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Today's Topic: Political Theater

with Jane Alexander

Monday, May 15, 2000
11 p.m. EDT

As an actress, **Jane Alexander** had played mothers, daughters, lovers, wives, murderers, lawyers, judges, drunks, nurses, sinners and saints. But, as she wrote in yesterday's Washington Post Magazine, her role as chairwoman of the National Endowment for the Arts during the Republican revolution was like no other. For starters, many in Congress wanted to abolish the NEA altogether. The agency survived, though, and so did Alexander. She'll be online today to field questions and comments about the article and her tenure as NEA chairwoman.



Jane Alexander

Alexander was chairwoman of the National Endowment of the Arts from 1993 to 1997. She has appeared in numerous films and received Oscar nominations for her work in four of them: "The Great White Hope," "All the President's Men," "Kramer vs. Kramer" and "Testament." Yesterday's article was adapted from the forthcoming book "Command Performance," to be published next month by PublicAffairs.

Please read **Jane Alexander's** article, **Political Theater** and then submit your questions and comments.

* * *

Jane Alexander: Good morning everyone. I'm here to answer your questions and look forward to your comments.

Arlington VA: Ms. Alexander, thank you for all that you did to save the Endowment. I'm not sure we'd still have it without you.

What do you see as its future? Do you envision there ever being a time when the Endowment can again fund the full range of work produced by American artists?

Jane Alexander: Yes, in fact I see an expanded future for the arts in general and federal funding for the arts within five years. There are many supportive Republican members of Congress at the current time and I believe that will increase in the future.

Alexandria, VA: Hello, Ms. Alexander:

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I admire your work and dedication for the NEA. How is your successor continuing your struggle?

Jane Alexander: My successor, Bill Ivey, has been an excellent chairman. He has increased the focus on federal funding of the arts as a community investment and increased the focus on arts education.

Lenexa, Kansas: Dear Ms. Alexander:

While I do not share the theology of Christian conservatives, I do respect them as equal citizens of this country. Your words, however, reflect an anti-Christian bias.

You should work to unite America, not further its division(s).

Sincerely,

Rev. Vince Milum
President - The Universal Light Institute

Jane Alexander: Being a Christian myself, I certainly am not anti-Christian. And as I seek to uphold the first amendment, it certainly encompasses all citizens of the United States. I would only wish that some of our citizens were not so narrow minded as to exclude our homosexual population and other minorities.

Washington, DC: Ms. Alexander,

I enjoyed your article. But, even considering legitimate first amendment concerns and slippery-slope arguments, couldn't it be said there must be a place at which common-sense and decency say society must draw the line at "art" that involves self-mutilation?

Jane Alexander: First of all, community standards define what a community will bear in terms of art and values in general. With regard to self-mutilation, there is a long tradition in certain tribal cultures, including our native American people, that involve self-mutilation in rituals. The great religious art of the world invariably involved some kind of bodily mutilation, be it crucifixion, de-capitation, or St. Sebastian with arrows in his body. Everything must be viewed in context.

Washington DC: How do you see the Internet and the Arts cooperating, that is, in new ways?

Jane Alexander: Like all informational mediums, the internet will soon become our major story-telling medium. The arts will proliferate through the internet as will art commerce.

Centreville, VA: Ms. Alexander,

You must get this question all the time, but how do you see that this is the best way to be spending our tax dollars?

Do any of your tax dollars find their way to artists depicting religion in a positive light or do you generally send our money to bloodletters and defilers? I think I know the answer to that one. Government funding of religious are would certainly come under fire for Separation issues, wouldn't it? Why is funding art that attacks religion any different?

It is my sincere hope that all funding for the NEA is stopped. If this "art" is worthy, then let a benefactor fund it (certainly some Hollywood millionaire would want to spend their money on a bloodletting). Just keep my money out of it.

Jane Alexander: The NEA funds museums all over America whose collection include enormous numbers of religious paintings and art works and the National Endowment for the Arts also helps restore churches and religious iconography nationwide.

