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THE FLORIDA HUMANITIES COUNCIL

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THE HUMANITIES

Philosophy, ethics, religion, history, art criticism, literature, language, linguistics, folk life, archaeology, anthropology and jurisprudence.

They tell us about our lives, our cultures and our societies. They provide the traditions, interpretations and visions which define our existence.

FRONT COVER

Pencil sketch of James Weldon Johnson by artist Mark Priest, an instructor at Seminole Community College.
Once was introduced to an audience at a community college as the executive director of the Florida Endowment for the Manatees. It was the only time when I have been introduced that a majority of those in the audience actually looked as if they knew what I did for a living. I, of course, was madly trying to remember everything I ever had heard about sea cows. Fortunately, I was the commencement speaker and the audience was more interested in getting on to the important stuff — watching family and friends graduate — than in listening to me.

I tell this story to help explain why we recently changed the name of the organization to the Florida Humanities Council.

Originally the Florida Citizens' Committee for the Promotion of the Humanities when the organization was founded in 1971, the name was changed to the Florida Endowment for the Humanities in 1974.

Florida Endowment for the Humanities always was difficult. The word “endowment” kept getting in our way. It was a misnomer. We are not endowed; we are supported by grants from the state of Florida and the National Endowment for the Humanities. As our support from the state has shrunk, we have begun to seek private sector funds. In our discussions with corporations, foundations and individuals, we often have found it necessary to explain first that we are neither rich nor endowed. Our decision to abandon the term “endowment” makes our role easier to explain.

Although we have changed the name to better describe ourselves, we are still committed to the humanities — no matter how difficult the word is to explain. As Sharon Scholl of Jacksonville University explains, public humanities programs give people a deeper sympathy with the worlds around them. The composition of our state demands a citizenry with the capacity to understand communities outside their own. This is the contribution of the humanities. The Florida Humanities Council will continue to make sure that people throughout the state — not just those on the college campus — have opportunities to develop this capacity.

Ann Henderson
Executive Director
Richard Eberhart Teaches Me About My Father’s Death

By Sheldon R. Isenberg

I only know Richard Eberhart through his poems, and I have made that acquaintance only recently. Maybe my innards are just getting old enough to learn from him.

My preparation for this reading has included experiencing my father’s dying which he completed last summer: 10 days unconscious in intensive care, breathing at the rate it takes to sustain 110 heartbeats per minute—the pulse of a marathon runner at the end of the course. Everything gave out but his heart.

My father’s aging was very hard—not because he resisted it, but because the end game of his life was so long—decreasing circles of activity as his body disintegrated until the magnetic force of his bed became irresistible. His story is not like the ones Eberhart tells of 90 and 100 year olds playing bridge and sinking holes in one. Nor like the story that is the poet himself, writing at 86.

So I approach Eberhart as a teacher. I’m looking for inspiration, models for aging—ideas and images. Reading him, I have found many wonderful poems about elders and eldering. But there are other themes that I need to learn about from Eberhart—death, of course, and youth. Our ideas of eldering are knotted with our ideas of youth. And time and timelessness. And nature.

In an essay published more than 20 years ago, he says that poets write “to perform the self in acts of creation against the total loss of time were one silent.” Eberhart continues to write—he seems to find time, not lose it. We were delighted and astonished as he helped prepare us for this occasion with gifts of new words. In “On Aging,” an unpublished manuscript, he points me to a relativity of time more profound than Einstein’s: “to feel old at 30, young at 80,” as he says.

My father was rarely young for me. But I remember one time, when he was just 80, he danced with my mother on legs that almost refused to carry him. But he bore a young delighted smile on his face.

Eberhart keeps pointing me to the mystery: the inexplicability of being born, of dying old or dying young, of living long and healthy or not so healthy. No easy morals—no morals at all. The Biblical faith that long life rewards a good life he does not affirm—but the wonder and mystery of all being, he does affirm.

In “Survivors,” published in The Long Reach: New and Uncollected Poems, 1948-1984 (New Directions, 1984), Eberhart talks about the “ancient ladies” who, “At ninety, Play golf at ninety, At Castine, a way from sorrow. ...Who have evaded ill By some mysterious principles...”

The mystery, given “The common lot, Nature ruthless. ...” but “nature is Not ruthless to them. Seemingly. ...” And yet “I cannot accept/That to live long means truth? When I think Of Keats, of Hopkins/ Of Dylan Thomas.”

Watching mother and father swallows feeding their chicks and teaching them to survive, he decides that “The laws of nature/ Are from ancient time./ Why then/ Not Salute? Old ladies full of grace/ Who have/ Outwitted time,/ or so it seems.”

He gives us lots of time. Hearing of Auden’s death, he writes in “Trying to Hold it All Together” (Collected Poems 1930-1976, Oxford University, 1976):

We cannot outface time,
Nothing can be done about the human condition.
O nothing can be done!
Don’t think it.
Don’t believe Will will help us,
or religion, his civilized stance,
A comic attitude, any saving grace,
We cannot hold it all together, the depth,
We cannot trick it out with word embroidery.
Time is the master of the man, and we know it.
Time outwits us finally—we feel the poet’s grief, but without a trace of sentimentality; in his poetry none of the ruthlessness of nature, but also there is no false hope of immortality preached by some philosophies, some religions.

He admits that he wants to find that place where time stops—and so aging and dying—he wants the consolations of religion, but “Doubt and belief warring in me to this day.”

In his poem, “A Way Out,” (Collected Poems) Eberhart shares the story of his powerful attraction to the immortalities promised by Buddha and Christ.

I could not abrogate my reason
East or West.
Caught in this dilemma, I dreamed of time
And flung myself on the breast and body of nature.
Naturalism claimed me as day turning to night,
But I was struck twice by blinding light.

The promises of eternity beyond nature Eberhart cannot handle rationally, and he won’t give up his rationality. But still, like St. Paul he was struck by blinding light—once more than Paul.

From Buddha and Christ to Mother Nature’s lap where he finds neither consolation nor irrational promises, but hope-filled reality:

We can live in nature as in our mother
Before we were born, and we can sense
That old death will give way to new life
As new mornings grow, Spring comes over the land.

My father was a pious Jew—periodically. There were times during his long illness when my mother—who spoke to God as someone who could heal my father, if he were asked properly—insisted that he put on Tallis and Tefillen and daven. And he did that. But toward the end, enough prayers unfulfilled, my mother stopped insisting and he stopped it. No disappointment expressed, no doubt of or anger with God. Another possibility had not panned out.

Although in the end, Eberhart teaches, “time takes us away in its mystery, there is wonder to youth and wonder to age.” The wonderful meditation on “Clouds” (Maine Poems, Oxford University, 1989):

Clouds so big you would think they are the rosy bosoms
Of young girls. How could the old world look so new?
... and before long
The girls grow up and have children, grow to be old ladies
While every day the skies present some new wonder...
We are bound to lose as time takes us away
Leaving a few poems to make their way in the world
To establish fundamental wonder and astonishment.
For it is all so old, and all so new, life...

My mother told me that when my father was in the nursing home, after his final stroke, unable to swallow, to speak, or to move his hands to write, he communicated with his eyes during the few moments a day that he was awake. (I saw that myself.) And she also told me that there was a young, pretty nurse—maybe with rosy bosoms—who would come visit him and so inspire him that he would move through the paralysis, even get up a few sounds, look at her and toothlessly smile. He flirted, and my mother—herself a great beauty in all her ages—was not jealous! It was life!

