

# Humanities

## Research Collections

If it's true the little things reveal the big things about us, the lamp on Margaret Child's desk can tell us a lot about her and the NEH Research Collections program she developed.

"Just an ugly thing," Mrs. Child says, dismissing the homely, functional lamp she transformed with decorations on the shade. A large slick green-and-white "International Federation of Libraries Association" seal solidly roots for attention on one side. All around, delicate lines of pink, white, yellow and green paper strips bearing cookie fortunes from the Chinese restaurant down the street whisper persuasive messages: "Give what you have to someone, it may be better than you think"; "The future destiny of the child is always the work of the mother"; "A visit to a strange place will bring you fresh work"; even, "Man who make love on a hill is not on the level."

Margaret Child is eminently approachable. She is someone who listens. When she responds, it is with thoughtfulness, wit and unexpected feedback. When an official of the Society of American Archivists was asked about NEH's Research Collections, he said, "It's hard to tell what it would be like without Margaret; it's like asking what would life be like without your mother."

Not unlike a guardian angel, Margaret Child has been with the Research Collections program from the first. She was named its director when NEH announced the new Division of Research program in July 1975.

And, a guardian angel for the nation's research centers and collections—most of which are richly endowed with written and archival material if not with munificent funds—Research Collections has made its mark as the place where librarians, researchers and archivists go when problems need to be solved.

"The basic criteria used to determine whether or not a particular application for a Collections grant warrants funding include the potential research use of the collection, the importance of the project as a model, and the immediacy of the need to make the material accessible to scholars"

intones a recent NEH program announcement from Mrs. Child and her staff (read TEAM) of four. Taking that a lively step further, the "Research Collections: Development, Access and Use" guidelines add, "(we) serve the needs of the community . . . the watchwords (here) are responsiveness and flexibility." Says Mrs.

Child, "We keep a fluid situation. The program has grown but it's still young. We're careful to keep up on what our constituency is saying, what they want."

Evidence of Research Collections flexibility and responsiveness is seen in a survey of the 170 grants made during the program's first three cycles. Eight general categories emerge, revealing intriguing samples within a broad sweep of concerns:

**Microfilming.** Grants have been made for copying important foreign collections for domestic use by American scholars, as in the 1977 award to *Vanderbilt University* to microfilm ancient manuscripts of the *Ethiopian Orthodox Church*, available only in monasteries in the hinterland of Ethiopia.

Domestic microfilming projects have centered on preserving fragile collections such as the widely-used *Indian Archives of the Oklahoma Historical Society*, which in seven million deteriorating pages records the history of U.S. involvement (1860-1930) with more than sixty American Indian tribes, including: the Delaware, Cherokee, Comanche, Nez Percé, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Choctaw, and Apaches.

**Surveys.** Two kinds are funded. Four years of support awarded in three successive grants to the *Ohio Historical Society* for its *Ohio Labor History Project* typify a search for manuscript material not previously deposited in an institution. In this case, union records are being sought to document the role of labor in shaping Ohio's history.

*The Women's History Sources Survey* conducted by the *University of Minnesota Social Welfare History Archives* received two successive grants to support a five-year effort to locate and describe manuscript sources relating to women already deposited in existing repositories. Their completed national guide to women's sources material, listing 20,000 manuscript descriptions from over 1,600 collections, will be released in book form next winter and is expected to have tremendous impact as a research resource.

**Processing.** About three quarters of the Research

### CHAIRMAN CONFIRMED

Joseph D. Duffey's nomination to be Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities was confirmed by the Senate on September 15, 1977, and Mr. Duffey is at work in his new assignment.

Collections grants are made to catalog and/or describe significant research collections. In 1977, for example, the *Nantucket Historical Association* received a two-year grant to process its chaotic collection, dating from 1660, of whaleship logs and journals, business account books and the papers of the Nantucket Society of Friends (1707-1944).

Two awards have been made to the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery to produce a four-volume guide which describes and delineates the fabulous, and heretofore unfathomable, Huntington collections which have long pulled scholars to San Marino, California, from all corners of the world.

**Systems Development and Library Automation.** Several substantial awards are currently funding (on a gifts-and-matching basis) pilot projects for the development of: cost analysis of computer linkups for library networks; library automation and automated data bases to form a national library network pooling the bibliographic materials from major sophisticated research collections with those of the Library of Congress. To modern libraries forced to cut operating costs and share resources while providing ever-expanding service, the ramifications of these pilot projects are of great significance.

One cost analysis/development project underway establishes a communications link between the computers of the Library of Congress and of the *Research Libraries Group*, which includes the New York Public Library, Harvard, Yale and Columbia. The idea is to "permit RLG member libraries using on-line video terminals to search for and acquire cataloging records stored at the Library of Congress. . . . This is the first practical experiment to begin to implement a national library network with a direct link to the Library of Congress."

