

ently not certain in his own mind whether he should accept the AAAS presidency if he wins it. In a statement to *Science*, he said: "In determining my course of action with respect to the presidency of the AAAS, I shall try to ascertain what is best for the AAAS with the help of conversations with people on both sides of the controversy.

I am seriously concerned that there be some semblance of adherence to the democratic process. We must note that the Council will express its preference with the full knowledge that I have served for nearly 10 years and am continuing to serve as chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission. If I am defeated, the matter will be settled. If

I am elected by a decisive margin, this should be taken into account." That statement indicated that Seaborg is still struggling over the question of whether he would make an appropriate leader of the AAAS. "I'm going to talk to more people," he said. "I really want to do what's right for AAAS."

—PHILIP M. BOFFEY

## 2. Arts and Humanities: Federal Money Is Benefiting Culture

The National Endowment for the Humanities has the twofold mission of upgrading the quality of humanistic endeavor and laying open its riches to the general public.

Former president of Brown University Barnaby Keeney, chairman of the endowment until President Nixon's refusal to reappoint him last July, remains its most outspoken representative. Keeney feels that humanists have lost sight of what he considers their proper role, namely, that of interpreting the past so that man may live more wisely and happily in the present. He thinks that the humanities have been in danger of becoming an intellectual retreat rather than a living force, and that humanists have been delinquent in helping people formulate new values to deal with the consequences of advances in science and technology.

In a 1969 speech, for example, Keeney declared: "Strenuous and occasionally successful efforts are being made to apply the social sciences, but almost never are the humanities well applied. We do not use philosophy in defining our conduct. We do not use literature as a source of real and vicarious experience to save us the trouble of living every life again in our own."

The most visible signs of the disparity between government support for science and the humanities are found in aid to higher education. In 1965, of all federal money for research, less than one-half percent went to humanities, with the result that the proportion of humanities scholars to science scholars declined drastically in postgraduate education programs (*Science*, 1 October 1965). The effect of this bias is seen

on campuses throughout the country, where humanities classes are often housed in shabby edifices abandoned by science departments when they moved to shiny new government-funded facilities.

The endowment directs its beneficence into four categories—fellowships and stipends for individual scholars; research and publication; the upgrading of humanities education; and a public program, whose broad mandate is to get the grass roots excited about the joys of knowledge.

While individual research and scholarship grants are awarded for many kinds of activities, from underwater archeological excavation to a study of the philosophy of law, the humanities council has tried to favor studies that will stimulate thought on civilization's current afflictions. The stress on "relevance" has produced some dismay in scholarly quarters where there was fear that pure research was being downgraded. But the objections have apparently been dispelled. When asked recently what the endowment's greatest accomplishment had been, Keeney replied: "It's gotten the humanists to think of something besides pure research." The endowment started out by handing over 80 percent of its budget for individual study and research. Now, with priorities shifting to education and public programs, the proportion is down to 35 percent.

The most adventurous and least clearly defined of the programs is the one for public consumption. It has two basic thrusts: one deals through the media, primarily in the form of educational television programs; the

other involves direct confrontations between the humanities and The People. In the latter category, the centerpiece is the National Humanities Series. Organized with grants to the Woodrow Wilson Scholarship Foundation, the series sends teams of actors and teachers to interested communities whose cultural facilities are limited. Under the general heading of "Time Out for Man: The Humanities in Action," the teams stage lively public productions, which feature the writings of history's great thinkers, around themes of current public concern. After the performance, discussions are held between the audience and those on stage. The performers have reportedly been enthusiastically received, and some communities have become excited enough to form groups to foster more such activities.

The aim of the public program is to build on the resources of all the local institutions it can get its hands on—museums, libraries, schools, adult education centers, historical societies, radio and TV stations, and newspapers. A pilot program in Utah, for example, provides for a humanities agent (modeled on the lines of an agriculture extension agent) to aid statewide agencies in designing programs related to local history and culture, and to engender cooperation between public schools and local historical societies.

The endowment's education program is largely concerned with aiding in the development of humanities curricula. Colleges and universities have received the most attention, but the most novel program may be the National Humanities Faculty, which is applied to elementary and high schools. Under this program, small groups of scholars and teachers deliver talks to students and aid faculties in designing courses that have special relevance within a particular school—such as a program on human attitudes and values to aid in a school's transition to desegregated classes. A broader aim of the program is to get high schools and neighboring

colleges—which for the most part inhabit separate intellectual communities—into a pattern of productive exchanges.

