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NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
HUMANITIES

E C O N O M I C
I M P A C T

*"Culture is not consumed
like a typical commodity—
a car or a cabbage."*

—1992 Report to the South Carolina Legislature

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NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
HUMANITIES

L I F E L O N G
L E A R N I N G

*"I've been to towns where the
population is 84, and
86 people come to the program."*

—Tames Alan, Washington State

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NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
HUMANITIES

TECHNOLOGY
and the
HUMANITIES

*"Man is still the most
extraordinary computer of all."*

—John F. Kennedy

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NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
HUMANITIES

C U L T U R A L
T O U R I S M

*" We have envisioned a place
that draws the public in, fires its
imagination, and responds
to its hunger for an
understanding of the past."*

—Rhoda Gilman,
on the Minnesota History Center

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NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
HUMANITIES

EDUCATING
TODAY'S YOUTH

*"A teacher affects eternity;
he can never tell where his
influence stops."*

—Henry Adams

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The National Endowment for the Humanities

A Jeffersonian American Institution

by
Clay
Straus
Jenkinson



NEWS**NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
HUMANITIES**1100 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W. b/c
Washington, D.C. 20506
file NEH medal
<http://www.neh.gov>Contact: Jim Turner, 202/606-8671

NEH-98-010-N

EMBARGOED: HOLD FOR RELEASE UNTIL WEDNESDAY, OCT. 28**PRESIDENT CLINTON AND FIRST LADY TO AWARD
NATIONAL HUMANITIES MEDALS AT WHITE HOUSE NOV. 5**

WASHINGTON, Oct. 28, 1998 – President William J. Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton on Thursday, Nov. 5, at 9:30 a.m. will award the 1998 National Humanities Medal to nine distinguished Americans at a special ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House. A White House dinner in honor of the recipients will be held that evening.

The 1998 National Humanities Medal recipients are:

Stephen E. Ambrose *(Helena, Mont.)*

biographer of Eisenhower and Nixon; author of "Undaunted Courage," "Citizen Soldiers" and "D-Day," three historical books simultaneously on the New York Times bestseller list; principal commentator in the PBS documentary films "Lewis and Clark" and "Eisenhower"; chief historical advisor on the Spielberg film "Saving Private Ryan."

E. L. Doctorow *(New York, N.Y.)*

author of many popular and critically acclaimed novels about America's last 100 years, including "Ragtime" and "Billy Bathgate"; many of his novels have been adapted to film, and a musical version of "Ragtime" is currently running on Broadway.

Diana L. Eck *(Cambridge, Mass.)*

creator and director of the Harvard-based Pluralism Project, which documents and analyzes America's religious diversity and produced an acclaimed CD-ROM that is now in wide use as a resource for studying the role of religion in American culture.

- MORE -

NEH News -- 1998 National Humanities Medalists to be Honored at White House Nov. 5
Oct. 28, 1998
Page 2

Nancye Brown Gaj (*Raleigh, N.C.*)

founder and president of MOTHEREAD, Inc., a national family literacy program that enables newly literate adults to improve their reading skills while helping them encourage and guide the learning of their preschool-age children.

Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (*Cambridge, Mass.*)

director of Harvard's W.E.B. Du Bois Institute for Afro-American Research; author of the best-selling "Loose Canons: Notes on the Culture Wars" and "Colored People: A Memoir"; coeditor of the "Norton Anthology of African American Literature."

Vartan Gregorian (*New York, N.Y.*)

educator, administrator and philanthropist; former president of Brown University and of the New York Public Library; current president of the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Ramón Eduardo Ruiz (*Rancho Santa Fe, Calif.*)

scholar and professor of the history of Hispanic America; author of 12 books, including in-depth studies of the Cuban and Mexican revolutions.

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. (*New York, N.Y.*)

prolific scholar and professor of American history; two-time Pulitzer Prize winner, for "The Age of Jackson" and "A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House"; author of "The Disuniting of America."

Garry Wills (*Evanston, Ill.*)

syndicated columnist, essayist and cultural critic; Pulitzer Prize winner for "Lincoln at Gettysburg"; author of numerous acclaimed books on American culture and history.

"The 1998 National Humanities Medalists represent virtuosity in the humanities in a variety of ways—through writing and teaching, scholarship and literary creation, and public outreach and philanthropy," said William R. Ferris, chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities. "Their work demonstrates the vital role of the humanities in American life. Their ideas and insights have touched untold millions of our citizens and have shaped a clearer understanding of who we are as a nation. It is a great pleasure to announce the distinguished recipients of this year's highest national honor in the humanities."