**Oral History.** Research Collections makes a limited number of awards for oral history projects to fill out and elucidate strong documentary collections contemporary enough to profit from this new method. One such grant went to the *Dance Collection* at the *Performing Arts Research Center* of The New York Public Library. Some 400 hours of interviews will be taped and transcribed, focusing on eight seminal figures in

dance history: Balanchine, Chase, Danilova, Massine, Graham, Ashton, de Valois, and Markova.

**National Problems.** Each cycle a few grants are made which address major national problems in the library and archival field. One such is the three-year grant awarded in 1975 to the Society of American Archivists to focus on the problems of *Archival Security*. To combat the costly problem of manuscript thefts and raise the consciousness of the library and archive communities, SAA has compiled and printed a security manual and maintains a registry of stolen or missing items. In addition, they have drafted model legislation which, when enacted by the states, will protect archives and libraries from theft.

**Use.** A few grants are made to provide partial support for long-term scholarly collaborative research centered on particularly strong research collections, such as that in American economic history at the *Eleutherian Mills Library* in Delaware.

**Consultation.** Finally, when a collection is of obvious interest to American humanists, but staff feel unqualified as to how to develop or process it, they may apply to Research Collections for a small grant to bring in a *consultant* to evaluate their situation.

Mrs. Child has been with NEH since 1974 when she was "loaned" by the history department of the University of Maryland to the Endowment's Division of Research. The Division was examining ways in which it could best promote the development of new research tools and the better utilization of the nation's existing research collections. Mrs. Child was assigned the task of studying the problems of unaffiliated research libraries. The job soon mushroomed to include all research libraries and similar institutions, such as historical societies. For it became apparent that escalating costs of labor, utilities, acquisitions and archival preservation and maintenance were creating severe problems common to all.

The result, she saw, was a lot of rich resource material begging for proper attention. Too much lay untapped, underdeveloped or deteriorating simply because the repository institution couldn't afford to process its collections and make them available and

(Continued on back page)

The Research Collections "team," from left, Lawrence Christensen, Jeffrey Field, Amy Lowitz, Margaret Child, Leslie Perkins.





# Programs of the National Endowment for the Humanities for Fiscal Year 1978

The Endowment supports a variety of activities in the humanities, principally through "open application" programs, although certain specialized grants are by invitation only. Programs providing outright grant support this fiscal year are listed below. Most of the programs also support a large number of projects through gifts and matching Treasury funds, as well as through a combination of outright and gift and Treasury funds. A new program of Challenge Grants is described below. A fuller description of Endowment programs is contained in the NEH Program Announcement available on request from the Public Information Office, National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, D. C. 20506.