Orlando FL: I've recently been studying the relationship between misogyny (or other "harmful" content--ie obscenity) and expression; I've found myself frustrated by the constant measuring stick of the 1st amendment. What can you share with me about your thoughts/experience on using the 1st amendment as a line of defense? Specifically, do you find that it is something that people take for granted or something that constantly needs reconfiguration (in the context of doing business with congress.) Complicated question, sorry. Let me know if I can be clearer.

Jane Alexander: The first amendment became a part of our Constitution some years after the Constitution was hammered out by our founding fathers because there was a need for all citizens of the United States to be protected in their right for free speech. It is the very bedrock of our democracy and needs to be understood as such.

Washington, DC: In a recent New Yorker article, Philip Roth talked about the decline of the common reader and what he termed a "narrowing of consciousness" particularly about culture and the arts. What role might government play in expanding public consciousness about the arts?

Jane Alexander: Those of us who have worked at the NEA including the current chairman, Bill Ivey, have sought to increase public awareness of what the arts do for people in their own community; what arts education does for the littlest child to the most elderly citizen; and that it is a plus all the way around for understanding who we are to each other and what we are doing in this world.

Annapolis, Md.: Thanks for taking questions.

1. What does the country gain by financing the arts on a federal level?
2. It seems the the arts have survived for years without federal backing, what's special about this time period?
3. The tide was certainly against the NEA in 1995. What happened to allow it to survive?

Jane Alexander: First, it's important to understand that the arts throughout history have always been subsidized by popes, kings, or governments in power, from the ancient Greeks to the great nations of today. The United States is a fairly young country and does not compare yet with the great European or Asian countries that have supported their artists ninety per cent. The United States is unique in the world in supporting its artists with almost ninety per cent private money and about ten per cent public money. The importance of public money is to expand opportunity and access for all people--not just a few that private citizens or corporations choose to support. The battle we fought with the 104th Congress in 1995 came down to the wire. There was a move to eliminate the NEA completely, but people all across the country wrote their congressmen and women that they liked the arts and they wanted continued funding fo the NEA. Now the NEA will survive, I believe, forever.

Arlington, VA: I loved you in Kramer v. Kramer. Did you know that Meryl Streep would be a star even then? Thanks for your work on the Nat'l Endowment.

Jane Alexander: I don't think that anybody knew that Meryl would be a star then, but she certainly was very gifted with a strong individual presence.

Newport News, Virginia: I love the arts. They enrich life so much. I am thankful for the blessing of art. However, the Almighty God who created the universe is the Greatest Artist there ever was. I think it hurts artists, when obscenities and blasphemies are considered art. I hope artwork is encouraged, in a clean way. I look forward to dancing, drawing and writing more in the future.

Jane Alexander: I think the almighty Lord created the greatest art in creating the world too, but God also created human beings with an infinite capacity to dream and express many diverse things.

Orlando FL: I'm very interested in learning more about the NEA and all its political implications. You mentioned that you were disappointed in no longer sponsoring individual artists, only groups/organizations. What are the major drawbacks from this new policy? And what have been the implications of this since the policy went into effect?

Jane Alexander: Art always begins in one human brain. And then expands to include other people: those who wish to help the artists present their work, and then finally the audience who will view the work. So when you eliminate the fellowships or funding of individual artists, you are stopping a lot of the impetus for creative expression at its core. Art takes a lot of time and skill to conceive and produce, and all great nations encourage and reward their most excellent individual artists.

Pennsylvania: Ms. Alexander,

Thanks for your support of the NEA. Is there a recent study of the decline in arts education in our schools? My impression is that there has been a very serious deterioration over the last 30 years.

Saw you in Shadowlands in London in 1990. It was one of the highlights of my trip.

Jane Alexander: Thank you for the comment on Shadowlands. I loved doing it too. C.S. Lewis was a great spiritual writer. You are right that arts education has been undergoing a serious decline since the 1960s and '70s. There are currently studies underway conducted by the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the Department of Education and educations nationwide, to ascertain just how many schools do have arts education in their curriculum. We feel that because of Goals 2000, which was passed by Congress several years ago and had arts education as part of the curricula, along with mathematics, English, history, etc., that schools are now increasing arts education once again.

