

Humanities

Art, the essential historian BY JOHN CANADAY

I would like to know, sometime, why some people are spontaneously attracted to art—the visual arts especially—while others who have been conditioned by apparently the same circumstances are left either cold or puzzled by something that has interested me as far back as I can remember, fascinated me since adolescence, and enriched my adult life beyond measure—with no explanation that I can reach as to why it happened.

In our close-knit family of eight, books were plentiful (my father's shelf included Dante, Samuel Johnson, and George Meredith) and our Kimball upright piano was subjected to constant abuse. But until I began bringing pictures into the house there were almost none, except for family photographs, on the walls. The only ones I can remember were a chromo of a German mountain scene with peasants (which I recognize in retrospect as having been in the manner of Ferdinand Waldmüller), a reproduction of an early Taos painting showing an Indian dipping water from a stream, and a tinted mezzotint of Gainsborough's *Duchess of Devonshire*, none of which explains why as a teen-ager I developed a passion for Holbein drawings without ever having been inside an art museum or having seen, so far as I can remember, any art books. I have no idea why, how, or exactly when this first love was generated, but I do know that art from that time until now has been an increasingly potent form of communication with the past and an enlargement of the world around me.

During the fifty years that have elapsed since I first collided with art history under Professor Edmund Cassius Taylor at Yale, I have come to understand that the history of art is the essential history of the world, and that therein, more than on an aesthetic basis, lies the immortality of a great work of art while minor ones die and drop away all around it. Within the last few years I discover that my ideas as to the importance of painting as one of the humanities have carried with them consequent dissatisfactions as to how art history and criticism (including much of my own) are usually approached today.

I know that art as the essential historian of its contemporary world through the ages, has been rather consistently a liar, distorting by idealization what it has not falsified by omission. But these are white lies, as I hope to get around to explaining in a moment. If you want history in terms of the sequence of events that make up the armature upon which history books are organized—the charting of wars, treaties, revolutions and politics, the rise and fall of dynasties and social institutions—then art, in spite of a few exceptions, seldom offers anything but a mixture of semi-truths, total absurdities, tactful evasions and partisan exaggerations. As an extreme example including all of these, take Rubens' glorification of the marriage of Maria de'Medici and Henry IV, a marriage made neither in heaven nor, as Rubens would have it at the behest of his unpleasant patroness, on Olympus.

Or take the Napoleonic painters, a group that happens to give me special pleasure. When it comes to tactful evasions and partisan exaggerations, no artists, ever, have bested these Frenchmen. In their passionately distorted accounts, Bonaparte's peculiarities are ignored, and his defeat and exile become glorious as the prerequisite martyrdom to sanctification. By the evidence of contemporary painters, here was a noble spirit brought low not by any imperfections of its own but by tragic circumstances manipulated by the forces of evil. Subliminal Biblical references barely stop short of the Crucifixion.

And yet there can be truth to history, truth of a special importance, in distortions of this kind. Rubens' *Marriage of Maria de'Medici and Henry IV*—the whole series of gigantic paintings—has always struck me as being inflated to the point of parodying the ideal of baroque grandeur whose formulas it exemplifies, but the Napoleonic artists vivify as no straightforward, factually accurate historian could do, one aspect of a story that from any objective point



Photographie Giraudon

In Peter Paul Rubens' Henry IV Receiving the Portrait of Maria de'Medici, Jupiter and Juno look on affectionately while Minerva, goddess of wisdom, advises the French king to contract the proposed marriage with the Italian princess, and playful cupids make away with his helmet and shield. The baroque ideals of grandeur are pushed to their limits—or further—in this episode from a series of paintings celebrating a crassly political union.

of view reduces the French adulation of Napoleon to something like blind hysteria. There is no way to calculate the degree to which Napoleonic painting accounts for the survival of the Napoleonic legend, but it is difficult to look at these pictures without recognizing them as inexhaustible sources for the legend's perpetuation. They carry still the fervent, almost religious conviction with which they were conceived.

The Napoleonic episode is only a small bit in the vast matrix of the history of the world, but its reflection in art exemplifies in its own way what I mean by the "essential history" that art can reveal. This is the history of the ideal goals that civilizations have set for themselves, whether or not those goals were achieved, whether or not the means toward achievement were admirable, and

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whether or not the goals themselves were valid by our standards. Gothic France was hardly the spiritual realm that is materialized in the Gothic cathedral; Chartres, the apotheosis of medieval intellectualism and spirituality, is a historical lie, if you wish, in that it says nothing of medieval poverty, cruelty, intolerance and corruption. But it is a white lie at worst; if it is a part-truth, historically, the part it deals with testifies to our potential for the sublime.

Down the historical chart from Egypt until today, the arts distill for us comparable essences of civilizations. This is a truism, of course, but art historians seem to avoid it more and more, for fear of expounding the obvious or confusing moral with aesthetic values—perhaps from fear of falling into errors like the neo-classic vision of ancient Greece as a world of perfect order and harmony (the Parthenon's white lie) and the romantic vision of the Middle Ages where the cathedrals were built by hordes of the devout dragging stones while chanting to the glory of God. As for art critics, they (or

we) have become so preoccupied with aesthetic analyses in debate with one another that art as a social manifestation, unless it is that semi-art form called "protest art," is isolated from the deepest forces that inspire it.

In the second paragraph of these comments I mentioned art as "a potent form of communication with the past" in a personal context. There is inexhaustible pleasure in communication with artists who may have worked a hundred years ago (Degas, for instance) or five hundred (Mantegna is always approachable in spite of his stern manner) or thousands. This is a pleasure I have tried in my professional life to relay to pupils and readers, but I am not at all sure as to how successfully this can be done except in cases where a latent capacity, like a neglected natural talent, can be aroused. Right now, with fingers crossed, I would place my bets on the exposition of "essential history" as the most rewarding interpretation to make art mean something to the largest number of people.



Photographie Ciraudon

Jean Antoine Gros's *Napoleon Visiting the Pesthouse at Jaffa*, painted in 1804, commemorates an incident when Napoleon, during his Near Eastern campaign of 1798-99, visited a hospital in Jaffa where members of his troops were dying of the plague. Relocating the incident in a more romantic setting (a mosque), Gros shows the General touching plague sores as if to cure them miraculously, while the afflicted men look on worshipfully. In spirit, the painting is less closely related to the factual incident than to Rembrandt's famous etching, *Christ Healing the Sick* (the so-called "Hundred Guilder Print"), with Napoleon cast as Christ at the center of a number of incidents that Rembrandt drew from Matthew 19.



The National Gallery of Art

Ed. note: William J. Bennett calls his new position as NEH chairman "a terrific job." And in recent remarks to the employees of the Endowment, which he characterized as a "good agency with a good staff," Bennett outlined his goals.

"Since this is an agency meant to inspire critical inquiry and imagination in others, it should possess these qualities itself. Intelligence, candor and good will should mark our work," Bennett said. "It should be plainly and unabashedly idealistic. It should be marked by industry as well as straightforward and simple prose."

Noting that he is "the first chairman with the responsibility and the inclination to defend a smaller budget," Bennett maintained that a smaller budget provides the opportunity to raise the Endowment's standards of evaluation. He emphasized that when he makes decisions on applications recommended to him by the National Council on

the Humanities, "quality will be the major concern."

Among the new chairman's first projects are:

- A program of summer seminars for secondary school teachers modeled after the Endowment's Summer Seminars for College Teachers program. Plans are underway to offer ten to fifteen such seminars during the summer of 1983.

- Chairman's awards of up to \$75,000 for outstanding projects proposed by state humanities committees.

- Invitations for proposals related to the approaching 200th anniversary of the U.S. Constitution.

- Revisions in the Challenge Grants Program so that awards are made not only on the basis of financial need and the ability to raise private funds to supplement federal funds, but also on the basis of the contribution that the institution might make to the humanities.

- The merging of the Division of Special Programs and the Division of Public Programs for both administrative and budgetary reasons.

The thirty-eight-year-old chairman, a scholar of American political philosophy and Constitutional law, comes to the Endowment from his position as president of the National Humanities Center in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, which he helped establish with the late Charles Frankel. He was educated at Gonzaga Catholic High School in Washington, D.C.; Williams College; the University of Texas, where he earned a doctorate in philosophy; and Harvard Law School, where he received his J.D.

The following highlights from a recent interview reflect William Bennett's conception of the humanities and his view that NEH has "a modest role, a limited role, but one that can make a difference."

A Conversation with William J. Bennett



Q. The National Humanities Center sought to bring scholars into more contact with the public, "to put good ideas into circulation," as one of its brochures states. Do you see the NEH State Humanities Committees as a way to accomplish this kind of public outreach?

A. To some extent, but too often scholars have been stampeded into addressing issues of public policy because someone felt, mistakenly, that it was expected of them. I think this is a disservice to scholars and a disservice to the humanities. My own research has addressed such matters of public policy as the *Bakke* case, placing it within the context of Constitutional history. I've also done work in the philosophy of education, and the "new" ethics. But I have no interest in cosmologizing my preferences. What worries me is that the humanities will write a check that we can't cash. Yeats said, "We have no gift to set the statesman right." What does the average medievalist know about energy problems? I think it demeans the scholar and scholarship if the unstated part of the invitation to speak implies "unless you can tell us something immediately applicable to public policy, you are of no value."

Q. But Charles Frankel was a brilliant example of a scholar who was influential in public policy. However, even he once said that "over the long run, the great argument for putting a philosopher in a government position is merely that he might carry some messages back from the world to academe."

A. To me, Charles Frankel represented a fine example of the philosopher in the public classroom. There's been much discussion over the years within and outside this agency concerning the role of the humanities and its connection with public affairs. My own view is that very few people can make the connection and talk about public issues effectively. Charles Frankel was one of them.

As for carrying messages back to academe, I would only hope that we not inevitably regard schools and other educational institutions as somehow not part of the real world. I think, as a matter of fact, that whether a classroom is a real place is contingent upon what goes on in that classroom. It's real, obviously in the sense that it's a physical

location for human beings. But whether it's real in the sense that anything vital, interesting, or significant is going on depends upon the kind and quality of people and effort present. I've been in classrooms, seminars and discussions which were every bit as real as the push and pull of Congressional debate, or the offense and defense of a football game. I've also been in classrooms, discussions and seminars that were so moribund, so dull, so uninteresting that one really did wonder if they were part of the real world or whatever world it was, one wanted to get out of it as quickly as possible.

Q. So you think that Charles Frankel was the exception and not the rule in terms of how influential a philosopher can be in public discourse?

A. Nobody gets the authority to speak intelligently about public issues simply by earning a degree in philosophy. I've listened to a number of discussions and debates involving philosophers and sometimes they're helpful, and oftentimes they're not. Unfortunately, there's no necessary connection between training in a particular discipline and the ability to make sense. That's an individual matter. You see people who have all sorts of degrees who don't make any sense at all. There are other people who make sense without those degrees.

Philosophers, I suppose, ought to be trained to have an independence of mind, to have good critical facility and to be philosophers rather than ideologues. The philosopher looks at the evidence and the arguments before making judgments. Of course, that is an ideal view of the philosopher in our own time. I think we can see that many philosophers, just like other people, have been corrupted by ideological leanings, and that they'd sacrifice their independence of mind for a party line. That's too bad. I don't think Socrates would approve. But philosophers are human too and subject to the same kind of corruption as other people.

Q. Speaking of corruption, you wrote an article in the December 1980 issue of *Commentary*, in which you stated: "One of the most serious ethical problems of our time has become the fad of the new ethics and its defenders," which you have variously described in other articles as "that never-never-

cloud-cuckoo land of modern philosophy" which is leading to "cultural suicide."

A. It was Pascal who said that philosophers think they're doing a great service when they sit down and describe a human nature that never was, a society that never could be and tell us to model our lives on that. So I think some of the directions in modern philosophy are sterile, barren, in just this way. Alisdair MacIntyre has made this case better than I can, in his book, *After Virtue*.

Q. Would you characterize "values education" as part of the new ethics?

A. That's a different kettle of fish. "Values education," has not, for the most part, been promulgated by philosophers. It's been a trend that's been pushed mainly by people who call themselves "educationists" and its locus has been in some schools of education, which have foisted it on the elementary and secondary schools.

Q. Are such trends responsible, in part, for the illiteracy the Rockefeller Commission underscored in its report last year, *The Humanities in American Life*?

A. I don't know that such programs contribute to illiteracy, but I certainly know that if one takes time out of the school curriculum to engage in facile and pointless exercises in values clarification, one is sacrificing time that could be used to teach people how to write.

Q. You have been a consultant to more than fifty secondary schools. What will be the role of the NEH in humanities education at the elementary and secondary level?

A. We ought to recognize schools that are doing a good job. We should sponsor summer seminars in the humanities and invite school teachers to come. Why not address their minds? Most people who read books as adults picked up the habit as children. The invitation to the humanities ought to be made early.

Q. How do you feel about humanities programs aimed at the out-of-school public?

A. Fine, if they're worth the time. I'm partial to books and lively classroom lectures. As commend-

able as some television shows are, you can't write in the margins on the side of the TV. How do you compare the value of a \$1 million television show with the same amount of money spent on books, fellowships, or other humanities programs? That is not to say that television or movies can't be used productively in the humanities. The NEH should certainly fund worthy television shows and museum exhibitions. But every program in every division must be justified against the alternatives. We have to set priorities. The Council must, citizens must. When the budget goes from \$130 million to \$96 million, we have to determine how to use the funds in the most intelligent manner.

Q. There are some who question whether government should be funding the humanities at all in this period of budget restraint. What will you say to them?

A. I will say that the legislation seems to be sensible enough, that the humanities are part of our national resources, that something can be done, admittedly modest, by the government, and that this agency should support the essential and the exemplary in the humanities.

One has to back up and ask why should that be government's business at all? There are critics—and I think there are sound criticisms of government's involvement here and there. But provided it's a modest role, a role that sees itself as pointing to the kinds of work which contribute to the life of the mind in this country—then I think it's worth doing.

The rationale for that was put very well by James Madison who knew that a free people must be a learned people. He talks about liberty and learning leaning on each other. According to Madison, learned institutions ought to be the favorite objects of a free people. I think that's right. If one tries to figure out what the country is or what the government is, one pretty soon gets into the realm of ideas. What's distinctive about the United States? An economic system? But there are really others like it. A political system? There are others like it, too. The real venture that this country represents lies under those systems. It is a venture in the realm of ideas, certain beliefs about the possibilities of human beings and then, from them, a certain set of political and economic institutions that embody those ideas. These ideas have been copied by others, too. They require nurture, reaffirmation, defense particularly in today's world. It is not a world which in most places is well disposed towards the ideas which have formed this country. And the ideas set forth by the Founding Fathers owe more to subjects that we call the humanities than to any other set of disciplines.

Q. Do you see any dangers in government funding of the humanities?

A. There are always risks—pressures that can be put on an agency—politics, pressure groups, special interests and the like. But NEH must respond first and foremost to arguments about quality, arguments about merit. One worries about the risk of politicization of an agency like this. How can that risk be prevented? Peer and panel reviews can help but I don't know of any structural solution. The best defense against that kind of corruption is the integrity of the people who are involved in the enterprise.

Q. How do you guarantee that?

A. When we have grants which may have a political character or tinge, we have to be very sure that our panel review is impartial. Who was it who said that "every anthropologist loves his tribe"?

I would like to see some people on our panels—and this is not a comment on who we have now, because I haven't really dug into that yet—who are very well educated nonspecialists, who are of a

very critical and skeptical turn of mind, who need to be persuaded, who don't just see the title of a proposal and fall over. I would want to be sure we have some people of healthy skepticism. After all, the burden of proof should be on the proposals. Do they make the case that this justifies putting our hands into the pockets of the taxpayers?

Q. What about histories of radical movements or fundamentalist religious movements or conservative movements that contribute to the history of this century or the last century, yet which may be political?

A. Let's just assure ourselves that they proceed from knowledge, not mere opinion. I think we need a little more rigor in what we understand to be the humanities. They are not everything; they are not all disciplines; they are not a set of political bromides or formulas. At the same time, we can't lock the humanities up and say that we will entertain no proposals which might have political ramifications.

If we had a young John Locke out there who wanted to write the Fifth and Sixth Treatises on Government, talking about the really sound and rational basis for a political society, I hope John Locke, if he tried to apply, would be received favorably here at the National Endowment. Now what he writes might have profound political implications; but I don't think we can say, "No applications from people whose work might have political implications." I do think, however, that we should not give grants to individuals who are really engaged in a political polemic or an ideological incantation posing in the guise of the humanities.

Q. What other kinds of awards would you caution against?

A. Bad grants can fall into a lot of categories as can good grants. Bad grants can be by subject matter: the grant really is not in the humanities; or the humanities are dragged in kicking and screaming, as an afterthought; or, occasionally buzz words like "humanistic" are put in to catch the attention of this agency and to receive funding. Sometimes, you have these "orphan" grants. "Well, we can't get money from anywhere else"—but the thing isn't really in the humanities. A bad grant, of course, can be a grant that's given to people who can't pull it off, who don't know the first thing about whatever they're organizing, or to an individual who doesn't have a snowball's chance of writing a book that he or she proposes to write.

Q. And what do you think is a good grant?

A. Let me give you a simple example of what I thought was a good grant. I understand that libraries in Vermont were sponsoring sessions in which citizens came to the library. Beforehand they were given a book to read in the humanities—*Madame Bovary* or *Huckleberry Finn*. Then they had a discussion about the book with someone from a university who taught the book, and who knew the book inside and out. They were given the book—pretty inexpensive, two or three bucks, and this process was duplicated in a number of libraries around the state of Vermont. And citizens kept coming back for these sessions. They got a lot out of it; they continued the discussions among themselves afterwards, and at the end of the series they had four or five new books, but now marked up with notes in the margins. Very simple idea, very straightforward idea. It seems to me a very good way to serve one of those legislative purposes which is to contribute to the public understanding of the humanities.

