

ADE Federal Policy Committee Report

October 2006 Introduction:

This report looks back on another busy year for the Federal Policy Committee. Funding for both the grants program and the staffing for the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) was again zeroed out by the Administration, and the fight to convince the Congress to restore the funding consumed the time, talent and energy of many ADE members and continues at this writing. Issues relating to the guidelines for and peer review process in the Scholarly Editions Program at the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) also were in the forefront.

These issues will be covered in this report, but first we'll focus upon the ADE's relationship to two major advocacy groups. **NCH and NHA:**

Again this year, the work of both the National Coalition for History (NCH) and the National Humanities Alliance (NHA) has been vitally important. Our working relationship with the directors (Bruce Craig and Jessica Jones) of these two organizations continues to be exceptionally good, and they have been smart and politically savvy leaders in the fight to save the NHPRC and increase the funding for the NEH. Our ADE investment in these advocacy groups earns an excellent return!

NCH: In late 2005, as the ADE's term as a rotating member on the NCH National Policy Board was ending, Bruce Craig suggested that we apply for another term. Roger Bruns wrote requesting that ADE have one of these positions and at the January NCH board meeting the ADE was elected for another term. Charlene Bickford has represented the ADE at the board meetings in 2006, traveling to Philadelphia for the AHA meeting.

Fortunately the OAH meeting was in Washington this year so no travel was necessary for that meeting. Early in 2006 we were faced with a bit of an internal struggle with the archival community within the NCH over goals in the NHPRC battle. There is more detail on this issue below, but suffice it to say that the NCH Board found the position and strategy of the ADE and other organizations and strategy to be more realistic and voted to support it.

In August 2006 Bruce Craig announced that he would leave his position as Executive Director of the NCH to move to Prince Edward Island, Canada in January 2007. This is a tremendous loss to the NCH and to documentary editor in particular. Bruce has been a stalwart and tireless ally, has been great about keeping the historical constituency informed about our issues, and will be very difficult to replace! Bickford is on the subcommittee of the NCH Policy Board that will name his replacement. The goal is to have someone in place for a couple of months before Bruce departs.

NHA: Like Bruce Craig, Jessica Jones has been a tremendous ally. Though the ADE does not contribute enough to the NHA to merit a seat on the NHA Board, Jessica has often invited Bickford to take part in these meetings. For example, she participated in a meeting of some of the NHA directors on setting NHA priorities for the NEH budget in FY2008.

ADE support for NHA and NCH: The directors of these two organizations both spend a substantial amount of their time and resources on our issues. Perhaps more than any other organization, our members and editing projects benefit from their work. With the ADE's budget in good shape, Bickford believes that the Council should consider

contributing enough to the organizations for the ADE to become a regular member of both of their boards. In the case of the NCH, we would have to double our contribution, raising it from \$1,500 to \$3,000. The NHA requires at least a \$1,000 contribution for an organization to be eligible for board membership. The ADE's annual \$1,500 contribution already meets this requirement, but it is time to increase our contribution, at least to the \$2,000 level. We should not worry about restrictions relating to how much we spend on "lobbying" because most of the work of these two organizations involves simply informing the constituencies, not direct lobbying.

Humanities Advocacy Day (HAD):

As has been the case since the inception of this advocacy day exclusively for the humanities spearheaded by the NHA, the ADE was a financial sponsor of the 2005 HAD and Charlene Bickford served on the HAD Steering Committee. Again this year, ADE members participated at a higher level (13 of 115 participants) than virtually any other organization. HAD participants were provided with both a briefing and fact sheets on the NHPRC that Bickford and Craig put together. The fact that the NHPRC was again zeroed out in the Administration's budget made the issue urgent and participants were told that they should make sure that the NHPRC was covered in all their meetings. ADE members (Susan Englander, Leslie Rowland, Mary-Jo Binker, Ted Crackel, Roy Rosenzweig, Penny Kaiserlian, Emily Schulz, and Rega Wood) took part in several of the state delegations, advocating for both the NEH and the NHPRC. They were aided by leaders of other organizations (Lee Formwalt of the OAH, Arnita Jones and Linda Kerber of the AHA, and Peter Givler of the AAUP). Additionally, a "national" team led by Bickford

and Craig, visited staff of the NHPRC's appropriations subcommittees and the offices of some members of the subcommittees. Other members of this team were Allida Black, Roger Bruns, Dennis Conrad, and Phil Chase. Some members of the national team also joined state groups that had meetings set up with NHPRC app. subcommittee members. In those meetings both issues were dealt with.

