

important sense it is they who represent the real spirit of end-century Germany. It is easy to explain this apparent Green hypocrisy as the Bavarian Chancellor Franz Josef Strauss does: "A rose is Green before it is red." Strauss, whose real chance of becoming West German chancellor a few years ago provoked fear and loathing verging on hysteria in all the best German circles, is widely considered a relic of nationalism if not of Nazism. Yet Strauss also makes sweeter deals with the Communistic East than any other West German leader except the former Socialist chancellor, Willy Brandt.

"Zwei Seelen wohnen, ach! in meiner Brust" (Two souls dwell, alas! within my breast), lamented the greatest German poet, Johann Wolfgang Goethe (1749-1832). Much has changed since Goethe's days, but that fierce ambivalence has not changed. As Sauzay explains, the most strident German opponents of all authority, of all defense, and of every form of violence exerted for one's own protection, could easily fall into a violent frenzy and possibly outdo Nazism. The American nuclear umbrella is widely acclaimed as the only force that has made 40-odd years of uneasy peace possible for Europe. Sauzay's analysis leads one to suspect that it is only the overwhelming Soviet presence on their borders that inhibits Germans from once again combining phenomenal energy with unpredictable fantasy to produce a product the nature and color of which no one can imagine but the terrible intensity of which would be only too familiar. It makes no sense to predict a revival of Nazism. But it probably would have made no sense, in 1924, to predict its rise in the first place. Let there be no misunderstanding: Neither Mme. Sauzay nor this reviewer predicts a new Nazism. But there is a fear that something could come, idealistic, noble in sentiment, self-righteous and pharisaical in its condemnation of all the evils of lesser and more mongrel nations, that could create another inferno.

The Swiss, on Germany's southern border, and particularly the German-speaking Swiss, who share many of the most typically German virtues and vices, look on the Germans with a mixture of superciliousness and super-

stitious awe. After all, the Germans followed Hitler, the Swiss did not—in large part thanks to the firmness of their French-speaking General Henri Guisan. The Swiss were far too wise for that. At the same time, all the Swiss—but particularly the German-speakers with their variety of peculiar Allemanic dialects—have placed themselves in a kind of golden mountain ghetto and realize that if the Germans are morally their inferiors, they themselves are cultural parasites on Germany. They buy and borrow culture from everywhere, but they graft it onto Germanic roots. The Swiss have feelings of inferiority to and contempt for the Germans that resemble those of Germans toward the rest of the West, and especially towards the United States. The French, among whom the most brilliantly perceptive analyst to date is Brigitte Sauzay, neither disdain nor venerate their German neighbors: but they wonder, in both senses of the word. The Swiss expect nothing good to come out of Germany; the French expect something astonishing and do not know whether it will be good or evil.

Mme. Sauzay evokes the revival of Lutheranism in postwar Germany and sees it exemplified—although in a secularized form—in Green enthusiasm. The 18th-century Enlightenment was antireligious in France and England but religious in Germany, which created quite a different spiritual climate and quite different spiritual tensions. Mme. Sauzay has correctly observed that even the anti-authoritarian protest movements, which are anti-Christian in so much of the world, are strangely religious in Germany. One omission in her incisive analysis lies in her underestimation of the strength of the *Evangelical* renewal—not political religion, but Christian renewal. This has not yet been discovered by the media, but it is there—as the Evangelical or Fundamentalist renaissance was there in the United States long before the media noticed Jerry Falwell. Evangelicalism in Germany differs from that in the United States in that it consists almost entirely of piety, very little of politics. Mme. Sauzay reminds us that we must expect something big from Germany, although she cannot say what. She warns us that it could suddenly

turn nasty—the Green bud could produce a black flower. She is correct to tell us to expect *something*, and also when she says that whatever it is, it will not be what we are looking for. The German top, full of energy, continues to spin, and it can move in almost any direction—right or left, or perhaps even "just right."

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Letter From New York

by Richard Kostelanetz

Ask Dr. Grants

How do I get a grant?

You first must get an application. Forget about those grants for which you cannot apply, such as MacArthur Fellowships, which are essentially designed for people already known, which is to say celebrities, or incipient celebrities.

Once you get the application, read its guidelines carefully to make sure you qualify and, if you do, then to organize your presentation. If you don't understand something in the guidelines, call or write the granting agency's administrators, who are required to give advice to applicants. Should you find them unhelpful or discouraging, you can either assume they want to save your time, or suspect that they are trying to lessen the competition, rather than increase it, in order to channel available funds to applicants who are administratively favored. Administrators, it should not be forgotten, are supposed only to administer, not to choose. The selection of winners is the responsibility of either the funding agency's board or an ad hoc panel convened for a particular competition.