Ventura, California: Jane,

Thanks for all your hard work as head of the NEA. I have always admired your work as an actress, but you really had your hands full with the boys in DC. After reading your article in the Post today, I would like to know what you found the most enjoyable and rewarding part of the job as head of the agency?

Jane Alexander: Thank you for your nice question. There was so much to enjoy. First a foremost was meeting people in every state of the union, both artists and citizens, and delighting in their enthusiasm about their own community and the arts.

Falls Church, VA: Why can't these artists and museums fund themselves or find other means of support? Why do they need tax dollars? Is it that no one wants to see the art perhaps?

Jane Alexander: Are you saying you don't want to see the arts perhaps? There are many other citizens who do want to see the art, and since we live in a democracy, as taxpayers, we pay for many things which we personally may

not enjoy supporting, but that is the nature of our great democracy.

Los Olivos, CA: Arts have always required subsidies, even back in ancient times when it was Kings and emperors who supported their favorite sculptors and actors. Now we have a situation where a committee decides who pays out the money. In my mind, the arts and committies are unreconcilable. What happens is that the best grant writers get the money, and the artists are neglected. Wouldn't i be better to just go back to a dictatorship where arts funding is concerned?

__PFF

Jane Alexander: Even under dictatorship, somebody makes choices. Unless you live a society where there is endless amounts of money available, so that anybody who wanted to create art would receive a grant, there has to be a selection process.

Washington, DC: Do you think that the Republican efforts to eliminate the NEA have faded somewhat in recent years, and if so, why?

Jane Alexander: When, in 1997, it became clear that the 104th and 105th Congresses under Newt Gingrich as Speaker did not succeed in eliminating the NEA, the subsequent 106th Congress has been more moderate in its response to the agency.

Washington, DC: Ms. Alexander: I very much enjoyed your article in yesterday's magazine. I share your concern that the arts continue to be devalued in this country. Two questions: (1) Pragmatically speaking, what can an ordinary citizen do to promote the arts in his or her own community? (2) How can an ordinary citizen educate his or her lawmakers (local, state, federal) on the importance of the arts and the necessity for their continued subsidization? Thank you.

Jane Alexander: Many citizens help the arts in their own community through attendance at arts events, support and voluntary help. You can let your legislators know by a phone call or a letter to them how important the arts are to you. It's as simple as that.

Reston, Virginia: I was shocked that President Clinton did not return your calls or have appointments with you. Given you were his appointee, why did you stand for his ignoring you while you took some real heat? I think you did a great job and that your prominence helped the cause of the arts. Thankyou

Jane Alexander: It took me a long time to realize that the NEA was relegated to the office of the first lady. Hillary Rodham Clinton was and is a staunch supporter of the arts and consistently helped me and stood up for the NEA. However, the first lady is not an elected official, as is the President, and my disappointment was that the office of the President was not more responsive to me. However, he is a very busy man and I did the best job I could.

Kensington, Maryland: Hello Ms. Alexander - I was an intern with the NEA in 1984 just after finishing my B.A. in art history & business. I was also an intern and staff member at the Congressional Arts Caucus from 1985-1987. I applaud the way you stood your ground as the NEA Chairperson. I remember so vividly the attitudes of political appoitees in top level positions during the Reagan years. I would attend hearings or meetings of the National Council and it was all I could do to not jump up from my seat and beg them to defend the NEA instead of "tow the party line". What is your opinion of the current controversies involving Mayor Guiliani and the Brooklyn Museum & the Whitney ?

Jane Alexander: With regard to Mayor Giuliani and the Brooklyn Museum controversy, he was in clear violation of the Supreme Court decision of 1998 which states that you cannot penalize an institution for the content of works

you find offensive. And the Whitney Museum, if you are alluding to the withdrawal of private money because of content, I find that sad.