Q. There's been some effort made to evaluate grants. How successful has that been?

A. With the business that we're in, it's hard to find a means of measurement that is exact. At the National Humanities Center, I found a number of

indices of our success. At first we started with a production model: How many books will be written at the Center? But we found out that one of the really good things we were doing at the Center was preventing certain books from being written. Through the exchange and discussion that took place at luncheons and seminars, people would find their theses so damaged they gave them up. And so they wouldn't write the book. This is progress. Preventing bad books from being written can be a real service to the cause of civilization because, as everybody knows, there's so much being written, and it's not all good.

But it depends on what you're talking about. NEH has a Fellowships Program. If the fellows write books and enough of the books are good and acknowledged to be good by other scholars and sometimes by the general public, then I think that's a pretty good measuring rod. When you put on a television show and lots of people watch it, think it's great and want to see it again, want to bring it into their schools and show it to the students, and the students learn from it, that's a pretty good test. If you send in consultants to an educational institution to improve the teaching and you report that two or three years later there are new courses or new methods that really have caught on and they're succeeding in educating students, and the place has a vitality it didn't have before—that's hard to measure in an exact and quantifiable way. But it still can be very real. I don't buy the notion that if you can't quantify it, you can't measure it. I think you can discern activity in intellectual life just as easily as you can in biological life. Sometimes it's the same in both cases: a matter of brain waves.

Q. What do you think the ideal role is for the government in relation to the humanities?

A. A modest role. I think government must look to the exemplary in the humanities and reward that. I think it should look to the essential. The legislation which governs us is very sound. That is, we are here to help strengthen teaching in the humanities; we are here to help encourage research which will contribute to the life of the mind; we are here to help interested citizens gain an understanding of what the humanities comprise; and we are here to contribute to essential humanities resources. It may be a modest role, a limited role, but one that can make a difference. I think it was Justice Brandeis who said that all government teaches by example. That's true. It teaches for good or for ill. So too does the NEH teach by example. Many have said that more significant than anything else the NEH does is the fact that it gives its "seal of approval." NEH says this kind of work is good enough so that we can support it. And in giving its "seal of approval," we are telling other citizens, "this is what we regard as important, as significant, as worthwhile, as exemplary."

Q. You stated earlier that you were worried that "the humanities may be writing a check that we can't cash." What is a reasonable expectation for the humanities?

A. We need a proper sense of what the humanities can do. Love, death, friendship, courage, meaning, history, honor, justice—these are the concerns of the humanities as we've known them through the ages—and to learn about them is plenty good enough, thank you.

The humanities cannot save our souls; they do not give us a party line. But as Matthew Arnold said, they can serve the very practical purposes of "elevating the spirit and enlarging the mind." And that's a very great deal.

—Ruth Dean

Ms. Dean was formerly the cultural correspondent for the Washington Star.

EL GRECO OF TOLEDO

Eerie, chalky gray buildings dominate the horizon above an ancient Spanish city. Overhead, a dark blue sky is streaked with wild clouds that mask the sun behind. The hidden light source casts an unreal, pale color on the clouds and makes them appear as if they are about to collide and explode. The combinations of sky and architecture produces a cityscape charged with an unnatural, electrifying spiritual energy.

Generations of art critics concluded that the painter who created his *View of Toledo* was one whose artistic soul was so entangled in the decadence and religious mysticism of his surroundings that he himself became a mystic isolated from the world about him, his works the embodiment of the essence of the Spanish soul.

The works of Domenikos Theotokopoulos, "El Greco," the Greek painter from Crete who established his studio in Toledo in the late sixteenth century after studying in Italy, have been the subject of debate ever since.

His distorted landscapes, his choice of colors, and the elongation of the human body in his paintings established him as a controversial artist even in his own time—so controversial, in fact, that the king of Spain rejected his work.

But aided by some contemporary research, we must look again at that *View of Toledo*. The "hidden light source" is called moonlight. And what is that odd looking series of triangles supporting what looks like a pipeline across the lower third of the landscape? What is such a mechanical contraption doing in the midst of mysticism?

Scholars who have recently reexamined El Greco's works and his surroundings have come to new conclusions which aver that the artist was not a mystic; instead, they conclude, he was immersed in the sixteenth-century community in which he chose to live and work and was a part of the local elite in a Toledo that was not decadent but still vibrant and prosperous.

Jonathan Brown, professor of art history at New York University's Institute of Fine Arts, has dispelled the aura of mysticism about the *View of Toledo*, for example, without denigrating El Greco's genius. He has concluded that the painting was an emblematic view of the city calculated to suggest its proud history and continuing civic achievements—a dignified ancestor of the Chamber of Commerce brochure or picture post card. Each element was included to emphasize the city's antiquity and the rich variety of its culture. At the top were the cathedral and palace, symbols of Toledo's time-honored role as the dwelling place of the highest religious and secular authorities in the land. The mechanical device in the picture is the Artificio de Juanelo, an ingenious pumping system that carried water uphill to the royal fortress. It was included to show the wonder of "modern" Toledo and to demonstrate the city's continued vitality.

Such reexaminations of El Greco are the central theme of an exhibition, partially supported by the NEH, of seventy of the artist's works. Currently



The Metropolitan Museum of Art

View of Toledo is one of seventy masterpieces by El Greco in the first major loan show of his paintings seen in America. The NEH-supported exhibition will open at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., on July 3.

showing at the Museo del Prado in Madrid, it will be seen in three American cities, including Toledo, Ohio, in the coming months.

The exhibit postulates a new explanation of El Greco's art based on the cultural context in which it flourished—the city of Toledo which was the center of the Spanish Church, the moving force of the Counter Reformation. It was the ability to interpret this dominant religious mood of Spanish Catholicism that established El Greco as an artist.

El Greco was born in 1540 on the island of Crete, where he is believed to have become a painter employing the traditional Byzantine style. He later went to Venice, apparently to develop his talent in the style of Titian, and in 1570 moved to Rome. In 1577 he journeyed to Spain for reasons which are unclear but no doubt had to do with furthering his career. An acquaintance helped him get a commission to paint three altar pieces for the convent church of Santo Domingo el Antiguo in Toledo, and perhaps for another work which he did in the Cathedral of Toledo. However, he was rebuffed at court in 1583 when a painting failed to please King Philip II. Thereafter, he settled in Toledo where he continued to paint until his death in 1614.

"All the while he was living in Toledo," Brown notes, "he was creating stupendous masterpieces of painting in a style that truly deserves to be called original. It was precisely this quality of genuine, almost unprecedented artistic originality that first plagued and then obsessed viewers of his art over the next three centuries."

Appreciation and interpretation of El Greco's works have indeed undergone dramatic changes and reversals.

To his contemporaries, Brown says, El Greco was an enigma. Comments usually took the form of grudging admiration. By the early eighteenth century, when Antonio Palomino published his definitive study of Spanish painters, El Greco's

works were in thorough disrepute among admirers of the Classical school of painting. Thus, Palomino summed up El Greco's works by stating: "What he did well, none did better. And what he did poorly, none did worse."

Outside of Spain few knew of his paintings until the Napoleonic occupation of Spain from 1808 to 1812 brought quantities of Spanish works to France. In this era Romantic writers and artists, in a selective search of the past for evidence to buttress their belief in the primacy of emotion over reason, discovered Spanish religious painting. Theophile Gautier was the key figure in promoting a reappraisal of El Greco's art. Another influential admirer, Edouard Manet, studied El Greco's paintings in Spain and used one work as a model for a painting in 1864.

During the last thirty years of the nineteenth century, avant-garde artists and critics succeeded in arousing an ever-growing admiration and enthusiasm for El Greco. But the turning point, according to Brown, was a publication in 1886 by Manuel B. Cossio of an enthusiastic, informed appraisal of the artist in a popular encyclopedia. This was followed by Cossio's pioneering study of El Greco's life and work published in 1890. He offered a new interpretation which turned the painter's work into the quintessential expression of the Spanish spirit.

"During the first third of the twentieth century," Brown said, "El Greco appears to have become all things to all men. Rarely in the history of taste has an artist undergone such a stunning reversal of fortune. After centuries of neglect, he became almost overnight a universally appealing figure. Into the existing vacuum of appreciation rushed all manner of theory to account for what appeared to be an artist without forerunner or follower. The result was a bewildering variety of interpretations which took years to consolidate."

"The most misguided interpretations belong to what might be called the functional school of thought, invented by men of science. Unable or unwilling to grapple with the complexities of El Greco's art, they sought refuge in simplistic theories that attributed his unusual style to what might be called mechanical defects. The most outlandish of these theories, of course, is the one proposed in 1913 by a Spanish ophthalmologist, Dr. German Beritens, who apparently believed El Greco to be the one and only painter ever to practice a nonrealistic style and therefore proposed that the distortions of El Greco's art were caused by an optical defect, astigmatism. Equally absurd was the idea proposed many years later by Dr. Gregorio Marañón that the gaunt and haggard figure types sometimes employed by El Greco in his later years had their origin in the totally imaginary practice of using inmates of Toledo's insane asylum as models."

More serious attempts were made to hold El Greco up to the mirror of modern art. For example, twentieth-century critics saw him both as a "proto-Cubist" and as a "proto-Expressionist." Thus, his art was interpreted without reference to its contemporary cultural surroundings.

Despite a considerable body of knowledge about the painter, Brown said, interpreters of the data have tended to accept myths about El Greco as truths. For example, nowhere is there any evidence to suggest that the artist was in contact with the Spanish mystics. Studies of El Greco's clientele

show that he operated within the typical professional framework of the time, and that he was familiar with the contemporary artistic thought and traditions.

"Recently," Brown adds, "the conception of El Greco as an intellectual artist has been confirmed by the sensational discovery of extended comments on art from the pen of El Greco himself."

These writings, in the form of margin notes to Vitruvius's *Ten Books on Architecture*, were discovered recently by Fernando Marias in the National Library in Madrid and testify to El Greco's belief in the prevailing ideas of Italian sixteenth-century art practice and theory.

They have led to an understanding that the subjective, antinaturalistic character of El Greco's painting was not the result of spiritual visions or emotional reactions to his subject matter, but an attempt to create an art dedicated to the expression of abstract ideas about beauty—art that would exhibit his virtuosity and prove his status as an intellectual artist. "For instance," Brown writes, "El Greco's use of elongated figure proportions, one of the most familiar features of his art, was motivated by the belief that such figures were inherently more beautiful than normal sized figures."

El Greco's treatment of human figures was based in the theory of the Italian Mannerist school. His interest in manipulating the human body also appears in his fondness for foreshortenings.

Another feature of El Greco's art was an exclu-

sion of inanimate nature. "His art looks into the mind, not over the landscape, for inspiration, just as the Mannerist theorists prescribed," says Brown. The ultimate effect of his various spatial devices "is a compositional pattern that hovers ambiguously between the second and third dimension." This subtle effect together with his unnatural treatment of light, made an important contribution to the otherworldliness of his art.

The general view of historians has been that El Greco lived in a Toledo that went into decline after the court left for Madrid in 1561. This conclusion was based on records of petitions from the city to the court asking for aid. Other historical records, however, indicate that the city's population did not decline for some years afterward; additional contemporary accounts refer to the city's generally prosperous appearance, according to Richard L. Kagan, professor of history at The Johns Hopkins University.

"The intellectual stagnation generally associated with decadence and decline cannot be found in El Greco's Toledo," Kagan states. "The city held on to a small but relatively wealthy group of churchmen, merchants and nobles who were prepared to extend patronage to poets and painters alike. This patronage, in fact, is the principal reason why Toledo, despite its impending economic difficulties, was able not only to support a whole colony of artists, scholars, and intellectuals, but also to remain one of the vital centers of Spanish cultural life."

His research shows, Kagan said, that Toledo was a city governed by a learned elite with artistic interests, sophisticated literary tastes, and a strong sense of civic pride. In many ways, this elite resembled that which governed Florence at the height of the Renaissance. It was a city in the mainstream of the counter-Reformation.

"Those who have proposed that El Greco found in Toledo an 'oriental' city steeped in mysticism have misinterpreted Toledan spirituality," Kagan writes. "It is, of course, true that in the Middle Ages there were important manifestations of both Jewish and Moorish culture in Toledo, but by the end of the sixteenth century the city was neither mysterious nor mystical. Its character was rather, as Toledans themselves claimed in 1605, that of a second Rome, a new Rome. Toledo was a city dominated by churchmen who emphasized the necessity for strict observance of the central doctrines of the church. And it was with members of this group that El Greco found many of the contacts that were crucial to his success in Toledo...."

"In Toledo, therefore, El Greco represented a break from tradition. He regarded painting as one of the liberal arts, equal in status to mathematics, music, and poetry. The fact that he wrote treatises on art and architecture . . . demonstrates that he viewed himself as a learned painter, a practitioner of a noble art."

Brown concludes that El Greco, almost alone among the practitioners of artificial art, found the means to reconcile the seemingly irreconcilable goals of Mannerist aesthetics and Counter Reformation theology.

"This brilliant achievement," he states "could only have occurred in a place where men possessed of great wealth, high learning, and sophisticated taste had yet to find a painter capable of expressing their artistic, intellectual, and religious aspirations. El Greco's career in Toledo may have required him to be more of a professional painter than the gentleman-artist he would have wished to be, but at least there he found a rarefied society of kindred spirits who sustained his ambitions to achieve the grace that gives sign and splendor to the beauty of the mind."

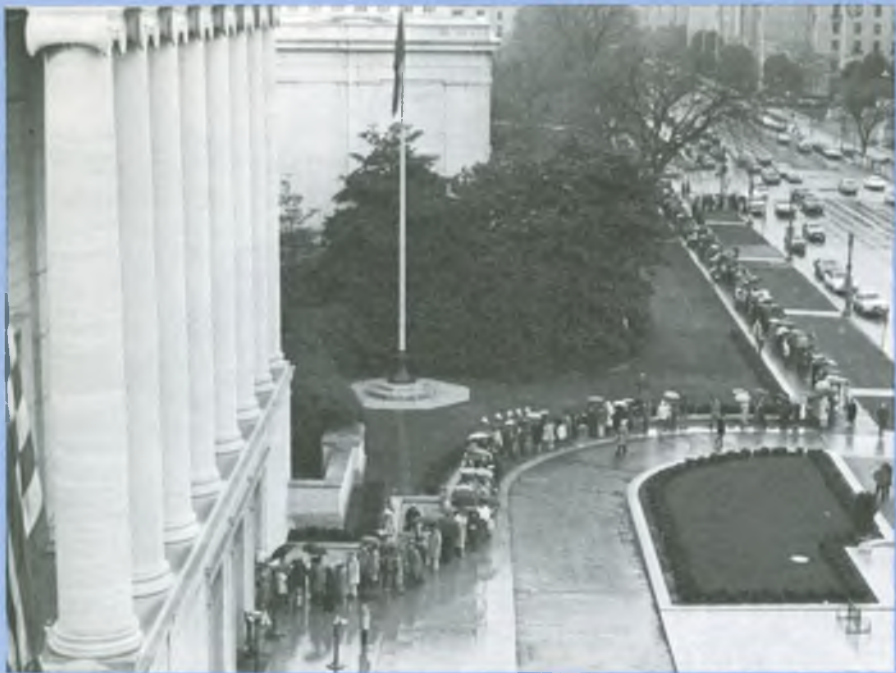
—William O. Craig

Mr. Craig is a member of the Endowment staff.

"El Greco of Toledo"/Roger Mandle/Toledo Museum of Art, OH/\$28,343/1980/\$125,000 OR; \$400,000 FM/1981-83/Museums and Historical Organizations



Domenikos Theotokopoulos, called El Greco, (1541-1614) painted this canvas of Saint Martin and the Beggar in 1597/1599.



The National Gallery of Art



Museum-goers learn about the seminal nature of Cezanne's work at the NEH-funded Cezanne exhibit at New York City's Museum of Modern Art. Lines winding around the block were a familiar sight in every city that played host to the "King Tut" show. The Treasures of Tutankhamun, the official NEH title for this record-breaking exhibition, made millions of Americans more aware of archaeological techniques as well as the splendors of an ancient civilization.

The Exhibition as Text

BY NEIL HARRIS



The expanding role of museums, particularly museums of art and history, has become a cultural commonplace. In this country, thousands of museums are less than twenty-five years old. Their burgeoning annual attendance figures, the glamorous international cullings of art objects and artifacts (aided by federally supported indemnification guarantees), the numerous smaller, more specialized shows, many with catalogs as impressive as any produced by the "blockbusters," the creation of a separate (currently threatened) national agency to encourage museum operations, all testify to the ascent of organized display. More subtle still, perhaps, has been the evolution of the exhibition form itself as a source of value and information, a textual type demanding attention from scholars whose fields of interest are neither history nor visual arts. The experience of exhibition-going has transcend-

ed any specific subject matter as a popular pastime.

As museums have broadened their cultural role, other institutions, like libraries, have begun to cultivate some of their features. Books and periodicals, particularly of nineteenth-century origin, are endangered species; their physical survival depends on sequestration or expensive conservation methods. Micro-text copies prolong the lives of fragile originals. In some libraries the card catalogs themselves are threatened with disintegration, and are being replaced with new recall systems. Libraries are exploiting the exhibition value of their older volumes and manuscripts, even as normal daily care turns into curatorial responsibility. As certain kinds of printed materials become scarcer and more valuable—trade catalogs, advertising ephemera, dime novels, and comic books—the library hosts magical encounters with the ordinary stuff of an

older day. Like museums of history and art.