The National Humanities Medal honors individuals or groups whose work has deepened the nation's understanding of the humanities, broadened citizens' engagement with the

- MORE -

NEH News -- 1998 National Humanities Medalists to be Honored at White House Nov. 5
Oct. 28, 1998
Page 3

humanities or helped preserve and expand Americans' access to important humanities resources. The humanities are areas of study such as history, literature, philosophy and languages that form the record of human cultural heritage.

Recipients of the National Humanities Medal are selected by the president of the United States. Annually the National Endowment for the Humanities assists in the selection process by soliciting nominations for the medal from the humanities community. These nominations are first reviewed by the National Council on the Humanities, NEH's presidentially appointed board of advisors. The NEH chairman selects a list of the most highly qualified candidates, whose names are then forwarded to the White House for final consideration by the president.

The National Endowment for the Humanities, an independent federal agency created by Congress in 1965, is the largest funder of humanities programs in the United States. The Endowment's mission is to promote knowledge of human history, thought and culture and to enhance the role of the humanities throughout the nation. NEH provides funding support in four areas: preserving and providing access to cultural resources, education, research and public programs.

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FACTS

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

1100 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20506
<http://www.neh.gov>

1998 NATIONAL HUMANITIES MEDALISTS

Stephen E. Ambrose
Helena, Montana

Stephen Ambrose is one of the nation's leading scholars of military and diplomatic history. A professor emeritus of history at the University of New Orleans, founding director of the Eisenhower Center there and founder of the National D-Day Museum in New Orleans, he has written numerous books, including "Citizen Soldiers: The U.S. Army from the Normandy Beaches to the Bulge to the Surrender of Germany, June 7, 1944-May 7, 1945" (1997), "Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson and the Opening of the American West" (1996) and "D-Day, June 6, 1944: The Climactic Battle of World War II" (1994). These three books were simultaneously on the New York Times bestseller list, with "Citizen Soldiers" listed in both the hardback and the paperback categories. Other important books by Ambrose are "Rise to Globalism: American Foreign Policy, 1938-1997" (the standard textbook on the subject, now in its eighth edition), "Crazy Horse and Custer" (1975) and multivolume biographies of Richard Nixon and Dwight Eisenhower. Ambrose has also reached a broad public audience as a historical advisor and commentator on the PBS documentary films "Eisenhower," "Divided Highways" and "Lewis and Clark: The Journey of the Corps of Discovery." He was the historical consultant for the film "Saving Private Ryan," and he has been frequently interviewed on television and radio.

E. L. Doctorow
New Rochelle, New York

E. L. Doctorow is a celebrated author whose novels have the distinction of being both popular and critically acclaimed. Taken as a whole, his work might be read as a spiritual history of America's last hundred years. With "The Waterworks" (1994), set in post-Civil War-era New York City; "Welcome to Hard Times" (1960), set in the Dakota Territory in the late 19th century; "Ragtime" (1975), depicting the pre-World War I period; "Loon Lake" (1980), "World's Fair" (1985) and "Billy Bathgate" (1989), all set in the 1930s; "The Book of Daniel" (1971), portraying the politicized 1950s and '60s; and "Lives of the Poets" (1984), reflecting the nervous national self-examination of the 1980s, he would seem to have the muralist's sense of the big canvas, with its commingling of past and present, public and private, its love of narrative and linguistic figuration. Doctorow is published in 30 languages. His honors include the National Book Critics Circle Award (twice), the National Book Award, the PEN/Faulkner Award, the Edith Wharton Citation for Fiction and the American Academy of Arts and Letters' William Dean Howells Medal. Film adaptations have been made of his work, and a musical version of "Ragtime" is currently running on Broadway. Doctorow is a professor of English at New York University.

- MORE -

1998 National Humanities Medalists

Page 2

Diana L. Eck

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Diana Eck, professor of comparative religion and Indian studies at Harvard, is a scholar of the religious traditions of India who has turned her attention for the past decade to the United States. In 1991, she developed and became director of the Pluralism Project, a Harvard-based research project aimed at studying and documenting the rich religious diversity of America, with a special view to the nation's new immigrant religious communities. Through this project, Eck has fostered a better understanding of how the American religious landscape has diversified in the past 25 years, how various religious communities function within the greater society and the ramifications of increased religious diversity for American public life. She and her student research team have studied hundreds of religious communities from the Sri Lakshmi Hindu Temple in Boston and the Sikh Gurdwara of Oklahoma, to the All Nations Pentecostal Church in Denver and the Cambodian Buddhist Temple in Long Beach, California. The Pluralism Project's multimedia CD-ROM, "On Common Ground: World Religions in America" (1997), features portraits of some 400 communities and an in-depth analysis of the 15 major religious traditions in the United States. This resource has been credited with generating a greater understanding of how religious communities act and interact in America's pluralistic society.

