

University of Rhode Island

DigitalCommons@URI

National Foundation on the Arts and
Humanities (1965-1967)

Education: National Endowment for the Arts
and Humanities, Subject Files II (1962-1996)

9-29-1966

National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities (1965-1967): Report 06

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/pell_neh_II_53

Recommended Citation

"National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities (1965-1967): Report 06" (1966). *National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities (1965-1967)*. Paper 4.
https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/pell_neh_II_53/4

This Report is brought to you by the University of Rhode Island. It has been accepted for inclusion in National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities (1965-1967) by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact digitalcommons-group@uri.edu. For permission to reuse copyrighted content, contact the author directly.

NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

1800 G STREET, N.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506



September 29, 1966

National Endowment for the Humanities

THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
HUMANITIES--INITIAL PROGRAMS

The National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act, signed by the President on September 29, 1965, brought into existence the Foundation and its constituent National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities. The Congressional mandate of the National Endowment for the Humanities was:

- to develop and encourage the pursuit of a national policy for the promotion of progress and scholarship in the humanities;
- to initiate and support research in programs to strengthen the research potential of the United States in the humanities;
- to award fellowships and grants to institutions or individuals for training and workshops in the humanities;
- to foster the interchange of information in the humanities;
- to foster public understanding and appreciation of the humanities; and
- to support the publication of scholarly works in the humanities.

In recognition of the inter-related nature of the two fields, arts and humanities, Congress provided a unique administrative device, the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities, made up of the two Endowments whose chairmen provide co-equal direction of the Endowments. Associated with each Endowment is an Advisory Council of 26 prominent private citizens, appointed by the President, and chaired by the respective chairmen of the Endowments. The Act established an interagency advisory Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.

The term "humanities" as defined by the Act, "includes, but is not limited to, the study of the following: language, both modern and classical; linguistics; literature; history; jurisprudence; philosophy;

archaeology; the history, criticism, theory, and practice of the arts; and those aspects of the social sciences which have humanistic content and employ humanistic methods." Total appropriations for Fiscal 1966 and 1967 make \$4.5 million available to the Humanities Endowment for its current programs. The Endowment is additionally authorized to receive unrestricted gifts from private donors which will be matched by federal funds up to a total of \$3 million.

As a statement of the role of the humanities in American life, the Endowment had before it the report of the Commission on the Humanities issued in April, 1964, which argued:

Even the most gifted individual, whether poet or physicist, will not realize his full potential or make his fullest contribution to his times unless his imagination has been kindled by the aspirations and accomplishments of those who have gone before him. Humanist scholars have therefore a special responsibility in that the past is their natural domain. They have the privilege and obligation of interpreting the past to each new generation of men who "necessarily must live in one small corner for one little stretch of time."... Through the humanities we may seek intellectual humility, sensitivity to beauty, and emotional discipline. By them we may come to know the excitement of ideas, the power of imagination, and the unsuspected energies of the creative spirit.

The National Council on the Humanities, at its first meeting in March, 1966, turned to the task of identifying needs and shaping programs that would be true to the aspirations of the Commission's report and to the carefully reasoned goals of the Act's legislative sponsors. Then, under the chairmanship of Henry Allen Moe and subsequently under that of Barnaby C. Keeney, the Council and the Endowment established three major goals and within them specific programs directed toward their attainment. These goals were:

Discovery and development of individuals whose work contributes to our knowledge of the humanities and through whose careers as teachers and practitioners this knowledge is communicated to students and the public at large.

Development and dissemination of knowledge which would add to and interpret that store of wisdom and learning which is the humanities.

Effective educational programs in the humanities for students in schools, colleges, and universities, and more broadly for

all Americans through the innumerable resources of informal education, to enrich significantly the quality of our national life.

Discovery and Development of Individuals

On March 20, announcing initial programs for the development of individual scholars and teachers, Dr. Henry Allen Moe, interim Chairman of the Endowment, asserted that, "We are true to our traditions of the value of the individual, which our whole philosophy of government was evolved to protect, if we begin our concern with the individual man or woman working in the humanities." Drawing on the experience gained through existing federal and private programs to develop individual competence in the physical sciences and scholarship, which have clarified effective methods and techniques, the Endowment has adopted two of the most reliable of these programs, the summer stipend and the 6-8 month fellowship for research, study and writing. Those eligible are young teachers and scholars who have completed their doctorates, who stand at the beginning of their professional careers and who would benefit greatly by the opportunity to pursue freely studies in their fields. Candidates are nominated by their institutions, which may be colleges, museums, historical societies, and special libraries. In the belief that scholars of high potential exist in every region and institution, the Endowment, by accepting only a single nomination from each institution for each program, seeks to encourage individual excellence wherever it may be found. Approximately 200 summer stipend awards will be made for the summer of 1967 and 100 fellowships awarded for the 1967-1968 academic year. Awards will be announced on March 1, 1967.

