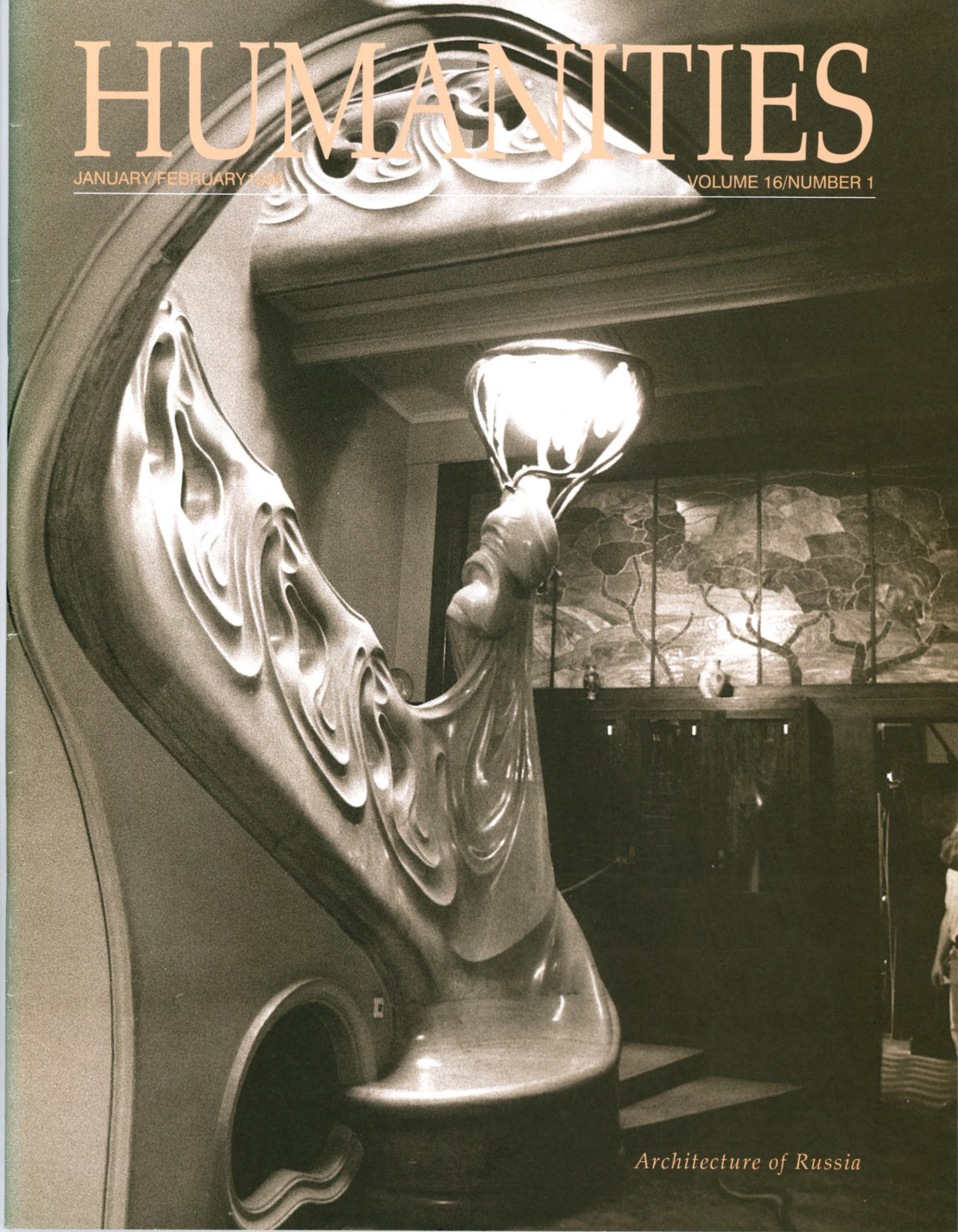


# HUMANITIES

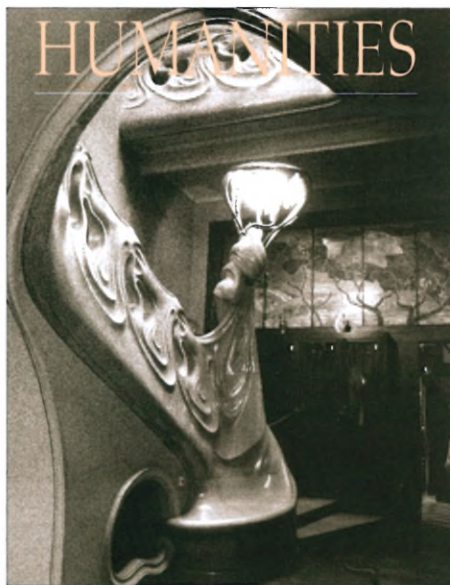
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1995

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*Architecture of Russia*





An art nouveau lamp ornaments the main stairway of the Stepan Riabushinskii house (1900-02) in Moscow. —©Photo by William C. Brumfield

#### *Humanities*

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

### *Who Owns History?*

Disney America at the Manassas battlefield . . . the Enola Gay at the Smithsonian . . . The rescinding of a commemorative stamp on the atomic bomb . . . Some recent brouhahas have revived a longstanding question about the public presentation of history: Who owns it anyway?

In this issue of *Humanities*, Endowment Chairman Sheldon Hackney discusses the issue with two people of diverging views—writer William Styron, whose novel *The Confessions of Nat Turner* tells the story of a slave uprising in Virginia, and historian Cary Carson of Colonial Williamsburg, whose own attempts to popularize while educating have run into occasional controversy.

For Disney to propose a theme park adjacent to a real Civil War battlefield was “synthetic history” and “irresponsibly vulgar,” Styron contends. “I think the presumptuousness involved in trying to deal with slavery, which is what they avowedly said they were going to do, is simply more than they could handle.” Carson sees it differently. As a professional from the museum world, he says that the work of historical selection is not all that different from what Styron himself does. “Historians, I’ve always insisted, are ultimately fiction writers no less than novelists. They simply play by a stricter set of rules.” He adds: “In a larger sense, we’re all making selections from this body of agreed-upon truths we call facts and putting them together in ways that we think address the larger truths that are certainly far more interesting and important than the facts by themselves.”

What standards should apply in the public presentation of history? Carson describes them as “rules historians have made and by which they try to play. They have to do with rules of evidence, rules of argument, rules of rational discourse.” He shifts to what he sees as the larger question: “Can the past be popularized and still address authentically important issues in American history today?” The question, he says, is not “Who owns history?” but “Who’s entitled to say what its lessons are?”

With that in mind, we visit some places where the lessons of history are taught in a number of differing ways: through site visits, through exhibition retrospectives, through film. Our first stopping place is present-day Moscow, where Tulane professor William Brumfield spent the summer with a group of professors studying the architecture of Moscow’s past. “Even as our institute focused on the historical context of Moscow’s architecture and art,” he writes, “the dizzying pace of change in contemporary Russia intruded at every point.” The cultural legacy of seventeenth-century churches is set against the incongruity of a twentieth-century Ray Charles in concert.

Closer to home, we find another scene of unexpected cultural complexity, this time among the steepled churches of New England. The African Americans who dwelt there from colonial times on—little noticed because ninety percent of blacks were in the South—included slaves and free artists, artisans and public benefactors, whalers and merchantmen. A new traveling exhibition called “Making a Living” tells the stories of people like Alexander L. Twilight, who in 1823 became the first black person to graduate from an American College, and Lewis Temple, inventor of the toggle iron harpoon. The exhibition will go to thirty sites in Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Massachusetts over the next fifteen months.

As we retrace the path of these black men in New England and elsewhere who were to gain the right to vote after the Civil War, we pause to look at a piece of concurrent history—that of women. A new Endowment-supported film scheduled for February release, *One Woman, One Vote*, traces the struggle, which for a time pitted part of the women’s movement, onetime allies, against ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment. It would take until 1920 for women, black and white, to gain suffrage.

—Mary Lou Beatty



# HUMANITIES

The Magazine of The National Endowment for the Humanities

January/February 1995

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## L E T T E R S

### ONE HIT, NO ERRORS

To the Editor:

Not meaning to be a grump, but in Andy Jurinko's drawing of Gil Hodges, *et al*, in the July/August issue of your fine magazine, there are three apparent inaccuracies that happen to catch my eye:

1. Striding as he is, it is hard to imagine that Gil has actually stepped on the plate; rather, he is stepping over it.

2. In reality, there is no extension of the third-base foul line from the rear of the batter's box toward us, looking on from the viewers' perspective.

3. In the 1940s or 1950s, when this scene would have taken place, there was no such thing as a "high-five" (a la No. 42, Jackie Robinson) or a "low-five" (a la No. 1, Pee Wee Reese). Instead, they merely shook hands, somewhat constrained, if not quite as gentlemen.

—Fred Milverstedt  
 Madison, Wisconsin

To Fred Milverstedt

from artist Andy Jurinko:

Thank you for your close observations of my drawing of Gil Hodges. . . . Let me attempt to clarify each point.

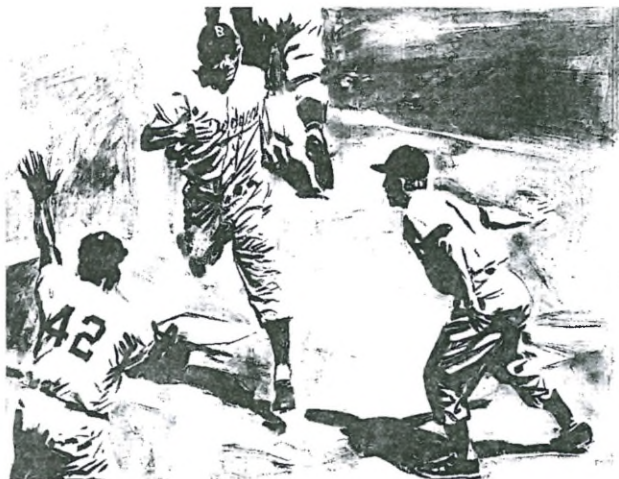
1. Hodges had already touched home plate with his *right* foot. He is shown striding *past* the plate with his left leg.

2. Although they may have been superfluous, foul lines in many ballparks extended beyond home plate into foul territory as they did in the Polo Grounds where this action took place. There are thousands of photographs which prove this.

3. Gil Hodges has just scored on an *inside-the-park* home run. Jackie Robinson (42) and Pee Wee Reese (1) are *not* extending high fives, but rather, are signaling Hodges to stay up, not to slide.

This image was based on a black-and-white news photograph. It is a preliminary study for the full color oil on canvas painting now in progress, one of six hundred being completed for my book on Major League baseball from 1946-1960.

New York City



To Andy Jurinko

from Fred Milverstedt:

Thank you for your prompt and courteous reply. . . . Considering the impulsiveness of my act and the crankiness of my intention, your measured response deserves plaudits. You have convinced me of my misinterpretation; indeed, on this plane of reality, clouded by our blind subjectivity, things are not always as they seem. . . .

Thanks much for the Polo Grounds lithograph. (But is that the Brat at second base or Buddy Blattner?)

Madison

### MISLABELING THE LABORER

This photograph was incorrectly identified in the article, "By the Sweat of Thy Brow," in the September-October issue. It is *The Stoker* by Chester Beach (1912), a 21 5/8" bronze owned by the Brooklyn Museum.





**M**arjorie Berlincourt has always liked to build things from the ground up. As she retires as director of the Division of Fellowships and Seminars after twenty-two years at the National Endowment for the Humanities, Berlincourt has designed and implemented program after program for teachers and scholars.

When she first arrived in Washington in 1972, it was as a consultant to start a new program called Summer Seminars. "The director, Jim Blessing, saw the need for undergraduate faculty in small, often isolated colleges to have the chance to recreate the collegiality of the graduate seminar experience. The program fulfills the purpose of sharing both the intellectual resources of the director and research libraries. It creates a network for scholars who don't have the opportunities that people at the major research universities have," says Berlincourt.

Berlincourt has seen the Summer Seminars for College Teachers flourish and offshoots of it such as Summer Seminars for School Teachers become mainstays of the Endowment's programs.

One of the most memorable seminars directors was Gregory Vlasco, whom Berlincourt describes as a national treasure. "He was a retired professor from Princeton University who continued to direct seminars into his eighties," she remembers. "It's wonderful that people who never had the chance to work with him at Princeton had a chance to work with this man. It is exciting to see what a difference it makes to the teachers, and the director gains as much as the participants from the seminars."

Berlincourt served as assistant director in Fellowships and Seminars from 1972 to 1978, as deputy director of Research Programs from 1978 to 1984, and as director of State Programs from 1984 to 1991 before returning to Fellowships and Seminars as director in 1991. "I feel very fortunate that I had the opportunity to manage both academic and public divisions. That is very rare," she adds.

Before arriving at the Endowment, Berlincourt was a professor of Greek and Roman history at California State University at Northridge. She received her B.A. in classics and French from the University of Toronto, and her M.A. and Ph.D. in classics from Yale University.

She describes herself as being from a generation of women who followed their husbands, so when Ted Berlincourt was offered a position with the Office of Naval Research, she left teaching and California. "I did miss teaching," she says, "but I am fortunate that I have always enjoyed what I was doing. I like to organize things."

Besides Summer Seminars, Berlincourt began the programs Travel to Collections and Dissertation Grants. While director of State Programs, she helped the state councils gain maturity as organizations and begin long-range planning. Chairman Sheldon Hackney says, "Marjorie Berlincourt has served the NEH and the humanities community tremendously well over a long period of time. Her managerial skill, combined with a fine sensitivity for quality in the humanities, has made her an invaluable leader at the Endowment. We will really miss her."

Having worked for five chairmen and five acting chairmen, Berlincourt has seen programs and divisions come and go. In January, with her departure, the programs of Fellowships and Seminars will be incorporated into other divisions at the Endowment. Throughout the changes, she says, the original purpose of the Endowment has remained, and she hopes it continues.

"There has to be an emphasis on scholarship and public access to the community. I like to see a balance between these two areas; they are equally important. One can't have public programs without the scholarship behind it."

In anticipation of her retirement, Berlincourt and her husband Ted have spent the last year designing and planning their house to be built on the Mendocino coast in California. It is a long process, with lots of reworking and paperwork. But just as her work at the Endowment required persistence and patience, she knows the fruits are worth it.

"What I have enjoyed the most at NEH is developing programs that continue and serve their purpose. I hadn't expected to be presiding over the breakup of a division, but the programs will continue and that is what is important." □

—Amy Lifson

Marjorie and Ted Berlincourt with grandsons Christopher and Nathaniel Yale.



Photo by Leslie Yale

## A Farewell to Marjorie Berlincourt



# Who

**T**WO RECENT CONTROVERSIES—  
*one involving a Smithsonian  
exhibition on the atomic bomb and  
the other a proposed Disney theme  
park near a Civil War battlefield—have prompted  
questions among the public, indeed among*



*historians, about the public  
presentation of history.*

*"Who Owns History?" was*

*the topic when Endowment*

*Chairman Sheldon Hackney*

*held tandem conversations*

*recently with writer William Styron and historian*

*Cary Carson. Styron is the author of The*

*Confessions of Nat Turner and Sophie's*

*Choice. Carson is vice president for research of*

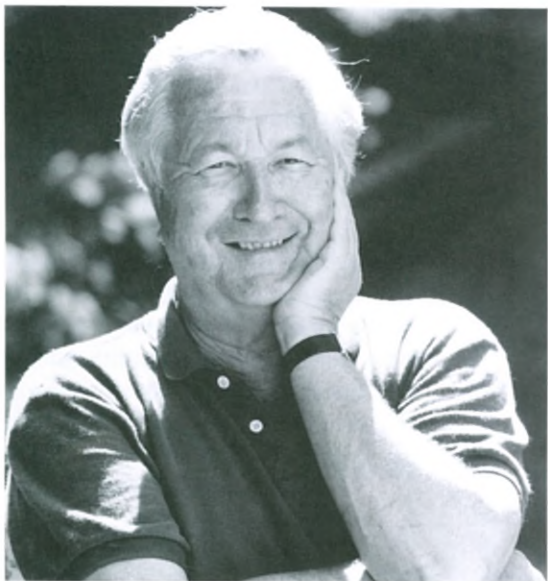
*the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.*



# Owens History?

*Conversations with writer*  
**WILLIAM STYRON**

*Williamsburg Historian*  
**CARY CARSON**



—©Photo by Peter Simon

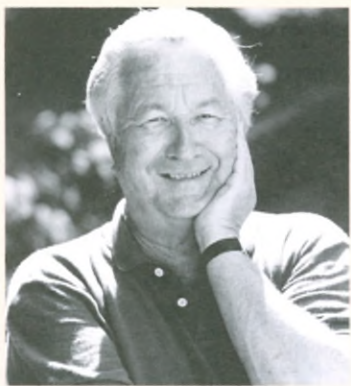
WILLIAM STYRON



—Courtesy of Colonial Williamsburg

CARY CARSON





**SHELDON HACKNEY:** Bill, after months of controversy, the Disney Co. decided to look elsewhere for the location of the theme park that it had wanted to build near Haymarket and Manassas in Virginia. That must make you feel good. As I understand your attitude toward the Disney project, it was partly about its impingement on the real Civil War battle sites in northern Virginia, but partly about other things as well. Why would it make any difference to you to have a theme park located next to the battlefield of First and Second Manassas and other battlefields in that area?

**WILLIAM STYRON:** To respond to your first point, I'm absolutely delighted that this thing has been resolved. To us, the central issue from the very beginning was the location. In the first place, they were erecting what would be synthetic history in an area where history already existed in the form of these battlefields and precious, to me, historical sites. It was something irresponsibly vulgar, it seemed to me, to have this monumental theme park in a place where the theme was already laid out in the form of history itself, silent and ready to be absorbed by people who wanted to go there and contemplate history in its original state.

The second thing—and it's probably just as bad if not worse—was the proposed construction of a huge theme park which would have ramifications in the form of, plainly, mile after mile of ancillary projects such as hotels, motels, fast-food joints, and all the attending apparatus that's so plainly visible already in places like Orlando, where Disney has done this. This was a shocking prospect for people who valued the pristine nature of that area around Haymarket.

**HACKNEY:** I'm struck by your use of the term "synthetic history." The Disney "imagineers" had said that they merely wished to use modern technology, which they command very well, to make visitors feel what it was like to live at some point in the past—what it was like, for instance, to be a slave in Virginia in the pre-Civil War era. How do you think they will fare at that?

**STYRON:** Certainly Disney could probably create a little vignette about history which might be effective. In their films, they did a reasonably good, although juvenile, version of Davy Crockett and the Alamo, and—pardon the expression; I don't mean to be condescending—rather simple-minded aspects of history. But I think the presumptuousness involved in trying to deal with slavery,

*Continued on page 10*



*As vice president for research for the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Cary Carson has worked collaboratively with curators, educators, and architectural historians on the restoration and interpretation of the Public Hospital, the Courthouse, the slave quarters, and other Williamsburg sites. He and his colleagues have written two educational master plans that give direction to interpretation, research, and collecting at the foundation.*

**SHELDON HACKNEY:** I would like to explore some of the issues about the public presentation of history. It's a delight to speak to someone fresh from the museum wars, especially someone who's recently been called "a high-living lackey historian helping corporate museums present 'illusory individualization of experience and their subsequent commoditization.'" (Laughter.) That's really a mouthful.

**CARY CARSON:** It is, isn't it? It just goes to show that Disney wasn't the first popularizer to raise the hackles of academic historians.

**HACKNEY:** Well, Disney is a much more visible presenter. But do you think there was any difference in kind between what Disney was intending to do in a history theme park and what Colonial Williamsburg does?

**CARSON:** Well, we don't know that, do we?

**HACKNEY:** No, of course.

**CARSON:** We never had a full explanation of what Michael Eisner alluded to when he said, "I have a vision of a third-generation theme park, which



won't be like the theme parks that my predecessors built." He never told us what that was, so we can't really say. On the other hand, from the moment Disney announced its intentions to build a history theme park in northern Virginia, many people in the history museum field, whether they were prepared to acknowledge it publicly or not, were struck by some of the obvious similarities as well as some of the differences. That is to say, Disney's ambitions were not that dissimilar from the ambitions of history museums and historic sites to reach a broad public audience. We also employ many of the same presentation techniques—re-creations, storytelling, theater. We both teach largely with what people can see and how they feel based on what they see.

**HACKNEY:** But you're tied to some extent to material remains, material culture, and Disney would not be. They can create a totally synthetic experience.

**CARSON:** That's true. That gets into the question of authenticity, doesn't it?

**HACKNEY:** Yes.

**CARSON:** How much authenticity should be expected? Here's my short answer: at a minimum, enough to fool the general public, and, at best, enough to fool the experts—including ourselves. Authenticity is more than it's often cracked up to be. What we're really talking about is believability. Do historians have to succeed in re-creating a past that they believe in before they can persuade their audiences to believe in it too. But a believable past is not a fixed thing. If authenticity could be nailed down once and forever, historians would have been out of a job generations ago.

**HACKNEY:** Let me make sure that I understand you. Believability is not all you probably intend, because you also would think that you would be using the same tests for truth. It should be not just believable, but it ought to be authentic in some way, should it not? A novelist can create something that seems like a historical experience in a novel but isn't constrained either by intimate facts or identities or getting the facts of material culture right.

**CARSON:** Historians, I've always insisted, are ultimately fiction writers no less than novelists. They simply play by a stricter set of rules. In the end it all is art. That is, historians can often agree

on certain basic facts. But, when we begin assembling those facts into something larger and more meaningful, our choice of the facts we do and don't select and how we put them together, that's the art of what we do. And in doing that, we are constrained in ways that, say, William Styron isn't when he writes about Nat Turner. That isn't to say that he doesn't feel a tremendous sense of obligation to the same set of facts that historians writing about this subject would. On the other hand, we permit him, a novelist, some license that we don't permit ourselves. That is the difference between his work and our work. In a larger sense, we're all making selections from this body of

***If authenticity  
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out of a job  
generations ago.***

—Carson

agreed-upon truths we call facts and putting them together in ways that we think address the larger truths that are certainly far more interesting and important than the facts by themselves.