Nancye Brown Gaj

Raleigh, North Carolina

Nancye Gaj is founder and president of MOTHEREAD, Inc., a national family literacy program designed to improve parents' reading and language skills while helping them encourage and guide their children's learning. Gaj, an adult educator, founded the organization in 1987 by first working with incarcerated women in North Carolina. She discovered that, regardless of their reading ability or prior educational experience, parents were powerfully motivated to read and talk about stories that they could share with their children. She knew that this was also true for families outside of prison walls. So, with funding from the Z. Smith Reynolds and Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, the North Carolina Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities, her organization developed a curriculum based on multicultural children's literature. The curriculum uses a contextualized approach to literacy instruction that empowers parents to learn while teaching their children. These materials are currently being used by trained instructors throughout North Carolina and 18 other states with state humanities council affiliates in California, Minnesota, Utah, Virginia and Washington state. MOTHEREAD's nationwide success is a tribute to Gaj's educational vision, administrative skill and philanthropic spirit.

- MORE -

1998 National Humanities Medalists

Page 3

Henry Louis Gates, Jr.
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Henry Louis Gates, Jr., W.E.B. Du Bois Professor of the Humanities, chair of the Department of Afro-American Studies and director of the W.E.B. Du Bois Institute for Afro-American Research at Harvard University, is one of the nation's leading black intellectuals and critics. He is coeditor of "Encarta Africana," a forthcoming CD-ROM encyclopedia of the history and culture of the black world, and of "Africana," a forthcoming encyclopedia in book form. He is also coeditor of "The Norton Anthology of African American Literature" (1996), a major compendium that has introduced black writing to the literary canon and helped reshape the teaching of American literature. Gates is the author of "Figures in Black: Words, Signs, and the 'Racial' Self" (1987), "The Signifying Monkey: Towards a Theory of Afro-American Literary Criticism" (1988), "Loose Canons: Notes on the Culture Wars" (1992), "Colored People: A Memoir" (1994) and "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Black Man" (1997). An influential social and cultural critic, Gates is a staff writer for New Yorker magazine and contributes regularly to other mainstream publications as well as scholarly journals. His honors include a MacArthur Prize (1981), recognition as one of Time magazine's 25 most influential Americans (1997) and Phi Beta Kappa. He is the host and narrator of "Into Africa," a film series on ancient African culture to be released in 1999 by PBS and the BBC.

Vartan Gregorian
New York, New York

Vartan Gregorian has had an exceptional career dedicated to creating a broadly educated citizenry and mutual understanding among all peoples. Former president of Brown University (1989-1997) and the New York Public Library (1981-1989), he is currently president of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, a general purpose philanthropy founded by Andrew Carnegie "for the advancement and diffusion of knowledge and understanding." Author of "The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan" (1969), he has been a professor of history at San Francisco State College, the University of Texas at Austin and the University of Pennsylvania. An administrator since 1969, he was founding dean of the faculty of arts and sciences and provost at the University of Pennsylvania (1974-1980). At Brown, he strengthened the research, teaching and public service activities, and tripled the institution's endowment. At the Library, he was instrumental in reviving the system. Gregorian has been recognized by Change magazine as one of the most influential educators in the U.S. and by Who's Who as one of 50 great Americans. He is pro bono advisor to the Annenberg Foundation's \$500 million Challenge the Nation school reform initiative. His honors include Phi Beta Kappa, the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters' Gold Medal for Service to the Arts, the Pennsylvania Humanities Council's First Humanist Award, Portugal's Grand Oficial da Ordem do Infante D. Henrique, France's Officier de l'Ordre des Artes et Lettres and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Silver Cultural Medal.

- MORE -

1998 National Humanities Medalists
Page 4

Ramón Eduardo Ruiz
Rancho Santa Fe, California

Ramón Eduardo Ruiz, an emeritus professor at the University of California, San Diego, is a distinguished historian of Hispanic America. He has had an influential career as an educator, scholar and intellectual. Author of a dozen books and numerous articles, he has written on multiple aspects of Mexico's history and on the two most important upheavals in Hispanic America, the Cuban and Mexican revolutions. These studies are now standard reference works. His books include "Cuba: The Making of a Revolution" (1968), "The Great Rebellion: Mexico, 1905-1923" (1980), "The People of Sonora and Yankee Capitalists" (1988), "Triumphs and Tragedy: A History of the Mexican People" (1992) and "On the Rim of Mexico: Encounters of the Rich and Poor" (1998). Ruiz has taught at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and other Mexican institutions. A former president of the Chicano/Latino Faculty Association of the University of California system, he has been honored for his contributions to education by the Chicano Federation of San Diego and by his students at UCSD.

