the course of the tale, which Gilbert sees as a precursor of the modern *Bildungsroman*, Erec must learn how to bring the two types of obligation into balance.

The story begins at Arthur's court at Cardigan, at the Easter festival. Arthur has decided, rather impulsively, to conduct a hunt and to revive an old custom of pursuing the white stag that inhabits the forest. Queen Guinevere and her maids in waiting follow the hunters, and they are joined by Erec, a handsome young knight who has not yet proven himself in *aventure*, and who does not yet have a lady. Erec joins the queen and her maid. In the forest they encounter a silent, arrogant knight, his disdainful woman companion, and a dwarf, who attacks the queen's maid and Erec with a whip. Erec vows to avenge this affront and sets off after the hunters, hoping to acquire some arms with which to fight the knight.

He arrives eventually at the town of Laluth, where he meets a poor vavasor—or petty nobleman—and his family, including his beautiful daughter, Enide. Erec falls in love with the girl immediately, and vows to fight in an upcoming tournament for her. At the tournament, he challenges the arrogant knight whose dwarf had attacked him. He wins the tournament prize and requests permission to bring Enide to court. She is received at court with much pomp and splendor and wins the favor of the king and queen. Arrangements are made for the wedding of Erec and Enide. At this point in the story Erec has established himself as a knight, since he has proven himself in *aventure*, and he has won the admiration of the court for finding such a beautiful bride.

After his marriage  
... Erec loved so ardently,

he burned no longer for events  
of knightly valor, tournaments;  
he showed indifference to them all,  
and lived, absorbed and sensual,  
making her pet and paramour ...  
seeking her ease in everything.  
Now grief among his comrades spread;  
often among themselves they said  
he loved too well, he was not wise.

...  
So much remark there was, and  
blame,  
by knights and sergeants, Enide came  
to hear of it. She heard them speak,  
placing him now among the weak,  
feeble at arms and chivalry.

...  
This talk disturbed, bore down on her.  
She hid her thoughts; she did not dare

to tell her lord how matters stood,  
so much she feared his bitter mood.  
So she concealed the whole affair  
until one morning ...  
"Sire," she said, "since you press me  
so,  
I will tell you the truth I know;  
I speak with sorrow and with dread.  
In this whole country it is said  
by all—the fair, the dark, the red—  
what shame it is that since you've wed,  
you neglect arms and exploits ...  
Can you believe the pain, for me,  
to hear them laugh and jeer and mock?  
How much it hurts me when they talk.  
But what is most unbearable  
is that they blame me, fault me, all,  
accuse me. This is, you see, their  
view:  
I have ensnared and captured you.

Arthur pursuing  
the white stag  
from *Erec et  
Enide*, ms. 1376,  
folio 107,  
Bibliothèque  
nationale. The  
manuscript is be-  
lieved to date  
from the early  
thirteenth  
century.



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Erec sets off to seek *aventure*, taking Enide with him. As the couple encounters the challenges endemic to chivalric tales, Enide is "... sad and full of thought/ more and more struggling and distraught/ at all her folly, all she'd said." She rides ahead of Erec, who has told her not to warn him of impending disaster. In each case, however, she gives him a warning, all the while silently rebuking herself for disobeying Erec's wishes.

In Enide, Gilbert maintains, we see one of the most fully realized, psychologically true, and appealing characters in medieval literature: "She is a sort of medieval version of Shakespeare's Viola in *Twelfth Night*." She is described as a girl who was made "... to be regarded, gazed upon/ eagerly, in the way that one/ might look, and think, in one's own glass," yet she is not a passive beauty. She can curry and saddle a horse and, indeed, serves as Erec's groom, helping him onto his horse, then riding before him, the perfect medieval lady. Like Shakespeare's heroine she is extremely sensitive and suffers silently much of the time, expressing her sadness only to herself—while Erec, though not feigning emotion like Orsino, indulges in excesses of emotion not unlike the Duke of Illyria's. Gilbert does not pretend to trace an influence on Shakespeare, but suspects that Chrétien, like Shakespeare, was familiar with the comedies of Plautus and had Roman heroines in mind when creating Enide.

Repetition, a characteristic of medieval poetry, reveals Chrétien's sense of humor in *Erec et Enide* and underscores the important idea of preparedness. Characters and incidents that Erec has failed to dis-

pense with in the first encounter pop up again in later passages, and Erec's later ability to 'smite' them demonstrates his development and growth in this medieval *Bildungsroman*. Such passages also recall the medieval belief that character development is never static, that life is a continual striving for development, for perfection. Eventually, Erec reestablishes his reputation as a bold knight, without having had to abandon his wife, thus fulfilling knightly obligations and the obligations of marriage.

Along the way to this happy ending, there is much shrewd and comic treatment of the practical details and difficulties of life. Processions, jousts, and tournaments are described with an attention to detail characteristic of the age:

Those who were well and smartly placed  
saw many iron, steel, helmets laced,  
green ones, yellow ones, vermillion—  
they sparkled like the very sun....

Arms fill the field, conceal its floor,  
and from the ranks is raised a roar,  
the melee and the fracas rise  
the lances grind with a great noise,  
they snap; shields splinter, tearing by,  
and hauberk fail and rivets fly,  
saddles are emptied, men fall down,  
and horses sweat and shine with foam.

Chrétien de Troyes, who was a clerk at the court of Marie de Champagne, probably composed *Erec et Enide* about 1170 or a little earlier. As the first of his works, it shows him at the beginning of his competence as a writer. It reveals his individual methods, qualities, techniques, perceptions, and points of view at an early stage. "It is a valuable work of art," says Gilbert, "both for its own

virtues and because of its position in Chrétien's *oeuvre*. In its variety of themes, its character development, its symbolism, and its humor, it makes an interesting comparison with later works by Chrétien—particularly with *Yvain*, a tale which presents the opposite side of the same human dilemma."

Gilbert's translation will be published by the University of California Press later this year. The volume will contain an appendix listing the names of all Arthurian figures who appear in the poem, and account for their histories, legends, reputations, and personalities as they occur in a number of works indebted to Chrétien or which are analogues of his work. A glossary will provide short definitions of many terms and expressions unfamiliar to contemporary readers. Gilbert's long-range plan is to translate all of Chrétien's Arthurian romances in such a way that they can be published in inexpensive editions that will be helpful—and stimulating—to students, teachers, researchers, and inquisitive readers.

By making the tale of Erec and Enide available to these groups, Gilbert can share in Chrétien's boast in the opening lines of the poem:

This story of Erec, son of Lac  
—broken, spoiled by every hack  
who pieces out and mars a tale  
before kings and counts—I'll make  
prevail  
as it deserves in memory  
as long as Christianity.

—Mary T. Chunko

*"Verse Translation of Chrétien de Troyes's 'Erec et Enide' " / Dorothy Gilbert / University of California, Davis / \$18,355 / 1984-85 / Texts*

*Detail from the Birth, Life, and Death of King Arthur, illustrations by Aubrey Beardsley.*





## The Age & the Art of Chivalry

Readers of medieval romances often visualize a bold knight in shining armor with helmet and breastplate decoratively chased and polished. But such an image actually belongs to a much later era than the Dark Ages in which the heroes of those romantic tales are thought to have lived. "Most of the armor that we see today postdates even the time when chivalry was in flower—roughly from the ninth to the thirteenth century—and was made for parades and tournaments, not for use in battle," says Peter Barnet, an art historian at the Detroit Institute of Art who was assistant director of an exhibition shown there, "The Age and the Art of Chivalry." The exhibition traced the development of arms and armor from early mail pieces to elaborate ensembles of steel plate capable of shielding the wearer from the powerful crossbow. A traveling exhibition of European arms and armor from the Metropolitan Museum of Art offered the occasion several years ago for the interpretive display of the institute's own holdings.

Traditions from three cultures were blended in the chivalric code, according to Helmut Nickel, curator of arms and armor at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and coauthor of the catalogue for the Metropolitan traveling exhibition. Horsemanship in battle, central to knighthood, was introduced to western Europe by mounted nomads from the steppes of Iran. (In several languages, the word for knight—*chevalier*, *caballero*, *cavaliere*, *Ritter*—refers to horses or horsemanship.) From the Romans, chivalry inherited the vestiges of culture remaining after the Empire's fall, and from the Germanic tribes, a system of mutual loyalty between leaders and followers.

"The basic chivalric code established a fairness between fighting men, and each knight followed it in hope of reciprocity," Nickel explains. He cites examples of the code, such as giving fair warning before beginning to fight, not murdering a foe while he slept, and not

raping virgins.

Nickel believes that in the development of the chivalric code, the old legends and the code were mutually influential: while the heroes were following the code, the code was evolving according to the models of behavior set by the heroes. "The greatest praise one could give a knight was to compare him to Lancelot," Nickel says.

Rather than in shining armor, the knight of the early Middle Ages probably girded himself in a shirt of mail, a very expensive protective garment such as had been used by the Romans. Formed of interlocking rings of steel, a mail shirt was constructed much like a modern sweater, with rows of rings in place of stitches. It could require as many as a quarter of a million rings and weigh about twenty-two pounds. Shaped by the increase or decrease of stitches in a row, the shirt was pulled over the head. Further protection was achieved with mail *chausses* (leggings), a helmet fashioned of iron plates attached to an iron framework, and a shield made of wood over which leather was stretched to prevent the shield's being split by a heavy blow.

Mail, while effective against the thrust of a sword, could not deflect arrows, especially those shot from a crossbow. It was not until the fourteenth century, more than one hundred years after the institution of chivalry began to wane, that an impregnable armor came into use. The plate was added, piece by piece, until almost all of the knight's body was encased in a cocoon of steel—thus the shining armor—and the shield was no longer needed.

In Detroit the exhibition was accompanied by a series of films, lectures, and demonstrations to familiarize museum visitors with everyday life in the age of chivalry. Highlights in the series included demonstrations of how a suit of armor is worn and how a man moves inside it. A display to show the development of the helmet also dealt with the tradition of steel and metal

Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bashford Dean Memorial Collection



Italian armor,  
fifteenth century.

work, a subject of particular interest in Detroit. To draw the interest of families, story hours for children featured Arthurian legends. An adjunct exhibition brought together institute holdings illustrating aspects of medieval life through medieval graphics, textiles, and tapestries. One tapestry showed a shepherd and shepherdess conversing against a millefleur background. A miniature painting from a medieval manuscript depicted an apocalyptic beast under attack by four human figures wielding medieval weapons; and a model of a horse—fully armored and mounted by a figure in knight's armor holding a lance—captured the panache most people associate with the age of chivalry.

—Anita Mintz

"European Arms and Armor from the Metropolitan Museum and the Detroit Institute of Arts (Implementation)" / Alan P. Darr / Detroit Institute of Arts, MI / \$111,739/1984/Humanities Projects in Museums and Historical Organizations



A wedding from  
the Spiegel des  
menschlichen,  
Lebens,  
Augsburg,  
1475-76.



## Medieval Women

Medieval exempla resound with the stern admonition of Thomas Aquinas: "Woman is subject to man on account of the weakness of her nature, both of mind and of body. She was created to assist man, but only in procreation, because for all other tasks another man will be far more efficient."

Typical medieval moral literature depicted woman as the reincarnation of Eve who had lost Eden for mankind. That literature reflected the prevalent misogyny of the era: women were denied seats in the English Parliament and the French Estates-General; marriage gave the husband full authority over his wife's property; civil law permitted, sometimes even encouraged, wife beating. As eminent medieval historian Friedrich Heer put it, "the undifferentiated mass of oppressed women were forced to accept life and men and misery as they found them"

But recent scholarship has emphasized that the lot of medieval woman was not entirely bleak. "There really was a positive side to the life of women in the Middle

Ages," says Joan M. Ferrante, a professor of English and comparative literature at Columbia University, and author of *The Lais of Marie de France*.

With help from NEH, Ferrante has conducted two summer seminars for college teachers that have examined the status of medieval women as presented in the literature of that era. Says Ferrante: "We've tried to increase our understanding of the Middle Ages by looking at it from an uncommon perspective, and to add to our knowledge of the role of women in the development of Western culture."

The seminars evolved from a friendly argument between Ferrante and an academic colleague, who was "skeptical that women ever had good standing in the Middle Ages," Ferrante recalls. To explore her theory, the Columbia professor examined several notable medieval women—including Eleanor of Aquitaine, Marie de France, Heloise, and Countess Matilda of Tuscany—who appeared to influence their societies in some way.

Each two-month seminar began

by studying the role of women in literature written by men. Ferrante points out that the two dominant forms of nonreligious literature—the epic and the romance—present distinctly different portraits of that era's females.

The epics—some of them known as *chansons de geste*—portray a warlike virile, unsentimental society. Females played only a secondary role. "In the epics, women generally become the peace-weavers," notes Ferrante, "they're married off in order to unite and bring peace to warring factions." One exception, adds Ferrante, is the "very ambiguous" *Nibelungenlied*, where the chief female characters have been denied their legal rights and instigate the downfall of the society. "The work can be read as a sort of warning about what might happen when women are denied their rights and privileges."

But a very different picture of women emerges from the literary form that came to dominate the twelfth century—romance. A reaction to the often-brutal *chanson de geste*, the romance found a comfortable home in the French and Angevin courts, which sought a more stimulating social climate in a heretofore dour world dominated by monkish demands and dreams of Charlemagne's faded glory. The new art form embellished the legend of Arthur to produce an ideal of social conduct for that era's aristocracy.

"Women," notes Ferrante, "are really appendices of men in these romances. They are objects of love, and their function is to set off or highlight men's psychological development." But in medieval allegorical literature, Ferrante notes that the virtues and the liberal arts were personified as women. "Allegorical literature shows the positive side of the medieval conception of women."

Some romantic literature showed that women were often more pragmatic than men. Ferrante notes that in the famous twelfth-century guide to wooing by Andreas Capellanus (*De arte honeste amandi*), "women debate men; the men speak the wonderful rhetoric of love, but the women cut through the rhetoric, and get down to the realities."

Ferrante says the difference probably is a reflection of real life in the



courts of the time. She notes aristocratic women of that era "were often better educated than their male counterparts" whose training generally focused more on such pursuits as fighting and governing. She adds that within a court milieu, women appear to have better status. That's certainly reflected in this literature, though it doesn't really reflect society as a whole.

In the work of female writers of that era, we find a different perspective from that found in literature written by men. Ferrante notes that more than a dozen *trobairitz*, female lyric poets of Provence, used the same literary conventions as male poets, but with more emphasis on the emotional costs of their passions.

Marie de France in her short, narrative *lais*, looks at the personal problems of men and women. Princeton University historian Natalie Davis recently noted (in the introduction to the 1983 book, *The Knight, the Lady and the Priest*, by Georges Duby) that by examining Marie's work, Ferrante has shown that "some [medieval] marriages are spoiled by jealous or faithless husbands, but love is as much a resource for a woman as for a man."

Ferrante's seminars also examined the works of other medieval women

writers, including the tenth-century playwright Hroswitha. "Her plays were in Latin, based on models by the Roman Terrence," notes Ferrante. "But she adapted the classical form to deal with Christian subjects. And in her plays, the women characters are often very forceful—they're able to exert tremendous influence."

Ferrante notes that similar influence was exerted by some historical women of the Middle Ages. Her seminars examined the lives of several famous medieval females, including Countess Matilda of Tuscany, who inherited lands in northern Italy and became a political "buffer" in a struggle between the pope and the German emperor; Heloise who inspired some of the philosophical writings of Abelard; and Cristina of Marykate, a Saxon woman who struggled against her family to become a hermit; and Christine de Pisan, who at the end of the Middle Ages made a career for herself as a professional writer, working not only on women's subjects, but on politics, government, on social problems, as well as on education, the deeds of great women, and her own life struggles.

The two dozen college teachers who completed Ferrante's seminars have produced a variety of scholarly

articles and also have incorporated some of their research into their teachings. "When I first did this in 1981, the role of women was not really being looked at that closely," says Ferrante. "But now, it's being taken much more seriously."

Much of the subject matter for the seminar was a natural outgrowth of prior work by Ferrante, including translations of Marie de France and various *chansons de geste*, and a book, *Woman as Image in Medieval Literature from the Twelfth Century to Dante*.

But Ferrante also stumbled onto some discoveries as she devised the seminar's syllabus. One find was the thirteenth century work, *Roman de Silences*, which tells the unusual tale of a young medieval woman secretly brought up as a boy. She eventually becomes the most successful knight in France.

"It suggests that environment was more important than heredity in determining one's success in life," notes Ferrante. For a society still responsive to the words of Aquinas, it was making revolutionary statements.

—Frank O'Donnell

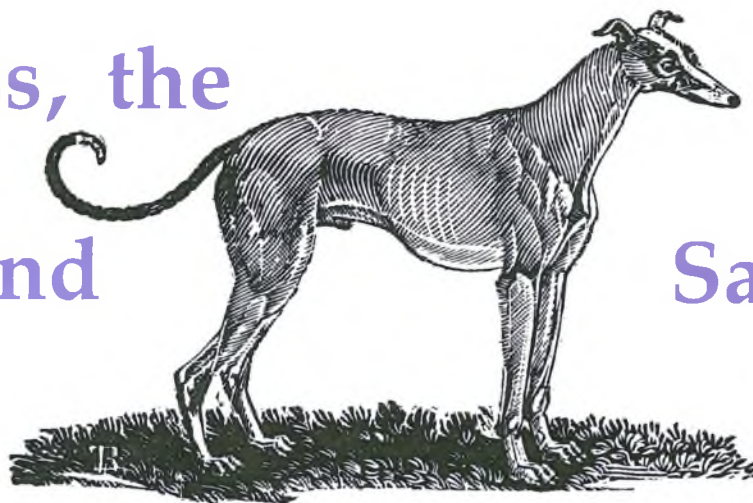
"Women in Medieval Life and Literature"/Joan M. Ferrante/Columbia University, NYC/\$64,298/1983-84/  
*Summer Seminars for College Teachers*



Procession carrying relics of Saint Genevieve through the streets of Paris, the city she protected from fire in the miracle of 1130, Cabinet des estampes, Musée Carnavalet, Paris.



# The Sorceress, the Friar, and the Greyhound



Saint

Medieval theological treatises as a rule make poor subjects for film dramatizations. Nevertheless, one thirteenth-century Dominican friar, the author of *Tractatus de Diversis Materiis Praedicabilibus*, a tract on the dangers of superstition, has been the unwitting script man for a suspenseful film drama that explores powerful human emotions and, perhaps, some inhuman ones as well.

Unlike many members of the *petite noblesse* of thirteenth-century France, Etienne de Bourbon did not ride with the Seventh Crusade, sent by Gregory IX in 1239 to wrest the Holy Land from the infidel. A Dominican mendicant, he joined instead the growing legion of defenders of the faith who fought at home against the other deadly enemy of the Church: the heretics.

Etienne was an inquisitor. The relatively small group of scholars who have read his *Tractatus*, which he wrote in the 1250s near the end of his life, know that he sat on several ecclesiastical inquiries resulting in the fiery executions of Waldensians, followers of Peter Waldo of Lyon in the second half of the twelfth century.

Art historian Pamela Berger, of Boston College, came across Etienne's *Tractatus* while she was conducting research for a book, *The Goddess Obscured*, a study of the persistence of the ancient mother goddess in various guises—Demeter, for instance—during the centuries of conversion from paganism to Christianity. While investigating "popular" medieval religious practices, Berger discovered recent scholarship on that part of Etienne's text recounting his experience with a rustic cult in southern Burgundy. In the *Tractatus*, Etienne writes of his discovery of the sect's ancient rite of pagan worship and of his encounter with the *vetula*, or woman healer, who conducted the rite.

The cult, Etienne reports, has retained the ancient Celtic practice of animal worship; they enact a healing

ritual in adoration of a greyhound "saint," Guinefort. In addition to recounting the mythology and hagiography of Saint Guinefort, Etienne describes the activities of the *vetula*, who would lead the mothers of sick babies to a grove where the greyhound was buried and where, by means of certain plants, fixed ritualized activities, and "interactions with the devil," the mothers could either heal their sick infants or assure them a rapid death. Etienne implies that the anonymous, illiterate *vetula* is a sorceress and that the rite over which she presides is a form of infanticide.