Eberhart teaches that to die is to enter into the realm of the unhuman, unknowing, wonderful, speechless, mysterious nature: earth, stone, water, plants, animals. Eberhart doesn’t anthropomorphize: Nature doesn’t mean—and this we hear many times—NATURE DOESN’T CARE. And that turns him on!

Big Rock

This excites me. I sit watching the sunset
But it was the same decades ago.
Nature is impervious to my bodily changes.
I am amazed to see trees, skies unchanged...
I claim that I make nature alive
Because if it were not for the human predicament
Nobody would know what nature was like...
Nature is not my lover,
I am the lover of nature,
I kick the boulder with the foot of Hercules.
The boulder sits, but I can walk around it.

Time conquers—but with imagination and love, we are greater even though—or even because we die—the human predicament makes nature live.

To the ancient Sphinx, he says:
I would rather be alive, suffering and exulting

Continued on page 23
Lift Every Voice and Sing

The Life of James Weldon Johnson, educator, writer, civil rights leader

By Louis H. Pratt

In 1894, upon graduating from Atlanta University at the top of his class, James Weldon Johnson received two attractive offers. The first: a scholarship to study medicine at Harvard University. The second: a job as principal of the all-black Stanton School, from which he had graduated, in his native Jacksonville.

The scholarship offer was a rare honor for a black man in that era and Johnson had to be sorely tempted. During a one-year break from studies in Atlanta, he had spent several months working for Dr. Thomas Osgood Summers, a white surgeon in Jacksonville. Summers, a warm, generous man who shared Johnson’s literary interests, was a great influence in the young man’s life, and, upon returning to the university, Johnson took courses in medicine and anatomy in preparation for a career as a surgeon.

But the young man later spent two summers teaching the children of black tenant farmers in rural Henry County, Georgia. He held school in a modest church without a blackboard or desks for his pupils; yet he supervised the education of 50 students. He found sheer excitement in passing along to others the knowledge he had gained. More importantly, he reveled in the intimate contact with people from his own culture. He wrote, “I could realize that they were me, and I was they; that a force stronger than blood made us one.”

And so his choice upon graduation was a relatively easy one. “There must be both great teachers and capable students for the achievement of real education,” he later wrote, “but great teachers are almost as rare as great philosophers.” In the summer of 1894, Johnson returned to Jacksonville to lead Stanton School.

One can only speculate as to what might have happened had Johnson made another decision. Perhaps the sum of his life would have come out the same. But over the next 40 years, Johnson’s multifaceted achievements in education, music, literature, law, diplomacy and civil rights would carve for him a leading place in the history of African-Americans.

To this day, his words still reach out to both black and white Americans. While he was principal of Stanton School, he wrote lyrics for a song composed by his brother, J. Rosamond Johnson, for a program observing the birthday of Abraham Lincoln. The song, first performed by the 500-student chorus of Stanton School, is still sung regularly. Titled, “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” it was adopted by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People as the Negro National Anthem.

Seeds of pragmatism

Johnson was born in Jacksonville on June 17, 1874, the first of three children to Helen (Dillet) and James Johnson.

His father held a respected position as headwaiter at a local hotel. His mother, a woman of mixed black and French dissent, was the daughter of the postmaster of Nassau, in the Bahamas. The couple had met in New York, where the senior James Johnson worked for a time as a waiter and Helen Dillet came to be educated.
During the Civil War, James Johnson followed Helen to Nassau, where they were married in 1864. When the war ended, the couple moved to Jacksonville.

Helen Johnson taught her eldest son to play the piano, and she encouraged him to read the authors of the classics, including Charles Dickens, John Bunyan, Sir Walter Scott and the Brothers Grimm. James Johnson impressed his son with lessons of honesty and integrity and the value of education.

Young James also learned the benefits of independence as he held various jobs in the community, and his maternal grandmother's manner and bearing contributed lessons of decisiveness, endurance and entrepreneurship. Though she wanted him to enter the ministry, neither of his parents expressed a preference for his vocational ambitions. Instead, they encouraged him to explore his own interests and inclination by providing opportunities for travel and by supporting his pursuit of academic and moral excellence. Thus, the seeds of utilitarianism and pragmatism found fertile ground in young James' mind. It was a short step from the idea of making himself useful to the ideal of selfless service to humanity.

Having been graduated from the eighth grade at Stanton School, Johnson had to go elsewhere if he was to continue his education. Jacksonville had no high school for blacks at that time. So, at 16, he left to study at Atlanta University, where he enrolled in the Preparatory Division and continued on into the college program.

At Atlanta, he continued to be a serious student who enjoyed exercising both mind and body. He played on the school's baseball team, sang in a quartet and took delight in friendly, often heated discussions of the central topic of the day: the race issue. He was introduced to Booker T. Washington, who had yet to rise to national prominence, and, at the Great Columbian Exposition of 1893, he met Frederick Douglass and a young, aspiring poet named Paul Laurence Dunbar. With the latter, he initiated a friendship and literary relationship that continued for many years.

True to his rearing, Johnson continued to show keen understanding and appreciation of the work ethic. His scholarly pursuits notwithstanding, he found time during his vacations to use his talents in practical ways. He earned money as a time-keeper for a road gang and as a wood turner in a
small mill. It was during this period, too, that he was employed for a time by Dr. Summers. The physician was himself a published poet and he encouraged his young assistant to exercise his budding literary talents. Johnson had published poems in the school paper at Atlanta. Summers also opened his library to Johnson and shared his experiences as a world traveller. In the fall of 1889, Johnson reluctantly left Dr. Summers to resume his studies in Atlanta.

According to Johnson's later reflections, Atlanta University educated him "as a means of living, not of making a living," in an effort to make him, "better and nobler, and of higher value to those we should have to serve. Inspired by this philosophy and the practical student-teaching experiences of his classmates, Johnson set out for rural Georgia during the summer of 1891 to educate the children of tenant farmers.

Seeds of accomplishment

Nowhere is Johnson's pragmatism more evident than in his philosophy of education. For him, education was the hallmark of achievement by blacks; it was the historical key to the accomplishments and progress of the race. Therefore, he believed the schools attended by blacks should provide the same quality of education as those attended by whites. Moreover, he said, education for blacks should be particularized through a re-writing of American history to reflect the contributions of African-Americans. When this has been accomplished, he argued, young blacks would develop a cultural respect and inner confidence necessary for self-actualization and racial pride.

It was this school of thought that the new, 23-year-old principal took to the 1,000 students and 25 teachers of Jacksonville's Stanton School.

Initially, there were doubts that so young a man, however well-educated, could provide effective leadership for such a large institution. Johnson had doubts himself. Despite his impressive academic background and record of achievement, he had no formal training in education and he had no experience in organization and administration.

But he proved equal to these tasks. On the advice of the superintendent, he consulted with the principal of the white school on matters such as educational leadership, and he volunteered to teach classes at Stanton to test his ideas on motivating and challenging students.

He also brought about major curriculum reforms. He introduced and became involved in teaching Spanish. He added advanced courses, such as algebra and physics. During his seven-year tenure, he expanded the curriculum to the high school level.