NEH:

Appropriation: The NHA was seeking a \$15 million increase for NHA programs this year and the Federal Policy Committee continued to work with the NHA in seeking this higher appropriation level. Unlike in recent years when the Administration had sought increases for the NEH by requesting additional "We the People" funds, this year the Administration requested level funding for the NEH. NHA decided to work for a \$15 million increase to be allocated across the NEH's programs. The Federal Policy Committee regularly distributed NHA updates through sedit-1 and in some cases contacted certain key members to be in touch with their Representatives or Senators. Through a floor amendment to the Interior Appropriations Bill offered by Reps. Leach, Price, Shays, Slaughter, and Dicks, the NEH appropriation was increased by \$5 million. The Senate Appropriations Committee voted for level funding and as of this writing, the full Senate has not considered this bill. Senator Norm Coleman and others are trying to get the signers for a "Dear Colleague" letter in behalf of an increase of \$5-\$10 million for the NEH, but the Senate will probably leave town until after the election before acting on the bill. We will need to take action in November to push for the best possible number.

Issues Related to the Scholarly Editions Program: Last year's Federal Policy

Committee Report reviewed the situation with the NEH's funding for editions. Though the total amount of money granted to scholarly editions was higher in the spring 2006 cycle (see the attached chart), there were several ongoing editions that were not funded. Some of those project directors believed that their proposals were hurt by the lack of outside expert reviews—the NEH stopped seeking and using outside expert reviews during the 2005 grant process. In addition, even with the increased funding for the editions program (all coming from the WTP funds), a major resource problem still exists. There was already much concern about the 2007 grant cycle because so many ongoing editions will be seeking renewed funding. Then, the NEH released its revised guidelines for the Scholarly Editions Program and a statement in them about the NEH's Digital Humanities Initiative seemed to require that all editions funded by the NEH must have an electronic component/publication. All of these factors combined to convince the ADE's leadership that an approach should be made to the NEH Chairman about three issues: the requirements under the Digital Humanities Initiative, outside peer review, and the lack of resources which threatens ongoing editions and any new projects as well. A well reasoned and accurate letter addressing three issues: the digital requirement, the dropping of peer reviews, and the problem of declining resources for editions was drafted, edited, and eventually signed onto by the ADE Council and the Federal Policy Committee. The letter, which sought a meeting with NEH Chairman Bruce Cole, was shared with the American Association of University Presses (which also was protesting the digital requirement), the NCH and the NHA. Because of an item about the letter in Bruce Craig's weekly update, a reporter for *Inside Higher Education* picked up the issue and

wrote an article for the September 18 issue:

<http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2006/09/18/documents>. The publicity apparently put the NEH on the defensive because, after originally calling our letter “thoughtful,” they sent an official response that attacked the ADE letter for its “allegations”, “misinformation,” etc. The *Inside Higher Education* reporter received a hand delivered copy of the NEH response (courtesy of the NEH) before ADE President Roger Bruns received the reply, and another article was published in the September 25 issue:

<http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2006/09/25/neh>. That article dissected the NEH response and seemed to conclude that the editing community’s concerns were not being fairly considered. At this writing Roger Bruns has a meeting scheduled with the current director of the Research Division of the NEH to try to have a civil dialogue about issues of concern to ADE members. The documents related to the letter to the NEH are attached to this report. format had been announced but no new resources had been committed to the editions program for this.