Such usurpation of museum uses reflects not only the increasing sense of the book as object, but the higher value placed upon exhibition encounters with "authentic" originals. Even as schools continue to wrestle with the problem of teaching the ancient art of reading, many Americans have become more comfortable with and more sensitive to the special character—temporal and spatial—of the museum exhibition.

In regularly organized and popularly attended forms, the art exhibition is relatively young. Elizabeth Gilmore Holt, tracing the rise of art exhibitions and art criticism, starts her survey in the late eighteenth century during the Age of Revolution, when nationalistic competition and transformed patronage patterns combined to encourage this new and unique system of presentation. Salons and



The Boston Museum of Fine Arts, whose first section was completed in 1876, is typical of the imposing, even forbidding, museum architecture of the Victorian era.

academies received the attention of writers like Stendhal, Thackeray, Heine, and Baudelaire, while others explored the novel pretensions of gallery-going. Samuel Butler's sardonic presentation of Mendelssohn's self-imposed purgatory in the Uffizi—"I wonder how many chinks Mendelssohn gave himself for having sat two hours on that chair. I wonder how often he looked at his watch to see if his two hours were up... how often he wondered whether any of the visitors were recognizing him and admiring him for sitting such a long time in the same chair..."—was matched by the interest of Zola, Hawthorne, James, and Wharton. Hawthorne, slowly and painfully led to pleasure in the European masters, insisted at the Manchester Art Exhibition that painting galleries were "the greatest absurdities that ever were contrived," and believed his fellow spectators to be only "skimming the surface, as I did, and none of them so feeding on what was beautiful as to digest it, and make it part of themselves." The sight of a great many paintings all together was "like having innumerable books open before you at once, and being able to read only a sentence or two in each..." His comments recall André Malraux's contrast between European and Asian art practices. Pitting works of art against each other, Malraux wrote in *The Voices of Silence*, is an intellectual act which makes relaxed contemplation impossible. "To the Asiatic's thinking an art collection... is as preposterous as would be a concert in which one listened to a programme of ill-assorted pieces following in unbroken succession." Indeed for much of the nineteenth century large numbers of people found the great museum a bewildering and intimidating setting. The wedding party in Zola's *L'Assommoir* caught the contrast in the high hopes with which they entered the Louvre, and the confusion and fatigue with which they left.

It is hard, of course, to be certain about what happens to people at even the most popular of contemporary exhibitions. Strolling about with hundreds or thousands of others, glancing for a few seconds at dozens of images or objects, overhearing snatches of conversation or relying, uncertainly, on the authority of a magic wand and a taped voice, many museum visitors still justify Hawthorne's suspicions. It is often easier to summarize a film, a novel, or a concert, than to describe sensations or offer conclusions about an exhibition. The glass of fashion continues to reflect back a need to

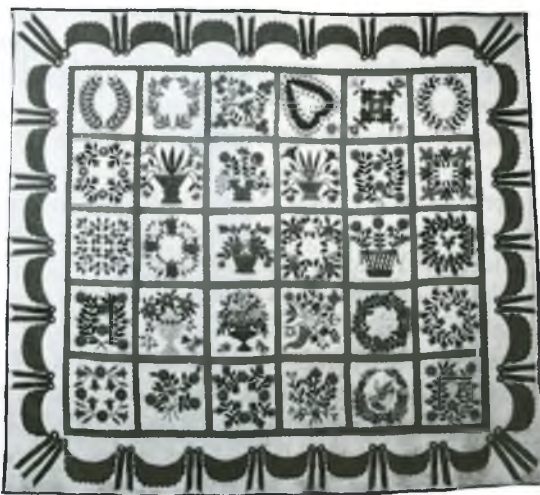
see and be seen where effective publicity has created a major event.

But although skepticism about the impact of exhibitions must persist, there are increasing numbers of spectators who visit exhibitions not as passive victims of existing arrangements but as selective and even aggressive observers. Some return again and again, varying their pace and concentrating their attention upon individual pieces or sections. Museum visiting cannot be easily described by any generalization. Like books, exhibits are read at many levels and velocities. To a generation accustomed to photographic reproduction, color television sets, and the bazaars of shopping centers, the exhibition is now understood as a self-interested and sometimes arbitrary organization of objects, their placement offering clues to the larger argument. The sequence of rooms and galleries, their size and lighting, the quantity and quality of labels and explanations, the omissions and the exaggerations are all more widely noticed. Some of this may result from broader private collecting, an expanded art criticism, or the flight of the printed word; some may be spawned by suspicion of establishments, scholarly, curatorial, and administrative. And some by the sophistication which repetition permits, an unexpected sense of familiarity with the demands exhibitions make on the eyes, the ears, and the feet, as well as the attention span. As a mass experience, reading from printed materials has benefited from hundreds of years of developed conventions; exhibition going, far newer, is

still developing the rituals appropriate to its enjoyment.

Despite Malraux's notion that a "Museum without Walls" would transform the revelation of art that "real" museums offered, sanctified space displaying objects retains a privileged position. Just as the book has withstood many threats to its monopolies, so the planned presentation of art possesses special appeal, built around the union of beauty, authenticity, and informed intention. The organized world of an art exhibit, with its effort to justify categories and control juxtapositions is valued (and evaluated) as an exercise of taste, intelligence, and judgment. But the organizing eye, as well as the work of art, is subjected to greater scrutiny. What had once been whispered at curatorial meetings or scholarly conferences is now bruited about by newspaper reporters and magazine critics. As exhibitions multiply it is easier to make comparisons and offer contrasts. Shows which travel to several museums and are subjected to very different installations offer pointed reminders of the choices which display requires. Exhibition does remain a more authoritarian form than books, whose messages are more easily retrieved and argued with. But this authority has begun to weaken, just as the very architecture of the museum building has lost the imposing uniformity which it possessed decades ago, in favor of sometimes radical experiments with space and material.

Increasingly informal, approachable, and responsive, the environment of the art museum has become correspondingly more influential as a frame for popular interpretation. And the exhibition as text has therefore become of greater consequence to humanists. "Can the imagination conceive any thing more interesting?" Charles Willson Peale asked in 1800, advocating his darling project of a science museum. To this "magnificent pile," to this "magazine of knowledge," the "learned and ingenious would flock" to gain and distribute their hard-won knowledge. Peale's hopes were dashed by commercial competition but almost two hundred years later his compound of enlightenment and entertainment seems prophetic. And as applicable to art and history as to science. Flourishing but fragile, the art exhibition cannot be simply the responsibility of an arts endowment or of individual museums. It is also a commitment of the NEH, a recognition that this mode of presentation helps establish our identity and validate our past.



This quilt from an NEH-funded interpretive exhibit at the Baltimore Museum of Art is one of many used to commemorate social and political events of the mid-1900s.

The Baltimore Museum of Art

Continuing the Renaissance at Villa I Tatti



Photo Archives, Villa I Tatti

Few scholars in this era of ever-increasing specialization can fully appreciate the Renaissance ideal of *uomo universale*—the “complete man” like Leonardo da Vinci, who was at once artist, philosopher, scientist and writer.

But each year a dozen or more young scholars are granted a chance to share that Renaissance vision amid the silver-green olive groves and black-pointed cypresses just outside Florence, the first city to feel the awakening of the modern mind.

The setting is the Villa I Tatti, for more than fifty years the home of art critic and humanist Bernard Berenson, who moved from America to live in the land of Leonardo, Michelangelo and the Medicis. At his death in 1959, Berenson left the unpretentious villa to his alma mater, Harvard University, which converted it two years later into a font of Renaissance learning.

Now officially called the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, it is still known to Florentines and visitors alike as I Tatti, a peculiar name that may have its origins in the name of the family Zati, who owned the villa in the sixteenth century.

Whatever its origins, I Tatti's reputation in the academic community is clear. It is, says Vassar College history professor Benjamin Kohl, “the foremost center for advanced study of the Renaissance in the world” and one of fourteen NEH-assisted centers for advanced study that enable academics to pursue independent research in the company of scholars from different disciplines. Since 1976, NEH has supported three to five postdoctoral fellows each year to study for twelve months at I Tatti together with nine or ten other scholars—assisted through Fulbright fellowships or other means.

Unlike other NEH-supported centers—for example, the Institute for Advanced Study or the National Humanities Center—I Tatti is devoted strictly to the study of a specific period of history—the Renaissance in all its aspects. In keeping with Berenson's own interests, the center initially was dominated by art historians. “In Florence,” recalls philosophy professor Alan Perreiah, an NEH fellow during 1980-81, “you mention I Tatti and people automatically say, ‘Oh, you're an art historian.’” But I Tatti has expanded in recent years to include scholars from such different disciplines as musicology, economic history, literature, philosophy, archaeology, paleography, iconography and conservation.

“It can be almost any facet of the Renaissance,” says Harvard literature professor Walter Kaiser. “The key is that all the fellows are working in the same historical period” bounded approximately by the birth of Petrarch in 1304 and the death of Titian in 1576. Kaiser is deputy chairman of an advisory committee that meets each January to choose the next year's fellows from among four to five dozen well-qualified candidates.

I Tatti generally seeks scholars “in the earlier rather than in the later stages of their careers,” notes Craig Hugh Smyth, the center's director. Smyth, who formerly directed New York University's Institute of Fine Arts, adds that one of the center's chief goals is to stimulate scholars “with promise.”

Perhaps surprisingly, the center doesn't cater mainly to Harvard graduates, but instead attempts to bring together gifted academics from around the world, notes Maureen Mazzoui, an associate professor of economic history at the University of Wisconsin, another 1980-81 NEH fellow. Mazzoui's colleagues at I Tatti that year came from such diverse institutions as the University of Milan, the University of Virginia, West Germany's University of Erlangen-Nurnberg and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The selection committee strives to bring in at least one fellow each year from behind the “Iron Curtain,” Kaiser says. “It's perhaps the one time in their careers that they can make scholarly contact with the West.”

All the fellows share the unique resources of I Tatti, once a squarish, three-story Tuscan farmhouse expanded by Berenson to include two wings and a courtyard flanked by mathematically formal Italian gardens. Today it houses only Smyth, some domestic help and an occasional distinguished scholar who might visit for a week or two. The fellows, who live “off campus” in the City of Flowers or in separate villas divided into apartments, pursue individual research projects. Wisconsin's Mazzoui, for instance, used the 90,000-volume library to do research for a study of the Italian woolen industry from 1300 to 1600.

Bejeweled with an exquisite collection of early fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Italian paintings, I Tatti also houses a large periodical collection and a separate music library built after Berenson's death. As an added attraction to art historians, the villa safeguards an unmatched archive of more than 200,000 photographs of Italian art and archi-

ture. Creighton Gilbert of Yale University's art history department notes that I Tatti also helps fellows secure access to the many libraries, archives and art collections in Florence, among the largest and most important in Italy. Relations with the town were cemented when I Tatti helped rescue Florentine paintings threatened by a flood in 1966.

Although some fellows find the I Tatti library world enough for their research, others, like Perreiah, an associate professor at the University of Kentucky, venture frequently outside Florence to complete their studies. Perreiah was probing the intellectual links between the late medieval philosopher Paul of Venice and subsequent Renaissance philosophers. He traveled throughout Italy to collect hundreds of pieces by the Venetian. “I Tatti was like a base of operations,” says Perreiah, who journeyed out of town about once a week, but was guided chiefly by a bibliography of material at I Tatti.

For all those who remain in I Tatti itself or in Florence, the highlight of each day is the *pranzo*, or large midday communal meal. Generally twenty to twenty-five fellows, visiting scholars or luminaries gather at one large table to break bread and share intellectual experiences just as Renaissance men did centuries ago. “Here an economist talks to an art historian and to a philosopher,” notes Kaiser, who adds this cross-fertilization of ideas also takes place to a lesser extent during afternoon tea or at impromptu “meetings in the library or walks through the garden.”

Initially, Kaiser says, “there was a real question of whether this all would work, or whether I Tatti would simply be a mausoleum. It's become a real institution of scholarship and intellectual exchange.” The “mainstay” of I Tatti, Perreiah agrees, “is the discourse, the discussions you get into—they just come at you from all angles.” He adds that “good conversation like that can be more than just recreation, it can be an inducement to better work.”

It appears also to be an inducement to hard work. During his year in Florence, Perreiah nearly finished the first complete census of Paul of Venice's manuscripts—about 250 texts. In addition to finding new manuscripts, he carefully inspected the texts to establish their dates of authorship, research necessary to produce an accurate chronology of Paul's writings. “And this is indispensable in tracing the development of his thought,” says Per-

reiah, who also gathered sufficient archival materials to completely revise his earlier biography of the philosopher and completed two articles and five "studies" now being prepared as articles.

Victoria Kirkham of the University of Pennsylvania, a 1977-78 Fellow, also reported I Tatti "an ideal environment." Her work on Boccaccio's number symbolism took her to a broad chronological range of Latin and Romance literature in search of numerological texts, including treatises on Pythagorean number symbolism, Patristic commentaries on numbers in the Bible, homilies and sermons by later medieval theologians and preachers, encyclopedic allegorical fiction, and popular vernacular romances.

Kirkham also investigated iconography in the other art forms (architecture, painting, manuscript illumination, music) of Boccaccio's time, wrote an outline for her book and completed two chapters and the introduction as well as several articles.

I Tatti's doors are open not only to current fellows but also to several senior research associates and the many academicians visiting Florence for brief periods. "Any bona fide scholar is welcome to work there," says Kaiser who adds that I Tatti arranges many guest lectures each year to keep the intellectual melting pot well-stirred. Former fellows at I Tatti also are welcome to return at any time and use the library "day and night, seven days a week" Smyth says. "Thus, at any one time, I Tatti is an institute composed not just of one year's fellows, visiting scholars and research associates, but of members going back over twenty years, many of whom return regularly to continue their work."

The company frequently is distinguished. Former fellows hold such prominent and varied posts as president of the American Musicological Society, president of the Region of Umbria, curator of Italian painting at the National Gallery in Washington, chairman of the board of the National Gallery in London, editor of *Medieval Studies* at the Pontifical Institute in Toronto and curator of rare books at the Newberry Library in Chicago.

They have full professorships or the equivalent at many prestigious universities including Oxford, Padua, McGill, London, Warsaw, Munich, M.I.T., Princeton, California at Berkeley, Berlin, Carnegie-Mellon, Columbia, Harvard, Yale, Trinity and Tokyo.

I Tatti fellows also have written many seminal books and articles, including David Herlihy's *Les Toscans et leurs familles*, a work of demography hailed by many specialists; Eric Cochrane's widely read *Florence in the Forgotten Centuries: 1527-1800*; Howard Brown's *Music in the Renaissance*, a work for the general public; Christopher Lloyd's *The Catalogue of Earlier Italian Paintings in the Ashmolean Museum*; and Jerrold Seigel's *Rhetoric and Philosophy in Renaissance Italy* described by Perreiah as a ground-breaking book that helped guide his own research.

Mindful of its status as the world's premier center for Renaissance study, the directors of I Tatti convene scholarly conferences every other year to explore in depth some facet of Renaissance life, for example, the relationship between Florence (once called the "Athens of Italy") and Venice (next to Milan, the richest and most powerful state in Renaissance Italy).

As Smyth puts it, "In a period when relations among men and nations are under great strain, I Tatti demonstrates the possibilities of understanding between different nationalities but with common concerns about human history and creativity."

—Francis J. O'Donnell

Mr. O'Donnell is a regular contributor to *Humanities*.

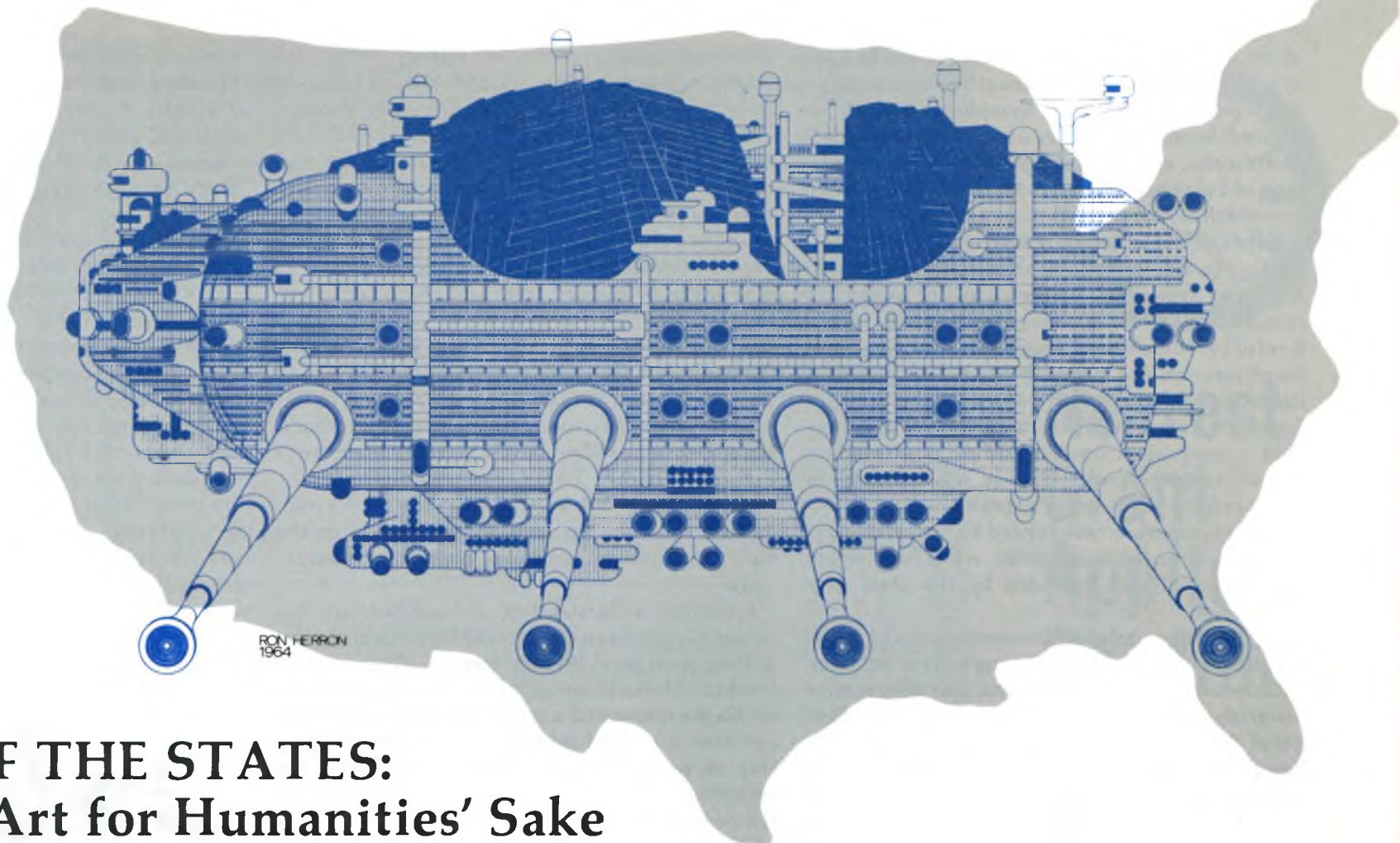
"Fellowships at Centers for Advanced Study" / Craig Smyth/Villa I Tatti-Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, Florence, Italy/ \$45,000/1976-77/\$45,000/1977-78/\$135,000/1978-81/ \$57,000/1981-82/\$171,000/1982-85/Division of Fellowships and Seminars.