The Endowment's Senior Fellowships Program is directed toward the established scholar who has already made significant contributions to his field. These scholars constitute a major national resource. They are exceptionally capable of conducting original research in their fields, of achieving major new syntheses of knowledge, and of deriving from their work new insights which affect our assessment of the past and our values of today. The Endowment's role is to provide the opportunities--freedom from teaching and administrative duties for a period of up to one year--to insure a fuller utilization of this resource. Approximately 50 Senior Fellowships will be awarded in the coming year.

Approximately \$2 million (almost 45 percent of the Endowment's total funds) will be expended initially in these programs to support and extend individual capabilities.

Development and Dissemination of Knowledge

President Johnson has said:

"We have proven our scientific and technical genius...Science can give us goods--and goods we need. But the humanities--art

and literature, poetry and history, law and philosophy--must give us our goals."

To redress the imbalance of scientific and humanistic knowledge, and to accelerate the development of that knowledge so crucial to our goals, is the intent of Endowment support of research in these fields.

Research projects which the Endowment will support may range from broad new syntheses of knowledge in all the humanistic disciplines to precise studies of critical importance in limited fields. Beyond the encouragement of excellence in research projects in the humanities at large, the Endowment attaches special importance to studies of the origins and development of American culture. It seeks to foster both original historical research and increased popular understanding of the meaning of the United States--to itself and to the world--in terms of our national experience.

For example, a scholar has a grant to make a contribution to the study of American culture by investigating the development of the principles of individual freedom, human rights, and constitutional law as they were influenced and fixed in the consciousness of our early settlers by the actions of the English Parliament of 1628.

To many scholars throughout the world, one of the most obvious obstacles to a full understanding of America's literary heritage has been the lack of authoritative, complete editions of major American authors. The United States lags behind France, England, the Soviet Union and Italy in providing full and accurate editions of its great authors. The need is twofold: first, to complete the works of individual major authors by editing accurately for the first time the published or partially published work of the author, and second, to prepare new texts of the essential works of major authors which are already in print in inferior or unavailable editions. Under the leadership of the Modern Language Association, this work has been begun through the establishment of a Center for Editions of American Authors, a work involving over 130 American scholars in providing definitive texts of Mark Twain, Stephen Crane, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, William D. Howells, Washington Irving, Henry Thoreau, and Walt Whitman. The key to the success of this great effort is the financial support extended by the National Endowment for the Humanities. It is hoped that, with Endowment assistance, means can be found to establish authoritative texts for popular editions of American authors.

Recognizing that the development of knowledge is dependent in part upon the effectiveness of scholarly research aids and tools, encyclopedias, bibliographies, and library resources, and that many such tools presently lag behind scholars' needs, the Endowment will support their production and also encourage the application of modern computer techniques to research in the humanities. One such grant has been made.

With Endowment support the American Historical Association will carefully explore methods of making more readily available the enormous, and steadily growing, resources of the historian. The grant will enable the Association to assess fully present bibliographical services and to adapt the computer, with its speed and accuracy in cataloguing and flexible cross-referencing, to the needs of research in history.

To insure that American scholars will have the opportunity to participate fully in the planning of international scholarly meetings, the Endowment will support, in instances where funds are not obtainable otherwise, travel to such planning conferences by representatives of scholarly societies.

For the Fiscal Year 1967, the Endowment has earmarked \$1.5 million dollars to carry forward these priority programs whose goal is the increase of knowledge through research and scholarly activities.

