

KENTUCKY STORIES HUMANITIES PROGRAM INITIATIVE

**“My first duty is to start, for the first time, to live as a member of a human race
And my first human act is the recognition of
how much I owe everybody else.
Thus God has brought me to Kentucky where the people are,
for the most part, singularly without inhibitions.”**
—Thomas Merton, *The Sign of Jonas*, 1953

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF KET HUMANITIES PROGRAMS

Addressing Educational and Social Needs: Kentucky is a study in contrasts. Burdened by poverty, geographic isolation, and lack of education, the state is also rich in history and cultural resources. Forty percent of adult Kentuckians (one million persons) read only at a basic level, and 35.4 percent lack a high school diploma, the second-highest percentage of all the states. More than twenty percent of the state’s residents under 18—some 83,000 children—live in poverty. But Kentucky has a long and important history, and its history has a way of enduring—the past, its artifacts and echoes, often seem strangely alive in the present. To this day, Kentucky officials taking their oaths of office must swear they have never fought a duel.

Kentucky is the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis, Kit Carson and Muhammad Ali, Lionel Hampton and Bill Monroe. It has nurtured the legends of Daniel Boone, Jesse James, and Hunter Thompson; the art of John James Audubon; and the literary legacies of Harriette Arnow, Robert Penn Warren, Elizabeth Hardwick, Marsha Norman, and Bobbie Ann Mason. As an editor and translator, Kentucky’s Maria Jolas stoked the cultural fires of Paris from the 1920s into the 1980s, helping artists from James Joyce to Alexander Calder. Kentuckians D.W. Griffith and George C. Wolfe have brought their different visions to film and theater. Kentucky has given to American law the great Louis Brandeis, the first Jew to serve on the Supreme Court. To Hollywood it has contributed a long stream of luminaries, from Victor Mature and Irene Dunn to Johnny Depp and George Clooney.

Kentucky's vigorous traditional arts range from quilting to carving to Bluegrass music. The state has three regional cultural centers, and it boasts cultural organizations with national reputations for innovation. These include: Appalshop; the University of Louisville Photographic Archives; the Western Kentucky University folklore program; and Actors Theatre of Louisville.

In its humanities programming, KET draws on the cultural strengths of Kentucky to address the state's educational and social needs. This approach allies KET with schools and educational institutions across the state. Under the Kentucky Educational Reform Act of 1990—a \$1.3 billion reform effort The New York Times called “the most extensive statewide school restructuring plan in the nation”—arts and humanities were integrated into the curriculum and put on the same plane as mathematics and the sciences. Kentucky became the first state to adopt legally-mandated, high-stakes student assessments in the arts and humanities. It was also the first to include the results of those assessments in its school accountability index. Kentucky high-school students must also take a survey course in humanities before they can graduate. The curricular integration of the arts and humanities represents a multi-faceted approach that recognizes different ways of learning, one that enhances academic performance and school involvement among children from low socio-economic environments.

Because of the state's needs, KET humanities programs serve a psychological as well as educational purpose. The Upper South—Kentucky, Tennessee, West Virginia, and parts of Virginia, Missouri, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio—is arguably the country's most marginalized and stigmatized region, the land of “Dog Patch,” “The Beverly Hillbillies,” and “The Dukes of Hazzard”(sic). Too many Kentuckians, especially young people, have absorbed negative stereotypes about their state and region. Too many Kentuckians are unaware of their state's history and culture. These factors undercut the incentive to learn, to expand intellectual horizons, and to break the cycle of ignorance and poverty.

“The road was perfectly alive with pigs of all ages; lying about in every direction, fast asleep; or grunting along in quest of hidden dainties.”
—Charles Dickens, impressions of Louisville, 1842

Humanities Across the Schedule: Few stations or state networks in public broadcasting can approach KET’s amount of local production or its commitment to education. And few can match the amount of humanities content in local production. An awareness of humanities issues permeates all divisions of KET and can be found in virtually every category of KET production. For example, *Basketball in Kentucky: Great Balls of Fire* (2002), a four-hour documentary on Kentucky’s obsession with the game, could have been a conventional celebration of hoops glory. Instead it probed the social history of the state’s favorite sport, exploring its racial and political dimensions.