The library at Villa I Tatti in Florence, Italy. Among the pleasures of I Tatti are the treasures of Renaissance art which adorn the walls. Shown here is Domenico Veneziano's world-renowned Madonna and Child. A view of the Villa corridor shows a glimpse of San Sebastian by Clima. Fellows read and study in one of Villa I Tatti's conference rooms which is furnished in the style of the Italian Renaissance.



This illustration from *Visionary Drawings of Architecture and Planning* is Ron Herron's *Cities: Moving*. "...the *Walking City* is an expression in architectural terms, albeit ironic ones, of the Archigram vision of society. The social structure of cities is not static; mobility, flexibility, and change are the dominant characteristics of modern urban life. Our cities are, in fact, moving—the average household moves once every three years. If they lived in Ron Herron's *Cities: Moving*, they wouldn't even have to pack."



STATE OF THE STATES: Studying Art for Humanities' Sake

When the state humanities councils were organized in the early 1970s, a constant challenge was to explain the differences between *their* mission and that of the already-established state arts councils. The contrast has become more tangible and also more vividly necessary after a decade of experience in funding local projects.

John Barcroft, former director of the NEH Division of Public Programs, was an early participant in the continuing dialogue on the interrelationships and sharp contrasts between the arts and the humanities. "Only one 'face' of the arts—that involved with studying man's image of himself—is related to the humanities," he explained. "This face of the arts, a discipline of the humanities, is but one small part of the much larger whole of humanities scholarship."

The humanities, as explained by Congress, include the study of literature and the history, criticism, and theory of the arts. Arts agencies fund the performance, creation, and display of the arts. Humanities agencies fund the study of the arts and their broad cultural context from the perspectives of history, philosophy, and other humanities disciplines.

The arts provide an experiential way of approaching and understanding the world, while the humanities stress an analytical method, one which steps back from that world and analyzes it thoughtfully, objectively, and in relationship to a wide range of human behavior and institutions.

Anita Silvers, a philosopher of art at San Francisco State University and member of the National Council on the Humanities, has noted that "there is a difference between the ways in which philosophers, on the one hand, and artists, on the other, present conceptual problems. The philosopher produces analysis or speculation. The artist constructs an instance which embodies or exhibits the application of the problematic concept."

This contrast between the experience and the analysis of the arts has been demonstrated in projects jointly supported by arts agencies, which fund performances, and sister humanities councils, which support discussions, commentaries, lectures, and printed materials which expand upon and analyze the experience of the performance.

In North Dakota, the arts council and the North Dakota Humanities Council each contributed fund-

ing to the Tiago Northwest International Arts Festival on Norwegian Independence Day last year. The humanities funding brought Playford Thorson, a historian, to the festival, to discuss the historical development of Norwegian culture. Marion Nelson, an art historian from the University of Minnesota, discussed Norwegian art forms.

In a more far-reaching experiment, the Ohio Arts Council and the Ohio Program in the Humanities have established a joint program in folk art and culture. All projects must lead to increased public understanding and appreciation of folk traditions and their cultural and educational significance. All must involve professionals from both the arts and the humanities. Recent projects include a month-long exhibition and symposium on the quilting tradition in Ohio, held at the College of Wooster; a series of storytelling performances in the Appalachian communities near Cincinnati and an interpretive photographic and cultural exhibit on the folk traditions of black residents of Cincinnati's West End.

Many projects funded solely by state humanities councils have also admirably developed public understanding of the analytical, critical approach to the arts, enhancing public appreciation of the role of the arts in society.

Controversy over the sculpture "Hoe-Down" which stands in front of the Federal Building in Huron, South Dakota, prompted the South Dakota State University art department to develop a public program which was funded by the South Dakota Committee on the Humanities. A philosopher identified underlying ideas and values that generated the controversy, and discussed how opposition to the sculpture related to Midwestern aesthetic values. An art historian discussed public art projects throughout history and how they reflect and preserve a society's cultural values. Richard Eide, head of the University's art department, argued that "economic values cannot always be placed above artistic values," agreeing with Brookings artists that the removal demanded by some citizens would have been "a violation of artistic expression."

Public conflicts from the past have also been illuminated through the use of historical dramas funded by state councils. The Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and Public Policy funded Fer-

rum College's original dramas, "Too Free For Me" and "Charity for All," re-enacting nineteenth-century events related to slavery and Southern race relations. Historical insights were the central focus of the program at the insistence of the Foundation. Five historians participated directly in the performance, commenting throughout as would a Greek chorus. At the conclusion, they joined the cast in leading discussions with the audience, which served as "jury" for the trial depicted in the drama.

Explains executive director Robert Vaughan, "Their impact is based solidly on their conception as a humanities program first, rather than as drama. This conception distinguishes them from other drama/lecture projects where performance is the primary consideration."

State councils have also supported many projects focusing on a particular art form from the perspective of the humanities. A project funded by the Iowa Humanities Board integrated commentary by a philosopher of art into performances by the Des Moines Ballet. In five programs around the state, "The Contemporary Choreographer: Response In the Arts to Aesthetic and Moral Values in Modern Society," Curtis Carter of Marquette University addressed the audience during the performance which was interwoven with choreographed movements for the dancers. He also prepared extensive program notes, including selections from the writings of a variety of theorists on dance, and developed a pre-performance symposium with scholars in English literature, philosophy, and history.

Curtis notes that "Scholars from Plato to the present have written about dance, and there is a growing interest among humanities scholars today in this art form." As a philosopher, Carter has been attracted to the usefulness of his discipline in understanding dance. "Philosophy allows me to put in abstract terms the things I see and provides categories of thought for understanding dance in relation to other human endeavors. The humanities can provide a vocabulary and a set of concepts for speaking about dance."

The cultural and historical context of music was explored in "From Miner's Tent to Opera House: Spokane's Musical and Cultural Past and Present," funded by the Washington Commission for the Humanities. A series of lectures, panels, discus-

sions, and radio programs, conducted by the Eastern Washington State Historical Society in cooperation with the Spokane Symphony Society reviewed the musical history of Spokane from tents, boardwalks, and the first opera house to the infusion of European culture to the avant-garde in the twentieth century.

Other projects have considered more contemporary musical forms in their cultural contexts. In Kentucky, workshops on the history of jazz and its relationship to race in society were funded by the Kentucky Humanities Council to accompany a series of concerts in Lexington city parks funded by the local park board. The Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi held a symposium on "Folk Music and Modern Sound" to consider the ways in which American music reflects the country's traditions and character. The symposium was funded by the Mississippi Committee for the Humanities, while funding for performances was provided by the state arts commission.

A critical and analytical perspective on the visual arts has been encouraged through many projects, with lectures, panel discussions and interpretive materials complementing various exhibitions. Typical of these was "Directions in Watercolor," a colloquium and discussion with a philosopher and art historian on the work of three watercolor artists on display at the Ohio University Lancaster Campus Gallery. The colloquium was funded by the Ohio Humanities Program.

The visual art of architectural design has stimulated many unusual projects. The New York Council funded a project at the Drawing Center in New York City on "Visionary Drawings: Planning and Architecture." An exhibit showed one hundred drawings of visions for a better future world by architects, planners, and engineers from Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe to Frank Lloyd Wright and Buckminster Fuller. A series of lectures accompanying the exhibit featured such scholars as Leo Marx and Lewis Mumford, to provide commentary on the social and political implications of the work of architects, from the visionary to the ordinary.

In Seattle "Art Deco and the Architecture of the 20s and 30s" was examined by scholars of history,

philosophy, literature, and art history. Public programs included exhibits, guided walking tours, an illustrated catalog, and a continuously running slide-tape presentation on the cultural and artistic influences on the Art Deco style of ornament. Victor Steinbrueck, professor of architecture emeritus from the University of Washington, praised the project's expansion of "general awareness of that period of architecture and art decoration as an expression of the life style and character of the time."

A project funded by the Association for the Humanities in Idaho and conducted by the Department of History at Idaho State University, examined through discussions and slide-tape presentations the public and private historic architecture of Pocatello, Idaho. The project emphasized the importance of public awareness of the town's past, and the relationship between awareness of the built environment and the overall community spirit.

Enhanced understanding of local heritage and values has also been encouraged through programs dealing with local literary figures. With a grant from the Alaska Humanities Forum, the University of Alaska sponsored a week-long Alaska Writer's conference in Fairbanks to consider the relationship of writer to land and community and the reflection in contemporary Alaskan literature of the geography and isolation of the state. The program was aired in five one-hour radio programs.

In Virginia, the state council supported a film about the life and work of Anne Spencer, a black poet from Lynchburg, to help all Virginians learn about the history, society, politics, and character of the state in which she worked. The council also highlighted the work of another Virginian, John Dos Passos, with an exhibit of paintings and drawings at the family home in Westmoreland, Virginia.

A week-long festival "The Poet in Society," funded by the Virginia Foundation, examined the role of the poet in today's culture and the values and concerns shared by poets as well as the general public.

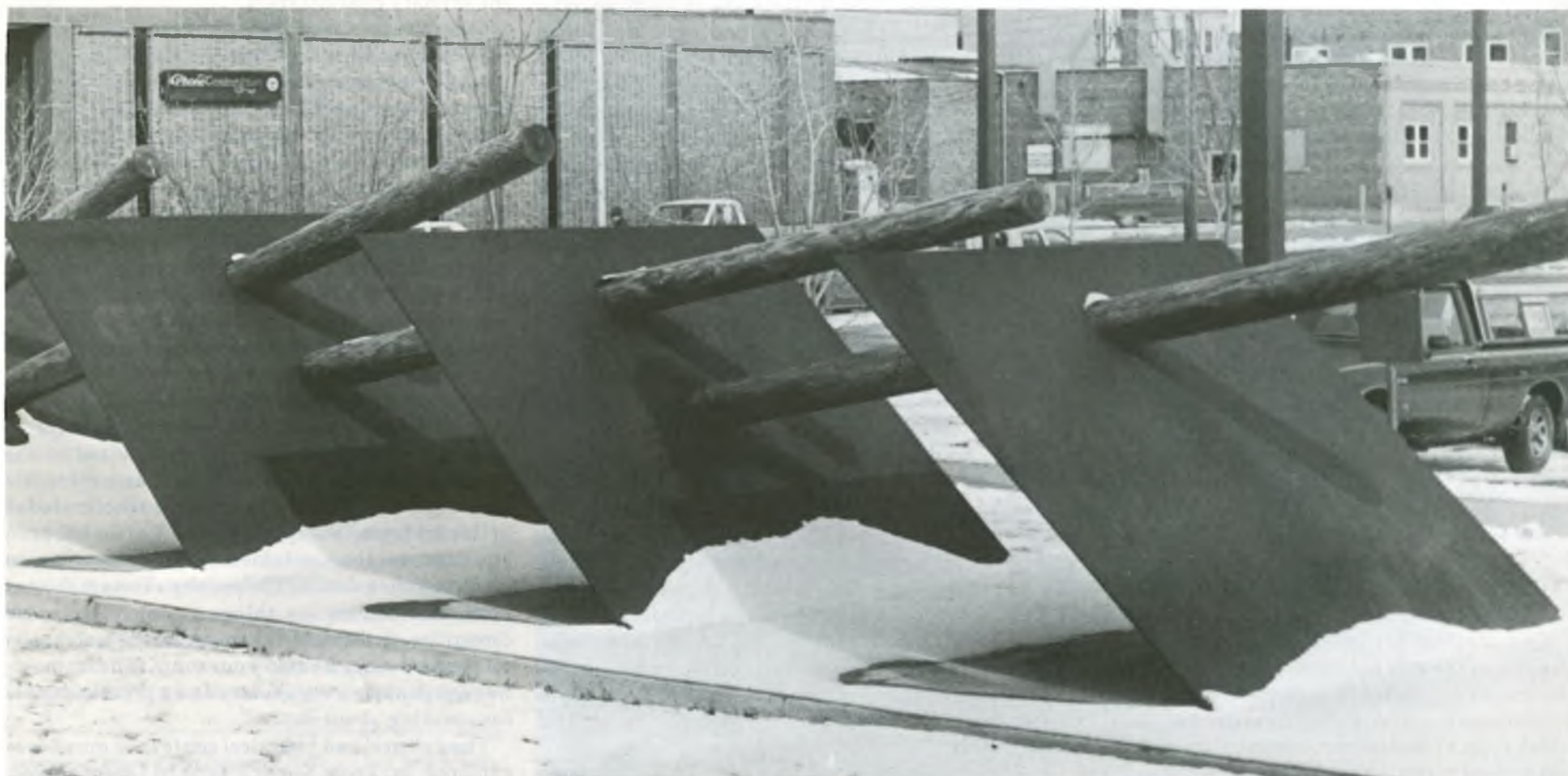
During the week of discussions and films, a panel of poets assembled in the jury box of the Albemarle County Courthouse to testify from the witness stand on behalf of poetry and poets, their function

in society and the contribution that poetry makes to public discussions. The poetry and other writing of Stanley Kunitz, noted for his involvement in social and political life, provided the focus of the symposium. At the festival, Kunitz observed: "Since his work is practically worthless as a commodity, the poet is uniquely equipped to embody and defend the worth and power and responsibility of individuals in a world of institutions."

At Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, "Art Within Art: Artists Frame Their World," brought together scholars in literature, drama, and art to explore the concept of the frame, "the boundary between fiction and life common to all forms of art." A. Walton Litz, chairman of the department of English at Princeton University, summarized the special contribution of the humanities to understanding all of the arts, when he called the conference "an ideal catalyst for interdisciplinary discussion. This was exactly the sort of conference that does further the work and reputation of the humanities."

—Julie Van Camp

Ms. Van Camp is an Endowment staff member.



"Directions in Watercolor," a show funded by the Ohio Program in the Humanities, featured the work of Jack Meanwell, whose *Figures*, an oil on paper, was drawn in 1980. *Hoe-Down*, which stands in front of the federal building in Huron, South Dakota, became the subject of controversy as well as the subject of a South Dakota State Humanities program which attempted to relate the sculpture to Midwestern aesthetic values.

Please note: Area code for all telephone numbers is 202.

Deadline in
boldface

For projects
beginning after

DIVISION OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS—Richard Ekman, Director 724-0351

Elementary and Secondary Education—Francis Roberts 724-0373

October 15, 1982

April 1983

Higher Education/Individual Institutions

Consultant—Janice Litwin 724-1978

Pilot—Cleveland Donald 724-0393

Implementation—Lyn Maxwell White 724-0393

June 1, 1982

October 1, 1982

June 1, 1982

November 1, 1982

April 1983

January 1983

Higher Education/Regional-National—Blanche Premo 724-0311

July 1, 1982

January 1983

DIVISION OF PUBLIC PROGRAMS—Stephen Rabin, Acting Director 724-0231

Humanities projects in:

Libraries—Thomas Phelps 724-0760

Media—Mara Mayor 724-0318

Museums and Historical Organizations—Cheryl McClenney 724-0327

June 15, 1982

June 1, 1982

June 8, 1982

January 1, 1983

January 1, 1983

January 1, 1983

DIVISION OF STATE PROGRAMS—Donald Gibson, Acting Director 724-0286

Each state group establishes its own grant guidelines and application deadlines; therefore, interested applicants should contact the office in their state. A list of those state programs may be obtained from the Division of State Programs.

