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Donor Establishes Award to Honor Boyd

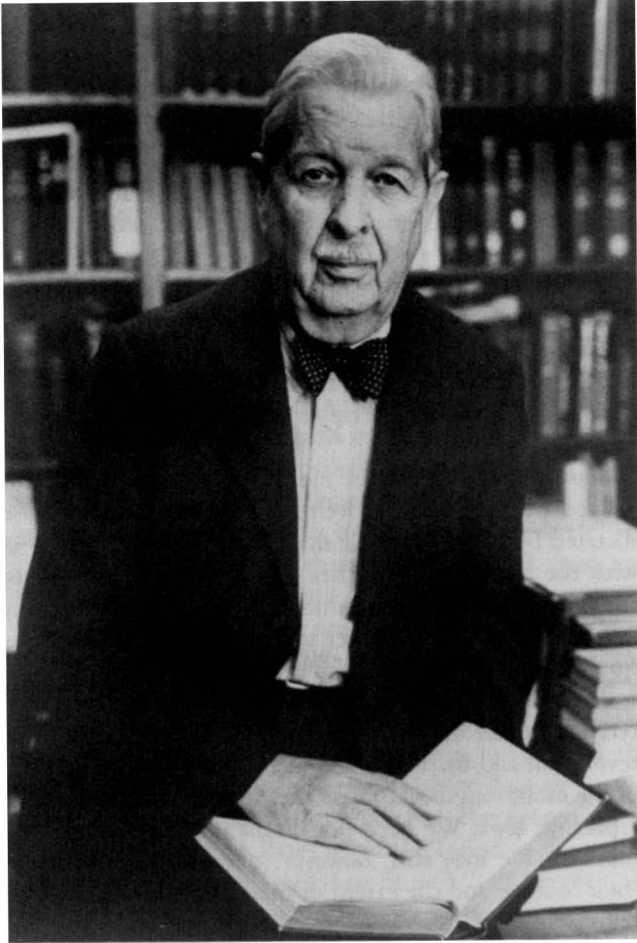
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Donor Establishes Award to Honor Boyd

The Association for Documentary Editing recently received \$500 to establish the Julian P. Boyd Award. This is intended to serve as a memorial to Boyd that will reflect both the breadth of his interests and his concern for excellence. The award will be given every three years to honor a distinguished contribution to knowledge of American history and culture. The donor, who prefers to be anonymous, intends to make further contributions to the award fund but not necessarily to support it single-handedly. Those who wish to honor Boyd by contributing may do so through Raymond W. Smock, Secretary-Treasurer, Association for Documentary Editing, The Booker T. Washington Papers, History Department, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742.

Julian Parks Boyd

3 November 1903–28 May 1980

For three decades since the appearance of his first volume of the *Papers of Thomas Jefferson* in 1950, the work of Julian Parks Boyd has marked a permanent alteration in the character and dimensions of historical scholarship in the United States. For an entire generation of scholars and editors, Boyd's death at Princeton on 28 May 1980 at the age of seventy-six dimmed one of those fixed stars by which, almost unthinkingly, we have charted our place.

The late Carl Van Doren's assessment that "Julian with all his shining faculties could have prospered in any profession he chose," was quoted frequently in newspaper obituaries last spring. The remark intrigued one newspaper columnist to whom Boyd's was an unfamiliar name. "What he chose to do was labor in a little-known endeavor which was sure to keep him relatively anonymous," the journalist wrote, "and to provide few worldly rewards. In our instant electronic age, the idea of a person spending thirty years trying to put the words of Thomas Jefferson in order is an exotic one indeed; it is hard to imagine a young man or woman coming out of college in 1980 making a similar choice for a life's work. Most people I know devote their days to labors that seem monumentally important for a few hours or even a few months, but which are forgotten as soon as the next project comes along. . . . And then there is a man like Boyd."

There is a mural in the lobby of the Virginia State Library—a mural commemorating the Virginia Declaration of Rights. On 12 June 1951, just a week after the United States Supreme Court had upheld an act of Congress aimed at the suppression of the Communist party, Julian Boyd spoke at the mural's unveiling before an audience that included Virginia's Senator Harry F. Byrd, Sr., Governor John S. Battle, and former governors Colgate W. Darden and William Munford Tuck. Playfully introduced as a distinguished scholar "born in South Carolina, educated in North Carolina, and one time citizen of Pennsylvania and now of New Jersey [who had] had the wisdom to specialize in a Virginian," Boyd spoke on "The Fear of Ideas." A selection from the printed text of Boyd's address appears below. These comments and his work testify to Julian Boyd's conviction that whether the year was 1776 or 1798, 1951 or 1980, the nation forgets Jefferson's words only at its peril—even, or perhaps especially, in an electronic age.