Since 1995, the *Electronic Field Trip* instructional series has taken students to such down-to-earth sites as Mammoth Cave, a hog farm, and a car plant, but humanities issues are not neglected. A third of the 21 *Electronic Field Trip* programs have featured behind-the-scenes visits to cultural centers, including: the Battle of Perryville site; Louisville’s Speed Art Museum; and White Hall, the home of the fiery abolitionist Cassius Marcellus Clay, whose dueling weapon of choice was the Bowie knife.

Louisville: Thirty Years of Change (2002) was produced after the state’s largest city voted to consolidate city and county governments. The two-hour documentary traces the city’s history from 1940 to 1970, a crucial period during which many contemporary problems took form. The program was well received by both critics and viewers, and it gives public-affairs debates an historical and cultural context as Louisville, now the nation’s sixteenth largest city, ponders its future.

Now in its ninth season, the popular *Kentucky Life* magazine series has aired programs filled with profiles and mini-documentaries, all of which address historical and cultural subjects and humanities-based issues. Shows have included features on: the Italian and Irish immigrant stone masons who designed and built many of the state’s rock fences and

buildings; the history of Appalachian African Americans (“Affrilachians”); and a look at the observance of the Day of the Dead in the state’s growing Hispanic community. Other programs have featured profiles of Kentucky writers Harlan Hubbard, Jesse Stuart and Robert Penn Warren, as well as segments on the numerous artists and craftsmen who have contributed to the state’s mountain arts traditions. Subjects that have sparked viewer interest include: the Melungeons, a mysterious group of dark-skinned, blue-eyed people from Eastern Kentucky; the sand paintings created by Kentucky’s Tibetan Buddhist monks; and a profile of the Freedom Singers, who traveled the South in the 1960s to sing songs of the Civil Rights movement.

By any measure *A Evening with Richard Davis and Friends* was a successful program—an entertaining hour of jazz and the winner of two regional Emmys—but KET wrung the humanities content from Davis and his performance at KET. We arranged for the bassist to tape six one-hour instructional programs on jazz for both teachers and students. A professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Davis discusses jazz instruments and pioneers and covers the history, elements and social context of the music. KET distributes these by satellite and videocassette.

Since it began in 1997, *Kentucky Author Forum Presents* has featured nationally-known writers interviewed by respected journalists and experts. The programs are designed to be accessible to a general audience, especially to young adults and viewers interested in history, literature, culture, and government. The nationally-distributed series gives viewers in-depth conversation that is both civilized and thought-provoking — discourse that neither avoids controversy nor indulges in gratuitous arguments and one-upmanship. Authors on the series have included John Updike, Jane Goodall, E. L. Doctorow, Elie Wiesel, Katherine Graham, David Halberstam, A. Scott Berg, and Sandra Day O’Connor.

KET has produced many instructional projects based on the humanities. *DanceSense* (2002) is a nationally-distributed, 10-program series on the history, cultural context and purpose of dance. It covers all forms of dance—including popular, folk, religious, ballet, tap,

modern, and jazz—and the development and relationship of African-American, European and Native-American dance forms. *DanceSense* provides students with content essential to understanding the art of dance, all presented with lively examples. The project’s video and Web site (www.ket/dancesense) were designed simultaneously and complement each other with great exactness, playing off the respective strengths of each medium.

Humanities Through the Arts is an 18-week instructional course for high school students that surveys history, beliefs, and traditions as reflected in the arts. It examines the persistence of cultural influence over time and the connections among the different arts. Since 1996 this course has been broadcast by satellite to Kentucky students as well as schools in 19 other states. It is also available on tape. During the 2002-3 school year, 168 schools and 12,563 students were registered as using KET’s humanities resources. The resource Web site (www.dl.ket.org/humanities) includes student-to-teacher mail, forums, galleries, and unit-by-unit classroom resources. Other distance-learning courses in the humanities are: *Humanities Connections*, a four-program course for middle school; and *Humanities Themes*, an ongoing online collection of lesson plans, projects, and worksheets for teachers.