**HACKNEY:** I couldn't agree more.

**CARSON:** I had an instructive experience last March. Following the announcement of Disney's plans to build a history theme park in our backyard, Colonial Williamsburg conducted a number of super-secret market survey focus groups to test our "product" versus a Disney product. I went up to Stamford, Connecticut, to sit behind the one-way mirror and listen to a group of ten people talk about their experience as history learners. They were chosen on the basis of two demographic characteristics. They

had to have visited Colonial Williamsburg and they had to have visited a Disney attraction at some time or other. They weren't told who was paying for the market survey. In one of the exercises, the discussion leader held up flash cards with adjectives printed on them, and the respondents were asked to say whether those adjectives applied or didn't apply first to Williamsburg and then to Disney World or Disneyland. We were very surprised by some of the answers. For example, when the moderator held up the flash card that said "authentic," everybody nodded in agreement: Colonial Williamsburg is authentic. Then he said, "And Disneyland?" and without a pause, every one of them said, "Oh yes, yes, Disneyland is authentic, too." Later, he came back to that answer and asked, "How can this be? We all know that Disney's America, if it's built, is going to be totally made up. It isn't even a real historical site. Everything will be artificial. And you all know that Colonial Williamsburg is a real place, even if much restored." "Sure," they said. But when they explained, they shifted from what you and I and other professionals think authentic means to what it meant to them. They said, "Disney always does things first-class, and if they set out to do American history, they'll hire the best historians money can buy. They will hire whatever specialists are necessary to create a completely plausible, completely believable appearance of American history." That answer really set my colleagues back on their heels.

Furthermore, we ourselves recognized that authenticity raises complicated issues. Colonial Williamsburg and Monticello and Mount Vernon pride themselves on being real places. But those of us who work for these organizations can never forget that a tremendous amount of educated guesswork has gone into the re-creation of the eighteenth-century capital of Virginia or into those eighteenth-century plantations. The whole Disney phenomenon held a mirror up to our souls.

**HACKNEY:** It focuses attention on the important question here, which is: What standards should the public presentation of history require, whether it's Disney or Colonial Williamsburg or Greenfield Village or Sturbridge or what have you? It might be possible to create an experience that is believable and still have that experience fall far short of your test of historical truths, of being faithful not only to the record, but



which is what they avowedly said they were going to do, is simply more than they could handle. That's a supertheme beyond any theme park. It's spanned three hundred years of American history, and it's something that I do not believe can be done with dignity.

**HACKNEY:** What's the big danger there? Overromanticization or trivialization or oversimplification?

**STYRON:** I think it's beyond the scope of any kind of imaginative representation. The history of slavery was a kind of a subhistory of the human race in a curious way. It had its own monumental themes beginning back in 1619 at Jamestown, and had so much involvement in the whole development of our history in the South that it simply can not be represented, to my mind, by isolating any particular item and making it a reasonable symbol for the history of slavery itself. I'm thinking of things like the auction block, which I presume they would need to represent. Well, the auction block is indeed a sorry example of what the white people inflicted upon black people, but it does not tell the history of slavery. It's an ugly symbol but, in a sense because of its ugliness, it's also a false symbol, because slavery was much more than the auction block.

**HACKNEY:** It was also a very complex institution.

**STYRON:** It was a complex institution that involved almost a tidal wave of human responses. It's an institution that cannot be represented, to my mind, in any sense by symbols such as the auction block or the slave ship or whatever.

**HACKNEY:** Sticking with slavery for a moment, one of the things that a historian would be interested in is how the institution came into being, why it was sustained over time, how it changed, and then how it came to an end. Those are big themes of historical forces or change over time. Is it possible for that to be represented?

**STYRON:** That seems to me the central problem. You could, for instance, demonstrate once again the cruelty of slavery through the auction block, but how are you going to demonstrate the extraordinary moral tensions involved in slavery, the inner life of slavery, the conflicts having to do with the dilemma in the minds of so many white people about the very existence of slavery. It has to be remembered that, while slavery did exist, it's demonstrably an institution in which there was perpetual conflict on the part of the slave owners. This is what, of course, contributed to the abolition of slavery ultimately. Despite the fact that a war was fought over it, there was enormous moral conflict all over the South about its existence, which is central to the whole understanding of slavery. Maybe they could do a tape, but it seems to me something totally beyond real representation.

**HACKNEY:** It seems to me a heightened and very easily grasped example or representation of conflict in American history in general. There's labor-management conflict, there are conflicts among different immigrant groups in America, between Europeans and Indians during the westward expansion. That conflict is not always very pretty, and current-day Americans have different attitudes toward it, depending on which side of the conflict they identify with.

*Continued on page 50*

beyond that, faithful to a historian's sense of how history happens.

**CARSON:** And to a historian's duty to tell important stories. It seems to me that too must be part of the authenticity equation. Honest to the record is the easy part.

**HACKNEY:** I agree.

**CARSON:** Those rules are pretty well established. They're rules historians have made and by which they try to play. They have to do with rules of evidence, rules of argument, rules of rational discourse. In practice, they're broken all the time, sometimes by professional historians, more often by newcomers, or should I say, part-time dabblers in historians' work—filmmakers for instance. I'm thinking about some interesting discussions in the Washington papers recently about whether a filmmaker like Oliver Stone has crossed over a line of truthfulness that should be respected in works of fiction that masquerade as real history. The much more interesting issue you raise—and one that lies just below the surface in much of the criticism that has been leveled at Disney's America—is this question of significance. Can the past be popularized and still address authentically important issues in American history today?

**HACKNEY:** The question I ask myself is, what is the big danger here in Disney or any public presentation for the general public? Is it the danger of having history overly romanticized or having it overly simplified or sanitized so that the conflict is taken out of it?

**CARSON:** In Disney's defense, the few times that Michael Eisner himself or one of his lieutenants got semi-serious about their intentions, they made it very clear that they were eager to tell a version of American history that did acknowledge conflict, pain, and struggle. Professional historians' reaction was, "They're lying," or a little more charitably, "They can't make it work, not in an amusement park."

**HACKNEY:** There's no way we can tell.

**CARSON:** The unspoken fear for many of us academic historians was that, even if they told stories of struggle and conflict, they were going to come to the wrong conclusions. This gets to the heart of our symposium question, not "Who owns history?" but who's entitled to say what its lessons are. Writing the conclusion is even more critical than writing the story. I'm dead sure that, however the Disney people handled the





*The reenactment of a slave auction at Colonial Williamsburg in 1994 caused controversy.*

controversies of the American past, they would have found the struggle uplifting and would have wanted to leave visitors with the view that Americans do have the courage, the generosity, the ingenuity, and the resourcefulness to tackle the nation's unfinished business. In other words, their story of struggle would inevitably have led to an optimistic conclusion. They said as much. Many academics are just too cynical to accept that. They want nothing to do with a story that has a hopeful ending. They are not hopeful themselves and they distrust any history teacher who isn't as gloomy as they are.

**HACKNEY:** If that were the Disney version, it would be one close to mine, though I think the story is not over. I guess academic historians are in the business of making things quite complex. They wouldn't need us if history weren't subtle and complex and full of ironies and ambiguities. There is some resistance to or some suspicion that popular history is going to be sugarcoated.

***There is some  
resistance to or  
some suspicion that  
popular history is  
going to be  
sugarcoated.***

*—Hackney*

**CARSON:** I don't equate sugarcoating with simplification. If you stand back and say, "How does the American public learn its history?" the answer has to be, "from many different sources." They learn it from their parents, from their

elders; they learn it, certainly, from television, from visits to museums and theme parks; some lesser number of them learn it from reading books, from the classroom; and a very small number of them actually learn it from professional historians, the masters of complexity. It seems to me that if you acknowledge that Americans learn history from all those sources, then it's important to match the message to the medium. A film or a history exhibit or a theme park can successfully communicate different things than can be successfully taught in a classroom or in a monograph. That fact does not disqualify any one of those sources for the job of educating the public about the past.

Once you sort that out, then the question has to be put to the popularizers, what can you do better than any other history teacher? Well, you expect them to understand the complexities, to be sure. Beyond that, you expect them to exercise their special talents to simplify,

*Continued on page 50*



# MOSCOW



12 JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1995



# in Transition:

## THE CITY AND ITS ART

BY WILLIAM C. BRUMFIELD

**К**огда придет солженицын в Москву?  
“When will Solzhenitsyn appear in Moscow?”  
That was one of the most frequently heard questions when Jim Curtis and I arrived at the end of May to do advance planning for our NEH Summer Institute, “Moscow: Architecture and Art in Historical Perspective.” Long expected in the capital, Alexander Solzhenitsyn had already entered Russia through the Far East, where he gave a few brief statements attended by reporters and the BBC camera crew that had exclusive rights to cover his journey by train across the country. No schedule was made available, and we felt that the great writer had wisely avoided the glare of a publicity spectacle. The media commentators and spur-of-the-moment opinion polls leaned to the view that Solzhenitsyn’s time had passed, that he had done the people a great service by his unassailable documentation of the concentration camp system, but that the years of exile had removed him from Russia’s new struggles. His statement of mid-June on the need to restore moral values to the young and the dubious nature of current economic reforms only reinforced the impression of a well-intentioned figure remote from contemporary life. Yet Solzhenitsyn, who had been consigned to oblivion so often in the past, always came back. And Moscow, the setting of his novel *The First Circle*, seemed to be the ultimate place of reckoning.



© Photos by William C. Brumfield

OPPOSITE: Red Square from the domes of Saint Basil’s. The towers of the Kremlin walls (left) and of the Upper Trading Rows (1889-93) converge on the Historical Museum (1874-83) at the north end of the square. ABOVE: The icon screen of the mid-seventeenth-century Church of the Trinity in Nikitniki, in central Moscow.



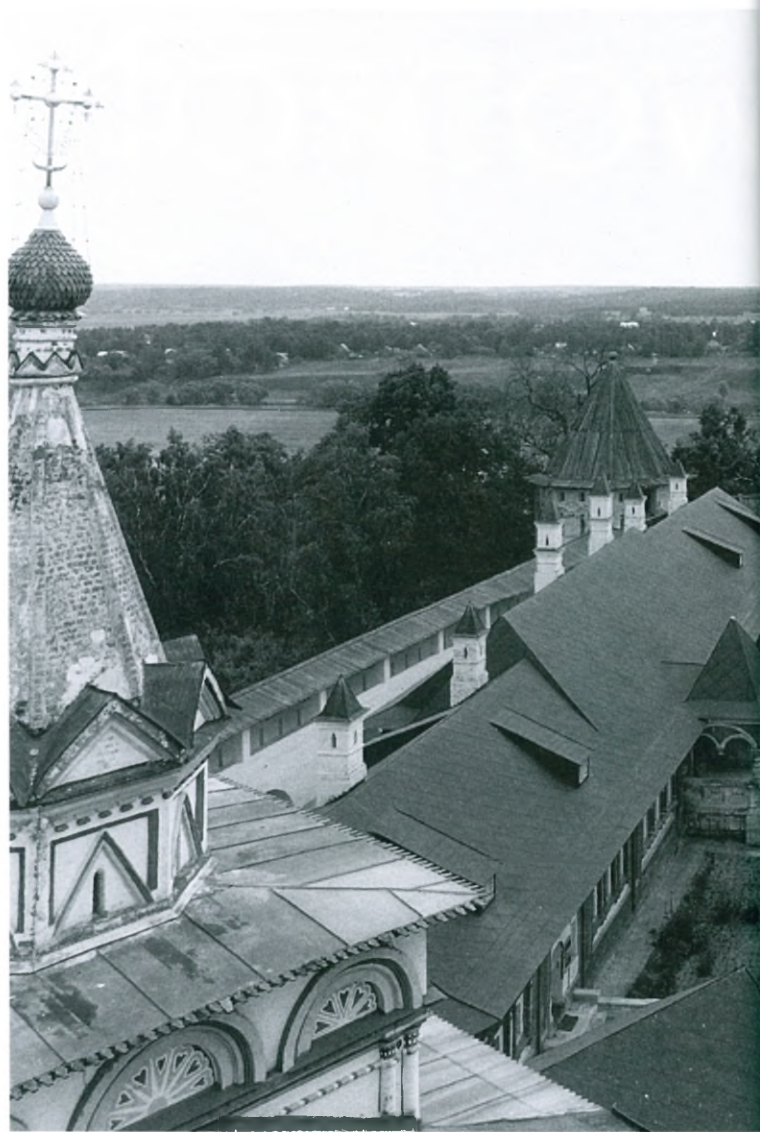
Compared with the great cities of classical civilization, Moscow is a relative newcomer; yet its history is as rich and compelling as that of any other major capital, and its architectural landscape has come to symbolize the very essence of Russia—balanced between east and west. In western institutions of higher education, however, Russian architecture and art have received little attention as objects of study and teaching. There are hopeful signs that this neglect is fading, and the NEH has made its own contribution to this process by sponsoring Summer Institutes for College and University Faculty on topics related to the arts in Russia. Our own institute, on Moscow's architecture and art, took place in that city between June 13 and July 22. The participants represented a number of academic disciplines and interests, ranging from art history to sociology, but all had a practical interest in expanding their knowledge of Russian artistic culture and acquiring new material for presentation in the classroom.

Over the six weeks we had lectures and discussions four and five times a week and visited roughly forty sites. Since Moscow is generally considered, by foreigners and natives, to be the heart of Russia, we chose to focus the entire summer institute on this area and certain outlying sites.

Our intention was to move beyond a logocentric, literary approach to Russian culture by examining works of architecture and art that have remained largely unnoticed outside of Russia, even though they represent in many cases the most significant extant legacy of the country's cultural development. From the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries, for example, Muscovy produced relatively little that could be called artistic literature as developed in the West—and nothing as significant as masterpieces from the Renaissance in England, Italy, and France. However, Moscow still contains a wealth of architectural monuments (and icons) from the same period, despite the devastation of invasion and revolution.

Of course it could be argued that most of these monuments pale in significance when compared with contemporary work in western Europe. Nonetheless, the importance of Russia in the modern world is beyond doubt, and its development, richly reflected in architecture, can be studied within its own historical context quite apart from preconceived notions derived through the study of other cultures. Although a seventeenth-century Moscow church such as the Trinity in Nikitniki may seem idiosyncratic by Western standards, it is admirably designed for its environment and use, and its well-preserved, vibrant frescoes offer abundant material for an interpretation of Russian cultural history at the beginning of the Romanov dynasty. Similar examples can be found in Moscow during subsequent centuries, even as the city's builders created structures whose scale and style are obviously related to European architecture.

In order to examine directly this multifaceted relation between art and history, the institute visited a number of museums and architectural monuments, particularly major monasteries whose architecture provided illuminating examples of the layering of Moscow's cultural and political history. In addition we traveled to historic sites beyond Moscow: Vladimir and Suzdal to the east; the Holy Trinity Monastery at Sergiev Posad and the Abramtsevo estate (center of the Russian Arts and Crafts movement), to the north; and to the west, the ancient settlement of Zvenigorod with its early fifteenth-century Dormition Cathedral and the Savva-Storozhevskii Monastery.

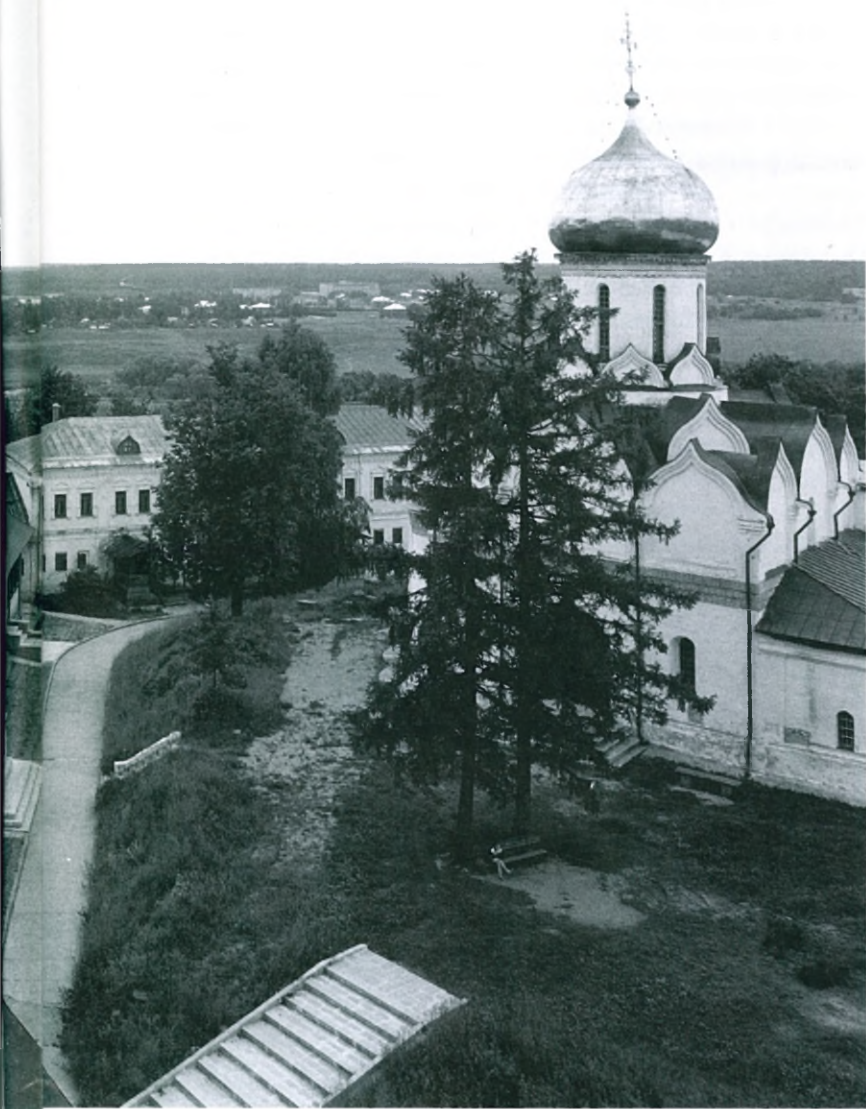


Also to the west we visited the seventeenth-century Resurrection New Jerusalem Monastery, among Muscovy's most impressive architectural ensembles visited. The monastery's Resurrection Cathedral, modeled on the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, was partially demolished during the retreat of the German army from Moscow in the fall of 1941, and attempts to rebuild it have lasted almost two decades. Although restorers have finished basic work on the structure proper, restoration of the baroque decoration of the soaring interior space is likely to be interminable. Furthermore, the Moscow Patriarchate has requested the return of the monastery, originally commissioned by

Patriarch Nikon in the 1650s, to the church. It is unclear what effect this transition would have on the restoration effort and on the museum now located in the monastery refectory.

In Moscow itself we were treated to the extraordinary privilege of a tour of the Kremlin palace complex, off-limits to tourists and normally used for occasions of state. This ensemble, part of the Kremlin Museum but directly under the authority of the Russian president, includes the late fifteenth-century Faceted Chambers (used as banquet hall); a labyrinth of churches and seventeenth-century royal residences known as the *Terem*; and the aptly named Great Kremlin Palace, commissioned by Nicholas I and





LEFT: The view toward the Moscow River basin from the seventeenth-century bell tower of the Saint Savva-Storozhenskiy Monastery at Zvenigorod. The Cathedral of the Nativity of the Virgin (ca. 1405) is to the right. BELOW: Interior of the Cathedral of the Resurrection at the New Jerusalem Monastery, undergoing reconstruction after severe war damage.



built to a design by Konstantin Ton in the 1840s and 1850s. To see the grand halls, named after Imperial Russia's highest orders, and the long enfilades with magnificent state rooms was a revelation: even the nineteenth-century palaces of St. Petersburg could not surpass this one in terms of scale and lavish use of the decorative arts.

No less intriguing, although very different in terms of architectural style, was our personally guided tour into all of the corners and towers of the Cathedral of the Intercession on the Moat, popularly known as St. Basil's. The curator of the building, which is affiliated with the State Historical Museum, gave unstintingly of her time

and effort in explaining the history of the building, its icons, and the problems associated with its preservation. Although this monument seems relatively well preserved, its exterior polychrome work is fading, and the interior of the central tower church (dedicated to the Orthodox miracle of the Intercession of the Mother of God) is in scaffolding, as is the small attached church over the grave of the eponymous Basil the Blessed, a sixteenth-century ascetic.

Many other curators also generously shared their knowledge at the sites under their care, whether palaces, churches, or monasteries. Permission to visit a number of architectural monuments that had not been converted to museums

came through the Moscow City Office for the Protection and Use of Monuments of History and Culture, whose preservation specialists occasionally accompanied us to the site.

Some of the most interesting examples of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Russian architecture are the

mansions built for Moscow's leading merchants, such as the Morozovs and the Riabushinskiis. Fortunately, many of these mansions have been preserved in one degree or another. Some are museums, such as the richly theatrical residence that Fedor Shekhtel built in 1900-1902 for Stepan Riabushinskii; but most of the good



examples are now used as ambassadorial residences. In our final week we were fortunate in gaining permission to see the interiors of the French, New Zealand, and American embassy residences.

One of our most unusual and illuminating excursions involved a trek through Moscow's avant-garde architecture of the 1920s with Andrei Gozak, whose enthusiasm and knowledge have made him a delight to work with over the years. Andrei knows the streets better than any bus driver, and was able to steer us from Mosei Ginzburg's experimental communal apartment house (*Dom narkomfina*), to the Zuev and Rusakov workers' clubs, and to the ultimate in rationally organized dormitory complexes, built in 1929

by Ivan Nikolaev. With the partial exception of the workers' clubs all of the above modernist buildings are in an advanced state of dilapidation, yet people still live in them. Perhaps the most unlikely stop on this tour was Konstantin Melnikov's Bakhmetev Street bus garage, completed in 1927. Buses were our main form of transportation during the institute, and here we were, a group of American academics, making our way through the grease and fumes of an acknowledged landmark of modern architecture that has also functioned as a bus repair depot for almost seventy years.

For our deeper acquaintance with Russian art, medieval and modern, we had the best of resources, an array of museums including

the two buildings of the Tretyakov Gallery (from ancient icons to Soviet and post-Soviet painting), the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts (Western art), and specialized collections such as the excellent Museum of Decorative, Applied, and Folk Art, just off Sadovaia-Karetnaia Street. Some of the participants also made an effort to visit as many of Moscow's new private art galleries as possible.