Considerable money has gone into programs with direct application to the country's social problems—such as ethnic studies of minority groups, a grant for the Watts Writers Workshop in Los Angeles, and faculty development grants for small Negro colleges—but the endowment has yet to discover a comprehensive way of harnessing the cultural energies of poor and underprivileged youth. One such opportunity arose in the formation of the Eastern High School Freedom Annex in Washington, D.C., a center for supplementary courses in black history and culture, which was formed by a group of young blacks who were fed up with their high school. The program, which has received two endowment grants, has drawn a number of dropouts back into the school system and has propelled others on to college. Endowment staff members say they would like to back more programs that perform a beneficial social as well as cultural function. But a paramount concern for quality forces them to be highly selective: “after all, we’re not a social action agency.”

The endowment tries to be a standard-setter for excellence and a perpetuator of the best in American culture. In this capacity, one of the largest appropriations has been made to the Modern Language Association. Under yearly grants (\$189,000 for 1970) teams of scholars have labored over production of complete, accurate, annotated editions of the works of major 19th century American authors. The project is widely praised for supplying an authoritative collection of works, many of which are unpublished, out of print, or abroad in inaccurate texts. Some critics have complained that the grants put a lot of money into some pretty precious scholarship. “Does it really matter whether Melville’s ocean was ‘roiling’ or ‘boiling,’” wondered one.

As part of its effort to break down rigid barriers between disciplines, the endowment is putting money into a number of programs to stimulate crossbreeding with the sciences. Among these is a grant to the Princeton engineering faculty to permit widening of the curriculum to include the political, esthetic, and human ramifications of an engineering project. Another grant enables research fellows at the Salk Institute to study the humanistic implica-

tions of advances in such fields as genetics.

In the scholarly realm, the endowment intends to place future emphasis on the development of basic research tools such as bibliographies and dictionaries, and on technological research aids like computers, microfilm libraries, and improved methods of copying documents.

In the public arena, inspired in part by the success of the state arts councils, the endowment is looking into the creation of a new state-based program. The form it will take is yet undecided. State programs might become attached to local arts councils or historical societies, or they might be administered by state humanities consortia made up of representatives from cultural agencies, publications, and educational TV stations. Keeney, whose views incline to acerbity, doubts whether local auton-

omous agencies can conduct programs of high quality, but feels that a state-based program would be “very helpful politically.”

The National Foundation for the Arts and Humanities (NFAH), because of its high artistic and intellectual standards and the fact it has had so little money, has operated remarkably free of serious criticism. Experience has proved unfounded the fears that money would be poured only into existing channels rather than used to create new ones, that government intervention would mean the pollution of art, or that federal infusions would dry up private contributions. The uneven cultural landscape of the country—with its vast expanses of TV land unaffected by artistically thriving urban centers, the two-way snobbery between the enlightened and the intellectually unwashed, dancers in the “dance capital of the

## Humanities: Some Typical Projects

The following undertakings give an idea of the range of ways in which the National Endowment for the Humanities has tried to pump fresh blood into humanistic pursuits:

- ▶ A grant of \$87,730 to Education Systems Corporation for the production of elementary school readers on Mexican-American history and culture.

- ▶ \$900 for a college professor who undertook, with his students, the excavation of a 400-year-old Indian village in Pennsylvania.

- ▶ Development of a 7th-grade course on the civilizations of Athens and Sparta which places emphasis on social change and the role of warfare in changing values.

- ▶ A Younger Humanist Fellowship to allow a professor to develop his concept of an “eco-community,” a new life style which minimizes waste and pollution.

- ▶ A study of the federal arts projects of the Depression.

- ▶ A whirlwind 3-month program of community enlightenment sponsored by the Tulsa, Oklahoma, library system, in which a \$24,250 grant was used to pay for speakers, films, and public discussions about civilization’s current concerns.

- ▶ Fellowships enabling authors to complete books such as *The Mind and Mood of Black America*; *International History of City Development*; and *Jefferson the President*.

- ▶ An \$80,000 contribution to “Trail of Tears,” an educational television series documenting the government’s maltreatment of the Cherokees.

- ▶ A grant to a musicologist to record and publish the reminiscences of old New Orleans jazz musicians.

- ▶ \$161,000 in grants to faculty members of junior colleges so that they can take a year off to improve themselves as teachers.

- ▶ \$30,170 for a Folklore Institute, in Arizona, which experiments in the classroom use of folklore in the state’s ethnically mixed junior high schools.

- ▶ \$46,330 to George Washington University for exploration of the humanistic dimensions of its relations with the City of Washington, D.C.

—C.H.

world" waiting on tables to stay alive, towns whose only building that is not air conditioned is the library—is partly a result of the government's laissez-faire attitude toward what is not a commercial enterprise. The Ford Foundation's vice president McNeil Lowry has noted that artistic standards have become "generalized and popularized" when subjected to the laws of the marketplace.