DIVISION OF FELLOWSHIPS AND SEMINARS—James Blessing, Director 724-0238

FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMS—Maben Herring 724-0333

Fellowships for Independent Study and Research—David Coder 724-0333

June 1, 1982

January 1, 1983

Fellowships for College Teachers—Karen Fuglie 724-0333

June 1, 1982

January 1, 1983

Summer Stipends for 1982—Mollie Davis 724-0333

October 1, 1982

Summer 1983

Fellowships for Journalists—Julian F. MacDonald 724-0376

To be announced

SEMINAR PROGRAMS

Summer Seminars for College Teachers—Dorothy Wartenberg 724-0376

Participants: 1983 Seminars

Directors: 1983 Seminars

April 1, 1983

July 1, 1982

Summer 1983

Summer 1983

Centers for Advanced Study—Morton Sosna 724-0376

February 1, 1983

Fall 1984

DIVISION OF RESEARCH PROGRAMS—Harold Cannon, Director 724-0226

Intercultural Research—Harold Cannon 724-0226

February 15, 1983

July 1, 1983

General Research Program—John Williams 724-0276

Basic Research

State, Local and Regional Studies

Archaeological Projects—Katherine Abramovitz 724-0276

February 1, 1983

February 1, 1983

October 15, 1982

January 1, 1984

January 1, 1984

April 1, 1983

Research Conferences—David Wise 724-0276

September 15, 1982

April 1, 1983

Research Materials Program—George Farr 724-0276

Research Tools and Reference Works

Editions—Helen Aguera 724-1672

Publications—Margot Backas 724-1672

Translations—Susan Mango 724-1672

October 1, 1982

October 1, 1982

May 1, 1982

July 1, 1982

July 1, 1983

July 1, 1983

October 1, 1982

April 1, 1983

Research Resources—Margaret Child 724-0341

June 1, 1982

April 1, 1983

DIVISION OF SPECIAL PROGRAMS—Carole Huxley, Director 724-0261

Program Development—Lynn Smith 724-0398

July 15, 1982

February 1, 1983

Science, Technology and Human Values—Eric Juengst 724-0354

General Projects

Individual Incentive Awards

Sustained Development Awards

May 1, 1982

February 1, 1983

February 1, 1983

December 1, 1982

YOUTH PROGRAMS—Marion C. Blakey 724-0396

Youthgrants—Applicant's Preliminary Narrative

Formal Application

October 15, 1982

November 15, 1982

May 1, 1983

May 1, 1983

NEH Youth Projects

Major Projects Grants—Applicant's Preliminary Proposal

Formal Application

Planning and Pilot Grants

December 1, 1982

January 15, 1983

April 15, 1983

July 1, 1983

July 1, 1983

October 1, 1983

OFFICE OF PLANNING AND POLICY ASSESSMENT—Armen Tashdian, Director 724-0344

Planning and Assessment Studies—Stanley Turesky 724-0369

February 1, 1983

July 1, 1983

OFFICE OF CHALLENGE GRANTS—Thomas Kingston, Program Officer 724-0267

September 1, 1982



Nearest Grant Application Deadlines



Archaeologists as a group happily join St. Paul in his triumphant cry, "O grave where is thy victory? O death where is thy sting?" For they, like St. Paul, are thinking of resurrection; but unlike his, theirs is the resurrection of dead civilizations, and it is not faith but evidence that moves them.

It is, in fact, by death and destruction that archaeologists have their work, as it were, set out for them. Tombs provide for them the richest source of the raw material for their study of ancient cultures, including not only the bones that hint at former flesh and teeth that tell of diet but also manifold grave goods that embody arts and technical skills as well as religious beliefs concerning the needs and desires of the dear departed in the tomb.

It was reasonable, therefore, that Emily Vermeule, the eleventh Jefferson Lecturer in the Humanities, should make her archaeological debut with the publication of an article on a Mycenaean tomb under the temple of Ares in the Athenian Agora. Between that article and her most recent book, *Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and Poetry* (The Sather Classical Lectures, Vol. 46, University of California Press), her interest and researches have ranged widely over all aspects of life as well as death in the Greek world, but her special province has been the Mycenaean period (1500-1100 B.C.). That period, so-called from the first traces of it found by Schliemann in Mycenae, is now known to represent an early flowering of Greek culture before three hundred years of the Dark Age made necessary a rebirth of Hellenism as it had long been known from Greek literature and history.

What kind of person does it take to bring to life a long dead and buried people whose only written records are little more than lists and inventories, written in a primitive and often ambiguous syllabary? Obviously, academic training is useful in the collecting and weighing of evidence. And a way with words will certainly help to make real and vivid lives that must be pieced together from fragments of the gathered evidence.

But because creating a whole from the bits and pieces of a buried civilization is like the work of the archaeological pot-mender who must fill out with plaster those parts of a vase from which the shards

ship."

"This book is probably written at the wrong time by the wrong person," wrote Emily Vermeule in the introduction to her *Greece and the Bronze Age*, a book that since its publication in 1964 has remained the standard handbook on the Mycenaean period and the one most often seen in the day-packs of college students and travelers in Greece alike. "...Such a work," said the *New York Review of Books* in August, 1979, "normally formed the climax to a scholar's career before retirement: Professor Vermeule published it in her thirties..."

So the time has turned out to be not so very wrong even though there have been many new Mycenaean finds and publications since the book came out. And that is largely due to the "wrong person's" perceptive judgments and interpretations which match in timelessness the objects which she presents as characteristic of the Mycenaean view of life.

An impeccable academic record as a student at Bryn Mawr (A.B., Ph.D.), Radcliffe (M.A.), American School of Classical Studies at Athens, and St. Anne's, Oxford, laid the foundation for teaching positions at Bryn Mawr, Boston University, Wellesley, and currently Harvard, as the Samuel E. Zemmurray, Jr. and Doris Zemmurray Stone-Radcliffe Professor.

Her way with words has brought her not only nominations to distinguished lectureships (Sather at Berkeley, Semple at Cincinnati, Harrower at Aberdeen) and professional awards (the American Philological Association's Goodwin Award of Merit, several honorary degrees) but also invitations to contribute to publications like the *Atlantic Monthly* and the *National Geographic*.

Some early efforts at poetry appeared in the *New Yorker* and *Poetry Magazine* but soon recreation of the past—both in translation of Greek poetry and the interpretation of Mycenaean art—seems to have absorbed much of her poetic energy.

A poem written while she was still in college by the then Emily Dickinson Townsend (and proud of the connection with her poetic namesake) shows the keenness of perception and delight in exploring the objects of sensation that have come to characterize the poet-archaeologist of later years:



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are missing, the most important requirement for a Mycenologist is poetic imagination. And the one American who most quintessentially combines such training, eloquence and creativity is Emily Dickinson Townsend Vermeule.

These qualities have also made her a superb teacher. As Peter Green says, writing about the Sather Lectures in the *New York Review of Books*, "To students fed for too long on windy bureaucratic trash or emotive but inarticulate slang, her sparkling prose must have come as a revelation. Nor is elegance of style achieved at the expense of intellectual strength. Her extensive (and often very funny) notes show her equally at home in an extraordinarily wide range of topics; the wit and poetic insight have a solid underpinning of scholar-

Exercise in Bacon's Garden

Strawberry leaves
dying will give
a most cordial
excellent smell;
a walk
where your
feet will crush wild
thyme and the wa-
ter mint
leaf, they
perfume the air:
fragrance delight-
ful shall rise - (Sir
Francis expounds,
finger in





air and the thought
sweet in his
mind of a garden
properly
planned at last.)
Pineapple-tree,
lemon and bay
and flag,
myrtle,
rosemary first;
almond in March
and sweet
briar, white
thorn and musk-rose:
melon and quince
and plum,
apri-
cot, grape, fall pop-
py - the grass should
be kept
shorn - (Sir
Francis prefers
fountains to
pools, for the frogs
spoil things; he
thinks of the turrets
bellied to
hold small birds.)

(*Counterpoint* (Bryn Mawr-Haverford Literary Magazine), Spring 1949, pp. 18-19.)

Compare her description of a Mycenaean dagger: "the gold wildcat stippled black, the ducks of silver, or gold with silver wings, bleeding contrasted electrum drops, the dark stiff river punctuated by snub silver fish, the sprays of silver papyrus-lotus with gold tips" ("The Art of The Shaft Graves at Mycenae," *Lectures in Memory of Louise Taft Semple* (3rd series), The University of Cincinnati, 1975, p. 21). Or of a wooden box: "it is blood-action frozen, powerful emblem themes, the meat-eater certain to catch the grass-eater, the clawed gallop of speed against the graceful crumple of exhaustion, everything brought up to the surface without air in a pressing riot of decorative plant life which conveys less of a real setting than a sense of being trapped in a forest" (Ibid., p. 25).

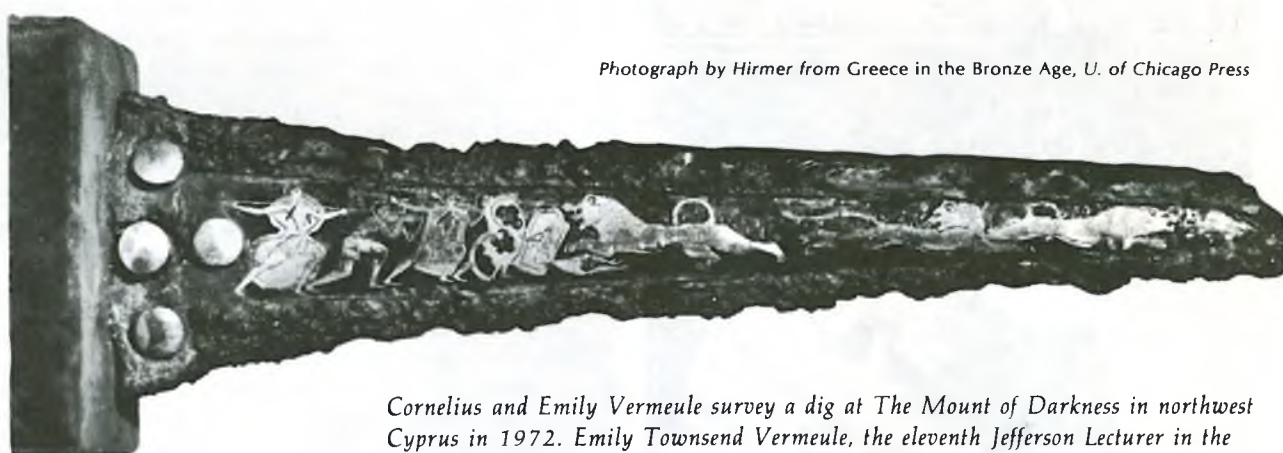
became clear that each of us judged life-size according to her own size.

A more serious difference of opinion between us has often been over the usefulness of things depicted in Mycenaean painting as indications of reality—real customs, real dress, real chariots, and so on—in short, whether and to what extent Mycenaean art is representational. Emily Vermeule, like most archaeologists, wishes to wring from the inarticulate evidence of pots and paintings as much information as possible and tends to think of the Mycenaean artists as conscientious reflectors of the passing scene. My many hundreds of hours spent working with fresco fragments gave me the illusion of fellow-feeling with those artists and a strong conviction that their concern was far more often with decorative effect and pattern than it was with accuracy of representation. "But what," Emily would say, "would have been the reaction of the artists' employers to a horse inadequately harnessed or a battle fought with no shields?" I expect that they may have deplored the ignorance of the artists and that the artists put them off with some spur-of-the-moment myths about magical horses pulling without harness and invulnerable warriors. But smug with artistic integrity, they knew in themselves that a lot of leather straps would detract from essential horseness and that shields, though excellent cover-ups in real battle, would also conceal and obscure the action in a picture. In this particular disagreement who is more right is both unlikely ever to be certain and ultimately of little importance since it is such tension between points of view that keeps speculative scholarship on an even keel.

When Spiros Marinatos began to dig in Thera (Santorini) where volcanic pumice from the island's second millennium B.C. explosion preserved intact so much early Mycenaean material, he invited Emily Vermeule to join him there. After Thera there was the Harvard University-Museum of Fine Arts Cyprus Expedition, of which she has been the director since 1971. She manages the people and problems involved in the direction of an excavation by assuming both a technical and a wryly human point of view, as in her description of the clay chests (larnakes) used as coffins: "Most have holes

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Photograph by Hirmer from Greece in the Bronze Age, U. of Chicago Press

Cornelius and Emily Vermeule survey a dig at The Mount of Darkness in northwest Cyprus in 1972. Emily Townsend Vermeule, the eleventh Jefferson Lecturer in the Humanities. A fourth-century Etruscan sarcophagus shows a married couple united in death. An inlaid dagger from the Mycenaean Shaft Graves.



A veteran of various excavations in Mediterranean lands, Emily Vermeule gained her first digging experience in the Athenian Agora and then went for three seasons to Gordion in Turkey. When in the early sixties she was excavating in Kephallenia and Messenia with the great Greek archaeologist Spiro Marinatos, she was a frequent and welcome visitor to the Pylian Palace of Nestor where I was cleaning and joining the fragmentary frescoes. We both found it stimulating to outguess each other on the meaning and placement in some general design of small brightly colored and mysteriously marked fragments. While I was arranging pieces of a procession of women so that the artist Piet de Jong could make a restored drawing, we disagreed about the women's size, and it gradually

bored through the bottom in long rows, and holes through the corners just above the legs—to help the heat penetrate the thick clay during firing, and also to provide free sanitary drainage for the corpse" ("Painted Mycenaean Larnakes," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 85, 1965, p. 126).

On the various problems that beset scholars of the early Greek period Emily Vermeule has had the courage to speak out before the Millennium, that is, when the evidence is all in. She wrestles, for example, with the problem of connecting up the Mycenaean world of the second millennium B.C. with the classical Greek culture that seems to spring full-armed from three hundred years of Dark Age. That a strong link was the oral traditions kept alive by bards seems evident, or, in her

words: "then come the Dark Ages, with everyone dying or moving but the poets who obstinately wander their mountains and chat with their muses and sing with animated improvisations to changing audiences" ("Kadmos and the Dragon," *Studies Presented to George M. A. Hanfmann*, 1971, p. 186).

So also she discerns with sensitivity the principles of art which distinguish the work of nomadic peoples of the north from that of settled and "civilized" Mediterranean men: "Here the decorative exaggeration of 'nomadic' art is paramount: the clutter of the dense background, the surprising leaps of the hunter, the dancing collapse of the victim, the emphasis on leg, horn, neck, mouth, and eye, the concentration on the surface and not on the story" ("The Art of the Shaft Graves at Mycenae," *Op. Cit.*, p. 24). That it took the consummate skill of southern craftsmen to execute these nomadic features so superbly must have given some satisfaction to a people thus overrun—that the captive took the captor somewhat captive at least aesthetically.

Emily Vermeule's range of interests includes not only the art and mythology, pottery and history, religion and epigraphy of the Mycenaean period, but also much of later Greek art.

Attempting to understand the meaning and purpose of various kinds of decoration and shapes of the useful objects created by people long dead and known to us only through relatively imperishable appurtenances of daily life and ritual requires both human sympathy and educated imagination. Emily Vermeule has said that "poets, critics, historians, archaeologists, artists spend their working lives as necromancers, raising the dead in order to enter into their imagination and experience." That she moves easily among all five categories is a rare achievement indeed.

In studying about death, its customs and rituals, one inevitably confronts a civilization's attitudes about life. One of Professor Vermeule's chapter titles in *Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and Poetry* is "Immortals are mortal, mortals immortal." She sees this affirmation of life as "part of the Greek legacy to the West, and almost a definition of humanism."



Death, depicted as Hypnos, is gentle with the bleeding body of a fallen warrior on a red-figure vase from the sixth century B.C.

The Jefferson Lecture



Emily Townsend Vermeule will deliver the eleventh Jefferson Lecture in the Humanities on May 5 in Washington, D.C. The distinguished classicist and archaeologist will speak on the topic "Greeks and Barbarians: the Classical Experience in the Larger World."

The purpose of the Jefferson Lecture, which was established by the NEH in 1972, is to focus national attention on the humanities and to provide recognition and a unique forum for outstanding scholars and thinkers. The Lecture is the highest honor the federal government confers for intellectual achievement in the humanities.

Previous Jefferson Lecturers were Lionel Trilling, Erik Erikson, Robert Penn Warren, Paul Freund, John Hope Franklin, Saul Bellow, C. Vann Woodward, Edward Shils, Barbara Tuchman and Gerald Holton. The lectureship carries an award and a stipend of \$10,000 which the Endowment provides. Private contributions cover those expenses which may not be supported by appropriated funds.

Rediscovering Greek Games at Nemea



U. of California Information Office

This summer an ancient, three-million pound version of Rubik's cube will be tackled by classical scholar Stephen G. Miller of the University of California, Berkeley, and his wife, Stella Grobel Miller of the classics department at Stanford. Scattered about the site at Nemea, Greece, where Miller has directed excavations over the past nine years, are some 950 blocks of limestone, each an almost identical section from thirty-three fallen Doric columns that formed the exterior of the Temple of Zeus.

If they can be put back together in the right order, Miller will have directed the first large reconstruction of an ancient Greek building in thirty years. If the ancient roof is reconstructed, our idea of what classical Greek architecture looked like might change.

The twenty-nine-acre site, eighty miles southwest of Athens, was the location of religious festivals and Panhellenic games held every other year between circa 400 B.C. and A.D. 370, when an earthquake partially destroyed the temple.

To give an idea of what the living Nemea was like, Miller says one should try "to imagine a state fairgrounds where in the off-season the grounds are deserted. But once, every two years, they teem with tens of thousands of athletes and their trainers, priests, pilgrims, sports fans, and people selling souvenirs and the ancient equivalent of beer and hot dogs."

The stadium itself, almost completely excavated, has been a source of much new information about the ancient Greek games that are of great value to scholars. Four years ago, the Millers found a spectacular tunnel leading into the stadium. Buried for two thousand years, it was still intact and is now believed to be the earliest vaulted tunnel built in the Western world.

Other puzzles than the scattered stones of the Temple of Zeus await the Millers and an international team of scholars, architects, engineers, and soil experts who will be working at the site this summer.