In the practical matter of coordinating access to buildings and meetings with local specialists in art and architecture, we benefited greatly from the assistance of the Russian Institute of Art History, whose director, Dr. Aleksei Komech, I had known and worked with since the beginning of 1980. Komech, the leading spe-

cialist on the history of early medieval Russian architecture and its connections with Byzantine culture, has a long affiliation with the Institute of Art History, and his recent appointment as director—formerly a position obtained through party political connections—is in itself a sign of encouraging developments in Russian society. This progress seems to be reflected in the building itself, an elegant townhouse built in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries on Kozitskii Lane. The interior is undergoing a much needed renovation, and some of the larger halls are being returned to their original luster for the first time in this century.

Komech would be the first, however, to admit the enormous difficulties that





still confront not only Russian society generally but also the institutions that study its artistic heritage. From his perspective as director of one of those institutions, he notes: "We can only dream of the days when we had an annual budget. During the past year we have been told on a month-to-month basis how much our institute will receive—and sometimes we do not even know that." Projects for architectural

preservation, for which Komech often serves as an unpaid consultant, are in particularly desperate straits: "If under the previous system the state provided about a third of the resources necessary to maintain registered architectural monuments, now it allocates only one-tenth of that amount—and the need for maintenance grows even faster." In these circumstances, the director of a major cultural research

institution must possess boundless energy and an equally capacious sense of humor. In his farewell remarks to our group he noted how good it was to talk about subjects (i.e., art history) unrelated to politics—a statement both sincere and gently ironic, since politics has never been far from art, and art history, in Russia.

Even as our institute focused on the historical context of Moscow's architecture and art, the dizzying pace of change in contemporary Russia intruded at every point. Although we witnessed nothing as dramatic as the events of August 1991 or October 1993, the daily news and our own observations left no doubt that we were in the middle of a society trying to reinvent itself on virtually every level. For some factions the answer to perceived chaos lay in a return to the old verities of strong power and Soviet government; for others the answer lay in even older verities of strong power and a revived Orthodox, monarchist state.

Yet everyday life itself, active and disorderly, imposes its own logic. As politicians debate and President Yeltsin issues decrees to govern the country, almost every open space in the city seems engulfed with entrepreneurs of one sort or another, Russian and non-Russian, selling items ranging from carburetors to bananas. There are large open-air markets specializing in car parts, and others dealing in crafts and souvenirs, such as the bazaar at Izmailovskii Park. But food, tobacco, and alcohol—the basic consumables—provide the main impulse to trade. Some vendors sell from booths, while others simply set up a crate—if that. Among the more distinctive hawkers are the women who sell dried fish (favored in Russia to accompany beer or stronger drink); some of them held as many as five fish in one hand, displayed with the flair of an experienced cardplayer. There are also many book tables and stalls, and even a series of distinctively decorated kiosks with the cupola for the Sofrino firm, which sells literature and other items for church and devotional use.

Indeed, kiosks have sprouted like mushrooms (also on sale), as Moscow authorities attempt to regulate street trade, with only limited success and allegations of bribery. In an economy of small entrepreneurs who are unable or unwilling to make a substantial investment in retail space, the kiosk is a viable alternative. At present the metal kiosk booths are themselves the object of regulatory fervor. A policy of locating them in specially designated rows (reminiscent of the old Russian tradition of trading rows) has brought some order into their placement, but in order to limit their number to the several thousand that already exist, city planners have designed mini-arcades for various districts throughout Moscow. This is only one of the ways in which social and economic change in Russia are visibly transforming the urban fabric and its design. The life of the streets—with its mixture of energy, vitality, and, it must be added, deprivation—provided an essential background for our examination of Moscow's more traditional architecture.

The transformation was no less evident in the media, particularly television, whose glitzy, entertaining commercials endlessly touted the rewards of investing in various stock companies, some of which have since been the target of belated investigations and public uproar over lost investments. Perhaps this frenzy for rapid gain through ephemeral stock companies, little more than pyramid schemes, represents the growing pains of a new capitalism. The larger question is, will the burgeoning entrepreneurial culture serve as an "invisible hand" leading toward a reasonable economic system?



LEFT: Church of the Miraculous Icon at Abramtsevo (1881), designed by the artist Viktor Vasnetsov for the estate of Savva Momontov, patron of the arts. ABOVE: The Abramisevo ceramics studio (1873), one of the most productive enterprises of the Russian arts and crafts movement.





Stepan Riabushinskii house (1900-02), built by Fedor Shekhtel, Moscow's leading architect of the art nouveau period. Combining the latest in modern structural design with traditional crafts, such as mosaics, this house signaled the cultural ascendancy of a new entrepreneurial class. The front hall of the house is depicted on the cover.

The participants in our institute not only observed these changes with every step through Moscow, but also had opportunities to meet with representatives of a new class of professionals who intend to make the system work. One of these is an architect in his thirties who had formerly worked for a state planning office rife with waste and incompetence. Now self-employed, he actively pursues, and obtains, commissions from wealthy clients for houses whose scale ranges from large suburban to palatial. He gets paid handsomely irregardless of whether they are built, and he is determined to create for his family an independent existence based on personal enterprise. His great love, however, is the architecture of medieval Novgorod, which he studies as a specialist. With the disappearance of state-subsidized journals in architectural history, his professional fees occasionally help to support the modestly produced volumes in which his scholarly work appears.

For other professionals in the arts, the new era can mean holding on to artistic values with little prospect of steady support. One couple, whose work was well received at our institute, have specialized in the demanding technique of dry-point etching on copper plate. They still live in a cramped two-room apartment and are worried that their two teenage daughters will become alienated and leave home because of an insufferable lack of space. Yet they proudly showed me the three tickets they had purchased, at a considerable price, for the Ray Charles concert in Moscow this July. I did not attend the sold-out concert, part of a festival of contemporary (largely American) jazz. But when I saw Ray Charles's inspiring, absolutely beautiful performance live on Moscow television, I understood the reason for my friends' sacrifice. For such experiences one can get through much else in life.

There were numerous other intellectuals and artists that we, as a group or individually, were able to meet over the course of the institute. For some the future promises artistic and personal freedom; for others the promise is already tainted by corruption, crime, and massive social problems. Perhaps this uncertain environment has stimulated the widespread and serious interest in medieval Russian culture that I noticed among many Russians involved in art and architecture. Comprehending this venerable cultural legacy is one part of a rebuilding of national identity in contemporary Russia. But perhaps in an odd way medieval culture suggests certain parallels with Russian life today, punctuated with reopened churches and monasteries, and surrounded by bazaars and trading rows. As one of our participants said in wonder after seeing the vast flea market near the Kiev Station:

"Whatever Russia is, it is certainly not the West."

Alexander Solzhenitsyn finally returned to Moscow on the evening of July 21, a day before the end of our institute. One of our intrepid participants decided to take the subway to Yaroslavl Station, brave the crowds, and see what she could see. As it turned out, the crowd was quite manageable. Solzhenitsyn's homecoming was, all things considered, a joyful and hopeful occasion. □

*William C. Brumfield is professor of Russian at Tulane University. He codirected the summer institute, "Moscow: Architecture and Art in Historical Perspective" with James Curtis, professor of Russian at the University of Missouri. To support the six-week institute for twenty-two college and university faculty members, the University of Missouri received \$200,495 from the Higher Education program of the Division of Education Programs.*



# Shakespeare & Company

## Teachers Acting It Out

By Maynard Mack, Jr.

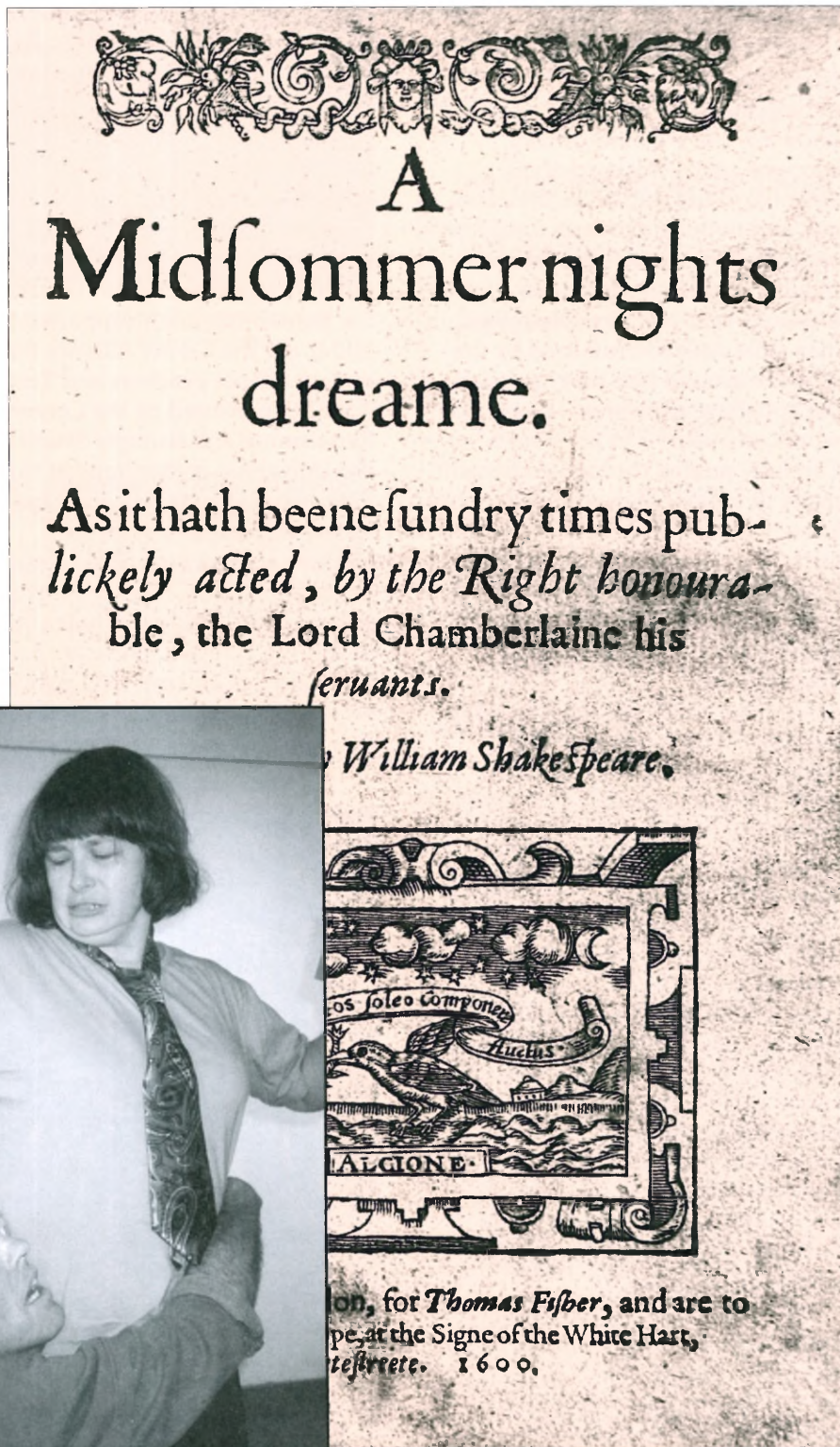
What's going on in high school humanities study these days? Whatever it is, Shakespeare is right in the middle of it

all, where he seems to crop up, century after century. All over the country, during semesters, in the summers, on weekends or evenings, groups gather to study what Shakespeare has to say to us, today, that we were unable to hear yesterday.

In fact, for many American high school students, the values, heroisms, tragedies, and human victories in a Shakespeare play turn out to be as provocatively strange, as challengingly "other," and—what is most important—as complex and interesting as those added to diversify the curriculum. For our students, unfamiliar with much of the Western tradition that many of their teachers grew up on, Shakespeare represents true diversity, and his plays expand their world.

With Shakespeare, students experience diversity in four dimensions: not just

Kevin Coleman, the director of education for Shakespeare & Company, and institute participant Rita Russell emote in a classroom applications exercise at "Camp Shakespeare."





the diversity of geography, ethnicity, and race, but the diversity of *time* as well. A rich sense of time is, of course, a remarkable human achievement, one that must be taught relentlessly by champions of the humanities lest it be lost amidst the world's getting and spending. The ability to feel time, to shape it, to see things in its perspective—all the while knowing that we must, finally, succumb to it—this capacity is essential to full human understanding, and nothing increases a student's appreciation of time's power and fragility more than finding in a four-hundred-year-old play (*Macbeth*) a man (Macduff) so brutalized by the violence around him that he makes the appalling admission, "I have no words, my voice is in my sword." Carefully guided through enactment, many of today's high school students know instantly what Macduff is saying and understand what has happened to him. They are awed, and in some ways comforted, to find their world reflected so painfully in Shakespeare.

Does this mean, they can be led to ask, that Shakespeare saw the destructive effects of violence on what is noble and humane? That he knew what violence does to language? That when language collapses, there can be no conversation about what it means to be human (much less what it means to be an American) because only swords, or guns, will be left to speak? Could Shakespeare foresee where so many high school students find themselves today, and where they will die, in *some* sense of that word, if we fail to teach them languages for living? Year after year, high school teachers turn to Shakespeare to help their students explore such fundamental truths of civilization.

One of the Endowment's major contributions to a national conversation about human values has been to bring different groups together to improve humanities teaching in our



Maynard (Sandy) Mack, Jr., at the final session of the institute. His necktie symbolizes the imminent return by the participants to the formality of the classroom.

—Courtesy of Shakespeare & Company

schools through Shakespeare. Two examples of such collaboration between high school faculty and other groups committed to teaching the humanities (both supported by NEH), are the Center Alliance for Secondary School Teachers and Texts (CAST), sponsored by the Center for Renaissance and Baroque Studies at the University of Maryland at College Park (which I codirect), and Shakespeare & Company's National Institute on Teaching Shakespeare in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, (where I was resident scholar this past July). Happily, these are just two pieces of an emerging patchwork of collaboration that enlivens the educational scene. They repre-



Caliban, from *Eight Illustrations to Shakespeare's Tempest*, designed by Walter Crane, 1893.

—Folger Shakespeare Library

sent, it seems to me, fundamental ways in which teaching Shakespeare is deepening humanities study in our schools.

The program in Massachusetts is part of the teaching mission of Shakespeare & Company, located at The Mount, Edith Wharton's mansion in the Berkshire mountains. A performance, training, and teaching operation, Shakespeare & Company is committed to

revitalizing the acting of Shakespeare, convinced that what our world needs from his plays lies coiled in the language he invented, and that as actors—and teachers—we need sometimes to get our culture-laden brains out of the way and make contact in our own experience with the powerful realities Shakespeare's language makes available to us. Their National Institute on Teaching Shakespeare embodies these principles and passes them on to twenty-five high school teachers through four weeks of intensive summer work. The fruits of this study are taken back to the teachers' classrooms—classrooms where well over three thousand students are being taught this year alone, differently and better. We should remember this ripple effect when bemoaning the coasts of education. Help twenty-five high school teachers and you can reach thousands of students immediately, and for years thereafter.

Kevin Coleman, director of education for Shakespeare & Company and institute leader, watches two high school teachers explore the encounter between Hamlet and his uncle after the murder of Polonius. Coleman is clever, funny, passionately serious, and, above all, resourceful. So when the scene fails to develop powerfully enough, he instinctively asks two other teachers to enact silently, on the side of the playing space, an Ophelia cradling the body of her murdered father. These two teachers stay silently where the teacher





*Institute participants attended rehearsals and performances by Shakespeare & Company actors at The Mount, Edith Wharton's mansion. The Mount, located in the Berkshires in western Massachusetts, now houses Shakespeare & Company.*

playing Hamlet will spot them and remember what Hamlet has done to the old man. It works—as do most things in these magical short weeks. The scene deepens; more is at stake: a dead man and his orphaned daughter silently haunt the performance.

The teachers arrive at the institute having memorized a short passage from a Shakespeare play that is particularly important to them. For much of the first few days, when they are not learning to breathe more deeply and naturally, seeking their real voices, or studying the historical contexts and imaginative structures of the plays selected for their institute (*A Comedy of Errors*, *Hamlet*, and *Macbeth* in 1994), the teachers work with faculty finding the muscles, the power, built into the speeches they have chosen. After only a few days, all twenty-five teachers gather and “perform” their short monologues for each other. What a change is there! Socially restricted throats open, spines release and lengthen, and, most important, after intensive work on fewer than twenty lines, the teachers come much closer to understanding what their lines really mean, both to themselves and to their audience. We begin to

hear a consummate dramatist giving voice to basic human conflicts.

We hear the same words, of course, but they have changed utterly. The texts have begun to challenge this group of talented teachers to explore, fearlessly, the truths about loss and gain, love and death, that Shakespeare's language brings to life. The teachers begin to own Shakespeare's words, not borrow them. They will not become actors—only a few have any interests in that direction—but they are learning to actually *do* the work of the humanities by making connections over time with different perspectives on our human condition. They are learning to use the powerful language of a master dramatist to help them connect with the experiences in the plays, in their own lives, and, when school starts, in their students' lives.

“Camp Shakespeare,” as the participants nickname their institute, is no recreational spa. It is hard work, occasionally scary, and everyone takes it seriously. Walks through the meadow down to the classrooms are spent working on lines or thinking about the effects of the economics of London playhouses on Shakespeare's career. Meals are often spent talking

**I**t seems to me that despite all the social hierarchy and patriarchy, on a deeper level Shakespeare's comedies are really democratic. Each character has a voice, gets key moments to use it, and no one is around to tell us the Duke is right just because he has power.

—Participant at Hagerstown

with faculty informally about ideas that have emerged during the formal classes of the day, or getting more help with Shakespeare's rich four-hundred-year-old language. Classroom applications hover over every conversation and are guided by a savvy, seasoned high school teacher, Michael Cremonini: What of this can, should, be taken back to the high school classroom, and how? The teachers also engage in intensive formal academic study of topics like Renaissance printing, tragic theory, and the history of Shakespeare criticism.

In Hagerstown, Maryland, in June 1992 a different but similar group gathered to study Shakespeare's comedies in an institute entitled Languages for Living: Teaching Shakespeare's Comedies. The institute was part of the CAST project, a multiplatform collaboration between the University of Maryland English department faculty and high school teachers all over the state to study the major literary texts taught in high school classrooms. After extensive planning with CAST cocreator and



# Lady Macbeth talks Macbeth

back into regicide!

That's scary: after all  
that creative language he  
has used, or invented,  
to stop himself, Lady  
Macbeth needs only  
a few macho comments  
to drive him back  
to murder and  
self-destruction.

—Participant at Great Barrington

codirector, Adele Seeff, I was on my own, with twenty-eight high school teachers from all across Maryland and a master teacher, Bill Harman, for a week of nonstop study.

Our challenge was specific: Tragedy has just about taken over the high school curriculum as far as Shakespeare is concerned. There is no good reason for this and many bad consequences. Since it is in comedy that Renaissance women come closest to gaining full human voices, and since in most high school classrooms half the students are, of course, female, the dominance of tragedy should concern us. Further, while many students' lives have yet to be marred with tragic pain, most do, fortunately, live comic lives—not funny comic, but celebratory, growing comic, the comedy of spring, of youth, of achieving competence, of learning languages adequate for dealing with the world. They are involved in the deep comic cycles of maturation—advance, retreat, advance again—that epitomize the hope that people can survive, that we can cope, that we can find languages for living.

We worked to see what we could learn from four of Shakespeare's comedies: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *As You Like It*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*. All but the third make occasional appearances in the high school curriculum; *The Winter's Tale* probably never will or should, but its intensely adult story teaches some of Shakespeare's most troubling and exhilarating lessons about healing. Like all of us, high school teachers, too, need something for themselves, something they *won't* be expected to pass on to their students, if they are to keep their minds sharp and their dignity high.

Mornings were spent on formal study of the plays and topics of historical background like the First Folio, or Shakespeare's theaters. Afternoons were split between curriculum work and detailed study of specific, particularly teachable parts of each play. Evenings, we viewed and analyzed films of the plays, in showings open to the public of Hagerstown—and the public showed up and joined us in our work. We spent one day with an experienced actor and director, Michael Tolaydo, who helped the teachers bring lines from page to stage, or, more accurately, from a printed past into the physical present, and who taught a little stage combat. On the final day the teachers presented interpretive projects they had been working on in "spare moments" during the intense week.

Virtually none of the teachers had taught comedy before they arrived, having been trained in tragedy; almost all planned to teach comedy in the future—an important shift. Tragedy can sometimes be so powerful that it seems to burn right through cultural differences. But comedy makes us conscious of the way culture is, as the current lingo goes, "constructed" and "negotiated." And if we are going indeed to have a conversation about what it means to be an American, and if we are seriously going to seek ways to mine the riches of our cultural diversity rather than fortress ourselves in cultural isolation,

we will need to strengthen our ability to hear and speak more languages, literal and metaphoric. If this vital democratic work is going to advance, as we approach the twenty-first century, we need to learn how to cross cultural, ethnic, racial, and gender lines; to learn the languages on the other side, the languages that will let us all talk, maybe even sing, together. To do this, I would argue, we are going to have to study comedy, the genre of successful connections, and particularly Shakespeare's comedies, in which his active young people refuse to be stopped by the prejudices of their elders but instead work their way, sometimes in dizzying confusion, through to speech that *includes*, to speech that allows words to supplant swords, to languages adequate for living.

These are two glimpses of powerful work in the humanities that some high school teachers are doing. It is work our colleges and theaters should be helping with. A few have begun to join forces, but every theater and college in the country ought to be collaborating with neighboring high schools to help find authentic, inclusive languages for living together. The voice in the sword already can be heard screaming. We must listen to it and then work together to find words, wise, healing words—languages for living. And then teach them as if, because, our humanity depends on it. □

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Maynard Mack, Jr., is head of the University Honors Program and associate professor of English at the University of Maryland, College Park.

Shakespeare & Company received \$170,000 and the University of Maryland received \$213,500 from the Division of Education Programs, Elementary and Secondary Education in the Humanities.