Application forms fall into two groups: those for individuals and those for organizations. The former are customarily simple, no more than two pages in length, requiring minimal information: name, birthday, birthplace, current address and telephone

number, "education," present employment, current income perhaps, as well as a brief professional resume. Individual applications customarily require you to submit a sample of recent work. In competitions for individual grants, the winning amounts are usually fixed in advance, either at a single level (e.g., \$20,000 in Literature at the National Endowment for the Arts) or at successive levels (\$5,000, \$15,000, and sometimes \$25,000, as in NEA-Visual Arts now). In nearly all competitions for individual grants, the ratio of applicants to winners is at least 10 to one; 30 to one is not uncommon.

Are there better ways to beat those odds?

You can bet on horses that offer better odds, or, if you are desperate, you can rob a bank. For more modest purposes, you can collect unemployment, which probably does more to support the work of indigent individual artists than all the arts councils combined. (In addition to acknowledging the 20th anniversary of the NEA, artists should honor the 50th anniversary, or whatever, of unemployment benefits.) If you have the taste or talent for bureaucratic paperwork, you would be wise to form a nonprofit organization or become part of one, simply because some petitions for its awards have far lower odds. The trouble is that organizational applications are more complicated, being at least four pages in length and requiring a detailed budget to justify a grant within a particular range. The application to the New York State Council on the Arts is especially complicated; and to compound the busywork (and deplete the applicants' creative spirit even more), NYSCA during the application cycle issues a second set of elaborate forms, many of them with questions already answered on the original. All this complexity looks like an insidious device to favor two groups of people: (1) applicants who were previously successful; (2) the NYSCA administrators who can prejudice panel decisions by revealing minor fault amid the mass of detail.

The more complicated an application form is, the more reason you have for wanting to examine the applications of previous winners; there is, in

my experience, no better guide to writing your own. When you examine successful applications, notice carefully what claims are made, how long the accompanying explanations are, and how detailed the budget is. Some agencies are more helpful than others in providing previous applications. At a public agency such as NYSCA, all previous applications, of winners as well as losers, are fortunately kept on file, available for public inspection and even photocopying! The man in charge is Joseph Wells, whose number is 212-614-2904.

Budgeting for organizational grants is a curious business. The NEA, for instance, requires that its grants be "dollar-matched" with funds obtained from elsewhere. What this means in practice is not as it seems (and probably not what was intended). Let's say you are a small literary publisher with nonprofit affiliation, and you calculate that you need \$10,000 to typeset and print 1,000 copies of a big novel. (This is cheap. A commercial publisher would require at least \$100,000 to do the same job, because of all its overhead.) In order to get that 10 grand from the NEA, the small press must establish an expense budget of at least 20 grand. The organization then figures that if it needs that 10 grand from the NEA for book production, there must be at least 10 grand more in expenses. In a small-press application, this extra 10 grand can legitimately include payments to authors and to the press's editors, administrative fees, secretarial assistance, postage, shipping, etc. Now if by good fortune the \$10,000 grant comes through, all these "expenses" must be donated, at least temporarily, until there is income from sources other than the NEA grant. In other words, one must budget at least \$10,000 more expenses—at least twice as much than is immediately necessary—in order to get the \$10,000 required to print the books.

The principal requirement of successful organization-application-writing is a credible budget, where every particular cost makes sense within the size of the grant and the promised result. If, for instance, it costs a thrifty small publisher roughly \$10,000 to typeset and print 1,000 copies of a 500-page novel, no one on

a selection panel can object if the application allocates \$10,000 for typesetting. If, however, an applicant publisher allocated \$20,000 or only \$2,000 for a thousand copies of such a long book, some panelist might object that this small-press applicant was either extravagant or naive. (If, by good fortune, the applicant's uncle happens to be a book-printer, it would be better to specify a credible sum [\$10,000] as the printing cost and then list any reduction from this norm as his dollar-matching contribution to the nephew.)

On the other side of the ledger, by the terms of dollar-matching, an organization must also posit at least \$10,000 income from sources other than the NEA. This other income may include grants from other agencies, sales of books, personal contributions, etc. In some applications (and in only some programs), the organization must budget income of "in-kind contributions," such as the editorial time of its principals, because "in-kind" has always been the laudable convention by which poorer applicants can dollar-match. The trouble is that most people asked to construct an application budget make the mistake of treating the question personally—to make a schedule to which they will indeed hew, as they would hew to a personal budget of monthly expenses. That attitude, let me suggest, would be a mistake, especially in filling out an organizational application to public granting agencies. The first truth to remember is that you must create a coherent, persuasive fiction in which the figures are appropriate to the scale of the project (and the possible size of the grant). It does not matter whether you actually expect \$5,000 in immediate sales of books; if your application needs that \$5,000 figure in order for income to match the amount requested, then you put down \$5,000 sales.