NHPRC:

FY2006 Appropriation: The struggle to restore funding for the NHPRC’s grants program after the Administration zeroed it out in its FY2006 proposed budget ended with an appropriation of \$5.5 million and funding to continue the NHPRC staffing. Given the circumstance, this was about the best possible result we could have hoped for, but though the grants figure was \$500,000 more than the FY2005 amount, it was still nearly one

million less than the appropriations of the early \$2 million more than the appropriations of the early 21st Century. And, though the funding was increased, the actual amount available for grants was \$.5 million less than what was granted in FY2005, when the Commission had reserved \$1 million from the previous year's record appropriation of \$10 million. Thus, editions again ended up with a cut in their grants from the previous year. This gradual erosion in funding, plus cuts in or no funding at all from the NEH, is doing serious damage to historical editions and putting the immediate future of some of the smaller projects at risk..

The battle over the FY2007 budget began when it was learned that the Administration had zeroed out the NHPRC (grants and staff) again. We hit a snag in our advocacy efforts when it became clear that there was a disagreement between the wider historical community and the archival community as represented by leaders from the Council of State Historical Records Coordinators (COSHRC), SAA, and NAGARA, They passed a statement declaring their intention to push for a \$20 million appropriation for NHPRC in order to fund the Partnership for the Historical Record (PAHR) program (see last year's report) at \$10 million. The joint statement also contended that a portion of the NHPRC's appropriation, no matter what the funding level was, should go to PAHR and challenged the equal split between publications and records funding that has existed since the late 1970s. Craig, Bickford, and others believed that requesting a \$20 million appropriation for the NHPRC when it was only authorized at \$10 million was an untenable position and the NCH Board agreed. Our discussions with T-THUD App. Comm. staff on HAD validated this position. They pointed out that level funding would

be a good result given the current budget climate and that seeking an appropriation that was double the authorized level was unrealistic. We decided to advocate \$10 million in funding and eventually the archival organizations changed their strategy and joined us. We were again successful in convincing members of the House, including some influential majority members of the Appropriations Committee (thanks to our UVa contingent for convincing fiscal conservative Rep. Goode to write). The House Humanities Caucus leaders again circulated a “Dear Colleague” letter in behalf of NHPRC funding, but it did not garner as many signatures as the 2005 letter did. The House subcommittee funded the Administration’s request for NARA and added NHPRC funding of \$5.5 million for grants and \$2 million for administration; then an amendment on the House floor cut the total NARA appropriation by \$8 million in order to fund something else. The Senate subcommittee recommended a total funding increase for NARA (although there was a \$4 million cut in operating expenses) over the Administration’s budget. The repairs and restoration budget saw the biggest increase, but practically all of the funding in this line item was earmarked by the Senate for particular projects. The Senate subcommittee set the NHPRC figure at \$5 million with no funding for administration. Meanwhile the National Archives building was flooded in a torrential and lengthy downpour that flooded many of the federal buildings in the Washington Mall area. The basement of the building, including the new two year old and beautiful theater, was seriously damaged and the building was without power for weeks. Most staff could not return to work in the building for nearly a month. The staff working on the recovery had to constantly monitor the air and it is believed that the moisture levels were

controlled and there was no damage to documents. This costly flood caused NARA to have a deficit for FY2006 and impose a hiring freeze. Because of the anticipated cuts in the NARA operational budget for FY2007, the cancellation of evening and Saturday research hours and early closing of the exhibit halls have been proposed, along with other damaging cuts. At the NHPRC there have been a number of retirements of experienced staff and no replacements are being hired. The OMB recently took all mentions of the NHPRC's role out of NARA's proposed strategic plan, insisting that NARA's role be confined to non federal records. Things look very grim indeed and we will certainly have to make the NHPRC case very strongly to Congress in 2007 if we are to have a hope of its survival. And, we'll need to strengthen alliances with the archival community and have more help from the wider historical community. Charlene Bickford for the Federal

Policy Committee Charlene Bickford, Chair
Phil Chase Theresa Collins Linda Crocker Simmons Barbara Oberg Ann D. Gordon
Richard Leffler Leslie Rowland Charles T. Cullen, ex officio (ADE NHPRC Rep.)

