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Howard F. Huelster

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Howard F. Huelster
218 Amherst St.
Saint Paul, MN 55105

29 July 1991

Sen. Claiborne Pell
Labor and Human Resources Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Sen. Pell:

I have just finished rereading Allan Parachini's article on the NEH, its chair, Ms. Lynne Cheney, and Prof. Iannone, nominee for a seat on the NEH's National Council. The article apparently appeared in the Los Angeles Times; I found it in the July 6, 1991 edition of the Minneapolis Star-Tribune; it was headlined as follows: **Is the Western view the best? Humanities director under fire for cultural exclusivity.**

My personal view on the matter is that the Western tradition will continue to be taught and will, for the foreseeable future, in both bulk and emphasis, dominate material from minority cultures, women's studies, and international sources. The latter will gradually grow in its representation in the canon.

The matter is definitely not an **either/or** question, much as the press loves to cast all discussion into debate format.

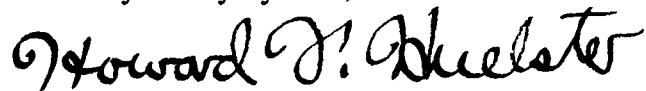
Because emotions have been stirred on all sides of the discussion, the person who leads the NEH is in a particularly powerful position to work either good or ill. Such a person has to be trusted by all sides; she ought to have a position which is a compromise among all major positions. That position ought to have the seeds of an eventual compromise in it.

Ms. Cheney obviously is not the right person for her job, given her current adversarial position in the matter. She, however, probably is not dislodgeable from her job.

Her nominee, Prof. Iannone, given the biographical material in the sources I've read, has two strikes against her. One, she is not distinguished in her field for the job she's been nominated for. Two, her views on the matter of changes in the canon are extreme. For these reasons I do not think that her appointment should be confirmed.

In the process of the hearings on this nomination, I hope that you will be able to bring out a description of a positive role in the NEH's management of change, to correct those one-sided and adversarial positions which are out there on this matter of the canon.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Howard F. Huelster". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, decorative initial 'H'.

Howard F. Huelster
Associate Professor of
English, Emeritus
Macalester College