“My courage is of the sort that grows stronger with adversity.”

—Henry Clay, while debating the Compromise of 1850

Values Underlying KET Humanities Programming: KET produces a great variety of humanities-based programming, but it is possible to identify some basic characteristics that point to organizational values and goals. These will be carried forward and strengthened by the *Kentucky Stories* initiative.

- **KET’s primary focus is on state history, cultural figures and groups, but we are aware that these often have regional and national interest.** For example, in 1998 KET aired *James Still’s River of Earth*, a documentary on the Appalachian writer. The program was designed for a state audience. A native of Mississippi, Still moved to the mountains of

Eastern Kentucky as a young man and lived in an isolated cabin. He was a slow, meticulous writer who produced several volumes of poetry and vivid stories that blended traditional and modernist elements. Still's 1940 novel, *River of Earth*, is considered a classic, but he's not well known. In fact, his 70-year literary career was largely unknown to his Kentucky neighbors—he referred to it as “a secret moonshining operation.” *James Still's River of Earth* was released nationally by NETA. Somewhat to our surprise, the documentary found audiences in all parts of the country. One reason might be the growth of Still's critical reputation, but his story also has a compelling humanity—his Thoreau-like journey to the woods, his dedication to craft, and his determination to live simply among mountain people.

- **KET's humanities programs recognize the diversity and inter-connectedness of American culture.** This awareness is not pasted on, but forms an integral part of KET's mission and interests. In 2000, KET aired *Ellis Wilson—So Much to Paint*, a documentary on a Kentucky-born artist who became part of the Harlem Renaissance and the Black Arts Movement. Like Still, Wilson (1899-1977) is not well known, but KET believed a statewide audience would respond to his work and to his life story and its historical context. When the program was released nationally, we found it also struck a chord with viewers far away; so has its Web site: www.ket.org/elliswilson. Wilson grew up in western Kentucky, culturally the most “southern” part of the state, at a time in which talented African Americans had to leave to find opportunity. Wilson's artistic journey took him to Chicago, then New York, and finally to the Caribbean. His vibrant paintings of everyday life among the Gullah and in Haiti are now assuming a larger place in American art history.

- **KET's humanities programs look for the past in the present and enliven abstraction and theory with vivid specificity.** Whenever possible, we try to capture what might be called “living humanities.” We prefer to produce documentaries on cultural figures when they're still alive. In 1998, KET produced *World of Our Own: Kentucky Folkways*, a series of eight programs. KET's camera crews spent six months and traveled 10,000 miles, back

and forth across Kentucky, to capture footage of horseshoers, barbecuers, fiddlers, fence-makers, ginseng hunters, carvers, quilters, Hindu body-painters, marble shooters, seed-savers, grave-decorators, weavers, canners, hand-jivers, hound-breeders, and basket-makers. *World of Our Own* includes folk traditions that have been in the state hundreds of years and more recent ones brought by Kentucky's growing immigrant community. It examines traditional music, art, and games, as well as occupational folk art and crafts and customs associated with fishing, cooking, distilling, tobacco farming, funerals and river life. The project Web site (www.ket.org/worldofourown) augments its educational impact.

- **KET designs humanities programs with education in mind.** Across the state, KET is considered an educational organization, not primarily as a source of public television programming. This attitude, continually revealed by surveys, accurately reflects KET's sense of identity and priorities. In 2000, KET produced *Kentucky's Underground Railroad — Passage To Freedom*, a one-hour documentary that tells how Kentucky bridged the Deep South and the way north for escaped slaves. It combines location footage, interviews, and period music to create an evocative portrait of the time and place. But KET took just as much care with the project's educational component.

The program Web site (www.ket.org/underground) won the Eddie Award at the PBS/NPR Online Summit for "Best Companion Content Tied to a Local or Regional PBS Broadcast." KET was one of four national winners.