Stanley N. Katz, ex officio (AHA NHPRC Rep.) October 3, 2006

NEH Editions Funding

FY2001—FY2006

Year applicants # funded Outright Matching Total

2001
(last
year
in
Colla
borat
ive)
20
\$2,2

82,8
18
\$1,3
18,5
00
\$3,6
01,3
18

2002 (first year of
new editions
program) 48 27
\$2,036,000
\$1,920,000
\$3,956,000

2003
(first year of WTP funds used for editions; those funds included) 47 16 \$1,715,000 \$1,470,000 \$3,185,000

2004
(\$12 million increase for WTP, funds used for editions included) 59 20 \$2,200,000 \$1,040,000 \$3,240,000

2005
(\$5 million increase for 71 21 \$1,985,792 \$1,445,000 \$3,430,792* WTP, WTP funds used for editions included)

2006 (WTP funds used for 21 \$2,570,000 \$1,666,869
\$4,236,869** editions included)

*includes an almost \$300,000 grant for an electronic conversion grant (new initiative within editions program); therefore the grants for actually creating editions declined again.

**Though this figure is substantially larger than the previous year's ongoing historical editions did not fare well in the process.

ADE Letter to NEH Chairman Bruce Cole

September 1, 2006

Chairman Bruce Cole The National Endowment for the Humanities 1100 Pennsylvania Ave,
N.W. Washington, DC 20506

Dear Chairman Cole:

I write on behalf of the Council and members of the Association for Documentary Editing, in which most of the significant documentary editing projects in this country are represented. The ADE's members appreciate your strong support for documentary editions as part of the basic foundation of the NEH's mission and the "We the People" initiative. Nevertheless, we wish to voice concerns over certain issues that have arisen.

1. Digital Humanities Initiative

The first area involves the ways in which the NEH's Digital Humanities Initiative relates to scholarly editions. As you know, on August 20 new guidelines for the Scholarly Editions Program were posted on the NEH Website. With only ten weeks remaining until the November 1 deadline, project directors and their host institutions are suddenly faced with a guideline on digital publication that has troubled the scholarly editing community. The statement in the introduction to the guideline requires that:

Applicants employ digital technology in the preparation, management, and online publication of all critical and documentary editions. Projects that include TEI (Text Encoding Initiative) conformant transcription and offer free online access are encouraged and will be given preference.

Editors in the ADE fully understand the need to present authentic documentary resources on the Internet and have long pressed for increased federal attention to and funding for making their editions more widely accessible through electronic publication. They have also pioneered ways to transform textual scholarship into flexible and reliable digital formats. Nonetheless, this eleventh-hour imposition seems to require that on-going scholarly editions present plans for digital publication if they seek funding from the NEH. The agency's objective is admirable. Its execution seems unrealistic and potentially endangers the future of the ongoing book editions.

No electronic publication of any value and guaranteed permanence can be designed with two months lead-time. Moreover, most editors already in the midst of ongoing book editions are not in a position to determine whether or not their work will appear in electronic form. Few, if any, project directors or host institutions control the rights to these editions. Electronic publication of their work requires both negotiations with their publishers and willingness on the publishers' part to permit competitive publications and/or venture into electronic publishing themselves. Typically, publishers have made substantial financial investments in these editions with little or no profit to show for it. Asking them to produce free online resources is unrealistic. There is a very strong archival argument to be made for the presses as the best candidates to create electronic resources that will be maintained for future generations, particularly if there is a revenue stream to support this maintenance. If the editions are not put online by publishers, who will guarantee long-term access and pay the costs of maintaining digital editions?

Even if viable plans for electronic publication are already in place for certain editions and publishers are ready and able to cooperate, those ongoing projects can only execute the work of preparing those new electronic publications by diverting staff time and talent away from their current objectives. But they have been told that meeting production goals is key to any renewal of NEH support. Either the requirement must be accompanied by significant increases in funding that will permit hiring staff dedicated to the electronic projects, or the requirement will impose the self-contradictory need to cut production on the current work dramatically in order to fund it at all.