## ENDOWMENT REORGANIZATION UNDER WAY

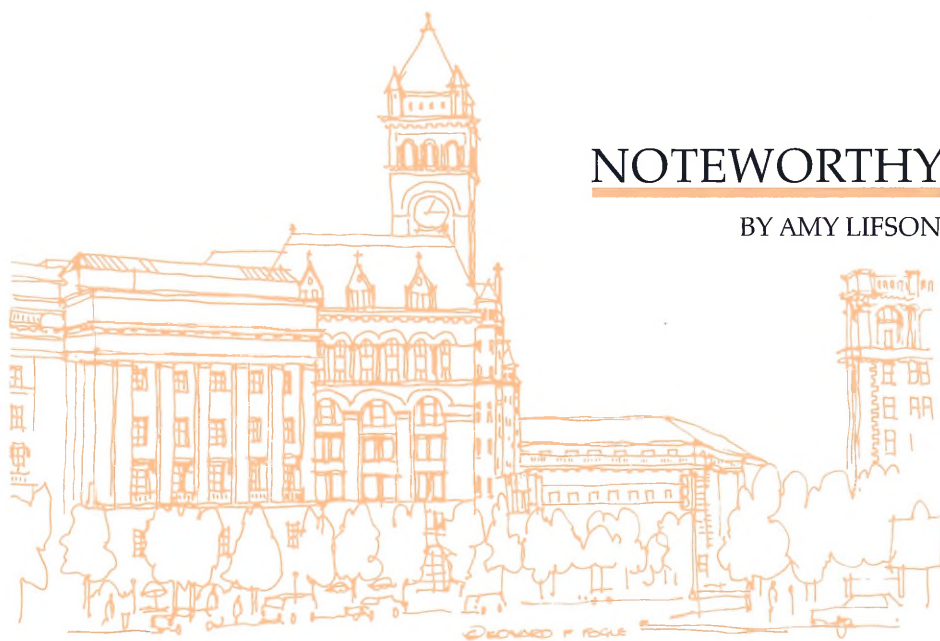
A reorganization is under way at the Endowment to streamline the agency's structure and to improve services to grant applicants, while at the same time cutting administrative costs.

"My goal is to have a simple and effective organizational structure at NEH, so that programs and offices can work closer together and build on each other's achievements," Endowment Chairman Sheldon Hackney said in making the announcement in November. "The main feature of the reorganization is the elimination of two divisions and the grouping of similar programs in the divisions where they fit best, thus creating a more logical arrangement of functions within the Endowment and improving service to our customers." The effective date is January 1, 1995.

Under the new arrangement, the Division of Fellowships and Seminars is being dissolved and its programs reassigned to other divisions: Fellowships go to the Division of Research, and seminars to the Division of Education. One program from the Division of Research, the Guides program, is being shifted to the Division of Preservation and Access.

This consolidation is designed to allow programs to draw on each other's strengths and, through more logical grouping, make it easier for applicants to determine where to apply within the Endowment.

As part of a newly defined federal/state partnership, NEH's relationship to the state humanities councils is being managed by the Office of the Chairman. Consequently, the Division of State Programs is being dissolved. Carole Watson, the division's



## NOTEWORTHY

BY AMY LIFSON

director, has become special advisor to the chairman and director of the federal/state partnership. In addition, state councils will be eligible to compete for grants in all program areas of NEH.

The challenge grants program, which had been decentralized among the divisions of education, public programs, and research, is being consolidated into a single Office of Challenge Grants. By combining the efficiency of central administration with specialized services available through the divisions, this arrangement allows applicants to apply to one office and is designed to improve the consistency of criteria across NEH in making challenge grant awards.

### A PERCEPTION OF DISORDER

Remember the image of the heroic fireman escaping the flames of a burning building to hand a child to its mother? Myths like these and less idyllic realities are explored in "Society, Politics, and Volunteer Fire Fighting in 19th-Cen-

tury Brooklyn," at the Brooklyn Historical Society through the spring of 1995.

The exhibition looks at the world of fire fighting before it was professionalized in Brooklyn in 1869. While Brooklyn was changing from a small village to a commercial and industrial city, the volunteer force was being transformed from a homogenous, middle-class group to a larger, political and social movement.

Between the insurance companies and merchants, who pushed to professionalize the force, and the Democrat politicians, who wanted the force to stay volunteer—were the fire fighters themselves. According to cocurator Judith Giuriceo, the image of fire fighting changed from upstanding civic duty to immigrant rowdiness. "There developed a perception of disorder, with stories of brawls on the way to a fire and fierce competition between fire houses. Whether or not these were exaggerated stories, the rowdy reputation fed anti-immigrant feelings toward a force that was largely Irish and German working class."

Besides the changing profile of the fire fighter, the exhibition examines the changing technology, the fraternal organization, the urban challenges of a growing city, the move to professionalize, and the nostalgia and memory of a group who once were heroes.

### HISTORY GUIDE PUBLISHED

Fresh off the presses is the third edition of the *Guide to Historical Literature*. The new guide, produced by the American Historical Association, updates the 1961 version. The guide is an annotated bibliography of what is judged to be the most useful historical writings ranging from topics of prehistory to the 1990s. □



An 1848 lithograph by H.R. Robinson of the volunteer fire fighters of Engine co. 13.

Courtesy of Brooklyn Historical Society

FIRE ENGINE NO. 13.

BROOKLYN, N.Y. 1848

Printed by H. R. Robinson, 115 N. 3rd St.

98





*Jane Fonda and Michael Sarrazin in THEY SHOOT HORSES, DON'T THEY?*



*Hollywood Style*

# AMERICA'S LOVE AFFAIR

*with the Movies*

BY MAGGIE RIECHERS



Americans love going to the movies. Whether it's the newest action-adventure, love story, or horror film, we line up on Saturday nights at theaters or video stores waiting to be embraced by a plot, setting, and characters that will take us somewhere else, into someone else's life and problems. If the film is done well, we don't even realize that for two hours we haven't thought about our own lives or our own problems.

That's what makes American cinema so compelling. Larger-than-life characters in exciting clothes say clever things to one another, and we in the audience forget our own humdrum routines.

"One of the things that made filmgoing such a wonderful experience," director Sydney Pollack is quoted as saying, "is it was kind of a dazzling journey that you took to a place and a life that bore little resemblance to your own.

"And you measured the success of it sometimes by the distance between you and that world."

Pollack and other American directors, screenwriters, film editors, cinematographers, and scholars provide their interpretation of the American movie style in the ten-part documentary series, *American Cinema*, produced by the New York Center for Visual History under executive producer Lawrence Pitkethly, and scheduled to be aired on



*Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman on the set of CASABLANCA.*



public television stations beginning in January. The New York Center for Visual History is a nonprofit documentary film production company which focuses on the arts and humanities.

The series examines the central concepts, facts, and themes of American feature filmmaking during the past sixty years of the sound era and interprets American film as an artistic, social, and economic phenomenon. The ten programs are organized conceptually rather than chronologically around the central theme of how American film reflects our national psyche.

Using clips from over two hundred films, the series discusses topics such as what makes American film unique; how the studio system developed and its impact on the economics of filmmaking; Hollywood stardom; the rise of film genres such as the western, the romantic comedy, the combat film and film noir; and the state of film today in the age of television and through the eyes of the film school generation and independent producers.

The series also aims to present American film as a subject of critical study and to offer analytical approaches for understanding and interpreting cinema. A crucial element of this analysis is understanding that from the beginning of motion pictures, Hollywood has stamped its own style on the art form.

The first program in the series, "The Hollywood Style," supported by NEH, looks at this basic style of American films and attempts to make it visible to the audience, to have us become more "visually literate."

"We live in a visual culture, constantly being bombarded by the media," says the program's senior producer, Molly Ornati. "The cinema is such a prominent part of our lives, yet we seem inarticulate in discussing it."

"We want the audience to see that every film image is the result of historical, economic, and cultural forces," says Ornati, who previously produced *Voices and Visions*, a thirteen-part documentary series on American poets. "To fully understand it is to see it as having these dimensions."

The documentary is also being offered as a credited college telecourse through twenty universities using the videotape of the program, a textbook, and a study guide, developed with the assistance of the program's thirty-member advisory board of film scholars.

In the companion textbook to the series, *American Cinema/American Culture*, author John Belton of Rutgers University points out that a work of art is customarily associated with the name of the artist, and the history of an art form is traditionally written in terms of those names. Such an approach, however, removes the artist from the world around him and its effects on his work.

To counter this view of the artist creating in a vacuum, art history also looks at artistic styles and movements rather than just individual works. The cinema, as an art form, should also be treated in this light.

"The history of the cinema that has been offered to the public on television," Belton writes, "has traditionally been written as a history of names, as a history of actors, directors, producers, and writers whose works transcended the times and places within which they were produced."



"But in the American cinema, individual artistic styles exist within the context of a larger, 'national' style, which has come to be known as 'classical Hollywood style.'"

The key element of this style is the art of telling a story. American films are narrative driven, using the technical elements of the craft to move the story along.

"The tradition of storytelling," says Ornati, "is fundamental to American culture. We love to tell stories about who we are." From this tradition comes the western, the combat film, the romantic comedy, three distinct genres that reflect American life.

"I'm an American and I've been brought up on American films, which means story and narrative," says director Martin Scorsese in the broadcast. "And in most cases... everything is at the service of the narrative story."

And the story line is almost always the same.

"A goal-oriented protagonist is the base story line of most Hollywood productions," says Ornati, "and it has resonance in Americans' belief in the strength of the individual to succeed."

The rugged individualist is obvious in the Western or combat film. Film noir presents the underside of the theme, the individual who failed or who took an immoral route to achieve his goal. The different genres tell the same story over again and again yet each film brings out the issues and ideas relevant to its time and in a new light.

"The style is at the service of the story," says University of Wisconsin film professor David Bordwell in the broadcast, "and the story is really about these humans struggling with one another, pursuing certain goals, trying to get what they want, trying to find whatever they're trying to find, and the style presents those, is a kind of vehicle for those."

Other national film traditions, Ornati notes, are not as narrowly focused on the story as American films. They tend to focus on other things—daily experience, the minutiae of relationships, for example.

When she interviewed French director Bertrand Tavernier for the documentary to provide an international perspective, he described the difference between American films and European ones in terms of plot. He noted in American films there has to be a death, violent fight, or abortion.

"It put into bold relief for me," she says, "the degree to which our cinema is very much a national cinema, reflecting our culture. American audiences have great impatience with films where nothing happens."

As much as Americans love the movies, the creators of the series believe there is a need for a greater understanding of how the images on screen are manipulated to evoke a certain response from the audience. How much of what goes into the making of the films we love do we understand?

For example, does the audience understand that in a film such as *Casablanca* it is not just the story and the actors that

make it a masterpiece but also the way the picture was directed, lit, photographed, and edited?

In "The Hollywood Style," filmmakers talk about the "invisible style" of Hollywood films, in which the technical elements are used to present a seamless story with everything "conspiring toward one goal," says Ornati.

"The program explains how an edit is made so the audience becomes so engaged in the movie that it doesn't think about the fact that it is looking at a white screen with lights flashing across it," she says.

In the documentary, production designer Richard Sylbert, explaining his own education in the invisible style, says, "The way I was brought up to think... the only thing that should be left on the screen is the story and the actors. And everybody else should just disappear... the whole point was to do something so well that nobody noticed what you did."

If you are visually literate, however, the craft does not disappear but becomes visible the way an observer notices the colors, brush strokes, and point of view of a painting.

"... it's not invisible," says Scorsese in the broadcast. "If you learn how to look at it it's not invisible. It's very, very precise and... really very artful."

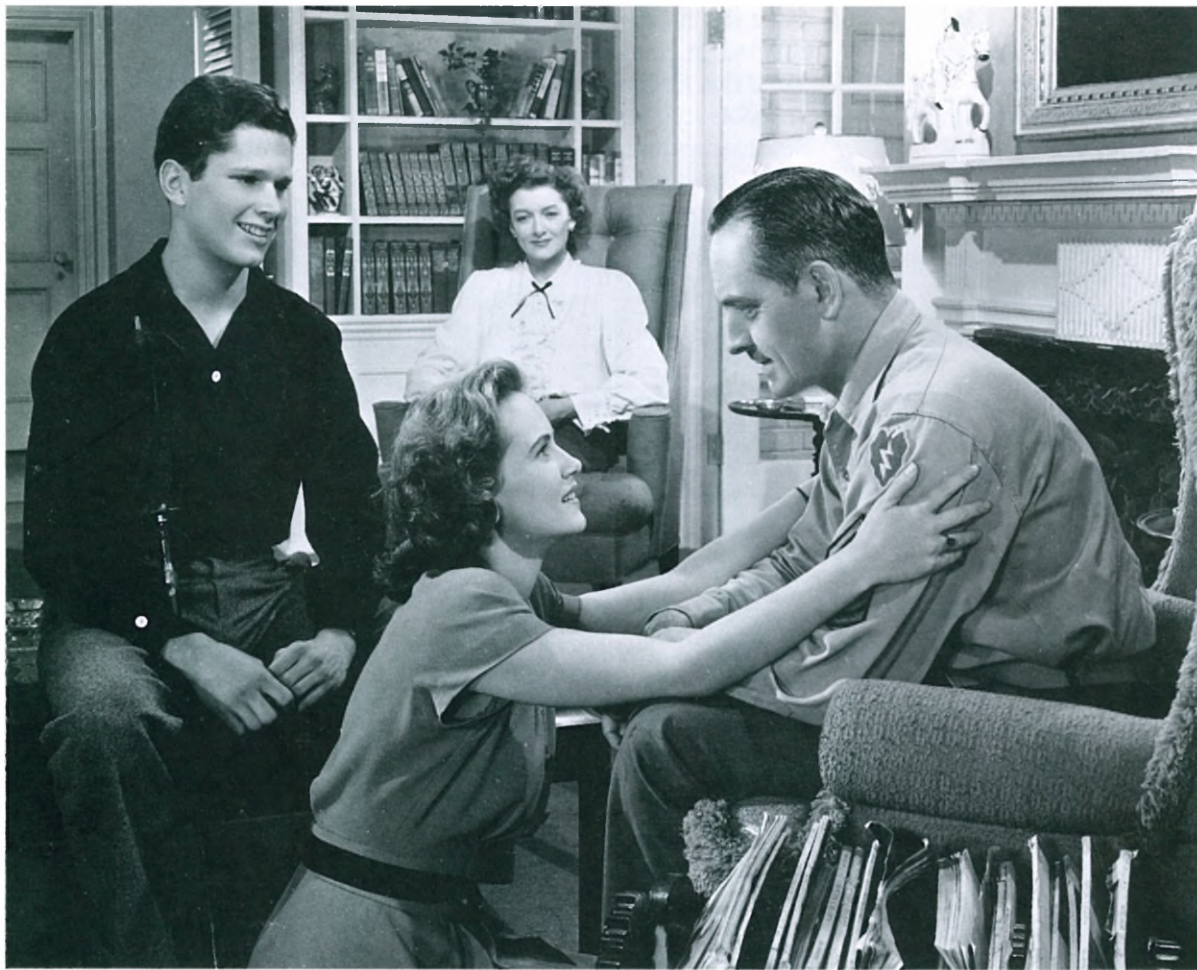
One aspect of Hollywood productions that sets them apart is the technical achievements of the filmmakers, the constant experimenting with the technical aspects of filmmaking to enhance the storytelling. Editing, lighting, camera angles, all blend together to achieve a film's overall texture.

For example, in the broadcast, film editor Dede Allen talks about how editing is used to advance the idea of a seamless story.

*Montgomery Clift and Olivia de Havilland in THE HEIRESS.*







*A scene from THE BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES with Michael Hall, Myrna Loy, Teresa Wright, and Frederick March.*

"You should never be aware of cuts," she says. "You want to feel as though that scene is taking place in front of your eyes as you speak and you're looking at a proscenium arch but you're not looking at a proscenium arch. You're much closer, you're much more involved, you're within the proscenium arch."

From within this proscenium arch Americans have seen a wide variety of films. Although the Hollywood style may be defined as narrowly focused on the story, it is extremely elastic, allowing for an Orson Welles, a William Wyler, or a Martin Scorsese.

"We wanted to portray the whole spectrum in which different directors have a place," says Ornati, speaking of the directors used in "The Hollywood Style."

Naturally, Orson Welles and the classic, *Citizen Kane*, is one director and film paid homage to in the broadcast because of Welles's innovative style and influence on those filmmakers who followed him.

"The film didn't receive an Academy Award that year (1941)," says Ornati, "and the award's implication of industry approval." But Wells's innovations became part of filmmaking. He originally developed with cinematographer Greg Toland the technique of deep focus in which the background and foreground stay in focus at the same time. A few years later, director William Wyler, working with Toland on such films as *The Little Foxes* (1942), *The Best Years of Our Lives*

(1946), and *The Heiress* (1949), naturalized this innovation to again invigorate the Hollywood style. "Wyler did this," says Ornati, "without directing the viewers' attention to an awareness of technique."

The spectrum of directors interpreting the Hollywood style, influenced by these giants of the past, continues today. Thus Hollywood can accommodate very different directors, such as Sydney Pollack, Martin Scorsese, and Lawrence Kasdan.

Pollack, says Ornati, is the archetypical American director who uses the classic narrative style with typical American heroes, as in the films *The Way We Were* or *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* A director such as Scorsese, "an expert practitioner of the form," says Ornati, applies the Hollywood style to the not-so-traditional characters of a failed boxer, a taxi driver, Italian-American gangsters.

"Kasdan tries to do something different," says Ornati. "His films (such as *Grand Canyon*) are more European,

using an ensemble cast with the characters dealing with the contradictions people face in their lives.

"We looked at these directors and how they are part of the traditions and how they tried to break from them," says Ornati.

"The Hollywood Style," as the first show in the *American Cinema* series, introduces the audience to the concept of a national cinema and a way of looking at that cinema. As such, it sets the stage for the next nine programs which examine how American filmmakers retell the story in different ways, through different genres, with different stars, from different historical and cultural perspectives.

"We want to make the audience more knowledgeable of all the elements of the medium to be able to critique it," says Ornati, "so they can understand it on the strength of all its craft elements and cultural issues." □

*Maggie Riechers is a writer based in the Washington, D.C., area.*

*The New York Center for Visual History received \$1.5 million from the Division of Public Programs to help support production of the ten-hour television series, American Cinema, which airs in January and February. "The Hollywood Style" opens the series.*



# One Woman, One Vote

BY MARJORIE SPRUILL WHEELER



—AP/Wide World

*H*undreds of women gave the accumulated possibilities of an entire lifetime, thousands gave years of their lives, hundreds of thousands gave constant interest, and such aid as they could. It was a continuous, seemingly endless, chain of activity. Young suffragists who helped forge the last links of that chain were not born when it began. Old suffragists who forged the first links were dead when it ended.

Carrie Chapman Catt and Nettie Rogers Shuler: *Woman Suffrage and Politics: The Inner Story of the Suffrage Movement*, 1923



**I**N 1995 WE COMMEMORATE the passing of seventy-five years since the 1920 ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment which enfranchised American women. It required almost as many years for suffragists to achieve this victory: Between 1848, when a resolution calling for woman suffrage was adopted at the Seneca Falls, New York, Convention, and 1920, when the federal woman suffrage amendment was finally ratified, several generations of suffragists labored tirelessly for the cause. Many did not live to see its successful conclusion.

The woman suffrage movement in the United States began in the Northeast in the context of antebellum reform. Many women, including Sarah and Angelina Grimke, Abby Kelly, Lucretia Mott, and Lucy Stone began speaking out for woman's rights when their efforts to participate equally with men in the great reform movements of the day—including antislavery and temperance—were rebuffed. These early feminists demanded a wide range of changes in woman's social, moral, legal, educational, and economic status; the right to vote was not their initial focus. Indeed, those present at the Seneca Falls Convention regarded the resolution demanding the vote as the most extreme of all their demands, and adopted it by a narrow margin at the insistence of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Frederick Douglass.

After the Civil War, woman's rights leaders saw enfranchisement as one of the most important, perhaps the most important of their goals. They were extremely disappointed when the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments did not provide universal suffrage for all Americans, but extended the franchise only to black men. Indeed, the woman's rights movement divided acrimoniously in 1869 largely over the issue of whether or not to support ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment.

Two woman suffrage organizations were founded in 1869, with different positions on the Fifteenth Amendment and different ideas about how best to promote woman suffrage. The National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA), headed by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, opposed the Fifteenth Amendment, but called for a Sixteenth Amendment that would enfranchise women. Led

exclusively by women, the New York-based NWSA focused upon the enfranchisement of women through federal action, and adopted a radical tone in promoting a wide variety of feminist reforms in its short-lived journal, *Revolution*. The other organization, the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA), with headquarters in Boston, was led by Lucy Stone with the aid of her husband, Henry Blackwell, and Mary Livermore, Julia Ward Howe, Henry Ward Beecher, Antoinette Brown Blackwell, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, and others: It endorsed the Fifteenth Amendment while working for woman suffrage as well. While supporting a federal amendment for female enfranchisement, this organization concentrated on developing grass-roots support for woman suffrage by forming state-level organizations; and, working through its organ, the *Woman's Journal*, the AWSA tried to make woman suffrage and other feminist reforms seem less radical and more consistent with widely shared American values.

In the 1870s, disheartened by the response to the proposed federal amendment, suffragists also tried other approaches to winning the vote. These included the use of the courts to challenge their exclusion from voting on the grounds that, as citizens, they could not be deprived of their rights as protected by the Constitution. This argument was made before Congress in 1871 by Victoria Woodhull, a beautiful, radical, and iconoclastic figure who briefly gained the support of Stanton and Anthony in the 1870s (before her scandalous personal life and advocacy of free love were revealed at great cost to the movement). In 1872, Susan B. Anthony attempted to vote, hoping to be arrested and to have the opportunity to test this strategy in the courts; she was arrested and indicted for "knowingly, wrongfully and unlawfully vot[ing] for a representative to the Congress of the United States." Found guilty and fined, she insisted she would never pay a dollar of it. Virginia Minor, a suffrage leader in St. Louis, succeeded in getting the issue before the United States Supreme Court, but in 1875 the court ruled unanimously that citizenship did not automatically confer the right to vote and that the issue of female enfranchisement should be decided within the states.