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.
New York, New York

Since the appearance more than five decades ago of his Pulitzer Prize-winning "The Age of Jackson" (1945), Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., has remained one of America's most widely known historians. A special assistant to President Kennedy from 1961 to 1963, in 1966 he won a second Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award for "A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House" (1965). His other books include three volumes of "The Age of Roosevelt" (1957-60), for which he won both the Francis Parkman and Bancroft prizes; "The Imperial Presidency" (1973); "Robert Kennedy and His Times" (1978), for which he won a National Book Award; "The Cycles of American History" (1986); and "The Disuniting of America" (1991). In 1980, Schlesinger founded the Robert F. Kennedy Book Award with proceeds from his best-selling biography. Each year, the internationally recognized award is given to a book that "most faithfully and forcefully reflects Robert Kennedy's purposes." A former president of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Schlesinger is a frequent contributor to magazines and newspapers. He taught history for many years at Harvard and the City University of New York, where he is now Albert Schweitzer Professor Emeritus of the Humanities.

- MORE -

1998 National Humanities Medalists
Page 5

Garry Wills
Evanston, Illinois

Garry Wills, an adjunct professor of history at Northwestern University, has had a distinguished career as a professor and visiting professor at many colleges and universities, as an author of many widely read books on American culture and politics and as a syndicated newspaper columnist. His "Lincoln at Gettysburg" (1993) won a Pulitzer Prize for its close textual analysis of the Gettysburg Address, words that Wills argues remade modern America. His other books include "Nixon Agonistes" (1970), "Inventing America: Jefferson's Declaration of Independence" (1978), "Explaining America: The Federalist" (1980), "The Kennedy Imprisonment" (1982), "Reagan's America" (1987), "Under God: Religion and American Politics" (1990), "Witches and Jesuits: Shakespeare's Macbeth" (1994) and "John Wayne's America: The Politics of Celebrity" (1997). He taught the classics at Johns Hopkins University for many years and was Henry R. Luce Professor of American Culture and Public Policy at Northwestern. In addition to the Pulitzer Prize, he has received the National Book Critics Award twice, the Organization of American Historians' Merle Curti Award and the Yale Graduate School's Wilber Cross Medal. A member of both the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, he is a frequent contributor to newspapers and magazines.

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FACTS

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1100 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
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NATIONAL HUMANITIES MEDAL

Purpose

The National Humanities Medal, inaugurated in 1997, honors individuals or groups whose work has deepened the nation's understanding of the humanities, broadened our citizens' engagement with the humanities, or helped preserve and expand Americans' access to important humanities resources. Up to 12 medals can be awarded each year. The Medal succeeds the earlier Charles Frankel Prize in the Humanities, given from 1989 through 1996.

Selection process

Recipients of the National Humanities Medal are selected by the president of the United States. Annually the National Endowment for the Humanities assists in the selection process by soliciting nominations for the medal from the humanities community. These nominations are first reviewed by the National Council on the Humanities, NEH's presidentially appointed board of advisors. The NEH chairman then selects a list of the most highly qualified candidates, whose names are then forwarded to the White House for final consideration by the president.

Humanities activities for which the medal may be awarded

- Development of outstanding educational programs for students, teachers or the general public
- Production of exemplary radio programs or television documentaries
- Sustained philanthropic efforts on behalf of humanities activities or organizations
- Development of major interpretive exhibitions, reading and discussion programs or other programs that attract people to the humanities
- Design and implementation of new technologies that enhance public, scholarly or educational access to the humanities
- Research that results in significant advances in the nation's understanding of the humanities
- Development of innovative programs that dramatically affect the way in which cultural resources are preserved

About the National Endowment for the Humanities

The National Endowment for the Humanities, an independent federal agency created by Congress in 1965, promotes knowledge of human history, thought and culture and enhances the role of the humanities throughout the nation. The Endowment supports significant and innovative scholarship in all humanities disciplines, fosters effective teaching and lifelong learning in the humanities, encourages thoughtful public participation in and enjoyment of the humanities, and preserves cultural and intellectual resources essential to the people of the United States.

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