Program Description	Estimated range of funding and number of awards FY 1978	Eligible applicants	For further information write
<b>PUBLIC PROGRAMS</b>			
To benefit the general adult public by using the resources of the humanities to provide insight, information and perspective on value-choices and decisions and on the history and culture of American and foreign societies.			Division of Public Programs, Mail Stop 400
<b>Media Grants</b> —to encourage and support the highest quality film, radio and television production for national and regional broadcast and distribution to a broad adult audience; must involve direct collaboration between outstanding humanities scholars and top technical professionals.	Grants may range from \$5,000 to \$1,000,000; there will probably be no more than 80 awards.	Non-profit institutions and groups, including public television and radio stations.	Assistant Director, Media Program, Mail Stop 403
<b>Museums and Historical Organizations Program</b> —to develop an interpretive historical overview using cultural and historical objects and drawing upon the past for insight and perspective in presentations to the general public.	Museum grants vary from \$5,000 to \$200,000, with number of awards between 200 and 250.	Museums, historical societies, and non-profit organizations and institutions that have collections.	Assistant Director, Museums and Historical Organizations Program, Mail Stop 402
<b>Program Development</b> —for experimental projects relating humanistic knowledge to the interests and needs of the general adult public, especially through public libraries and national adult membership organizations.	Awards range from \$5,000 to \$300,000 and will probably fund 50-60 projects.	Non-profit institutions and groups, including public libraries.	Assistant Director, Program Development, Mail Stop 401
<b>STATE PROGRAMS</b>			
For humanities projects of interest and usefulness to the citizens of each state; operated through volunteer citizens' committees in cooperation with the state government.	Each state group receives a minimum of \$200,000 per year, for regranting to in-state applicants.	Committees in compliance with Endowment authorizing legislation; local groups apply to the committee in their state.	Director, Office of State Programs, Mail Stop 404
<b>EDUCATION PROGRAMS</b>			
<b>Institutional Grants</b> —to support the design, testing, implementation, and evaluation of curricular programs to strengthen humanities in individual colleges and universities.		Colleges and universities.	Division of Education Programs, Mail Stop 202 Assistant Director, Institutional Grants
<b>a) Consultants Grants</b> —to provide assistance from noted teachers and administrators in developing and evaluating humanities curricula.	Grants of \$800 to \$6,000 for up to 150 awards.		Program Officer, Consultants Grants
<b>b) Pilot Grants</b> —to enable institutions to test and evaluate new curricula on a pilot basis.	From \$25,000 to \$50,000 for 25-30 grants.		Program Officer, Pilot Grants
<b>c) Development Grants</b> —to introduce a new, or make extensive revisions in an existing, humanities program in the curriculum.	Grants vary from \$60,000 to \$400,000 supporting about 20 awards.		Program Officer, Development
<b>d) College Library Grants</b> —awarded jointly by NEH and the Council on Library Resources to colleges and universities to develop stronger ties between humanities offerings and library services.	Grants of \$50,000 for 8 or more awards.		Program Officer, College Library Grants
<b>Higher Education Projects Grants</b> —to promote the development, testing, and dissemination of imaginative approaches to humanities education.		Colleges and universities.	Assistant Director, Higher Education Projects
<b>a) Humanities Institutes Grants</b> —to enable faculty from various institutions to collaborate in developing humanities curricula on particular topics.	Up to 12 awards of \$50,000 to \$500,000.		Program Officer, Humanities Institutes
<b>b) Curriculum Materials Grants</b> —to support the development, testing, and dissemination of exemplary curriculum materials in the humanities.	Grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$1,000,000 for 35-40 awards (average \$90,000).		Program Officer, Higher Education Projects
<b>c) General Projects in Higher Education</b> —to support other model projects.	Grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$1,000,000 for 25-30 awards (average \$90,000).		
<b>Elementary and Secondary Education Grants</b> —to improve curriculum materials; to draw on recent humanistic scholarship or the resources of museums and libraries; to provide training for elementary and secondary teachers focusing on the substance of the humanities; to support design and testing of new programs in neglected fields, and to aid school systems in strengthening their humanities programs.	Grants of \$1,000 to \$1,000,000 for 50-60 awards (average \$110,000).	Elementary and secondary schools and school systems, colleges and universities, and other education organizations.	Assistant Director, Elementary and Secondary Education
<b>Cultural Institutions Grants</b> —to provide formal and systematic education programs in libraries and museums for students and the general public.	From \$200,000 to \$400,000 for each of up to 4 awards.	Public libraries, museums, and other cultural institutions.	Program Officer, Cultural Institutions
<b>FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMS</b>			
<b>Fellowships for Independent Study and Research</b> —for scholars, teachers, writers, and others who have produced, or demonstrated promise of producing, significant contributions to humanistic knowledge.	The range of fellowships is \$5,000 to \$20,000, and awards will be made to approximately 180 fellows.	Individuals.	Division of Fellowships, Mail Stop 101
<b>Fellowships in Residence for College Teachers</b> —for teachers at undergraduate and two-year colleges to study at universities with distinguished faculties and libraries suitable for advanced study.	There will be 16 seminars for approximately 150 fellows awarded up to \$15,000 each.	Individuals.	
<b>Summer Stipends</b> —for college and university teachers and other humanists to spend two consecutive months in full-time study or research.	\$2,500 stipends for 200 teachers and other humanists.	Nomination by institution or apply to NEH if not affiliated.	
<b>Summer Seminars for College Teachers</b> —for teachers at undergraduate and two-year colleges to work during the summer with distinguished scholars at institutions with libraries suitable for advanced study.	There will be approximately 105 seminars enrolling approximately 1,260 teachers with stipends of \$2,000.	Institutions; individuals apply to grantee institutions.	
<b>Fellowships and Seminars for the Professions</b> —for practitioners in non-teaching professions (business, journalism, labor, law, medicine, public and school administration) and for law teachers, to study humanistic dimensions of their professional interests.	Academic-year fellowships for 24 journalists at Stanford University and University of Michigan; 30 four-week seminars for 360 to 450 practitioners in non-teaching professions; 3 summer seminars for 36 law school teachers.	Institutions; individuals apply to grantee institutions.	

