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In Memoriam

Lillian B. Miller
1923–1997

Lillian B. Miller, editor of the Peale Family Papers and Historian of American Culture at the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, died of a cerebral hemorrhage on 27 November 1997. She was seventy-four years old. Miller became a member of the Association for Documentary Editing when it was in its infant stage, once telling me of an early meeting in which a few would-be editors sat in a small room and listened to Julian Boyd expound on documentary editions. When Miller organized and began her editorship of the *Peale Papers* in the mid-1970s there were very few editing projects in American cultural history. She was concerned that America's documentary history be expanded to include art and culture. In that regard the volumes of the Peale Family Papers will be a proper legacy.

Miller received her A.B., magna cum laude, at Radcliffe College in 1943, and her A.M. (1948) and Ph.D. (1962) at Columbia University in American history. Her dissertation, *Patrons and Patriotism: The Encouragement of the Fine Arts in the United States, 1790–1860*, was published by the University of Chicago Press in 1966 and soon became the standard monograph tracing the history and development of art institutions in America. She taught at the University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee, George Washington University, and the University of Maryland.

As Miller's dissertation topic indicates, her major focus and interest had always been on the "encouragement" and dissemination of knowledge and culture in the United States. She was actively involved in professional organizations that promoted the study of American history and culture and served on many of their councils and boards, including the Commonwealth Center for the Study of American Culture in Williamsburg, Virginia; *American Studies*; *The American Quarterly*; the American Council of Learned Societies; the Institute of Early American History and Culture; the American Studies Association; and the American Antiquarian Society.

Miller was Historian of the National Portrait Gallery from 1971 to 1974 and, working with a Smithsonian group of curators and historians, was responsible for organizing the Portrait Gallery's two exhibitions celebrating the bicentennial of the American Revolution: *In the Minds and Hearts of the People* and *The Dye Is Now Cast*. After leaving the historian's position she continued organizing exhibitions, which were accompanied by substantial catalogues: (with Edgar P. Richardson and Brooke Hindle) *Charles Willson Peale and His World* (1982); *Portraits from the American Academy of Arts and Letters* (1987); *In Pursuit of Fame: Rembrandt Peale (1778–1860)* (1992); and a traveling exhibition, *The Peale Family: Creation of a Legacy 1770–1870*.

In 1974, Miller organized the Peale Family Papers project, which under her editorship has published in microfiche *The Collected Papers of Charles Willson Peale and His Family*, and in letterpress four of seven projected volumes of *The Selected Papers of Charles Willson Peale and His Family*. Once again, her attraction to Peale was not only as an artist, but—as Miller first encountered Peale in her *Patrons and Patriotism*—a promoter of the arts and a disseminator of culture and knowledge. Peale's prominent role in the establishment of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, and his influential museum of natural history and art, made him, according to Miller, a pivotal figure in our nation's history; even, as she liked to think of him, a cultural "founding father."

Miller also published and lectured extensively. She contributed chapters to significant works on American art and culture, such as *1776*, edited by John Browning and Richard Morton; *Seventeenth-Century New England*, edited by David Hall and David Grayson Allen; and *Insight and Inspiration*, edited by Irma B. Jaffe. Her articles were published in *New York History*, *Journal of American History*, *American Art Journal*, and the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*. Miller estimated that she had written over one hundred and twenty book reviews, and presented over one hundred and fifty slide-illustrated lectures to public and academic audiences on "subjects relating to American art and cultural history." This list does not pretend to be an exhaustive bibliography of her publications and offices, but it is meant to convey her immense curiosity and her indefatigable energy. At the time of her death she was engaged in many projects, among which were volume 5 of the Peale Family Papers, Charles Willson Peale's autobiography; and a work of great importance to her, *The Hereditary Tradition: Artistic Taste and Collections in the United States, 1860–1920*, a projected second volume of her *Patrons and Patriotism*. Her scholarly presence will be missed.

—Sidney Hart