They know, for example, that chariot races were always part of Panhellenic athletic festivals,

but they have not found the hippodrome at Nemea where those races must have run. Nor have they found a palestra or gymnasium.

"We know where those buildings aren't," says Miller. "Now we want to know where they are."

Two years ago, Miller found an open-air enclosure. Hundreds of drinking vessels and the remains of many thousands of sacrifices, some bones so well preserved that the archaeologists could see where they had been cut, assured them that what they had found was the shrine to a hero.

"We thought it might be the shrine to Opheltes," Miller says. Opheltes is a mythological infant killed by a serpent whose funeral celebration was the occasion for the first Nemean games. But the discovery of a series of tablets bearing "love curses" has made the hero's identity a question.

If all goes well this summer, Miller and his colleagues will be able to solve some of these mysteries and raise two columns of the temple, freeing the area they now occupy for further excavation.

Architectural and engineering studies necessary for the reconstruction have already been completed. "These processes have already told us about ancient construction techniques and architectural refinements," Miller says.

Miller's long-range plan is to put up at least nine columns. "Another possibility, if we put up all the columns, is adding a roof," he says. "We know from an examination of debris what the roof must have looked like. But all our large Greek ruins are without roofs. Without this limitation, the columns appear to spring up toward the sky. Seeing one with a roof may disturb our modern sense of the power of Greek architecture."

—Don Koue

Mr. Koue is a science writer in the Public Information Office at the University of California, Berkeley.

"Excavation of Nemea"/Stephen G. Miller/U. of California, Berkeley/\$215,200 FM/1981-84/Archaeological Projects

History's Unwritten Record



Statistical samplings of George Washington's home county have shown that his early accomplishments were not as extraordinary as once believed. Studies of material culture also enable historians to fill in gaps left by a lack of written records: a seventeenth-century English delftware plate bearing caricatures of William and Mary; Lonny Taylor describing a nineteenth-century New Mexican chair; a delicate glass recovered from the site at St. Mary's City, Maryland.



St. Mary's City Commission

Because history is traditionally for the province of the written word, historians for the past several generations have dwelt primarily among other keepers of the word in universities and libraries. The present generation of historians, however, has learned to incorporate new kinds of evidence into their scholarship—evidence derived from numbers, from artifacts, from oral as well as written testimony about historical events. This development has added an important new dimension to the study of American history, particularly of the history of American communities. Thanks to quantitative history, historical archaeology and oral history, a detailed and sophisticated knowledge of local and regional history—once chiefly confined to New England—is now possible for many other parts of the country.

Virginia, Maryland, Florida and New Mexico all contain settlements that are as old as or older than those of New England. But they lack the Puritan colonies' treasuries of written documents: manuscripts, diaries, public records, church records, printed sermons and books. It was upon such records that New England historians, in the nineteenth century and again in the 1950s and 1960s, developed the most influential conventional models of local historical research. In the absence of comparable records, historians of other colonial regions have turned to other sources.

In Maryland, historians working with the St. Mary's City Commission are using records which can yield significant data only in the aggregate. Thousands of probate inventories, processed by computer, are making it possible to construct a detailed portrait of early Chesapeake society that incorporates most of the residents of the region: men and women, black and white, bound and free.

Darrell and Anita Rutman, historians who are using similar data to investigate colonial Middlesex County, Virginia, provide a good example of how such aggregate "portraits" can extend previous knowledge based on the writings of literate individuals. The story of young George Washington, whose 250th birthday the nation celebrates this year, is familiar to every school child. The details of his biography suggest that he was something of a prodigy: orphaned at eleven, master of Mount Vernon at twenty, a lieutenant colonel of militia at twenty-two and a member of the Virginia House of Burgess at twenty-six. The Rutmans' statistical sampling of court records, however, suggests that Washington's experience was not an exception, but a rule. Seventy-three percent of the Middlesex children whose lives they traced in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries lost at least one parent before they attained their majority; 36 percent lost both parents. Young people of both sexes and in every level of society tended to assume adult responsibilities at an early age, whether their inheritance was modest or, as in Washington's case, grand.

Historical archaeology complements quantitative research in the Chesapeake region. No graphic portrayal of seventeenth-century St. Mary's City, the "ancient and chief seat of government" of the Maryland colony, has ever been discovered. To learn what the place looked like, scholars have turned to archaeology. They have found not only the remains of public buildings, homes and farmsteads, but also patterns of spatial relationships that illustrate the settlement's functions as a political, social and economic community.

Similar projects have illuminated the history of early plantation life along the James River in Virginia, where during the last two decades, archaeologists have recovered a wealth of artifactual data comparable to the wealth of written records of early New England.

In Florida, meanwhile, other archaeologists are at work attempting to document the life of early St. Augustine and have cast new light on the "starving

time" familiarly associated with the early years of many colonies. The Spanish settlers at St. Augustine did *not* starve, according to Florida State University archaeologist Kathleen Deagan. The written record is full of their laments about hunger, but archaeological evidence suggests that what they lacked was not food, but *familiar* food. The favorite foodstuffs of Spain were poorly adapted to the coastal Florida environment. Settlers had to make do with indigenous products and with less preferred foods from Europe. The revised record will say that the settlers ate well, although without enthusiasm.

New Mexico formed the other prong of Spain's North American frontier, but its early cultural life is as shadowy as that of St. Augustine if one looks only to written records. Thus the International Folk Arts Museum in Santa Fe turned to material culture as a means of mapping continuity and change in New Mexico's Hispano-Indian culture. Historian Lonn Taylor, director of the museum's New Mexico Furniture Project, explains why.

There is a considerable amount of written evidence concerning the royal governors of New Mexico during the first half of the eighteenth century, and from it we can get a fairly clear picture of the way in which they performed their jobs. There is much less written evidence about the people they governed. We know from a documentary source that a Pecos Indian named Miguel was making doors and windows for his Spanish neighbors in 1745.... If we could locate one of his products, we could tell what kind of raw materials were available to him, and what kinds of tools he used. By looking at the construction techniques and proportions of the door, we might be able to tell whether Spanish or Indian techniques of carpentry predominated at Pecos at that time. By looking at its decoration, we might even be able to tell who taught him to make doors, and possibly where that per-

son came from. By correlating this information with written sources, we might be able to elicit the name of his teacher. The location of the door might tell us something about his trade practices, who he sold doors to, and how far they were transported from the shop. Again, by correlating this evidence with written sources, we might be able to tell how much he was paid for making the door. In other words, while the written document gives us only his name, the material document illuminates his life.

Phoenix historians face a similar dilemma: an insufficiency of written records. This burgeoning Sunbelt metropolis—founded in 1870, a town of 60,000 on the eve of World War II—became in 1980, the nation's eleventh largest city, with a population of 764,000. Yet when the Phoenix History Project was organized in 1975, there was not a single history of the city in print, nor an archive containing the materials from which one could be written. In these circumstances, the organizers of the project turned primarily to oral history.

"The community was the repository," explained G. Wesley Johnson, a University of California historian and Phoenix native who headed the project. To tap this repository, Johnson and Robert Trenert of Arizona State recruited a disciplined team of some thirty volunteer and ten part-time staff interviewers, who interviewed some 500 persons. The resulting archives of transcripts covers the familiar themes of urban social and political history as well as topics, such as the development of air conditioning technology, that were of special significance to Phoenix's growth. Interviewees included minority and working-class informants along with Phoenix luminaries such as Senator Barry Goldwater and Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. Products of the research to date have included scholarly activities, exhibits, newspaper features, conferences and workshops. Monographs on local institutions, an illustrated history intended for the

general reader, and a scholarly urban biography are in the planning or writing stage.

These projects depart from the traditional model of historical research in ways other than the sources they use. No historian works alone, but traditionally the supporting cast of archivists, bibliographers, and librarians who make historical research possible are tucked away in the footnotes and acknowledgments of an individual scholar's work. Quantitative history, historical archaeology, and oral history are by their very nature collaborative, requiring in both conception and execution the efforts of several specialists and support personnel. Moreover, although university-based scholars have played roles in all of these endeavors, many of these projects are based in institutions other than universities: in the research arms of state or municipal agencies, as in the Maryland and Florida projects described here; in community organizations and local historical societies, as in Phoenix; in a museum, as in Santa Fe. Thus, not only have these undertakings provided new means of understanding American history but also new bases of sustaining this important branch of humanities research.

—John Williams

Mr. Williams is a member of the Endowment staff.

"Patterns of Spatial Organization and Use in a Chesapeake Community, 1634-1730"/Henry M. Miller/ St. Mary's City Commission/\$74,000 OR; \$100,000 FM/1981-84/"The Governor's Land Archaeological Project"/Alaine C. Outlaw/Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, Richmond/\$119,676/1979-81/\$55,277/ 1981-83/"An Archaeological Investigation of 16th-century Spanish Florida"/Kathleen Deagan/ Florida State U.; Tallahassee/\$50,661/, 1979-81/"A Survey of New Mexico Furniture, 1600-1940"/Lonn Taylor/ Museum of International Folk Art, Santa Fe, NM/ \$71,350/1980-82/"Phoenix History Project"/G. Wesley Johnson/ Arizona State U., Phoenix/\$49,406/ 1978-79/Basic Research



A graveyard dating to the early 1700s is part of the site being excavated by the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission. Later graves pierced several of the earlier shafts.



DUSTJACKETS

MediaLog

Ed. Note: Videotapes, films and cassettes also have dustjackets, which is why this feature of Humanities, usually devoted to NEH-supported books, is reprinting a section of the new MediaLog. This guide to television, film and radio programs supported by the Endowment will enable many more audiences to use these programs—schools, colleges, community groups and a wide variety of organizations whose members comprise the adult, out-of-school public. The humanities disciplines reproduced here are Philosophy, Religion and Ethics and a portion of the Literature section. The other five sections of the catalog are devoted to United States History, Archaeology and Anthropology, Folk Traditions and Local History, and History, Theory and Criticism of the Arts. MediaLog was published by the Film Fund under contract to NEH. To obtain a free copy, please write to the Public Affairs Office, MS 351, NEH, Washington, D. C. 20506.

Philosophy, Religion and Ethics

Dying 1975

Documentary

The film presents portraits of several terminally ill cancer patients who speak for themselves with unusual frankness about death and dying. Their observations, coupled with interviews with their families and friends, give insight into their fears about death: the connection between how they lived and how they will die, and the relationship of death to life.

Production Organization:
WGBH-TV, Boston
Executive Producer: Michael Ambrosino
Producer/Director: Michael Roemer

Format: 16 mm. (97:00)

Distributor: NOVACOM, Burlington House, 1345 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY
Fees: Contact Distributor

Awards: Blue Ribbon, New York Film Festival, 1977; Gabriel Award, 1976; Christopher Award, 1977; Media Award, American Cancer Society, 1977; Gold Medal, Virgin Island International Film Festival, 1976; Chris Award, Columbus Film Festival, 1977; CINE Golden Eagle, 1976

Hard Choices 1980

Documentary Series

The series examines some of the important ethical questions and issues raised as a result of the remarkable achievements in medical technology and explores the human value

implications and challenges brought about by the ongoing revolution in medicine and biology. It raises a number of vital questions regarding how medical technology affects the nature of our acting and of our thinking about human nature.

1
Boy or Girl: Should the Choice Be Ours? examines the dilemma we face as the result of a procedure devised to check serious genetic abnormality in a fetus. It is now possible to know the sex of a baby well in advance of birth. New experimental procedures are moving toward the possibility of sex choice at the time of conception. Yet, should this choice be ours?

2
Genetic Screening: The Ultimate Preventive Medicine considers ethical questions emerging as a result of the ability to predict prenatally the health of a child. It is now possible to predict just how normal some children will be before they are born. This could even mean that someday the abnormal need never be born again. Who is to decide what is normal and what is not normal?

3
Human Experiments: The Price of Knowledge discusses the ethical questions emerging from human experimentation used in the medical search for knowledge. Are experiments with human subjects ever justified? What about the costs to society and the risks to human subjects?

4
Behavior Control questions the implications and ethical considerations emerging from behavior control. It can mean helping someone attain a personal goal, or it can mean imposing standards of behavior from outside. How can we distinguish the benign forms from the harmful? Who says "yes" and "no" to the uses of behavior control?

5
Death and Dying raises ethical questions emerging from new life prolonging technology. Are the rights of dying people different from those of the living? Should a patient be told that he or she is dying? When does a physician's responsibility to preserve life end?

6
Doctor, I Want . . . explores the problems arising from a growing awareness that medical care is not an unlimited resource. The film encourages an examination of attitudes and expectations of those seeking and those providing medical care. What is

the definition of health? How can we be sure that medical services are distributed fairly?

Production Organization: KCTS-Seattle
Project Director:
Sandra Clement Walker
Executive Producer: John Coney
Executive in Charge of Production:
Ron Rubin
Series Producers: Graham Chedd, Steven Katten, Richard O. Moore
Series Host: Dr. Willard Gaylin, M.D., President of the Hastings Center, Institute of Society, Ethics and Life Sciences

Format: Videocassette (6 60-minute programs)

Distributor: Non-theatrical Distribution (US and Canada): PBS Video, 475 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W. Washington, DC 20024; International Distribution: NOVACOM, 1345 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10105
Fees: Contact Distributor

In Pursuit of Liberty 1977

Documentary Series

Through an examination of four fundamental civil and personal liberties—work, freedom of thought, privacy and freedom of the press—assumed by all Americans, *In Pursuit of Liberty*, with Charles Frankel, seeks new perspectives from which to view the evolution of liberties, the dangers which threaten them, and the ways each one may conflict with other, equally important, freedoms.

1
The Private Life. An examination of the American right of privacy, the film travels to Naples, Pompeii, medieval France and the streets of New York to examine man's right to privacy. An "unsocial" liberty, privacy is challenged by our crowded society, by the necessity for law and order and by the new morality of openness that often treats privacy as unhealthy and anti-social. Frankel traces Greek and Roman views of privacy in Naples and Pompeii, the conflict between privacy and security in medieval France, monastic privacy, and the privacy of the modern metropolis.

2
The Curse of Adam. Traditionally, work is where liberty has stopped, but today many feel that work should be a source of fulfillment to the individual. Frankel examines the different impact of the Industrial Revolution on workers' lives

in Great Britain and the United States, "Taylorism," the labor movement, and the contradiction between the economic imperatives of efficiency and the growing demand for spontaneity and leisure.

3
The Trouble That Truth Makes Freedom of thought is an ancient liberty, but one with an almost unbroken record for being in trouble. Should experimentation on human beings be permitted? Should theories that insult racial minorities be protected? Have elite groups—scholars, lawyers, doctors—used their specially-mandated rights well? The problematic aspects of freedom of thought are illustrated through examples of recent and past controversies: the 1974 protest at Yale University over physicist William Shockley's theories of comparative racial intelligence; an incident in San Antonio where women who came to a birth control clinic were given placebos instead of contraceptives and other medical experiments; the 1950 publication of Immanuel Velikovsky's *Worlds in Collision*; and Russian agronomist Lysenko's theories of environmental adaptation.

4
The First Freedom The American free press has been extolled as the bulwark of all our other liberties, but it has also been criticized for sensationalizing, over-simplifying, and presenting one-sided views of public issues. Frankel's discussion of censorship leads from Milton's 1644 pamphlet "Areopagitica," the first decisive critique of censorship in Anglo-American history, to the 1971 Pentagon Papers case. At Jefferson's Virginia home, Monticello, Frankel outlines the role Jefferson played in establishing the freedom of the press to attack government, and goes on to discuss the influence of Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, press centralization, the Fairness Doctrine in broadcasting, and a reporter's right to protect his sources.

Production Organization:
WNET-13, New York
Writer/Editor/Host: Dr. Charles Frankel, Columbia University
Executive Producer: Don Dixon
Coordinating Producer/Director:
Jack Sameth
Director of Research: John Chambers

Format: Videocassette (4 60-minute programs)

Distributor: WNET/13 Media Services, 356 W. 58th Street, New York, NY 10019
Fees: Rental \$60 One Episode, \$95

Complete Series; Sale \$385 One Episode, \$1,235 Complete Series

Shadows of the Nuclear Age

1980

Documentary Radio Series

Shadows of the Nuclear Age raises questions about the impact of the nuclear age on American social, ethical, and economic values. Through interviews with leading scholars, scientists, and policy-makers, the series focuses on the ways that the nuclear age has influenced our perspectives on national security, our notions of democracy and citizenship, our perceptions of humanity as reflected in literature, language, and the media, and what we perceive to be our options for the future.

Seven Minutes to Midnight explores the threat to human values and humanity itself as a result of recent breakthroughs in the technology of nuclear weapons and the proliferation of nuclear materials.

Hiroshima: The Decision to Use the Bomb discusses the Truman Administration's decision to drop the bomb, the relative weight of bureaucratic momentum, military necessity, cold war politics, and public reactions to the bomb and its aftermath.

The Story of the H-Bomb examines the development of the early arms race, with particular attention to crucial decisions and turning points, such as the Baruch Plan and the decision to build the H-Bomb.

The Years of Testing traces the history of nuclear testing and captures the debate over fallout, shelters, nuclear testing, and their effects in the 1950's.

The Missile Crisis recaptures the important moments and mood of the Kennedy years, the Cuban missile crisis, and the move toward arms control and a test ban.

The Road Not Taken: Protest and the Bomb examines the historical materials and current interviews in some of the public efforts to end the arms race and the projection of alternative values and attitudes.

Nuclear Hollywood analyzes the different ways that nuclear war has been presented in film from the cold war to the present, as well as the aesthetic difficulties of depicting the images of war, atrocity, and nuclear destruction.

