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The NEH Budget Cuts: Attitudes May Hamper Any Counteroffensive

Federal programs for the humanities are under attack as they have not been since the founding of the National Endowment for the Humanities in 1965. The promised budget cuts for the Endowment are only an outward manifestation of what is, at base, an attitudinal problem. The current administration, along with many other Americans, simply does not take seriously the need for, or the benefit of, government support for the humanities. Richard L. Bishirjian, chairman of President Reagan's transition team for the NEH, gave voice to this attitude when he recently called such support "the genteel equivalent of the political pork barrel." The question before the humanities community, then, is how it should respond to the dangers inherent in such an attitude.

Unfortunately, the very notion of a humanities community may be at stake in the current fray. Many people, hoping to demonstrate a unity and determination worthy of other "special interests," will expect all people in the humanities to rally unquestioningly in defense of the beleaguered NEH bud-

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Humanities Report

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION for the ADVANCEMENT of the HUMANITIES

4 FEDERAL JOBS requiring humanists' skills often do not require humanists. And therein lies the impetus for several current efforts by groups within the humanities to upgrade government hiring standards.

7 THE OIL INDUSTRY thinks that humanists, by and large, have been "anti-business" since the Vietnam era. So to clear the air—and explain a complex set of problems—it has launched a program of forums for the professoriate.

11 STATE HUMANITIES committees enter their second decade this year with philosophical as well as financial problems to sort. A look at two of the first state programs—Maine's and Oklahoma's—shows that progress has come through varied approaches to meeting the public's needs.

16 NEWS: The President's budget cuts include a 50 percent slash for NEH. Humanists and their supporters in and out of Congress react with indignation, hope for a congressional reprieve.

"It will be a sad day when, facing public danger, humanists become dangerous in public to themselves."

get. Others will take the occasion of prospective NEH budget reductions to seek advantage for their own favorite programs, thus revealing the hollowness of any notion of professional community. Both positions will be inappropriate, and both are disproportionate to the circumstances.

The new administration will not be deterred from its goal of cutting the federal budget; and the Congress is now of a mind to accept a substantial reduction in most domestic-program appropriations. There exists therefore no hope that the NEH budget will not shrink. Yet the administration's proposed cuts of 50 percent (or \$85 million) in the Endowment budget for fiscal year 1982 must not go unchallenged. Even if there is some merit in the reasoning of the Office of Management and Budget (see p. 17) that the federal government has for too many cultural efforts become "the financial patron of first resort," a reduction of such magnitude and rapidity—based on the repugnant premise that the arts and humanities are of "low priority" because they do not meet "basic human needs"—is difficult to justify. Even if one accepts as a "given" the distribution of funds in the existing budget, even if one overlooks its inequities and disproportionate nature, one cannot accept budget reductions that lack fundamental fairness and proper justification. The humanities should not be expected, on the basis of shallow reasoning about human needs, to suffer a larger percentage reduction than other domestic programs. If the domestic budget is to be slashed, then its programs should be reduced by comparable percentages across the

board. This is what humanists should expect and what they should seek from the Congress.

Attitudinal problems among humanists themselves, however, may prove to be obstacles to any effective counter-arguments. Chief among them is the well-known disinclination of humanists to support each other mutually. As if aware of the fragmentation among humanists, authors of the Heritage Foundation report to the incoming administration (*HR*, January 1981) proposed sharp reductions in only select and visible NEH programs—anticipating no doubt the disarray within our ranks that would assure eventual victory for their recommendations. It is a known fact, moreover, that some segments of the humanities community are presently preparing to do battle with other segments over the allocation of scarce funds. No more self-defeating attitude can be imagined.

We are called by different names—scholar, librarian, community college teacher, museum curator, state committee member—but we are all of the same profession: that of humanist. Differences of view and variations of pursuit among us must be accepted; efforts to depreciate the work of kindred professionals must not. It has taken 15 years for the humanities to gain a semblance of coherence and comity, progress which will quickly be squandered by public displays of division and distrust. Nothing is more certain than that Congress will conclude, if faced with such divisions within our ranks, that the humanities are not worth helping—at least not until their own house is in order. For our defense, then, the humanities need a unity of

purpose and an agreed-upon public posture.

The political warrants for federal support of the humanities have always been weaker than their principled justifications. Unfortunately, just as the principles for support had gained reasonably wide adherence, the political foundations of that support shifted—just as they have shifted for the support of science. Part of the blame must be accepted by the humanities community itself, which has not effectively seen to the public understanding of the humanities in their many manifestations. Yet for humanists themselves to deny the diversity of humanities pursuits, or to impugn the integrity of those pursuits not their own, will only rebound to the advantage of the enemies of all public support for the humanities. It will be a sad day when, facing public danger, humanists become dangerous in public to themselves. ■

—James M. Banner, Jr.

Why Humanist Ph.D.s May Be Too Qualified For Government Jobs

Increased interest in nonacademic careers among highly trained humanities graduates is producing a corresponding concern over the professional standards now in force for jobs which employ humanistic skills. Historians, philosophers, anthropologists, and others, who once in overwhelming numbers took their academic credentials back into the academy as teachers, now are finding the job market beyond the campus inundated by a humanist workforce that often lacks the requisite training. And the question of who is chosen for various private- and public-sector jobs involving the humanities—and how they are chosen—has become an issue to many within, as well as leaving, the academic confines.

Perhaps nowhere are the problems of standards and opportunities for humanities-related jobs more apparent than in the federal government, where job classifications for humanists are scarce, and where requirements for such jobs are ambiguous at best and, at worst, totally inadequate.

The federal government is far from a major receptacle for humanities gradu-

ates, but civil service and other government statistics do reflect the trend in the humanities toward nonacademic careers. Of an estimated 63,400 Ph.D.s graduating between 1936 and 1978, 2.6 percent were employed by the government as of February 1979, according to a recent National Research Council study. Among the more recent graduates, the percentage is higher. Of those Ph.D.s graduating between 1973 and 1978, for example, about four percent chose government employment. And recent updates of the figures suggest that the number of humanities graduates in government is continuing to rise gradually.

Groups representing the various humanities disciplines recently have turned their attention to the federal government's hiring practices and to strategies which will increase the number of highly trained humanists employed. While the goal of each group is the same—government standards that assure professionalism and maximum job opportunities in a given field—their respective approaches are markedly different, evidence of an extremely divided front in what many are discovering is a frustrating endeavor.

Historians are concerned that standards for their field are not rigorous enough and that the quality of federal personnel in history-related jobs is minimal. Anthropologists, on the other hand, fear that standards are too tight and exclude many qualified candidates. Meanwhile, philosophers would rather not be mentioned by name at all in the government standards, and political scientists, who have "been beating their heads against a brick wall" to get standards changed,

according to one, have decided to give up that tack and approach the problem of jobs through intensified career counseling.

At the center of the debate is the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the agency responsible for setting job qualifications standards for the federal government. Its "bible" is an intimidatingly thick tome titled "Qualification Standards Supervisory Positions in General Schedule Occupations," or simply the X-118, which details qualification standards for some 430 occupations, from historian to dressmaker to helicopter pilot.

The X-118 is currently the object of some wrath.

"Right now, there are absolutely no professional standards for hiring an historian in the federal government," complains Jack M. Holl, chief historian for the Department of Energy. "You don't even need a degree. All you need is 'equivalent experience'." The X-118 does in fact detail a hard-and-fast formula, based on the specific GS rating, for figuring the value of experience versus academic training. But the procedure is far from foolproof. "I worked for over 25 years in a supervisory position with the federal government," says Richard G. Hewlett, former chief historian for the Atomic Energy Commission, the Energy Research and Development Administration, and the Department of Energy. "and it was very difficult to hire anyone at lower GS grades as a historian who was actually trained in history. You had to draw from a pool of certified candidates that included high school graduates and former sergeants in the army."