There were other successes outside of the school, as well. In 1985, Johnson founded The Daily American, a newspaper of Republican politics, which became the first black daily in America. He saw the paper as another weapon he could use to defeat racism and promote racial pride and consciousness. The Daily American became a voice for civil rights and equal opportunity for blacks. Though it folded after eight months, the paper served as a medium of cultural awareness in Jacksonville.

Johnson went on to explore another avenue where he might
Lift Every Voice and Sing

Music by J. Rosamond Johnson
Lyrics by James Weldon Johnson

Lift every voice and sing
Till earth and heaven ring
Ring with the Harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the listening skies.
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea
Sing a song full of the faith that the
dark past has taught us
Sing a song full of the hope that the
present has brought us
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod
Bitter the chastening rod
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died
Yet with a steady beat,
Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed
We have come over a way that
with tears have been watered
We have come treading our path through
the blood of the slaughtered.
Out from the gloomy past,
Till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who hast by Thine might
Led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places,
our God, where we met
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine
of the world, we forget Thee;
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
May we forever stand,
True to our God,
True to our native land.

He was distracted in part from his duties as educator and lawyer by a new interest in music. His brother Rosamond had returned to Jacksonville in 1897 after graduating from the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, and was giving music lessons and directing a local church choir. Rosamond set some of Johnson's lyrics to music, and they began to work as a team.

Finding their efforts popular in Jacksonville, the brothers went to New York for the summer of 1899. There they met, among other people, a talented musician, Bob Cole. The three teamed up to write a love song, "Louisiana Lize," which became a quick success.

That fall, the brothers returned to Jacksonville. But they continued writing songs.

In February 1890, they made their most monumental contribution to the racial heritage and pride of black people with the creation of "Lift Every Voice and Sing." In his autobiography, Along This Way, Johnson recalls that he had accepted an invitation to speak at a program held in observance of Lincoln's birthday. Having failed to summon the inspiration for a poem on Lincoln, he turned his attention to collaborating with Rosamond on a song for the Stanton chorus. Johnson writes of the "agony" of creating the lyrics and the "ecstasy" that seized him midway through the creation and reduced him to tears.

With the work completed, he found "contentment — that sense of serene joy — which makes artistic creation the most complete of all human experiences."

The first stanza of the anthem strikes a joyful and jubilant note as it exhorts African-Americans to "Lift every voice and sing, till earth and heaven ring." It celebrates "the faith that the dark past has taught us ... (and) the hope that the present has brought us ..."

The second stanza is a litany of the sacrifices and the sufferings of a determined people: "Stony the road we trod, bitter the chast'ning road/Felt in the days when hope unborn had died ...."

Toward the end, the song shifts into a mood of exultation

use his talents to assist the black community. He became a part-time apprentice to Thomas Ledwith, a white lawyer, and in 1897 he became the first black man to be admitted to the Florida Bar. By 1898, he and his friend Judson Wetmore opened a law office. Johnson soon grew tired of the demands of the practice, however, and the partnership dissolved in 1901.
James Weldon Johnson
(continued from preceding page)

and triumph: "... and now we stand at last/Where the gleam of our bright star is cast." The final stanza is a divine apostrophe of prayer, thanksgiving and deliverance, which begins, "God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, Thou who has brought us thus far on the way ..." It ends with the supplication for protection and strength: "Shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand/True to our God, true to our native land."

Changing courses

The next 15 years brought abrupt new directions to Johnson's career. With his song-writing partnership blossoming, he resigned the principalship at Stanton in 1902 and returned to New York to join Rosamond and Bob Cole. Cole and the Johnson Brothers were becoming one of the leading song-writing teams in New York. Nearly every successful Broadway show had one of their numbers in it. One song, "Under the Bamboo Tree," sold more than 400,000 copies.

In New York, too, Johnson became active in the Colored Republican Club, eventually becoming its president.

President Theodore Roosevelt, voted back into office in 1904, was appreciative of the help given him by black leaders. He appointed several blacks to patronage positions.

In 1906, Roosevelt offered Johnson a post as consul to Puerto Cabello, Venezuela. By then, the success of the Cole and Johnson Brothers partnership was beginning to wane. Johnson decided to abandon his song-writing career and take the job. Three years later, President William Howard Taft assigned him to the post of consul to Corinto, Nicaragua.

In 1910, Johnson returned briefly to New York to marry a woman he had met several years earlier at a dance in Brooklyn, Grace Nail. Together, the returned to Nicaragua.

His consular position left Johnson with plenty of free time. He used it to complete a novel, The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man, which told the story of a light-skinned black who was able to pass as white. In 1912, Johnson published the book anonymously, hoping readers would accept the story as fact. Generally, they did.

That same year, Democrats regained the White House with the election of President Woodrow Wilson. For some time, Johnson had been seeking reassignment to Europe. Now, he realized that that goal probably was futile and, in fact, that a black Republican probably faced a dismal future in Democratic administration. He resigned the consul post in 1913 and returned to the United States.

He found work in New York in 1914 as chief of the editorial staff of The New York Age, the city's oldest black newspaper. In his columns, he raged against abuses of blacks across the country.

During the summer of 1916, J.E. Springarn and W.E.B. DuBois, then leaders of the NAACP, invited Johnson to attend an interracial conference in Amenia, New York. The goal of the forum was to develop strategies for shaping the black man's advancement toward full civil rights. Johnson was impressed by the NAACP, so when Springarn that fall offered him the position of field secretary, he accepted.

In all probability, Johnson was attracted to the position for several reasons. First, the primary objective of the NAACP — the achievement of civil rights for black people — was one to which he had been committed since his college years. Secondly, the position gave him the opportunity to marshal the various skills he had acquired and use them for the advancement of his people. He would be able to draw on the organizational and administrative proficiencies learned at Stanton, the investigative proclivities from The New York Age, the legal experiences gained from his law practice and the knowledge and contacts acquired through his work in politics and government. Although these would have provided ample motivation, there was yet another, personal, more compelling reason.

Against a background of virtual national silence, the civil rights of blacks were being eroded by disenfranchisement, Jim Crowism and mob violence. Over a 30-year period, more than 3,000 blacks had been maimed or lynched. Among these was a friend of Johnson's who had been caught on the streets of New York during a race riot in 1900, attacked savagely by police and nearly lynched. The friend never fully recovered.

In 1901, Johnson had himself narrowly escaped a lynching. He had met an extremely fair-skinned black woman in a Jacksonville park. Local whites spotted the two, assumed the woman was white, and incited a mob to violence. All that saved Johnson from the frenzied crowd was a white official who recognized him.
These personal experiences served to intensify Johnson’s commitment to outlaw this violence, which involved, as he wrote, “the saving of black America’s body and white America’s soul.”

In 1920, Johnson became executive secretary of the NAACP. Early the following year, Congressman L.C. Dyer of East St. Louis notified Johnson that he planned to revise and reintroduce his anti-lynching bill of 1918. For the next 18 months, Johnson devoted his efforts to developing lobbying strategies for passage of the Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill.

The bill passed the House of Representatives. But, to Johnson’s bitter disappointment, President Warren G. Harding found it politically expedient to avoid the issue, refusing to even make public comment on the proceedings. And late in 1922, the Senate rejected the bill.

In his book, James Weldon Johnson: Black Voice (University of Chicago Press, 1973), Eugene Levy argues that the campaign to pass the bill did, at least, accomplish two important objectives.

“It widely publicized the most openly brutal aspect of the American caste system ... (and) revitalized the association’s anti-lynching campaign,” he wrote.