Even as the NWSA and the AWSA competed for support and tried several strategies for winning female enfranchisement to no avail, woman suffrage was making headway in the West. Indeed, while most eastern politicians were dead set against woman suffrage, politicians and voters in several western states enfranchised women and, at times, battled Congress for the right to do so. In 1869 Wyoming led the nation in the adoption of woman suffrage while still a territory; in 1890, when it appeared that Congress would not approve its application for statehood as long as the state allowed woman suffrage, the legislature declared "we will remain out of the Union a hundred years rather than come in without the women." Even the Mormon stronghold of Utah enacted woman suffrage as a territory in 1870 and came into the union with woman suffrage in 1896. Colorado (1893) and Idaho (1896) were the other pioneering suffrage states.

Historians differ as to the reason why the West was so progressive in its adoption of the woman suffrage. One early theory was that frontier conditions undermined traditional gender roles and that women, having proven



—Library of Congress



their ability to conquer difficult conditions and do "men's work," were rewarded with the vote. Another theory was that the politicians hoped that women voters would help to "civilize" the West. Most historians stress practical politics as opposed to advanced ideology as the explanation, arguing that western politicians found it expedient to enfranchise women for a variety of reasons. In Utah, for example, Mormons hoped that the votes of women would help tip the balance of power in their favor in their ongoing power struggle with the non-Mormons population, consisting largely of miners, railroad construction workers, cowboys, and prospectors, who tended not to have women with them. For whatever reasons, these four western states were the only states to adopt woman suffrage in the nineteenth century. The next round of state victories did not come until 1910, and these were also in the West (Washington, 1910; California, 1911; Oregon, 1912; Kansas, 1912; and Arizona, 1912).

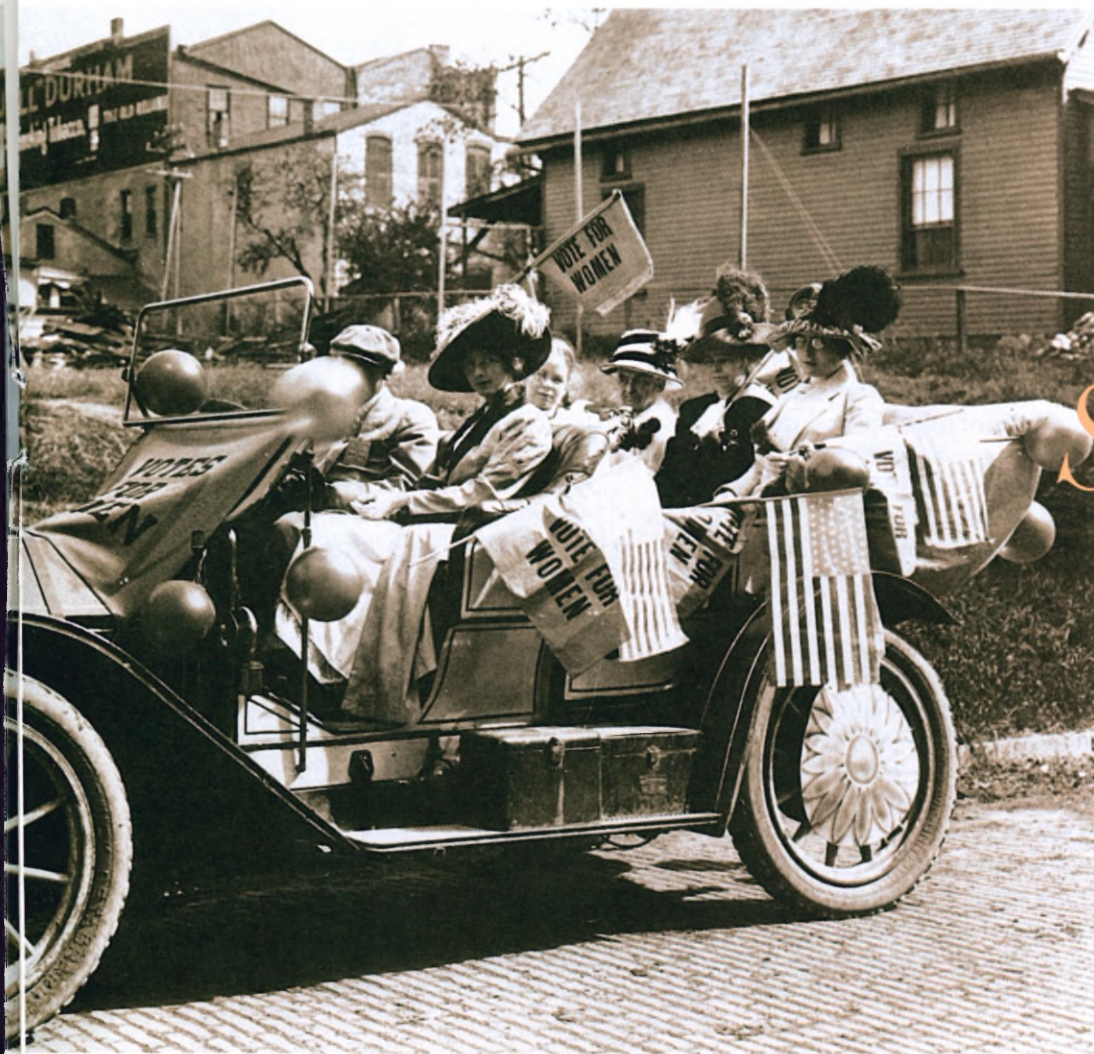
Meanwhile, the suffrage movement won a valuable ally when Frances Willard, as president of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, led thousands of otherwise quite traditional

women to endorse woman suffrage as a way of protecting the home, women, and children. Following its official endorsement in 1880, the WCTU created a Department of Franchise under Zerelda Wallace and Dr. Anna Howard Shaw (later president of the NAWSA) which encouraged state WCTU chapters to endorse suffrage and distributed suffrage literature. Though Willard was a member of the AWSA and invited Anthony to speak before the WCTU, the temperance organization's work for woman suffrage was particularly valuable in creating support for suffrage among women who might have considered the existing suffrage organizations and their leaders eccentric or radical. The WCTU endorsement, however, gained for the suffrage movement a powerful opponent when the liquor industry concluded that woman suffrage was a threat to be stopped at all costs. Indeed, NAWSA President Carrie Chapman Catt later referred to the liquor industry as "the Invisible Enemy" and believed that its corrupt manipulation of American politics long delayed the coming of woman suffrage.

One of the most important turning points in the history of the woman

suffrage movement came in 1890 as the two national suffrage organizations reunited in one major organization. At the instigation of younger suffragists, the movement's aging pioneers put aside their differences sufficiently to merge their rival organizations into the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA). Elizabeth Cady Stanton was elected president; Lucy Stone, head of the executive committee; and Susan B. Anthony, vice president; but it was Anthony who actually took command of the new organization. (She became president officially in 1892 and remained in office until 1900.) While continuing to demand a federal amendment, NAWSA leaders concluded that they must first build support within the states, winning enough state suffrage amendments to ensure that Congress would approve a federal amendment and that three-fourths of the states would ratify it.

Though Stanton continued to address a wide range of feminist issues, many of them quite radical (including an indictment of Christianity in her 1895 *Woman's Bible*), most NAWSA leaders, including Anthony, thought it imperative that the movement focus almost exclusively on winning the vote. In keeping with the new approach and influenced by the conservatism of newer recruits, the suffragists went to great lengths to avoid association with radical causes. This included shedding the traditional association of woman's rights with the rights of blacks. Indeed, though the



*Suffragettes in Lawrence,  
Kansas, 1915.*



NAWSA never stopped using natural rights arguments for woman suffrage, white suffragists—still indignant that black men were enfranchised ahead of them and angry at the ease with which immigrant men were enfranchised—drifted away from insistence upon universal suffrage and increasingly employed racist and nativist rhetoric and tactics.

The new NAWSA strategy included building support in the South. There the historic connection between the woman's movement and antislavery made suffrage anathema to the white conservatives who once again controlled the region and made advocacy of woman suffrage quite difficult for the influential white women the NAWSA wished to recruit. In the 1890s, however, with Laura Clay of Kentucky as intermediary, NAWSA leaders went to great lengths to, in Clay's words, "bring in the South."

Using a strategy first suggested by Henry Blackwell, northern and southern leaders began to argue that woman suffrage—far from endangering white supremacy in the South—could be a means of restoring it. Indeed, they suggested, the adoption of woman suffrage with educational or property qualifications that would disqualify most black women, would allow the South to restore white supremacy in politics without "having to" disenfranchise black men and risk Congressional repercussions. The NAWSA spent considerable time and resources developing this "southern strategy," sending Catt and Anthony on speaking tours through the region, and holding the 1895 NAWSA convention in Atlanta. At the insistence of their southern hosts, they even asked their aging hero Frederick Douglass—who was an honored participant in women's rights conventions elsewhere in the nation—to stay away. By 1903, however, it was clear that this southern strategy had failed: The region's politicians refused (in the words of one Mississippi politician) to "cower behind petticoats" and "use lovely women" to maintain white supremacy—and found other means to do so that did not involve the "destruction" of woman's traditional role.

A growing number of black women actively supported woman suffrage during this period, despite the fact that white suffragists largely turned their backs on them in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and, in the South, excluded them

totally from white suffrage organizations. Following a path blazed by former slave Sojourner Truth and free blacks Harriet Forten Purvis and Margaretta Forten, who spoke at antebellum woman's rights conventions, and Massachusetts reformers Caroline Remond Putman and Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin, who were active in the AWSA in the 1870s, black women persevered in their advocacy of woman suffrage even in these difficult times. Prominent African-American suffragists included Ida Wells-Barnett of Chicago, famous as a leading crusader against lynching; Mary Church Terrell, educator and first president of the National Association of Colored Women (NACW); and Adella Hunt Logan, Tuskegee faculty member, who, in articles in *The Crisis*, insisted that if white women needed the vote to protect their rights, then black women—victims of racism as well as sexism—needed the ballot even more.

Nevertheless, white suffrage leaders, who either shared the nativism or racism endemic to turn-of-the-century America or were convinced they must cater to it in order to succeed, continued in their attempts to shed the movement's radical image and to enlarge their constituency. From the late 1890s to around 1910, in a period historians once described as "the doldrums" of the woman suffrage movement, the NAWSA went through a major period of rebuilding—in regard to membership as well as image.

Under the leadership of Carrie Chapman Catt, president from 1900 to 1904, the NAWSA began successful efforts to recruit large numbers of socially prominent and politically influential women (the "society plan") and to convince the growing numbers of middle- and upper-class women involved in women's clubs that woman suffrage would be a boon to their civic improvement efforts. They also reached out to the new generation of college-educated women, many of them professionals, reminding them that their opportunities were owed to the pioneers of the woman's movement, and challenging them to take up the torch. The movement profited greatly from the new ideas and energy of younger leaders such as Maud Wood Park and Inez Haynes Irwin, who formed the College Equal Suffrage League, and Mary Hutcheson Page of Massachusetts and Harriot Stanton Blatch

(the daughter of Elizabeth Cady Stanton) of New York, who reinvigorated the suffrage movements in their states by introducing new tactics borrowed from English suffragists, including open-air meetings and parades. Blatch also organized the Equality League of Self-Supporting Women (1907), later called the Women's Political Union.



—University of Louisville, Ekstrom Library

The NAWSA also expanded its educational efforts, distributing literature to schools and libraries, sponsoring debates, and disseminating a new and less radical image of their movement's own history in which Anthony was virtually canonized. But particularly after Catt resigned in 1904 (owing to the illness of her husband) and Dr. Anna Howard Shaw inherited the presidency of the NAWSA, the decentralized NAWSA provided little in the way of a national political strategy. Between 1896 and 1910, no new states were won for woman suffrage; only six state campaigns were attempted—and all of them failed.

There was, however, considerable grounds for optimism by 1910. The Progressive movement, which began around 1900 at the grass-roots level and



swept both national political parties, was proving to be a tremendous boon to the cause of woman suffrage. In all sections of the United States, men and women who supported Progressive reforms (including pure food and drug legislation, protection for workers, an end to child labor, and legislation to curb political corruption) believed that women's votes would help secure such

movement, welcomed by middle-class leaders such as Harriot Stanton Blatch (who had objected to the NAWSA's "society plan"), who worked to unite women of all classes into a revitalized suffrage movement. As opponents were quick to point out, many socialists supported woman suffrage, though some socialists who were more radical in approach, including Emma Gold-

energy and boldness of the "militant" British suffragists, was also a major factor in the new suffrage activism.

Paul and her followers had no patience with the slow, state-by-state plodding that had consumed the NAWSA's energies since the 1890s, and demanded that the organization focus its attention almost exclusively upon the federal amendment. Though this infuriated a minority of southern suffragists who were states' rights activists and supported female enfranchisement by state action only, the NAWSA did indeed renew its campaign for a federal



*African-American women at the polls in Louisville, Kentucky, on October 5, 1920, after ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment.*

reforms. Countless women, many of them involved in civic improvement clubs, enlisted in the suffrage movement as they became frustrated at their inability to secure such reforms through "indirect influence" or lobbying alone. Middle-class reformers such as Jane Addams, founder of the famous settlement house in Chicago, Hull House, and Florence Kelley, executive secretary of the National Consumer's League, were strong supporters of woman suffrage. And labor leaders, including Rose Schneiderman, labor organizer and speaker with the Women's Trade Union League, and Agnes Nestor, president of the International Glove Workers Union, worked hard for suffrage as a means of achieving improved conditions for workers. Many working-class women joined the

man, thought it foolish to expect that much progress would come from female enfranchisement. As in the case of temperance and suffrage, however, the idea that women would support Progressive reforms provoked opposition: Industries that stood to lose from Progressive reform, such as the cotton textile industry of the South, joined the liquor industry as formidable opponents of woman suffrage, and worked together with the growing number of antisuffrage organizations to oppose state suffrage referenda.

Around 1912, the increased support for suffrage resulting from the Progressive movement and the series of victories in the western states seemed to breathe new life into suffragists all over America. The return of Alice Paul from England, where she was inspired by the

amendment—but not before it parted company with Paul and her followers. The central issue in this new rift in the suffrage forces was Paul's advocacy of a strategy derived from the British suffragists, to oppose the "party-in-power" until it adopted woman suffrage, a strategy that violated the NAWSA's long-standing policy of nonpartisanship. Forming their own organization, soon known as the National Woman's Party (NWP), Paul and her followers continued to pursue a federal amendment using bold new tactics, many of them directed at forcing President Wilson to support the federal amendment; these ranged from mobilizing women voters in western states against Wilson's re-election in 1916 to burning in front of the White House his war-time speeches in praise of democracy.

Carrie Chapman Catt was also eager for the NAWSA to bring the long struggle to a conclusion with the adoption of the federal suffrage amendment. Her return to the NAWSA presidency in late 1915 and the adoption shortly thereafter





Kansas State Historical Society

A 1912 suffrage parade in New York City sported banners and babies.

of her "Winning Plan" harnessed the power of the massive but sluggish NAWSA and initiated the final, victorious suffrage drive. Catt insisted that further state work was vital, but made it clear that the federal amendment was still the ultimate goal. Her plan called for suffragists in states that had not adopted woman suffrage—and where a victory seemed possible—to launch campaigns at once. In states where defeat was likely, she insisted that suffragists avoid such an embarrassment to the cause and seek only partial suffrage—municipal, presidential, or primary suffrage—as they thought best. She urged suffragists in states where women already voted to put pressure on their national representatives to support the federal amendment. Meanwhile Catt and her lieutenants, Maud Wood Park and Helen Gardner, worked hard to convince President Wilson to support woman suffrage by federal as well as state means, and conducted a massive lobbying effort to enlist congressional support. And when the United States entered World War I, Catt put aside her own pacifism and urged suffragists to support the war effort—a policy which enhanced the patriotic image of the movement with the public and powerful decision-makers, including Wilson. A growing number of state victories and Woodrow Wilson's conversion (he began working for the federal amendment in 1918) eventually led Congress to approve the

Nineteenth Amendment and to submit it to the states in June 1919.

Historians debate the relative contributions of Catt and the NAWSA vs. Paul and the NWP to the victory in Congress. But clearly Catt's careful coordination of suffragists all over the nation and skillful political maneuvering, together with the pressure on Wilson and members of Congress that Paul and her followers applied by less orthodox methods of persuasion, were all major factors.

The final chapter in the suffrage story was still ahead: thirty-six states had to ratify the amendment before it could become law. As the struggle over ratification began, Illinois and Wisconsin competed for the honor of being the first to ratify, while Georgia and Alabama scrambled to be the first to pass a "rejection resolution." Most states took longer to act, and many battles were hard fought, with suffragists and antisuffragists using all powers of persuasion at their command. By the summer of 1920, suffragists were dismayed to find that while only one more state was needed, no further legislative sessions were scheduled before the November 1920 election. Desperate, suffragists began pleading for special sessions. President Wilson was finally able to pressure the reluctant governor of Tennessee into calling such a session.

Thus the final battle over woman suffrage took place in Nashville,

Tennessee, in the long, hot summer of 1920. In that final, dramatic contest, antisuffragists as well as suffragists from all over the nation descended upon the state in a bitter struggle over ideology and influence. Despite the glare of national publicity, the suffragists watched with dismay as a comfortable margin in favor of ratification gradually disappeared, and they were quite uncertain of the result when the vote took place. When, on August 18, it appeared that Tennessee had ratified—the result of one twenty-four-year-old legislator from the mountains (Harry Burn) changing his vote at the insistence of his elderly mother—the antis still managed to delay official ratification through parliamentary tricks. While antisuffrage legislators fled the state to avoid a quorum, their associates held massive antisuffrage rallies and otherwise attempted to convince prosuffrage legislators to oppose ratification. Finally, Tennessee reaffirmed its vote for ratification, and the Nineteenth Amendment was officially added to the United States Constitution on August 26, 1920. □

*This article is adapted from the introduction to One Woman, One Vote: The Woman Suffrage Movement in America, edited by Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, which will accompany the television special One Woman, One Vote. The book will be published by NewSage Press of Portland, Oregon in July.*

*To produce One Woman, One Vote, the Educational Film Center received \$898,385 from the Humanities Projects in Media program of the Division of Public Programs. The film will air on PBS February 15.*



# HUMANITIES GUIDE

WHAT HOLDS  
OUR DIVERSE  
society together?

What are our values—  
shared and not shared?  
How have we established  
common ground or  
resolved differences in the  
past? Can we identify those  
values and commitments  
that we need to share as a  
successful society?

The National Endowment for the Humanities invites all Americans to join in a conversation, informed by scholarship, about the nature of American pluralism and identity.

In a special competition, the Endowment invites proposals that provide opportunities for people of all ages, from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, from rural and urban areas, from large and small communities, and from different walks of life to talk about what it means to be an American today. The National Conversation seeks to bring the American people together to discuss important issues about American identity, about our common values, and about our differences. Our country's motto, *E pluribus unum*, reflects the traditional belief that there are fundamental qualities that define us as a nation, but in an era of increasing ethnic, racial, and religious diversity, do these unifying qualities still have the same validity? How do we maintain a society that respects individual identity but looks to a national purpose?

The Division of Public Programs seeks proposals that will expand the reach of the humanities, that will engage diverse participants, and that will include voices not normally heard. We invite groups, communities, and institutions to collaborate on conversation projects to bring together people who may not have talked with each other before. We also seek proposals

## Special Competition: National Conversation on American Pluralism and Identity

for projects that will encourage the exploration of many points of view.

The conversations may occur within a single geographic area—a city, town, or neighborhood. These local conversations may be sponsored by community organizations, civic groups, fraternal organizations, schools, labor unions, or nonprofit institutions, such as museums or libraries. Conversations could take place in senior citizen centers, community centers, churches, hospitals, and workplaces.

Larger conversation projects may be developed by regional or national organizations and presented through local affiliates. They may use technologies—radio, teleconferencing, the Internet—to link people across communities in electronic conversations.

Finally, we encourage conversation projects that will involve a series of conversations rather than a single meeting. There is no prescribed time frame, although we expect most projects will occur within a six-to twenty-four-month time period.

A good conversation, as Frankel Prize winner Harold K. Skramstad, Jr., has written, "requires both talking and listening; it requires a sense of mutual respect and trust; and, most importantly, it implies a process that does not have a beginning, middle, and end." The key elements are

exchange and reciprocity, rather than competition or imposition of one's views on another.

Grants may range from \$3,000 to \$100,000 or more according to the scale of the project. The Endowment has allocated \$1 million for this competition and will make awards for local, regional, and national projects.

Any nonprofit organization, including community organizations, national organizations, state humanities councils, libraries, and museums, may apply. The NEH encourages partnerships among groups and strategies that will involve varied participants. Projects that involve more than one organization require that only one partner serve as the applicant organization and fiscal agent for the project.

To be eligible for NEH funding, applicants must have obtained tax-exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service. An applicant without tax-exempt status can seek a partnership with an organization, such as a public library or a local government, that already has such status.

Proposals will be evaluated by humanities scholars, public programming professionals, and members of the public outside the Endowment. Reviewers will represent a diversity of disciplinary, institutional, regional, and cultural backgrounds.

Upcoming deadlines for this special competition are January 27 and April 28, 1995.

For an application package, write to Special Competition:  
National Conversation  
NEH Special Projects  
Room 426  
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20506

For funding of other public humanities projects in conjunction with the National Conversation on American Pluralism and Identity, such as interpretive exhibitions in museums, library reading and discussion programs, and radio and television programs, you should apply within the regular funding categories in the Division of Public Programs.

The telephone numbers are:

- Humanities Projects in Museums and Historical Organizations: 202/606-8284
- Humanities Projects in Media: 202/606-8278
- Humanities Projects in Libraries and Archives: 202/606-8271



# Calendar

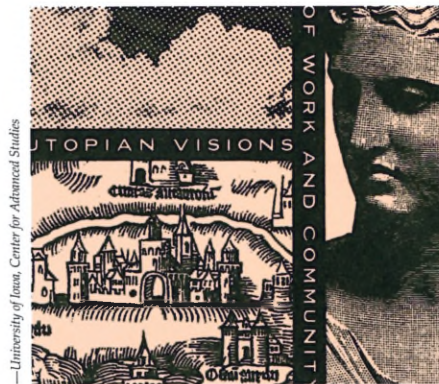
JANUARY ♦ FEBRUARY

BY STEVEN SNODGRASS



—Cleveland Museum of Art

The Spencer Museum of Art's "Latter Days of the Law: Images of Chinese Buddhism, 850-1850" presents paintings, rubbings, woodblock prints, and pictorial textiles created after the Huichang era, the period in which religious persecution began the decline of Buddhism in China. The collection, which examines cross-cultural influences, is on display through January 29 at the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.