"Etienne reports that he destroyed the grove," says Berger. "He burned the elder trees, which the *vetula* used for medicinal purposes. He disinterred and scattered the bones of the greyhound. But he makes no mention of any punishment to the woman."

"We know from the *Tractatus* that he is responsible for sentencing heretics to be burned. He tells us that in his eyes the *vetula* is committing infanticide. Why doesn't he burn her?" "There must have been something in her character or in her knowledge that fascinated him. That is why I felt at liberty to explore their relationship."

The result of Berger's exploration is a script that unfolds the friar's discovery of the secret ritual in the way that a murder mystery reveals the identity of criminal. Coauthored by Berger and Suzanne Schiffman, who served as first assistant to Francois Truffaut on many films and who wrote the script for *The Story of Adele H.*, *The Sorceress, the Friar, and the Greyhound Saint* is now being filmed in southern France. Directed by Schiffman, produced by Vincent Malle, the associate producer of *My*

*Dinner with Andre* and coproducer of *Atlantic City*, and filmed by Dominique Chapuis, whose credits include *Sugar Cane Alley* and *Shoah*, the NEH-funded film will be completed next year.

The story begins with the origins of Guinefort's "sainthood." It is a spring morning in the eleventh century. Inside the main house of a medieval nobleman's estate, a greyhound sits as guard next to a cradle.

From between the stones of an old wall at the back of the house, a large snake emerges and crawls through the weeds and grasses. The greyhound sees the snake in the window and leaps to his feet. The snake attacks the dog and bloodies his throat. In the fight that follows, the cradle is upset, and the bloodied dog pulls the baby away from danger. The dog returns to the fight, kills the snake, and begins to howl loudly.

When the nurse, mother, and father rush into the room, they see the overturned cradle, the baby in the corner with bloodied swaddling clothes, and the dog with blood on its mouth and neck. Thinking the dog has killed the baby, the father rushes forward, thrusts his hunting lance into the animal's side, and sees too late the dead snake's body.

This is the account of the martyrdom of Guinefort based on Etienne's report. In addition to consulting the thirteenth-century manuscript held in the Bibliothèque nationale, Berger also draws on J.C. Schmitt's study of the dog legend, *The Holy Greyhound* (Cambridge University Press, 1983). "A later edition of Schmitt's book discusses recent discoveries that both corroborate and contradict Etienne's report," says Berger. "An archaeological investigation of the site believed to be



the burial place of Guinefort shows that before the grove became a pilgrimage site, it was the locale of a modest *castrum* or dwelling (where the seigneur who slew the dog in the legend could have lived). This dwelling was abandoned in the twelfth century. The thirteenth-century text records the peasant belief that the seigneur's land had become desolate and uncultivable, in punishment for the seigneur's having slain the dog in haste," Berger explains.

Archaeological evidence shows, however, that contrary to Etienne's claim of having extirpated the cult, the pilgrimages to Guinefort's grave continued. Fragments of toddlers' shoes and woolen slippers from the late nineteenth or early twentieth century were found, as were what must have been votive offerings of coins. The most recent coin dated from 1919. This evidence supports the findings of a 1979 ethnographic inquiry, which indicated, through interviews with local residents in their eighties, that the grove was a continuous site of pilgrimage from the Middle Ages right up until this century.

Many scenes and dialogues in Berger's script are based on actual medieval texts. But although the language and motivations of Etienne are retrievable from his writings, the habits and language of the peasants, "can only be arrived at indirectly."



"As an art historian," Berger says, "I have always been interested in those aspects of history which were not recorded in the written texts, whether it was the everyday life of the preliterate peasant depicted in manuscript illustration, or the dream-life of monks recorded on sculpted capitals.

"When the texts are silent about a certain group," she continues, "scholars must be prepared to use the insights of anthropologists and psychologists, the interpretive power of art historians and archaeologists, as well as the vast store of folkloric scholarship to learn whatever they can about the silent ones."

Beginning with the Dominican's text, Berger conducted an investigation far more thorough than that which forms the main plot line of her story. She followed the clues about plants, insects, and ritualized actions associated with the *vetula* and with those who sought her cures.

Etienne describes the *vetula* as a member of group of "pitiable women soothsayers who seek health by adoring *sambucas* (elder trees) or by making offerings to them." Berger first went to the folklorists for more information about the elder tree. In the *Motiv-Index of Folk Literature*, compiled by Stith Thompson, she learned which parts of the elder tree were believed to have therapeutic properties and in what ways they would have been prepared. She then called on Frank Solomon, a professor of biology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, to help research the chemical properties and traditional pharmacological uses of parts of the tree and discovered that, in Solomon's words, "the elder tree is a veritable drugstore." The sap of the tree is .03 percent arsenic, one of the five substances used in medieval healing, Berger reports.

She consulted with a professor of medieval French language and literature to fix the tone and style of speech that the rural people might have used; with a medieval historian specializing in parish life and medieval theological history; and with a Latinist who reviewed Etienne's Latin text to make sure that the script reflected the Dominican's writings. Most of the scholarly consultants have continued to re-

Courtesy of Pamela C. Berger



Castle at Couches in Burgundy. Architecture such as this will form the background for a film dramatization of a story that took place in southern France in the thirteenth century.

view and advise on script and preproduction questions.

In the conflict between Etienne de Bourbon and "the forest woman," Berger is recreating for a television audience the conflict between the literate, Latinate clerical culture of the thirteenth-century Church and the oral, folkloric peasant culture still in the twilight of paganism. The dramatization of the dog legend sheds light on the medieval phenomenon of syncretism, the effort to reconcile differing religious beliefs and practices that resulted in small, local influences on the dominant Catholicism. The peasants, still clinging to ancient superstitions, venerate an animal as their ancestral Celts would have done. Yet in thirteenth-century France, they transfer the dog from the Celtic to the Christian pantheon.

As the friar investigates the practices of the Guinefort cult, he uncovers for the viewers information about those who never left any written record of themselves: their language, their beliefs, and their practices. The story reveals the disputes that frequently existed between the landed seigneur and the peasants who tilled his land, as well as the tensions between the local curates who lived among the people and the visiting emissaries of official Rome. At the same time, the film treats themes that are relevant to the modern age: struggles of pride versus humility and the universal problem of understanding another culture's point of view.

—Linda Blanken

"The Sorceress, the Friar, and the Greyhound Saint: A Film on Healing Rites in 13th-Century France (Script, TV, Doc.)" / Pamela C. Berger / Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA / \$88,878 / 1985-86 / Humanities Projects in Media

Engraving of elder branches from the Handbook of Plant and Floral Ornament by Richard G. Hutton (1909).





Richard Burton and Julie Andrews as King Arthur and Queen Guinevere in *Camelot*, by Lerner and Lowe.

Distant Avalon . . . A magic sword . . . The figure of King Arthur half-obscured by ancient mists . . . Arthurian legend is probably the most resilient theme to endure the long march of centuries from the Middle Ages into the modern world. Nineteenth-century poets, romantic novelists, Broadway, Hollywood, even contemporary politicians, have all seized on this particular myth to rally public sentiment.

Why? What still appeals about a hero who originated in Celtic legend as a primitive hunter at a time in history that remains obscure to all but the most devoted researchers?

"If I knew the answer to that question, I would make a lot of money!" jokes Michael J. Curley, professor of Latin and English at the University of Puget Sound and scholar of medieval folklore and literature. Curley will conduct an NEH-sponsored seminar this July to trace Arthurian material to its sources and discuss the myth's perennial fascination. Fifteen high school teachers from the New York area, Florida, the Midwest, and California will meet for the seminar—"Arthurian Literature of the Middle Ages"—at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma.

Study of the Middle Ages inevitably kindled Curley's own interest in Arthurian legend. "It's a theme that permeates the culture," he maintains, "and anyone who studies the Middle Ages has to come to grips with that." His current project, a book entitled *Merlin, The Anatomy of*

## Literary Origins of Arthur

*a Legend*, examines the development of Merlin's prophecies.

Curley's love of Celtic languages also opened the way for Arthurian studies, bringing him a fellowship year at the Center for Advanced Study of Celtic at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth. During this time, Curley visited a number of locations where various incidents from Arthurian lore are said to have occurred. "It would be difficult to stand on the quiet, overgrown sites of Wales and not be inspired to explore the myth of Arthur," claims Curley. "Archaeology's glacial pace brings only occasional revelations in Arthurian history, yet to know more about the physical locales illuminates a literature that is so graphically tied to the land."

But it is not with archaeology that the seminar will be concerned. By examining the earliest texts that depicted Arthur and his court during the course of the seminar, Curley hopes to give the participants a close look at the literary roots of the legend and the lasting effects the story had on history, folklore, politics, and religion. The texts will include: "Kulhwch and Olwen," the first story portraying Arthur as a literary figure who confronts the forces of nature symbolized by a wild boar; Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*, in which the elusive folk hunter steps out into the light of his great court and legendary Round Table and takes on political and historical significance; *Ywain* by the twelfth-century French poet Chrétien de Troyes, whose story is evidence of the rapid spread of Arthurian tales from Britain to France and establishes the courtly romance as a style of literature; and, finally, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, the English romance that follows the ad-

ventures and self-discovery of a knight from the Arthurian court, set against a background alive with Celtic magic and mythology.

Discussions of these readings will investigate the legend's inception and strip away the popular notions that envision Camelot as, to quote the musical, "a congenial spot for happily ever-aftering." Although Curley dubs modern versions such as the Arthurian novels by Mary Stewart and T. H. White, or even the film *Excalibur* "pseudo-medieval mumbo-jumbo," he admits that they have, in fact, allowed Arthur to live on into the 1980s. The seminar will give teachers experience with the original Arthurian texts and clarify the traditions that preserved the story through the centuries without diminishing its lustre.

The complex human themes woven into Arthurian legend ensure its long life. The idea of the quest, for one, is an ancient form of literature and fundamental in its metaphorical connection with life. The returning hero and his rebirth, based on the life of Christ, also have obvious appeal, as do the themes of betrayal—Guinevere's betrayal of Arthur, for example—and of passage from youth to age. The legend's close connection with politics contributed to keeping the tale alive, and Curley hopes the seminar will delve into the concept of history and the causes behind the rise and fall of kingdoms.

Curley is certain that many of the Arthurian stories apply directly to our own time. "The myths are very self-reflective and probe the values of their own society," he remarks. "We see ourselves in this: we too are an analytical age and use myths to probe our value systems, and we ask ourselves many of the same questions. There is a direct correspondence here."

Quest, romance, betrayal, passage. Arthur's kingdom generated ideas to last centuries. "This literature is bound to succeed with us because we haven't left any of these things behind," says Curley.

—Leona Francombe

"Arthurian Literature of the Middle Ages"/Michael J. Curley/University of Puget Sound, Tacoma/\$37,379/1985-86/Summer Seminars for Secondary School Teachers



Not since Malory, and perhaps not even then, has prose fiction been the dominant form in Arthurian literature that it has become in the past forty-five years. Beginning with the publication of the individual volumes of T. H. White's *Once and Future King* (1938-40), Arthurian novels have appeared with phenomenal frequency. In England and America alone roughly fifty Arthurian novels have been published since 1940, not including modern stories loosely based on Arthurian characters or situations, mystery novels focusing on supposed Arthurian artifacts, science fiction adaptations and continuations, and the like. Although a few notable works of Arthurian prose fiction were written in the nineteenth century and several more during the first decades of the twentieth, only since the 1940s has prose fiction surpassed poetry as the Arthurian literary mode par excellence. White may well be responsible for this shift, but if he is, it is curious that his novel has exerted so little influence on this recent generation of Arthurian novelists, novelists who largely eschew White's flights of fancy as well as his polemics.

Obviously, fifty different works spanning a forty-five year period reflect a wide spectrum of approaches and concerns, yet some common elements emerge from many of these novels, especially from the best of them. The most immediately obvious similarity is an insistence upon a specific historical context. Influenced by the findings and speculations of twentieth-century historians and archaeologists (notably R.G. Collingwood, John Morris, and Leslie Alcock), these writers attempt to create a Dark Age Britain as it might have been during the Celtic Twilight, the century and a half that separates Roman Britain from Anglo-Saxon Britain. Their notions of what this period was like differ a great deal, from a primitive, brutal world to the civilized representative and last bastion of Roman culture, even after Rome itself had fallen. Edward P. Frankland initiated this new Arthurian realism in 1944 with the *The Bear of Britain* a novel of violence, savagery, and stark realism. Realism becomes even starker in Henry Treece's *The Great Captains* (1956), which introduces Arthur as a

## The Age of the Arthurian Novel

half-savage tribesman and focuses on the barbarism rather than the glory of his reign. Novelists from the sixties onward leaven primitivism with cultural embellishment.

The realism sought by these novelists, however, comes at the expense of traditional elements of romance. Although they sometimes appear there is little room here for dragons, dwarfs, necromancers, love potions, or magic spells, and there is likewise little interest in or tolerance for Christian mysticism and matters concerning the Holy Grail. When, for example, in Marion Zimmer Bradley's *Mists of Avalon* (1982) Elaine reports that Pellinore and Lancelot (sic) have been burned by a dragon (apparently the Queasting Beast and the Loch Ness Monster rolled into one), Morgaine scoffs in disbelief, "What nonsense is this?" The dragon, "all soft like a grub or an earthworm," is quickly dispatched.

In conjunction with the general setting of Dark Age Britain, much of the current Arthurian fiction places events in specific locales which have received recent archaeological attention. Thus the Iron Age hill fort at South Cadbury is identified with Camelot; Liddington Castle, a hill fort near Swindon, is Mt. Badon, where Arthur achieved his most glorious victory over the Saxons; Castle Dore in Cornwall is Tristram's homestead; and Glastonbury is the site of Avalon, an association long predating the twentieth century.

It is also the fashion in many of these novels to use Celtic names, and thus Gwalchmei occurs rather than Gawain, Peredur instead of Percival, Cei instead of Kay, and so on. Arthur, whose non-Celtic name raises etymological questions, is commonly called Artos, but in



Bradley's *Mists of Avalon* even he is initially given the Celtic name Gwydion; and in Godwin's *Firelord*, after Arthur has been abducted by the Prydn or faerie folk, he is called Druith ("fool"), and after the events at the Beltane fires he becomes Belrix ("lord of fire"). The faerie folk themselves, referred to variously as the "people of the hills," the "little dark folk," the ancient ones, or the Prydn, receive extended treatment in some of these novels. A simple people who have maintained their natural bond with the earth, they are nearing extinction due to the encroaching "Tall ones." Several works suggest an equation between the development of technological sophistication and an ensuing alienation from the land. Arthur, who is portrayed as having a foot in each world, ultimately turns away from the people of the hills, hastening their demise and contributing to his own.

Finally, recent conjectures about British military tactics and equipment commonly appear in these novels also. A notion which occurs again and again is that at the center of Arthur's military success against the Saxons was the mobile cavalry unit, which allowed for rapid deployment and swift counter-attack. In conjunction with this speculation is the suggestion that Arthur's horse soldiers adopted the use of the stirrup, providing the stability and leverage necessary to fight effectively from horseback.

Consistent with such attempts to



achieve historical authenticity are the efforts of these novelists to render psychologically plausible characters. Because many of these novels are told from a first-person viewpoint—by an astonishing array of storytellers—it is often the narrator who is most vividly portrayed. In several novels, predictably, the first-person narrator is either Arthur or Merlin; in some it is a figure central to the legend, such as Guinevere, Lancelot, Bedevere, or Kay; and in others it is a newly created minor figure such as the old soldier Caius Geladius in John Gloag's *Artorius Rex* (1977). In Bradley's *Mists of Avalon*, Morgaine, the figure around whom the novel revolves, is treated with the greatest compassion and understanding, and her portrait is one of the most powerful to be found in this body of recent literature. The creation of a complex but sympathetic figure such as Morgaine, who is traditionally one of the villains of Arthurian legend, reflects another recurrent theme in these novels, man's moral ambivalence and the difficulty in separating good from evil. Characters such as Vortigern, Geoffrey of Monmouth's principal villain, or Mordred, the preeminent Arthurian villain, are portrayed more as having been misunderstood than as true Machiavellians. Perhaps the extreme example in this trend occurs in Mary Stewart's *The Wicked Day*, where the novel's explicit purpose is to exonerate Mordred and to demonstrate that he was simply the victim of overwhelmingly unfortunate circumstances. Balancing this view of Mordred, however, is that found in Catherine Christian's *The Pendragon* (1978), where Mordred is presented as a wicked homosexual who lures younger knights away from King Arthur by corrupting them sexually.

Like the literature, the critics, scholars, and others forming a faithful company of Arthurian readers, exhibit identifiable similarities. Their judgment of the modern literature, for example, depends consistently on its relationship—although not necessarily its fidelity—to the legendary tradition.

Extravagant deviations from the traditional story such as that in Stewart's *The Wicked Day* are likely to be viewed with disfavor by most Arthurian enthusiasts, who are willing

to tolerate reasonable liberties with storyline and character portrayal but not outrageous ones. Within the bounds of acceptability is the merging of Lancelot and Bedevere, which occurs in Sutcliff's *Sword at Sunset* and in Stewart's novels, or the splintering of characters which occurs in *The Mists of Avalon*, where Viviane, Niniane, and Nimue take on separate identities. A marginally acceptable alteration might be Stewart's making Mordred the eldest of Morgause's sons rather than the youngest, which he always is in medieval tradition.

Perhaps the most solemn taboo is against treating the Arthurian legend with disrespect. It is all right to poke a little fun at Arthur and his knights in the fashion of Monty Python, or even to turn the tales into fabliau, as Nicholas Seare does in *Rude Tales and Glorious*, because such treatments belie a fundamental affection for the legends. But a derogatory attitude, such as some readers have sensed in Thomas Berger's *Arthur Rex*, is anathema. Robert Nye's *Merlin* is perhaps the most widely condemned Arthurian novel, for although it is impressive in several regards, it appears to many readers as an opportunity to use revered materials for pornographic purposes.

Although it is possible that none of the Arthurian novels of recent vintage will survive the test of time, several of them now have devoted followings. Among these are Rosemary Sutcliff's *Sword at Sunset*, Mary Stewart's Merlin trilogy, Thomas Berger's *Arthur Rex*, Parke Godwin's *Firelord* and *Beloved Exile*, and Marion Zimmer Bradley's *The Mists of Avalon*, novels which have achieved both popular and critical success.

Rosemary Sutcliff's *Sword at Sunset* (1963) must be considered the first major Arthurian novel in the post-White era. Set in a reasonably civilized late fifth-century Britain and narrated by Arthur (Artos), Sutcliff's novel incorporates much of the traditional story while also reflecting current historical theories and paying tribute to some of the Celtic motifs. Sutcliff's ending, in which the mortally wounded Artos relinquishes his kingdom in order to seek the Isle of Avalon, is a satisfying variation. In its tone, the novel achieves an admirable balance be-

tween realism and romance, which undoubtedly contributes to its continuing popularity.

Mary Stewart's Merlin trilogy, consisting of *The Crystal Cave* (1970), *The Hollow Hills* (1973), and *The Last Enchantment* (1979), has enjoyed even greater popular success than Sutcliff's novel. Narrated by Merlin, these novels recreate an idealized and rather romantic post-Roman Britain, and thus they stand somewhat apart from other works in the recent tradition of realistic fiction. The first volume portrays the boyhood of Merlin (he is the illegitimate son of Aurelius and Niniane) and focuses on the education he receives from the hermit in the crystal cave (the novel's title and the concept of the crystal cave stems from a lyric poem by Edwin Muir). Stewart's chief source is Geoffrey of Monmouth, and like Geoffrey, her Merlin possesses prophetic powers and great intelligence but not the magical powers we associate with wizards. Mary Stewart's novels make an excellent introduction to the legend of King Arthur for younger readers.