Similarly, your description of what you want to do must create a credible fiction within the funding agency's guidelines. If the funding program requires that the proposed book be written from scratch, forget about all the rough drafts you've been doing for the past decade. If it requires live performance, forget for now about the videotape or record you want to make from it. If documentary writing is required,

rather than creative work, promise only to do documentaries, even if they might have a dash of poetry. And so on. The truth is that a grant application is not a proposal for reality; it is, as a proposal for a grant, a fiction that must, first of all, succeed within the conventions of grant-getting before it can generate the flow of funds that will, happily, allow the applicant to accommodate that fiction to reality.

A final truth to remember is that all awards should come to you as a surprise. Don't ever expect to be funded; don't ever make job (or marriage or whatever) decisions dependent upon the expectation of a grant, for if you make this mistake, the result can only be disappointment.

Are competitions fair?

In comparison to elections in the U.S., probably not. With respect to other selection procedures in this country, some are more fair than others. The rule to remember is that funding agencies differ from each other, with different mandates, different procedures, different tolerances, and even different secrets, which may not be immediately evident. For instance, while an individual NEA fellowship is simply a cash reward to an artist-applicant, a residency award is something else. For the latter, the selection committee is generally composed of people connected to the hosting institution who are looking not just to reward good work but to select individuals whose company they would enjoy. To win a residency from the DAAD Berliner Kunstlerprogramm, say, is more like being chosen a visiting lecturer at a university or an art museum.

How honest are the funding agencies?

Some are more honest than others. The truest rule is that administrators get away with what they are allowed to get away with. And if they get away with murder, as some do, the principal fault lies first with its trustees ("the Council") and then with the failure of our watchdogs to cry foul. For instance, the major scandal at the NEA now is that the chairman exercises, far more frequently than his predecessors, his power to veto grants previously

approved by NEA departmental panels. When I asked the NEA's press office for a list of the chairman's victims, the reply was that the NEA, in contrast to NYSCA, never identified rejected applications. They added that, "In order for vetoing to happen, there must be an error of fact or process." However, the examples known to me had in common the facts that they were liberal do-gooding operations donating literary magazines to prisoners and that both had been previously funded by the NEA. They might not have deserved funding, but political censorship is as unpleasant on the right as on the left.

Everyone involved knows about this scandal but is, in truth, scared to go public about it for fear of the chairman's wrath, which is to say his vetoing grants to them that would otherwise be awarded. (Believe me, as the recent recipient of NEA grants, as well as an applicant for more, I thought twice about revealing this.) When Grace Glueck mentioned this recurring vetoing in the *New York Times* (10 November 1985), she failed to note that it might be considered objectionable. The fear is that, until this abuse of administrative power is exposed as the moral and procedural affront that it is, all grants approved by NEA panels are vulnerable to the chairman's veto. My own feeling is that this makes the NEA chairman, elected by nobody, a cultural czar on the Soviet model and thus makes me wonder why a putative Reaganite should be behaving like an antidemocratic Communist. If the House Un-American Activities Committee still exists, it might question his Bulgarian tastes.

The recurring scandal at NYSCA is another kind of administrative abuse:

In presenting applications to panels, administrators are said to lie about applicants they disfavor, in order to prejudice panels against rewarding them. (And it follows that such lying would be unnecessary, if the applicant had no chance at all.) And when NYSCA administrators are caught lying, as they sometimes are, and the evidence of their lying is presented to the so-called Appeals Panel (which is itself a scandal), the initial negative judgment is always sustained. Let me tell a complicated story. A few years ago, a small press connected to me applied for a grant to do a book edited by the photography critic Mr. A.D. Coleman. A visual arts staffer who had a vendetta against Coleman reported to the NYSCA selection panel that Coleman had not fulfilled a grant he received two years before through another organization. In fact, however, not only was this grant just several months old (and thus not yet due to be completed) but also by the time the staffer reported on its status to the panel, her information was at least three months old and the earlier Coleman project was complete, except for the printing. She influenced the panel's negative decision and then its vote by making prejudicial misinformation available to the voters. These lies were reported to me, curiously, by another NYSCA staffer who was, like the panelists, conned into believing them as truth! When the evidence of staff lying was presented to the NYSCA Appeals Panel, we were refused. The lamentable truth is that at many agencies, staff lying (and staff vendettas) is treated as a sort of subsidiary benefit of the job.

How accountable are these cultural funders?

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They must issue thick annual reports itemizing every grant. Nonetheless, even these are not exempt from fakery. In the NYSCA Annual Report of 1976-77, the lump sum allocated for the literature program as a whole (p. 36) was considerably more than the total of the individual grants (on pages 37 & 38), which meant that \$110,500 was, as they say, "unaccounted for." When I asked about this discrepancy in NYSCA's own Annual Report, I got a series of baloney letters that indicated only that people of putative responsibility were allowing themselves to be "faked out." As far as I can tell, this public money has permanently disappeared, and there is every reason to believe that other NYSCA Annual Reports are similarly full of gaping loopholes.

