WHY SUPPORT RESEARCH AT THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES?

SO YOU CAN BRING HISTORY TO THE PRESENT, UNDERSTAND SPIRITUALITY, AND USE GREAT WORKS TO SOLVE REAL PROBLEMS.

And that’s just for starters. Through $64,000 in research grants, Boston University has been helping the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) learn more about how the past affects our present when it comes to politics, religion, and education.

- AMERICAN HISTORY ISN’T IN THE PAST.
Growing pains. No one is immune. Not even countries. To deepen our understanding of how the United States became a nation of different nationalities, Bruce Schulman, Boston University historian, used a $42,000 NEH Public Scholar award to research and write about the political climate during the early 20th century. Schulman’s research is intended to guide us through the political issues of the past to help us deal with problems the country grapples with today. The book will be called “Are We a Nation?: The Emergence of the Modern United States” and it’ll be an important read to better understand where we came from, and where we want to go.

- SPIRITUAL WITH JUST A SPLASH OF RELIGION.
Ever heard of Eugene Exman? Probably not. Stephen Prothero, Boston University professor of religion, is going to change that with his $50,400 NEH Public Scholar award. Drawing on a recently discovered archive from Exman’s home, Prothero will show how Exman, a book editor in the 1900s, had a major influence on why many Americans today describe themselves as “spiritual but not religious.” His book The Work of Eugene Exman (1900-1975): How an Editor and His Authors Made America More Spiritual and Less Religious delves into how Americans went from the religious depression of the 1930s to the religious counterculture of the 1960s and ‘70s. Whether spiritual or religious, we have total faith that you’ll enjoy this book.

- REVIVING THE HUMANITIES, FOR HUMANITY’S SAKE.
What does Paradise Lost have to do with Facebook? Plenty, according to Erin Murphy, Boston University professor of English. She likens the disruptive power of seventeenth-century England’s print revolution to today’s social media explosion. Think #MeToo and #BlackLivesMatter. She’s proving the real, lasting relevance literary studies has to modern discussions of everything from gender identity to fake news. And students are listening. With her NEH Distinguished Teaching Professorship, she’s doubling down on her conviction, sending students into the professional world to apply their humanities education, with internships at government, nonprofit, and private-sector organizations. What good can a lot of old words do? As John Milton explained, a lot: “Books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are.”

We hope you’ll give strong consideration to supporting research funding for the NEH. If you have any questions or would like to discuss the role that NEH research plays in our daily lives, please visit bu.edu/federal.
SPOILER ALERT: HE WON! AND A BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOLAR WANTS TO TELL YOU HOW AND WHY.