The American contribution to recent Arthurian fiction surpasses that of the British in quantity and rivals it in quality. Discounting John Steinbeck's uncompleted *The Acts of King Arthur and His Noble Knights* (1976), which is primarily a modernization of Malory, Thomas Berger (*Arthur Rex*, 1978) is arguably the best of American Arthurian novelists. *Arthur Rex* may be fairly considered one of the great comic works in Arthurian literature, taking its place alongside White's *Once and Future King* and Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. Critics have been especially fond of linking Berger's spoof of the Arthurian fellowship with Twain's, seeing them as a pair of "literary wise guys." But as noted previously, some readers of *Arthur Rex* sense a derisive attitude toward Arthurian literature in this novel, and the opening, especially if read alone, might bear this out. However, once readers of *Arthur Rex* accustom themselves to Berger's "comic realism" (it's a little like becoming adjusted to reading Chaucer in Middle English), Berger's true affection for his materials is evident. Further proof of Berger's sincerity may be found in his remarkable



knowledge of Arthurian literature. From the Middle Ages alone Berger draws on stories from Geoffrey of Monmouth, Chrétien de Troyes, Malory, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and some of the lesser Gawain poems, the *Alliterative Morte Arthure*, and Bedier's version of the Tristram legend, an especially effective episode in the novel. Berger's literary storehouse and comic distance make *Arthur Rex* distinctive among recent Arthurian novels.

Parke Godwin's novels (*Firelord*, 1980 and *Beloved Exile*, 1984) emphasize the political maneuvering for the kingship in the aftermath of Ambrosius's death; the various tribal rivalries that divide the Britons and make them easier prey for the Saxons; and the parallel stories of Arthur and his Saxon rival Cerdic. Godwin takes liberties with traditional Arthurian characters. Lancelot, for example, is first seen as Gareth's lad (Gareth himself is an Irishman and is unrelated to Gawain), and his quick intelligence soon elevates him to a position of prominence. Lancelot is particularly adept at military tactics, and it is he who introduces Arthur to the use of the stirrup. Physically, Lancelot is nondescript ("Going down the ranks, you wouldn't look at him twice"), and Godwin has Lancelot marry Eleyne, who is even more unprepossessing (a "mouse of a woman and plain as a boot"). But Godwin's alterations, as considerable as they are, are not overly disconcerting. His handling of the major human relationships—Artos and Morgana, Artos and Guinevere, and Artos and Bedivere—is skillful and sensitive. In *Beloved Exile*, told by Guinevere, Godwin continues the story following Artos's death. This novel is more somber in mood, as befits the events it describes, but it also portrays Guinevere's growth in wisdom, self-knowledge, and compassion, paralleling Artos's development in the first volume.

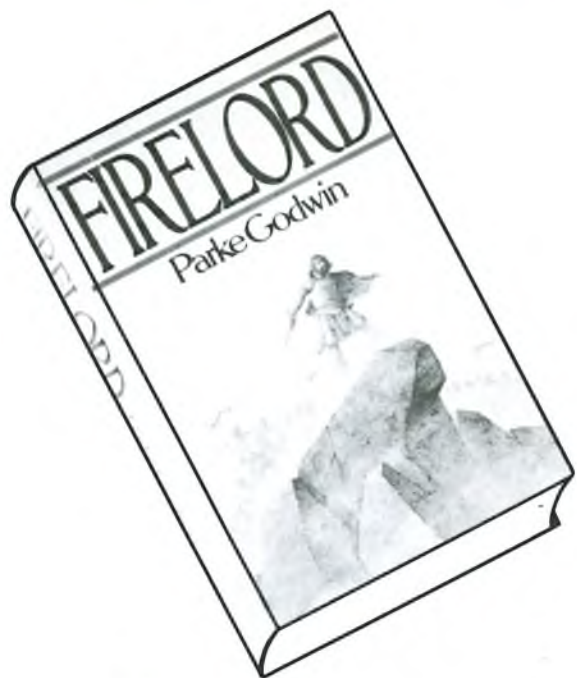
Marion Zimmer Bradley's *The Mists of Avalon* is an extremely thorough and surprisingly faithful retelling of the traditional story, from the vantage point of the story's four principal women—Igraine, Viviane, Gwenhwyfar, and Morgaine. The novel also reflects Bradley's impressive knowledge of the Old Religion, and at its center is

the conflict between the worship of Ceridwen (the Celtic "Great Mother" who in her tripartite form was Mother, Lover, and Destroyer), and the new male-centered worship of Christ. This struggle is symbolized by Arthur's conflicting loyalties to Gwenhwyfar, a devout Christian, and Morgaine, who has been groomed to replace Viviane as the Lady of the Lake, high priestess of Avalon; it culminates in Arthur's betrayal of Avalon when he flies a banner of the cross at the battle of Mt. Badon rather than one bearing the dragon, a crime which he compounds by allowing the goddess's chalice to be used in the Christian Mass. Behind these actions is Gwenhwyfar's desire to cure her barrenness, but Arthur's sacrifices are to no avail. As a result, Avalon is doomed to retreat into the mists and to be lost forever, Arthur is doomed to have no heir but Mordred, and the plan to save Britain conceived by Merlin and Viviane fails. The novel ends on something of a positive note, however, as Morgaine perceives that the old worship of the goddess has not entirely disappeared because a degree of fusion of the old and the new has been achieved in Christian practices and rituals.

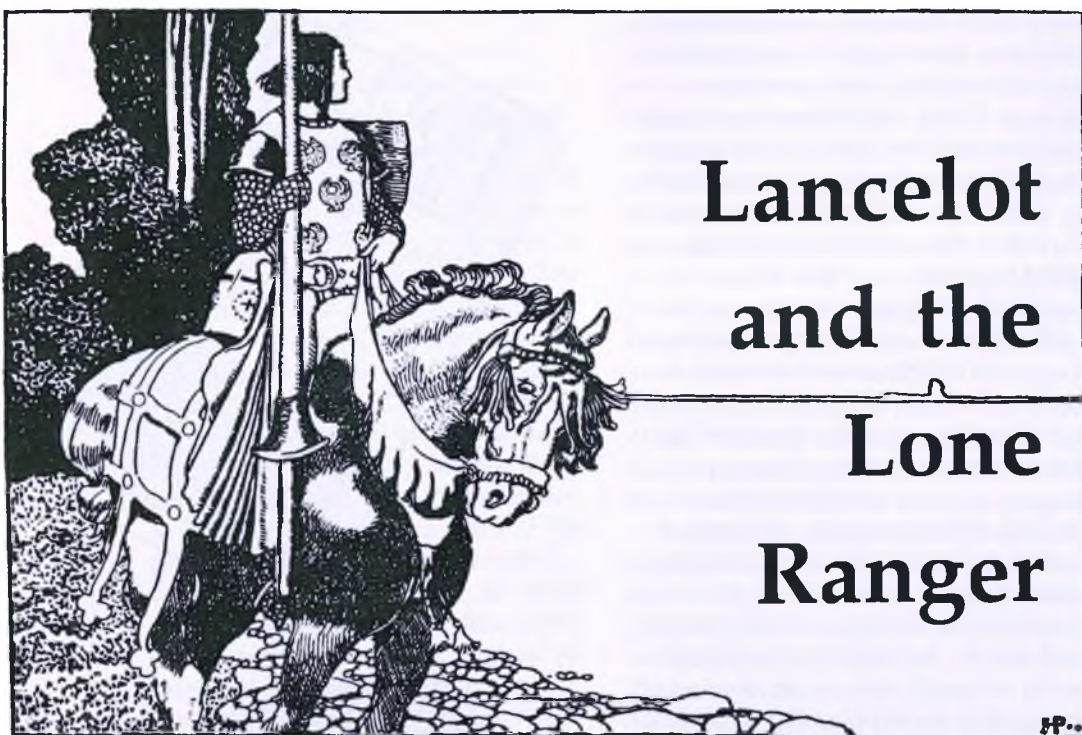
A similar fusion of old and new characterizes the thriving subgenre of modern Arthurian literature. Whatever the fate of the many Arthurian novels penned in the last several decades, as a group they attest impressively to the current vitality and the continuing imaginative appeal of the legends of King Arthur. There are some indications now that the elements of fantasy are beginning to return to Arthurian literature, and if that is the case, then the legend is about to undergo a further transformation as the age of Arthurian realism draws to a close.

—John Conlee

Mr. Conlee, who has just completed a term as chairman of the English department at the College of William and Mary, has published articles in *Medium Aevum*, *The Chaucer Review*, and *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, among others. He has recently completed a critical edition of *Middle English Debate and Dialogue Poetry*, to be published by Colleagues Press, and is currently at work on a critical study of the *Middle English Merlin poems*.







*Lancelot as depicted by Howard Pyle in 1903.*

Like threads in a tapestry, the legend of Lancelot can be traced along the continuum of history from the earliest folktales and fables to their latest expressions in the Lone Ranger and Luke Skywalker. Yet each brave warrior who fights valiantly against evil does so in a different historical and philosophical context. The Grail and the Force are separated by more than time.

To help students from places called Pawnee, Broken Arrow, and Wagoner understand the threads connecting the medieval past with the American present, twenty-five high school teachers of English and social studies gathered at Oklahoma State University last summer to spend two weeks of intensive study of the Middle Ages at an NEH summer institute.

"Our plan," said project director, J. Paul Bischoff, assistant professor of history at Oklahoma State University, "was to give these teachers some sense of how the literary, historical, and ideological dimensions of medieval times are interrelated and to show them how the Middle Ages fit into a larger, unified, and continuous evolution of history, literature, and ideas."

Morning discussions focused on three major texts of medieval literature. An examination of *Beowulf* in the original language considered its literary elements, as well as its connection with medieval history and ideology. For Chaucer's *Canterbury*

*Tales*, the teachers studied not only style and technique but Chaucer's rendition of the political, religious, and social life of the Middle Ages as well. Finally, the participants examined Malory's treatment of the Arthurian legend, particularly the significance of the legend in the Middle Ages and its development as a theme in medieval literature.

Afternoons were devoted to history and ideology. The history component, which covered the three ages of medieval Europe looked at the ways in which medieval civilization differed from the ancient world as the center of European civilization shifted from the Mediterranean to the broad plains of northern Europe. To study the three orders of the Middle Ages—warriors, priests, and peasants—the teachers investigated feudalism as a functional process within the development of the medieval social structure, examined the Church with its multidimensional approach to Christian life, and reconstructed the lifestyle of the average person living in the medieval period. The history component concluded with an exploration of the physical surroundings of the period, including housing, commodities, and trade.

For the philosophy component, participants examined the importance of the Middle Ages in the history of Western thought; the origins of medieval ideology; the philosophies of St. Augustine, Maimonides,

Thomas Aquinas, and other representative philosophers; and the development of scholasticism and its influence on the thinking and values that shaped the social and political life of the times.

The institute also included workshops on classroom methods of translating what was learned into practical application in the high school English or history class. The teachers were required to write a major interdisciplinary research paper, using library resources to develop a presentation for classroom instructional use. Topics covered in the papers included medieval architecture, laws, medicine, mathematics, farming, and clothing. Each paper consisted of a discussion of the research topic followed by suggestions for various classroom applications and a bibliography.

In a paper on medieval medicine, Regina Simonton of Morrison High School described the medieval doctor's basic procedure in treating an illness. Using a list and charts of planetary movements, eclipses of the sun and moon and other astrological data, the doctor would determine which bodily humors—yellow bile, blood, black bile, and phlegm—were out of balance. By observing the positions of the moon, he determined from which humor or combination of humors the disease originated and then calculated the treatment to be followed. "Although these calculations may have taken several hours," said Simonton, "treatment would not be administered until all calculations were completed." Simonton suggested that students in her class research the movement of planets, stars, and astrological signs and attempt to chart a modern-day illness by tracing the origin of the disease and diagnosing the illness by the procedure used in the Middle Ages.

Mark Thompson of Wynnewood High School explored the status of women in Chaucer's "Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale" and Steinbeck's *The Pearl*. "The social conditions surrounding the two women [Alisoun and Juana], their reactions to abuse from their husbands, and the decisions of Juana and the lusty bachelor all show that the problem of dominance . . . has a long tradition," said Thompson. "The adventures of these characters are varied, but the



authors' ideas converge on at least one point: the conception that one must dominate automatically hinders happiness in a relationship." Thompson devised classroom activities requiring students to write a dialogue of an argument between Alisoun and Juana concerning the role of the wife in marriage, or having the students pretend to be lawyers handling divorce proceedings and write a legal brief outlining the case for the court.

Myra McCurry of Pawnee High School examined medieval physiognomy and its use in *The Canterbury Tales*. "Whether Chaucer was a believer in physiognomy (the science of divining a person's character by outward appearance or form) is not known, but it is obvious that he chose to make use of its principles to present his characters," said McCurry. "Knowing that staring eyes and a high voice indicate gluttony and licentiousness, smooth skin reveals a capability to hide one's emotions, and fine yellow hair denotes a lack of virility, the fourteenth-century audience was aware of the Pardoner's characteristics long before he revealed himself in his tale." McCurry suggested inviting a police sketch artist, trained in drawing composites from descriptions, to draw the characters in *The Canterbury Tales* from descriptions given by the students.

In his paper, "The Possessory Assizes of Henry II," Robert Owens of East Central High School in Tulsa traced many fundamental American constitutional guarantees to the time of Henry II's assizes. For example, he said, both the First Amendment's right to petition the government for a redress of grievances and the Third Amendment's prohibition of the quartering of troops without the consent of the owner stem from the assize of *novel disseisin*, established between 1166 and 1176. According to this assize, no freeman could be dispossessed of his land unjustly and without judgment. For the classroom, Owens planned to have students conduct independent research to prove the thesis that the legal reforms of King Henry II of England contributed in a substantial way to the American Constitution.

Carla Irvine, a sociology teacher from North Intermediate High School in Broken Arrow, used a



comparison of the legend of Lancelot and the lore of the western cowboy to add a new dimension to her class in U.S. social studies. Her paper, "The Code of Chivalry and the Code of the West," discussed how the literature of these two periods reflected the image of the hero-as-fighter: a stoic, pain-ignoring warrior, proud and brave, fighting valiantly against heavy odds to save the honor and lives of his kinsmen. Like his nineteenth-century counterpart, the early chivalric hero is not only a hero in battle—"a person aware of his good name," said Irvine—but also a representation of the force of good in the struggle against evil.

Irvine's paper also compared the historical similarities of the two periods. Both eighth- to eleventh-century western Europe and nineteenth-century western America were battlegrounds, she said. The people of medieval Europe were constantly threatened by invasions of Vikings and barbarians from the north and Islamic warriors from the East, whereas nineteenth-century Americans faced the constant turmoil of conflicting land claims by the West's original inhabitants against invading settlers and the later fights between ranchers and farmers.

During the year following the institute, Bischoff visited about two-thirds of the participants' classrooms to observe how the material covered by the institute had been put to use. On June 21, the teachers returned to

Oklahoma State University for a final session in which they wrote their own evaluations of the institute, based on a year in which they used the information from the institute in their classrooms.

"I think the Middle Ages is an era about which high school students have sort of hazy romantic concepts, but about which they have no hard information," says Bischoff. "The institute was intended to provide teachers with that hard information in ways that could be used in the classroom." One of those ways—attempting to diagnose a modern-day illness using medieval methods—probably helped dispel hazy romantic notions about the Middle Ages. Just as those who examined the assizes of Henry II gained a clearer picture of the conditions that gave rise to the First and Third Amendments, those who compared the code of chivalry with the code of the West learned that the legends of Lancelot, the Lone Ranger, and Luke Skywalker will reemerge in another age when the future again forms a setting in which a brave warrior battles for good against evil.

—Caroline Taylor

"Medieval Studies for High School English and History Teachers"/John P. Bischoff/Oklahoma State University, Stillwater/\$59,618/1985-86/Humanities Instruction in Elementary and Secondary Schools

An engraving by Frederic Remington (1861-1909) from Harper's Weekly, 1890.





# HISTORICISM & ITS DISCONTENTS

"... in hym that shold say or thynke that there was never suche a kyne called Arthur myght well be aretted greted folye and blyndeness, for there be many evydences of the contrarye ..."

—William Caxton, in his preface to Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur*, published in 1485

Many twentieth-century scholars would dismiss all of the many "evydences" that Caxton goes on to list. Their standard argument has been that modern historiography began with the Renaissance and that the fanciful chronicles of the Middle Ages show a simple, naive cast of mind unable to sustain a distance between past and present. In *Historicism and Its Discontents*, a book written with the support of an NEH grant, Lee W. Patterson disputes this argument by examining medieval works that articulate the great founding legends of Britain.

Pivotal among these is the *Historia regum Britanniae*, written by Geoffrey of Monmouth, bishop of St. Asaph, and published sometime between 1135 and 1139. Geoffrey begins his history with the settlement of Britain by Brutus of Troy, a descendant of Aeneas, founder of Rome. Then follow the reigns of early kings, the Roman conquest, and the Saxon infiltration. The culminating point of the *Historia* is the story of Arthur, a glorious and triumphant king who defeats a Roman army in eastern France, only to be mortally wounded when he returns home to deal with a rebellion led by his nephew Mordred.

Geoffrey alleges that the *Historia* was translated from "a very old book in the British tongue," but this source, like the narrative it purports to recount, is almost pure fabrication. Stories about Arthur had been

popular in Wales before the eleventh century, and Geoffrey adapted some of the Celtic stories to suit feudal times. The fact that this fictional history had an enormous influence on later chroniclers—and in fact reached its greatest popularity three and a half centuries later at the accession of the Tudors—is considered by the critics of medieval historians to be illustrative of the simplistic relationship the Middle Ages held with its past.

Patterson, however, draws attention to several crucial historiographical issues that are confronted by Geoffrey of Monmouth. By positing a Trojan origin for British civilization, Geoffrey was explicitly recalling a past model that had heretofore been unrepresented in English historiography. This classical, secular approach to history is most clearly illustrated by Virgil's *Aeneid*. At its core is *translatio imperii*, the observation that ruling civilizations have moved westward, from Troy to Greece to Rome, each empire the heir of the previous one. The geographical succession of these empires was less important to medieval chroniclers than the chronological progression. *Translatio imperii*, says Patterson, suggested that each empire was "the inheritor of imperial glory yet under the shadow of inevitable decline." Despite the ambivalence of this model, Continental rulers since the eighth-century Carolingian kings had invoked Troy as a source of legitimation for their rule.

In contrast, the Augustinian approach to history, formulated in reaction to Virgil, discounted such secular events in favor of wholly spiritual values. Augustine held that the current "sixth age" of time—that between the Crucifixion and the sec-

ond coming of Christ—had no historical significance. It was merely a time of waiting, of deferment, of exile. The whole period of the Roman Empire was, for Augustine, merely one of *libido dominandi*—the desire for domination—and valuable only for the spiritual lessons that could be derived from it.

Until Geoffrey of Monmouth, Augustine's approach dominated English historiography. The highly influential *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* (Ecclesiastical History of the English People), written in the eighth century by the Venerable Bede, an Anglo-Saxon theologian, was a historically accurate account, but its whole lesson and purpose was to demonstrate the growth of the Church. In it, people are historical markers rather than creators of history. Patterson notes that the *Historia ecclesiastica* "is as close as you can get to pure Augustinian history."

Geoffrey of Monmouth explicitly challenged this mode by rewriting the *Aeneid* for his own time. This challenge was recognized by his contemporaries, one of whom, William of Newburgh, is said to have noted bitterly, "Geoffrey's fictions have taken the place of Bede's truths." Geoffrey's use of the Virgilian approach provided his Anglo-Norman audience with a model that showed the possibility that the values of the past can be recuperated in the present. This bears witness to a more complex relationship between past and present than many twentieth-century scholars' views of the Middle Ages would allow.

It also points to a major difference between modern and medieval consciousness of history. Modern thought focuses on the differences between past and present; its goal,



suggests Patterson, is "a recovery of the past in all its otherness." In the Middle Ages, the emphasis was rather on the continuities between past and present. Patterson cites a medieval proverb, *Verum quia vetus* (True because old), that illustrates the medieval awareness of the power the past exerts on the present. As we see in Geoffrey's conjuring of Trojan antecedents, the past is "simultaneously a source of value and an unavoidable pattern of action," notes Patterson.

In 1154, after twenty years of dynastic crises, Henry II ascended to the English throne. Inheritor of the Norman tradition of centralized authority and imperial ambition, Henry spent his thirty-five-year reign strengthening the cult of kingship. During his reign, often at his court, were written *romans d'antiquité*—most particularly the *Roman de Troie* and the *Roman d'Enéas*. These romances reflect the political ambitions of the ruling dynasty in evoking the Trojan empire and a time when kings were more than contractual feudal overlords.