Silver Spring, MD: Jane-

I loved the postage stamp example used in the article! An excellent way to get the point across that the amount of arts funding spent per person in this country is very small.

For the benefit of those in this discussion who seem to be against government funding of the arts, can you please explain that government funding of the arts is in fact a very small, and increasingly diminishing, piece of the pie for so many arts organizations.

In fact, many people would be interested to know, that in the face of declining government funding for the arts many organizations are becoming increasingly commercial/ market oriented in their approach to business. As an example, The Roundabout Theatre in NY is now performing at the "American Airlines Theatre" - I believe What are your thoughts on this new trend for arts organizations?

Jane Alexander: I couldn't agree more with you. As you see increased private funding for the arts, you will see that these corporations or foundations wish to be advertised publicly for their support, such as the example you cite.

twin cities minnesota: What's a (n obviously intellegent) "girl" like (her) doing in a place like that? Jane is a classic example of when anything, (art, movies, cars, money, you name it) becomes the end-all and be-all of life! There are still quite a few of us who love the arts, (but hate what the NDE has done in the past decade) but who still look to a higher source, a higher value. I, for one, no longer attend anything at the Walker Art Center. And there are many more like me!

I'm glad for her sake and ours that "Jane" is no longer there. Let's get back to sanity!

Jane Alexander: The great thing about our country is that if you don't want to go to the Walker Art Museum, nobody's forcing you. The good thing about the Twin Cities is that there is tremendous support for a multitude of exceptional arts institutions, including museums, theaters, concerts, and literary events. The Twin Cities and the state of Minnesota give enormous amounts of money to keep their enlightened citizens happy.

DC:

Jane:

Although I am a supporter of NEA (and a republican I might add), I can't stop myself from being disgusted by the hypocrisy from Hollywood on the issue.

When Tom Hanks and Steven Spielberg criticized Congress two years ago on NEA funding during the Academy Awards, I almost DIED! If the entire Shrine Auditorium donates 1 percent of their salaries to the NEA, it would be funded I don't know how many times over.

If Hollywood cares so much about the NEA, why don't they donate some of their MULTI MILLION DOLLAR salaries to help fund it? How much does Hanks make a picture? \$30 million? Don't you find this a bit hypocritical? Shouldn't the art industry step up to the plate and give back to their own?

Jane Alexander: If the Hollywood community were the only supporters of the arts, it would indeed be an elitist support. The NEA is owned by all citizens in the United States, and although I might agree that Hollywood's corporations in film, music, and publishing, could contribute more to nurture artists, the individual actors, musicians, and directors pay an enormous amount of money in taxes and also donate their money and services privately to all kinds of good causes, including the arts.

Washington, DC: Last night on 60 Minutes, a man who once was homeless talked about how a work/ rehab program allowed him to live a real life and save money. As an example of his success he said, "Now I go to the theatre. I have tickets to go to Carnegie Hall." As a professional in the arts, I couldn't decide if this comment was good or bad. Should theatre really be something that people use as a measure of success and wealth or shouldn't it be something that EVERYONE has access to? Ultimately I support increased funding for the NEA so that it can continue to develop and nurture artists and further more make art more accessible for everyone. Thank you for your service to this country.

Jane Alexander: The man you saw on 60 Minutes was talking less about status than he was about the delight he took in seeing theater and listening to music. You're quite right that when there is public funding of the arts, more people are able to take part in it. Consider community arts festivals, for example.

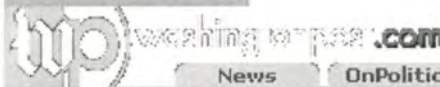
Rockville, md: Ms. Alexander: I admire your work tremendously. After having read your piece in the Post magazine section, I wonder how you held your temper when confronted with people like Jesse Helms and Orrin Hatch. It seems as if these lawmakers who have sworn to uphold the Constitution take liberties when it comes to the arts.

Jane Alexander: First of all, as in any society, you can lose your temper once, but don't expect to be asked back again. I applaud civility in government as I do in all human interchange, and Senators Helms and Hatch are civil men, despite any difference of opinion I may have had with them.