Nuclear Anxiety: Coping with the Eve of Destruction explores the way in which American culture is affected by the necessity of avoiding confrontation with death and nuclear destruction, and questions whether and how the dangers of nuclear war can be faced.

Memos and Megatons—How We Talk About the Bomb. Leading linguists, critics, poets, writers, journalists and historians talk about the ways in which the language of modern war, nuclear deterrence, and bureaucratic decision-making contributes to the problem of accurately perceiving the dangers of modern war and its human consequence.

The Literature of Apocalypse presents

an analysis by leading literary figures and critics of the modern literature of war and apocalypse in fiction, poetry and drama, as well as the role of the literary artist in relation to war.

Swords and Plowshares—The Economy of the Arms Race examines the human and economic values implicit in the arms race. The discussion focuses on the effects of sustained high levels of military spending on economic values and the relationship of a growing military sector to the formation of philosophical and ethical perceptions.

Ethics and Options for a Threatened Planet discusses what values, ethics, and law are relevant in the nuclear age. It examines the applicability of various post-war ethics—Just War, Christian Realism, Realpolitik, and Radical Pacifism—at a time when increased world competition raises the possibility of war.

Where Do We Go From Here? The Great Nuclear Debate discusses the feasibility from the perspective of humanist values of various proposals and plans to end the arms race, including those proposed by government arms control advocates, by those who believe peace is only achieved through military strength, and by those who believe in disarmament.

Production Organization: SANE Education Fund
Executive Producer: Steve Shick
Producer: David Freudberg
Director: Dr. Robert K. Musil

Format: Reel-to-reel, Cassette (13 30-minute programs)

Distributor: The SANE Education Fund, 1411 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102
Clearances: Commercial and Non-commercial broadcast
Fees: Contact Distributor

The Shakers

1974

Documentary

The Shakers are America's longest and most successful experiment in Christian communal living. The American Shaker community was established in 1774. By 1850 there were 6,000 brothers and sisters living together in nineteen communities stretching from Maine to Kentucky. Their meeting houses resounded with devotional songs and ecstatic dancing, and their communal farms and workshops poured out products and inventions that made their name synonymous with quality and ingenuity. Today there are only twelve Shakers left, living in two villages in New England. The film traces the growth and decline of this remarkable religious sect through the memories and songs of the surviving Shakers themselves.

Producers: Tom Davenport, Frank De Cola
Director: Tom Davenport
Advisor: Dr. Daniel Patterson

Format: 16 mm. (30:00)

Distributor: Tom Davenport Films, Rt. 1, Box 124, Delaplane, VA 22025
Fees: Rental \$40; Sale \$400

Awards: American Film Festival Blue Ribbon; CINE Golden Eagle; American Library Association "Selection for Young Adults"

Shinto: Nature, Gods and Man in Japan

1978

Documentary

The film traces the roots of Shinto, Japan's native religion, into Japanese prehistory. Through *Shinto* the Japanese people have perceived their relationship with nature, expressed their cultural aspirations, and been inspired to create works of great beauty and artistry. Among the *Shinto* shrines and rituals featured in this film are the holy island of Okinoshima, the imperial shrines at Ise, and the historical shrines of Nachi, Izumo, Kasuga, Omiwa and Munakata.

Production Organization: The Japan Society
Producer/Directors: Peter Grail, David Westphal

Format: 16 mm., Videocassette (48:00)

Distributor: Japan Society Films, 333 E. 47th Street, New York, NY 10017
Fees: Rental \$50; Sale (16 mm.) \$550; Sale (Videocassette) \$385

The Humanities in Literature

Life on the Mississippi by Mark Twain

1980

Drama

Life on the Mississippi is a dramatization of Mark Twain's epic chronicle of a young man's coming of age on America's greatest river. The novel grew out of Twain's own experiences when, as a young man, he fulfilled his boyhood ambition to become a river pilot. After a difficult apprenticeship during which he braved the hazards of the deceptive ever-changing river and a potentially disastrous brush with an egomaniacal pilot, he earned his license, and with it, a new maturity.

Production Organization: Nebraska and ETV Great Amwell Co.
Executive Producer: William Perry
Producer/Director: Peter H. Hunt
Series Producer: Marshall Jamison
Cast: Robert Lansing, David Knell, James Keane, Donald Madden, John Pankow, Jack Lawrence, Marcy Walker, Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., host.

Format: 16 mm., Videocassette, 2" Quad (2:00:00)

Distributor: Nebraska Educational Television Network, 1800 North 33rd Street, Lincoln, NE 68501
Fees: Contact Distributor

Awards: Cine Golden Eagle, 1981; Eddie Award, American Cinema Editors (ACE), 1981

Mark Twain: Beneath the Laughter

1979

Drama

Mark Twain: Beneath the Laughter explores the nature of "the dark side of Twain" and the deep cynicism of his

later years. In 1909 Mark Twain, aged 74, returns from Bermuda to spend the Christmas holidays in Connecticut with his daughter Jean. On Christmas eve Jean is fatally stricken. Her death leads Twain to review his own life as if it were a story he were writing. Key events in his past are dramatized—the young Sam joins and then deserts the Confederate Army, becomes a newspaper reporter, and then learns to pilot a Mississippi riverboat.

A "Discussion Leader's Guide" is available.

Producer: Marsha Jeffer
Director: Lary Yust
Writers: Gill Dennis and Larry Yust
Photographer: Howard Wexler
Cast: Dan O'Herlihy, Lynn Seibel, Kay Howell

Format: 16 mm., Videocassette (58:00)

Distributor: Pyramid Films, Box 1048, Santa Monica, CA 90406
Fees: Sale \$750 (16 mm.); Sale \$395 (Videocassette); Rental \$75

Awards: CINE Golden Eagle, 1980; American Film Festival, Honorable Mention, 1980

The O/Aural Tradition: Beowulf (Parts I and II)

1978

Radio Drama

The medieval epic poem, *Beowulf*, is dramatically presented through readings in the original Old English and modern translation by Burton Raffel.

Producer/Director: Charles B. Potter
Writer: Robert P. Creed
Music: Mary Remnant
Sound: David Rapkin

Format: Reel to reel (2 59-minute programs)

Distributor: Charles B. Potter, 838 West End Avenue 6-D, New York, NY 10025
Fees: Contact Distributor

Awards: CPB Award for Best Public Radio Local Programs, 1978

The Odyssey of Homer

1981

Dramatic Radio Series

Homer's great epic tells the story of Odysseus of Ithaca, who struggled for twenty years after the Trojan War to return to his home. His wife, Penelope, waits for his return, warding off aggressive suitors while his son, Telemachus, searches for him. Ultimately Odysseus returns home, ousts the suitors and is reunited with his family.

Each program dramatizes a portion of the work and contains a documentary segment analyzing a particular aspect of Greek life.

Episode 1
The Suitors of Penelope Richard Posner of the University of Chicago discusses Homeric government.

Episode 2
The Voyage of Telemachus Charles Bye, visiting professor of classical studies at the University of Athens, ex-

The Art of the Fellowship Proposal



Each year the NEH receives thousands of individual fellowship applications from good scholars for good projects. A few hundred are recommended by review panels for funding, but only a few score elicit a unanimous recommendation of "Absolutely Yes!" As budgetary constraints on the Endowment increase, the importance of a strong panel endorsement to the success of an application also increases.

Writing a fellowship proposal that receives enthusiastic endorsement from panelists is both an art and a science. The science is in carefully following the guidelines for the format of the application and in presenting a proposal that clearly reflects knowledge of the subject being studied and the methodology appropriate to it. The art is more difficult to describe and is the subject of this article.

The art of writing a successful proposal is *not* a matter of knowing arcane secrets of grantsmanship, a presumed hidden agenda at NEH, or that influential someone in the Fellowships Division. Nor is it achieved by mimicking proposals that received NEH grants in the past. (Examples given in this article are intended to demonstrate levels of quality, not to serve as models.)

The art of writing a successful proposal is largely a matter of understanding how individual fellowship applications are selected for funding.

There are three fellowship programs which award grants for individual study and research in the humanities: Summer Stipends; Fellowships for College Teachers; and Fellowships for Independent Study and Research. They are all highly competitive because of their limited budgets and the large number of good proposals submitted each year. The ratio of grants to applications varies among the programs and from year to year, ranging from a low of one-to-five in the College Teachers program to a high of one-to-nine in Independent Study.

All three programs use *ad hoc* review panels—composed of scholars representing the disciplines of the applications under consideration—to evaluate the proposals. Panel ratings serve as the basis for the National Council on the Humanities' funding recommendations to the NEH chairman, who gives final approval on all Endowment grants.

In making their assessments of an application, panelists consider the evidence provided by the applicant—the description of the project, the letters of reference, the curriculum vitae, and the bibliography of works relevant to the study. (Directions for proper completion of application materials cannot be recapitulated here; they are given in the guidelines for each program and should be followed carefully.)

In evaluating this evidence the panelists adhere to the four selection criteria stated in the program guidelines. A review and discussion of these criteria (which vary only slightly among the three individual fellowships programs) will help reveal what makes for an "artful," i.e., competitive, application.

1. The quality or promise of quality of the applicant's work as a teacher, scholar, or interpreter of the humanities

This criterion focuses more on the applicant than on the project. The panel looks for evidence that

the individual has the knowledge and ability to carry out the project and a commitment to excellence in scholarship. In making this determination, the panel considers more than just the curriculum vitae and record of previous publications. Reference letters provide critical information as well, and the project description itself, in its conception and presentation, is an important indicator of the quality of the individual's thought.

The phrase "the promise of quality" in this criterion indicates that panelists are concerned not simply with past accomplishments of the applicant. All three programs make grants to scholars early in their careers, as well as to senior scholars. Panelists try to judge the quality of applicants' work by standards appropriate to their career stages. There are no quotas set for awards to junior or senior scholars, nor is there any prejudice against either group. Among the Independent fellowships awarded last November (listed on pages 23-25 of this issue of *Humanities*), 48 percent went to junior scholars. (Forty-nine percent of the applications were from junior scholars.)

One of these junior scholars is studying the origin of the economic decline in New England from 1840 to 1925. The applicant was awarded a doctorate in history in 1979 and is currently an assistant professor at a major university. Her record of publications includes two journal articles and three conference presentations.

In evaluating her application, panelists took note of her status as a younger scholar. The sophisticated knowledge of the subject revealed in the proposal itself and strong letters of reference were instrumental in convincing the panel that there was "promise of quality" from this applicant. "Extremely impressive proposal," commented one panelist. "Well-reasoned, clear and attractive."

When panelists evaluate the "quality of work" of senior scholars, they may place greater emphasis on some aspects of the application.

One of the 1982-83 Independent Study awards to an established scholar (doctorate awarded in 1968, college professor since 1966, currently an associate dean at a major university) was for a biography of Anne Sexton. Certainly the proposal description was a principal element in panelists' consideration of the quality of work of the applicant, as were the letters of reference. But panelists also took careful note of the applicant's record of achievement—nine academic honors; three books and numerous articles of high quality; and poems published in a variety of journals.

Without this level of accomplishment it is unlikely a panelist would have concluded, "Seldom have I found an applicant I could bet on with more certainty—an absolutely first-rate proposal and person to do it." Another remarked, "Publications are quite good, references are excellent, and the candidate obviously has access and can do the biography."

It should be noted that the "work" whose quality is being judged under this criterion need not have been conducted in an academic setting. Two of the three programs entertain applications from scholars unaffiliated with colleges or universities; they also include unaffiliated scholars on their panels.

2. The importance of the proposal to the specific field and the humanities in general

The best evidence of the importance of the project is given in the applicant's project description, though certainly letters of reference provide necessary corroboration. An applicant cannot assume that panelists will appreciate the importance of a project or have a predisposition toward the subject matter. It is incumbent upon the applicant to make the case for the importance of the study to be undertaken.

Because applications are competitive and reviewed in groups, panelists look for those projects likely to make the greatest contribution to the humanities. The contribution an applicant expects to make may be through teaching, through the production of materials that will serve other scholars, or through development of new perspectives on the discipline that will encourage further discussion and understanding of the subject among all interested audiences.

A project that will serve only the applicant (such as remedial work by the applicant to "catch up" in a field) will not be competitive with projects that offer to add to the knowledge of students, colleagues, or a wider public.

A summer stipend was recently awarded for a project to write an archaeological commentary on the *Wasps* of Aristophanes, applying vase paintings and other monumental evidence to a study of the play's terms, puns, metaphors, objects, actions and the *mise-en-scene* of the Athenian law courts.

In his proposal, the applicant argued the importance of the project by citing other scholars who have affirmed the value of applying archaeological evidence to interpretation of Aristophanes' comedies. He then offered his own view of the significance of providing a "material and historical context" for understanding literature in general and the *Wasps* in particular. He suggested the study would serve classicists as well as a wider group of readers and would provide a basis for more authentic and effective productions of the play.

He persuaded the panel that a new understanding and appreciation of Aristophanes was needed and could be achieved through this project. One panelist commented, "This kind of study is something we should see more of and that is an approach to a classical text which attempts to conceptualize a drama as it was originally conceived and produced as, among other benefits, a stimulus to the production of ancient comedy." Another noted that "it is the sort of work that combines 'scholarly' and 'practical' use: it may well help directors and actors present more visually meaningful performances of the play."

In addition to the importance of the subject matter, the proposal may argue for the value of its methodology, as in this excerpt from a 1982-83 Independent Study proposal:

Political history is currently out of fashion, largely because it tends to be biographical and narrative in orientation and, except for vote counting, does not lend itself to social-scientific techniques and analysis. Political history, however, deserves attention, partly because it contains the central question of history—how are

decisions actually made—and partly because political, old-fashioned elitist history needs redoing. I propose to take a fresh look at the political history of Tudor England and study the political environment in which individuals translated their culturally conditioned aspirations and assumptions into the realities of political success and failure. It is customary to approach politics from the perspective of those who succeeded because the documentation is skewed in that direction and successful ideas live on in terms of their historic consequences. Unfortunately, successful people also tend to be well adjusted and to know how to make the system work for them; as a result, they do not usually have much to say about the functional and psychological strains under which they operate. It is the unsuccessful who flounder and cry out and thereby reveal in their lives and writings the pressures and emotional strains under which all the natural leaders of society must work. As Scott Fitzgerald said: 'It is from the failures of life and not its successes that we learn the most.'

The ultimate tour de force is to relate theory to practice and to offer an explanation of Tudor politics in terms of a multitude of failure stories, thereby rewriting and reinterpreting the sixteenth-century political scene.... Irrationality in politics, political failure and paranoia are, alas, sufficiently relevant themes to need no special pleading. That they are being studied within a sixteenth-century context should not distract from their importance to the scholar, from their interest for the general reading public, or from their impact upon our knowledge about mankind.

Panelists were convinced. "It appears that the realization of this project would shed new light on the political dynamic of a crucial period.... I think his approach will serve as an important scholarly model in terms of developing understanding of the political process in any era." "The book would likely reach not only specialists but intelligent readers generally and make a significant and original contribution to both. This is one among two or three proposals that I rank as the very best - the reflection of a mature and brilliant scholar on a field in which he has long worked, that is at the same time an act of imagination - an asking of fresh questions of material long familiar that will influence all our thinking."

Importance of the project is not a function of the discipline or scope of the project. There are no favored fields, time periods, or cultures. It is rather what the applicant makes of the subject that determines its importance—a point to be taken up under the third criterion.

3. The conception, definition, and organization of the proposal

This and the preceding criterion are mutually supportive. The importance of a project is dependent on the way it is conceived, and its conception cannot be judged without regard for its importance.

Good conception, definition and organization of the project obviously result from the applicant's command of the subject and thus fall within the realm of the science of proposal writing. There is, however, also an art to conceiving, defining, and organizing the project. Put simply, the most successful applications seem to be those in which applicants let their ideas and enthusiasm for the subject "shine through."

A potential applicant once contacted an NEH program officer and said she had two projects for a summer stipend in mind. After describing the projects, she asked the staff member which she should submit. The program officer counseled her to submit the one which interested her most.

Conception of the project involves asking the right questions about the subject to be studied, drawing the right comparisons with other works and subjects, and setting the right scope for the

project. The operative term here is "right." The right questions, right comparisons, and right scope—in addition to being appropriate to the field—are those which capture the interest of the panel. And since a panel is made up of scholars in the discipline, their interests will be similar to those of an applicant's colleagues.

Competitive proposals are those which go beyond a naive or redundant treatment to explore the subject's real potential, to yield new perspectives (including interdisciplinary views), or to break new ground.

Among the applications for 1981-1982 Fellowships for College Teachers were two projects treating ethical issues related to science. Both studies were intended to improve classroom instruction and serve as the basis for new courses. Of these two projects in essentially the same discipline and with the same purpose, only one was funded. The quality of the conception and definition of the project made the difference.

The successful proposal focused the study on ethical issues relating to medicine and explained clearly the value of the project to the institution and students it would benefit. It then discussed the nature of and reasons for recent moral problems associated with medicine and appropriate ways for approaching these problems. The proposal concluded with the specific questions to be explored and the methodology that would be applied.

The project received a strong recommendation from panelists. Typical of their comments was, "This is an excellent proposal both in terms of care with which it is worked out and the probable significance for teaching."

The unsuccessful application proposed a two-part study on 1) "the history of the biological sciences and of philosophical issues peculiar to them" and 2) "contemporary work in the area of ethical issues in science and technology." The proposal discussed the applicant's teaching responsibilities, academic background, and current approach to and problems with teaching ethical perspectives on science, and offered as a plan of study only a brief paragraph noting resources and faculties to be consulted.

Panelists expressed concern at the application's lack of a clear focus for the study, of specific issues to be tackled, of the approach to be taken." In comparison with the other proposal which takes biology as background for considering ethical issues, this one is not as well developed," one panelist remarked.