Earlier works composed to articulate imperial dreams had not dwelt long on romantic love; as Patterson notes, "Roland [in the *Chanson de Roland*] and Beowulf did not have girlfriends." But the twelfth century was a time of new interest in the private life of feeling, and old stories began to be expanded or recast to reflect this interest. For example, in twelfth-century retellings of the *Aeneid*, Aeneas becomes a great lover, and the character of Dido undergoes a recuperation. It was at this time, too, that Chrétien de Troyes added the Lancelot and Guinevere romance to the King Arthur legend.

During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, there was an enormous proliferation of Arthurian legends, some of which ran to seven or eight volumes. French authors in particular used the legends as a formal tapestry on which individual knights jousted, fought, aided damsels, and slew monsters. The anonymous poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, though it begins with Brutus the Trojan founding Britian, focuses almost totally on a challenge to one of the leading knights of King Arthur's court, involving a beheading and erotic temptations.

However, during this period and

beyond, the Arthurian legend was also invoked for legitimation by the kings of England. Edward I, who reigned from 1272 to 1307, held tournaments in the best Arthurian style. Upon subduing unruly vassals in Wales, Edward gave the realm and the title "Prince of Wales" to his son and heir. Though this was partly a gesture to the Welsh, the allusion to Arthur—often conceived in legend as a Welsh king—added a resonance of imperial majesty to the title that British heirs to the throne carry to this day.

As Patterson notes, Arthur was invoked by other political figures as well. Edward II was deposed in 1327 by a group of men led by Roger Mortimer, earl of March, who held land on the border between England and Wales. In the letters we have between Mortimer and his coconspirators, the leader's code name was "Arthur."

By the end of the fourteenth century, dynastic problems had caused nearly thirty years of crisis. Edward, the Black Prince, son of Edward III, died before his father, who was in his dotage and controlled by unscrupulous parties. He was eventually succeeded by his ten-year-old grandson Richard, in whose name a royal council attempted a deal with a peasant revolt and religious unrest. When Richard finally began to rule in his own right, he did so with a somewhat exalted idea of his own powers and prerogatives. He was deposed in 1399 by Henry of Lancaster, who himself faced rebellions throughout the early part of his reign and uneasy relations with his son and heir at its end.

An epic poem in English, which has come to be known as "the alliterative *Morte Arthure*," was almost certainly put into its final form

around this time. Its anonymous author chose as his central theme King Arthur's campaign to conquer Rome (*translatio imperii*). At the moment of his triumph, Arthur hears of his nephew Mordred's treacherous rebellion, hurries home to England, and is defeated at the Battle of Salisbury Plain. In its relationship to its sources, as well as its theme, this poem, says Patterson, shows "an almost obsessive interest in the problem of past and present," an issue that must have been of special urgency during the dynastic upheavals of the time.

Patterson's original intention had been to include a chapter on Chaucer and the way that his work, like that of Chrétien de Troyes, combined the historiographical with the romantic. This chapter eventually became an entire second book, which Patterson hopes to publish in 1987. Nonetheless, *Historicism and Its Discontents* uses the history of Chaucer criticism to highlight points Patterson wants to make about the modern view of the Middle Ages and about the problem of reconstructing the past.

My argument in this book," says Patterson, "is that in every case, the desire to recover the past is governed by imperatives in the present." This desire usually arises from discontent with the present, a sense that the essence of the past has escaped. In fact, Patterson's basic premise is that historicism—the effort to make sense of the past—is both a function of discontent and necessarily productive of it. "I can offer no consolation," Patterson quotes from Freud, whose *Civilization and Its Discontents* he echoes in his title.

This dynamic is operative in both modern attempts to understand the Middle Ages and medieval efforts to create a past. Ultimately, we cannot presume to sneer at Geoffrey of Monmouth or other medieval chroniclers. *Historia est narratio rei gestae*—history is the narration of things done—is not necessarily truer now than it was in the Middle Ages.

—Jennifer Newton

"Medieval Literature and Legendary History"/Lee W. Patterson/Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore/\$25,000/1984-85/Independent Study and Research

Stained glass roundel of King Arthur riding a camel. Flemish. Early sixteenth-century.



Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Cloisters



Historians generally agree that some time before 600 the Britons rallied against Saxon invaders. This map from Leslie Alcock's *Arthur's Britain* (Allen Lane, London, 1971) shows possible locations where archaeologists believe the battles could have taken place. Both Gildas, a monk writing in A.D. 545, and an early Welsh source, the *Annales Cambriae*, refer to a final triumph at Badon. Welsh tradition names the triumphant commander as Arthur.



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among them were the works of Chrétien de Troyes. Born about 1130, Chrétien wrote five romances about Arthur and his fabulous kingdom: *Erec and Enide*, *Cligès*, *Lancelot*, *Yvain*, and *Percival*. As we shall discover, Chrétien, too, drew on earlier sources for his subject matter. With great originality, however, he reshaped the Arthurian legend by introducing Lancelot and his adulterous affair with Guinevere, the theme of courtly love, and the quest for the Grail.

Chrétien's sources included Celtic legends and the first major literary work concerned with Arthur, *The History of the Kings of Britain* by Geoffrey of Monmouth. Geoffrey was born at Monmouth about 1100. He seems to have spent some twenty years in Oxford. Ordained in 1152, he was appointed bishop of St. Asaph in Wales. He died about 1154. Geoffrey combined myth and legend in a learned, but fantastic history of Britain from the supposed arrival of refugees from the sack of Troy to the Anglo-Saxon period. Arthur appears as a British king who defeated the Romans in France, but was fatally wounded in Britain, in a battle against rebels led by his nephew Mordred.

Even in the twelfth century, then, Arthur was a legendary figure. What, if anything, was the substance behind the legend? For the present-day researcher, this is a difficult question, which involves the interpretation of obscure medieval documents. It also involves evaluating the archaeological record, in search of a context in which the hero may have lived. Medieval scholars had fewer difficulties. For one thing, they were much more willing than we are to take their sources at face value. For another, their belief in the historical Arthur was supported by a sensational discovery. In 1191, the monks of Glastonbury Abbey in Somerset announced the finding of the bodies of a man and woman associated with a lead cross, which identified the re-

Victorian poets William Morris, Swinburne, and Alfred, Lord Tennyson rediscovered King Arthur in the works of their literary forebears, the inventors of romance, who wrote between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries. This literary tradition has its roots in ancient Celtic mythology and in a period of British history for which the records are few and very short. Since the 1950s, however, historical research and archaeological excavations have contributed evidence to support the assertion of historian Geoffrey Ashe, published in *The Quest for Arthur's Britain* (The Pall Mall Press, Ltd., 1968): "The Arthurian Legend, however wide-ranging its vagaries, is rooted in Arthurian Fact."

Indeed, in Victorian England, interest in the Middle Ages and in ide-

alized views of medieval chivalry and dedication to noble causes, such as the quest for the Holy Grail, were prominent features of the Romantic movement. For the Romantics, the prime source of information about the legends of King Arthur was the medieval writer Sir Thomas Malory (died 1471), author of *Le Morte Darthur*, a collection of historical romances first published by William Caxton in 1485. It was immensely popular, and appeared in numerous editions in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Reprinted in 1816, it was the direct inspiration of Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*.

Malory's inspiration is, in turn, credited in the early editions of his work. In his introduction to *Le Morte Darthur*, Caxton noted that the author acquired his knowledge from "certain books of French." Foremost



# il arthur

mains as those of Arthur and, according to some sources, Queen Guinevere. The historian Gerald of Wales, who visited Glastonbury about 1192, reported that he saw the bones, and a drawing of the cross appeared in Camden's *Britannia* in the sixteenth century. The bones disappeared during the Reformation, and the last mention of the cross suggests that it was in Wells, also in Somerset, in the eighteenth century. We have no means today of knowing whether the bones and the cross were genuine. In the Middle Ages, on the other hand, few questioned their authenticity; in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Arthur was as historical a figure as Washington or the Duke of Wellington.

We, unlike our predecessors, belong to a skeptical age, which demands far more rigorous proof than was sought by Gerald, or Geoffrey, or Chrétien de Troyes. We are com-

pelled, therefore, to examine the evidence very carefully indeed. First, let us consider the documents. Geoffrey made use of an extraordinary work entitled "On the Ruin and Conquest of Britain." Apparently written in or about the 530s by a monk named Gildas, this is an indictment of the crimes of contemporary rulers and churchmen and an account of what befell them because of their wicked ways. In his oblique, polemical manner, Gildas is referring to nothing less than the end of Roman Britain. He tells how the Roman province was devastated by barbarians; how the Roman commander in Gaul, Aetius, failed to retrieve the situation, and how in desperation the Britons decided to call in the Saxons. Soon, however, the Saxons revolted and began to conquer the island for themselves. Their advance proceeded until they were checked by a British general named

Ambrosius Aurelianus. Henceforth, victory went sometimes to the attackers, sometimes to the defenders, until the Britons triumphed at the siege of Mount Badon, which halted the Saxon advance. For all its obscurity, and despite the fact that it does not mention Arthur, Gildas's work is as important to us as it was to Geoffrey of Monmouth.

The reason is revealed by another of Geoffrey's sources, a work known as "The History of the Britons," which is attributed to Nennius, who wrote in the tenth century. Nennius's history begins in conventional fashion with an account of six ages of the world, from the Creation to the Last Judgment. There follows a muddled account of Roman Britain, partly derived from Gildas. In describing the Anglo-Saxon conquest, however, Nennius provides us with a nugget of pure gold. "In those days," he writes, "Arthur

*According to Geoffrey of Monmouth, Arthur is conceived at the castle in Tintagel when his father Uther, with the help of wizardry from Merlin, impersonates the husband of his mother, Ygerne. Excavations have shown the site to be the locale of a Celtic monastery from the fifth to the seventh centuries, on which a castle was built in the twelfth century and fortified in the thirteenth century.*



British Tourist Authority



*In 1190 the reputed relics of Arthur and Guinevere were discovered in the ancient cemetery of Glastonbury Abbey. The tomb itself was destroyed during the Reformation and the bones dispersed, but there is a contemporary record of the discovery from Gerald of Wales.*

fought against [the Saxons] with the kings of the Britons, but he himself was the military commander (in Latin, *dux bellorum*).” Arthur took part in twelve battles against the Saxons. “The twelfth battle was at Mount Badon, in which nine hundred and sixty men fell in one day from one charge by Arthur.” Gildas told us of the crucial importance of the encounter at Mount Badon, and Nennius tells us who commanded the British troops: Arthur. Thus, for Nennius, Arthur was real. He was a general (not a king), who played a prominent part in the British resistance to the Anglo-Saxons and who won an important victory at Mount Badon.

The text of Nennius’s history is preserved in several manuscripts, notably a document in The British Library, known as Harleian Manuscript 3859. This contains a number of works, bound together in a single volume. They include another key Arthurian source, a set of annals that covers events in late Roman Britain; there is reason to believe that they were compiled as early as the fifth century. The annals contain two references to Arthur. The first records how he fought for three days before he beat the Saxons at Mount Badon, in the year 72, which may correspond to A.D. 518. The second reference reports the conflict of Arthur and Mordred at the battle of Camlann, in which Arthur was killed, in 93, perhaps the equivalent of 539.

Gildas, Nennius, and the annals have taken us a long way from the world of Camelot, Guinevere, and the Holy Grail. They suggest that Arthur, far from being the ruler of a fabulous country, was a general in-

involved in a series of desperate attempts to stop the expansion of the Anglo-Saxons after the Romans had withdrawn from Britain. His greatest victory was at Mount Badon, in the early sixth century; twenty years later, he was killed at the battle of Camlann.

In many ways, archaeology and history are ideal partners. While historical documents, such as “The History of the Britons,” report (or claim to report) on key figures and events, archaeology is better equipped to sketch the broad outlines of social and economic trends. As far as the end of Roman Britain, the emergence of independent kingdoms in the west and the Anglo-Saxon settlement of England are concerned, archaeology has made substantial strides in the last few decades. While we still have only a hazy idea of the location of Mount Badon (was it near Bath?), and no idea at all of the location of Camlann, we do have the glimmer of an impression of sub-Roman Britain.

In 367, the historical sources tell us, barbarians from Scotland and Ireland overran the Roman province, which was recovered—with difficulty—in 369. In 383, a British general, Magnus Maximus, took troops to support his bid for imperial power in Gaul. Stilicho withdrew further detachments to defend Italy in 401. Within the decade, stripped of government forces, Britain ceased to belong in any meaningful sense to the Roman Empire. The door, already ajar, was wide open for settlement from the Continent.

After the early fifth century, lowland Britain presents an almost completely un-Roman appearance. Exca-

vations at Canterbury, London, St. Albans, Lincoln, and York show that, although the former cities may have been occupied, the inhabitants lived in communities that were no longer urban. There is little, if any, evidence for the survival of Christianity (in contrast to western Britain), or of the use of money, or of the application of the “advanced” technology of the Romans. The Anglo-Saxon settlers moved into a region that had abandoned (or was in the process of abandoning) the trappings of Roman civilization. In the north and west, local commanders had assumed the administrative powers of the Roman governors, and took what measures they could to stem the tide of Anglo-Saxon expansion. Gildas’s diatribe was directed against these rulers, and he saw the successes of the Saxons as retribution for abuses of power. Nennius’s twelve battles were events in the British attempt to stop the advance of the Anglo-Saxons.

Several archaeological excavations contributing evidence of the post-Roman, pre-Anglo-Saxon Britain have been at sites also associated with the Arthurian legend. Between 1966 and 1970, for example, Leslie Alcock, a professor of archaeology at the University of Glasgow, excavated Cadbury Castle, a hill fort of the pre-Roman Iron Age near the village of Queen Camel and West Camel. His report stated that between 400 and 1000, somebody whose style of construction proved him to be Celtic, not Saxon, refortified Cadbury Castle. “As the Saxons conquered this part of Somerset in the seventh century,” Alcock wrote, “the acceptable range of time shrank to little more than 200 years. Almost in the middle of it was Arthur.”

Stripped of his crown, detached from the Round Table and the Holy Grail, Arthur emerges from the Dark Age documents as a historical figure, shadowy but real: a British general of the sixth century.

—David Whitehouse

Mr. Whitehouse is the chief curator at The Corning Museum of Glass. An archaeologist by training, he has excavated in Britain, in Mediterranean countries, in Iran and Afghanistan. He is the author of more than two hundred articles, reviews, and books.





What began around a kitchen table in Vermont—book lovers talking about books—has grown into a national program encompassing 300 libraries and more than 30,000 people from Maine to Hawaii. The process of expanding from small to large scale can be a traumatic journey into the heart of bureaucracy—a rite of passage out of which good ideas too often emerge unrecognizable. That has not been the case with Let's Talk about It, a three-year nationwide program sponsored by the American Library Association (ALA) and funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. By bringing scholars and the general public together to explore themes of past and present life and culture through reading and discussion, Let's Talk about It has given a good idea room to grow.

When Pat Bates, then program director at Rutland Free Library in Rutland, Vermont, was in her kitchen talking about books with friends, it occurred to her that similar discussions could be held on a larger scale in the library.

Funded by a grant from the Vermont Council on the Humanities and Public Issues, Bates's first program in 1978, was called "Women in Literature." The plan was to present a ten-week reading and discussion series focusing on five books all related to a particular theme. The group would meet every two weeks with a local humanities scholar to discuss one of the five books. When 150 people registered for the "Women in Literature" series, which included such works as Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*, it was evident that out-of-school adults would respond to opportunities to explore the humanities under the guidance of scholars.

The success of that first program led to others in Vermont and throughout New England; six years later, the Vermont model provided the framework for a national Let's Talk about It. Armed with \$1.5 million in funding from NEH, and under the direction of ALA, the project's national advisory committee, composed of librarians, scholars, and state humanities council representatives, tackled the daunting job of replicating across the nation the



Six national themes were developed by the American Library Association for reading programs at local libraries. Among them, *Not for Children Only* offers an adult reexamination of the classics of children's literature, and *Being Ethnic, Becoming American* (illustration on the following page) explores the tension between assimilation and the preservation of heritage.

American Library Association

## "Let's Talk About It"

three ingredients that had transformed Pat Bates's kitchen table into a round table for discussion: interested adult readers; challenging, exciting texts; and scholars willing to devote serious intellectual effort to a new audience.

It was decided that money would be allocated in subgrants of \$18,500 to library organizations representing individual states. At workshops held in different regions of the country, members of the advisory committee provided an overview of the Let's Talk about It project and instructed teams from the states on how to apply for a subgrant. The goal of the workshops was to give the states the background and flexibility necessary to design pilot projects in such a way as to suit their own needs.

Subgrant proposals from the state teams were evaluated by a six-member selection committee, with thirty states ultimately receiving funding. Most states are basing their programs on one of the six themes selected by the advisory committee and developed by scholars with expertise in the appropriate field. ALA supplies all fifty-one states and territories participating in the workshops with a packet of materials including theme pamphlets, which establish the general direction of a theme and introduce the five texts to be discussed; promotion kits comprised of sample news releases, clip art, ad mats, and other promotional ideas; and theme posters. These materials make it easier for small- to medium-size libraries with limited resources



to present effective programs.

Theme selection proved to be the advisory committee's most challenging and enjoyable task. After extensive deliberations among the group, six themes emerged reflecting issues central to the human experience in contemporary society. (Four additional themes will be ready for use in 1987). The theme concepts either illuminate an aspect of modern life as it is expressed in a variety of literary forms or show new ways to approach a particular kind of literature.

For example, *Making a Living, Making a Life: Work and Its Rewards in a Changing America* explores how what we do is inextricably linked to who we are, using such books as Studs Terkel's *Working* and Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*. *Being Ethnic, Becoming American: Struggles, Successes, Symbols* looks at another universal human concern—the tension between assimilating oneself into a homogeneous culture, on the one hand, and preserving ethnic roots, on the other. This theme is analyzed in Maxine Hong Kingston's *Woman Warrior*, James Baldwin's *Go Tell It on the Mountain*, and three other works. *Not for Children Only* exam-

ines children's classics from the perspective of adult readers, using such standards as E. B. White's *Charlotte's Web* to show that books written for children are intrinsically humanizing for any reader. The remaining three themes are the Way We Were, the Way We Are: Seasons in the Contemporary American Family; Individual Rights and Community; and What America Reads: Myth Making in Popular Fiction.

That discussions on these wide-ranging, challenging themes have attracted 30,000 out-of-school adults indicates that television and the video cassette recorder may not have quite so firm a stranglehold on the popular imagination as we often assume. Victor Swenson, executive director of the Vermont Council on the Humanities and Public Issues and a member of the Let's Talk about It national advisory committee, believes that the success of reading and discussion programs reveals a "common human craving for something cerebral that none of the popular kinds of entertainment comes close to touching." Elizabeth Baer, dean of Washington College in Chestertown, Maryland, and also a member of the advisory committee as well as a participating scholar in numerous discussion groups, echoes Swenson, commenting that wherever she has presented a program, the audience has exhibited a "remarkable hunger for intellectual stimulation, a hunger to hear what the scholar has to say and to respond."

And respond they do. Whether it is a woman in Nevada, Missouri, expressing dismay over a fellow participant's preoccupation with phallic symbols ("Mercy—why, he could find a phallic symbol in a meadow"), or whether it is a woman in Vermont telling Elizabeth Baer, after the discussion of *Wide Sargasso Sea*, "I've read the book twice and I'm convinced you're wrong about it," one thing is clear: Adult readers aren't afraid to have their say. Scholars throughout the country have commented on the rewards of dealing with such an audience. "Talking with adults about literature," according to a scholar in Oklahoma, "keeps me honest, keeps me away from academic isolation and aloofness." It also brings the scholar into contact with a much larger audience

than one usually finds in academia. As Baer notes, "the average scholarly article is read by five to seven people."

If Let's Talk about It (and its progenitor in Vermont) has brought about what Pat Bates and Victor Swenson have called a "reading revolution," it hasn't happened without the contributions of many different groups and individuals. In addition to the advisory committee and staff at ALA, including project director Sandra Cooper, the efforts of state humanities councils, and local librarians have been invaluable. The former have identified scholars at the local level, offered consultation on designing and carrying out the actual programs, and, in some cases, supplied additional funding. Similarly, local librarians have served as facilitators, transforming their libraries into kitchen tables around which scholars and readers gather.