The ADE reiterates its admiration for the objective pursued by the NEH. We are enthusiastic about digital humanities scholarship, but think it is a complicated and quickly evolving field in which editors, publishers, funding agencies and others should work in concert. Editors are unanimous that their work should be much more widely available than it is, and indisputably, the Internet offers the widest distribution now imaginable. A major initiative backed by serious

funding is long overdue. But simply imposing a requirement at the last minute, without addressing how this direction will affect the scholarship already underway with support from the NEH and without money to make it happen, puts at jeopardy the publications that the NEH has long nurtured, promoted, and funded.

2. Declining Resources

Closely related to the first issue is a most difficult and pressing one: the declining resources available for the work of producing scholarly editions. We know that you are acutely aware that, despite the much needed and appreciated infusion of “We the People” funds, the NEH’s grant resources committed to scholarly editions are wholly inadequate to fund the projects that are highly rated in the competitive review process. And, far fewer projects are supported through the NEH today than in the past.

Just a few statistics illustrate that point. In FY1982 the NEH made 61 grants for editions totaling \$3,396,185 (\$2,157,974 outright, \$1,238,211 matching). In 2006, nearly a quarter century later, the NEH made only 22 grants for editions totaling \$4,236,869 (outright, \$2,570,000 outright, \$1,666,869). Despite the addition of WTP funds, the 2006 total for grants is slightly less than 25% higher than the 1982 figure in real terms.

And 2006 was the best year in recent history for grants to scholarly editions; in 2003 and 2004 the grants totaled less than they did in 1982! Thus, each year, projects that have been funded by the NEH in the past are not funded at all, have their grants cut from the previous grant level, or are level funded. In real dollars, projects are receiving less money and are required to raise more private funds.

This trend is worsened by the funding difficulties of the NHPRC. Ongoing historical editions have experienced a damaging decline in their funding from the NHPRC in the last few years. In FY2003 the NHPRC gave out over \$3.2 million in grants to editions; this year it granted \$2.25 million.

While the mission of editing projects has been increased to add websites, electronic publication, educational tools, and the work related to obtaining and reporting on grants has increased dramatically, the available funding has declined. This Catch-22 situation cannot continue much longer.

3. Review Process for Documentary Editions

Another related area of concern is the review process. ADE members have become aware that one element of that process—reviews from outside specialists familiar with the projects and their subject matter—has been eliminated in recent grant making cycles. While we applaud the hard work and dedication of the NEH staff and while we understand that seeking outside reviewers and sending out individual proposals consumed staff time and resources, we believe that these expert reviews provide valuable information and opinions that assist the panelists and staff in their evaluations.

Each year panels consist of different persons, and thus lack familiarity with projects already underway and with previous panels’ decisions about those projects and reasoning behind them.

Often, panels have only one member generally familiar with editorial practices, challenges, and accomplishments. One year a panel may consider a certain project's sample annotation excessive; the next year, a new panel might consider the annotation too lean.

Thus, it is not surprising when projects that have been almost continuously funded by the NEH have their funding interrupted for a year, and then restored, or when projects customarily denied funding by the NEH suddenly receive a grant, and then have subsequent applications rejected. In other words, a project's fate rests with the panelists—its fortunes may rise when it has a forceful proponent, or fall when it faces a vociferous critic.

We understand the difficulty of locating hundreds of outside reviewers. But 60 proposals from scholarly editing projects is not an overwhelming number, especially if instead of requiring seven outside reviewers for each grant proposal, staff could seek out three. This would reduce staff time, but would retain the valuable input of outside scholars.

For the sake of all those involved in the process, it is desirable that the NEH funding decisions be based on specific policies, on accurate information, and on sound interpretations. Further, the agency should be able to tell rejected applicants explicitly why they were not funded, and subsequent NEH panels should know what adjustments applicants have made in response to criticisms from previous NEH panels.