"Right now, there are absolutely no professional standards for hiring a historian in the federal government. You don't even need a degree."

Thomas Fulton, chief historian for the Department of Agriculture, is chairman of the Society for History in the Federal Government's committee established to review the X-118 standards and recommend changes. "We're a new committee," he explains. "The old one ran into an absolute stone wall." The current qualifications standards, Fulton says, allow political scientists, anthropologists—almost any humanities graduate—to qualify as a historian. Standards for other groups are far more rigorous. "The standards applied to economists put those for historians to shame," he says.

To illustrate his case, Fulton notes that the chief historian for the U.S. Forestry Service, Dennis Roth, has his Ph.D. in anthropology. There has been absolutely no criticism of the job Roth (who has a master's degree in history) has done, says Fulton, but his situation is symbolic of the larger problem. Even Roth himself concedes that standards ought to be tightened.

Some, however, see the historians' efforts to tighten standards as motivated by issues other than quality. "Blatant trade unionism" is the phrase used by Robert M. Wulff, an anthropology Ph.D. working as a senior policy analyst for the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Wulff himself, however, is helping to launch an effort aimed at changing government standards. "I don't blame them," he says of his humanist colleagues. "There are a lot of unemployed historians."

Historian Holl counters that his main concern is "protecting, promoting, and fostering professionalism"

in history in the federal government. "This may sound a bit calloused," says Holl, "but I couldn't care less about finding history graduates jobs." And, Hewlett adds, "Hiring a trained historian to do work in history is simply good management."

Archaeologists, engaged in both science and humanistic scholarship, are also eager to see standards tightened. Diane G. Gelburd, a cultural resources specialist with the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, has been working for the past two years to get the federal government to upgrade requirements for hiring archaeologists. She says that "archaeologists in the federal government are beginning to complain about the quality of federal archaeology." One high-level career archaeologist at another federal agency, a veteran of over 20 years, puts the problem more bluntly: "There are some real turkeys working [as archaeologists] with the government. The standards are definitely too lax."

Meanwhile, the anthropologists at work on the X-118 standards think that requirements are defined too narrowly. "The federal definition of anthropologist is one that would apply to an anthropologist teaching traditional anthropology at a university," says Wulff. "It is very limiting, not at all contemporary, and it excludes too many trained anthropologists."

□

Perhaps the most realistic approach to the standards of the government hiring bible, X-118, is that taken by the philosophers. It is an approach best expressed in the sentiment of Donald Scherer, professor of philosophy at

Bowling Green State University and chairman of an American Philosophical Association (APA) subcommittee on nonacademic careers. "Calling oneself a 'philosopher' is, at this time, not a good marketing technique," he says.

Daniel I. Winkler, staff philosopher on the President's Commission for the Study of Ethical Problems in Medicine and Biomedical Research agrees. "When we were trying to get funding for this position," he recalls, "Congressmen were absolutely wide-mouthed with astonishment at the thought of paying someone to sit around and think." The Commission changed the title to "ethicist," and Congress funded the position. "I think the label 'philosopher' might best be kept out of the public eye," Winkler says, "though that is exactly what I am paid to be."

Government use of philosophers may be on the rise (over 30 federal agencies retained philosophers on some consultant basis last year), but most are, like Winkler, dead-set against changing the X-118 standards to reflect that trend.

And, if philosophers are happy with their anonymity, government professionals in modern languages are equally satisfied with the status quo in their field. The feeling among them is simply that university graduates often do not measure up to the standards the government does set. Currently, according to Allen I. Weinstein, scientific linguist with the State Department's Foreign Service Institute (FSI), the FSI is working with the Modern Language Association and the Educational Testing Service to devise uniform standards for the nationwide test-

An array of special interest groups is waiting to challenge any change in standards that might exclude their constituencies from federal jobs.

ing of college students with government service in mind. "Universities will soon be able to measure the language ability of their students versus accepted government standards," says Weinstein.

The language specialist, however, is the anomaly. Most humanists view government hiring standards for their field as woefully inadequate and offer two possible reasons why. The first is the government's failure to change standards to reflect the evolution of different jobs. "Standards for archaeologists were written when a federal archaeologist stood around Mesa Verde National Monument in a ranger's uniform and a Smokey-the-Bear hat, answering elementary questions from tourists," says one long-time federal archaeologist. "Back then, you didn't need the field experience or expertise in classifying artifacts that you need now."

A more complex reason, however, has to do with legal restrictions. "We are mandated to write a minimum standard for an occupation that is so low it cannot be challenged," explains Paul A. Katz, director of the OPM's Standards Development Center. Katz says that an array of interest groups is waiting to challenge any change in standards that might exclude their constituencies from federal jobs. "Any substantive attempt to change the standards for hiring historians," he says, "would result in a court challenge we'd lose so fast we wouldn't have time to spend money on lawyers' fees."

Even putting aside the question of who is qualified to do what for the federal government, Katz says that changing standards is an administrative

nightmare. "First, you must do a thorough study on the qualification standards for a given occupation. If the study shows a need for change, those proposed must be drafted, published, and circulated to all agencies affected and to other interested parties. Then you must solicit and receive comments from all affected groups. Already, you are into a year's work." With 430 occupation standards that must be reviewed regularly, Katz says that his office has to set priorities. "Unless an agency can demonstrate real management problems due to our standards, a request for review will probably not get very far." The number one priority this year, says Katz, is job definitions for park rangers.



The difficulties in affecting change through the Office of Personnel Management have forced some scholarly groups to adopt a different approach to the problem—intensified career counseling. "We have found that often getting a government job is a matter not of standards but of skill, timing, and openings," says Sheila K. Mann, director of educational affairs for the American Political Science Association. "We're teaching our graduates how to fill out government forms and suggesting various ways to get their foot in the door."

Robert Wulff's group uses similar tactics. "We're suggesting that anthropologists not cling to that title too closely," says Wulff, who helps run workshops on finding jobs in the federal government for the Washington Association of Professional Anthropologists. "'Housing specialist,' 'social

scientist,' 'policy analyst,' and 'manager' offer much more mobility. It would be nice to see 'anthropology' mentioned more in the X-118, but that's only a problem if you don't know the rules to the hiring game."

In fact, some say, the standards themselves have very little to do with how many humanists get hired to do what. "It is a lack of knowing the job opportunities that limits humanists in federal hiring," says Lisa Carlson, a policy analyst with the OPM who has her doctorate in educational psychology. She has been active for the past two years in placing humanists in federal jobs. "They only look for the obvious job titles," she says of unsuccessful humanist applicants.

Humanists' unwillingness to "psyche out" the hiring system, not the hiring standards themselves, allow certain humanities-oriented jobs to go to individuals with less training, Carlson says. "Any individual with a Ph.D. has the edge," she maintains. "It's a matter of understanding the process."

One of the first items to be understood is the federal government's ubiquitous "171" form, which any applicant for federal employment must fill out. Essentially, this is a job history and list of skills. "Lots of people take one look at the 171 and fold right up," says Carlson. "In the federal government there is a very literal definition of experience. Nothing is taken for granted. A Ph.D. with teaching experience should list everything he or she has done, from grading papers to curriculum development. Those evaluating the 171s will not automatically assume that 'teaching' included mastery of those skills."

Carlson believes that learned societies interested in placing more Ph.D.s in nonacademic employment should offer guidance to their constituents on filing the 171 form and should engage in what she calls "covert" job counseling. That is, they should have individuals in, for example, philosophy, who are working in the federal government and know what an agency is looking for on a 171, counsel other philosophy graduates interested in government jobs. "What does a tenured professor know about getting a job in the federal government?" asks Carlson. "Learned societies need to take advantage of those outside academe."

