

1989

## Obscenity: Andres Serrano Controversy (1989): Correspondence 12

Claiborne Pell

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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND  
HUMAN RESOURCES

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6300

July 19, 1989

Mrs. James A. Baker, III  
2415 Foxhall Road  
Washington, D.C. 20007

Dear Mrs. Baker:

Thank you very much for your recent letter and for your thoughts regarding the current controversy over grant procedures at the National Endowment for the Arts.

While the peer review system utilized at the Endowment has served the arts in this country well for almost 25 years, I agree with you that closer attention must be paid to the criteria used in judging applications and that more internal control must be exerted over regrants.

I have recently sent the enclosed letter to Acting NEA Chairman, Hugh Southern, which expands on these points and which I am happy to share with you. I will be closely following what transpires at the upcoming meeting of the National Council on the Arts and, if necessary, I will follow up by taking steps to amend the Endowment's legislation.

With warm regards,

Ever sincerely,

Claiborne Pell  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Education,  
Arts & Humanities