Jane Alexander: I wish to thank all of you for your interest and for your questions today. My hope is for increased federal funding for the arts in America to celebrate all the diversity in this great country of ours. Thank each and every one of you for any support you can give the NEA in this regard.

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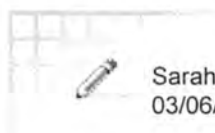
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Sarah Howes
03/06/2000 02:10:37 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Ellen M. Lovell/WHO/EOP@EOP, Katharine Button/WHO/EOP@EOP
cc: Anne F. Donovan/WHO/EOP@EOP
Subject: Arts Education Month Resolution Passes

----- Forwarded by Sarah Howes/WHO/EOP on 03/06/2000 02:09 PM -----



Angela Koskie <AngelaK@ccsso.org>
03/06/2000 09:30:46 AM

Record Type: Record

To: ArtsEd@lists.ccsso.org
cc:
Subject: Arts Education Month Resolution Passes

"ArtsEd" is the listserv of the Arts Education Partnership <<http://aep-arts.org>>, a private, nonprofit coalition of education, arts, business, philanthropic, and government organizations that demonstrates and promotes the essential role of arts education in enabling all students to succeed in school, life, and work.

by Legislative Counsel Thomas L. Birch

Senate Passes Arts Education Month Resolution

With a majority of senators signed on as cosponsors, Senate Resolution 128, designating March 2000 as Arts Education Month, passed the Senate floor by unanimous consent on March 2. The measure, introduced by Sen. Thad Cochran (R-MS), provides advocates with a tool to encourage schools and communities to engage in activities that showcase, celebrate and reward arts education programs and student accomplishments in the arts.

Many thanks to all of you who asked your senators to join as cosponsors to the resolution. Without your intervention, the measure would not have gone to the floor for a vote. Your contact offered the opportunity to remind your senators of your active interest in legislation that benefits the arts in your state.

Senators who cosponsored S. Res. 28:

Alaska - Frank Murkowski (R), Ted Stevens (R)
Arkansas - Blanche Lincoln (D)
California - Barbara Boxer (D)

Colorado - Ben Nighthorse Campbell (R)
Connecticut - Christopher J. Dodd (D), Joseph I. Lieberman (D)
Delaware - Joseph R. Biden, Jr. (D), William V. Roth, Jr. (R)
Florida - Bob Graham (D)
Georgia - Max Cleland (D), Paul Coverdell (R)
Hawaii - Daniel K. Akaka (D), Daniel K. Inouye (D)
Idaho - Michael D. Crapo (R)
Illinois - Richard J. Durbin (D)
Indiana - Evan Bayh (D), Richard G. Lugar (R)
Kentucky - Jim Bunning (R)
Louisiana - Mary L. Landrieu (D)
Maine - Olympia J. Snowe (R)
Maryland - Barbara A. Mikulski (D), Paul S. Sarbanes (D)
Massachusetts - Edward M. Kennedy (D), John F. Kerry (D)
Michigan - Carl Levin (D)
Minnesota - Paul Wellstone (D)
Mississippi - Thad Cochran (R), Trent Lott (R)
Missouri - Christopher S. Bond (R)
Montana - Max Baucus (D)
Nebraska - J. Robert Kerrey (D), Chuck Hagel (R)
Nevada - Harry Reid (D)
New Jersey - Frank R. Lautenberg (D), Robert G. Torricelli (D)
New Mexico - Jeff Bingaman (D), Pete V. Domenici (R)
New York - Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D), Charles E. Schumer (D)
North Dakota - Kent Conrad (D)
Ohio - Michael DeWine (R), George V. Voinovich (R)
Oregon - Gordon Smith (R)
Pennsylvania - Arlen Specter (R)
Rhode Island - Lincoln D. Chafee (R), Jack Reed (D)
South Carolina - Strom Thurmond (R)
South Dakota - Tim Johnson (D)
Tennessee - Bill Frist (R), Fred Thompson (R)
Utah - Robert F. Bennett (R), Orrin G. Hatch (R)
Vermont - James M. Jeffords (R)
Virginia - Charles S. Robb (D), John W. Warner (R)
Washington - Patty Murray (D)
Wyoming - Michael B. Enzi (R)