Although many groups are doing just that, many others are not. The American Historical Association offers some job counseling during its annual meetings, and the APA has published a pamphlet on finding federal employment; but neither is aggressively placing candidates in federal jobs. Congressional internships, supported with funds from the Andrew Mellon Foundation, were offered to historians and philosophers for the first time this year, however, and while congressional jobs are not technically civil service, Carlson stresses the importance of such "nontraditional" avenues to jobs with the government.

Also providing job opportunities for humanists, says Carlson, are appointments obtained through the Intergovernmental Policy Act (IPA) of 1970, which allows federal agencies, state and local governments, and colleges and universities to exchange personnel. Carlson says that often temporary IPA appointments lead to per-

manent positions with the federal government.

Most agree, however, that the most effective way to upgrade government standards and ensure the employment of humanists is the active counsel and lobbying effort of learned societies working in tandem with humanists in government. They should see to it, says Carlson, that appropriate jobs are "wired," that is, that the specific requirements written for them are so selective they lock out less qualified candidates. Even OPM director Katz believes that this may be humanists' best bet for upgrading standards. Others, however, note that short notice on job openings and time conflicts with the academic-year schedule complicate matters.

In the long run, many feel that circumventing the X-118 standards is only a cosmetic approach to the problem. "It's okay to ignore the standards and look for other ways to get a federal job," says Diane Gelburd. "The trouble is that, meanwhile, the government continues to use those standards to do all the rest of its hiring and firing."

And, the current hiring freeze notwithstanding, humanists both inside and outside the federal government are coming to realize that as government becomes a more attractive career alternative, they have a vested interest in seeing standards changed. ■

—Jonathan Walters

Jonathan Walters is a Washington, D.C., writer whose past contributions to Humanities Report include a look, last March, at hiring practices for humanists in the corporate world.

Chatting With Gulf: The Oil Industry Seeks A Scholarly Hearing

In an age obsessed with the concept of "meaningful dialogue," American industry has come to view better communication as simply good business. Sperry-Rand Corporation, in an elaborate advertising campaign, urges "listening" on the nation as a new civic virtue. Other industries explain their philosophies and problems by way of print—brochures enclosed with monthly statements, full-page ads in *Time* or *Newsweek*. For the oil industry, with perhaps the most complex set of problems to explain, an academically-oriented avenue to communication has emerged. During the past decade, oil companies have developed the "faculty forum" to encourage dialogues between middle management oil executives and scholars and teachers in the humanities and the social sciences. And while some humanists have found the forums worthwhile, others call them little more than elaborate public relations gimmicks.

A typical faculty forum is a two- or three-day seminar in which about 12 faculty representatives meet with an equal number of oil executives to ex-



JAMES C. FERRELL

change "ideas, opinions, attitudes, experience, and knowledge," according to Janet Dove, public relations staff advisor with the American Petroleum Institute (API). Individual companies hold forums on an average of twice a year in different cities throughout the country. Keynote speakers, most often from the oil industry itself, present a wide range of issues at the forums: alternative sources of energy, nuclear power, government regulation, and the industry's public image. Discussion is encouraged at the main sessions, as well as at dinners, receptions, and other informal gatherings included in the forum package. "By the end of a two-and-one-half day forum," says Luddy Hayden, manager of community affairs for Gulf Oil Corporation, "we hope that both faculty representatives and oil executives are at least more aware of each other's problems and concerns."

The American Petroleum Institute's Committee on Education and Youth Development conceived the forums in 1971 as a way to counter growing disenchantment with the oil industry among academics. API's board of directors, in fact, included in its "agenda for the 1970s" the goal of improving understanding between the university community and the petroleum industry. After meeting with groups of university professors, the Institute concluded that the best way to accomplish this was through what Dove describes as "in-depth, informal dialogue sessions between company and faculty representatives."

"In the aftermath of the 1960s, business people believed that anti-business sentiments were being advocated on

"Academics may be skeptical about the oil industry, but we agree on more matters than we realize. . . . We differ in the degree to which we are willing to compromise."

the campuses," explains Barbara Bland, president of Consumer Communications, a management consulting firm, and coordinator of Gulf's forums. "After the Arab embargo in the early 1970s, the companies' feeling that they had not been given a fair hearing by academics increased. The forum was a good way to sound out these and other problems."

Today, companies are revamping the forums structurally to include wider discussion and more divergent views. Conoco, for example, is currently planning a forum entitled "Reachable Goals for the Eighties," which will examine energy problems from international, national, and regional perspectives. Conoco forums have also been expanded to include representatives from national organizations, such as the League of Women Voters and the AFL-CIO, as well as from social action groups, power companies, and newspapers and radio stations.

Gulf Oil Corporation has also restructured its forums, according to Hayden and Bland. In discussing controversial issues, such as the effect of oil exploration on the environment and the safety of nuclear power, the company now provides speakers with opposing viewpoints. Gulf is also planning a complementary program for academics called the Faculty Advisory Council, which will be staffed by veterans of the faculty forums. Bland cites three goals of the new Council: "to involve academics in the planning of future faculty forums; to work together to identify socioeconomic issues; and to discuss the role of the academic community in solving problems facing our nation." Changes in the concept of

faculty forums, says Bland, are attempts to present a more complete picture of the energy situation and to provide an appropriate follow-up to the forum.

While program sponsors concede that there are many problems inherent in these attempts at faculty outreach, most companies remain enthusiastic about the idea. "Academics may be skeptical about the oil industry," Hayden admits. "But we agree on more matters than we realize. Both groups believe that the country is facing a serious long-range energy shortage; where we disagree is often in how we propose to solve the problem. The oil industry believes that wilderness areas protected by the federal government should be accessible for exploration; the academics tend to strongly resist this idea. We differ in the degree that we are willing to compromise." The ethics of oil is also an area of academic concern. But it, too, is aired at the forums, says Betty L. Wiley, assistant director of speaker services at Conoco. "Honesty characterizes the faculty forum," she says.



The academic community's response to the forums has been varied. Michael L. Harrington, associate professor of philosophy at the University of Mississippi, thinks that Gulf's Fall 1979 forum in Atlanta was worthwhile and that it allowed considerable give-and-take between the two groups. "The executives told us clearly what problems frustrate them," says Harrington. "These include their negative public image and what they see as political interference." He agrees with the in-

dustry that there may be too little contact between business and the humanities. "More communication can only be positive," he says.

Margaret R. Morely, associate professor of history at Northern Arizona University, also commends the program. She came away from a Gulf-sponsored forum last summer in Denver with a greater appreciation of the jobs middle management oil executives perform, she says. "If professors are in continuous contact with the oil industry, they will be able to share their knowledge with colleagues and students," Morley says.

But other academics have quite a different impression. Philip Beidler, associate professor of English at the University of Alabama, characterizes the forum he attended—the Gulf-sponsored affair in Atlanta—as "trumped up, characterized by jargon and buzz words, and indicative of the industry's defensiveness." He says that the industry spokesmen were "trying too hard, apologizing too much. They were eager to prove that their profits are not obscene; that the media are responsible for vilifying them, and that they are grossly over-regulated by government." His conclusion? "The whole thing was a waste of time."

One of the forums' most outspoken critics is Beidler's colleague George H. Wolfe, assistant dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Alabama and assistant professor of English. Wolfe has attended two forums, one sponsored by Exxon and one by Standard Oil of California (Chevron), and he blames the failure of both on the participants, whom he characterizes as "ill-informed, blun-

dering academics," on the one hand, and "salesmen and hustlers," on the other. In an article published on *The New York Times*' Op/Ed page last December, Wolfe argued further that forums are occasions for "an industry line to be pressed upon an apparently powerless group of academics who have great difficulty distinguishing between propaganda and fact, between lunacy and legitimate solutions." The executives are eager to impress upon the participants the difficulties of being in the oil business, he wrote, but reticent about answering controversial questions. "The oil companies assume that we as a group (the academics) are educated, articulate, and only occasionally combative. What better group is there for company spokesmen to present their version of the history and current state of the energy crisis to, and what better group from which to ascertain what The People think about them and their multinational dealings—all without revealing anything significant about their operations?"

