REACTIONS FROM PANEL MEMBERS

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I think it will be useful to tell you a bit about the Pennsylvania
State Library's involvement in the National Endowment for the
Humanities projects and then I will relate some of my own thoughts
on this subject.

One of our divisions at the State Library, the Library Services
Division, has an enormous collection of publications including
a large genealogy collection and a variety of political science
resources which are useful for state government. One of our greatest
strengths is in the area of newspapers. We recently received
a grant from the NEH Research/Resources Program to begin a planning
process for the preservation of newspapers throughout the Common-
wealth. We were one of fifteen states selected to receive this
planning grant. What it means (and it has interesting implications
for librarians) is that we are now involved in the process of
inventorying and cataloging on OCLC all newspapers published in
Pennsylvania since the first one appeared in 1719.

Various attempts have been made to collect this information
in the past, but this project entails a comprehensive search for
all of the extant newspapers, whether they are housed in historical
society buildings, in libraries, or in the attics of private homes.
We are trying to locate all of these newspapers in order to microfilm
the ones that are deteriorating, and we are setting up priority

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lists for this type of preservation activity.

These plans will be submitted to NEH for a subsequent grant, a grant that will require matching funds from the state to cover the expense of the detailed work that is involved. Many of you may have received two communications from us recently. One was an announcement of the grant and an invitation to a conference held on September 30. The second was a request for some brief information about newspapers collections which you are aware of. By identifying these newspapers and making them available to people on microfilm, the history of rural areas (as well as that of urban areas) will be preserved and brought to life as never before. I think this project has implications for humanities programs connected with libraries. Such a project could bring people together in order to discuss the history of a community and the popular culture which once existed and formed the basis of modern Pennsylvania communities.

Our Library Development Division has also been involved in the NEH program in several ways. Approximately three years ago, the State Library received a NEH grant which supported local pro-gramming efforts. The objective was to help libraries throughout the state develop new concepts in adult programming. Leandra Fox was in charge of this program which produced some exciting documents. This project focused on the "built environment." Papers were commissioned on a variety of topics including the following: architecture and its influence on everyday living, the preservation of local history, rural and urban values, women

and literature, ethnicity, and aging. These papers, which were distributed to the twenty-five libraries that participated in the project, were used to stimulate thought and generate ideas for local programming. Over fifty programs were held throughout the state utilizing local humanists to investigate these concepts.

Over five thousand people participated in these programs. A planning guide was developed in conjunction with this project. It presents a simple blueprint for planning a humanities program in the library. It suggests how you can get a sense of what is needed in the community. It includes some checklists to follow to insure that your program is successful. We still have some of these planning guides available at the State Library. If you are interested in seeing one, please let me know and I will send you a copy.

The third division in the State Library is the School Library Media area. I don't think that this division has sponsored any humanities projects within the last few years. The recent reorganization of the Department of Education (the unit that the State Library belongs to) has resulted in a very close relationship with the Pennsylvania Public Television Network. I was interested to learn that the production of public television programs is an area that the NEH is interested in. I feel that this is something we should look into now that we have the opportunity to cooperate with the public television network.

You may be wondering why we do humanities programming in libraries. It seems to me that there are three main reasons.

Libraries sponsor humanities programs in order to increase circu-
lation of existing materials, to bring information to people,
and to bring people into the library who have never been there
before.   I think it is important to realize that you need not
be concerned about all of these objectives, but you should be
concerned about one or more of them.   If you don't have space
in your library to bring a group of people in for a meeting, don't
worry about it.   You can use the church hall down the street.
Bringing people in to the library does not have to be your goal.

However, the number of people you involve in your programs
is extremely important.   Tom Phelps mentioned that one of our
goals is to bring humanistic ideas to the general public.   When
presenting humanities programs, we need to do everything we can
to reach as broad a cross-section of people as possible.   Some
ideas will only appeal to a narrow audience.   A friend of mine
once said that he hated it when libraries sponsored programs on
Lower Bessarabian art.   How many people are going to be interested
in a program on Lower Bessarabian art?

We can use humanities programs to reach that large group of
people in our communities that we have been unable to reach by
offering traditional library service.   Librarians should seek
to serve a larger group of people.   They need to realize the differ-
ence that exists between a specialized candy store and a supermarket.
Libraries should be the supermarkets, the Kroger's, the Giant
Eagles, and try to serve a large clientele.   That is the key to
success.   That is the way we can best utilize humanities programing

in libraries.