—University of Iowa, Center for Advanced Studies

*Is utopia possible?*

That is one of the questions that scholars will pose in "Utopian Visions of Work and Community," a series of public programs that focuses on perfect societies and their lessons for the modern world. The project is administered by the University of Iowa. Public programs take place in Davenport, Iowa, on January 7, Rock Island, Illinois, on January 14, and Kalona, Iowa, on February 16.



—Milwaukee Public Museum

A thirty-seven-figure powwow scene, made with life casts of Indians from Wisconsin's seven tribes, is the centerpiece of the Milwaukee Public Museum's "A Tribute to Survival." The exhibition describes the history and culture of North American Indians and their interactions with nonnative peoples.



## ENDOWMENT EXHIBITIONS

The Lower East Side Tenement Museum's newly restored nineteenth-century apartments recreate the homes and tell the stories of two immigrant families, the Gumpertzes, who lived at 97 Orchard Street in the late 1800s, and the Baldizzis, who lived there during the Great Depression. The Gumpertz dwelling (*right*) contains exhibits on women's issues, such as labor and desertion, and on other German immigrants, including Christians, Jews, and Freethinkers.



—photo by Simon Cherry, Lower East Side Tenement Museum

Based upon Arthuriana from the Newberry and New York Public Libraries, "The Many Realms of King Arthur" is currently traveling across the United States. The exhibition, produced by the American Library Association in four traveling components, explores the legend of Arthur from the Middle Ages to the present through engravings, paintings, books, films, musicals, and other genres. Through February 2, the exhibition is in Tulsa; Des Moines; Ann Arbor, Michigan; and Derry, New Hampshire. The exhibition opens February 10 in Albuquerque; LaCrosse, Wisconsin; Columbus, Ohio; and Burlington, Vermont.



—Newberry Library



# MAKING A LIVING:

By Laura Randall



ONE BLUSTERY JANUARY EVENING IN 1796, a group of men gathered at the local parsonage in Jaffrey, New Hampshire, "for the purpose of forming a Collection of Usefull books to be called the Social Library." Among those present that night was Amos Fortune, a black bookbinder who had worked as a slave in Boston until, at age sixty, he was able to buy his freedom.

After Fortune paid his three dollars as a founding member of the Jaffrey Social Library (a dollar and a half was a day's pay at the time), he began to rebind the books in the collection with his own fine, soft leather. This was just one of the many contributions Fortune would make to his adopted New England town during his twenty years of residence there. One of Jaffrey's more literate citizens, Fortune ran a tannery and taught local children how to read in his spare time. When he died, he bequeathed part of his estate, estimated at \$800, to the village church and school.

Amos Fortune will be honored, along with other African Americans who lived and worked in New England from colonial times through World War II, in a traveling exhibition that will come to the very community he worked so hard to support. In an effort to foster greater understanding of the role played by African Americans in New England's history, the New England Foundation for the Humanities, with support from NEH, has organized an exhibition titled "Making a Living: The Work Experience of African Americans in New England," which will be presented as a series of thirty programs at sites throughout the area from January 1995 through June 1996. At each site, programs will depict the histories of local individuals and events.

"People often tend to think of the African-American experience in America as only happening in the South," says Sarah Getty, director of the New England Foundation for the Humanities. "When they think of New England, they think of lobster pots and village greens with white churches; they don't insert into that picture the image of black people working on farms and chasing whales. With this exhibit, we're enriching the public's idea of what our history has really been like."

"Making a Living" will focus not only on prosperous New England blacks like Amos Fortune but also on the countless anonymous faces who helped to build the houses, operate the farms, do the housework, make the shoes, and sail the merchant ships and whaling vessels. "You'll find stories about every type of person, from a boxing master to a chimney sweep, from a man who sold peanuts at Brown University to one of the founders of the Providence Art Club, which later became the Rhode Island School of Design," says exhibit coordinator Marilyn Richardson.

One of the women featured in the panel exhibit is Elleanor Eldridge, a Warwick, Rhode Island, native who had a successful paperhanging business. Eldridge's life as a domestic worker and eventually a successful business owner was chronicled in a two-volume memoir in 1838 by a white friend, after Eldridge was swindled out of her land by a jealous neighbor in the early 1800s. Traveling through New England and other eastern states, Eldridge sold copies of the book and was able to buy back her land. The frontispiece portrait of Eldridge with a whitewash broom in her hand, which will be displayed alongside her story, is one of the earliest portraits of an African-American woman.

Like Eldridge, the painter Edward Mitchell Bannister was a successful African American who lived in Rhode Island during the late 1800s. Born in New Brunswick, Bannister began what would become a successful career

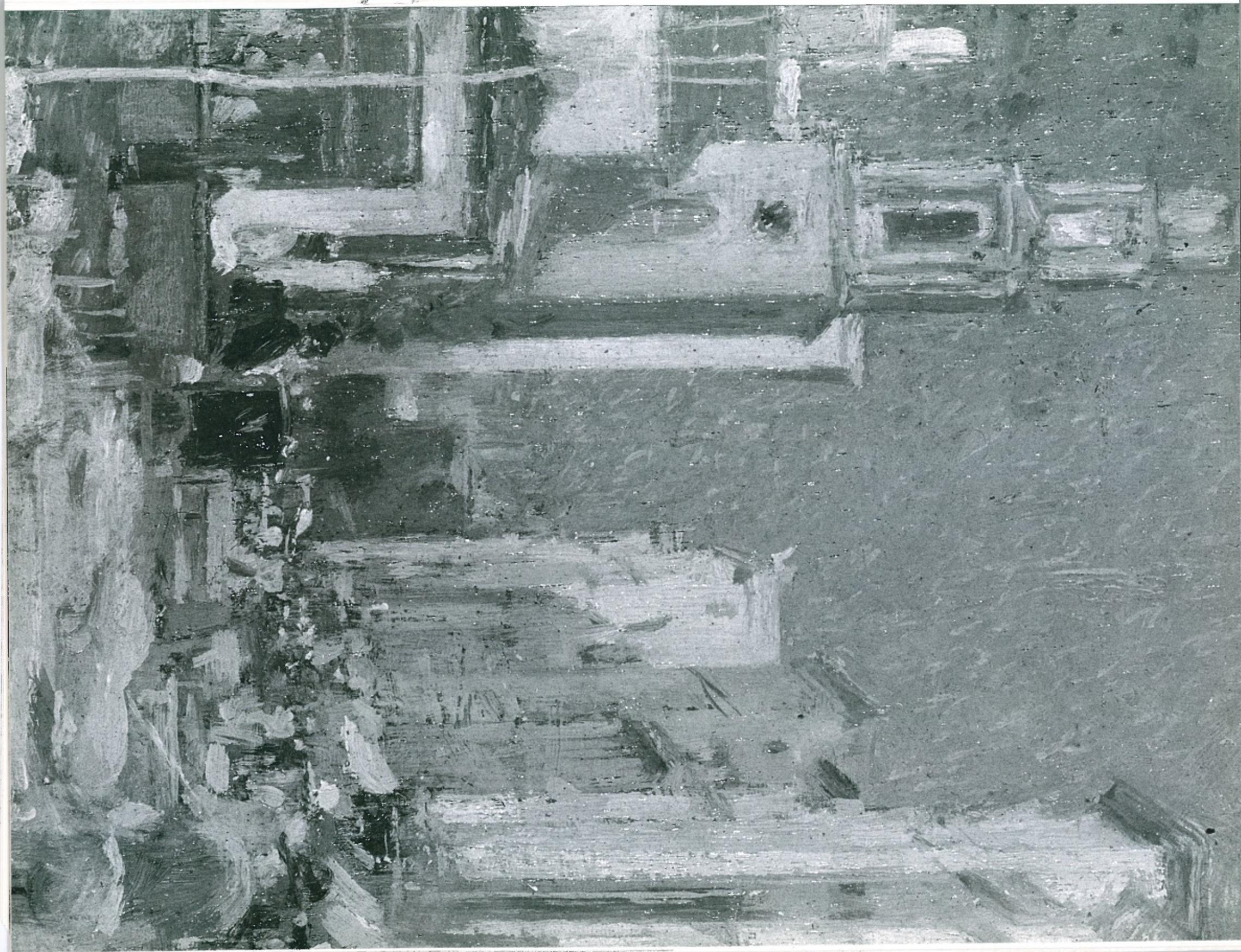
## African Americans in 19th-Century New England



Edward Mitchell Bannister (1828-1901).

Opposite: Street Scene by Bannister, ca. 1895.







in art after reading an observation in the *New York Herald Tribune* that "the Negro seems to have an appreciation of art while being manifestly unable to produce it." Bannister, a prolific painter who studied art at the Lowell Institute in Boston, won the gold medal at the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition. His Providence studio was a popular gathering place for artists and, in 1873, the site of the Providence Art Club.

The stories of Bannister, Eldridge, and dozens of other African Americans will be told in a panel exhibit that intersperses text, photographs, and geometrical strips of color to form the appearance of a quilt. This motif reflects the African-American tradition of quilting and the use of African images within the designs. African symbolism appears in African-American quilts, says exhibit designer Debra Sherman. "The snowflake-like stars that are part of the exhibit's cover design represent speech," she explains. The asymmetrical design of the quilts stems from superstitions involving evil spirits, which were believed by many to follow only straight lines.

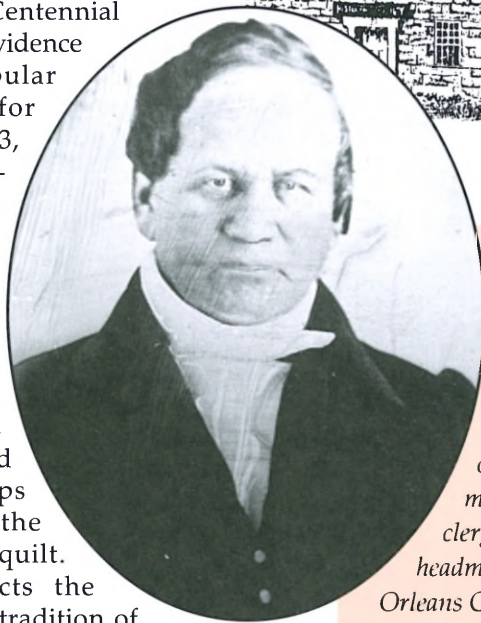
Accompanying the six-panel exhibition, one for each New England state, will be public reading and discussion programs and a thirty-minute video to be shown on Connecticut Public Television. One set of the exhibition panels will be displayed in Boston's Museum of Afro American History, a cosponsor of the exhibition. The museum's African Meeting House is the oldest standing African-American church in the United States and was the political, social, educational, and spiritual center for Boston's free black community prior to the Civil War.

Since very few book-length studies have been done on the history of African Americans in New England, much of the information for "Making a Living" was gleaned from newspaper articles, book chapters, historical journals, and primary materials such as handwritten letters and family photographs. It was a task that took anthology editor Robert Hall and his team of researchers to tiny historical societies, to the immense university libraries of Harvard, Radcliffe, and Boston University, and to the dusty basements and tattered photo albums of friends and relations of the subjects.

"It was the combination of Boston's reputation as 'freedom's birthplace' and the relatively small number and proportion of blacks in New England that explains



—Courtesy of Orleans County (Vermont) Historical Society



Alexander Lucius Twilight (1795-1857), who, among other achievements, was a clergyman and headmaster of the

Orleans County Grammar School in Brownington, Vermont. Against the advice of the board of trustees, Twilight single-handedly built the Old Stone House as a dormitory and classroom space for the school. It is said that he quarried the stone from local fields and constructed a wooden or earthen staging that rose as the building rose, using an ox to work a treadmill from the staging to raise the blocks into place. Because the ox could not be lowered when the house was finished, it was slaughtered for a celebratory feast. The building is now a historical museum.

the lack of historical documents," says Hall, a professor of African-American studies and history at Northeastern University in Boston. Hall states that prior to 1910, 90 percent of the total black population lived in the South. But the challenge was not in finding the material. "The difficulty for me," he says, "came in trying to establish a chronological balance and representation of the various regions of New England."

Black New Englanders in colonial times faced a dual struggle, says Hall, who has written extensively on the black experience in America. "The presence and persistence of slavery in the South weighed heavily on the minds of black New Englanders, and many were major contributors to black lodges and efforts to assist fugitives," he says. "But we have found that people still experienced as much or more discrimination in the North, even when they were free."

In 1831, Alexis de Tocqueville observed that many free blacks perished and those who lived in the cities "perform the meanest offices and lead a wretched precarious existence."

Blacks and whites both knew that in the colonies it was illegal to teach slaves to read and write. While advances in education and professional fields were made by black New Englanders in the early 1800s, an overwhelming majority had no access to literacy. Some African Americans, however, were to become pioneer educators. In 1823, Alexander L. Twilight, a native of Bradford, Vermont, became the first black graduate of Middlebury College (and probably the first black person to graduate from any American college) and is best known as principal of Orleans County Grammar School at Brownington, Vermont, an early coed boarding school. Twilight also served a term in the Vermont legislature (1836-38).

Over images of early Nantucket in the video, we hear the story of "the African School," founded in a church by the community's black families in 1824. Jacob Perry became the only African American among the many teachers who taught there. We also see the first post-Civil War black teacher in Boston, Harriet L. Smith, who taught from

1890 to 1917 at the Sharp School on Beacon Hill.

Whenever possible, African Americans sought work as artisans, such as shoemakers, blacksmiths or carpenters. However, it was difficult for a black man to earn a living in these trades, unless he worked in a concentrated black neighborhood where members of his own race could support him. Boston, which had the largest and most clustered black population in New England, had a higher percentage of black artisans than any other city in New England; it also had more black peddlers, mercantile operators, and entrepreneurs.



Many African Americans worked in the maritime trade. During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, seafaring was one of the three or four most common occupations for free black men in New England. Some worked in the whaling industry out of New Bedford, Massachusetts. A local blacksmith, Lewis Temple, is credited with inventing the toggle iron harpoon, a rotating device that enabled fishermen to trap whales more efficiently.

"Making a Living" coordinators found stories and slices of life from the New England states—Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont. Accompanying the traveling exhibition will be a special space where host libraries and historical societies can display the stories and documents of their own citizens.

The Jaffrey Public Library in New Hampshire, for example, will add the papers, belongings, and photographs that helped tell the story of its local hero, Amos Fortune, to the exhibition when it arrives in the spring of 1995. Within the library's collection are the handwritten receipts Fortune received when he purchased the freedom of his first and second wives, apprentice contracts from Fortune's tannery business, and copies of the popular 1950 children's book, *Amos Fortune, Free Man*, by Elizabeth Yates.

Nearly two hundred miles across the border in Ferrisburgh, Vermont, a local agricultural museum plans to display letters from the mid-1800s that discussed plans to bring escaped slaves from Pennsylvania and New York to the museum, which was once a sheep farm. Known as the Rokeby Museum, the eighteenth-century Federal-style house was once the home of Rowland D. Robinson, a writer and abolitionist who hired escaped slaves as domestic workers and farmhands.

The history of the African-American work experience in New England includes accounts of slavery. "One of the most surprising discoveries was that there were actually slaves working in gangs in fields of tobacco and other agricultural venues in Connecticut and Rhode Island," says Sarah Getty. "The general idea people have of slaves in New England—if they have any idea of them at all—is of someone working in a house carrying things around on a silver tray or being one of two or three farmhands."

In reality, black Americans sometimes fled to remote communities in an effort to escape abuse. A casual reference in a Maine guidebook led Marilyn



—Rhode Island Historical Society

*Portrait of Eleanor Eldridge from the title page of her memoirs, 1838. Eldridge, a Warwick, Rhode Island native, owned a successful wallpapering business.*

Richardson to Malaga Island, a half-mile-long island near the mouth of the New Meadows River where a racially mixed community of African American, Irish, Scotch, and Portuguese people lived during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Records of the Maine Historical Society revealed that most of the island's relatively poor residents were forcibly removed when the area was being considered for development as a resort. "The very poor fisherfolk and the racial mixture of Malaga gave the fancy resort area a less-than-sparkling reputation," Richardson says. "A number of people were declared mentally defective and moved to a hospital on the mainland. The entire island was eventually evacuated." Today, Malaga Island is a deserted island with no structures except a dilapidated fisherman's lean-to. The only remaining monument to the former residents is on the slope of a grassy hill on the hospital grounds, where their graves lie in a row of white markers.

It is the presentation of difficult stories such as Malaga Island that will motivate New Englanders to think and discuss and face their history, says Richardson, a former curator at the Museum of Afro American History. "You may have one person saying 'Ouch,

that really hurts,' and someone else saying, 'That's a fascinating part of history,' and that inevitably leads to a discussion that benefits both parties," she says. "It provokes thought and opens people's minds to the possibility that there is a lot more to learn about."

Sylvia Watts McKinney, executive director of the Museum of Afro American History, agrees that the "Making a Living" exhibition breaks new ground in its depiction of African Americans who are not necessarily a part of history books and classroom discussions. "There's a whole culture that is now being valued," she says. "A group of people who lost things as a result of slavery is now finding that history and having an appreciation for that history." □

*Laura Randall is a free-lance writer in Washington, D.C.*

*The New England Foundation for the Humanities received \$244,535 for a traveling exhibition, discussion programs, and a video from Public Humanities Projects of the Division of Public Programs.*

**"MAKING A LIVING: THE WORK  
EXPERIENCE OF AFRICAN  
AMERICANS IN NEW ENGLAND"**

**opens in January at the Museum of  
Afro American History in Boston.**

**In February it moves to the  
Connecticut Afro-American Historical  
Society and the New Haven Public  
Library in New Haven; the Rhode  
Island Black Heritage Society in  
Providence; and in Vermont to the  
Bixby Memorial Library in Vergennes  
and the Rokeby Museum in**

**Ferrisburgh. In April programs begin at  
the University of Maine at Presque Isle  
and at the Jaffrey Public Library in  
Jaffrey, New Hampshire.**



# The Door of *Golden Promise* Immigration

**O**NCE I THOUGHT TO WRITE THE HISTORY OF THE IMMIGRANTS IN AMERICA," wrote Oscar Handlin in *The Uprooted*. "Then I discovered that the immigrants were American history." In writing his immigration epic, Handlin only considered the "uprooted" of Europe. A new traveling exhibition series, "Many Peoples, One Land: The Oklahoma Experience," expands the historical lens to include immigrants from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Europe.

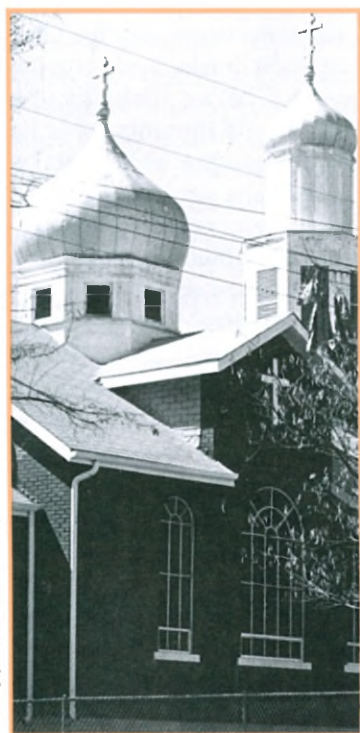
Each of the three exhibitions focuses on a different facet. "First Americans, First Oklahomans: Indian Peoples" tells the story of Oklahoma's Native Americans from ancient times to the present day. The exhibition explores the differences between tribal life in western and eastern Oklahoma through a look at customs, clothing, and lifestyles. Also considered is how forced life on the reservations affected plains-roving tribes like the Kiowa, Apache, and Comanche and their attempts to fight assimilation policies and preserve their cultures.

A second historical thread is picked up in the "Land of Promise: Europeans and African Americans in Oklahoma" exhibition. Life on the underdeveloped plains serves as a backdrop for an examination of the often complex European, African-American, and Indian relationships. Many tribes that held black slaves freed them at the end of the Civil War; some (Cherokee, Creek, and Seminole) admitted former slaves into tribal membership. "Land of Promise" also addresses segregation, which began to crumble with the opening of Oklahoma's universities to African Americans in the 1950s.

The immigration chronicle continues with the third exhibition, "Still the Golden Door: Oklahomans from Latin America, Asia, and the Middle East," which will be completed in late January. Influxes of groups from these regions have been continual since the mid-nineteenth century. Railroad building in the 1880s accelerated emigration from Latin America, particularly Mexico. While Asian immigration has been steady, the Vietnamese, who began arriving as refugees in 1975, now constitute the largest group. Although a small number of Middle Easterners came during the territorial years, the unsettled conditions following both world wars spurred their immigration to Oklahoma.

The exhibitions, curated by Dianna Everett, use photographs from the Oklahoma Historical Society and the Western History Collections at the University of Oklahoma Library.

"Many Peoples, One Land" is sponsored by the Oklahoma Foundation for the Humanities in cooperation



Courtesy of Oklahoma Historical Society.

Turn-of-the-century Ruthenian immigrants settling in Hartshorne, Oklahoma, used architectural elements from their homeland in building Saints Cyril and Methodius Russian Orthodox Church.

The Cristoforo Colombo Society Italian Band from Krebs, Oklahoma, 1905.