□

The differences in perceptions of the forums may be partially explained by the results from an informal survey of participants. These reveal that, first and foremost, forums differ in quality—some are simply better than others. The speakers may be more articulate or attuned to the issues and audience at a particular forum, or the groups of people may be more compatible. "Group dynamics dictate the forum," Barbara Bland stresses. "If there is a personality conflict among any of the people present, it is bound to affect the outcome of the forum."

Jerome R. Lewis, director of the Delaware Public Administration Institute at the University of Delaware, says that "it is fashionable to be negative about the oil industry. If people come to a forum with their minds made up, open discussion becomes very difficult."

Other social scientists concur. In a study sponsored by the Business Roundtable entitled "How's Business? What the Public Thinks," (published in *Public Opinion*, July/August 1978), Seymour Martin Lipset and William Schneider note that over the past 15 years, there has been a steady decline in the public's trust of big business. "Business, labor, and government are all suffering from the same disability," say Lipset and Schneider. "The public believes that they are motivated by self-interest." If such an attitude prevails, they conclude, educational programs designed to improve an industry's self-image will have little effect.

A third factor, some add, is the role of academics, particularly humanities professors, in society. Wolfe, for one, notes that humanists are isolated from the business world, and are trained to deal not in percentages, trade-offs, and profit-margins, but in ideas, concepts, and abstractions. Furthermore, he adds, they are currently facing a serious employment crisis. "Humanities professors are extremely sensitive about their role in society," says Wolfe. "This makes them susceptible to flattery and easily taken in by a good show. Being invited to a forum sponsored by one of the largest industries in the world is one way to validate their role. This may contribute to the way some academics evaluate the forums."

Basic statistics reveal that, despite growth in the faculty forum program, it is not yet a major public relations enterprise. Though several of the largest American oil companies conduct forums, including Atlantic Richfield, Conoco, Standard Oil of Indiana, Standard Oil of Ohio, Texaco, City Service, Shell, Gulf, and Phillips, only nine of the nation's 350 energy companies belonging to API participate in the program. Companies spend anywhere from \$3,000 to \$17,000 on a single forum, and since 1971, some 1,535 faculty members have attended.

"The purpose of the program is modest," says Delaware's Lewis. "It aims to bring together two very different groups of people whose paths might otherwise never cross." And although some academics criticize the program, others, like Lewis, think that communication—even on this relatively small level—is worthwhile. ■

—Marilyn Fenichel

Marilyn Fenichel is a Washington-based freelance writer.

How does one give meaning to the legacy of Socrates, Arnold, and Emerson in the far reaches of American culture? After a decade of experience with state committees, the question has not yet been resolved.

State Committees In Maine and Oklahoma Enter a Second Decade

Robert L. Lively, historian of religion by day, often becomes a "circuit rider" by night, or over the long winter weekends in his home state of Maine. He is one of several humanist scholars who travel the circuit of small, isolated communities in west-central Maine, helping citizens there to clarify their towns' values.

The region Lively and his colleagues serve is facing the devastating social upheavals of a declining economy: population loss, public apathy, troubled youth, disintegrating community life. And the small crowds which gather to hear these humanists share their perspectives seem to appreciate the added dimension such discussions bring to their thinking. A historian may tell them how European cities faced and dealt with similar problems as the Industrial revolution waned. An English professor may read a John Updike poem on youths, then lead a discussion of the poem's human implications for the town. An art historian may illustrate the decline in the sense of community that has plagued other places, at other times, by showing

slides of American landscape painting. Each humanist approaches the problem in his or her own way, but all try to give to their rural audience a sense of how the collective past can illustrate their particular present and future.

The circuit-rider project, sponsored by the Maine Humanities Council through funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities, has hit a sympathetic chord with many of Maine's rural citizens. But it is by no means without problems. Some of those who attend the town meetings are uncomfortable, says Lively, with what they consider "sitting around philosophizing." And several have asked the historian why academics should be paid to interact with the public. Occasionally, a more blatant misunderstanding of the humanist's role emerges. Hecklers and pickets have appeared at some of the Maine Council's affairs to protest the teaching of "secular humanism"—a brand of "godless" social thought they consider one step removed from Communism.

Halfway across the country in Oklahoma, a state with twice the population of Maine, but also made up chiefly of small towns and rural areas, confusion about the role of the humanities in civic and personal life is equally evident. Here, too, where most of the counties' populations include fewer than 50 percent with a high-school diploma, there is a lingering suspicion of academics. And, says Anita R. May, executive director of the Oklahoma Humanities Committee (OHC), any mention of the humanities is likely to be met with moral outrage by some. "Humanist means atheist among some of our church-related groups," says

May, "just as using federal funds for social purposes is often confused with socialism—or worse, with Communism."

This confusion in the provinces, which state committees such as Maine's and Oklahoma's confront daily, is symbolic of a larger, if more rationally based, confusion faced by the Endowment, its governing council, and others charged with relating humanistic scholarship and learning to the American public's needs. More than any other institution, the state committees have been given the responsibility of explaining the humanities and applying humanistic thought to public problems. It is an awesome task which has been undertaken with varying degrees of success in different locales.

How does one give meaning to the legacy of Socrates and Arnold and Emerson in the far reaches of American culture? After a decade of federal experience with the state committees, the question has not yet been resolved. Indeed, recent political decisions affecting the funding and control of the committees have merely exacerbated problems that were evident in 1971, when NEH, through its division of public programs, sponsored experimental state-based programs in six states. Maine and Oklahoma were two of those six trial states, and their progress as well as their problems help to illustrate the crucial issues being addressed now, in plotting the future of state committees in a lean era.

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State humanities committees (or councils) were created ten years ago to

meet a congressional mandate that the Endowment localize its activities. The largely independent committees were to receive operating funds from NEH and other sources and then regrant them to local groups and voluntary associations for individual projects. The leeway given each state in setting its own priorities and operating guidelines worked to create considerable diversity in the state programs. Congress also specified, however, that the state programs concentrate on issues of public policy in their granting activities, and this early charge has led directly to current criticisms of the state programs as often "politicized." In the reauthorizing legislation for the Endowment completed in 1976, the emphasis on public-policy programming was eased. State committees were then free to pursue projects and programs that more closely approximated, on a local level, the programs of the Endowment itself. Now, some critics suggest that "localization" has become wasteful duplication.

Accountability also became an issue for the state committees in the 1976 reauthorization, sowing seeds for the current controversy over state control. The 1976 legislation contained a number of provisions that required the committees and their activities to be made more accountable to their respective state's government and citizens. Governors were authorized to appoint half the members of a state's humanities committee, provided that the state appropriated funds to the committee according to a graduated formula. If the state did not wish to allocate funds to its committee, the governor could still appoint two members of the committee's governing body. To date, 84 gubernatorial appointees have been named under the 1976 provisions.

This state influence was broadened in the current reauthorization bill, passed in the last session of Congress. Senator Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.) sponsored a section of the new legislation which forces state governors and legislators "to make a choice between bringing humanities councils within the framework of state government or maintaining them as private bodies." Wherever the former choice is made,

"a state would be required to match from state funds either 50 percent of the council's basic operating grant from NEH (\$200,000 at present) or 25 percent of the total support received from NEH, whichever is greater."

