

THE ROLE OF LIBRARIES  
IN NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES  
IN LOUISIANA

A Thesis

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by  
Becky Hebert  
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## **Abstract**

Describes the study done to identify and describe Louisiana tribal libraries and public library services to Louisiana Native American communities. These four tribes had tribal libraries: Chitimacha, Coushatta, Tunica-Biloxi, and the United Houma Nation. Tribal library evaluation areas included collections, users, technology, funding, cultural integration, and staff demographics. The following tribes were interviewed about public library service in their parishes: Caddo Adais, Choctaw-Apache Community of Ebarb, Clifton Choctaw, Four-Winds Cherokee, Jena Band of Choctaws, and the Talimali Band of Apalache of Louisiana. Most communication between tribes and parish libraries was poor. In general, the tribal library staff did not know about resources available. The State Library of Louisiana was unaware of the existence of the tribal libraries. The Louisiana Voices program offered to make tribal stories into commercial quality recordings. The conclusions provide a compromise for tribes and parish libraries to work together. Future research possibilities complete the paper.

## Introduction

There were two purposes to this study: First, to identify and describe tribal libraries in Louisiana; second, to determine ways in which the public libraries were serving the Native American<sup>1</sup> communities in Louisiana. The tribal libraries were identified using a series of phone calls and personal contacts. In addition to the basic services provided by the tribal libraries, the level of technology at the library and the amount of funding received from gaming such as casinos was specifically researched in this study.

Native American communities in Louisiana are defined in this study as geographical areas where there is a large concentration of members of either state recognized or federally recognized Indian tribes, including one tribe that is currently applying for federal recognition. Federal recognition is defined as being recognized as a tribe by the Secretary of the Interior following the Department of Interior's guidelines. A tribe becomes recognized by the state of Louisiana at the discretion of the state legislators.<sup>2</sup>

At the time of the study, there were four federally recognized tribes; the Coushatta Tribe, Tunica-Biloxi Tribe, Chitimacha Tribe, and the Jena Band of Choctaws. There were five state recognized tribes; the Clifton Choctaw Tribe, the Choctaw-Apache Community of Ebarb, the Four-Winds Cherokee Tribe, the United Houma Nation, and the Caddo Adais Tribe. The Talimali Band of Apalache of Louisiana is currently applying for federal recognition. Table 1 lists the tribes, the parishes where they are

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<sup>1</sup> The term Native American and Indian will be used interchangeably throughout the paper.

<sup>2</sup> According to Pat Arnould, Deputy Director of the Louisiana Governor's Office of Indian Affairs. January 27, 2002.

located, the population from the 2000 U.S. Census, the tribe's recognition status, and if they have a reservation.<sup>3</sup>

**Table 1: Tribal Information<sup>4</sup>**

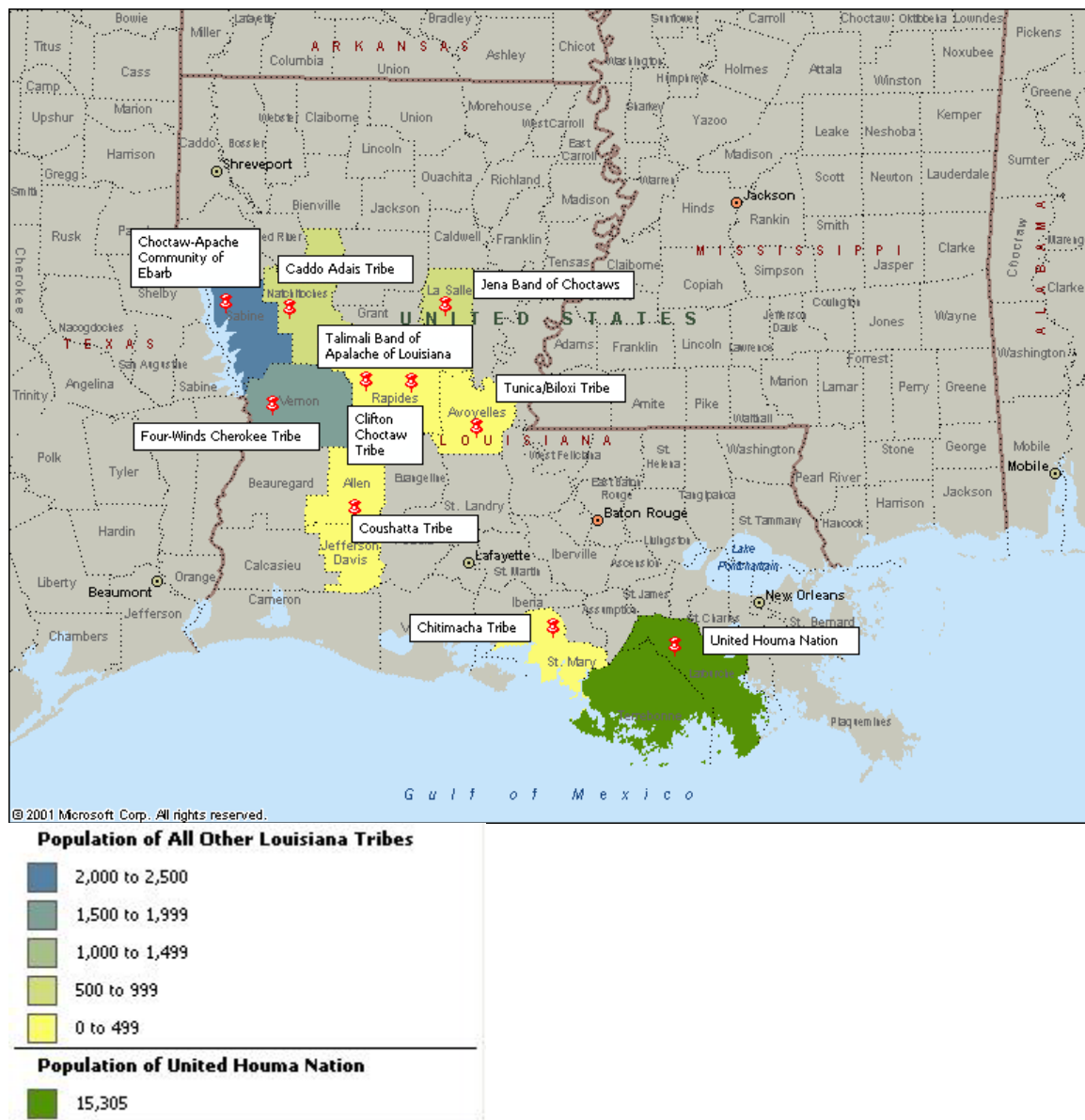
Tribe	Parish(es)	Census Population	Approximate Enrollment	Living in the Parish Area	Recognition	Reservation
Chitimacha Tribe	St. Mary	289	997	475	Federal	Yes
Coushatta Tribe	Jefferson Davis and Allen	20	750	300	Federal	Yes
Jena Band of Choctaws	LaSalle	792	241	35	Federal	No
Tunica-Biloxi Tribe	Avoyelles	64	927	100	Federal	Yes
Caddo Adais Tribe	Natchitoches	612	980	450	State	No
Choctaw-Apache Community of Ebarb	Sabine	2,237	3,200	800	State	No
Clifton Choctaw Tribe	Rapides	181	400	200	State	No
Four-Winds Cherokee Tribe	Vernon	1687	Not Available	Not Available <sup>5</sup>	State	No
United Houma Nation	Terrebone and LaFourche	15,305	17,000	12,750	State	No
Talimali Band of Apalache of Louisiana	Rapides	Not available	300	300	Pending	No