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Letter From the Heartland

by Jane Greer

Who's Wearing the White Hat?

In the heartland's fiercest modern-day shoot-out—farmers versus lawyers and bankers—it's hard to tell the good guys from the bad.

Charles Niska, farmer and father of eight, is serving two consecutive one-year sentences in the North Dakota State Penitentiary for illegal practice of law and jumping bail.

Niska got into trouble helping his neighbor Richard Schmidt try to outwit two local banks, which had started foreclosure proceedings on Schmidt's 3,500-acre farm and called in a \$95,000 promissory note.

Schmidt, on Niska's advice, tried to file "land patents" on his farm, which would exempt it from forfeit for bad debts. No deal. So (also on Niska's advice) he wrote and mailed a letter of complaint, or "constructive notice," to the county register of deeds who had refused to let him file. For this, Schmidt was charged with a Class C felony: "threatening a public servant."

The "constructive notice" had said merely that the register of deeds, in refusing to let Schmidt file, was remiss in her duty and liable for civil and criminal actions.

Considered by the law to be a victim of Niska's manipulations, Schmidt copped a plea in return for talking about Niska, the prize the attorney general's office had wanted all along. After Schmidt gave his evidence, Niska was charged with practicing law without a license, given a deferred sentence, put on probation, and ordered to undergo psychiatric testing (his speech rambles, he gets excited a lot, he has funny ideas about the income tax, he likes to talk about liberty and justice for all). Niska refused to be tested; on religious grounds he views psychiatry and psychology as a "devilish perversion," and as a citizen he views the evaluation order as political harassment. When the county state's attorney asked that his probation be revoked, Niska missed his hearing and was charged with jumping bail. Now he's doing time.

Niska and Schmidt are joined by thousands of others across the Midwest in their efforts to foil the foreclosure mechanism, but it seems clear that each of these men is in trouble with the law mainly because he's a royal pain in the neck. Certainly they pose no real threat to the system. Most have attended clandestine meetings at which out-of-state "experts" in "common law" give farmers a shred of hope and teach them, they think, to forestall foreclosure with loopholes and tricks—such as writing "constructive notices" or pleading that the lending agreement has been broken if their land is taken by force. The farmers use these maneuvers enthusiastically, like drowning men handed ping-pong balls. Can you blame a guy for trying?

Yes, says the law establishment. Such "common-law" efforts are feckless, undermine what real help could be given to the farmers, and result in a lot of bureaucratic paper-shuffling that clogs the courts and costs taxpayers money. Besides, they say, Niska and those like him really *are* misrepresenting themselves as lawyers. At least in North Dakota, the law is sufficiently vague that it can, when necessary, be interpreted as meaning that a nonlawyer giving anyone any sort of advice in

legal matters can be prosecuted. (I grow faint thinking of the times I've said, "You oughta sue!" to friends who've been wronged at work or in a business transaction.) Niska was a gigantic burr under the saddle of The Law, and he was removed.

As one who once paid my \$10 and filled out a simple two-page application for nonprofit incorporation of a four-person literary group (the application was provided by the secretary of state's office), only to be told by a lawyer that the form wasn't valid or nearly detailed enough and that I'd have to pay him or someone like him \$500 to do it right, I sympathize with these farmers who resent the power, arrogance, and condescension of the law elite. On the other hand, if I ever really *need* a good attorney, I want to be sure I get one, and not some nut who doesn't know a writ from a hole in the ground. But is it right for the law establishment to set the limits of its own domain? If the actions threatened in a "constructive notice"—lawsuits, being reported to a higher authority, etc.—are legal and possible, how can the filer be charged for filing? And if they aren't possible, why worry about it?

Niska's story brings other questions to mind. When a letter of complaint such as the one Richard Schmidt sent to the register of deeds is considered "threatening" and outlawed, only outlaws will have the courage to communicate displeasure to their elected officials. What then happens to government by representation?

And who among us hasn't run into dead-earnest social workers and psychologists who are convinced—nay, *taught*—that *no one* is mentally healthy, that mad instability rages in us all, and that it's their job to find it and fix it? Niska's fear of shrinks makes perfect sense to me.

Regarding the farmers' plight, there's a good case for saying to them, "You borrowed too much too fast and got in trouble. Now take your licks like the rest of us have to." For their part, though, these farmers claim that they were enticed into the situation by the banks back in the 70's when there was plenty of easy money. The more radical among them claim it was a long-standing *plot* by the banks to get their land, but all of them say, in their own