<b>Fellowship Support to Centers for Advanced Study</b> —for scholars in the humanities to attend centers for study and research in their own fields and for interchange of ideas with scholars in other fields.		Support level varies, providing stipends for from one to seven fellows at a small number of centers.	Independent centers for advanced study.
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<b>RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAMS</b>			Division of Research Grants, Mail Stop 350
<b>Collections</b> —to support making research collections at national, state, and local levels more accessible and collaborative research programs to utilize resources at centers.		Support ranging from \$1,500 to \$75,000 per year will assist 40 or more projects.	Institutions.
<b>Research Materials</b> —to support the creation of major reference works for humanistic research: e.g., atlases, dictionaries, bibliographies, catalogs, and guides; to collect and edit historical, literary or philosophical works.		Research tools grants from \$15,000 to \$75,000 to support over 50 projects; grants of \$65,000 or so for 30 or more editing projects.	Institutions or Individuals.
<b>General Research</b> —to support large-scale, long-range, or collaborative research efforts; to support the narrative writing of regional, state, and local history.		Grants of \$30,000 and up to 100 or so projects; for history, from \$10,000 up for 15-30 awards.	Institutions, associations, and individuals.
<b>Program Development</b> —to support experimental efforts designed to stimulate and facilitate research (e.g., specially designed workshops) at national and international levels.		Grants of some \$20,000 for some 20 projects.	Institutions.
<b>Translations</b> —to support the production of scholarly, annotated translations of hitherto untranslated works of significance for humanistic scholarship.		Grants of some \$25,000 for about 40 projects.	Institutions, individuals.
<b>Publication</b> —to support publication costs of manuscripts produced by Endowment grants.		Grants of \$10,000 for some 80 volumes.	Commercial and non-profit presses and publishing houses.
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<b>YOUTH PROGRAMS</b>			Youth Programs, Mail Stop 103
<b>Youthgrants in the Humanities</b> —to support humanities projects developed and conducted by young people: educational projects, humanistic research, media presentations, and community programs.		Small awards from \$500 to \$110,000 will be made to as many as 75 projects.	Youthgrants in the Humanities
<b>Special Youth Projects</b> —to support experimental out-of-school humanities projects for large groups of young people under the direction of experienced professionals in the humanities and in youth work.		Awards ranging from \$1,000 to \$200,000 will probably fund 100-120 projects.	Special Youth Projects
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<b>CHALLENGE GRANTS</b>			NEH Challenge Grants, Mail Stop 800
To improve the financial situation of the nation's cultural institutions and to enable them to continue or expand their humanities programs; institutions must match each Federal dollar with at least three dollars in new or increased donations from the private sector.		Grants range from \$2,000 to \$1,000,000 in multi-year totals (generally three-year fund-raising periods); the number of awards will approximate 250.	Cultural institutions which store, research, or disseminate the humanities.





known to interested scholars.

In most cases what was needed was to get assembled material out of cardboard boxes in basements and attics and into acid-free folders and described in orderly, usable finding aids. Other collections, perhaps already organized, suffered from various problems of remoteness, obscurity or deterioration from over-use or air pollution. There, guides to the holdings of a repository or "emergency" microfilming were needed.

Meanwhile, as NEH learned more about the needs of the repositories of America's documentary resources, grant applications and inquiries were mounting in the Research Resources office. In July 1975 NEH announced the evolution of a new Research Division program, Centers of Research (now Research Collections), with Margaret Child in charge.

As a college girl fresh out of Mt. Holyoke and Cornell, with a B.A. and an M.A. in History, Mrs. Child was recruited by the CIA. It was 1952, her area was Southeast Asia, her title was research analyst. Asked to pick a specialty language, she opted for Indonesian, went to the Department of Defense for a language course, and married her teacher, James Child. Retiring from the Agency in 1961, Mrs. Child found that managing a home, three children under five and a free-lance translating career were simply not enough. There was room for a Ph.D. and teaching at the college level. Looking back, Mrs. Child concedes,

"That was administration."

Administration is what they do in the office of Research Collections. Mrs. Child and her staff of professionals—Jeffrey Field, Amy Lowitz, and Lawrence Christensen, and secretary Leslie Perkins—work cooperatively, sharing the ever-increasing load of inquiries, applications, and grants as equitably as possible among them. They process grant applications, assign reviewers, and select panelists who pass recommendations for grant funding to the National Council on the Humanities and to the Endowment's Chairman for final judgment.

Along the way, active grants are managed, site visits made, evaluations conducted, and library and archival conferences attended, the most recent of which was the "41st Annual Meeting of the Society of American Archivists" in Salt Lake City earlier this month. Three-quarters of the Research Collections staff was there, holding office hours for a group which represents a major part of the program's constituency.

Call it outreach if you will. Call it listening. It's definitely Research Collections' style. Says Timothy Walsh, associate director of the Society of American Archivists, who met with the NEH group in Salt Lake City, "Few groups make this effort. NEH shows us commitment. Research Collections has become, in two years, very visible as a national option."

—Sally Ferguson

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