Levy added, “Johnson’s struggles with Congress marked the emergence of an important phase of modern civil rights activism. For the first time a civil rights organization led by a black man took the initiative in pushing congressional legislation.”

Harlem Renaissance

During the decade of Johnson’s tenure as executive secretary, he found himself amid the emergence of an important cultural development. Black writers, musicians and painters began to flock to Harlem as their work gained national attention. Inspired by an intense racial pride and a renewed sense of their heritage, these artists heralded the introduction of “the New Negro” and signalled the emergence of one of the most prolific periods of artistic expression: The Harlem Renaissance.

Like W.E.B. DuBois, Johnson believed that the cultural achievements of blacks could serve as a bridge between the races. Consequently, he joined DuBois and Alain Locke to form a trio of older men, established in their fields, for the purpose of mentoring such younger artists as Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Countee Cullen, Arna Bontemps, Wallace Thurman, Jessie Fauset, Rudolf Fisher, Claude McKay, Nella Larsen, George Schuyler, Jean Toomer and Eric Waldron. These writers sought to inspire racial consciousness and accelerate progress toward eliminating racial barriers for blacks.

Johnson already had published The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man and Fifty Years and Other Poems (1917) before the Renaissance began. These works served as inspiration for new writers. Moreover, the decade of the renaissance also inspired Johnson into a prolific period of personal creativity, which resulted in the publication of four books: The Book of American Negro Poetry (1922) and God’s Trombones: Seven Negro Sermons in Verse (1927) helped firmly establish Johnson’s reputation as a poet. The Book of American Negro Spirituals (1925) and The Second Book of Negro Spirituals (1926) documented the significance of the spirituals and stimulated racial pride in this important facet of black culture.

Johnson’s career came full circle in 1930 when he was appointed Adam K. Spence Professor of Creative Literature at Fisk University in Nashville. At Fisk, Johnson taught courses in American literature, and he used his first-hand experiences to introduce students to the writers of the renaissance and to the work of many of his literary acquaintances, such as Paul Laurence Dunbar.

During his eight years there, Johnson published Black Manhattan (1930), a book of history and literary criticism, Along This Way (1933), followed by Negro Americans, What Now? (1934), a series of essays which proposed a solution to the race problem in America. His last published work, a long poem titled “St. Peter Relates an Incident,” appeared in 1935.

Johnson was killed in Maine in 1938 when the car in which he was riding was struck by a train.

He has left an enviable legacy. His assessments of the racial situation in America have validity and currency more than five decades later, and they stand as irrefutable testimony to an intellectual giant who understood his history. He also was aware of the psychology dominating minority and majority cultures which, through mutual reinforcement, support the stereotype of Eurocentric superiority. Thus, Johnson took great delight in testing the power of the written word, chiefly through his essays and poetry, to destroy the myths and counsel his people back to racial health. The fiery, passionate rhetoric and measured cadences of Johnson’s pen foreshadow James Baldwin.

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Yet, Johnson’s whole was more than the sum of his parts. His legacy of humanism challenges us to reclaim our history, rediscover our unity and our uniqueness, and achieve interracial harmony and brotherhood.
The Long, Slow Climb

Seven women political pros discuss the emergence of women in Florida politics

By Joan S. Carver

Editors note: One of the roles of the Florida Humanities Council is to help minority groups recapture their heritage. With that goal in mind, FHC co-sponsored a conference on the emergence of women in Florida politics. The conference, as is represented in the following article, served to provide women a first draft of their political history.

In Florida politics, 1928 was a landmark year. That fall, eight years after ratification of the Women Suffrage Amendment, voters for the first time elected Florida women to major public offices. Mamie Eaton Greene of Monticello was chosen to serve on the state Railroad Commission, the predecessor of the Public Service Commission, and Ruth Bryan Owen of Miami was sent to Congress.

In retrospect, however, their elections seem to be something of a fluke. It would be 44 years before Florida voters again chose a woman for statewide office.

For women, the path to elective office in Florida has been a long, slow climb.

Recently, a new generation of women political leaders gathered in Tampa for a one-day conference on women in Florida politics. The event, sponsored by the Florida Humanities Council and the Tampa Bay chapter of National Coalition of 100 Black Women, brought together state Senators Mary Grizzle and Jeanne Malchon, state Representatives Corrine Brown and Cynthia Chestnut, Hillsborough County Commissioner Sylvia Kimbell, Plant City Mayor Sadye Martin and political consultant Doris Weatherford. The seven talked about their common experiences and the challenges and difficulties of women seeking and holding political office in Florida.

Despite the early victories of Greene and Owen, office holding by women is a relatively recent phenomenon. In the first 50 years after passage of the Women Suffrage Amendment, few women ran for office and fewer still were elected.

In the cases of Greene and Owen, both benefitted from ties to prominent men. Greene was appointed to the commission by Gov. John W. Martin upon the death of her first husband, R. L.

Dr. Carver is dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Jacksonville University. She moderated the panel discussion on women in Florida politics.
Florida's first congresswoman, Ruth Bryan Owen, flanked by her secretary and driver in this 1929 photograph, served two terms. She was the daughter of William Jennings Bryan.

Eaton, in 1927. The following year, she was elected to retain the seat. Owen's father was three-time Democratic presidential nominee William Jennings Bryan. A dynamic personality in her own right, Owen no doubt capitalized on his popularity.

Neither remained in office more than two terms, however. And, in fact, none of the first five women elected to the Legislature served more than three terms.

Women seeking local political offices fared little better than those pursuing statewide and national posts. The school boards had the greatest number of women; apparently this was considered a safe office for women to hold.

Change in Florida came in the 1960s with the influx of large numbers of new residents, many from outside the South, and with legislative reapportionment, which not only broke apart constituencies and established power bases but also shifted political power away from the conservative northern part of the state. Contributing as well to new political attitudes were the civil rights and feminist movements. A tangible result of these changes was the election of more women to political office.

The impact of the population influx upon the role of women in politics can be seen not only in the increased number of women in office, but also in comparisons with national figures and among regions within the state.

Florida, with only 2.7 million people in 1950, was a southern
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state in characteristics, history and locale. By 1990, it could be argued that Florida, with more than 12 million people, had lost much of its "southern character."

In 1950, Florida had no women in statewide, congressional or mayoral offices, only one female state legislator, two female county commissioners and 26 women school board members. By 1990, the state had one congresswoman, one female cabinet member, 10 women state senators, 20 women representatives, 55 women mayors, 83 women county commissioners and 136 women school board members.

In 1990, Florida ranked 22nd among the states in the percentage of women in the Legislature and 12th in the percentage of women on county governing boards. It ranks first in these categories among southern states.

Within the state, the northern tier of counties has remained the most conservative, the least affected by in-migration and the most reluctant to elect women to office. The majority of women legislators elected over the past 20 years has come from South and Central Florida, and those areas are twice as likely as North Florida to send women to the county commissions, city councils and school boards.

Acceptance came slowly

The first surge of women into office — a small surge, admittedly — came with the 1963 reapportionment. The number of women in the Florida House of Representatives increased to three; prior to that the House never had more than one female representative at any time.

Acceptance of women in Tallahassee was not immediate, however. Among those elected to the House in 1963 was Mary Grizzle, who now is a Republican senator representing Pinellas County. Speaking at the conference on women in politics, she observed, "We were a big wonder in 1963. They (men) really weren't ready to accept us then. It wasn't until we got to the early '70s that we were able to do things."