Whether or not a state decides to make its humanities committee a public agency, however, the committee will now be required to match from any source available the full amount of assistance it receives from NEH, and will be bound as well to comply with requirements for "broad public participation." Governors will be able to appoint at least four members of the governing body, regardless of the choice made as to state sponsorship. (He or she will, of course, appoint all members if the committee becomes a state agency.)

The legislation's complicated formula for allocating additional NEH funds to the state committees is also likely to reheat an argument that has been simmering for a decade: Should a state's funding be predicated on its size? The current formula has a per capita provision which favors the larger states.



When the Endowment established its six pioneer committees in 1971, the structural model chosen for both Maine and Oklahoma was that of organization within existing state arts agencies. The arrangement did not work. The harder-to-define humanities needed an identity separate from their more visible and popular counterpart in the arts. In 1973, the Oklahoma Humanities Committee made a relatively smooth transition to independence from its arts-council status. Maine did not. Although an almost autonomous arm of the Maine State Commission on the Arts and Humanities, the latter committee remained an arts-flavored group. Divided as to mission and methods, it could not reach a consensus on how to proceed; so in 1975, the Maine experiment turned back its grant, closed up shop, and asked the Endowment to begin again. About six months later, the Portland-based Maine Council on the Humanities and Public Policy was reborn; having once been one of the first, it was then one of the last of the state com-

mittees. But in a short time it has made up for those first foundering years.

When, in 1976, state committees were offered the option of branching out from their public policy mandate to fund humanistic programs paralleling those of the Endowment itself, Maine opted to hew closely to the public policy line, although it has come to interpret this broadly. Maine Council chairman Gloria S. Duclos, a classicist, believes her committee can have the greatest impact on academic humanists and on the public by taking its public-policy mission seriously. "The issue need not always be something going on at the State House," she says, "but it's not reading Jane Austen in the privacy of one's home, either. We humanists should become involved in public policy to sharpen up our skills and our awareness of who we are—and because everyone has an obligation to participate in life."

Maine is a state with few cultural institutions. Its depressed economy (the lowest U.S. per capita income, by some standards), significant influx of tourists, and low level of educational attainment (ranking 47th in the percentage of its high school graduates who go on to college) all present the humanities council with subtle problems. Misunderstandings arise between the "Down-Easters" and the flocks of health-care and education professionals who have migrated to the state. There are conflicts, too, between what one native calls "those who subsist and those who make subsistence a lifestyle." The Council's executive director, Karen Bowden, believes that having an "elitist" image in such an environment is not a disadvantage. "For a program like ours to be successful, we have to bring extremely high standards to it," she says, "the kind of standards that belong to scholarship."

Among projects the Maine council has funded are a nationally recognized mediation program for small claims court; a study, completed with the aid of the New Hampshire Council for the Humanities, on the legal and economic problems arising from joint governmental administration of the Piscataqua Basin; and films, forums, lectures, and workshops on such issues as the critical problems of the Maine

woods, the future of the state's small towns, and farmland conversion and preservation. The Council also supports a humanist-in-residence at the Department of Mental Health and Corrections.

Unlike Maine's humanities council, the Oklahoma committee took advantage of the easing of the Endowment's public-policy requirement to begin expanding its funding to include exhibits, and support of local museums and historical societies. More typical of the Oklahoma programming are its public-

television special on bluegrass music and tradition, its traveling exhibition on native-son Will Rogers, and its widely praised interpretive exhibit, "Gloria Dell'Arte: a Renaissance Perspective," which included lectures, tours, special events, and programs held in 50 communities.

But the OHC is not without public-policy projects. It sponsors, for example, a program in which humanist scholars, prison inmates, and correctional facility staff meet to analyze their perceptions of confinement. Oth-

er projects have probed such questions as the roots of family violence and the state's responsibility for ameliorating hunger and malnutrition.

Barbara Hillyer Davis, an active humanist participant, project director, and former chairwoman of the committee, notes that a decade's experience has given the OHC a more sophisticated approach to fulfilling its charge. "We used to have to do slide shows on 'what is a value question?'," she says. Now the OHC encourages variety in its proposals, seeking especially those

A Public-Policy Role for the Humanities?

"The interests and aspirations of many people turn naturally toward the humanities through concern for freedom, moral values, beauty, and knowledge of the past. Yet in the public mind the term *humanities* often suggests remote intellectual activity or narrow academic professionalism. One of our national objectives should be to resolve this seeming paradox. As we cope with the urgent rush of day-to-day affairs, from controversies over nuclear energy to frustration at the myriad difficulties of our individual lives, we must argue for the active role of the humanities in shaping this country's future. We must stress how limited our sense of national purpose is, indeed how imperiled our civilization is, if the humanities are exiled to a peripheral role of irrelevance."

—from *The Humanities in American Life: The Report of the Commission on the Humanities*, University of California, Press, 1980.

"A terrible disservice has been done to the humanities by the expectation, and sometimes the insistence and demand, that they be integrated into public policy. While the humanities are an extraordinary resource for the enlightenment of citizens on public issues, humanists

are not uniquely qualified—in fact, they are often unqualified—to speak of the facts and details of specific cases and problems that citizens may confront, such as: the expenditure and distribution of taxes, the wisdom of land development schemes, or the uses of retirement. It is possible that an occasional scholar in the humanities may be able to illuminate issues, but the unfortunate employment of humanists in settings where they are asked to speak of things about which they know nothing, and to give advice on living, has done the humanities a disservice. Such situations have occurred with regrettable frequency in the state-based programs."

—from *Mandate for Leadership: Policy Management in a Conservative Administration*, the Board of Trustees of the Heritage Foundation 1981.

"The late Charles Frankel once said that one purpose of government support for the humanities and of the Endowment was, in his words, 'to call scholars and teachers in the humanities to think and act with their fellow citizens in mind.' Well-conceived projects involving research or learning in the humanities in the context of civic or public organizations may do just that. I would add to Charles Frankel's de-

scription that another purpose of the Endowment is the obligation to remind the public at large of the important role which scholars and teachers in the humanities may play in our national life. These projects often facilitate that role. . . .

"I do agree with the [Heritage Foundation Report's] statement that 'humanists are not uniquely qualified . . . to speak of the facts and details of specific cases and problems that citizens may confront, such as the expenditure and distribution of taxes, the wisdom of land development schemes, and the uses of retirement.' That is not to say, however, that each of those problems can be addressed simply in terms of technical 'facts and details.' In each of those areas there are issues to which historians and often scholars in literature and philosophy may make contributions, because each of these issues has an historical and philosophical dimension which, were it better understood, might provide a helpful sense of perspective. The rescue of such areas of public discussion from being dealt with simply as matters of technical analysis is one important contribution of learning in the fields of the humanities."

—Joseph D. Duffey, from an open letter to Michael M. Joyce, principal author of the *Heritage Foundation Report*.

from such large state minority constituencies as Hispanic-Americans and Indians, who often before were benignly ignored in programming.

Both states set a high priority on extending their outreach—both to new constituencies and to remote and sparsely populated areas of the state. In 1979, for example, OHC-funded projects reached 32 Oklahoma towns with populations under 2,500. In Maine, the council's presentations were viewed in 35 towns of under 2,500 people. Rural residents are definitely gaining an understanding of the humanities through the Oklahoma program, asserts Jack S. Catlin, an OHC member and classicist at the University of Oklahoma. "But I don't think we should quit yet."



Although some 75 percent of all funded projects of the state committees are usually sponsored by nonacademic groups, according to NEH chairman Duffey, a vital component of any committee's contribution—and of its quality—is the role it plays in coordinating the work of educational and cultural organizations in the state and in bringing the public together with humanist teachers and scholars. Often, the latter is not an easy proposition. "Some project directors do not know how to find a humanist, or even who one is," complains Maine's Duclos. The Maine council, she says, must constantly reject proposals with diluted or nonexistent humanities content. The council now requires a humanist as co-director for each project it funds. In 1979, some 200 Maine humanists in 30 disciplines were involved in council activities, with those in history, English, and philosophy most often participating. Oklahoma used the skills of 272 humanists in 20 disciplines, led by those in history, English, art history, and archaeology and anthropology.