Another called the proposal "too broad, too vague." A third said, "not clear that this really takes her enough beyond what she already does and knows to constitute a 'project.'"

As these examples illustrate, it is important that applicants state clearly what they intend to do, what question they intend to ask, and why. It cannot be left to the panel to infer or the references to imply what the plan of study will be. Panels must know how the grant period is going to be used.

4. The likelihood that the applicant will see the project through to completion

This criterion simply means that panelists will consider whether or not what is proposed can be and is likely to be achieved.

The criterion does not mean that the entire project must be completed during the grant period, only that it should eventually be completed and that the portion slated for the period of the fellowship can be handled in that time.

A 1981-82 College Teachers fellowship was awarded for a study of gambling in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England, focusing on how this leisure activity reflects changes in social and private values resulting from industrialization.

Following an intensive discussion of the significance and approach of his study, the applicant

stated:

As ambitious as the project is, I believe that it is not an unrealistic one, and my previous work suggests that I can undertake it successfully. I am already familiar with much of the literature, both primary and secondary, on "sporting" topics, and I have had some success in using this material in a constructive way.

In addition to favorable reactions to the applicant's abilities and the potential value of the study, panelists were convinced of the likelihood the research and a monograph would be completed. "Proposer offers convincing argument and has evidently pursued work to point where it can be completed," said one. Another said, "[He] has background to indicate likelihood of completion."

Finally, there are a few additional factors a panel may consider in making decisions on a group of applications. Geographical and institutional diversity are sought among fellowship awards, though no quotas are set. Panelists often take this into consideration as a tiebreaker among highly rated proposals. (Among the 143 College Teacher fellowships listed at the back of *Humanities*, 124 colleges and universities in 37 states are represented.)

The individual fellowship programs give preference to applicants who have not had major grants or postdoctoral fellowships in the last six years. Panels are also sympathetic to able applicants in situations or institutions that offer few research opportunities.

There is also a *je ne sais quoi*, a "sparkle," an appeal that distinguishes successful proposals from the nearly successful proposals. This special quality is synergistic, combining and transcending all the previously mentioned qualities, as the following excerpt from a highly rated summer stipend proposal demonstrates:

An extensive study of Russian twentieth-century literature for children is long needed. It would provide us with an observation point from which the very formation of the 'Soviet mind' could be observed, because children's literature in the USSR reflects that process in its complexity: from ideological indoctrination by the state to inoculation with critical attitudes and ways of independent thinking by dissenting writers.

For this author the study of Russian children's literature is a lifelong commitment. I was born and raised in a family of children's writers: my father was the author of more than sixty books of prose and poetry for children and about two dozen plays for the same audience. And my mother has published several books of poems for children as well. I had the privilege of knowing almost every contemporary significant children's writer personally. For fifteen years I worked as a writer and, from 1962 through 1975, as an editor for the children's magazine *Kostyor* in Leningrad. I published a few books of my own and translated poetry for children. Nine of my plays for children were staged and published. At the same time, I was studying and collecting materials related to the history of Russian children's literature, beginning with the 1920s, when the Russian literary avant-garde became involved in children's literature.

At this point I am entering the conclusive stage of my project; to complete my manuscript on the *History of Modern Russian Literature for Children* I need to carry on some additional research in earlier Soviet periodicals and rare books and to double-check the materials that I copied in Soviet libraries some years ago. The NEH stipend would enable me to complete my work during the summer of 1982 by working in the libraries of Harvard and Yale, and, primarily, in the Library of Congress.

"Absolutely yes!" was the funding recommendation from one member of the review panel. The other members agreed.

—John Lippincott

Mr. Lippincott is a member of the Endowment staff.

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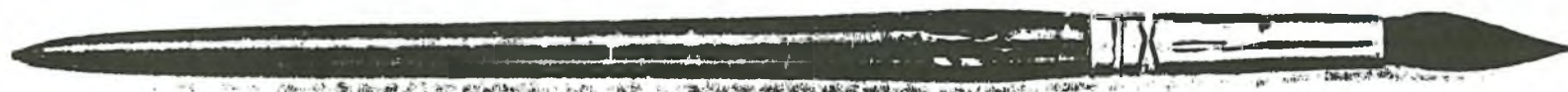
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Robert A. Rosenstone on *REDS*

In producing *REDS*, the motion picture about American radicals John Reed and Louise Bryant and their involvement in the Russian revolution, Warren Beatty "at times shoved history aside."

So says Beatty's historical consultant on the film, Robert A. Rosenstone, a professor of American history at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena and the author of a highly regarded biography of Reed, *Romantic Revolutionary* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1975).

But Rosenstone also points out that Beatty has shown the moviegoers who have seen the film in the four months since its release a side of history that they probably never saw in their high school—or even college—history textbooks. American history books tend to neglect American radical movements, he believes.

"Even our college courses don't teach much about radicalism," says Rosenstone whose courses in cultural and intellectual history at Cal Tech include one on "Radicalism and Revolution." "We have a long tradition of radicalism in the United States—going back to the Regulators in North Carolina in the 1760s. I happen to think it's a valuable tradition in many ways. But whether it's valuable or not, it is part of our heritage. As a historian, I think we benefit from knowing all of our history."

Rosenstone has devoted most of his scholarly career to the social critiques undertaken by Western radicals, from those offered by John Reed and his fellow Bohemians to the student protests of the sixties. He is currently studying, with the help of an NEH fellowship, another kind of challenge to the social organization of the West, that posed by the American encounter with Japan. He is researching the reactions to Japan of the nineteenth-century Americans who were the first to live there.

While at first the link between American radicals and American reactions to an alien culture may seem tenuous, Rosenstone believes in Paul Ricoeur's concept of "understanding the self by the detour of understanding the Other." What did Americans reject? What did they admire? These questions provide insights concerning the strengths and weaknesses of the society at home.

Rosenstone's first book, *Crusade of the Left*, is a history of the Americans who fought in the Spanish Civil War, most of them in the Abraham Lincoln Battalion of the XVth International Brigade, formed under the auspices of the Soviet-led Comintern. In this book, Rosenstone writes about the American perception that radicals are treasonous and that dissidence in the United States occurs "because of wishes of men in the Soviet Union" and not "in response to perceptions of reality on this side of the Atlantic." Does the popularity of *REDS* signal a change in public opinion of radicals?

Rosenstone thinks not. "When radicals are safely dead, we begin to think they're okay," he says. "Eugene V. Debs makes it into the history books now as kind of a gentle guy, which he was. *TIME* magazine gave Norman Thomas, who was the head of the socialist party in the thirties and considered pretty radical, an eightieth birthday party ten or fifteen years ago. That's a long way to come for Norman Thomas."

According to Rosenstone, *REDS* is not an accurate barometer of public opinion about radicalism because it is not really a radical film.

"It's a film about an American who gets caught up in this foreign revolution and then asserts his own individualism as opposed to the revolutionary mentality of the leading Bolshevik in the film (Grigory Zinoviev, portrayed by Jerzy Kosinski).

"To me, the real center of John Reed's life is not the Russian revolution and certainly not his love for Louise, but his choice between success and popularity and his integrity as a writer," Rosenstone says.

Reed had established his reputation as a journalist by 1914, through his dazzling, firsthand accounts of the revolutionary battles led by Francisco Villa and Emiliano Zapata in the Mexican Civil War and through his subsequent book, *Insurgent Mexico*. But his opposition to World War I presented a dilemma. He was unable to sell articles to newspapers that Rosenstone calls "hysterically patriotic." Seeing this crisis as a turning point in Reed's life, Rosenstone writes in the biography, "A society which once had promised everything now withheld the means of making a living, unless



Photograph from *Romantic Revolutionary*

he were prepared to compromise his beliefs. Jack did not waver...."

"He could have been popular still," Rosenstone says. "He was offered a job on the Committee of Public Information; he was offered a job in the Government Censorship Office. He could have written for the newspapers, but he would have had to write what they wanted, not what he wanted. At that point, he chose a path that led to this sort of martyrdom—because of his own commitment and honesty.

"None of that is really shown in the film. And in a certain way, [the omission] emasculates the historical John Reed."

An article which Rosenstone wrote about the historical inaccuracies in *REDS* appears in the most recent issue of *The Journal of American History*, published by the Organization of American Historians (OAH). Rosenstone wrote the article, he

says, not to criticize the motion picture, but "for the historical record."

Did he point out these historical discrepancies to the filmmakers? He did. What, then, is the role of the historical consultant?

"I was a resource. I offered advice. They would have questions like 'How many delegates were at the Socialist Party convention in 1919?'

"I think I had a peripheral impact. I'd like to think that there's as much politics in the film as there is because I kept insisting that politics were important in John Reed's life."

Everybody involved in the film, Rosenstone says, had read *Romantic Revolutionary*, which was published in 1975. Cinematographer Vittorio Storaro, who doesn't read English, had gotten the Italian version.

Beatty called Rosenstone in 1972, having heard from a friend about the biography-in-progress, and thus began a series of conversations that



continued for seven years. The use of "witnesses," acquaintances of Reed or important figures from the time, who appear in the film against a blackened screen to comment Greek chorus-like on the action, was the first idea that scholar and producer discussed. Rosenstone was able to suggest some of the people to be interviewed.

"I knew from the beginning that Warren had his own vision of John Reed," Rosenstone comments. And though it is a vision that the scholar does not wholly embrace, it too has educational value.

"The only previous feature film about a historical American radical made in the United States was the one about Woodie Guthrie about four years ago, *Bound for Glory*. They never mentioned that he was a communist. In fact, he just seemed like a dust-bowl balladeer.

"It's marvelous to have a genuine

film about an American radical that, for all its historical flaws, at least says, 'Hey, you know, we *do* have radicals and they're real people, and they don't eat children for breakfast and they don't walk around carrying bombs in their pockets.

"We have this notion, somehow, that radicalism is all a foreign conspiracy and, you know, it's not."

For those who would still object to the misrepresentation of history in the film, it is worth noting that *REDS* has drawn people not only to the box office, but also to the book stores. Random House has reprinted in paperback Rosenstone's biography in a Vintage edition with a tie-in to the movie that reads, "The incredible story of the man whose life inspired the motion picture *REDS*." The book sold 15,000 copies in three months. Penguin has just published a seventh reprint of Reed's *Ten Days That Shook the World*

Robert A. Rosenstone, 1981 NEH Fellow. The real John Reed and Louise Bryant were married in the fall of 1916 after Reed had purchased a small cottage on Croton. According to Rosenstone's biography of Reed, "The ceremony meant little, but he wanted her to be the legal heir." Warren Beatty and Diane Keaton portray the lovers in *REDS*.



which has sold 70,000 copies since *REDS* was released.

Fans lured to Rosenstone's book by Warren Beatty's film portrayal will recognize Reed's exuberance, idealism and self-absorption. They may be somewhat shocked by his need for acceptance or attention, and by his casual regard for fidelity in marriage. They will discover why Reed is revered as a master of language in the generous quotations from his stories, poems and articles, as in this description of prostitutes that begins the chapter about his experience with the IWW strike in Paterson, New Jersey: "As soon as the dark sets in, young girls begin to pass that Corner—squat-figured, hard-faced, 'cheap' girls, like dusty little birds wrapped too tightly in their feathers."

When Reed begins to awaken to the inequities in the American way of life, shortly before he witnesses the suffering of the IWW strike in Paterson, he blames the individual drive for success, a drive that directed a good deal of his own life. Each man, Reed wrote, is "intent upon merely making a little money for himself, without any thought of the... incongruity of his plan with the immutable rhythm of nature."

This a sentiment that we have grown accustomed to hearing in the speeches of radicals, those visionaries or malcontents, usually in the sway of Marxist-Leninist doctrine, who seek a change in the social-economic order. It was part of the antiwar movement in 1914, part of the creed of rebellion in the 1960s. But, surprisingly enough, the view that Americans hold too dear the single-minded pursuit of wealth, has emerged in the writings of another group of Americans, concerned not with revolutionizing their culture, but with spreading it. This discovery is one of the surprises that Rosenstone has encountered in his current research on Americans faced with the culture of Japan.

In "Learning from Those 'Imitative' Japanese" an article in the June 1980 *American Historical Review*, Rosenstone writes that in the late 1890s many Americans pointed to "light-heartedness and joy as primary national characteristics of the Japanese." He continues:

To citizens of a land where the pursuit of happiness was supposed to be a fundamental goal, perhaps this characteristic should not have seemed so surprising. But what Amer-

icans had a license to pursue, the Japanese had apparently achieved—and done so contrary to American expectations. Japanese happiness arose neither from individual liberty nor the acquisition of wealth.... the Japanese had difficulty understanding 'the rush and struggle for riches in America.'

It is important to remember that Americans who found themselves admiring the culture of Japan were prepared for a different sort of reaction. "Most Americans went to Japan in the nineteenth century as cultural imperialists," Rosenstone says. "They were Protestant missionaries, technical experts hired by the Japanese government to help them industrialize or improve agricultural output, teachers of English and of science.

"They went with notions of Western superiority in technology, of course, but also in forms of government.... They believed that Japan should not only modernize, but missionize."

They returned "with a change of world view, a broader definition of what it meant to be civilized." The specific lessons that Americans can learn from the Japanese are more elusive than the general impression that "they knew something about the quality of life that we didn't," says Rosenstone.

The genesis of this study, he points out, was a year that he spent teaching in Japan as a Fulbright Lecturer. Stylizing himself a "cultural critic," he says that he found in Japan not only a fascinating society, but "one that we Americans might be able to learn from."

A colleague once wrote of Rosenstone, "He perceives the American experience as diverse, as constantly in search of confirmation and judgment by confrontation with the other, and as continually throwing up radicals and dissidents who consciously or not look at America from that perspective of the other..."

In his latest research, he confronts what he has studied before—the "un-American" as a means of reaching deeper into what is American.

—Linda Blanken

Ms. Blanken is the managing editor of *Humanities*.

"Learning from Those 'Imitative' Japanese: The Historical Challenge of the Other"/Robert A. Rosenstone/California Institute of Technology, Pasadena/\$22,000/1981-82/Fellowships for Independent Study and Research

About the authors...

John Canaday was born in Kansas, raised in Texas and was graduated from the University of Texas with a degree in French and English literature and then proceeded to Yale for graduate study in the history of art. After teaching at the University of Virginia and Tulane, he went to the Philadelphia Museum of Art as head of the Division of Education. Six years later he joined the *New York Times* where he remained as art critic for seventeen years. A term as Distinguished Visiting Professor in History of Art at the University of Texas was followed by an extended lecture tour of Latin America under the auspice of the U.S. Department of State. His fifteen books include *Mainstreams of Modern Art*, *What Is Art?*, *Keys to Art* (with his wife, Katherine Hoover Canaday), and seven mystery novels under the pseudonym Matthew Head. Mr. Canaday is currently at work on a general history of art scheduled for publication in 1983. **Page 1.**



Neil Harris is professor of history at the University of Chicago. Educated at Columbia, Cambridge, and Harvard Universities, he has published books and articles concerned with the history of American culture, including *The Artist in American Society* and *Humbug: The Art of P.T. Barnum*. From 1975 to 1977 Professor Harris served as director of the National Humanities Institute at the University of Chicago. He continues to serve as a member of the board of directors of the American Council of Learned Societies, as a Trustee of the Henry duPont Winterthur Museum, and as a member of the National Museum Services Board, created by Congress in 1977 to recognize and assist the operation of American museums. **Page 7.**



Mabel L. Lang is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Paul Shorey Professor of Classics at Bryn Mawr College, where she has taught since 1943. Educated at Cornell University and Bryn Mawr, she has been both a Guggenheim and Fulbright Fellow. Her work on excavations at the Athenian Agora, at Gordion and Pylos has resulted in eight books and numerous articles on Linear B and Mycenaean epigraphy and Greek epigraphy, history, literature and archaeology. Professor Lang is a colleague and former teacher of Emily Townsend Vermeule, the eleventh Jefferson Lecturer in the Humanities, about whom she writes on **page 16.**



Editor's Notes

There remains some confusion in people's minds about the distinct roles of the two Endowments, even among those who should know better. "Why," we are often asked, "does the NEH fund art exhibits? Isn't that what the Arts Endowment does?"

An eloquent reply comes from John Canaday in his essay on page 1. Mr. Canaday believes that "the essential history that art can reveal... is the history of the ideal goals that civilizations have set for themselves..." leaving no doubt that art history and seminal exhibitions such as *El Greco of Toledo* (Page 5) belong in the humanities. When seen in the context of recent scholarship, El Greco's pres-

cient sixteenth-century paintings become far more than a vision of one man's world; they are important to the understanding of the Counter Reformation.

To Neil Harris (page 7) the art exhibition "as a frame for popular interpretation" is a "model of presentation that helps establish our identity and validates our past," a goal worthy of every historian and part of NEH's stated mission.

And Mabel Lang (page 14), one of the former teachers of Emily Vermeule, celebrates the eleventh Jefferson Lecturer as archaeologist, poet, and art historian who uses art from the Grecian Bronze Age to describe and interpret Mycenaean civiliza-

tion. A dagger, a wooden box, a ceremonial vase—art objects taken from the shaft graves of Mycenae—recreate and define the ancients to whom they belonged. Professor Vermeule's most recent book, *Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and Poetry*, demonstrates that "her interest and researches have ranged widely over all aspects of life as well as death in the Greek world"

Thus, not only is "art for art's sake"—for its own intrinsic value and the idyllic pleasure we gain from it—but art is also and especially for the humanities' sake. As Mr. Canaday so elegantly points out, "[art is] an increasingly potent form of communication with the past and an enlargement of the world...."

—Judith Chayes Neiman

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