It wasn't until 1970 that the first black woman was elected to the Legislature. Gwen Sawyer Cherry, a teacher and lawyer from Miami, served in the House until her death in an automobile accident in 1979. Replacing her in the House was Carrie P. Meek, an educator who went on in 1982 to become the first black woman elected to the Florida Senate.

After Greene's election in 1928, no other woman won statewide office in Florida until voters in 1972 chose Paula Hawkins of Orlando (later a U.S. senator) to serve on the Public Service Commission.

The characteristics of women office holders today — including the six elected officials on the conference panel — generally are reflective of the demographic and political changes in the state. Of the panelists, three were born outside of Florida, four are black, one is a Republican, four are Democrats, and two hold nonpartisan offices. Three of the women are educational administrators, one is a retiree from the school system and two had been housewives prior to their entry into politics.

The sole woman in the Florida congressional delegation (and the third woman ever sent to Congress from Florida) is a conservative Republican, born in Cuba, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen. The only woman cabinet officer, Education Commissioner Betty Castor, is a Democrat who was born in New Jersey.

Among the 30 women serving in the Legislature, 19 were born in the Northeast or Midwest, eight are Florida natives and three were born elsewhere in the South.

The political affiliations of current women office holders also reflect the new parity in the two-party system in Florida. Of the women in the House, nine are Republican and 11 are Democrats. The Senate is less representative of the political balance; among the 10 women, only two are Republicans. Of the three black women in the House and the one black woman in the Senate, all are Democrats.

The routes from which women come to political office vary and are not markedly different than those taken by men. Some, like Senator Grizzle, decide to run after years of party activity and helping men win office; others like Mayor Sadye Martin are recruited by neighbors and local leaders, and still others, such as Commissioner Sylvia Kimbell, run for office out of frustration with the lack of responsiveness in the system.
The importance of preparation for a successful campaign was apparent in both the backgrounds and the comments of the panelists at the conference. Most had worked in political campaigns prior to deciding to run and also had developed a rich network of contacts in the community. As Representative Corrine Brown told the audience, “You don’t go to bed one night and have this great vision that you are going to run. You start getting involved in groups and organizations — you have the support group when you begin to run.”

Another commonality among the panelists was their view on defeat: rather than a loss, it is a preparation for the next battle. Malchon, the Pinellas County Democrat, lost her seat as county commissioner, but went on then to make her successful run for the Senate. Brown and Kimbell both lost in their first tries for public office, but came back to win the next election. Brown said, “The difference between winners and losers is how you count the setbacks. So, I never stopped working. It took me four years to win.”

**Different challenges**

One of the major problems women candidates have faced in the past is raising sufficient funds for viable campaigns. A variety of factors may contribute to this: a reluctance by women to ask for contributions, a lack of the kind of business connections that open checkbooks, and doubts among potential contributors as to the credibility and electability of female candidates.

While agreeing that adequate funding is essential for a viable campaign, the panelists did not believe it is was necessary to have a huge war chest to win. They pointed out that most of their campaigns had been run with far fewer dollars than those of their male opponents.

Malchon, for example, noted that the first time she ran for office she had only $6,000, compared to her opponent’s $20,000. Although the amounts she has been able to raise have increased with each successive race, she said she has never had a treasury as large as that of any of her opponents. Brown also pointed out that she raised only one-sixth of the amount spent by her male opponent, an incumbent, in her first bid for a House seat. But the fact that she got 43 percent of the votes in that race gave her the credibility to raise more money the next time out.

Several panelists said women can use support groups and organizations better than can men to offset any funding disadvantages.

“You don’t have to match your opponent dollar for dollar,” Malchon explained. “The reason you don’t gets back to the way men and women operate. We have networks and support groups. Your volunteer cadre can be worth anywhere between $30,000 and $50,000 of what your opponent spends. Don’t sell that short. Women are used to going out and doing things. Males are also used to opening their checkbooks. Even if a male says he will volunteer, he has ‘his girl’ make the calls.”

Chestnut echoed Malchon’s remarks, advising potential women candidates, “You need to call on a support group and people you know. You go to the churches; you go within the community trying to get funds. You have to take advantage of all the opportunities.”

Indeed, the use of support groups and organizations is reflected in the biographies of the women in the Legislature. Most frequently mentioned is membership in the League of Women Voters and party organizations. Most of the female legislators belong to several such organizations and have held leadership posts in one or more.

A recent addition to the list of women legislators’ affiliations is membership in chambers of commerce. Of the 30 women currently in the Legislature, 16 list some form of business, consulting or law as their occupations. Only three listed themselves as housewives. In comparison, of the 30 women elected to the Legislature between 1928 and 1978, a third listed themselves as housewives. As increasing numbers of women come from business and the professions, it is likely that their access to funds will increase.

Women also will gain in their fund-raising capabilities with the power of incumbency. Once a woman has a track record, political action committees and donors generally will be more willing to contribute to her campaign.

Representative Cynthia Chestnut did note, however, that changing public attitudes are making it easier to run low-budget
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campaigns. The public “wants to see more of the support at the grass-roots level rather than have someone who spends lots and lots of money to buy a campaign,” she said.

Also, Doris Weatherford, the political consultant, advised women in the audience to carefully weigh financing needs in selecting which office to pursue. Usually, special elections and school board and city council races are less costly.

Other panelists advised women aspiring to office to be aware of the personal, as well as the financial, cost of political life. Holding office is demanding; balancing family, political responsibilities and often a job is not easy. A supportive network of family and friends is essential, the panelists stressed.

For some on the panel, the answer to the problem of family responsibilities was to wait until the children were grown to run for office. Others use a support system — a mother-in-law, husband, friends of paid help.

The women talked about the need to come home on weekends to do grocery shopping and cleaning. There is a certain benefit in having these responsibilities, Brown added. Quoting another woman legislator, she said, “Going home every weekend and doing the laundry keeps you humble.”

No longer quiet

The days when men could ignore women office holders and, in Grizzle’s words, “hope we’ll be quiet” are past. While still in the minority, women now wield considerable power in office.

Most notable is the election of Gwen Margolis of Miami to the presidency of the Senate. Within that chamber, women now chair six of 20 standing committees and five of the seven subcommittees.

In the House, women constitute a smaller percentage of both the total membership and majority party. There women chair only three of 28 standing committees and six of the 48 subcommittees.

Women office holders are making a difference in both the political process and in policy decisions.

Malchon said, “Most men

Women are better able to deal in group situations on a fair basis

— Sen. Jeanne Malchon

... and women have different styles in dealing with situations, and what I call a corporate male mind set comes into the legislative process. Women are better able to deal in group situation, on a fair basis, i.e. on a noncompetitive basis. This is not to say that we don’t have some women in office who have developed a corporate male mind set. But, as a group, I think women work together more, they establish common goals. I truly believe that they are much more concerned with programs and achieving things that are in the best interest and truly serve people as opposed to their own particular business interest.”

The impact of women office holders in the Legislature can be seen in many of the issues that have been brought to prominence in the past two decades. The attention given to such concerns as parental leave, child care, domestic violence and equal pay is a direct result of efforts by women office holders. Many issues that women consider important do not cross the male agenda and would not have been considered if women weren’t in office, the panelists agreed.