"Humanists on the whole don't toot their own horns vigorously enough," says Duclos. "They downplay their own potential for contributing." Last year the Maine council invited a group of humanists to the Bethel Inn to discuss and reflect upon what a public humanities program ought to be and to find ways to improve what one par-

ticipant called "the often uneasy relation of the humanities to society." About 45 humanists attended, including some who had not participated before in the council's work (and who since have shown interest in preparing proposals). Through such meetings, says Duclos, state committees have the chance to air their problems and refine their plans.

In the year ending last February, the Oklahoma Humanities Committee received 127 proposals and funded 80 of them, with awards totalling \$371,709 (the median was \$4,336). Its report to the Endowment notes that participation by the state's citizens increased over the previous 18 months by more than 165 percent—a 221 percent increase in project activities, and a 194 percent increase in the number of towns and cities involved. In the same period (1979) the Maine Council funded 16 out of 28 proposals (plus 10 planning grants) for a total of \$167,642 (the median was \$14,865). Maine's Endowment proposal also notes an increase in the council's geographic range, audience, and number of activities.

Both committees have become increasingly concerned—and thus cautious—about funding media proposals, due to soaring costs, frequent cost overruns, and the passive quality of slides, films, and videotapes as contrasted with forums, discussions, or workshops. The humanities are best conveyed by experiences that provide the opportunity for discussion and response. Maine's Karen Bowden believes. Oklahoma's Anita May adds that scholars may feel less comfortable working with film than with lectures or even slide shows, and that documentary makers often lapse into advocacy, failing to provide a balanced view of public issues. Yet the committees' members are also aware that film touches wider audiences and that a videotape can bring more viewers access to what might otherwise be a one-shot program.

The committees are also aware of criticism that the state programs, particularly panels and forums using humanist "experts," often raise expectations for the humanities' contributions to the resolution of public-

policy issues too high. They admit that often programs can become sidetracked by discussion leaders who perhaps let the topic slip from poetry to parity, by citizens more interested in griping about taxes than analyzing democracy, and by academics who have little interest in the responses of their audience.

The committee members also admit that there have been projects to which no one, or few, showed up. And, further, they note that not all who do attend their programs are enthusiastic. The conservative and fundamentalist groups who equate the humanities with secular humanism have become particularly vocal critics—a problem not eased by the occasional newspaper editorial reading (as one did in Oklahoma), "The Humanist Threat to Freedom." A recent Endowment proposal from the Maine Council candidly discussed the problem. "Even if the Council succeeds in distinguishing the humanities from secular humanism," it warned, "there is much in humanistic education which such critics will continue to condemn. The humanities' recognition of multiple and conflicting views, the very basis of liberal education, is itself being called into question."



In fund-raising, a crucial activity for the decade ahead, the two states' committees show a marked contrast in style and philosophy. Yet each has adapted to economic realities. With its marginal economy, few foundations, and relatively few corporations, Maine has chosen so far not to exert a concerted effort in supplementing its Endowment grant. Bowden says, "We don't want to compete with institutions we support for the very limited charitable contributions available." The council also has decided against requiring grantees to raise additional money, but last year doubled its NEH request for gifts and matching funds. Duclos says that the council will look into developing a fund-raising strategy based on soliciting small contributions—a method that has raised visibility as well as money in several other states.

For the last two years, the OHC has conducted a fund-raising drive for

"Even if the Council succeeds in distinguishing the humanities from secular humanism, there is much in humanistic education which [fundamentalist] critics will continue to condemn."

operating money, collecting approximately \$2,000 each year. Far more industrial than Maine, the state has also been more successful in obtaining grants from outside sources for specific projects, for example, a \$40,000 gift from Cities Service Corporation to mount the "Gloria Dell'Arte" exhibit. The committee's latest request for gifts and matching authorization from the Endowment was for \$180,000, compared to Maine's \$20,000. "Where fund-raising prospects are promising, we expect a state to be fairly vigorous in obtaining money," comments B.J. Stiles, head of the Endowment's Division of State Programs. Both Maine and Oklahoma currently receive the maximum amount possible from the Endowment (annually, 10 to 15 states fail to do so).

Combining efforts with their state's arts council, and with other local arts and cultural organizations, often provides the humanities committees greater impact for their limited funds. A recent Tulsa Theater production of "Becket, or the Honor of God," for example, was partially funded by the OHC. A symposium followed the performance, at which humanists put the play into historical context, pointing out inaccuracies used by the French playwright for dramatic effect. Even the cast joined in the discussion, which touched on the play's portrayal of the Catholic Church, as well as the problems encountered in changing the action from French to English, from history to drama, from the 12th-century to the 20th-century mind.

"I think the humanities are the best way to develop an audience for the arts," comments Myra Ruffner, associ-

ate director of the Arts and Humanities Council of Tulsa. "They educate people to have a reaction other than the emotional one."

Neither state committee wants to turn to the state government for financial support, and both have unresolved doubts about state control. Having both grown out of state agencies, the committees value their independence. They also believe they have proven themselves to be responsible to public needs. OHC chairman Catlin says bluntly that in Oklahoma state control would produce "another pork barrel project—it would mean that policy control would be at the state level." Maine supporters, too, see little advantage in state affiliation and fear that in such fiscally uncertain times the state might be unable to provide adequate funds anyway. The Endowment's view seems to be that the committees are fragile—and publicly accountable—organizations whose work is best done in neutral territory, rather than as another agency vying for funds with already well-established state constituencies.

But adjusting to what may be a less-than-autonomous future is only one of the challenges facing the state humanities committees in their second decade. Finding new financial sources, resolving questions of elitism versus populism, and continuing to build an audience for their programs are equally compelling tasks. Steven Weiland, executive director of the Minneapolis-based Federation of Public Programs in the Humanities, a professional organization supported by 44 of the state groups, puts the situation into succinct perspective when he says that both

Maine and Oklahoma—along with all the states—will continue to "face the struggle of adapting the humanities disciplines to public use" in the decade ahead. "I don't see a time when the issue will be settled," says Weiland.

Geoffrey Marshall, director of educational programs at NEH, said after speaking at a recent Maine council program that even austerity has not yet prevented scholars from providing imaginative humanities projects to engage the public. But circuit rider Robert Lively still is waiting for the ultimate indication that the public understands, appreciates, and supports humanistic disciplines. That sign will come, he says, "when the town mayor calls me up and says, 'Lively, send me out a philosopher, and to hell with the cost!'" ■

—Donna Shoemaker

Donna Shoemaker is a Washington-based writer and editor specializing in educational topics.

Harsh Endowment cuts met with outrage, planning

Yale University president A. Bartlett Giamatti compared it to a mugging. Pulitzer Prize-winning author Eudora Welty said it was "almost wicked ...aside from being shallow." And J.W. Peltason, president of the American Council on Education, lamented the fact that "a great nation has turned its back on its soul."

The chorus of indignant voices arose immediately following President Ronald Reagan's February 18 announcement of plans to halve the 1982 budget requests for the National Endowments for the Arts and the Humanities. And it is not likely to abate soon. A few days after the Presidential address, congressional subcommittees began taking testimony on the effects of the budget reductions, which would slice President Carter's request for the National Endowment for the Humanities from \$169.5 million to \$85 million and reduce his \$173 million figure for the National Endowment for the Arts to \$88 million. Bipartisan efforts to soften the administration plan were expected to gain momentum when the President made known more budget specifics on March 10. (Appropriations hearings on the Endowments' budgets are scheduled for late April in both the Senate and the House.)