The long-term effect of Let's Talk about It has been to develop not just readers but critical readers who realize that literature is more than mere plot. According to Pat Bates, "After you've gone through a discussion series, you change how you read. You understand that many books are like artichokes, where you peel off leaves to get to the heart. The scholar teaches you to look for the underlying messages."

It all came into focus for Elizabeth Baer one evening in Fairfax, Virginia, as she watched a woman's book cooperative unloading crates of books from a large van. Awaiting the books were more than 100 readers who had registered for a discussion program in which Baer was involved. The image of those crates of books being loaded onto hand carts confirmed her belief in the worth of Let's Talk about It. The need for intellectual sustenance had been there all along, but here was a project that was actually delivering the goods.

—Bill Ott

Mr. Ott is the editor of Books for Adults, Booklist, and is the American Library Association Materials Coordinator for Let's Talk about It.

*"Let's Talk about It: Reading and Discussion Programs in America's Libraries"/ Sandra M. Cooper/American Library Association, Chicago/\$1,585,425/1983-86/ Humanities Projects in Libraries*





# A Nation of Readers

*Ed. note: What is noteworthy about what now must be called a national phenomenon of adult reading programs is not only the speed with which they caught on, but the variety of ways they have been adapted by the state humanities councils to serve local readers. How the councils work to bring the humanities to out-of-school adults is an interesting study in the relationship between geography and culture.*

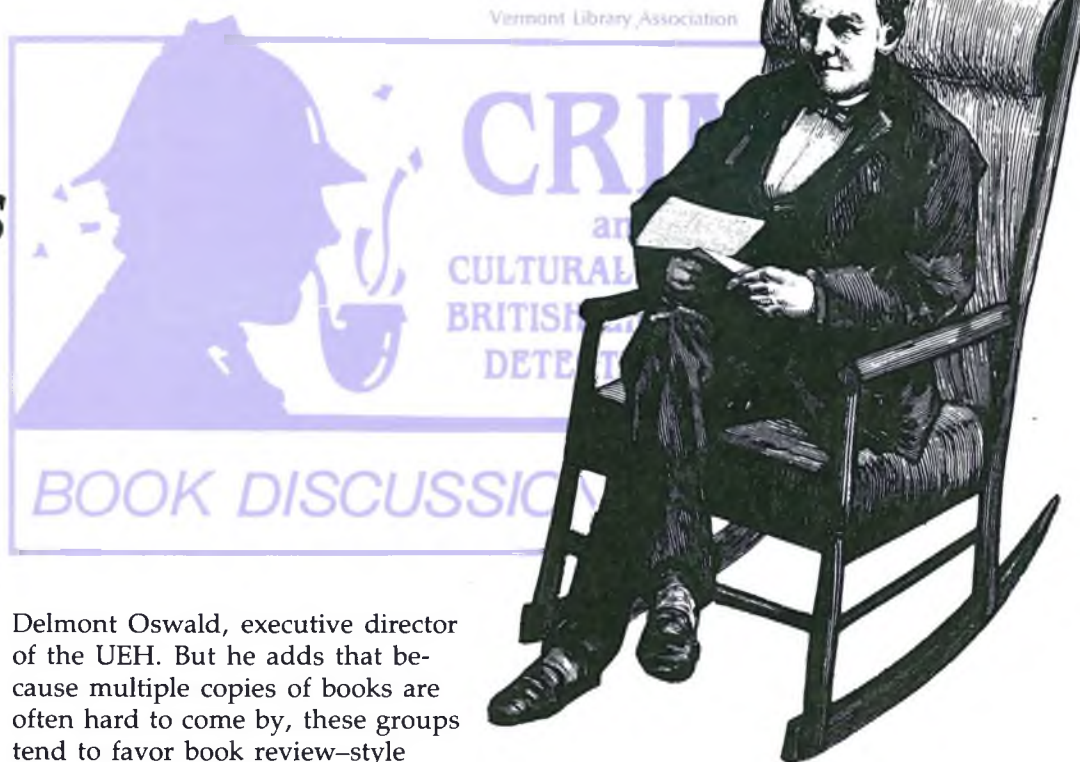
*The following article points out the differences in approach between Vermont, where it all began and where new kinds of programs are being tested, and Utah, where radio and chautauqua programs have been enlisted to reach the state's far-flung populace.*

Vermont, a state of blunt green mountains, has a strong sense of "town." One of the first state committees to sponsor scholar-led reading and discussion programs for adults, the Vermont Council on the Humanities and Public Issues has for almost ten years reached communities throughout the state through the local librarian, a presence in almost every Vermont town.

Utah's jagged mountains jut up from flat salt desert. It takes ten hours to drive from the top of the state to the bottom. Most of this immense area is sparsely populated, except for a narrow corridor known as the Wasatch Front, where most of the people and cultural activities are concentrated. To reach the state's widely scattered population, the Utah Endowment for the Humanities (UEH) has packaged reading/discussion programs that can be mailed both to libraries and to independently organized groups. Utah has also piloted to library-based program similar to Vermont's. Both Utah programs are complemented by radio programs, "scholars on tape," and a traveling chautauqua.

## UTAH

"In Utah, book clubs and reading groups are common. Many have been in existence for ten years," says



Delmont Oswald, executive director of the UEH. But he adds that because multiple copies of books are often hard to come by, these groups tend to favor book review-style meetings rather than book discussions.

As a way of encouraging preexisting groups to more active inquiry as well as helping new reading groups form, the UEH developed a humanities reading and discussion program for adults to serve the entire state, including the sparsely populated areas far from the Wasatch Front. "Books Alive" is transported to all parts of Utah in 9"x12"x4" boxes that include multiple copies of a book; a study guide prepared by scholars to provide an analysis of the book; a list of related resources, including scholars willing to lecture or lead discussions, films, and other media material; as well as a bibliography of additional readings on the theme.

Packages have been created for nine themes, such as Utah's Changing Population—Cultural Diversity with readings that include *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou, *The Chosen* by Chaim Potok, *Laughing Boy* by Oliver La Farge, and *Barrio Boy* by Ernesto Gallaraza or *And the Earth Did Not Part* by Thomas Rivera. Other themes contain only one or two titles. The theme, *The Sacred and the Secular*, for example, features *Screwdriver Letters* by C. S. Lewis.

The packages are more than a convenience, according to Oswald. "Nearly half of the groups that have used Books Alive reported that they organized because the packages are available."

Few of the groups, however, have scheduled scholars to speak at their meetings, even though packages come with an easy application for a quick response mini-grant to cover the cost of the scholars' honoraria. One participant has commented that scholars are the "icing on the cake." The UEH disagrees. "To conduct a solid humanities program, we feel they need a scholar," says Oswald.

The UEH plans to augment the book packages with radio programs. Four major public stations, along with many smaller commercial stations reach most of the state. "Perhaps because of the vast distances and the geographic challenges, many stations have very faithful listeners," explains Oswald.

One program called "Thinking Out Loud" has produced shows on themes such as medical ethics, Egyptian archaeology, ethnic history, George Orwell's writings, American nineteenth-century material culture, women's history, and issues in American education. "With a magazine format of scholarly content, humanistic approaches, as well as high audience appeal, why not tie it to Books Alive?" Oswald explains. The programs can be reused by recording them on cassette tapes, thereby literally bringing a scholar's voice to reading and discussion groups.

At about the same time Books Alive was introduced by the UEH, Let's Talk about It (LTAI), a scholar-led, library-based reading/discussion





program for adults was piloted in Utah. Sponsored by the American Library Association, the pilot program targets rural areas outside the Wasatch Front, as well as underserved metropolitan areas.

The majority of Utah's population—especially outside the Wasatch Front—are members of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints (Mormons). One of the first acts of the Mormon pioneers who settled the state in the mid-nineteenth century was to establish public schools. Utah is ranked second in the nation in percentage of high school graduates; The state spends 60 percent of its budget on education.

"Mormon church meetings emphasize discussion as a forum for exchanging ideas. The women's organization sponsors a monthly program dealing with secular literature and so it was felt a foundation for LTAI already existed," says Helen Cox, director of the Utah Library Association's project.

Another plan for reaching wider audience in Utah involves a traveling program.

In the summer of 1984, a traveling chautauqua complemented Books Alive programming in about twenty communities. The chautauqua idea—a liberal arts education for adults and families in an informal setting—was called by Teddy

Roosevelt "the most American thing about America." A typical program, sponsored by the Utah Library Association, contains "something for everyone" with a scholar-led reading and discussion of a Willa Cather short story, a viewing and discussion of the American Playhouse's "Bernice Bobs Her Hair" (produced with funds from the NEH media program), a lecture on women's changing roles in the West, and a performance by a woman assuming the character of Willa Cather.

#### VERMONT

Last year when the first "About Books and People" program was planned for Chester, Vermont, almost ten years after the first adult reading programs had tested the water in that state, librarian Sally Anderson expected a modest turnout. But when more than fifty people picked up the books, she knew she had underestimated. The evening program opened to a standing-room-only crowd, which in Chester was seventy-two people.

Librarians like Anderson still collaborate with scholars from the local colleges and universities to plan the programs. Anderson remembers "how nervous I was calling professors at Dartmouth, Middlebury, and the University of Vermont. Somehow they seemed way up there and little Chester way down here. Why would anyone drive more than one hundred miles to speak in our small town?" She found that scholars are in fact "gracious in sharing their time and knowledge. They look forward to participating in these programs."

One of the programs, *Myths in Marriage*, critically examines the myth of "boy meets girl and they live happily ever after." The participants read *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen, *Age of Innocence* by Edith Wharton, *Tell Me a Riddle* by Tillie Olsen, *The Summer before the Dark* by Doris Lessing, *Rabbit Run* by John Updike, and *Portrait of a Marriage* by Nigel Nicolson.

The group meets every other week over the twelve-week period. Scholars introduce the books, then lead the discussion.

The success of the program has changed the status of the library in

Chester, claims Anderson. "What was once called 'that expensive little hobby on Main Street' is now the center of intellectual action."

Anderson is now director of the Vermont Reading Project and is introducing the program to libraries all over the state. "We have towns as small as 600 that are pulling in twenty participants. I recently traveled to a town which consisted of one street and that was not paved. Yet, six or eight women attended the meeting, ready to choose a program and sign up the required number of people."

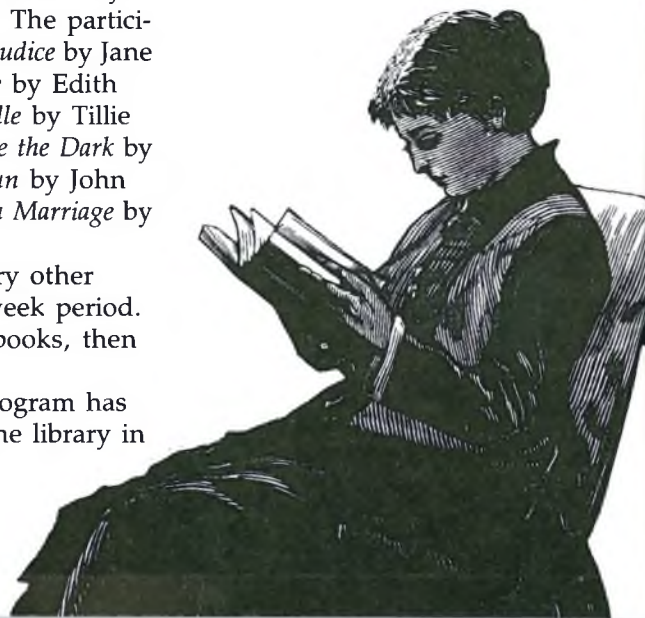
Reading and discussion groups are now strongly established in Vermont, and the latest NEH funding is being used to test twelve-week programs that will examine the topic Individual Rights and Community in America with readings from *The Republic*, *Coriolanus*, *Locke's Second Treatise*, *Rousseau's Social Contract*, *The Scarlet Letter*, and *Democracy in America*.

"People want to confront serious issues," Anderson observes. Yet the discussions do not polarize the groups. Participants become close. Friendships develop. People smile.

"We live in a complex and often depressing world; the news from out there is not always promising or uplifting. These programs allow us to think about what it means to be human, to explore the issues of living, and to begin to understand better our culture and ourselves."

—Susan Rasmussen Goodman

"Vermont Humanities Reading Project"/ Sally C. Anderson/Vermont Library Association, Burlington/\$210,000/1985-87 Humanities Projects in Libraries





The 573 love letters exchanged between Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning have ironically become a very public record of what was in 1845–46 a very private courtship and secret marriage. The instant celebrity that descended upon the Brownings once their secret was known has not abated in 120 years. They are lovers who belong to the public imagination, not just the literary world.

Within their lifetimes, their great fame caused their Florentine home, the Casa Guidi, to become a kind of literary mecca. Michael Meredith, president of the Browning Society of London and professor of English and librarian at Eton College, has written, "Meeting the Brownings was a cherished memory for many British and American visitors to Florence in the 1850s. Upon their marriage the Brownings found themselves celebrities, and therefore numerous accounts of meetings survive to tease biographers with a kaleidoscope of impressions. Such accounts—together with photographs, paintings, and drawings—are full of half-truths, simplifications, and distortions, for to meet the Brownings was not the same as to know the Brownings—and few could claim that distinction."

If few could really "know the Brownings," many at least know more about them as the result of an NEH-funded conference and exhibition held in Winfield, Kansas, last spring, "Meeting the Brownings: Their Lives, Their Art, Their Age." The exhibition contained 250 items including rare manuscripts, books, and first editions as well as ordinary objects from the Brownings' homelife: Robert's christening gown,



Chalk drawing of Elizabeth Barrett Browning by Field Talfourd after a portrait done in Rome in 1859.

Baylor University, Waco, Texas

## Meeting the Brownings

a teacup, a cross, an inkwell, a matchbox in the shape of a fish. By presenting such items together with the more famous manuscripts and letters, the exhibition designers made it possible to see the Brownings as people, not just poets and legendary lovers from the rarified heights of near-myth.

Meredith, who wrote the text for the exhibition catalogue, told the *Winfield Daily Courier* at the time of the exhibition, "There are numerous items that have never been seen in public before—the 'prompt' copy of Browning's first play, *Stratford*, presented at Covent Garden Theater, London, in 1837; Browning's book of John Donne, important because Browning was one of the few in the nineteenth century who appreciated Donne's greatness; and Browning's copy of Wanley's *Wonders of the Little World*, published in London in 1678 and the source of the poet's *Pied Piper*. The book contains many marginal notes in Browning's handwriting and even a poem by him."

The approaching centennial of Robert Browning's death (1989), and an increased interest in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poetry, (especially her 1857 poem, *Aurora Leigh*, with its autobiographical themes of the intellectual and spiritual growth of a literary woman), made last spring's conference a timely new consideration of Robert and Elizabeth—their lives together, their

shared interests and beliefs, and their work as leading and beloved poets of their day. Southwestern College of Winfield, Kansas, hosted the event, which brought internationally known scholars and the most extensive collection of Browning materials ever amassed for a single showing to a rural heartland town of 10,000 to 11,000 people.

In the words of one of the visitors to the exhibition and conference, "The distance from Wimpole Street to Winfield was surprisingly short." Not only was the city founded in the Victorian era and very conscious of its origin, it is also the location of a Rossetti society that has been active for decades. The main reason for bringing the Brownings to Winfield, however, is that a large portion of the exhibition already resided there.

The project was the brainchild of Southwestern College's English professor Sandy Feinstein, who worked in conjunction with Browning authority and Winfield resident, Philip Kelley. From his introduction to Browning at the age of twelve, via *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, Kelley's love for the Brownings has made his avocation his life. After a career as editor, printer, and teacher in New York City and London, Kelley returned to his native state to devote himself to Browning scholarship. Kelley's Wedgestone Press in Winfield is editing and publishing the Brownings' voluminous correspond-

Earliest known photograph of Robert Browning made in Paris in 1856 and discovered in 1985.



ence: 12,000 letters to appear in chronological order, an undertaking that will fill forty volumes.

Kelley's vast collection of Browning memorabilia formed the backbone of Southwestern's exhibition. The Armstrong Browning Library at Baylor University lent its collection, and by the time the exhibit was actually displayed, it included materials from forty different locations and had grown too large to be shown in one place. So it was divided between the college and public libraries—a circumstance that served to emphasize the double appeal of the event for both scholars and the general public.

The conference included poetry readings at the Winfield Public Library, as well as the presentation of papers at the college library. At the first of the three public readings, Feinstein led a discussion of Browning's use of the dramatic monologue to portray the Renaissance world.

Because the conference sought to place the Brownings within their time and culture, the papers were divided between discussions of the Brownings and their art, and of other Victorian writers and artists such as members of the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood. The exhibition, in fact, included Dante Gabriel Rossetti's painting, "Hist!—said Kate the Queen," based on *Pippa Passes*, a work owned by Eton College.

In a special session, Sandra Donaldson of the University of North Dakota conducted a workshop on editing. Donaldson, who is currently coediting *The Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning to Isa Blagden, 1850–1861*, explained the processes of reading handwriting, checking references, and dating letters, and talked about the political is-

ssues involved in editorial interpretation. Another aspect of the printing process was offered through tours of Wedgestone Press, where conference-goers had the chance to see what happens to a manuscript as it goes from the editor to the printer and publisher.

Early press coverage emphasized the public nature of the conference. Townspeople began to think of the Browning collection as part of their community, and even before widespread news coverage, Feinstein received inquiries from the local Girl Scouts, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Stillwater, Oklahoma, Browning Society. The conference presented the opportunity for the Winfield community to reexamine its own Victorian past. Plans grew to include guided tours of Spring Hill Farm, a two-room farmhouse built in 1872 and in continuous operation since that time. The tours allowed conference visitors to experience "the slower paced era of the 1800s," with such recreational activities as horseshoes and picnics, boating and afternoon tea.

In short, Winfield became very like London in 1845 when one of England's most famous poets reclined on her invalid's couch at 50 Wimpole Street. Elizabeth Barrett—whose sonnets her contemporaries would call the finest love poems in England—had achieved international fame with the 1844 publication of her *Poems*. This collection grew out of her passionate interest in literature and was made possible by her illnesses: By her late thirties, confined to her room and cared for by her family, Elizabeth was able to devote herself to her studies, poetry, and vast correspondence. It was on

January 10, 1845, that she received the letter that would change her life. "I love your verse with all my heart, dear Miss Barrett," wrote the thirty-three-year-old Robert Browning. "I do, as I say, love these Books with all my heart—and I love you too."

At this point only Elizabeth was famous; her future husband had grown from a precocious boy into a struggling poet whose earliest works met with critical failure. Not until 1841 did he begin to find his true voice, with *Bells and Pomegranates*. In this collection, Browning was beginning to meld his important poetic themes with strong writing, and he won recognition from a few for this work, including a nod in verse from Elizabeth Barrett.

In an 1844 poem, "Lady Geraldine's Courtship," Geraldine's lover reads to her:

...at times a modern volume,—  
Wordsworth's solemn-thoughted  
idyl,  
Howitt's ballad-dew, or Tennyson's  
enchanted reverie,  
Or from Browning some 'Pomegran-  
ate,' which, if cut deep down the  
middle,  
Shows a heart within blood-tinctured,  
of a veined humanity!

Browning's delight at this recognition prompted him to write to the retiring poet, and so he sent his famous declaration, which began the world's most private, public love story.

—Allyson F. McGill

"Robert Browning and the Victorians: An Exhibition of Correspondence, Scholarship, and Poetry"/Sandy Feinstein/ Southwestern College, Winfield, KS/ \$37,166/1985–86/Humanities Projects in Libraries

Courtesy of Michael Meredith, Eton College

Bronze mould of Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning's clasped hands by Harriet Hosner, 1853.





# THE Humanities GUIDE

*for those who are  
thinking of applying  
for an NEH grant*

## Public Programs in Libraries

Libraries have received support from the Endowment's Division of General Programs for projects in all fields of the humanities and for a variety of approaches—reading and discussion groups, conferences, and exhibitions—but successful applicants have at least one thing in common. They propose projects that are feasible within the context of their libraries and their communities. Many successful applicants propose projects that simply make their libraries' existing collections more appealing and accessible to the public.