A brighter future

Reapportionment following the 1990 census will again break up constituencies and weaken the power of incumbency. It also will increase the number of congressional seats allocated to Florida. Thus, there will be more and better opportunities for women to seek political office.

The sharp increase in the numbers of women in business, law and other professions suggests a growing pool of potential candidates. As more women are elected to local and state offices, they also are gaining the experience to compete for higher offices. For example, both Ros-Lehtinen and Castor served in the Legislature before running for their current posts. Also, five of the women in the Senate today moved there from the House and several women legislators had prior local elective office experience.

As the conference closed, Grizzle issued a challenge to women in the audience: “I wondered why women haven’t gone further in politics and the state Legislature,” she said. “Women in my time never take the top post and go for it. And it’s all out there. Pick your goal and go for it. You’re just as good as the top, why take second place?”

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New technologies often raise moral concerns. This seems to result from their creating new possibilities for human action, both individual action and collective or institutional behavior. The new possibilities then need to be evaluated morally, as well as in other ways. So it is with computers.

The introduction of computers into our society has created possibilities for individual and institutional behavior which were not available before. We could not have reached the moon without computers, nor could we have the kind of global communication systems we now have. But computers, like other technologies, create potentially undesirable as well as desirable possibilities. We now have a greater capacity to track and monitor individuals without their knowledge, to develop more heinous weapons systems and to eliminate the need for human contact in many activities.

In line with this account and in an attempt to understand the field of computer ethics, James H. Moor ("What is computer ethics?" Metaphilosophy, October 1985) has emphasized that because of the new possibilities created by computers, we face new choices, but we find a vacuum of policies about how to make these choices. The central task of computer ethics, Moor argues, is to determine what we should do and what the policies should be. This includes consideration of "both personal and social policies."

Examples of the vacuum of policies with regard to computers might include the lack of rules concerning access to electronically stored data when computers were first being used, or the lack of policies about the ownership of software, or the present lack of conventions about the privacy of electronic mail.

This view of how computers create ethical issues might lead one to think — as I used to think — that what we have to do to resolve these issues — to fill the vacuum — is to take our traditional moral theories or moral norms and apply them to the new situations created by computers.

For example, I initially thought we could simply take our general rules regarding property or privacy and figure out what the rules imply about computer software or access to electronic files. Moor, however, is quick to point out that this will not work because computers have also created conceptual muddles.

A good example of this is the case of computer software. It is certainly true that a complex body of law regarding ownership of new inventions and proprietary rights to new creations already existed when computers came on the scene. However, when we try to apply this law to computer software, the implications are not clear because it is not clear what software is. Is software a product or a service? That is, should those who create software be seen as providing a service or producing a product? The answer to this question makes all the difference in which laws are relevant. Or, should a program be seen as the expression of an idea — a form of intellectual property for which copyright law is appropriate? Or, should computer software be seen as processes for changing the internal structure of a computer? Or as a series of "mental steps" capable, in principle, of being thought through by a human, and not, thereby, appropriate for ownership?

The conceptual muddles prevent us from simply applying the law mechanically. We do not know which law to apply.

So Moor seems to be right both in identifying the vacuum of policies surrounding computers and in emphasizing that the issues call for more than a mechanical application of ethical principles.

Environment is a key

On the other hand, it would be misleading to leave the impression that computers create or come into a vacuum. Computers are used in a broad variety of contexts. They are brought into businesses, homes, criminal justice systems, etc.
educational institutions, science, government, and so forth. And, in each of these environments, there are already social relationships, social rules, and policies. Computers may change the way we do things in these environments; at least, they may change the scale and speed of transactions in these environments, but these environments are the opposite of a vacuum. They are filled with norms of behavior. The established rules, and, in particular the moral principles embodied in those rules, can not be ignored. Working out policies regarding computers calls not for creating rules anew, but for extending, modifying, or adapting existent rules (or the principles embodied in those rules) to the details of the computerized environment.

Perhaps the most important thing about computers is their malleability. They can be used to do almost anything that involves data and calculating, sorting and monitoring. Because of this malleability, computers can be used as much to change things as to keep things the same. When computers enter a new environment, we tend, initially at least, to map the way we had been doing things onto the new computer system. The process of automation is a process wherein we look at the way we had been doing things and then automate those activities. We look at how we have been accounting, communicating, manufacturing, and so on; then we create programs which allow us to do essentially the same thing, only more efficiently; that is, better, faster, on a larger scale.

An important implication of this is that working out the ethical issues surrounding computers is a matter of trying to understand those environments in which computers are used — the nature of the human relationships involved, the institutional purposes, ideals, and the norms of behavior that have been operative. This does not clear up the conceptual muddles but it helps to identify what factors will make a difference.

This way of looking at the ethical issues surrounding computers brings with it both good news and bad. The good news is that we do not have to start from scratch. The bad news is that often the environments we are to look at are not ideal and embody tensions between values, rather than clear or definitive value commitments. I will give an example of this in a moment.

Before I illustrate my point about there being something other than a vacuum in the environments in which computers are used, I want to introduce my second major point, that analogical thinking can play an important role in working out computer ethics issues. By making analogies with other situations (not involving computers) and identifying the similarities and dissimilarities with these other situations, we are able to uncover the important moral elements. This helps us to figure out what the rules of the situation should be.

The simplest examples of the usefulness of analogical thinking are:

1) When I first started working on the ethical issues surrounding computers, a lot of attention was being paid to breaking into computer files. I found this an uninteresting problem because it was so clearly bad behavior and I was puzzled that it was so interesting to others. Finally, someone suggested to me that we ask how this behavior differed from someone breaking into an office and then into a file cabinet. This helped me to explain why computer crime is a non-issue. It is true that the physical behavior required to perform each act (getting access to an electronic file and breaking into an office and into a file cabinet) is different, but morally there is no significant difference. The other interesting thing about this kind of behavior is that at first people do not recognize what it is.

2) Very similarly we can look at the behavior of sitting at a terminal and “playing around” by seeing just what systems or files you can get access to. The appropriate analogy here seems to be that of walking down the street and testing the doors of every house to see if they are locked. When you find one that is unlocked, you go in and look around. You may not change or take anything from the house. Again, here the analogy works to reveal little moral difference. It is the same sense of privacy and being violated that makes us feel it is wrong for the person to go down the street testing the doors as it is wrong for the person to test our computer files or systems. It is the same looking in on what was not intended to be viewed by just anyone.

This analogy can be carried a bit further. Suppose I forgot to lock my door. Am I partially responsible if someone enters my house? Or, suppose it is yard gates instead of doors and I left my gate unlocked and I have a swimming pool in my yard. This complicates things a bit since we think individuals have a responsibility to take measures to prevent people from the dangers of the pool, and there are computer comparables. We do expect individuals to take measures to protect their files, especially if they contain sensitive data.

But let us take a more com-
complicated case where analogical thinking seems to help but not give complete clarity. Take the case of employers monitoring the behavior of workers. As a result of computers, employers can now have a record of everything an employee does during the day while working at a computer terminal. The employer can tell how much time a worker spends on each task, how many errors are made before a programmer gets a program to work, how many and how long are the worker's breaks from work, what the worker says in electronic mail or on-line forums. The important question is, should employers be allowed to do this kind of monitoring.

Filling the vacuum

Here we have a vacuum in Moor's sense; that is, there are no laws or policies which say whether employers can monitor or under what circumstances. But we do not have a vacuum of ideas about employer-employee rights, interests and needs. Rather we have laws, policies and rules which reflect or incorporate principles and a tension between the rights, interests and needs of employers and employees.