- **KET supports the humanities projects of other organizations and independent producers.** A concern for humanities issues animates KET's relationships and results in constructive partnerships and behind-the-scenes encouragement and support. KET administers the Kentucky Fund for Independent Production, established by the state legislature as the country's first state-supported fund for independent video and film producers. During the coming biennial (2004-05), KET will award \$250,000 in state grants. Many of these have reached national audiences or have the potential to do so. They include:

Gethsemani, a documentary on the Trappist monastery; *Green Blood, Red Tears*, a documentary on high suicide rates among American farmers; *M & M Smith: For Posterity's Sake*, a documentary on twin brothers from Kentucky who opened a photographic studio in Harlem in the 1920s; *Night Riders*, a program on the state's "tobacco war" of a century ago; and *Beyond the Border*, a documentary on Mexican immigrants in Kentucky.

- **KET's humanities projects are connected to its activities in literacy and technology.**

Supporting KET's humanities efforts are related activities in education and technology that deserve mention. KET has a long tradition of producing projects to encourage literacy—and sees them as providing a foundation for the appreciation and understanding of humanities programming. KET is also committed to life-long education and believes that no one is too old to discover the humanities. The network is a national leader in adult education. Its *Workplace Essential Skills*, part of the PBS LiteracyLink initiative, is a 25-program series that was selected by the National Educational Telecommunications Association as the year's best instructional TV series and "Best of the Best" in the instructional television category. KET's *GED Connection*, a companion 39-program series, was released in 2001. Both now air on more than 200 PBS stations. Finally technical innovation has always been a hallmark of KET. KET was creating interactive technologies well before Internet. A computer-linked keyboard system enabling direct communication between teachers at KET and distance-learning classes hundreds of miles away was honored in 1991 with a \$100,000 Innovations in State and Local Government Award, given jointly by the Ford Foundation and Harvard University. KET is now building a data-management system that will allow it to archive and retrieve important footage for many purposes, including scholarly research.

**“We didn't give a hoot in hell what was happening on the track.
We had come there to watch the real beasts perform.”**

—Hunter Thompson, *The Kentucky Derby is Decadent and Depraved*, 1970

THE IMPACT OF CHALLENGE GRANT FUNDS

Fertile Soil: KET's performance in humanities programming is strong. An endowment will make it stronger. It will enable KET to establish regular and ongoing use of humanities advisors from both Kentucky and out of state. It will enable KET to leverage larger grants. KET has already demonstrated it can achieve solid results with limited funds. Our ingrained frugality, combined with the funding base provided by the endowment, will take KET humanities programming to new levels of quality and utility. Insuring that future promise is a rather simple economic premise: Dollars for production go farther in Kentucky than they do in many other parts of the country. It costs KET a third to half less to produce a given program than it costs in Boston, New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, or Washington, D.C.

Kentucky Stories: The *Kentucky Stories* initiative has a schematic resemblance to a Kentucky quilt. It is a mosaic of tightly-sewn pieces, an interlocking design of elements that are both distinct and closely related. *Kentucky Stories* has five programming elements—biography, history, place, folklife, and education. Two projects encompassed by the initiative are already in pre-production, a documentary on the 101st Airborne Division and a documentary on the Northern Kentucky region. Two other projects have been discussed in detail: *Kentucky History Toolkit*, a multi-media teaching resource on the state's history, and a documentary profile of Thomas Merton.

- ***Kentucky Lives*** consists of documentaries of Kentuckians whose biographies evoke the state's history and cultural traditions. Over the past decade, KET has produced some two dozen bios on all sorts of Kentuckians, living and dead, and its excellence in this area has been widely recognized. *Signature* (1996-98), a series of six documentaries, profiles contemporary Southern writers such as Barbara Kingsolver, Lee Smith, Marsha Norman and George C. Wolfe. A classroom guide accompanies the series.