Educational Programs in the Humanities

The humanities play an indispensable role in a democratic society, defining as they do the great themes of justice, freedom, and truth, and providing the individual citizen with knowledge and the insights to participate wisely in the deliberations which shape the nation's course. The principal means by which the resources of the humanities are conveyed to each citizen--the schools, colleges, and universities of the nation--are a major focus of the Endowment's goal of the effective transmittal of humane knowledge. Through cooperation with the U. S. Office of Education and other public and private institutions, the Endowment will assist efforts to improve teaching of the humanities, with particular emphasis on assuring that such efforts will have a direct relevance to teachers in school systems. Curriculum reappraisals and the development of better teaching materials are underway in the humanities, particularly English and social studies. Such efforts, by and large, have been more successful than attempts to bring better methods and materials into daily use in the classroom. Because the effort to reinforce the teaching of the humanities at the school level depends in part upon institutions of higher education, which are the focus of research and criticism, the Endowment will encourage a continuing fruitful relationship between the scholars in universities and colleges and teachers in the school systems.

The Endowment proposes two programs to strengthen college-university humanities teaching. To demonstrate the value of good teaching, a limited number of promising young post-doctoral students will be offered teaching fellowships in good liberal arts colleges with a strong tradition of teaching, but the teaching load will be limited, allowing a fellow to serve an apprenticeship under a senior professor. To demonstrate the advances

which may be brought about by college-university cooperation, the Endowment will invite proposals from institutions planning cooperative programs which, as shaped by the institutions, could consist of faculty exchanges, graduate-level study for advanced college students, projects for college faculty use of university library and research resources, and access to departmental colloquia.

The Endowment believes a center for advanced study constitutes a logical development in the strengthening of the humanities, combining scholarship of the highest order with a quality of teaching reflective of such an environment, and bearing the promise of substantial impact upon the fields of the humanities. A number of proposals for such a center have been advanced, but all lack the sustained planning which is required if the center is to achieve national importance. Questions of structure, program, relation to existing institutions, location, and capital and operating funds require detailed analysis. The Endowment's initial activity, which will commence in 1967-1968 will support the required planning for development of such a national center.

In recognition of the increasingly important role played by television in education, Congress appropriated funds to the Endowment for "studies of educational television and radio." One aspect of educational television, instructional programs, transmitted by authorized channels, special facilities and closed circuit, is the focus of the initial Endowment goal. Now a significant factor in education at the school, college and university level (reaching some fifteen million students annually), the quality of such instruction varies greatly, reflecting the lack of training of instructors in the medium of television. The Endowment will bring together carefully chosen educational broadcasters, including some from other countries conducting imaginative programs, to formulate methods appropriate to the fields of the humanities. The study will then convert these recommendations into films or video tapes which will demonstrate how to conceive, script, direct, produce, and teach through the medium.

In another communications medium the Endowment, in conjunction with the National Endowment for the Arts, will support inter-disciplinary training of journalists and critics to enhance the quality of criticism of the arts, and discussions of education and learning, particularly in smaller communities.

Recognizing the special claims of the almost two million Americans who for reasons of blindness or other physical disability must rely on "talking books," records, and tape recordings, the Endowment will insure that excellent works in the humanities will be made more broadly available than at present. Ineligible for any present programs are persons temporarily handicapped. An experimental "talking books" program for hospital patients will be undertaken to stimulate private and public organizations to institute similar programs in the nation's hospitals. The recent approval of a measure which would substantially broaden the Library of

Congress talking book program should result in a reduction or termination of the Endowment's efforts.

Many communities possess major resources for learning and culture in their museums and historical societies which share a common goal important to Endowment objectives--the preservation and interpretation of various aspects of our national heritage. In addition to programs to develop individual competency of hard-pressed museum and society staffs, the Endowment will support short-term seminars and institutes for individuals for whom longer term training is impractical and will initiate a graduate fellowship program to develop scholarly personnel through universities offering work in museum studies and American culture.

For these programs to develop teaching and education of the public, the Endowment has allocated \$782,000 for Fiscal Year 1967. In those programs directed toward the citizen and outside of the scope of formal education, the Endowment recognizes the challenge of a largely uncharted area, in which, during the coming year, it will seek to enlarge its efforts.

As the Endowment gains experience--and hopefully more funds--it expects to develop programs of institutional support for the humanities, as well as the project and individual support it now offers.

Thus, in its initial programs, the National Endowment for the Humanities will push forward on a broad front projects of varying scope and emphasis responsive to President Johnson's charge to the Endowment's Council:

"I believe that the National Council on the Humanities has a crucial role to play--not only in enriching scholarship, but in enriching life for all men...."