A case in point is the Folger Shakespeare Library. In celebration of the centennial of Emily Dickinson's death, the Folger opened its doors to the general public in an NEH-funded conference and exhibition, "Emily Dickinson: Letter to the World." During the two-day conference, scholars from several countries presented views of Dickinson's life and

letters, while a Dickinson exhibition—open free to the public from May 2 to June 30—featured manuscripts and other materials from Dickinson's life, as well as works by contemporary writers inspired by her work.

Libraries in relatively small or isolated communities can take advantage of NEH support to bring world-renowned scholars to their communities. The Durango Public Library, for example, sponsored a series of lectures by local and internationally known archaeologists speaking on the "new" archaeology. The library, in cooperation with the Fort Lewis College Library, capitalized on community interest in archaeological finds in southwestern Colorado to familiarize the local public with new developments in professional archaeology. The program emphasized the essentials of human existence, the basic materials of social life, and raised questions about social organization.

In reviewing the proposal, panelists applauded the program's emphasis on promoting understanding of one of the disciplines of the humanities. One librarian on the panel also stressed the value of a cooperative bibliography of their outstanding holdings in Southwest archaeology that the libraries plan to publish.

Several panelists commended the cooperation between a public and a college library, while NEH staff pointed out that the topic, which might not attract members of another community, has strong appeal to residents of the Durango area because of the archaeological importance of the region.

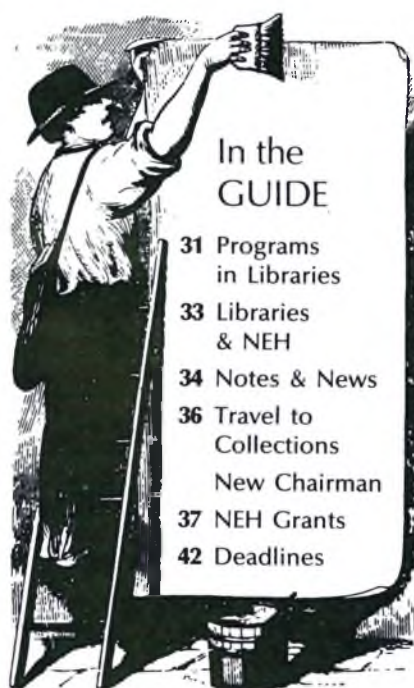
The successful project proposal not only demonstrates the fulfillment of a community need or inter-

est, but also demonstrates judicious use of a library's collection and human resources. A good example of a library that has capitalized on the strength of its collection in a particular subject and on local interest in that subject is the City Library of Springfield, Massachusetts.

The library's local history department is presenting a one-year series of lectures, exhibits, and publications examining the history of Springfield and its impact on New England in light of recent scholarship by historians and anthropologists. The series coincides with the 350th anniversary of the founding of the town, and the library's program is one of several celebratory efforts taking place this year.

Panelists reviewing the proposal commended both "the attempt to place local history in the context of a wider historical process" and the use made of local resources and talent. Exhibitions draw on the library's collection of photographs and records of the town, while many of the guest speakers are associated with institutions in the Springfield area, including the University of Massachusetts and the Connecticut Valley Historical Museum. One panelist thought that the program would "allow the public to see how real historians deal with a community—their community, in fact—and expose lay people to the questions that the profession asks and the methods that it uses to answer them. Thus, the project fulfills two of the goals of the libraries program, illuminating a series of historical events and providing an awareness of the methods and insights of one of the humanities disciplines."

To ensure the intellectual rigor of a project—an important criterion by



PROGRAMS

PROPOSALS

DEADLINES

GRANTS





**Poster publicizing a lecture series and exhibition on the new archaeology at Durango Public Library in Colorado. Pottery in the exhibition was discovered near Durango.**

FREE ADMISSION

*The Future of the Past*

CURRENT TRENDS IN ARCHAEOLOGY

January 28, 7:30 p.m. Fine Arts Auditorium, F&C IAN ALLEN, author of <i>Clan of the Cave Bear</i> "Archaeology: A popular novelist's viewpoint"	March 11, 7:30 p.m. Nixa Room, F&C ARTHUR ROBIN, Ph.D., Kansas State U. "Four Corners archaeology"
February 6, 7:30 p.m. Nixa Room, F&C LEWIS BINFORD, Ph.D., U. of New Mexico "Current controversies regarding the behavior of early man"	March 18, 7:30 p.m. Nixa Room, F&C WILLIAM LIPPI, Ph.D., Washington State U. "Public archaeology"
February 15, 7:30 p.m. Nixa Room, F&C KENNETH PETERSEN, Ph.D., Anasazi Heritage Center "Ancient man and his environment"	March 25, 7:30 p.m. Fine Arts Auditorium, F&C DONALD JOHNSON, Ph.D., author of <i>Lucy</i> "The beginnings of humankind: In search of our origins"
February 22, 7:30 p.m. Nixa Room, F&C ANTHONY BUCHNER, Ph.D., U. of Wisconsin "Historical archaeology: A Canadian view"	April 8, 7:30 p.m. Nixa Room, F&C PHILIP DUKE, Ph.D., Fort Lewis College "The relevance of archaeology"
February 29, 7:30 p.m. Nixa Room, F&C LINDA CORDELL, Ph.D., U. of New Mexico "The ancient Southwest: New theories"	April 15, 7:30 p.m. Nixa Room, F&C IAN HODDER, Ph.D., Cambridge U. "Archaeology's future: A European view"

This lecture series, which is sponsored by the Durango Public Library and the Fort Lewis College Library, is funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

which NEH panelists weigh the merits of a proposal—librarians must involve scholars and others with appropriate credentials. Many successful project proposals bring together public librarians, academic librarians, scholars, and members of a community.

An outstanding example of coordinated work among libraries, scholars, and the community is underway in Rhode Island. To answer the question "Is there a Rhode Island style?" the Rhode Island Department of State Library Services is bringing members of the public and humanities scholars together in libraries across the state. Participants include curators from the Rhode Island Museum of Art, and the Clara Barton Birthplace Museum, as well as scholars from the Rhode Island School of Design,

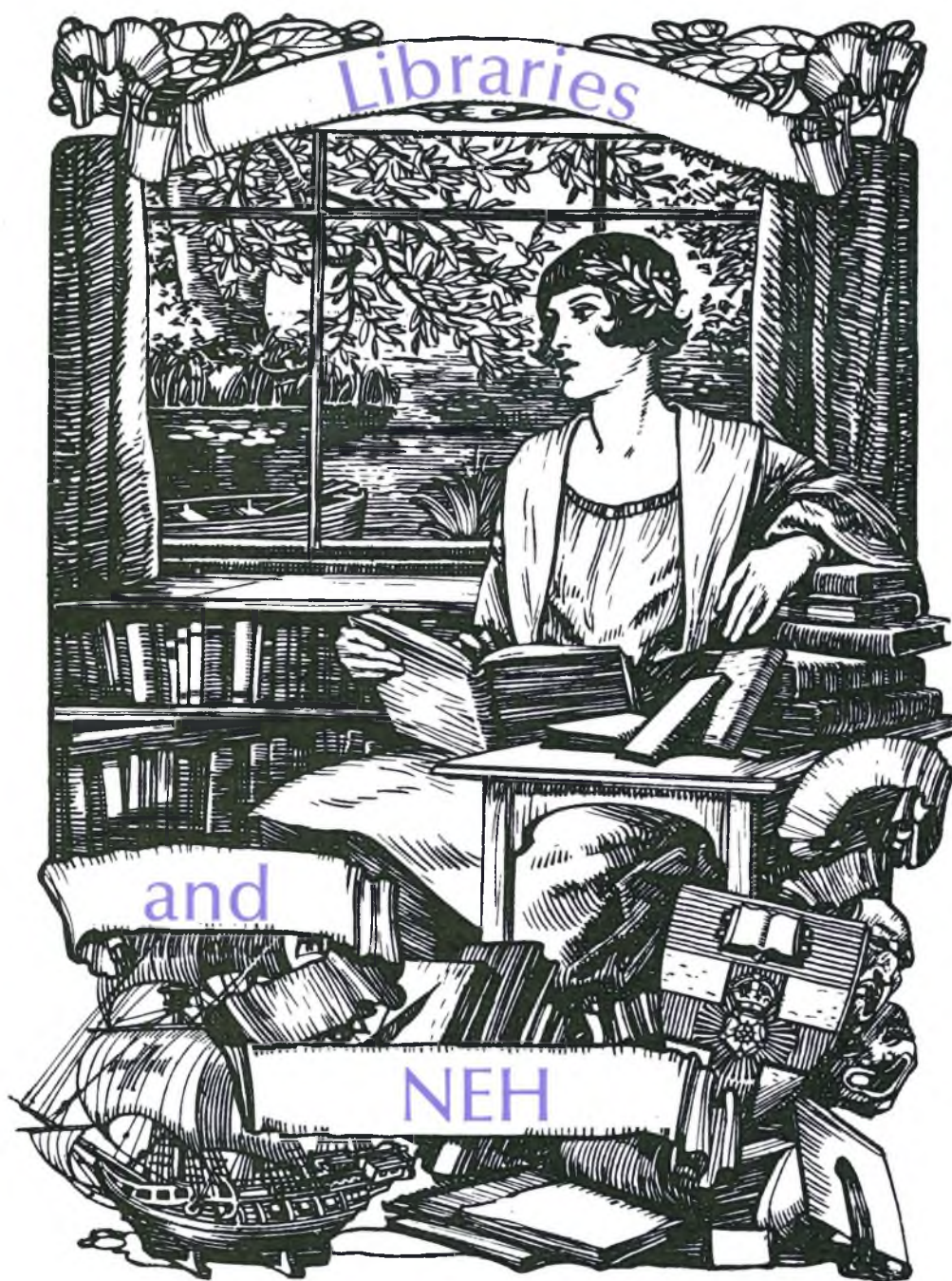
Brown University, and Providence College. One panelist noted that "this program will demand a lot of the humanist scholars who will lecture four to five times and prepare an essay and bibliography. However, the accompanying letters of support show great interest in the program."

In addition to attracting the support of scholars and other institutions in their communities, program sponsors must demonstrate in their proposals that they can attract strong public support as well. Publicity, of course, is a key factor in bringing the public into libraries for special programs. The successful proposal includes a publicity plan that can be carried out by the library's existing staff, or with the help of additional staff included in the proposal.

All projects funded by the Endowment's Division of General Programs should fulfill the legislative mandate to foster public understanding and appreciation of the humanities, yet even the most worthy program will not receive funding if the proposal describing it is not clear and concise. Applicants should avoid the use of jargon and turgid prose. They should read the Guidelines and follow the Application Instructions.

Every division of the Endowment funds projects in libraries. If in doubt about where to submit a proposal, prospective applicants should contact Thomas Phelps, Division of General Programs, National Endowment for the Humanities, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20506 202-786-0271.





Although only one program in the National Endowment for the Humanities explicitly names libraries in its title (Humanities Projects in Libraries in the Division of General Programs), all five divisions of NEH as well as the Office of Preservation and the Office of Challenge Grants provide support of one kind or another for libraries. With the exception of challenge grants, which are the only grants that provide long-range support for institutional development, NEH programs fund specific projects to enlarge opportunities for education, research, and public programming in all fields of the humanities.

#### **Division of Education Programs**

College and university libraries frequently play important roles in projects, funded through this divi-

sion, to strengthen teaching and learning in the humanities. Colleges or universities that are undertaking projects to improve the humanities curriculum, funded through the division's Central Disciplines in Undergraduate Education Program, may request funds for necessary library acquisitions. They may also propose activities to enhance the cooperation between libraries and humanities departments or to provide instruction in the use of the library's resources as an aspect of the humanities course.

Well-staffed research libraries have received funds from the Exemplary Projects in Undergraduate and Graduate Education Program to conduct institutes that provide college and university teachers with the opportunity for eight to ten weeks of intensive study under the

direction of several excellent scholars in subjects central to the humanities.

Finally, public, high school, and college or university libraries could be involved in collaborative projects to strengthen the curriculum and improve the teaching of the humanities in secondary school systems.

#### **The Division of Fellowships and Seminars**

Although there is no direct support for libraries in this division, which provides the opportunity for individual scholars, working independently or in collegial seminars, to pursue research and writing in the humanities, the grants made to individual researchers promote the use of library facilities.

#### **The Division of General Programs**

The Humanities Projects in Libraries Program supports libraries in any of this division's three broad goals for public understanding of the humanities: the appreciation and interpretation of cultural works; the illumination of important historical ideas, people, and events; and the understanding of characteristic approaches, findings, and problems in humanities disciplines. For a more detailed description of this program as well as advice for libraries seeking this kind of support, see pages 31-32 in this issue.

The division also supports the production of television and radio programs as well as interpretive exhibitions. Many libraries have received awards to create exhibitions interpreting their collections; many others have used NEH-supported films in connection with lectures and discussion programs.

#### **The Division of Research Programs**

By supporting research and the development of research tools and resources, this division in a sense helps supply libraries with the books and reference works that are their *raison d'être*. In the Texts Program, for example, the division offers publication subventions for significant works in the humanities and grants for the translation of such works from other languages into English.

Several programs in the division



provide more direct support for projects in archives and libraries. Through the Access category, the division funds projects to increase the availability of important research collections and other significant sources for scholarly research. Grants are made to organize and describe collections or archives, to develop catalogues or other bibliographic controls, to survey records, and to produce various kinds of finding aids. A crucial question considered when proposals for grants in this area are evaluated is whether the material to be dealt with has national significance for scholarly research in the humanities.

The Reference Materials Program also supports the creation of research tools, such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, and atlases. On the occasions when all the relevant materials for such reference works have been contained in one library, the library has been central to the direction of the project.

A university whose research library has outstanding holdings in some special area in the humanities might wish to start a research center. The Interpretive Research Program of this division provides funds for certain start-up costs for such centers. Finally, research libraries with fellowship programs may apply for funds, which they in turn regrant to individual research fellows, from the Centers for Advanced Study Program.

#### The Division of State Programs

Libraries are among the most frequent recipients of funding from the volunteer state humanities councils, which, with support from the Division of State Programs, make grants for projects in the humanities in all fifty states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Library reading and discussion programs, described on pages 25-28 of this issue, are being conducted in nearly every state. In addition, libraries have received funds for traveling exhibitions, film discussions, and lecture series.

#### The Office of Challenge Grants

Libraries of all kinds—public, independent, and college or university—have been notably successful applicants for challenge grants and have used them to en-

hance collections, to renovate facilities, to increase endowments or cash reserves (provided that funds are restricted to support programs, personnel, or activities within the humanities), and to catalogue, restore, and conserve humanities texts and materials.

Challenge grants are made to promote long-term growth and improve financial stability of educational and cultural institutions. Because recipients of challenge grants must raise three dollars in new or increased contributions from nonfederal donors for each federal dollar, these grants provide opportunities for institutions to expand their bases of private and nonfederal public support.

An award of \$300,000, for example, was made in December 1984 to Allen County Public Library in Fort Wayne, Indiana, to help establish a \$1.2 million endowment fund for the acquisition of books and journals in the humanities. Like all challenge grants, this award will help the institution improve its capacity to conduct programs and activities of high quality in the humanities.

#### The Office of Preservation

Research institutions engaged in the fight against deteriorating resources in the humanities will find help in the NEH Office of Preservation. The office emphasizes two goals: to preserve first the intellectual content, and in some cases, the materials themselves, of deteriorating documents in the humanities and to enhance the capability of research institutions to provide for the long-term maintenance of their collections.

Some of the activities that these grants support have included the following:

- preservation microreproduction;
- regional cooperative programs, including workshops to teach basic preservation methods, disaster preparedness planning, information dissemination, preservation condition surveys;
- training of staff in research libraries and archives in preservation techniques;
- the development and testing of products and processes necessary for preservation;
- participation in the U.S. Newspaper Program, a nationwide effort for

bibliographic control and preservation of U.S. newspapers.

By collecting, organizing, preserving, and transmitting knowledge, libraries are a crucial resource for learning in the humanities, and the National Endowment for the Humanities welcomes applications for support of humanities projects from these institutions. In addition the program staff of NEH welcome preliminary inquiries about funding and applications. Staff names and telephone numbers appear on pages 42-43.



The National Association of Government Communicators (NAGC) has awarded *Humanities* the first-place Blue Pencil Award in the category of government publications serving a technical or professional audience. The NAGC Blue Pencil Competition, an annual contest now in its twenty-fourth year, recognizes outstanding achievement in government publications. The winning issues of *Humanities* are numbers 4, 5, and 6 in Volume 6 (1985).

Judges determined prize winners in this particular category to be "clear, precise, and accurate publications" that were "well edited and clearly written" and that made "skillful and imaginative use of artwork."

This is the second NAGC award for *Humanities*; the first, an honorable mention, was awarded in 1980, the first year of publication.





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In *Humanities*, the bimonthly review of the National Endowment for the Humanities, the space that other magazines fill with ads is devoted to more of the writing by distinguished scholars and educators that won *Humanities* a national award for “excellence in educational journalism.”

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## Robert Penn Warren on his association with Cleanth Brooks

We're glad that federal regulations prevent us from selling ads. That gives us more room to tell you about current research, education, public programming, and funding opportunities in all fields of the humanities. But federal regulations also require us to sell *Humanities*. For only \$14, you will receive a year's subscription—6 issues of a magazine packed with ideas, with reports on NEH activities, with a special section for those who are thinking of applying for an NEH grant. Every issue contains a complete listing of NEH grants by discipline • current application deadlines • staff names and telephone numbers • regular features on exemplary projects AND NO ADS! Well, just one.

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Nearing the end of her research, a scholar in medieval French literature, who is finishing a book on illumination in medieval manuscripts, learns that a library in France contains an important manuscript. If she can examine the original, the scholar may find eccentricities in calligraphy that will provide new information about manuscript production or further information about a particular monastery where manuscripts were produced. Although the scholar's university can provide travel funds, these do not fully cover the costs of a four-day research trip to Paris. Supplementary assistance is now available from NEH for such travel, not only to Europe but to any other destination worldwide.

The Travel to Collections Program, which was established in 1983 to provide small grants for travel to research collections in North America and Western Europe, has been broadened recently to include support for research travel anywhere in the world. The flat \$500 stipend, which has been offered

since the program's inception, has been increased to \$750 because of increases in travel-related costs.

For areas where travel presents special difficulties, applicants will be required to obtain appropriate guarantees of access to the collection, in addition to the Availability of Collection form already required.

Average projected costs of travel for applications received in 1985 tended to be about \$1,400, with a range of \$500 to \$3,500. Rather than covering the full expenses of travel, the NEH stipend is intended to supplement an existing travel budget or to help leverage additional support from other sources. Moreover, according to Gary Messinger, program officer for Travel to Collections, "this additional support is often easier to obtain if an application has been successful in the Endowment's rigorous peer review process."

The program will continue to offer two application deadlines each year: July 15 (changed from September and January 15.

## Cheney Appointed NEH Chairman

Lynne V. Cheney has recently been appointed Chairman for National Endowment for the Humanities. Cheney, who joins the Endowment after serving as a senior editor of *Washingtonian* magazine is a native of Wyoming and graduated from Natrona County High School in Casper in 1959. A member of Phi Beta Kappa, she earned her bachelor's degree with highest honors from Colorado College and her master's degree from the University of Colorado in 1964. She received her Ph.D. in nineteenth-century British literature from the University of Wisconsin in 1970.

She has taught at the University of Wyoming, George Washington University, Northern Virginia Community College, and the University of Wisconsin and is a member of the Commission on the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution.

Cheney is the author of two novels, *Executive Privilege* (Simon and Schuster, 1979), and *Sisters* (New American Library, 1981). She is co-author, with her husband, Representative Richard Cheney (R-WY), of *Kings of the Hill* (Continuum, 1983), a history of the U.S. House of Representatives. She has also published many articles on American history, literature, culture, and politics which have appeared in such publications as *American Heritage* and *Smithsonian* magazines as well as *The Washingtonian* and has worked as a researcher/writer on the public television program "Inside Washington."



Lynne V. Cheney

by Michael Anderson



# RECENT NEH GRANT AWARDS

Some of the items in this list are offers, not final awards.