Mountain Born—The Jean Ritchie Story (1997), a documentary on the Appalachian folksinger, portrayed a “living treasure” of American music. A native of Viper, Kentucky,

and the youngest of 13 children, Ritchie learned traditional melodies from her family. Many of their songs were brought from Scotland in the late 1700s. As a performer, she has worked with, influenced and encouraged many artists, including Joan Baez, Woody Guthrie, and the young Bob Dylan. The program contains archival photos, excerpts from home movies, and interviews with Pete Seeger and Arlo Guthrie. *Mountain Born* aired in national prime time and was produced with an award-winning classroom guide.

Looking to the future, the *Kentucky Lives* strand has many important cultural figures to consider for documentaries. One candidate who has been frequently discussed in recent years is Thomas Merton, who lived as a Trappist monk at the Abbey of Gethsemani near Bardstown. The Merton project is a classic example of one caught between time and money. People who were close to Merton still live at the Abbey of Gethsemani and in Louisville, but their numbers decrease each year. KET has spent years researching and developing this project, interviewing Merton associates and scholars—Merton's papers are located at Bellarmine College in Louisville, and the University of Kentucky also has an important collection.

This program will require a major base of funding, which makes it ideal for the *Kentucky Stories* endowment umbrella. We anticipate that a biography will be among the first programs produced under the *Kentucky Stories* initiative, and a Merton profile will be among the first to be considered. KET's documentary will search for many Mertons: Merton the poet, essayist and journal writer; Merton the activist; and Merton the contemplative, a spiritual guide for a tragic, dehumanizing age. Merton's life is a fascinating mix of contradictions. His story is both local and international. He was a worldly man who became a hermit; a silent monk who overflowed with words; a social critic whose humor deepened as he became more pessimistic.

Other biographical possibilities include programs on John J. Audubon, Harriette Arnow, Wendell Berry, Robert Penn Warren, Bill Monroe, and Muhammad Ali.

- ***Kentucky Places*** concerns the relationship between the state's physical and cultural geographies. Many KET programs examine the uniqueness of place and its effect on people. *World of Our Own* is filled with that sensibility, and it also animated the *Signature* project. *Olmsted in Louisville* deals with the landscape designer's influence on the city's parks and neighborhoods. The 1995 documentary *Settlement Schools of Appalachia* probed the divided cultural influence of that uniquely mountain institution. *A Native Presence* (1995) recast the Kentucky landscape in terms of the Indians who once lived here—and who still live here. The state's Indian population is increasing, and even the buffalo are coming back. Kentucky now has more bison than it did in 1790. Looking to the future, KET is considering many project ideas in the *Kentucky Places* area, including the possibility of a High-definition documentary on the magnificent Red River Gorge.

Another project that has been intensely discussed at KET is a High-definition program on gardens across the state. Because of Kentucky's physical and cultural geography, these gardens flourish in a variety of micro-environments and their designs and flowers reflect the individual visions of their creators and their local communities. This project is sure to be near the top of the list for consideration.

KET is also interested in exploring Kentucky's urban environments. We are now researching and developing a major documentary project on the Northern Kentucky region, an area rich in African-American and immigrant history. It was also famous for illegal gambling and sinful carousing, a place where citizens of Cincinnati could finally have a good time. Production on the Northern Kentucky documentary is slated to begin next year as part of the *Kentucky Stories* initiative.

- ***Kentucky Past, Present & Future*** focuses on projects about the state's history and how it resonates through time. KET has produced many projects that fit within this strand, a recent example being *Underground Railroad — Passage To Freedom*. Looking to the future, we are discussing many topics for programs, as well as the possibility of a more comprehensive history series. One project already in development that is scheduled be

produced under the *Kentucky Stories* framework is a clear-eyed documentary on the 101st Airborne Division, which is based at Fort Campbell in western Kentucky. The “Screaming Eagles” are a state cultural institution as well as a military unit. The program will draw on extensive interviews, division archives, and collected film footage to tell its history, including its present deployment in Iraq.