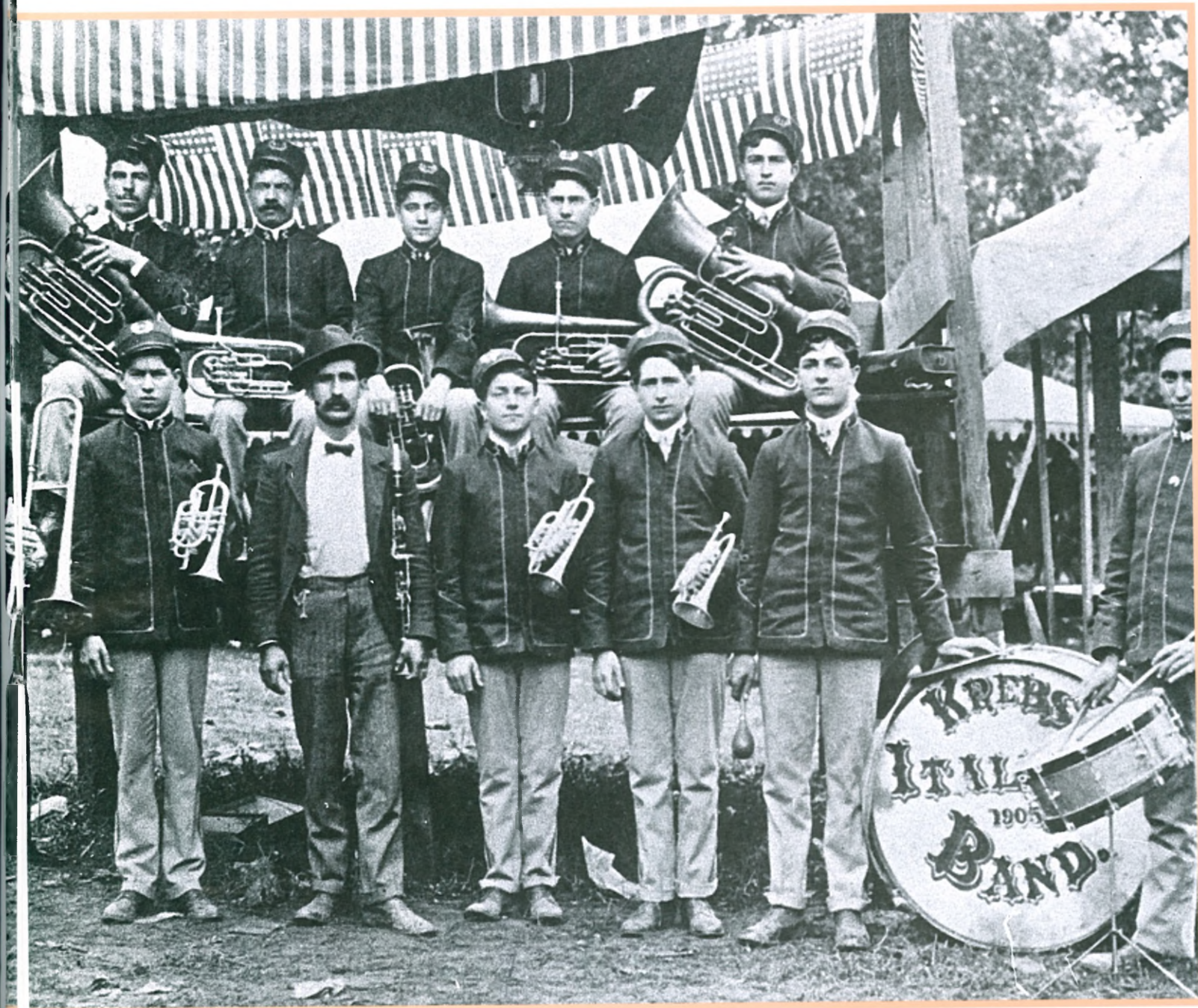


Courtesy of Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma



BY MEREDITH HINDLEY

# to *Oklahoma*





with the Oklahoma Historical Society. The exhibitions are circulated by TRACKS, the Foundation's traveling exhibition program, and coordinated by the Oklahoma Museums Association. The foundation received an NEH Exemplary Award Grant to develop the exhibitions.

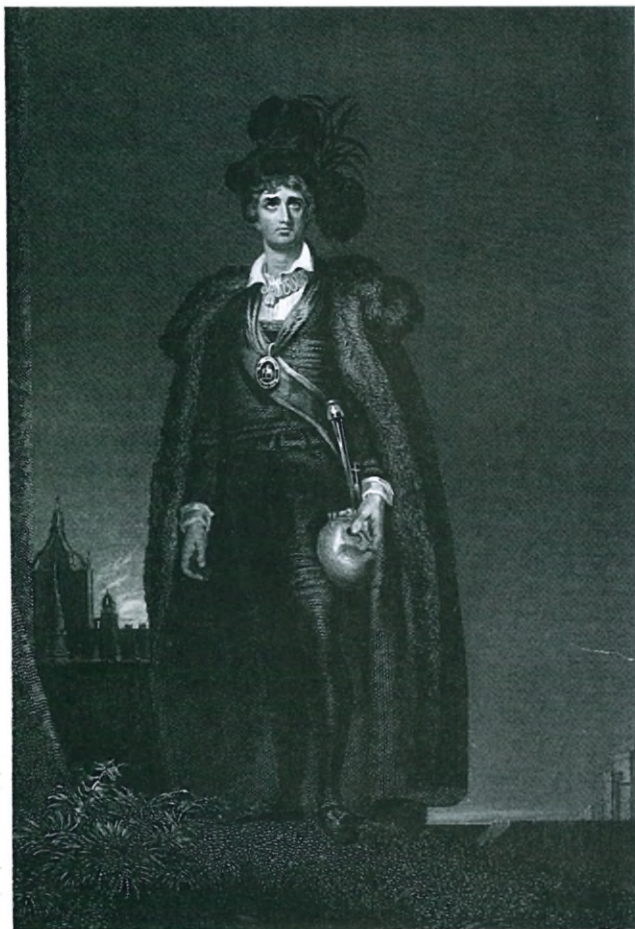
The impetus for "Many Peoples, One Land," according to Anita May, Oklahoma Foundation for the Humanities executive director, came in part from teachers. Oklahoma House Bill 1017 required that teachers provide students with multicultural learning opportunities, but many teachers felt frustrated by the limited materials available on ethnic groups. "Teachers are avid users of TRACKS, and they expressed a need for exhibitions which focused on ethnic issues," said May. "Partly it's their needs, but it's also a way for them to reach their students who are more diverse." To accompany the exhibitions, classroom materials have been developed.

While initially responding to the needs of educators, "Many Peoples, One Land" fills a broader role. "They tell a story that had never been told," says May. "The great thing is that the exhibits can go all over the state instead of staying in one place. It's essentially a traveling mini-institute of Oklahoma culture." The exhibitions are also going to be used in conjunction with NEH's National Conversation. Discussion starter kits have been developed and will be available for use in the host communities. □

## State By State

A roundup of activities by state humanities councils.

Compiled by Meredith Hindley



—Folger Shakespeare Library

A pre-performance lecture on *Hamlet* is part of the Alabama Shakespeare Festival's "Theatre in the Mind."

**ALABAMA**—"Made in Alabama: A State Legacy," an exhibition of nineteenth-century decorative arts, photography, and paintings by Alabama artisans runs from January 26 through March 26 at the Huntsville Museum of Art. Sponsored by the Birmingham Museum of Art, the exhibition is the culmination of a nine-year field survey of private and public collections to locate ceramics, coverlets, furniture, textiles, and other materials made in Alabama.

In cooperation with the Alabama Shakespeare Festival (ASF), the Foundation is sponsoring the sixth year of "Theatre in the Mind," a series of pre-performance lectures on productions in the current ASF season. Scholars, actors, production personnel, and audience members explore the issues and values reflected in both classic and contemporary drama. Productions include *Joe Turner Has Come and Gone*, *Hamlet*, and *Hansel and Gretel*. For more information, call 205-930-0540.

**ARIZONA**—The "Stepping-out: Social Attire of Territorial Tempe" exhibition opens at the Tempe Historical Museum in January. Using an arts and humanities perspective, "Stepping-out" interprets the historic clothing of central Arizona to provide insight into lifestyles

from the 1880s to 1911. Special events, lectures, and programs based on primary historical sources are also planned for the museum audience. For more information call 602-257-0335.

**CALIFORNIA**—The California Exhibition Resources Alliance (CERA), a program of the California Council for the Humanities, has begun circulating three new exhibitions to member museums throughout the state.

"No Laughing Matter: Political Cartoonists on the Environment" highlights more than 150 images by cartoonists from thirty countries. The exhibition, which explores how politically inspired art shapes awareness and concern for the natural environment, is at Ontario's Museum of History and Art through January 15.

"Faces of Destiny: Photographs from the 1898 Indian Congress in Omaha" brings together images from an extraordinary gathering of Native Americans. The exhibition continues at the Victory Valley Museum in Apple Valley through January 20.

The "Woven Vessels" exhibition considers the traditions of basket making and the evolution of the basket into nontraditional contemporary forms. The exhibition is on display at the Corona Public Library Heritage Room through February 25.

**ILLINOIS**—The College of Du Page's yearlong program to enhance public understanding and appreciation of the changes occurring in Eastern Europe continues. Events include a lecture series, discussions, recitals, and exhibitions.

The "Produce for Victory" exhibition featuring reproductions of World War II posters calling citizens to support the war effort through domestic production opens at the Peru Public Library on January 9 and runs through February 18. The library will also be hosting a World War II film and discussion series in conjunction with local companies who participated in wartime production.

**IOWA**—Cedar Falls Arts Alive and the Hearst Center for the Arts are taking an extended look at the life of Irish playwright Oscar Wilde. The basis for the exploration is a one-man play, *Oscar Wilde: An Evening Alone*, developed by actor/writer Robert Coyle and director Scott Smith. Reading/discussion programs at public libraries from January





Traditional and contemporary forms of basket making are explored in "Woven Vessels" at California's Contra Costa Public Library.

through March will prepare audiences for a series of free performances of *Oscar Wilde* in Cedar Falls and Mason City. Post-performance talkbacks led by scholars in history, literature, and theater will be used to refine the script. The talkbacks will also emphasize the relevance of Wilde's turn-of-the-century encounters with censorship and intolerance to contemporary issues. By involving both scholars and public audiences in the creation of the one-man play, the project hopes to bring academic and community perspectives to the topic.

**LOUISIANA**—The Louisiana History Symposium, sponsored by the Louisiana State Museum, is a three-part series complementing the new Louisiana history exhibition in the Cabildo. Lecture topics include "The Cabildo, Town Council to City Landmark" on January 24 and "Reconstruction in Louisiana" on March 11.

"The Road to the Promised Land," sponsored by the New Orleans Public Library, links the national and New Orleans Civil Rights movements through two interpretive exhibitions, a symposium on local civil rights history, and programs for children. "The Road to the Promised Land" exhibition, produced by the Texas Humanities Resource Center, provides the national perspective. A second exhibition

*The effects of the collapse of the Berlin Wall and other changes in Eastern Europe are considered in a yearlong program sponsored by Illinois' College of DuPage.*

surveys the New Orleans desegregation movement and documents the law suits to desegregate the public schools, playgrounds, and airport. Featured are key individuals such as attorneys A. P. Tureaud and Lolis Elie and federal judge J. Skelly Wright. The exhibitions and programs run from January 13 through March 13.

The "Space: Old and New Worlds" program, sponsored by the Meadows Museum of Art at Centenary College in Shreveport, hosts internationally known science fiction writer Ray Bradbury on February 21. Also featured is "Project Space," an interpretive exhibition by futurist artist Robert McCall.

**MARYLAND**—"Women First for 135 Years," a pictorial exhibition created to commemorate the 135th anniversary of the YWCA of the United States, runs through the end of January at the Baltimore Museum of Industry. The exhibition surveys the history of "women's work for women" on issues relating to health, housing, the workplace, diversity, and leadership by using archival documents, photographs, and artifacts. The YWCA of Greater Baltimore is sponsoring three programs to accompany the exhibition: a January 8 program addressing the histories of working women in the city; a January 15 discussion of the historical role of African-American women in social reforms; and a January 22 workshop on techniques used to document organizational history, preserve documents, and collect oral histories. For more information call the Baltimore Museum of Industry at 410-727-4808.

**MICHIGAN**—The people, traditional cultures, and indigenous architecture of West Africa are illuminated in a photography exhibition at the Lee Hall Gallery of Northern Michigan University in Marquette. The exhibition runs from January 9 through 31 before traveling to other sites in the state. Serving as a prelude to Black History Month, a public discussion program coincides with the exhibition.

To help communities mark Black History Month, the Michigan Humanities Council has made available prepackaged resources for thematic programs



—Johns Hopkins University News and Information Service.



on African-American heritage and African history and culture.

**MINNESOTA**—*Braided Lives: An Anthology of Multicultural American Writing*, a cooperative effort of the Minnesota Council of Teachers and the Minnesota Humanities Commission, is now in its fourth printing. The anthology was created to be used in classrooms and libraries.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE**—The New Hampshire Humanities Council continues its statewide literary project "What Is New Hampshire Reading this Month?" with Stephen Vincent Benet's *The Devil and Daniel Webster* in January. February features Lorene Cary's *Black Ice*. A number of activities are centered around the text of the month, including library discussion programs and special bookstore informational displays. Articles by scholars and writers commenting on the books appear statewide in newspapers, and channel 11 and other radio and television outlets feature special programs. For more information call 603-224-4071.

**NEW JERSEY**—The New Jersey Council for the Humanities will be giving five week-long residential teacher development seminars in 1995 with the support of a U.S. Department of Education grant. The goal of the New Jersey Teacher Institute is to provide instruction combined with follow-up activities designed to bring educators into contact with humanities scholars, current research, and diverse resources. In addition to the residential seminars, the institute has three other components: the Teachers' Grant Fund, for teachers and other educators to develop in-service humanities programs for their colleagues; the *Content Resources Guide*, a listing of printed materials, audio- and videotapes, and hands-on learning opportunities, and the *Directory of Professional Development Resources* in New Jersey, which will be a summary of information about professional development opportunities available.

**NEW MEXICO**—Forty-two photographs comprise "Nuestras Mujeres: Españas in New Mexico, 1880-1990," an exhibition showcasing Hispanic women in New Mexico. Accompanying the exhibition are public programs by scholars and members of the community on social, cultural, and family history. Eastern New Mexico University's College of

# Braided Lives

**G**uided by the belief that students from all backgrounds could be rewarded by reading and studying cross-cultural literature, the Minnesota Humanities Commission and the Minnesota Council of Teachers produced *Braided Lives: An Anthology of Multicultural American Writing*. The anthology features poems and short fiction from more than forty authors. In the introduction to the section on Native American literature, Diane Glancy, the daughter of an English-German mother and a part-Cherokee father, considers what it means to be a Native American—past and present.

## "The Fire Dragon and Sweat: An Introductory Essay"

What can be said of the Native American? A diverse collection of those-who-were-here-when-the-others-came. Seemingly fragmented and broken. Some now mixed with other races. Those-who-lost-in-the-nineteenth-century-battle-for-land. Actually it was disease that conquered the Indian. Smallpox. Cholera. Measles. And the loss of buffalo, which resulted in starvation. The white man killed off millions of buffalo in a ten-year period.

So what's left of those-who-walk-in-two-worlds? Those-who-walk-on-the-outside? What do you do anyway when two cultures meet head on?

A little native blood probably runs everywhere.

What of the heart that beats in this literature? The words that close the teepee-flap, the wigwam, wickiup, and longhouse door of life as it was on the plains and woodlands and southwest desert? Until 1890 anyway. And open the reservation four-wall, the woodshed, the urban apartment?

In the old days, literature was the oral tradition and the teepee-lining painted with exploits of the individual and the tribe. Even the name of the person, the clothing and marks of body paint, told a story. Now literature is poems and stories that record the action and characters and themes of Native American life.

Stories of resilience, defiance, power, vision, toughness, pain, loss, anger, sarcasm, a humiliation built on welfare, a humor built on irony.

There is awareness of nature and the spirit world. Respect of elders. Families. Children running everywhere. Tell-me-who-your-relatives-are-and-I-will-tell-you-who-you-are.

A way of life that involves sharing and relationships. Stories in which time is not always linear, but circular, and not so hurried and defined as white-time.

There is a paradox: isolation yet community. A fierce sense of privacy, yet the love of dress and show. A caring for Mother Earth and the warning against pollution, yet a littered campground after powwow. There is also the importance of family, yet fathers and mothers who can't live together and share responsibilities.

The Indian faced extermination or acculturation. They are those-who-stood-in-the-way-when-others-came-to-take-the-land. Those-who-would-never-belong. Those-who-are-aliens-on-their-own-land. Who run from the police and social workers. Who know hopelessness and poverty, alcoholism and purposefulness.

The worst is visible on inner-city streets and dusty reservation roads. The best is visible in ceremonial costume on powwow grounds. In those who-live-both-in-their-own-culture-and-in-this-world-that-is.

I remember seeing an Indian lawyer in her braids and geometric-design Pendleton wool jacket. Way to go, I thought. She was in a Minneapolis

St. Paul, Minnesota, artist Amy Condova created *All My Relations* as an illustration for the multicultural anthology *Braided Lives*.



courtroom defending other Indians in trouble for drunkenness and disorderliness. There are many others who work and run businesses while keeping the tradition of spiritual beliefs and ceremonies that make people strong.

They survive the trouble with this world. Settings of not-enough-rain or too-much-snow. Like the mixture of "Christian holy water and thunderclouds," in Leslie Silko's "The Man to Send Rain Clouds." They have legs that walk between the noise of traffic and the silence of the prairie.

I like to see Indians at powwows in lawn chairs eating snow cones. Indians concerned with tribal elections, bingo, bowling leagues, veterans' reunions, and doing what most Americans do. Driving vans. Playing basketball. Teens maybe thinking of going to college, but afraid to leave the family group. Adults worried about economic stability.

It's the new electronic Indian tuned into video and TV.

Still about the business of assimilation or holding out for tradition only. Sometimes uncomfortable with one another.

There's not one "Indian-ness" after all, but hundreds of tribes differing in language, government, custom, and belief. Sometimes I see another Indian and feel self-conscious. We're supposed to be one, yet we have little in common. Often I don't know what to say.

Sometimes there are even disagreements within groups about how to live.

It seems, overall, the new war cry is to "use your mind to beat the distance," as the young runner says in Barry Milliken's story. The new warriors are those who face their lives in homes and offices and school gymnasiums and ceremonial grounds with courage and endurance and imagination.

It takes both magic and sweat. The fire dragon of Roberta Hill Whiteman's story

and the hard work of Barry Milliken's "Run." I can dream and imagine the good road ahead, but I also need the discipline to set goals and strive to achieve them. Vision and work. The sense of being a real person in this world-that-is. □

*Reprinted from Braided Lives: An Anthology of Multicultural American Writing with the permission of the Minnesota Humanities Commission. Copies are available from Burgess International Group distributors at 1-800-356-6826.*



Arts and Sciences in Portales hosts the exhibition through the end of January. It reopens at the New Mexico State University Museum in Las Cruces on February 2 and runs through March 30. For additional information call 505-277-3705.

**OKLAHOMA**—Western historian Patricia Nelson Limerick delivers the ninth Oklahoma Lecture in the Humanities on February 25. Limerick's work focuses on the role of women and ethnic minorities in the development of the American West. Her speech will be preceded by a day-long symposium at the Cowboy Hall of Fame on ethnic and minority settlement and heritage in the West. The exhibition "Many Peoples, One Land: The Oklahoma Experience," chronicling immigration of various ethnic groups into Oklahoma, will also be on display. See page 42. For information call 405-235-0280.

**PUERTO RICO**—"Las Identidades Socioculturales, la Juventud y la Música" ("Youth, Music, and Cultural Identities") continues its series of presentations throughout the island. Using the award-winning documentary *Cocolos y Rockeros*, the project, organized by the University of Puerto Rico, seeks to promote discussion among high school students on how the tendency to identify themselves as either "cocolos" (fans of salsa music) or "rockeros" (fans of rock music) reflects their perception of their cultural identity.

The project "Lógica Filosófica: Aplicaciones Educativas para el Desarrollo del Pensamiento Crítico" ("Logic: Educational Applications for the Development of Critical Thinking"), which is creating software to develop critical thinking skills in college-level students, enters its second phase during the month of February. During this phase, the prototype will be tested and revised. The project is organized in collaboration with Sacred Heart University.

**RHODE ISLAND**—The "Feast Your Mind" series offers Rhode Island businesses the opportunity to present humanities programs to their employees. Six different topics are available, including World War II propaganda, Rhode Island history, and the American justice system. The activities within each series are varied. Sample programs include a lecture and discussion on the American family, a dramatic presentation about state founders Roger



Williams and Anne Hutchinson, and a conversation about a short story recorded on tape. "Feast Your Mind" presentations are available free of charge to any business in the state.

**SOUTH CAROLINA**—Beaufort hosts the South Carolina Humanities Festival from January 27 through 29. Festival activities consist of tours of the Penn Center and St. Helena Island, youth-oriented performances and storytelling, humanities projects fair, grant-writing workshop, and panel discussions with scholars and practitioners. The 1994 Governor's Awards in the Humanities will also be presented during the festival. The annual three-day event in Beaufort is cosponsored by the South Carolina Humanities Council and the Arts Council of Northern Beaufort County.

**SOUTH DAKOTA**—The South Dakota Humanities Council is currently signing up people interested in exploring Native-American culture through the "Braided Lives Multicultural Reading Series" this spring. Participants will read Ella Deloria's *Water Lily*, a historical look at a Native American community, and Elizabeth Cook-Lynn's *From the River's Edge*, a contemporary tale about the effects of the federal government's damming of the Missouri River on Native Americans in South Dakota.

Rapid City, Yankton, and Sioux Falls will be taking part in "Writing Life" reading circles that look at families in literature. Through the program, which is funded by grants from the National Book Foundation and the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, readers examine the works of living authors who have won the National Book Award. Each community considers the nature and meaning of family by reading three of the six books selected by the National Book Foundation. Those books include *Wartime Lies* by Louis Begley, *Common Ground: A Turbulent Decade in the Lives of Three American Families* by J. Anthony Lukas, *Rabbit Is Rich* by John Updike, *Housekeeping* by Marilynne Robinson, *The Homeplace* by Marilyn Nelson Waniek, and Gloria Naylor's *The Women of Brewster Place*.