The argument that art and the state don't mix has become nearly obsolete in face of the fact that private sources are inadequate to supply the financial support needed by the arts to experiment and flourish. Far from preempting the fields in which it operates, NFAH grants serve as magnets to attract other funds, and, for every federal dollar spent, well over \$3 in outside money has been generated. As Keeney says, "There's nothing like money to attract money." The respectability conferred by government endorsement of a program is also attractive. One witness at congressional hearings claimed that corporation boards whose philanthropic contributions had been limited to the "kids and dogs" category were becoming emboldened to dip into cultural activities.

#### Careful Selection

The NFAH procedure for selecting projects for funding was meticulously designed to avoid any suggestion of government manipulation. Once a program is designated by an endowment's council, project applications are invited. The staff forwards feasible-looking applications to selected specialists and to appropriate members of large, multidisciplinary "peer panels" (whose names are kept confidential to spare them harassment) for criticism and recommendations. The applications then undergo exhaustive screening by the council, which meets privately four times a year. The chairman must approve the final selections. The responsibility for grant selection is diffused by the requirement that the entire council must vote on every sum over \$10,000.

Congress has found little cause for complaint in the Foundation's mode of operation. One exception was an uproar in the House occasioned by certain colorful-sounding projects, most notably a study of 19th century comic strips. Several members chose the occasion to call for a termination of "handouts" to individuals under the arts program, an alarming prospect since grants to individual artists go to the core of cre-

ative activity. Some observers think that the problem was simply one of public relations—if the comic strips had been called "visual satire," for instance, the project would have met with no objections.

On the whole, staffs and councils feel that Congress leans over backward to avoid imposing its preferences. Still, they look forward to being granted a permanent lease on life (they were granted a 3-year extension this year). "We're so small that if Congress makes any cuts they could kill us," said one arts council member. "I would like us to get bigger and feel we were a permanent part of the scene." The size of the budget leaves little leeway for mistakes, and staff members feel strongly that they must have enough freedom to take risks. "Congress jumped down our throats for including one example of concrete poetry—poetry which relies on visual effect—in a literary anthology [a one-word poem: *Light*]," said one. "If a scientist does 100 experiments and succeeds the 101st time he's called a success—but if an artist goofs after 100 successes he's judged by the failure." The comparison, while overdrawn, reflects the defensive stance humanists have assumed in recent decades in response to uncritical public support of science and technology.

The NFAH, for all its hundreds of programs, remains in the pilot stage. Next year will be the first in which its beneficence outstrips that of the Ford Foundation's contributions to arts and humanities, which, this year, amounts to about \$20 million. Witnesses at this spring's hearings estimated that some \$150 million a year per endowment would be required to make a real dent in the country's cultural scene.

But the ball is rolling. The Foundation has always had a solid base of bipartisan support in Congress, and insiders believe the agency has successfully kept its nose above governmental politics. Congressional opposition, almost entirely limited to the House, has dwindled to some ritualistic carping—and Senator Strom Thurmond (D-S.C.), who 5 years ago labeled the whole idea unconstitutional, was recently to be found introducing one of the witnesses at the 1970 hearings. Press coverage is favorable, particularly for the more visible activities of the arts endowment.

Some observers, Keeney among them, think that ultimately the interests of both humanists and scientists would be

best served if NFAH and NSF were merged into a single National Foundation for the advancement of research, education, and the arts. (Representative Emilio Daddario's subcommittee recommended a similar body in the form of a National Institute of Research and Advanced Studies.) Such a body would be a public symbol of the interrelationship of all branches of knowledge and could more effectively support programs in which the respective purposes of scientists and humanists merge. Most arts people, however, would strongly resist such a combination since they feel their identity and objectives would be drowned in a large, multi-purpose organization. A more fruitful alliance, they suggest, might be with the cultural exchange programs of the State Department.

The marriage of convenience, as many regard it, between the arts and humanities may one day be dissolved in a government reshuffle. But right now the Foundation is young and happy, and many would agree with a staff member who calls it "the most exciting thing in government." As a federal agency devoted to spreading truth and beauty rather than combating misery and evil, the Foundation is rare indeed. And it will have further claim to distinction if its spirited and individualistic approach to its job can survive bureaucratic maturity.

—CONSTANCE HOLDEN

*(This concludes a two-part series.)*

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## RECENT DEATHS

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**C. Ralph Arthur**, 53; president, Ferrum Junior College; 13 October.

**Anna Bartsch-Dunne**, 93; former professor of histology and experimental physiology, Howard University; 13 October.

**Myron L. Begeman**, 77; professor emeritus of mechanical engineering, University of Texas; 25 October.

**Edward B. Blackman**, 53; professor of humanities and education, Michigan State University; 15 October.

**Raymond B. Blakney**, 74; former president, Olivet College; 24 October.

**Dan F. Bradley**, 41; professor of polymer chemistry, Polytechnic Institute; 31 October.

**Joseph N. Spencer**, 62; associate professor of pharmacology, University of South Dakota School of Medicine; 30 September.