Another project idea discussed among the staff is the historical connection between Kentucky and Liberia. One producer has researched the subject for years, compiling nearly a thousand pages of information and interviews. Liberia was created by those who saw gradual emancipation and a return to Africa as the solution to America slavery. Today the country is dotted with place names borrowed from Kentucky.

There is much official commemoration in Liberia, as well as contemporary family links between Kentucky and Liberia. The Kentucky-Liberia project shows the ante-bellum period from an oblique and startling angle. It brings the complexities of American slavery to the foreground. It reveals the concerns and the creative thought of those involved in the Liberian movement, including Henry Clay.

The Liberian perspective can be used as a frame, as a way to glimpse the surrounding context of Clay’s career. His long career should be better known. Clay left his mark on the country with statescraft, originality and charismatic energy. For example, as Speaker of the House of Representatives (1811-20), Clay transformed an office that had been modeled on the Speaker of the British House of Commons, who functions as an impartial referee of debate. Historian Robert Remini argues that Clay turned the Speakership into what it is today, one of the most powerful positions in federal government.

Liberia’s civil war has slowed discussions of this project, but after order is restored travel there will become easier. With the establishment of its humanities programming endowment, KET may be able to turn this idea into a viable production for *Kentucky Stories*.

Other ideas worth mention are “The Confederate Exodus” and “Frontier Kentucky.”

When the *Kentucky Life* magazine series aired a feature on the 20,000 Confederates who went to Brazil after the Civil War, it was clear that a full-length production could be done on this subject. Several million persons are estimated to have emigrated from the South. The Confederate exodus was the largest in American history, but it isn't widely known. The most famous emigre is perhaps Judah Benjamin, the Confederate Attorney General who settled in London and who was among a number of Jews prominent in the Confederate administration. The group that went to Brazil did not go there to preserve slavery—it was abolished in Brazil decades before—but were lured by romantic travel memoirs. Today the Confederate descendents are as racially mixed as all of Brazilian society, arguably the most tolerant in the world. Many Kentuckians were among those who went to Brazil. Feelings ran high here, perhaps because Kentucky was a border state. The war in Kentucky was truly brother against brother, neighbor bushwhacking neighbor.

**“A man who values a piece of land solely in terms of money
would use his wife as a prostitute.”**

—Wendell Berry, interview with *The Louisville Times*, 1975

In 1998, KET aired a program called *A Walk with Boone*. Its format might be styled as “*This Old House* goes to the woods.” Two historians, John Mack Faragher of Yale University and Thomas D. Clark of the University of Kentucky, visited key sites in the state associated with Boone. The program did well among viewers, but it represents only a small fraction of the insight that might have been brought to the subject of Boone and his time.

In the 1990s, KET received two NEH grants for planning and scripting *Boone*, a documentary project about Daniel Boone and the trans-Appalachian frontier. Boone is universally known, but poorly understood. Contrary to Fess Parker, Boone wasn't a big man. He didn't like coonskin caps, and he didn't fight for America to make all Americans free. Like many others, Boone was cautiously neutral during the Revolution, and he owned slaves. A Quaker raised among Indians in Pennsylvania, Boone enjoyed their company, and his

comfort level with Indians made many whites uncomfortable. As an old man, Boone claimed to have killed only three Indians during seven decades of frontier conflict. “I am very sorry to say that I ever killed any,” he added, “for they have always been kinder to me than the whites.”

In short, Boone’s iconic status makes him the perfect vehicle for bringing a more complicated and nuanced history of the trans-Appalachian period to large audiences through television and multi-media. In the absence of a cash match for larger grants, the *Boone* project stumbled, but the trans-Appalachian frontier continues to be a rich area for discussion at KET, which could lead to programming in the future within the framework of *Kentucky Stories*. KET has taped a long series of interviews with historian Thomas Clark that will be reserved as a resource for future productions. Clark turned 100 this year and brings a relaxed familiarity to Kentucky history, as though he might have known Boone and Tecumseh personally.