## Archaeology & Anthropology

**Durango Public Library**, CO; Daniel P. Brassell: \$17,400. To conduct a series of public lectures on the new archaeology. Glossaries and bibliographies of archaeological resources in the Durango Public Library and the Fort Lewis College Library will be prepared to complement the lectures. *GL*

**Folktale Film Group**, Delaplane, VA; Tom Davenport: \$115,000. To produce one 30-minute live-action dramatic adaptation of the Appalachian trickster tale, "Soldier Jack." The program, accompanied by a short resource guide, is intended for young people, ages 8 to 18, and their families. *GN*

**Harvard U.**, Cambridge, MA; Jane Ayer Scott: \$2,170. To publish a monograph that describes the contents and architecture of the row of Byzantine shops unearthed at the Turkish site of Sardis. *RP*

**U. Press of New England**, Hanover, NH; Thomas L. McFarland: \$5,377. To publish a compilation of folklore tales and traditions from four native American tribes of southern New England, which range from the 17th century to the present. *RP*

**U. of Florida**, Gainesville; Barbara A. Purdy: \$10,000 OR; \$2,961 FM. To conduct a research conference on wet-site archaeology, at which an international group of archaeologists will discuss significant new evidence about diet, technologies, art, and environmental adaptation contained by excavations in waterlogged deposits. *RX*

**U. of Nebraska**, Lincoln; Paul A. Olson: \$10,000. To conduct a conference to examine the interaction between Plains Indian and Euro-American cultures, in comparison with other semiarid regions. *RX*

## Arts—History and Criticism

**Arena Stage**, Washington, DC; David Copelin: \$75,000. To conduct postperformance symposia, program essays, and community events providing critical and historical background for the theater's offerings. *GP*

**Connie Goldman Productions, Inc.**, Washington, DC; Connie J. Goldman: \$26,251. To write four 30-minute radio scripts that explore the late-life creations and styles of a number of classical and jazz composers. *GN*

**Indianapolis Museum of Art**, IN; Helen, Ferrulli: \$15,000. To plan a series of noncredit courses exploring contemporary culture as manifested in the architecture and interior design of the American home. *GP*

**Japan Society, Inc.**, NYC; Peter Grilli: \$30,000

FM. To conduct a two-day symposium on rare Japanese wartime films and the development of a program guide with an essay on each film screened during a concurrent film series. *GP*

**National Committee for the History of Art, Inc.**, Princeton, NJ; Irving Lavin: \$10,000 OR; \$25,000 FM. To plan the 26th International Congress for the History of Art, which is meeting for one week in Washington, DC in August 1986. *RX*

**SUNY Research Foundation/Albany**, NY; Anne F. Roberts: \$73,919. To plan a collaborative effort between SUNY Albany and local libraries to examine the artistic and cultural significance of synagogues and churches in Albany. Exhibitions, bibliographies, and guides to the churches will be developed and disseminated through the libraries. *GL*

**San Francisco Symphony**, CA; Peter Pastreich: \$24,700 FM. To expand an existing series of lectures and preconcert programs and to plan a new series of programs designed for the symphony's Mozart and Beethoven festivals. *GP*

**Spelman College**, Atlanta, GA; Rebecca T. Cureau: \$10,000. To conduct a conference on the history of the relationship between historically black colleges and community-based culture, with a special focus on Willis James, a musicologist and folklorist at Spelman College. *RX*

**Unicorn Projects, Inc.**, Washington, DC; Ray A. Hubbard: \$500,000 OR; \$400,000 FM. To produce a 60-minute television film based on David Macaulay's book *Pyramid*, which tells the story of how and why pyramids were built, starting with the Old Kingdom's Fourth Dynasty in Egypt. The film will be the third in a series based on Macaulay's books. *GN*

**U. of Chicago**, IL; Penelope J. Kaiserlian: \$6,700. To publish an edition in modern notation of the four volumes of motets printed by Andrea Antico in Venice in the early 16th century. *RP*

**U. of Illinois**, Urbana; Michael A. Mullin: \$26,878. To plan programs and an interpretive exhibition drawn from library collections on stage designers as interpreters of dramatic literature. Set and costume designs by a group of designers will be the focal point of the exhibition and programs. *GL*

**WGBH Educational Foundation**, Boston, MA; Judith Wechsler: \$175,000. To produce one 30-minute television program and to write the script for one additional program in a proposed 13-part series on painting and the world of the painter from the Renaissance to the present. *GN*

## Classics

**Institute for Advanced Study**, Princeton, NJ; Donald F. McCabe: \$7,500 OR; \$8,000 FM. To

plan a meeting to coordinate a replacement of Moulton and Milligan's *Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, to determine further Greek lexicographical projects for the New Testament period, and to assess the use of computer technology. *RX*

**Skidmore College**, Saratoga Springs, NY; Thomas S. W. Lewis: \$88,371. To conduct a four-week summer institute for 30 secondary school teachers from the New England and Middle Atlantic areas who will study Greek civilization of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. *ES*

**U. of Idaho**, Moscow; Cecelia A. Luschnig: \$15,000. To develop a collaborative relationship between the University of Idaho and the state school system on the subject of the ancient world. *ES*

## History—Non-U.S.

**Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago**, IL; Arthur Voobus: \$30,000. To prepare research tools and reference works on manuscript sources for the history of the culture of the Syrian Orient. *RT*

**Newberry Library**, Chicago, IL; David J. Buisseret: \$257,074. To conduct two four-week summer institutes and related activities for 30 college and university faculty members of the reciprocal effects of the contact between American and European civilizations during the 15th and 16th centuries. *EH*

**New York U.**, NYC; Warren Dean: \$130,248. To conduct a four-week institute with extensive follow-up activities on Latin American history and culture for 60 fifth-grade New York City area teachers. *ES*

**Princeton U. Press**, NJ; Margaret Case: \$7,000. To publish a book that examines the roots of agrarian rebellion in Mexico to determine why a peasant-led revolution was successful in 1910 but unsuccessful a century earlier. *RP*

**Princeton U. Press**, NJ; Margaret Case: \$4,275. To publish a comparative analysis of the act of state formation on the political organization and social structure of rural Tunisia and Libya. *RP*

**Princeton U. Press**, NJ; Margaret Case: \$4,000. To publish a study of the changing composition of Barcelona's ruling class from the 16th to the 18th century. *RP*

**Princeton U. Press**, NJ; Margaret Case: \$5,075. To publish a biography of Mustafa Ali, a Muslim bureaucrat and historian whose writings provide information on and insight into late 16th-century Ottoman history. *RP*

**Syracuse U.**, NY; James M. Powell: \$8,000 OR; \$6,000 FM. To conduct an international conference relating Leopold von Ranke's philosophical ideas and his notion of history as a calculable set of general laws to the development of 19th-century intellectual his-



tory and to the development of history as a discipline. *RX*

**U. of Chicago**, IL; Keith M. Baker: \$25,000 FM. To conduct an international conference to investigate the nature of French political culture under the ancien régime and the processes by which revolutionary attitudes, fomented during an absolute monarchy, led to the French Revolution. *RX*

**U. of Hawaii**, Honolulu; Edward J. Shultz: \$19,715. To plan a 60-minute documentary that will examine the cultural traditions of Korea's Silla Kingdom (second century—A.D. 935) and introduce viewers to the work that archaeologists and historians have done on this subject during the last 20 years. *GN*

**U. of Kansas**, Lawrence; James W. Woelfel: \$120,000. To improve the Western civilization program by involving senior faculty members, revising the program's readings, purchasing additional audiovisual resources, and training teaching assistants. *EK*

**U. of New Mexico**, Albuquerque; Elizabeth C. Hadas: \$2,400 FM. To publish the first translation into English of an early 17th-century account of life in Brazil. *RP*

**U. of North Carolina Press**, Chapel Hill; Lewis A. Bateman: \$5,000 OR; \$1,250 FM. To publish the third volume in a comprehensive history of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland in the 19th century. *RP*

**U. of Pennsylvania**, Philadelphia; Thomas M. Rotell: \$4,000. To publish a history of the Merced Order, which was founded in the 13th century to ransom Christians held captive in Spain and North Africa. *RP*

**U. of Pittsburgh**, PA; Catherine Marshall: \$10,000. To publish a translation of the Italian work that analyzes the descriptions of the New World recorded by the earliest Spanish navigators and explorers. *RP*

**Yale U.**, New Haven, CT; David E. Underdown: \$105,000 OR; \$40,000 FM. To prepare the edition of all surviving sources on the Parliaments of 1625 and 1626. *RE*

## History—U.S.

**Arkansas Resource Center**, Little Rock; Kenneth R. Hubbell: \$68,744 OR; \$12,500 FM. To create a traveling exhibition and a comprehensive series of public programs on the roles played by blacks in Arkansas from the earliest settlement until the state's sesquicentennial in 1986. *GP*

**Bard College**, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY; Mark H. Lytle: \$112,780. To conduct a four-week institute and follow-up activities for 30 high school social studies teachers from around the country on the social, diplomatic, and economic history of the United States in the period 1929 to 1945, using the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library for primary research. *ES*

**CUNY Research Foundation/La Guardia Community College**, Long Island, NY; Richard K. Lieberman: \$50,860. To write scripts for a series of eight 30-minute radio programs examining and recreating the years 1934–46 to the Fiorella H. LaGuardia mayoralty in New York City. *GN*

**Crossways, Inc.**, Washington, DC; Candyce Martin: \$135,000. To write a script for three 60-minute dramatic programs about the Sager family who emigrated and settled in the Pacific Northwest between 1844 and 1848. *GN*

**East Tennessee Historical Society**, Knoxville; Charles F. Bryan, Jr.: \$80,000. To conduct reading and discussion groups at senior citizens' centers in 15 counties in eastern Tennessee. Participants will read selected books on recent American history and will hear lectures by scholars from the University of Tennessee and from the ETHS staff. *GP*

**Frances Perkins Film Project, Inc.**, NYC; Robert A. Potts: \$192,817. To produce a 60-minute documentary film on the life and work of Frances Perkins, Secretary of Labor (1933–45) and the first woman to be a member of the president's cabinet. *GN*

**Made in U.S.A. Development Corporation**, NYC; Elsa Rassbach: \$20,000. To revise a script for a 90- to 120-minute drama examining events at America's first large-scale industrial enterprise, the textile mills at Lowell, Massachusetts, during the years 1837–46. *GN*

**New England Institute for Human Resources**, Bangor, ME; Mary S. Lampson: \$65,000. To write a script for a 60-minute documentary about the history of young people in the work force in 19th- and 20th-century America for high school audiences. *GN*

**Ohio U.**, Athens; Gary A. Hunt: \$15,000. To plan exhibitions with an interpretive catalogue and symposium on the history of education in the old Northwest. Activities would coincide with the bicentennial of the Northwest Ordinance. *GL*

**Past America, Inc.**, Miami, FL; R. Shepherd Morgan: \$525,000 OR; \$215,000 FM. To produce "John Punch and the Servants of Colonial Virginia," a 90-minute drama which is the fourth program in the series "A House Divided, A History of Slavery in America." The program examines the origins of slavery in Virginia through the case of John Punch. *GN*

**Springfield City Library**, MA; Joseph Carvalho III: \$30,330. To plan six lectures, four exhibitions, and a publication that will reexamine the history of Springfield and its role in New England to be held in conjunction with the 350th anniversary of the city. *GL*

**U. of Georgia Press**, Athens; Karen K. Orchard: \$4,045. To publish an analysis of the impact of the Civil War on leadership patterns in the 19th-century South. *RP*

**U. of Mississippi**, University; Charles W. Eagles: \$7,500. To plan a conference in which scholars will examine the historical background and causes, growth and development, and accomplishments of the civil rights movement. *RX*

**U. of Nebraska**, Lincoln; Paul W. Wilderson: \$10,000. To publish the first volume of text in a new edition of the *Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*. *RP*

**U. of North Carolina Press**, Chapel Hill; Lewis A. Bateman: \$5,000. To publish an economic and social history of the Chesapeake region in the 17th and 18th centuries. *RP*

**U. of Oklahoma**, Norman; John N. Drayton: \$10,000. To publish an atlas that portrays the history of the Indian in the Great Lakes region of the United States and Canada from 1600 to the 1870s, when treaty making ended between the tribes and the United States. *RP*

**U. of South Carolina**, Columbia; David R. Chesnutt: \$120,000 OR; \$5,000 FM. To prepare the edition of the papers of Henry Laurens, the 18th-century statesman from South Carolina. *RE*

**WGBY-TV**, Springfield, MA; Robert B. Toplin: \$70,000. To write a script for a 90-minute drama about Lincoln and Fort Sumter, the pilot program in a six-part series about presidential decision making in times of crisis. *GN*

**Wesleyan U. Press**, Middletown, CT; Jeannette E. Hopkins: \$5,337. To publish a study of the legal status and treatment of the native American in colonial Massachusetts. *RP*

## Interdisciplinary

**American Asian Cultural Exchange**, Washington, DC; Shirley Sun: \$25,000. To write a script for a 90-minute documentary on the

experience of General Joseph Stilwell (1883–1946) in China. *GN*

**American Council of Learned Societies**, NYC; Frederick Burkhardt: \$100,000 OR; \$40,000 FM. To plan the edition of the correspondence of Charles Darwin. *RE*

**American Council of Learned Societies**, NYC; Christina M. Gillis: \$50,000 OR; \$1,865,000 FM. To continue fellowships of 6 or 12 months' duration for scholars engaging in postdoctoral research in the humanities. *RR*

**American Council of Learned Societies**, NYC; Thomas Noble: \$85,000 OR; \$720,000 FM. To continue fellowships of 6 or 12 months' duration for beginning scholars whose doctoral degrees have been conferred within the three years preceding the award. *RR*

**American Council of Learned Societies**, NYC; Thomas Noble: \$10,000 OR; \$415,000 FM. To conduct a program of grants-in-aid of up to \$3,000 for postdoctoral research in the humanities. *RR*

**Asia Society, Inc.**, NYC; Marshall M. Bouton: \$100,000 OR; \$50,000 FM. To develop a new series of public lectures, short evening courses, educational workshops, and guides devoted to Asian cultures. *GP*

**Athens State College**, AL; Mildred W. Caudle: \$44,487. To improve two sequential humanities courses through faculty development activities, the purchase of library and audiovisual materials, and cultural enrichment programs and students. *EK*

**Babson College**, Wellesley, MA; Albert A. Anderson: \$76,411. To plan and develop 15 courses to integrate the humanities with courses in the social sciences and business. Faculty will participate in workshops on the teaching of speaking and writing in content courses in the humanities. *EK*

**Beaver College**, Glenside, PA; Elaine P. Maimon: \$127,846. To conduct a series of summer institutes and follow-up activities over the course of 20 months to improve humanities instruction in 12 suburban and rural school districts. Beaver College faculty will guide teachers in exploring the teacher's role through the study of seminal texts. *ES*

**Bethany College**, West Virginia; William Daniel Cobb: \$100,000. To plan a comprehensive curricular reform program in the humanities through course development workshops, faculty research activities, a visiting scholars program, and the acquisition of library materials. *EM*

**CUNY Research Foundation/Queens College**, NYC; David Cohen: \$63,320. To conduct programs that will further the understanding and appreciation of the multiethnic cultures in Queens and Nassau County, New York. Book and film discussion programs will be held in 36 branch libraries. *GL*

**Carleton College**, Northfield, MN; Perry C. Mason: \$103,804. To plan faculty and curricular development for an arts and sciences seminar program in the humanities through the use of released time, summer stipends for faculty members, and consultants. *EL*

**Catawba College**, Salisbury, NC; Bruce F. Griffith: \$120,000 OR; \$75,000 FM. To develop required freshman and junior courses in the humanities through curriculum development and new faculty positions in history, Spanish, and the classics. *EM*

**Catholic U. of America**, Washington, DC; Ingrid G. Merkel: \$99,667. To develop two core sequences in the humanities for the university's honors program by providing summer stipends for course preparation and development as well as released time for the initial teaching of the courses. *EK*

**Central Michigan U.**, Mt. Pleasant; Benjamin



F. Taggie: \$287,632. To improve and update the academic preparation of 100 secondary school teachers in selected Michigan school districts through integrated tracks of graduate courses in the humanities, workshops in the schools, faculty symposia, and summer institutes. *ES*

**Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science & Art**, NYC; Michael G. Sundell: \$106,542. To plan faculty and curricular development to make the required courses in literature and history more coherent, and to design a series of new required senior seminars. *EM*

**Cornell U. Medical College**, NYC; Valerie Mike: \$48,000. To conduct research by a biostatistician to assess the contribution that statistics can make to the clarification of values and ethical issues associated with the uncertainty underlying decision making in the biomedical sciences and technology. *RH*

**Cuesta College**, San Luis Obispo, CA; Daniel J. Canney: \$5,550. To plan a two-semester, interdisciplinary humanities course. *EK*

**Ellensburg Public Library**, WA; Alice Yee: \$48,770. To examine native American history and culture as witnessed by a 100-year-old native American. A videotape, an exhibition, lectures by scholars, a bibliography, and discussion meetings are planned. *GL*

**Fisk U.**, Nashville, TN; Jessie C. Smith: \$157,724. To conduct three public seminars, each followed by a series of programs, on Martin Luther King, Jr., and the civil rights movement. The focus will be on cultural expressions of the civil rights era, literature from the movement and King's writings, and its historical context, 1954-74. *GL*

**Harvard U.**, Cambridge, MA; Nathan Glazer: \$35,000. To plan a conference exploring cultural relations between the United States and the Republic of India. *GP*

**Hope College**, Holland, MI; John D. Cox: \$58,200 OR; \$12,800 FM. To develop paired courses in the humanities, designed to promote better integration within the curriculum, by means of a series of faculty development workshops and topical symposia. *EM*

**Independent Broadcasting Associates, Inc.**, Littleton, MA; Julian C. Hollick: \$149,256 OR; \$37,000 FM. To produce a 10-part series of 29-minute radio documentaries on Indian culture and society, 10 shorter modular extracts from the full series for "All Things Considered" and "Morning Edition," and a 24-page study-listener guide to accompany the series. *GN*

**Institute for the Study of Human Issues**, Philadelphia, PA; David A. Feingold: \$429,906. To produce a three-film series for television depicting the development of Asian art and culture as presented by a major Thai intellectual, artist, and scholar, Kukrit Pramoj. *GN*

**Manhattan College**, Riverdale, NY; Albert J. Hamilton: \$92,516. To develop a unified four-year core curriculum in the School of Arts and Sciences through the use of workshops to enable faculty to study primary texts from various disciplines and to incorporate these materials in their courses. *EM*

**Milwaukee Public Library**, WI; Kathleen M. Rabb: \$14,982. To plan a series of pilot programs about the exploration, discovery, and expansion of the American frontier. Lectures, reading and discussion groups, and an exhibition of maps and photographs will be planned and tested. *GL*

**Mount Holyoke College**, South Hadley, MA; Margaret L. Switten: \$218,256. To develop curricular materials on the literary and musicological aspects of the medieval lyric and a six-week institute for 25 college and university teachers. *EH*

**National Academy of Sciences**, Washington,

DC; Mary B. Bullock: \$162,500. To continue the scholarly exchanges and related activities in the humanities involving the People's Republic of China. *RI*

**New England Conservatory of Music**, Boston, MA; Bruce McPherson: \$182,780. To develop and implement a new core curriculum by providing salaries for three faculty members and fees for consultants. *EM*

**Post Office Project**, Sparkill, NY; Christopher Lukas: \$35,000. To write a script, which will include dramatizations of two fictionalized memoirs, for a 60-minute documentary film on the late poet Charles Olson (1910-70), a leader of the Black Mountain School of poets. *GN*

**Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute**, Troy, NY; David H. Porush: \$200,186. To plan faculty and curricular development for an introductory interdisciplinary course for freshmen by providing summer stipends and released time. *EK*

**Social Science Research Council**, NYC; Kenneth Prewitt: \$300,000 OR; \$1,810,000 FM. To continue the International Research Program of the American Council of Learned Societies and the Social Science Research Council, consisting of the planning and research activities of 11 joint area-studies committees and a program of research awards. *RI*

**Sonoma County Library**, Santa Rosa, CA; Linda M. Haering: \$14,375. To plan programs to be undertaken by the Sonoma County Library, Santa Rosa College, and Sonoma State University on the theme, Sonoma Generations: Utopian, Familial, and Literary-Artistic. *GL*

**South Puget Sound Community College**, Olympia, WA; Jaime O'Neill: \$14,730. To conduct long-range planning for an improved humanities curriculum in an institution that was formerly a technical college by providing consultant assistance and either released time or stipends for faculty participants. *EK*

