

## ***B. Social Sciences and Humanities Research***

### ***Council of Canada***

This section includes records provided by SSHRC of its awards in the field of medieval studies for the past ten years. Virginie Portes provided the journal with a portion of the SSHRC database, searched on several parameters to pick up all successful applications that had used principal or secondary codes indicating that the research involved the Middle Ages. This retyped version cuts some of the excess fields of the database (principal applicant, codes, location of award if same as location of application, and so forth). Where information does not appear, SSHRC did not provide it.

Aside from the discovery that many, and growing, numbers of us have obtained SSHRC funding at various points in our careers, there are general trends to be noted and assessed. For example, there is real evidence here, for those who wish to pursue it, concerning the departure for America of some of our more prominent scholars. There is the somewhat surprising evidence that the assignment of keywords to our research is not a strength; this may be more of a problem than a superficial reading would suggest. There is an intriguing shift upwards—surely a shift higher than the rate of inflation—in dollar amounts per award in Standard Research Grants over the past ten years. Similarly, awards have increased temporally from one or two years to three (automatically extensible to four) years. There is also a very positive trend upwards, despite the rhetoric of insolvency, in the numbers of Standard Research Grants awarded each year.

In the other awards the trends are somewhat harder to read. 1993 was the banner year for Doctoral Fellowships. We run a fair number of conferences each year, especially given the fact that very many of us attend one or two of Kalamazoo, the Learned's, Leeds, and the Medieval Academy. Add in the conferences in our disparate disciplines (MLA, AHA, CCMAHand the like)—and we hardly have time to write all

those papers we deliver. Both for Doctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowships the trend is, pleasingly, for more years awarded per candidate.

One caveat is relevant here. This list of awards is not by any stretch of the imagination a statement about the quality and quantity of Canadian research in medieval studies. Very many of us find it difficult—when what we need is a pen, paper, and a quiet spot in the corner of a good library to work in—to translate a personal research project into the language and ethos of a SSHRC application. I can think of many books and major articles which arrived at completion without government funding beyond the provincial funding which supports (to a greater or lesser degree) the work of a university. That for the next generation of scholars the pen and paper have been superseded by the laptop and internet uplink does not change the fundamental truth that humanities research depends most heavily on solitude, on time for reading and thinking.