Especially at this time, when the Endowment has instituted a new digital policy, what confidence can editors have in the review process as it relates to established, ongoing editorial projects? In considering these projects, how will the panels interpret the word "preference" in regard to TEI as it relates to these particular projects?

There is a great need to complete the ongoing editions and digitize them for future generations. The NEH, which has invested so much in the production of the hundreds of volumes of scholarly editions now available or in progress and in digital editions, has a major stake in the accomplishment of this goal. Additional resources are absolutely essential if this goal is to be accomplished. The ADE stands ready to assist you in seeking to stop the erosion of federal resources available for meeting this goal and attaining funding that truly addresses the challenges of providing authentic and durable digital documentary resources.

We thank you in advance for your attention to the concerns of our membership. It is our hope that you could find time in your busy schedule to meet with me and a few of my colleagues from the ADE's leadership. We will contact your office about setting up such a meeting.

Sincerely,

Roger A. Bruns President, Association for Documentary Editing 11163 Saffold Way Reston, VA
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Council of the Association for Documentary
Editing Ronald Bosco, ADE President-Elect,
Emerson Family Papers, University at
Albany, SUNY Christine Patrick, ADE
Secretary, Papers of George Washington,
University of Virginia John Lupton,
Treasurer, Papers of Abraham Lincoln,
Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
Richard Leffler, Director of Publications,
Ratification of the Constitution Project,
University of Wisconsin

Mary Gallagher, The Papers of Robert Morris, Brooklyn, New York
Dennis Conrad, Past President, Naval Historical Center
Kenneth Price, Walt Whitman Archive, University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Michael Stevens, Wisconsin Historical Society

Federal Policy Committee Charlene Bickford, First Federal Congress Project, The George
Washington University Ann Gordon, Papers of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B.
Anthony, Rutgers

University Philander Chase, Papers of George Washington, University of Virginia
Charles T. Cullen, ex officio, President, The Newberry Library, Emeritis Larry Hickman,
The Center for Dewey Studies Stanley N. Katz, ex officio, Woodrow Wilson School of
Public and International
Affairs, Princeton University

Barbara Oberg, Papers of Thomas Jefferson, Princeton University
Leslie Rowland, Freedmen and Southern Society

A Joint Statement on 2007 Funding Levels for the National Historical Publications and Records Commission

**Council of State Archivists, National Association of Government Archives and Records
Administrators, and Society of American Archivists 3 March 2006**

**We support enhancement of NHPRC's programs in Fiscal Year 2007 to include formula
grants to states through the Partnership for the American Historical Record (PAHR).**

• For many years NHPRC has successfully funded documentary editions and administered
a competitive grants program to fund projects of national importance. The time has come for NHPRC to
expand its scope to embrace documentary issues at every level (local, state, and national) and in every type
of archival repository (public, private, university, etc.).

• State and local record keepers create records that are tied to federal rights and interests,
such as citizenship, identity, and elections. PAHR is essential to bridging the critical gaps among local,
state, and federal records to ensure citizens' rights and privileges.

**We support funding of NHPRC at the fully authorized level, but we believe that the current
authorization is insufficient to address the profound issues that archival repositories face. Therefore,
the archives community will advocate for a funding level of \$20 million.**

• We believe that the current authorization cap of \$10 million is a significant—but not
insurmountable—issue. Members of archival organizations will work to secure an agreement with
Authorization Committee members not to object to an appropriation that exceeds the authorization

level, and we will work toward raising the authorization level.

We believe that NHPRC's Fiscal Year 2007 appropriation, at whatever level, should be shared between "traditional" programs (documentary editions and nationwide grants) and PAHR.

- .
 - The division of NHPRC's appropriation should be an every-dollar split rather than a sequenced split.
- .
 - We believe that the exact distribution of funds should be negotiated, but we envision that an amount greater than 50% would be designated for "traditional" NHPRC programs.
- .
 - We understand that, should the appropriation be very modest, such a division could threaten NHPRC's viability. We are committed to the survival of NHPRC's traditional programs. In the event of a very modest appropriation, we will work toward the goal of both preserving traditional NHPRC programs and establishing PAHR at some level.