**SUNY Research Foundation/Albany**, NY; Kathryn Gibson: \$84,394. To conduct a series of programs that will examine 20th-century black literature by employing in-theater talks based on the production of a new play by Toni Morrison, lectures in public libraries, and scholar-led reading and discussion groups. *GL*

**SUNY Research Foundation/Albany**, NY; Phyllis Bader-Borel: \$140,000 OR; \$34,950 FM. To plan faculty and curricular development activities for a course to be given at nine community colleges on the relationships between the humanities and technology. *EK*

**Susquehanna U.**, Selinsgrove, PA; Hans E. Feldman: \$134,672. To develop the university's core curriculum by creating seven new courses, a new tenure-track position in foreign languages, and a summer workshop for faculty members and by using consultants and visiting speakers. *EM*

**Tacoma Community College**, WA; Carolyn A. Simonson: \$127,221. To develop new degree requirements and three new courses to create a more coherent and rigorous humanities curriculum at the college. *EM*

**Temple U.**, Philadelphia, PA; David M. Bartlett: \$4,389. To publish a study of the aged in Boston from 1890 to 1950 that examines the effects of industrialization, the New Deal, and Social Security on that segment of the population. *RP*

**Texas A&M U.**, College Station; Herman J. Saatkamp, Jr.: \$100,000 OR; \$10,000 FM. To prepare three volumes in the edition of the works of the American philosopher George Santayana. *RE*

**Texas Lutheran College**, Seguin; Philip N. Gilbertson: \$90,083. To strengthen the gen-

eral education humanities curriculum through the development of a new required introductory course and the enhancement of existing courses. *EM*

**Unicorn Projects, Inc.**, Washington, D.C.; Larry Klein: \$19,967. To plan a feature-length dramatic film drawn from James Agee's account of his trip through Alabama with photojournalist Walker Evans in 1936. *GN*

**U. of North Carolina**, Charlotte; Stanley R. Patten: \$131,965. To plan faculty and curricular development activities related to the revision of seven introductory courses in English, history, religious studies, and philosophy by providing release time, summer stipends for faculty, and consultants. *EK*

**Washington U.**, St. Louis, MO; Linda B. Salamon: \$227,774. To create a minor concentrating on significant humanities texts for preprofessional students by providing faculty released time and summer study, stipends for advisers, and the initial costs of coordinating the courses for the minor. *EM*

## Jurisprudence

**American Academy of Judicial Education**, Washington, DC; Douglas Lanford: \$14,888. To plan a six-month program of seminars for state court judges on the role of the humanities in the process of judicial decision-making. *GB*

**Webster U.**, St. Louis, MO; Fred Stopsky: \$126,664. To conduct a three-week institute with extensive follow-up activities on jurisprudence for 30 St. Louis middle-school principals. *ES*

## Language & Linguistics

**Language Project**, NYC; Gene Searchinger: \$70,000. To write scripts for two 60-minute programs and develop two outlines for a four-part series about language: what it is, how it works, and how it defines our species, based on recent developments in the field of linguistics. *GN*

**Linguistic Society of America**, Washington, DC; D. Terence Langendoen: \$70,000 OR; \$30,000 FM. To conduct a comprehensive, two-year project designed to clarify and strengthen the role of linguistics in the undergraduate curriculum. *EH*

**Michigan Technological U.**, Houghton; Sandra M. Boschetto: \$4,216. To use a consultant to evaluate the undergraduate foreign language program and to recommend ways of making foreign language offerings a greater part of the undergraduate general education curriculum. *EL*

**Modern Language Association of America**, NYC; Richard I. Brod: \$9,965. To conduct a conference on graduate education and training in foreign languages, literature, and linguistics. *EH*

**U. of California**, Berkeley; Leanne L. Hinton: \$8,902. To conduct a three-day conference on the nature, extent, and genesis of sound symbolism and to study the relationship between sound and meaning in language and its place in linguistic theory. Proceedings will provide an important reference for researchers and students. *RX*

**U. of the Pacific**, Stockton, CA; Francis M. Sharp: \$3,416. To use a consultant to aid the Department of Modern Languages and Literature in a review of its curriculum. *EL*

**Westminster College**, New Wilmington, PA; Nancy B. Mandlove: \$115,132. To restructure the curriculum in foreign-language literature and culture through faculty and curricular development centering on two new core courses, Concepts in Language and Con-



cepts in Culture. *EL*

## Literature

**Arizona State U.**, Tempe; Kristin B. Valentine: \$182,000. To conduct a series of programs that engage the public in discussions of the body of fiction about the western United States, such as the works of Wallace Stegner, Leslie Marmon Silko, Edward Abbey, Alberto Rios, and others. Formats include a readers' theater, reading and discussion, workshops, and essays. *GL*

**Cornell U.**, Ithaca, NY; Bernhard Kendler: \$4,500. To publish one volume in the complete edition of W.B. Yeats's surviving manuscripts of poems, plays, and selected prose. *RP*

**Cultural Uplink Productions**, NYC; Anthony D. Korner: \$20,000. To write a script for a 60-minute documentary on author Christopher Isherwood, largely devoted to interviews with him and prefaced by an introductory segment tracing his literary career. *GN*

**Duke U.**, Durham, NC; Marcel Tetel: \$129,361. To conduct a six-week institute for 25 college and university teachers on the literary and historical contexts of the essays of Michel de Montaigne. *EH*

**East Texas State U.**, Commerce; Dorothy Hawthorne: \$93,122. To conduct reading and discussion programs in 50 Texas libraries based on representative works portraying the people, history, and regions of the state. The project will coincide with the sesquicentennial of the Republic of Texas. *GL*

**English Literary Life Project**, Pasadena, CA; Gary Conklin: \$19,975. To plan a television film about English literary life from the end of World War I to the Suez crisis of 1956, focusing on English writers born in the early 20th century, the influence of their shared background and education, and the political and economic climate of the time. *GN*

**Folger Shakespeare Library**, Washington, DC; Katharine E. Zdravetz: \$84,188. To conduct a public conference and an exhibition about Emily Dickinson, her life and work. The exhibition will include manuscripts, letters, monographs, and artifacts from the collections at Amherst. The conference sessions will explore the significance of Dickinson's contributions to American letters. *GL*

**Friends of the Monroe County Library**, Key West, FL; Lynn M. Kaufelt: \$59,880 OR; \$16,000 FM. To conduct programs about Tennessee Williams, his work, and his times. Several formats will be employed, including discussions following the production of one of his plays, a four-day public conference, cable television interviews, and traveling exhibitions and programs. *GL*

**Indiana U. of Pennsylvania**; Ronald G. Shafer: \$103,538. To conduct a four-week summer humanities institute and academic year follow-up activities for 45 high school teachers from western Pennsylvania to study eight Shakespearean plays. *ES*

**Indiana U.**, Bloomington; John G. Gallman: \$10,000. To publish a reference work on traditional Chinese literature that includes essays on the major genres and provides information on 500 individual authors and works, with bibliographies. *RP*

**Learning in Focus, Inc.**, NYC; Robert Geller: \$600,000 OR; \$75,000 FM. To produce 60-minute television adaptations of four American short stories for young people ages 13 to 18. The stories have been selected for their literary merit, relevance to the theme of coming of age, and diversity in presenting aspects of American culture. *GN*

**Louisiana Library Association**, Baton Rouge;

William Austin: \$199,836. To conduct scholar-led reading and discussion programs in 70 Louisiana parish libraries. Titles of some programs are: Reading in American Themes, The Southern Eye, Nobel Authors, Women's Voices, and In a British Manner. *GL*

**Louisiana State U.**, Baton Rouge; Beverly Jarrett: \$3,260. To publish a biographical study and critical analysis of the American poet Wallace Stevens. *RP*

**Louisiana State U.**, Baton Rouge; Lewis P. Simpson: \$8,500 OR; \$7,016 FM. To conduct a literary conference, similar to and commemorative of the one that heralded the creation of the "Southern Review" 50 years before, which will consider the dual subject of southern letters and modern literature. *RX*

**Magus, Inc.**, Silver Spring, MD; Charles Sessoms: \$60,000. To write scripts for a two-part, two-hour series on contemporary American black history as seen by black writers from World War II to 1968, including James Baldwin, Amiri Baraka, John Oliver Killens, John A. Williams, Gwendolyn Brooks, Paule Marshall, Toni Morrison, and others. *GN*

**Mercer U.**, Macon, GA; JoAnna M. Watson: \$10,705. To adapt a great books program as a required component of Mercer University's established degree program at Central Correctional Institution. *EG*

**New York Center for Visual History**, NYC; Lawrence Pitkethly: \$350,000 OR; \$75,000 FM. To produce one film on Langston Hughes as part of a 13-part series for PBS on the world and work of American poets. *GN*

**New York Public Library**, NYC; Diantha D. Schull: \$52,000. To conduct a series of programs on themes in Spanish culture and literature at the Central Research Library, the Donnell Library, and three branch libraries. The programs will coincide with "Treasures from the National Libraries of Spain," an exhibition at Gottesman Hall in the Central Research Library. *GL*

**Princeton U. Press**, NJ; Margaret Case: \$4,170. To publish a collection of essays on Chinese lyric verse from the 2nd to the 10th century. *RP*

**Public Communication Foundation for N. Texas**, Dallas; Patricia P. Perini: \$312,000 OR; \$75,000 FM. To produce a 60-minute television program on the early life and work of Katherine Anne Porter, featuring a dramatization of "The Grave" and excerpts from "The Witness" and "The Circus," relating these stories of her Texas childhood and the myths she created about it. *GN*

**Shoe String Press, Inc.**, Hamden, CT; James Thorpe, III: \$2,500. To publish one volume in a 12-volume reference work that provides a commentary and bibliography on all aspects of medieval English literature. *RP*

**Soundscape, Inc.**, Alexandria, VA; Martha D. Fehsenfeld: \$35,616. To produce one radio play, *All That Fall*, by Samuel Beckett, plus a documentary on Beckett to be broadcast in 1986 in honor of his 80th birthday. *GN*

**Southwestern College**, Winfield, KS; Sandy Feinstein: \$37,116. To conduct programs on the Victorians with particular emphasis on Robert Browning and his place in Victorian letters. Activities include lectures, reading and discussion sessions, and exhibitions displaying holdings from a major private collection of Browning materials. *GL*

**Stanford U.**, CA; Grant Barnes: \$3,000. To publish a study of the public masquerade in 18th-century English society that examines the historical phenomenon and discusses the uses of masquerade in the novels of Fielding, Richardson, Inchbald, and Burney. *RP*

**Stanford U.**, CA; Grant Barnes: \$3,000. To publish the third volume in an edition of the letters of Jack London, which will be

illustrated with photographs taken by London. *RP*

**U. of California**, Santa Barbara; Elizabeth H. Witherell: \$160,000 OR; \$12,000 FM. To prepare the edition of the writings of Henry D. Thoreau. *RE*

**U. of Georgia Press**, Athens; Karen K. Orchard: \$2,860. To publish the last volume in a three-volume work that explores the fiction of Herman Melville. *RP*

**U. of Illinois**, Urbana; Marvin A. Lewis: \$10,000. To conduct a research conference on Zora Neale Hurston to consider the importance of her work in fiction, folklore, anthropology, and in the development of Afro-American literature. *RX*

**U. of Kentucky Research Foundation**, Lexington; Gurney M. Norman: \$111,957. To conduct an institute with a four-week summer component and extensive follow-up activities for 35 junior high school teachers from eastern Kentucky school districts on texts in Appalachian and classic literature. *ES*

**U. of Massachusetts**, Amherst; Richard J. Martin: \$8,874. To publish an examination of English Renaissance literature that relates to rhetoric and fiction. *RP*

**U. of Massachusetts**, Amherst; Bruce G. Wilcox: \$4,630. To publish an analysis of Milton's "Paradise Lost" that contrasts the pre- and postlapsarian pedagogy and poetics of the book. *RP*

**U. of Mississippi**, University; William R. Ferris: \$61,162. To write a script for a 90-minute dramatic film of William Faulkner's novel *As I Lay Dying*. *GN*

**U. of Nebraska**, Lincoln; Willis G. Regier: \$5,800. To publish a translation with commentary and annotation of Jacques Derrida's *Glas*, a book that simultaneously discusses Hegel's philosophy and Jean Genet's fiction and shows how two such seemingly distinct kinds of criticism can reflect and affect a reading of the other. *RP*

**U. of Vermont**, Burlington; Ralph H. Orth: \$55,000 OR; \$3,000 FM. To plan an edition of Ralph Waldo Emerson's journals and notebooks. *RE*

## Philosophy

**Columbia U. Press**, NYC; Maureen L. MacGrogan: \$5,841. To publish a discussion of critical social theory from Hegel's critique of natural right theories through the work of the Frankfurt School to Habermas's program of linguistically mediated communication. *RP*

**Columbia U. Press**, NYC; William P. Germano: \$5,000. To publish a translation of a 12th-century Chinese text on neoconfucianism that will be accompanied by an introduction, annotations, and a glossary. *RP*

**Florida State U.**, Tallahassee; Alan R. Mabe: \$160,540. To conduct an eight-week summer institute for 40 college and university teachers, who will explore recent developments in epistemology and the implications of those developments for research and teaching. *EH*

**Hackett Publishing Company, Inc.**, Indianapolis, IN; William H. Hackett: \$1,500. To publish a monograph on the philosophical question of weakness of will, a debate that has its origin in the ethics of Aristotle. *RP*

**Review of Existential Psychology & Psychiatry**, Seattle, WA; Keith Hoeller: \$4,236. To publish an English translation of an early essay by Michel Foucault on an article by Ludwig Binswanger that relates to existentialism and phenomenology. *RP*

**U. of Hawaii at Manoa**, Honolulu; David J. Kalupahana: \$125,888. To conduct an eight-week institute for 20 college and university



teachers on selected topics in comparative Asian and Western philosophy. *EH*

**U. of Illinois**, Chicago Circle; Edwin M. Curley: \$9,000 OR; \$10,000 FM. To conduct a six-day international conference to present and assess new research on Spinoza, including the evolution of his views from his earliest to his latest works, and the likely directions for future scholarship. *RX*

**U. of Santa Clara**, CA; George R. Lucas: \$110,510. To conduct a six-week institute for 25 college and university teachers on the systematic philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead and the critics of that philosophy. *EH*

**U. of Virginia**, Charlottesville; Richard M. Rorty: \$7,494. To conduct a three-day conference on Kant's moral philosophy—his idea of the autonomy of the moral agent and his account of the moral foundations of politics—in commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the publication of Kant's *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*. *RX*

**Western Washington U.**, Bellingham; William P. Alston: \$140,016. To conduct a six-week institute for 30 faculty members on the philosophy of religion. *EH*

## Religion

**Knox College**, Galesburg, IL; R. Lance Factor: \$88,986. To develop five new courses in religious studies by defraying the costs of released time, summer stipends for faculty members, fees for consultants, a visiting scholar, and a student assistant, and by covering the cost of library acquisitions. *EL*

**U. of Georgia Press**, Athens; Karen K. Orchard: \$3,603. To publish a book that studies the sermons and preaching practices of four prominent New England ministers: John Cotton, Benjamin Coman, William Ellery Channing, and Ralph Waldo Emerson. *RP*

**U. of Notre Dame**, IN; Thomas V. Morris: \$8,500. To conduct a conference on the philosophical implications of the major doctrines of Christianity and how these beliefs have contributed to the development and shape of Western thought and culture. *RX*

## Social Science

**Wellesley College**, MA; Arjo A. Klamer: \$10,000 OR; \$2,400 FM. To conduct a conference of literary theorists, philosophers, economists, and journalists to discuss and analyze the use of rhetorical devices to gain a better understanding of economic discourse and its presuppositions. *RX*

## U.S. Constitution

**African American Museums Association**, Washington, DC; Adrienne Childs: \$15,000. To plan a program for black museums in the United States on the history of Afro-Americans and the Constitution. *GM*

**Amagin, Inc.**, McKean, PA; Robert J. Chitester: \$32,000. To script two television documentaries, each examining the life and ideas of an important political philosopher, with emphasis on ideas that underlie the Constitution and Bill of Rights. *GN*

**American Bar Association**, Chicago, IL; Robert S. Peck: \$60,000 OR; \$20,000 FM. To conduct a nationwide series of community forums, which will occur in 1987 for the bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution, and a series of newspaper feature articles to clarify constitutional concepts, trace constitutional history, and examine contemporary constitutional issues. *GL*

**American Studies Center**, Washington, DC; Marc Lipsitz: \$27,800. To write scripts for 88 three-minute radio programs to be aired daily during the bicentennial of the Constitutional Convention. *GN*

**Bowling Green State U.**, OH; Ellen F. Paul: \$150,000. To conduct a two-year program of public conferences on the history and philosophy of economic rights under the Constitution. The program will include two conferences, publications, and videotapes. *GB*

**Catholic U. of America**, Washington, DC; Judith E. Greenberg: \$59,990. To conduct a four-week institute on the Constitution with extensive follow-up activities for 30 elementary- and middle-school teachers. *ES*

**Center for Study of Democratic Institutions**, Santa Barbara, CA; Robert Hutchins: \$84,078. To conduct a three-year program of research and public activities on the bicentennial of the Constitution through a series of scholars in residence, public lectures, and dialogues. *GB*

**Delaware Heritage Commission**, Greenville; Claudia L. Bushman: \$10,500. To plan a 60-minute dramatic videotape on John Dickinson and other Delaware delegates to the Constitutional Convention who defended the rights of the small states. *GN*

**Educational Broadcasting Corporation**, NYC; Jac Venza: \$20,000. To rewrite the script for a 90-minute historical drama on the role of James Madison in the Constitutional Convention of 1787. *GN*

**Federalist Society for Law & Public Policy Studies**, Washington, DC; Eugene B. Meyer: \$150,000. To conduct a two-year series of public conferences and lectures on the constitutional principles of separation of powers and economic liberties. The first conference will be held in Atlanta, the second in Chicago. The lectures will be held around the country. Printed material will be produced. *GB*

**Franklin and Marshall College**, Lancaster, PA; D. Grier Stephenson, Jr.: \$14,937. To plan a four-year lecture series on the role of the modern Supreme Court under the Constitution. *GB*

**Maryland Public Television**, Owings Mills; Sheila Mann: \$145,000 OR; \$100,000 FM. To continue preparation of six instructional television programs for the television-assisted course "The U.S. Constitution." *EG*

**New Images Production, Inc.**, Berkeley, CA; Avon Kirkland: \$198,788. To script a four-hour miniseries of docudramas based on *Simple Justice*, Richard Kluger's history of the landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision *Brown vs. Board of Education Topeka*, 1954. *GN*

**New School for Social Research**, NYC; Jacob Landynski: \$100,000. To conduct a two-year program of public conferences, lectures, and seminars on the 200-year dialogue between American and European thinkers on the American constitutional order. There will be printed materials in addition to two conferences and the series of lectures and seminars. *GB*

**Tennessee State U.**, Nashville; Clayton C. Reeve: \$60,000. To conduct a four-week institute for 32 high school juniors on the Constitution and American culture. *ET*

Capital letters following each grant amount have the following meanings: *OR* Outright Funds; *FM* Federal Match. Capital letters following each grant designate the division and the program through which the grant was made.

### Division of Education Programs

*EB* Central Disciplines in Undergraduate Education  
*EK* Improving Introductory Courses  
*EL* Promoting Excellence in a Field  
*EM* Fostering Coherence Throughout an Institution  
*ES* Humanities Instruction in Elementary and Secondary Schools  
*EH* Exemplary Projects in Undergraduate and Graduate Education  
*EG* Humanities Programs for Nontraditional Learners

### Division of General Programs

*GN* Humanities Projects in Media  
*GM* Humanities Projects in Museums and Historical Organizations  
*GP* Public Humanities Projects  
*GL* Humanities Programs in Libraries

### Division of Research Programs

*RO* Interpretive Research Projects  
*RX* Conferences  
*RH* Humanities, Science, and Technology  
*RP* Publication Subvention  
*RA* Centers for Advanced Study  
*RI* Reagents for International Research  
*RT* Tools  
*RE* Editions  
*RT* Translations  
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