Critics of the President's proposal say that much more than a 1982 appropriation is at stake in the coming debate over Endowment funding. The severity of the Reagan cuts—the harshest proposed for any federal agencies—will undermine, they say, the whole

notion of government responsibility for support of the nation's cultural life. Even unlikely opponents of administration economics, such as California Senator S.I. Hayakawa and his fellow Republican, Senator Ted Stevens of Alaska, have joined with other congressmen in condemning the 50 percent reductions as "too drastic" and likely not only to threaten many artistic, educational, and cultural programs at the local level, but also to destroy a 15-year record of achievement at the national level. Said Senator Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.), who sponsored legislation creating the Endowments in 1964, "The massive cuts proposed by the President clearly were developed by people who believe the government has nothing whatever to do with the quality of American life."

Supporters and officials of the Endowments, who had expected severe but manageable cuts, perhaps in the neighborhood of 20 percent, generally were stunned when word of the administration's drastic reductions began to be leaked to the press in mid-February. They were particularly incensed by the administration's rationale for such radical paring, set forth in a document prepared by the director of the Office of Management and Budget, David A. Stockman (see insert, opposite page) and later reiterated by the President in his address. Asserting that the work of the Endowments is a "low priority" budget item, given the range of government programs to be cut which focus more directly on "human needs," Stockman criticized the agencies for making government "the patron of first resort" in artistic and cultural pursuits and said that sharp reductions in their budgets would increase the level of giving from foundations, corporations, and individuals to support the arts and humanities.

"He doesn't understand how it's worked in the past," said Congressman Sidney R. Yates (D-Ill.) of the Stockman assertion. "The Endowments have been the trailblazers for contributions from business, not the other way around. I think if the Endowments cut their contributions, so will business."

In fact, the public record clearly contradicts the widely-believed Reagan

contention that availability of government funds has curtailed charitable giving to the arts and humanities. For example:

- The last edition of *Giving USA*, published by the American Association of Fund-Raising Counsel, shows that out of a total of \$2.49 billion contributed from all sources to "arts and humanities," only \$350 million, or less than 15 percent, came from state and federal agencies. Corporate gifts accounted for \$250 million, or 10 percent; private foundations gave another \$216 million, or 7 percent; and more than \$1.6 billion—67 percent of the total—came from individual gifts.

- Corporate and private philanthropic support for the arts has multiplied 12-fold in the 15 years since the National Endowment for the Arts was created. During those years, private support for the arts has grown from about \$226 million to \$2.7 billion.

- The Challenge Grant Program at the NEH, created by Congress in the 1976 reauthorization legislation, has produced new support from private sources for humanities programs and scholarship of over a quarter of a billion dollars in less than five years.

The true situation, suggest NEH chairman Joseph D. Duffey and others, is that, at a time when changing tax laws, declining earnings on portfolios, and reduced capital have altered the giving picture for many corporations and foundations, the Endowments have provided critical support for American art, scholarship, and learning that might otherwise have ceased altogether. Certainly, the first soundings from potential business patrons support this view. "I just don't see it in the cards that we'll be able to pick up that much slack," said Robert Thill, secretary of the contributions committee at American Telephone and Telegraph Company, when asked by the *Wall Street Journal* about the Reagan rationale. The gap to be filled, he said, will be "too much of an increase for corporations to make, in view of all the other obligations we have to meet."

Still, the argument that rankled more was the administration's contention that arts and humanities activities are of marginal importance to the

nation and should be "low priority" budget considerations. Many recalled the words of John F. Kennedy, that more could be learned of a nation by looking at its support of the arts than by looking at its armies. Others drew upon the pronouncements of Jefferson, Madison, Franklin, and other Founding Fathers to show that learning in the humanities is central, and not peripheral, to the idea of a democratic civilization. But some, too, sought to respond to the Reagan administration's own stated concerns.

"The administration is concerned with capital growth, investments in the future, the supply of resources, productivity, and national strength," said AAAH chairman James M. Banner, Jr., testifying before the House Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education in late February. "The greatest capital we possess is the knowledge of our citizens and the potential of our youth. Support for education and culture is not a subsidy but an investment.... An Administration determined to enhance productivity must understand that the production of knowledge has always been fundamental to social and economic advance."

Congressional sources predict a lively debate over the Endowment proposals and the eventual adoption of a compromise funding figure that will save the agencies from wholesale elimination of programs. "I expect overwhelming opposition (to the Reagan cuts) in Congress," said Frederick W. Richmond (D-N.Y.), who recently organized an arts caucus in the House and whose district of Brooklyn benefits substantially from the revenue produced by the arts in New York. Congressman Yates, who, as head of the House Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies, will be influential in establishing the Endowments' final appropriations figure, said, "I don't think the Congress will accept such a low priority for the arts and humanities."

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At the NEH, however, plans are being made to meet the worst-possible contingency: approval of the Reagan budget reductions intact. Chairman Duffey, who has ruled out any across-the-board cutting as "irresponsible,"

sees the possible elimination of whole programs. His staff is busy sorting reduction possibilities and their implications. "If you are cutting a program in half, for instance," says Duffey, "you have to ask is it worth continuing the program at all—or should the money be put into something else."

Although administration spokesmen voiced confidence that the 50 percent slash would not dismantle the arts and humanities agencies (NEH transition chief Richard J. Bishirjian told the *Washington Post* that "it is my judgment and that of the other members of the team that the true mission of NEH will not be jeopardized by the budget proposals."), the mood at the Endowment was decidedly somber when the

National Council on the Humanities gathered for their quarterly meeting two days after Mr. Reagan's February message to Congress. The Council members heard unsettling predictions from the various divisions of the Endowment, and then contemplated as a group how best, as one member put it, "to cut a body in half."

Cuts in administrative overhead, the most obvious and "painless" line of budgetary adjustment, will not offer the Endowment much in the way of crisis solution, according to the NEH chairman. The Endowment has succeeded in bringing its percentage-cost for administration down to the lowest level in its history, at 7 percent, and is now one of the more efficiently run

The Stockman Report

The following is an excerpt from the 145-page budget document prepared for President Reagan in January by the Office of Management and Budget. The report details the rationale for and probable public reaction to the Administration's contemplated spending cuts.

Program: *The National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities were first authorized in 1965. Most recently, the endowments were reauthorized in December 1980 for a five-year period, through FY 1985.*

Potential Change: *Reduce the budget authority of the arts and humanities endowments by 50 percent. The proposed savings reflect a 50 percent reduction in funding for arts and humanities programs beginning in Fiscal Year 1982. From Fiscal Year 1984 on for the arts and Fiscal Year 1985 on for the humanities, the endowments would be held level at \$100 million.*

Reductions of this magnitude are premised on the notion that the administration should completely revamp federal policy for arts and humanities support. For too long, the endowments have spread federal financing into an ever-wider range of artistic and literary endeavor, pro-

moting the notion that the federal government should be the financial patron of first resort for both individuals and institutions engaged in artistic and literary pursuits. This policy has resulted in a reduction in the historic role of private individual and corporate philanthropic support in these key areas. These reductions would be a first step toward reversing this trend.

Moreover, even in those areas where federal financing does not wholly supplant private philanthropic means of support, it constitutes a low priority item. Given the need for fiscal retrenchment across the full range of federal programs that meet more basic human needs, low priority items must bear a greater differential burden if fiscal restraint is to be achieved in a balanced and compassionate way.