**TEXAS**—"The Heritage of Islam," the focus of this year's "Creative Mind" lecture series at Amarillo College, examines the economic, political, and religious structures of Islam. Lecture

topics include: religious principles and practices of Islam; the history of the movement of Islam across the world; the role of women in Islam as portrayed through literature; and the influence of the Spanish Islamic arts in the artistic motifs of the American Southwest. The Texas Humanities Resource Center's new exhibition, "Istanbul," will be on display from February 16 through March 7 in conjunction with the lecture series. In addition, a writers' project will encourage participants to submit materials for editing and publication following the series.

The "Creative Mind" series begins on January 19 with a noon discussion and evening lecture by Dr. Peter Awn, professor of Islamic religion and comparative Religion at Columbia University. February lectures feature Yale University history professor Dr. Abbas Amanat speaking on the historical development of Islam and Dr. Sara Suleri Goodyear, also of Yale, addressing the role of women in Islam. In March, Dr. Margaret Henderson Floyd, architectural historian at Tufts University, will give the final lecture on Islam's influence on the arts of the Spanish Southwest.

**VERMONT**—Vermont's most famous U.S. president, "Silent Cal," breaks out of the stereotype of the cranky Yankee and manifests his integrity, character, and political astuteness in a one-man historical presentation by actor and writer Jim Cooke. The Vermont Council on the Humanities, in partnership with the Coolidge Foundation, presents "Calvin Coolidge: More Than Two Words," a free public performance at the Vermont State House in Montpelier on Wednesday evening, March 8, in the chamber of the House of Representatives. With wit, humor, and insight, Cooke's presentation challenges the myths of various New Deal historians and scholars. The performance will be prefaced with a special introduction by retired U.S. Senator Robert Stafford.

Vermont's early-age reading programs, collectively entitled "Beginning with Mother Goose," help parents foster the necessary skills and a love of reading in children. See page 49.

**WISCONSIN**—"Normalcy? . . . Never Again: Eau Claire and Its Neighbors in the 1920s" is a series of Chippewa Valley Museum public programs exploring issues and events of the 1920s and their effects on west central Wis-

consin communities. The memories of the region's oldest residents, artifacts, and archival resources are being used to create eight exhibitions, two lecture/reading/discussion series, and a workshop series on exhibition creation. The Chippewa Valley Museum is collaborating on the project with scholars and six other local organizations.

"The Progressive Legacy: The Political History of Wisconsin since 1945," a project sponsored by the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point, explores the legacy of the Progressive reform movement and its role in Wisconsin politics and society. Political figures who made Wisconsin history and academics who study it will participate in twelve panel discussions held from February through May 1995. "The Progressive Legacy" hopes to encourage consideration of the way in which Wisconsin society has drawn upon its traditions to address contemporary concerns and face the future. For information call 608-262-0706.

**WYOMING**—Ethete's Arapaho Cultural Museum is conducting the "Arapaho Culture and Language Immersion Project," a total-immersion language program for children age three to five. The project teaches Arapaho children from Wyoming's Wind River Reservation to speak their native language. Each weekday morning, the children receive three hours of instruction geared toward the growth and development of their cognitive and speaking ability in Arapaho. The structured learning environment allows children to interact with both tribal native-language instructors and each other in the Arapaho language.

"The Cultural Fallout of World War II," Casper College's four-day symposium, considers the impact of the Second World War on culture. In the symposium, which runs from February 20 through 24, scholars will discuss the legacy of the war on art, architecture, literature, historiography, music, and political culture. Events in conjunction with the symposium include "Wyoming Experiences World War II," an exhibition at the Casper College Library; a performance of Arthur Miller's play, *All My Sons*; and a critical discussion of the film *Day After Trinity*. For more information call 307-766-6496. □



# Connecting Through Mother Goose

## Early-Age Reading in Vermont

Beginning with Mother Goose" is part of the Vermont Council on the Humanities' broad initiative to create a literate community in Vermont by the year 2000. The series was developed by the Vermont Center for the Book, the Vermont Department of Libraries, and the council and seeks to incorporate books into family life from the day a child is born.

Three different programs comprise the "Mother Goose" series:

- "Beginning with Mother Goose." The namesake program is designed for parents of children from birth to age three and emphasizes books that are fun as a means of bringing parents and children together. The eleven books include Mother Goose rhymes, which play to a child's love of nonsense, and stories like *Where's Spot?*, which asks a child to participate in the search for a lost puppy.

- "Growing with Mother Goose." This series uses classics like *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* and modern works, such as *Strega Nona*, to engage children from ages three to five. The ten-book collection provides children and parents with opportunities to read, think, and talk about age-appropriate issues like "getting my way" and "needing each other."

- "Mother Goose Asks Why?" Geared toward three-to-seven-year-olds, the program awakens children to the fact their lives are filled with science. Through eight different works, including ancient folk tales and a look at the first air crossing of the English Channel in *The Glorious Flight*, children learn that everyone in their own way is a scientist.

With the guidance of professionals, parents and other adults gather for three or four sessions to discuss the program's books, share tips, and acquire information on reading with children. They learn how to use rhythm, rhyme, word play, and activity to stimulate the child's interest in language and stories, while developing communication skills. Adults also learn to use games and activities to prepare children to become readers, techniques to bring stories "alive," and receive assistance in choosing books for preschool children and creating home libraries. Program participants get to keep the books used in each program enabling them to continue reading with their children.

To promote the program and foster support in the business community, the Council has teamed up with Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility. Also, during the fall of 1994, an important alliance was formed with the Vermont Agency of Human Services to begin work on a comprehensive statewide initiative to involve teen mothers in the "Mother Goose" series. The aim is to help new families develop into reading families. □

—Meredith Hindley



Participants learn new ways to introduce children to science during a "Mother Goose Asks Why?" in Newport, Vermont.

—Photo by Craig Line, courtesy of Vermont Council on the Humanities.

I often challenge parents about their priorities. Would you let a day pass without feeding your child? Would you send your child to bed dirty? Of course not. Would you let a day pass without reading to your child? As parents, we hug our children and tell

them we love them, and thereby nourish their hearts; we clothe them and feed them, and thereby nourish their bodies; we must read to them, and thereby nourish their imaginations and souls.

The biggest satisfaction, of course, is the personal stories of participants relating how books have impacted their family: the illiterate mom and her two preschool children whose favorite family activity is listening to a tape recorded version of Read-aloud Rhymes for the Very Young; the single dad

who has turned off the television, once a constant companion for his two young daughters, and now sets aside daily reading time; and the young couple who had never been to a library before their first "Mother Goose" program, but are now regular visitors—she struggles to read picture books to her preschool son and infant daughter and he has begun tutoring with ABE in order to join them in reading.

Little things perhaps, but to me exciting.

—Morgan Coutts Irons,  
"Mother Goose" leader.

Excerpted from the fall 1994 newsletter of the Vermont Council on the Humanities and reprinted with permission.



## Conversation

(Continued from pages 10 and 11)

**STYRON:** Yes.

**HACKNEY:** Is it possible to link a representation of that sort of history, which includes conflict, with entertainment?

**STYRON:** That's a point I tried to make in the relatively small amount of writing I've done about this Disney project. It seems to me, with the confusion that Disney has about its own aims, there's no way that I can be persuaded that Disney is going to lure people to a theme park for a solemn understanding of American history. We know from the nature of people, in this country especially, that people flee as if from the plague anything that is going to be educa-

tive. People do not flock in vast numbers, at least the vast numbers that would justify Disney's existence, to enterprises which are going to educate people. They will, however, flock in droves to places which are going to entertain them. And the point you just made seems to me the most serious aspect of the whole thing.

A friend of mine, without too much cynicism, likened the Disney claim to be bringing people to education as being something done in the same spirit as the pornographers who advertise their tapes as being methods

whereby one can learn sexual techniques in a kind of educative fashion. We know that people buy those tapes to be erotically aroused. The same thing happens, I think, with Disney. They are going to advertise their projects as being vehicles whereby people will learn, but in reality we know they are going to go to a Disney theme park to be entertained. This is where I think anyone who believes that the history is going to be serious at a Disney theme park is under a delusion.

**HACKNEY:** To play devil's advocate for a second, if I were on the Disney team, I might say, Mr. Styron, you have made your living out of entertaining people with versions of history, particularly *Nat Turner* and *Sophie's Choice*, which are really rooted in a particular history. And your other work as well is sort of rooted in time and place, even *Lie Down in Darkness* to an extent. So what is the difference between what you do as a novelist and what Disney might do in presenting history?

**STYRON:** Well, I think there's a vast difference in that there's a huge gap between the contemplation of history through the written word or even, I might add, in learning about the history of the Civil War through a remarkable TV series like that of Ken Burns.

**HACKNEY:** Now you've got me at a soft spot, since that's our project. It was wonderful, wasn't it?

**STYRON:** Yes. I think that there's a world of difference between the contemplation of history in a four-hundred-page novel or a nine-hour-whatever-it-was seriously

to draw out larger meanings that yet do no violence to the complexities. Popularizers have to make the past more accessible to people who only have half an hour or half a day or in some cases only half a minute to learn the intended history lesson.

**HACKNEY:** Should museums take a stand, not simply on controversial issues or contemporary issues, but should a museum present a highly interpretive version of its subject, whatever that subject might be—in your case, eighteenth-century Virginia?

**CARSON:** I believe yes, it should. The other question is, should it always? There I have to fall back and say that museums are complex institutions, complex teachers. They do different things at different times. Sometimes the intent of an interpretation or presentation is primarily to pass along information, realizing, of course, that the selection of information is itself a form of interpretation. Other times a museum's purpose is openly celebratory, to present history in ways that make people both understand and feel good about something—an important part of creating the myths, the accepted truths, that we call our national history.

It is also very important, it seems to me, for museums to enter into this discourse that a democracy has to have with itself about those issues that remain unresolved and which can be informed in part by taking a historical perspective. And while museum historians should certainly show respect for those who hold other opinions, they make their most valid contribution if they take a point of view and try to present that point of view as persuasively as they can.

**HACKNEY:** Would a museum have an obligation to make the viewer, the audience, aware that there are competing interpretations?

**CARSON:** That can be done. I don't think equal time is the answer for every exhibition. You might ask instead, does the institution itself have an obligation to present different points of view at different times? I think the answer to that depends on the institution. Yes, I believe the Smithsonian does have an obligation on one hand to celebrate the history of westward expansion, for instance, and, on the other, to present a provocative point of view as the National Museum of American Art did three or four years ago in the exhibition

*People do not flock in vast numbers, at least the vast numbers that would justify Disney's existence, to enterprises which are going to educate people.*

—Styron

Continued on page 52



called "The West as America." The Smithsonian does both.

Now, what about Colonial Williamsburg? We're a single historic site. We have really only one exhibit—the restored town. We therefore have to make choices that necessarily exclude other choices.

We have to withstand criticism from people who say, "I did not find my point of view presented at your museum."

**HACKNEY:** Do you get that sometimes?

**CARSON:** Oh, sure.

**HACKNEY:** You mentioned contemporary social issues and how historical museums and presentations can illuminate current problems. Gender and race issues come to mind particularly, I guess, because frequently advocates of one point of view or another will point out that our founding fathers left a lot of Americans out. How does Williamsburg handle that criticism or that problem?

**CARSON:** By conceding that it's true. They did leave them out. Each age values some things and some people more than others. Other people it discounts or simply doesn't include in its perceptions. But it's pointless to go back and lay blame on people who were part of another time, another world view.

**HACKNEY:** Yes. Anachronism gone wild.

**CARSON:** Anachronisms can, of course, provide a very instructive contrast to what we think is important today. I can give you an example. We present a program at Colonial Williamsburg called "White Goes First." Small audiences in a one-room theater watch and overhear an extended exchange between an actor playing Thomas Jefferson and another playing Jefferson's slave, Jupiter. The action of this little playlet revolves around Jupiter's claim that he, too, can play chess. His boast and his master's disbelief become an opportunity to explore Jefferson's attitudes on the innate inferiority of blacks, his fundamental belief that Jupiter did not have the intellectual equipment to play this game. The point of the program is not to diminish the reputation of Thomas Jefferson. Instead, we deliberately use the legendary reputation of the man to open up and explore something that seems profoundly wrong to everyone in the audience. Nobody who sees the show really thinks that Jupiter, a highly intelligent, canny slave, couldn't learn to play chess.

Indeed, he shows in the course of the sketch that he does know how to play chess, that he's observed his master so often that he's picked up everything.

The encounter opens up people's minds to the question, how could a man as intelligent as Thomas Jefferson have held such racist views? And that question becomes the starting point for a discourse that interpreters have with visitors, visitors have with themselves, parents have with the families that have accompanied them, and ideally all visitors have with things that they read or see after they've left Colonial Williamsburg. It's all about learning how we got from back there to where we are now.

***It seems to me  
that many  
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public teachers  
of history are  
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their punches to  
avoid giving  
offense...***

*—Carson*

**HACKNEY:** The other function of a perception like that is that it ought to bring to us an awareness that we ourselves harbor world views or moral values that in a hundred years are going to look very bad. It really is a humbling experience if one can make that transition from the inadequacies of the past to perhaps inadequacy of the present.

**CARSON:** Often nowadays matters of race, class, gender, and religion challenge people's sensitivities. It seems to me that many museums and public

teachers of history are tempted to pull their punches to avoid giving offense—either by not portraying the past as professional historians really understand it, or by not addressing its obvious implications for the present and the future. I understand their concern, but I think it's misplaced. When museums are presenting history at the edge of public discourse, out there where ideas and opinions are still taking shape, it's important that we bring candor and reason to bear on these arguments. Sensitivities simply get in the way. If our museums make a conscious decision to mount an exhibition that deals with a provocative and controversial subject, then we've got to be prepared to offend certain people's delicate feelings, their sensibilities.

**HACKNEY:** You're going to consciously take that risk.

**CARSON:** That's right. As long as we're civil and empathetic, as long as we show respect, we must accept that we're likely to hurt some people's feelings.

**HACKNEY:** Isn't it easier to do that if you work for a well-endowed institution or some other sort of institution rather than one which really has to make the public enjoy the experience? I'm thinking of the Holocaust Museum, which is not an enjoyable experience, but an absolutely fantastic one.

**CARSON:** It may be true for those of us who work for national institutions that it's easier to address these larger issues that can draw criticism, can hurt some people's feelings. On the other hand, I know some local historical societies that deal surprisingly honestly with such issues. There are ways it can be done, ways to prepare audiences beforehand for what they're going to see and hear.

At Colonial Williamsburg, for example, we give some of our programs PG-13 ratings to alert parents that they contain grown-up themes.

**HACKNEY:** Do you really?

Another thing that fascinates me about your business is the issue of interpretation in general, but also how you present historical change over time—how you represent what changes, but also how you explain why it changes—and whether that can be done in a museum setting or by Disney. Or are the forces of change so abstract



executed TV series like *The Civil War*, and a theme park in which people are submitted to swift, entertaining jolts of what has to be, to my mind, pseudohistory. I just don't think that there's any comparison. Certainly a writer who is dealing with historical themes in novels is, by his very nature, attempting to be entertaining on a certain level. But as I say, there's a huge difference between the contemplation of, let us say, one hundred fifty thousand words of a novel and a twenty-minute jolt of entertainment.

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of history.*

—Styron

tious celebration of American history in the form of bad novels, superficial movies, and so on, which tell us how wonderful we are, when in reality we aren't all that wonderful. That, to me, is another danger in the motivations behind the Disney project. It's the idea that in making people feel wonderful, which is what undoubtedly they will try to do, they will utterly shirk the bleak and dark underside of history.

**HACKNEY:** I should be more explicit about my own feelings. I think that one can deal with the bleak and dark underside of American history in conjunction with its triumph and come out feeling proud of being an American, in fact absolutely exultant about the promise of American life and what it is in human history. But if one sets about at the outset to simply make people feel good, then I think there is some danger there.

**STYRON:** You end up with Yankee Doodle Dandy, which is, of course, what the popular representation of history in America has in general been—a false celebration of our virtues and an overlooking of this dark underside. I don't mean to say that there hasn't been, even in the entertainment, in movies, a kind of revisionism, which is to say that for many years the "red-skin" was considered the villain and we have reversed that trend in recent years. It still remains, however, a black-and-white representation of American history rather than the subtle play of moral tensions, which is really at the bottom of this whole thing.

**HACKNEY:** Exactly. Well, I thank you very much for this. □

**HACKNEY:** It's the level of subtlety and detail.

**STYRON:** Yes. By its very nature, a theme park is going to be superficial. I know that I'm being premature. I cannot prove this. Disney could work one of their miracles, which on certain other levels they often do, and I could be disproved, but my own feeling is that this is an impossibility.

**HACKNEY:** Disney has said that it would, in the theme park, celebrate American history and provide a sense of pride in Americans who go there. How does one do that? Is it possible to do that and remain completely faithful to the record?

**STYRON:** Right there, there's immediate danger in celebrating. For years there's been facti-

that they're really hard to represent to the public?

**CARSON:** They can be dealt with. Again it depends on the medium. I envy gallery-type history museums because they are not bound to a single time or place as those of us who interpret historic sites are. A curator planning a show to be presented in a gallery can bite off as much time as she wants to. The exhibit can start as far back as seems useful, and visitors can follow change from the beginning to the end of the exhibit. A very fine show that deals with both causes and consequences is "Field to Factory" at the National Museum of American History. Visitors begin the exhibit by experiencing life in the South. They see and hear about conditions that, as they proceed through the exhibit, they're led to believe prompted black people to pull up stakes and go North. And then, in the latter parts of the exhibit, they encounter the consequences of those decisions. Visitors learn about both causes and results. That's harder for us to do at Colonial Williamsburg, a town that's been restored largely to the third quarter of the eighteenth century. We use various literary devices of flashing back and of flashing forward to help visitors understand both the origins and later developments. As museum historians come to appreciate that they are artists creating responsible fictions, they're discovering that they can be as inventive as novelists and filmmakers in finding ways to help visitors understand beginnings, middles, and ends.

**HACKNEY:** That's right. Historians basically tell stories. But there are conventional tests of the truth. They're trying to represent the truth.

**CARSON:** As we understand it.

**HACKNEY:** As we understand it, I mean, whatever the truth means. But it's a very different goal. The novelist is after a truth of a sort.

**CARSON:** That's where I think our work really is quite similar. The best history always grasps for truths that are not simply matters of fact.

**HACKNEY:** I agree with that totally. But there are constraints not only of individual fact, but of rational connections, of causation that you have to honor as you put the story together.



**CARSON:** And we try to do that. But with a difference. The novelist's media are words, and words in a way are a luxury. Writers can arrange them in ways that deliberately lead readers along a train of thought that the authors carefully lay out in sentences, paragraphs, and chapters.

Museums operate somewhat differently. Yes, we too use words—in labels and verbally in spoken interpretations. But we all know that when people come to museums, they are conditioned by prior visits to other museums to learn mostly by what they can see. They expect a visual experience. Or, to put it another way, we know we're not very effective at teach-

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That's where the  
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—Carson

ing what people can't see. So our primary media are pictures, artifacts, and images. We know we have to deal first with their emotional reaction to those images. That's where the train of thought starts in a history museum. People see, then feel in response to what they've seen.

From there we ask ourselves, how do we get them to use those images and those self-impressions to begin thinking about what it is we want them to think about? We usually fall back on words, either spoken or written, to bring them to that third stage.

After stocking their minds with images of the past and implanting in their hearts feelings that those images have evoked, we often pass them on to the next popular history teacher they encounter in this very messy process of continually learning and relearning about the past. We have to trust that their visit to our museum will start them thinking in ways they enlarge on later.

**HACKNEY:** That's an interesting view. You now have film techniques, the creation of virtual reality and hemispheric theaters, all sorts of fancy devices that you can use. But all of those primarily work best on the emotions and on giving people stores of images, and you still are always going to have the problem of making the leap from the verisimilitude of the experience to thinking about it.

**CARSON:** That's right. And there are many, many ways in which popular historians try to do that. The one we fall back on all too readily is the mini-lecture. Before visitors get away from us, we frequently try to convert their museum experience into a classroom experience. We try to sum up for them. We encourage them to take away the guidebook. Since they haven't had time to read it at the museum, we encourage them to take it home and convert the visual experience into a reading experience.

**HACKNEY:** Even a set or list of interpretive questions would be good. I was thinking of the Ken Burns *Civil War* documentary on film, which I think is wonderful. It is pretty straightforward. It certainly selects some things rather than others and orders the experience for the viewer, but it's a pretty straightforward narrative and does not get into a lot of interpretive matters.

**CARSON:** No? I thought his version of the *Civil War* was highly interpreted. He portrayed it as a great national tragedy. I remember that Barbara Fields, one of the commentators, didn't regard it as a tragedy. Her comment was, "Well, that depends on whether you're white or black."

**HACKNEY:** Yes.

**CARSON:** But by arguing the tragedy thesis, Ken Burns started people thinking. The series started African Americans thinking, "Well, was it such a tragedy for *my* people?" Many whites were aware that their African-American neighbors were thinking this, and that caused them to reconsider Ken Burns's interpretation in a different light.

**HACKNEY:** Maybe that's the genius of a great documentary filmmaker or a great museum director.

**CARSON:** It is where genius is to be looked for in media that are not linear.

**HACKNEY:** What do you mean by not linear?

**CARSON:** Where the conclusion—what it all means—is not presented explicitly on the last page. Try as museum historians will, we cannot control how people experience our museums. Historic sites are the most open-ended of all. Gallery exhibitions exert a little more control in that there is an entrance and an exit, and most visitors see the show in that order. Even so, they seldom read every label. They bounce around like a pinball. A film is more linear because you're sitting there passively and letting a storyteller tell you a story with a beginning, a middle, and an end. Of course, books are most linear of all, books and classroom lectures.

These are challenges for those of us who work for these very undisciplined history-teaching institutions. We want to help visitors to reach useful conclusions, we want to help them begin the thinking process even though we can control the educational experience only very imperfectly.

**HACKNEY:** It is a great challenge for anyone who presents history to the public: to give them something with which to think and then to provoke them somehow into using it in thinking about their past.

Thank you very much, Cary. This has been most enjoyable. □



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		*National and multi-state projects    **Other projects

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Special Competition: The National Conversation • <i>Timothy Meagher 606-8272</i> .....	January 27, 1995	July 1, 1995
.....	April 28, 1995	September 1, 1995
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