

1991

Iannone, Carol: Letters Opposing Nomination of (1991): Correspondence 04

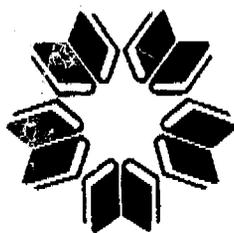
Stanley N. Katz

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**ACLS****Stanley N. Katz**
President

April 1, 1991

The Honorable Claiborne Pell
Committee on Labor and Human Resources
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510-6300

Dear Senator Pell:

I write on behalf of the American Council of Learned Societies regarding the President's nomination of Carol Iannone for service on the National Council on the Humanities. I will also be writing to other members of the Committee.

The American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) is a coalition of 51 learned societies in all the disciplines of the humanities and social sciences. It has been in continuous operation since 1919, and the total membership of all the affiliated societies is in the neighborhood of 300,000 people. The Council's general aims are to support research and education in the humanities and to provide a national forum for scholars in those disciplines. We received a Federal Charter in 1982, and since 1986 have had fiscal and administrative responsibility for the Senior Fulbright Program administered by the Council for International Exchange of Scholars. It would not be too much to say that the American Council of Learned Societies is the premier private humanities organization in the United States. As such, we feel bound to express our views on the President's nomination of Dr. Iannone.

By the time you receive this letter, you will have heard directly from the Modern Language Association, one of the leading members of ACLS and the learned society that represents Dr. Iannone's scholarly discipline. We support their judgment in this matter. We wish only to add our own view that Dr. Iannone does not present the scholarly maturity and distinction that the enabling legislation requires for such an important post.

We say this without a view as to Dr. Iannone's methodological or political persuasions, which are irrelevant to her nomination as a member of the Council. Rather, we wish to observe that the academic appointments to the National Council

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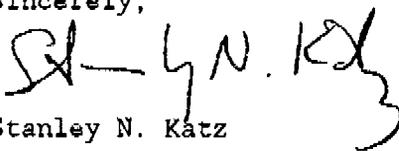
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ought to represent the very best people working in the humanities in this country. Dr. Iannone, so far as we can tell, has not achieved distinction as a scholar.

Precisely because Dr. Iannone's nomination is apparently intended to bring scholarly expertise to the Council, we feel obliged to oppose it. The members of the Council carry an important responsibility in advising the Chairman about grants, many of which go to members of the learned societies in this country. It seems to us that if Dr. Iannone is confirmed, it will set a disturbing precedent and may lead to a diminution of the Council's prestige and influence, especially within the national academic community. This, we believe, would be bad not only for the Council, but for the National Endowment for the Humanities itself.

Given these views, I am sure that you can understand that the American Council of Learned Societies would much prefer to see a person of greater scholarly distinction take a seat in the Council. Dr. Iannone may in time be such a person, but we believe that she has not yet reached that point.

Sincerely,


Stanley N. Katz