Probable Reaction: *The arts and humanities endowments have broad and articulate public constituencies, ranging from university presidents to museum directors to individual artists and scholars. In addition, most artistic and cultural institutions maintain strong ties to business and corporations through honorary appointments on boards of directors. A proposal to halve the budgets of the endowments could generate strong opposition.*

Those Who Decide: Key Humanities Posts

■ Appropriations

House Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies:

Sidney R. Yates (D-Ill.), chairman
Joseph M. McDade (R-Pa.), ranking minority member
Clarence D. Long (D-Md.)
John P. Murtha (D-Pa.)
Norman D. Dicks (D-Wash.)
Les Au Coin (D-Miss.)
Ralph S. Regula (R-Ohio)
Tom Loeffler (R-Tex.)
Silvio O. Conte (R-Mass.)

Senate Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies:

James A. McClure (R-Idaho), chairman
Robert C. Byrd (D-W.Va.), ranking minority member
Ted Stevens (R-Alaska)
Paul Laxalt (R-Nev.)
Jake Garn (R-Utah)
Mark Andrews (R-N.D.)
Harrison Schmitt (R-N.M.)
J. Bennett Johnson, Jr. (D-La.)
Walter Huddleston (D-Ky.)
Patrick J. Leahy (D-Vt.)
Dennis DeConcini (D-Ari.)
Quentin Burdick (D-N.D.)
Dale Bumpers (D-Ark.)

■ Other Congressional-Oversight Subcommittees

House Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education:

Paul Simon (D-Ill.), chairman
E. Thomas Coleman (R-Mo.), ranking minority member
Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts, and the Humanities:
Robert T. Stafford (R-Vt.), chairman
Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.), ranking minority member

■ The White House

Domestic Policy Adviser—Martin Anderson
Public Liaison for the Arts and Humanities—Aram Bakshian

federal agencies. In fact, only 12 of the 228 fulltime federal jobs at NEH must be eliminated by September 30 under the President's plan.

Programs most at risk in austerity budgeting appear to be the costly but impressive projects of the Endowment's division of public programs—museum programs, traveling exhibitions, television series, and other media projects. Council members were told that possible casualties included "Odyssey," the PBS series on archaeology, now in its second year; "The American Short Story," another PBS series considered by some to be one of the Endowment's most successful

public ventures; self-study grants for small museums; and future NEH-sponsored museum exhibitions of all sorts—from the large "Tut" variety to the smaller "Shakespeare, the Globe, and the World."

Proposed cuts in related federal agencies, such as the National Science Foundation, also will put tremendous strain on the research division at NEH, reported Council member Mary Beth Norton. Seventy-five percent of the NSF funds devoted to social-science programs, including those in archaeology and linguistics, have been eliminated in the Reagan budget, giving such projects, and those in areas such

as the history of science, "no other place to go" than NEH. The NSF budget, Norton revealed, has supported 20 percent of the research budget of the Social Science Research Council, as well as the scholarly exchange programs with the People's Republic of China and 20 percent of the work of the American Council of Learned Societies.

Also eliminated in the Reagan budget are such vital research and preservation agencies as the Institute of Museum Services and the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. While trying to live within its own restricted research budget, Norton concluded, NEH will also have to deal with a possible deluge of new research requests—often from those whose work faces termination without new sources of aid.

Norton's committee concluded that no one area of research should take precedence over another, but that "a 50 percent, across-the-board cut would represent disaster" for the total research effort. To cope, the committee recommended, the research division should adopt a scale of priorities to use in reviewing grant applications. Their suggested criteria, seen by some as applicable to all NEH divisions, included:

- The project's scope. Whether or not the research has national significance, as opposed to regional or local importance.

- Alternate funding possibilities. Whether NEH is the last resort.

- Cost effectiveness. Whether one project will yield greater or lesser results for the amount of money expended. The Endowment should "strongly discourage long-term collaborative projects," the committee asserted.

- Potential. Whether or not the project "holds out the promise of strong, scholarly achievement—something tangible and not ethereal."

Some Council members, however, called for a complete reordering of the Endowment's priorities in face of the severe budget cutbacks. Jacob Neusner set the tone for the priorities debate when he defended research and fellowships as "the two divisions critical to the Endowment and the nation." There is "no way to justify"

much of what the Endowment undertakes in its divisions of public and special programs, he added.

"In a time when difficult choices must be made, we must offer our best taste and judgment," said Neusner. "For every penny we spend, I think we must be willing to go down to 134th Street in New York City and argue that, yes, we should do this and not meet your pressing needs."

Counsel member Leon Stein, a former official with the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, countered that he did not wish "to pit my union members against your academic fellows," but vowed to argue just as strongly for the constituencies that benefit from NEH public programs. Of particular importance to the nation, Stein maintained, are the division of special programs' Youth-grants, which give gifted youngsters from all socioeconomic stratas the chance to engage their minds at an early age.

Richard W. Lyman, vice chairman of the Council, acknowledged that public programs, by their nature, probably would have to bear the brunt of budget-cutting. But he cautioned against "lemming rushes over cliffs." There is a danger, he said, in the Endowment's responding too readily to a prevalent line of criticism (that scholarly excellence has been sacrificed to public programming) and "ignoring its original mandate, which *requires* that NEH inform and educate—that it bring the humanities to the American public."

Philosophy professor Anita Silvers added that her colleagues on the Council must not lose sight of the difficulty of reinstating some programs at a later date, after they have been eliminated to save money. "We're not simply moving names and programs around," she said. "We're talking about something that will affect us for 10, 20, or 30 years."

Debate over the relative merits of outreach and academics will probably consume NEH budget preparers during the months ahead. But the Endowment will also be engaged in activities designed to bolster its precarious financial base. Beginning this month, NEH will sponsor a series of four "con-

versations" between Endowment personnel and others concerned with the fate of the humanities and foundation and corporate-giving officers. The meetings, to be held at locations across the nation, are part of the Endowment's increased emphasis on private giving—a policy that was accelerated more than 18 months ago, according to one NEH official, and "not as a response to the events of November 4."

But the real fight for the Endowment's future will be waged on Capitol Hill this spring. And supporters, though shaken by the events of winter, think that they have a reasonable chance of success in convincing elected officials of the dire effects of proposed spending cuts. Yale president Giamatti, a new member of the National Council on the Humanities, put the case succinctly when he noted that the severe Endowment cuts were in addition to the general "mugging" higher education received in the President's proposed budget. "An incredibly important part of our culture was left out of the priorities," Giamatti said. "And an intelligent citizenry is just as important to this country as economic balance."

Simon assumes chairmanship of vital House subcommittee

The Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education, which has responsibility for arts and humanities legislation within the House of Representatives' Committee on Education and Labor, will be headed in the 97th Congress by Paul Simon (D-Ill.), a key congressional advocate for increased emphasis on foreign language study and a longtime supporter of the National Endowments.

Congressman Simon was chosen by the Democratic leadership in February to chair the subcommittee, after its former chairman, William D. Ford (D-Mich.), became chairman of the House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service.

Simon, who was the keynote speaker at the first annual meeting of the AAAH last spring, has recently authored a book on the crisis in language skills, *The Tongue-Tied American*.

Association Notices

AAAH seeks coordinated effort to protect integrity of NEH

On March 11, representatives of several learned societies, educational associations, and other groups closely allied with the humanities met in Washington under the auspices of the AAAH to discuss major issues facing the National Endowment for the Humanities as a result of the Reagan administration's proposed reductions in the budget for FY 1982. According to AAAH chairman James M. Banner, Jr., this initial meeting of what is being referred to as the Ad Hoc Coalition on the NEH was exploratory in nature, designed to bring groups concerned with the humanities together to plan "a mutual and responsible reply" to the budget recommendations that would help to "protect the integrity of the Endowment." Groups invited to participate included the Council of Graduate Schools, the American Council of Learned Societies, the United Chapters of Phi Beta Kappa, the Association of American Colleges, and the Research Library Group Association. Representatives from the Endowment also attended.

ANNUAL MEETING

1981

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Washington, D.C.**

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