Other possibilities include Kentucky’s Shaker communities, the Fort Pillow Massacre (in which black Union soldiers were slaughtered near Paducah), the Hatfield-McCoy feud, and the trans-Atlantic correspondence from John Keats to his brother George, who emigrated to Louisville, a relationship that many feel produced the greatest letters written in English.

- *Kentucky Traditions* deals with crafts, folkways, and traditions of popular culture. KET’s past projects in this area include *Crafting Tradition*. As in *World of Our Own*, the customs encompassed in this strand may be connected to nearly any aspect of life. Looking to the future, we expect a great deal of project material in this area. Stretching from the Appalachians to the Mississippi, Kentucky features a remarkable diversity of folklife. The state’s rural character and geography have preserved folk community’s unity and sense of pride, as well as a strong reliance on family-centered, informally-learned skills. Kentucky also has a folk tradition of tinkers and eccentric inventors, such as Nathan Stubblefield, considered by many to be the world’s first broadcaster and the true inventor of radio.

- *Kentucky Lessons* consists of educational and instructional projects. Projects will be produced under this strand, and we will also adapt and blend projects produced in the other elements of *Kentucky Stories*, turning them into video and multi-media projects for instructional settings.

“So this is the great-grandfather.”

—Muhammad Ali, AKA Cassius Clay, standing
before a bronze of Henry Clay. Washington DC, 1975

Making the Endowment Work: Kentucky Educational Television’s sense of how an endowment will transform its humanities programming is based on experience, not on hopeful projections and predictions. During the mid-1990s, KET successfully established the W. Paul and Lucille Caudill Little Endowment, a \$2 million fund to support new arts programming for children. Four years ago, when interest from the Little Endowment became available, it helped to support not only traditional offerings, such as performance programs for young viewers, but also projects that expand the range and educational scope of KET arts projects. It is this sort of programming mix that KET will use for its humanities program endowment. The initiative will be balanced between continuing projects proven to be effective and projects that break new ground in scale, content, and approach. Specific examples of innovation fostered by the Little Endowment include the classroom program, *Electronic Field Trip to the Kentucky Opera* and two ambitious projects: *DanceSense*, the instructional series on dance, and the *Arts Toolkit*, the multimedia resource for teachers.

KET can be proud of its long commitment to humanities programming and of the increased recognition its productions have received, invariably with limited production budgets. Our programs about Kentucky history and folklife do especially well with state viewers and also lend themselves to classroom adaptations in many subjects—something that KET takes extremely seriously, given the state’s educational needs.

During the past decade, KET's humanities projects have won 20 grants from national and local foundations. By spreading these grants thin and mixing them with other support, we have been able to produce a variety of humanities projects. But we feel strongly that KET could do more programs that reach further and dig more deeply into Kentucky's rich history and folk culture.

That is the view of scholars who have worked with KET on past projects. They know KET is aware of Kentucky history and culture and committed to doing good programs about it. Their support says something about our passion and about the raw material we have to work with.

"Among the several states of the Union, none has a more interesting history than Kentucky," writes Malcolm Rohrbough, a University of Iowa professor respected as one of the country's leading authorities on the trans-Appalachian period. "I am convinced that your mission in programming this history has played a significant role in explaining the innumerable variations in Kentucky's past to its varied citizens of the present."

"Kentucky Educational Television has matured to a high degree of competence in research, writing and production," writes Thomas Clark, professor emeritus of the University of Kentucky. "After more than a half-century as a classroom professor, I can assert with some certainty that a well-researched documentary can bridge the abysmal gap of ignorance far too many people, locally and nationally, have of their history."

"I know of no other organization that is so successful in making the best of contemporary humanities scholarship available to the widest possible audience here in the Commonwealth," writes Erika Brady of Western Kentucky University. "KET's commitment to documenting the humanities is outstanding," writes Albert Sperath of the University of Mississippi. "KET's professional standards in the production process and finished program are the highest in the field," adds Michael Kreyling of Vanderbilt University. "You deserve the challenge grant and the opportunity to do even more of the excellent work on your record."