If we try to model the case on other employer-employee issues, we find similarities and dissimilarities. Monitoring is like using polygraphs to check the honesty of workers, and it is like listening in on workers' phone conversations. On the other hand, it is comparable to supervisors observing workers while they work. Which analogy should we use to think through the computer case? Whichever we use, the point is that in one sense, there is a vacuum, and in another sense, there is just the opposite — complexity, conflicting attitudes and opinions (from workers and employers), and a mixture of signs about how the case ought to be treated based on what we do in other cases or based on what we do in the same case without computers.

So, analogical thinking is very useful in working out computer ethical issues, but it doesn't always lead to clarity. Often, that is, it points to the lack of clarity in our social institutions and moral norms and ideals.

Many of the same points come to light if we ask a question which has puzzled me since I began work on computer ethics. Are the ethical issues posed by or surrounding computers new? Are the issues unique? We hear a lot about how computers are going to change our lives and some have said that we need a whole new ethics to deal with the type of society that computers are creating. This has always struck me as odd. And I have tried to figure out what it is that is new and what is not new about the ethical issues surrounding computers.

Using existing values

As I said earlier, computers do create new opportunities for individual action and institutional behavior. We could even say, as I said above, that they create opportunities to do things we have never done before. Still, for the most part and with few exceptions, these new opportunities do not call for new moral categories, nor do they call for new values. Instead, as I suggested above, they tend to force us to clarify the categories and values we already have and to weigh values against one another.

The reasons for this are those that I have already mentioned. Computers are malleable and they are used to perform tasks and make more efficient, activities which we were engaged in long before computers. To be sure computers have created some conceptual muddles, and the computerized situations have forced us to make explicit many of our assumptions. This forces us to rethink some of our moral notions. Still, the issues are not exactly unique. Rather, computers have created new versions of old moral problems. The issues have to do with property, privacy, rights, power and responsibilities.

Hence, I suggest to you that we think of the ethical issues raised by computers as new species of old moral problems. Moreover, I recommend that we recognize the important role of analogical thinking in working out the ethical issues surrounding computers.

The ethical issues raised by computers can be sorted out in a number of ways. They can, for example, be organized by the sector in which computers are used; that is, there are important issues that arise as a result of use of computers in medicine, education, business, criminal justice, government, and so on. I continue to prefer the approach that I took when I wrote Computer Ethics (Prentice Hall, 1985) and that is to organize the issues around broad topics that persist across sectors. In Computer Ethics I saw the major issues as centering around privacy, power and property.

Privacy is probably the issue that has received the most public attention. Computers make possi-
able a magnitude of data collection (storage, retention and exchange) never imagined before. While much of the initial public concern focused on the use and abuse of personal information by government agencies and private institutions (such as banks, insurance companies, credit agencies, criminal justice agencies), the privacy issues surrounding computers have become more diverse and complicated. They range from the integrity of electronic mail, to work place monitoring, to new computerized devices used by intelligence organizations.

While some new policies have already been created to deal with the privacy intrusions made possible by computers, more will be necessary in the future. The issues are particularly complex because “privacy” and why we value it are not so clear, as is seen when one considers the broad variety of legal cases that fall under the rubric of “privacy.”

Privacy versus power

Many of the so-called “privacy” issues raised by computers may be better understood as power issues in that they have to do with the growing power of large bureaucracies (government agencies and private institutions) to dramatically affect the lives of individuals. Insurance companies, credit agencies, educational institutions and government agencies all make decisions about individuals based on information they have stored in databases. Individuals do not have control over that information and, hence, do not know whether these agencies are basing decisions on accurate or appropriate information.

The power issues raised by computers are the most subtle and intractable. Computers are introduced into environments in which a distribution of power already exists, and insofar as computers are powerful tools, they can affect that distribution. When computers were first being used, there was some fear that they would cause much more centralization of power — as people in power became more powerful. Later, as the technology developed to provide smaller, less expensive machines and software, some imagined computers would decentralize and democratize. The idea here was that computers would give many individuals access to huge quantities of data.

Just what computers do to the distribution of power in organizations and more broadly in a society or in the world at large is an extremely complex issue and depends on how exactly computers are used in particular environments. As in the case of privacy, this question about the effects of computers on the distribution of power leads to deeper questions about the power relationships that already exist and whether these are as they should be.

As computers have developed into the powerful tools that they are, the stakes involved in creating computers, computer software and databases have gotten higher. Attempts to claim ownership of these creations have challenged our legal and moral notions of property.

The issue here that has received the most attention surrounds the ownership of software. Software is a new entity, and while western legal systems have developed property laws which encourage invention by granting certain rights to inventors, there are provisions against ownership of things which might interfere with the development of the technological arts and sciences. For this reason, we have copyrights which protect only the expression of ideas, not the ideas themselves, and we do not grant patents on laws of nature, mathematical formulas, ideas, and so forth.

The problem with computer software is that it has not been clear that we could grant ownership of it without, in effect, granting ownership of numerical sequences or mental steps. Software can be copyrighted, for here what is granted is ownership of the expression of the idea (not the idea). But this does not give software inventors very much protection. Others may see the software, grasp the idea and write a somewhat different program to do the same thing. So, while copyright law has been easy to extend to software, it has not given the kind of protection needed. Patenting would provide stronger protection, but the courts have been reluctant to grant this protection because of the problem mentioned above.

The ethical issues that arise here take us back to the philosophical basis for any property rights. What should be owned? What entitles one to own something? Are there things that should never be privately owned? And so forth.

Finally, an important way to approach computers and ethics is by focusing on the responsibilities of computer professionals. Computer professionals possess special knowledge and they often use this knowledge to contribute to projects having an enormous impact on the world. We need computer professionals to take responsibility for the effects of their work. Those who work on projects such as the Strategic Defense Initiative, automated voting machines, computer monitoring devices and educational software should inform themselves and make the public aware of the risks as well as the benefits of these systems. They should tell us what these systems cannot do as well as what they can.
At its October meeting the Board of Directors of the Florida Humanities Council approved grants totalling more than $125,000 for 10 projects throughout the state.

The board previously had decided to concentrate funding in two broad categories: commemoration of the Columbus Quincentennial and ethics. In selecting 10 projects for funding, the board reviewed 35 grant proposals.

The following are the projects approved for funding:

**1992: The Year of Cultural Encounters**

The Collier County Museum proposed a series of events using the disciplines of anthropology, archaeology, ethnography and history to explore the Columbus Quincentennial from a multicultural point of view. The events are a film series scheduled for February, two temporary exhibits at the museum in March and September and a two-day symposium next fall at the Naples Beach Hotel.

FHC funding: $14,078.

**Muckstepper’s Reunion: A Storytelling Conference**

The Zora Neale Hurston/Roof Garden Museum proposed a storytelling conference to be held December 13-20 in Belle Glade. The conference will present folktales and oral history of Belle Glade’s African-American pioneers, as well as folklorists from the diverse ethnic populations (Haitian, Jamaican, Bahamian, Georgian and South Carolinian) that comprise Belle Glade’s black community.

FHC funding: $15,000.