Senate Resolution 128

Whereas arts literacy is a fundamental purpose of schooling for all students;

Whereas arts education stimulates, develops and refines many cognitive and creative skills, critical thinking and nimbleness in judgment, creativity and imagination, cooperative decisionmaking, leadership, high-level literacy and communication, and the capacity for problem posing and problem-solving;

Whereas arts education contributes significantly to the creation of flexible, adaptable, and knowledgeable workers who will be needed in the 21st century economy;

Whereas arts education improves teaching and learning;

Whereas when parents and families, artists, arts organizations, businesses, local civic and cultural leaders, and institutions are actively engaged in instructional programs, arts education is more successful;

Whereas effective teachers of the arts should be encouraged to continue to learn and grow in mastery of their art form as well as in their teaching competence;

Whereas the 1999 study, entitled "Gaining the Arts Advantage: Lessons from School Districts that Value Arts Education," found that the literacy, education, programs, learning and growth described in the preceding clauses contribute to successful districtwide arts education;

Whereas the 1997 National Assessment of Educational Progress reported that students lack sufficient opportunity for participatory learning in the arts;

Whereas educators, schools, students, and other community members recognize the importance of arts education; and

Whereas arts programs, arts curriculum, and other arts activities in schools across the Nation should be encouraged and publicly recognized: Now, therefore, be it Resolved,

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION OF ARTS EDUCATION MONTH.
The Senate--

- (1) designates March 2000, as "Arts Education Month"; and
- (2) encourages schools, students, educators, parents, and other community members to engage in activities designed to--
 - (A) celebrate the positive impact and public benefits of the arts;
 - (B) encourage all schools to integrate the arts into the school curriculum;
 - (C) spotlight the relationship between the arts and student learning;
 - (D) demonstrate how community involvement in the creation and implementation of arts policies enriches schools;
 - (E) recognize school administrators and faculty who provide quality arts education to students;
 - (F) provide professional development opportunities in the arts for teachers;
 - (G) create opportunities for students to experience the relationship between participation in the arts and developing the life skills necessary for future personal and professional success;
 - (H) increase, encourage, and ensure comprehensive, sequential arts learning for all students;
 - (I) honor individual, class, and student group achievement in the arts; and
 - (J) increase awareness and accessibility to live performances, and original works of art.

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Melanne Verveer

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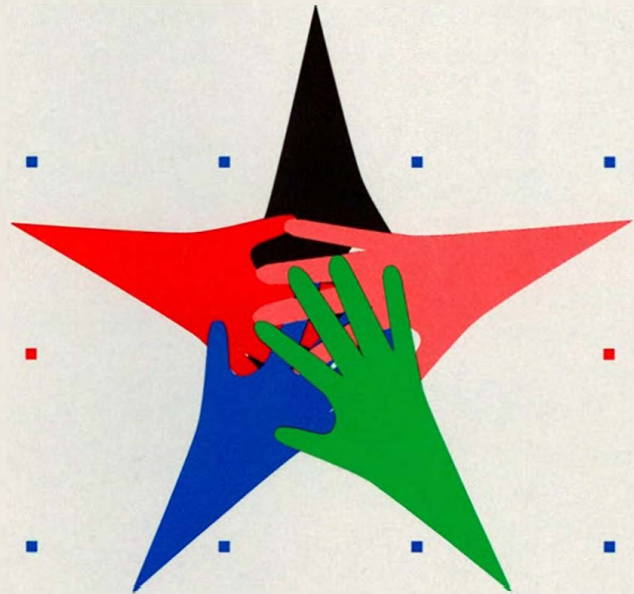
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Learning Partnerships



Improving learning in schools with
arts partners in the community

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 18, 1999

CONTACT: Christopher Beakey
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GE FUND/MACARTHUR FOUNDATION REPORT PRESENTS
GROUNDBREAKING EVIDENCE OF IMPACT OF
ARTS ON LEARNING

Top Research and Education Teams to Convene October 22 in
Washington to Review Key Findings

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) A new report compiling the results of seven major studies provides important new evidence of enhanced learning and achievement when the arts are an integral part of the educational experience, both in and out of America's K-12 schools.

Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning will be released on **Friday, October 22nd** at the Arts Education Partnership meeting, which will be held at the National Education Association, 1201 16th Street, N.W. in Washington, D.C. Interview opportunities and the meeting agenda are available on request.

Researchers whose work is featured in the report will be available to review qualitative and quantitative data on the learning and achievement of students involved in a variety of arts experiences. The research projects included students, educators, artists and others in **New York, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles** and the **San Francisco/Bay Area**. The report was edited by former *New York Times* Education Editor Edward B. Fiske, who is also the author of *Smart Schools*, *Smart Kids* and the bestselling *Fiske Guide to Colleges*.

In an introduction by **U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley**, the findings are referred to as "groundbreaking," and are offered to "address ways that our nation's educational goals may be realized through enhanced arts learning."

(more)

Arts and Learning

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The *Champions of Change* research offers clear evidence of how the arts can improve academic performance, energize teachers and transform learning environments. Among the findings:

Students with high levels of arts participation outperform “arts-poor” students on virtually every measure.

Based on an analysis of the Department of Education’s NELS:88 data base of 25,000 students, **UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies Professor James S. Catterall** found that sustained involvement in the arts correlates with success in other subjects, and in developing positive attitudes about community -- both generally and also for children in poverty. The correlation is particularly strong between music and success in math.

The arts have a measurable impact on students in “high-poverty” and urban settings.

In the midst of an inspiring turnaround, the **Chicago Public School District** saw significant student improvement in reading and mathematics in schools where the **Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education (CAPE)** developed arts-integrated curricula.

The arts in after-school programs guide disadvantaged youth toward positive behaviors and goals.

After a decade studying dozens of after-school programs for disadvantaged youth, **Shirley Brice Heath** of **The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching** and **Stanford University** found that youth in arts programs were achieving more in both school and their personal lives than those from the same socioeconomic categories, as tracked by NELS: 88. Students involved in the arts programs were doing even better than those in programs that focused on sports and community involvement.

Learning through the arts has significant effects on learning in other domains.

Judy Burton, Rob Horowitz and **Hal Abeles** at the Center for Arts Education Research at **Teachers College** in New York found that student achievement is heightened in an environment with high quality arts education and a school climate supportive of active, productive learning.

(more)

Arts and Learning

Page 3

Arts experiences enhance “critical thinking” abilities and outcomes.

Students preparing for what Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan describes as America’s “economy of ideas” need an education that develops imaginative, flexible and tough-minded thinking. In examining the offerings of **ArtsConnection**, the largest outside provider of arts education for the New York City public school system, researchers at the **National Center for Gifted and Talented at the University of Connecticut** found that students involved in the arts were motivated to learn not just for test results or other performance outcomes, but for the learning experience itself.

Unlike other learning experiences that seek only right or wrong answers, engagement in the arts allows for multiple outcomes. **Steve Seidel** and researchers from **Harvard University’s Project Zero** found that when “refusing to simplify” Shakespeare’s challenging texts, students became passionately engaged in learning classic works which high schoolers often consider boring.

The arts enable educators to reach students in effective ways.

Dennie Palmer Wolf and researchers from the **Performance Assessment Collaboratives for Education (PACE)** of **Harvard’s Graduate School of Education** examined professional development programs for teachers, and articulated the numerous ways that sustained, integrated and complex projects – like producing an opera – offer teachers a way to deepen learning across many disciplines.

Champions of Change was developed with the support of The GE Fund, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Arts Education Partnership and the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities. For an embargoed copy of the report, please contact Christopher Beakey by phone at (202) 667-0901, ext. 191, or by email at chrisb@twbg.com.

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