Faculty Enrichment Grant
Proposal
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I apply for the Faculty Enrichment Grant to support research at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University during the week of March 13-21 (OU Spring Break). I will use the funds provided by the grant to support my travel, food and lodging and acquisition of photocopies and facsimile reprints of materials consulted. The Beinecke Library holds rare and unique materials absolutely necessary to my current research project. As explained below, I will use this grant to complete research on a paper that I have been invited to present at a conference in September of 2004 co-sponsored by the Beinecke Library and Yale University.

Project’s Relevance to Current Research

This grant will support the conclusion of research for my paper tentatively entitled “The Traces of Petrarch’s Humanism at the Beinecke Library.” In this paper I investigate Francesco Petrarch’s specifically philological brand of Humanism as illustrated as represented in Medieval and Renaissance Italian manuscripts currently held by the Beinecke Library at Yale University. I argue that Humanism, the discovery and promulgation of literary texts from Latin Antiquity, can be traced by looking at manuscripts known as miscellanies. These manuscripts, medieval and renaissance versions of anthologies, were the most popular books of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The texts that Petrarch discovered and promulgated play a major role in these miscellanies. By looking at these manuscripts, I am able to propose a “standard reader” for Humanists. What texts were they reading? In what order did these texts come? Who choose these texts? Petrarch, the main proponent of Latin Humanism and the most important intellectual voice of his day, was crucial in articulating a vision of Humanism through structuring the contents of these miscellanies.
This paper is part of my larger research project that aims at reconfiguring current critical models of Humanism. Whereas this paper proposes new methods for understanding the canonical category of Humanism, my larger project will call into question Humanism as a uniquely Latin phenomenon. In my earlier work on Giovanni Boccaccio, I discovered that, just as Petrarch did with texts from Latin Antiquity (i.e. Virgil, Cicero, Horace), Boccaccio sought to promulgate texts written in the vernacular (i.e. Dante Alighieri, Cino Da Pistoia, Guido Cavalcanti) as works of great importance to current intellectual debates. My research and my paper will forward this view with specific attention to the polemic between Petrarch and Boccaccio. Although the closest of friends, the constantly disagreed over the value of contemporary literature. In the final analysis of my research, I hope to have articulated a new version of Humanism called “Vernacular Humanism.”

This research is vital to both the proximate research goal of completing my current paper as well as the broader research goal of revising current critical models of Humanism. With this research I can bring a more studied eye to potential courses on the Francesco Petrarch, Giovanni Boccaccio and more general courses on the Italian Renaissance. I will also more fully develop my own training in manuscript studies: philology, codicology and historical linguistics. I can also make an important contribution to the fields of both Boccaccio and Petrarch studies.

Anticipate Outcome of Research

Due to my previous work in this area and familiarity with the holdings of the Beinecke Library, I have been invited to present a paper on this research at a conference co-sponsored by the Beinecke Library and Yale University commemorating the seventh centenary of the birth of Francesco Petrarch. This conference will be the most prestigious gathering of international scholars of Petrarch to mark this anniversary, and I will have the opportunity to present my work to important scholars in my field. As is noted on the letter of invitation (see included copy), this paper will be published in a
commemorative volume. I will also incorporate this research into the revised conclusion of my dissertation “Boccaccio Dantista: Scholarship and Invention” that I hope to publish as a monograph.

Budget
Airfare (round-trip OKC to Hartford, CT) $ 300
Ground travel (round-trip Hartford to New Haven) $ 100
Lodging (5 nights x $70.00) $ 350
Food (6 days x 25) $ 150
Photocopies etc... $ 50
Total $ 950

Other Funding
I have not applied for any other funding for this research project. As is noted in the letter of invitation, my expenses for attending the conference itself will be covered by the sponsors. I will not apply for any funding through OU for this conference.