**Ted Smallwood Store: A Travelling Exhibit**

An exhibition of documentary photographs, interpretive text and artifacts from the Ted Smallwood Store to appear at six sites throughout Florida between December 1991 and December 1992. The purpose is to create an awareness of and generate interest in the Ted Smallwood Store and its historical importance to the interaction of Seminole and white culture in the Ten Thousand Islands area. The sponsoring organization is the Ted Smallwood Store.

FHC funding: $10,550.

**Seminole of South Florida: Native American Perspectives and Quincentenary Concerns**

The National Center for Shipwreck Research, in cooperation with the Seminole Tribe of Florida, proposed a six-month exhibit in Key West and Islamorada and a two-day conference to explore Native American cultural and ethical values in regard to the Columbus Quincentenary. Conference participants will discuss ways to incorporate an understanding of Seminole concepts into public policy decision making. Among other associated events is an historical reenactment of the 1840 Seminole attack on Indian Key.

FHC funding: $15,970.

**The Lore of Lake Okeechobee**

The Lakefront Steering Committee, in conjunction with the Palm Beach Community College Foundation, proposed hiring a folklorist and exhibit designer to research and prepare a travelling exhibit interpreting the Lake Okeechobee area’s folklore for local and coastal residents. The exhibit is to open at the community college, with speakers highlighting specific cultural topics such as South Florida folklore, prehistoric, historic cultures and Zora Neale Hurston.

FHC funding: $25,466.

**Ethical Dilemmas and Decision Making in Public Life**

St. Petersburg Junior College proposed a half-day public forum, scheduled for May 18, which will explore ethical dilemmas faced by public figures in the performance of their jobs and ways in which those dilemmas are resolved.

FHC funding: $2,808.

**“Negroes” of Spring, Doing the Right Thing**

Palm Beach Community College-Eissey Campus proposed FHC funding for two events held as part of a two-day festival designed to celebrate the arts and raise awareness of important ecological issues. FHC funds will be used for an environmental ethics symposium and a program titled, “Another Evening with Henry David Thoreau.”

FHC funding: $6,564.

**Violence: A Roundtable Discussion**

The Key West Literary Seminar proposed holding as part of its 10th annual event a discussion addressing the gratuitous depiction of violence in contemporary film. Ethical questions to be considered include the reasons for accelerating use of graphic violence and the responsibilities of writers, filmmakers and critics.

FHC funding: $10,179.

In the next year, the board will consider grant applications following the themes of the Columbian Quincentennial Centenary and “View from the Shore,” programs for and about Native Americans.

Deadlines for the next two rounds of grant reviews are as follows:

1. — Final application deadline Dec. 6, notification Feb. 6, first funds issued March 2.

2. — Preliminary application deadline Feb. 28, final application deadline March 31, notification May 29, first funds issued June 30.

FHC also invites grant proposals for Teacher Institutes using the theme, “Intercultural Encounters: The Making of the Americas.”

The deadline for Teacher Institute applications is Dec. 15, with awards to be announced in February.
Five New Members Join FHC Board

Cecilia Bryant
Cecilia Bryant is an attorney in general practice in Jacksonville and general counsel for the Florida Association of Domestic Insurance Companies. She also is an important member of the civic and cultural life of her community, contributing to the boards of the American Red Cross (Northeast Florida Chapter), the YWCA and PRIDE. From 1982 to 1989, she was a member of the state Board of Regents and was elected vice chair in 1988.

Bryant received her undergraduate degree from Sweet Briar College, her law degree from the University of Florida and her masters degree in taxation from George Washington University.

Thomas J. Hegarty
Thomas J. Hegarty is provost and vice president of the University of Tampa, as well as professor of history. Hegarty moved to Tampa in August 1989 from Indianapolis, where he was vice president for academic affairs at Butler University.

He received his undergraduate degree (magna cum laude), his masters and doctorate from Harvard University. Although Hegarty is a scholar of 19th century Russia, his current research and writing centers on topics of higher education.

In Tampa, he is a member of the Chamber of Commerce and the Tampa Bay Committee on Foreign Relations.

Mildred Hill-Lubin
Mildred Hill-Lubin is an associate professor of English at the University of Florida with a joint appointment in the Center for African Studies. Her scholarship focused on African culture in diaspora. She currently is completing a comparative study of African and African-American literature.

Among her many honors and activities, Hill-Lubin has served as president of the African Literature Association. She is a member of the board of directors of the Sexual and Physical Abuse Center and the Alachua County Center for Excellence.

She received her bachelor's degree from Paine College, her masters in English from Western Reserve University and her doctorate in English and African studies from the University of Illinois.

Thomas P. Johnson
Thomas P. Johnson is an instructor of English and the Humanities at Edison Community College. He also is a writer of short stories, children's literature and poems, an actor and a director.

Johnson earned his undergraduate degree from Concordia Senior College and his masters degree in English from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He has pursued graduate studies in theology at Concordia Seminary and history at Wake Forest University.

Before joining the faculty at Edison Community College, Johnson taught at Winston-Salem State University and Howard University and worked as a warehouseman in Valparaiso, Indiana.

Yvonne V. Sapia
Yvonne V. Sapia is resident poet and instructor of English at Lake City Community College. She is an associate member of the Academy of American Poets and is a past recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts poetry writing fellowship. In 1983, she was elected Woman of the Year by her colleagues and students at Lake City Community College.

Sapia was graduated from Florida Atlantic University, received her masters in English from the University of Florida and her doctorate in English (fiction writing) from Florida State University.

Her most recent book of poems is Valentino's Hair, which was published by Northeastern University Press. Her first novel which bears the same name was published this fall.
That living like you in a stone tomb.

The mystery of time is how short or long we live or why we die, why some of us suffer and some don’t. That is nature—not god, not karma, not sin. When we die, we become part of it and it is not open to reason or revelation of anything other than what it is.

The mystery: how what can imagine and love, what is conscious, comes out of what isn’t.

But then perhaps it is no less mysterious and wonderful than his “Vignette,” subtitled “Achievement/ Ninth Symphony.” (Maine Poems) which reads in toto:

Standing amid the alien corn
Ruth Adams made a hole in one
At ninety on the golf course at Castine,
Went home, into the black hole herself that night.

Besides my mother, golf was my father’s great passion. He never made a hole in one, but at last went “into the black hole herself,” I guess. He played hard at the end. And Richard Eberhart gives me what I ask for, insight into my mother’s pride that my father ran a 10-day marathon with death. Like her pride at his flitting—there was a man! No more to know; much more to say.

In the last stanza of the last poem of Maine Poems, Eberhart ties together poetry with time, the journey, and the sea:

No moment is so good as a sure moment
When words take on a supernatural mystery,
And wherever the sea and we are going,
Ultimately the best is in not knowing.

The greatest lesson is that he does not cease “to perform the self in acts of creation.”

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**Eberhart (continued from page 5**

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Voices from the past

Seminole warrior Osceola and Harriet Beecher Stowe, the author of Uncle Tom’s Cabin, are two of the historic figures appearing in the Florida Humanities Council’s Florida Chautauqua revival. They are portrayed by performer/scholars Homer Horsedance and Jean Calandra. Also appearing in the presentation are Bartolome de Las Casas, a 16th century priest and nobleman; writer and anthropologist Zora Neale Hurston and Senator Claude Pepper. The Florida Chautauqua revival debuted this fall in Defuniak Springs, Mount Dora and Avon Park. FHC plans to schedule more Chautauqua events next year. In addition, the performer/scholars will be available for individual in-costume presentations.