<sup>3</sup> U.S., Department of Commerce. Bureau of the Census. Profiles of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000 Census of Population and Housing; Louisiana.

<sup>4</sup> Enrollment numbers and parish resident numbers were gathered from the headquarters of each tribe.

<sup>5</sup> The tribe is currently involved in a lawsuit therefore this data was unavailable.

Figure 1 displays a map of the state of Louisiana and the locations by parish and populations of the tribes studied.



**Figure 1 Louisiana Indian Tribes by Parish and Population – US Census 2000<sup>6</sup>**

<sup>6</sup> Copyright © 1988-2001 Microsoft Corp. and/or its suppliers. All rights reserved. <http://www.microsoft.com/mappoint> © Copyright 2000 by Geographic Data Technology, Inc. All rights reserved. © 2000 Navigation Technologies. All rights reserved. This data includes information taken with permission from Canadian authorities © Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada © Copyright 2000 by CompuSearch Micromarketing Data and Systems Ltd.

Until now, tribal libraries in Louisiana have not been studied. Unlike the large Indian tribes in South Dakota and New Mexico, for instance, Louisiana tribes are not isolated geographically. A 2000 study on tribal libraries in Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Arizona stated that “Tribal libraries tend to be geographically remote...it’s not uncommon to cross over a cattle guard as a sort of ‘gateway’ marker.”<sup>7</sup> This is not the case for most Louisiana tribes. In general, the tribes are located near small to medium sized towns or cities in Louisiana. They have the same access to major roads and public services as the non-Indian population in Louisiana. The topography of the land where the tribes are located ranges from bayou country to forests to hills. Three of the federally recognized tribes are on reservations, all of which have casinos, making them even less isolated. The Chitimacha have a tribal school.

Ten parishes were part of the study; Allen, Avoyelles, Jefferson Davis, LaSalle, Natchitoches, Rapides, Sabine, St. Mary, Terrebone, and Vernon. Each parish has a public library system with a director.

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<sup>7</sup> Bonnie Biggs, “Tribal Libraries: And Still They Rise,” MultiCultural Review 9 (March 2000): 20-23;55-56.

## **Review of the Literature**

### **History of Library Services to Native Americans in Louisiana**

To date there has been nothing written on library services to the Native American population of Louisiana. Other states with larger Indian tribes, such as Oklahoma and New Mexico, have had multiple articles produced on the subject. Louisiana has fallen behind in this matter, and surprisingly so, since the state has been a pioneer in the library field. “Librarians across the country had been impressed by the library demonstration projects initiated by Essae Martha Culver, State Librarian of Louisiana, in the twenties ... this Louisiana project became a precursor of the library demonstration bill.”<sup>1</sup> The only article that comes close to covering the topic of libraries and Louisiana Indians is one on resources in libraries to research Louisiana Indian histories.<sup>2</sup>

With this in mind, there cannot be a literature review on library services to Louisiana Indians. The focus of the review will be on other states where research has been done. Casinos on Indian lands are relatively new, as is the availability of technology services to patrons in libraries. There is also a lack of published information on these subjects as they relate to libraries. What has been covered in the literature is the history and development of tribal libraries in general.

### **The Beginnings of Tribal Libraries**

The first recorded library “developed specifically to meet Indian information needs” was established by the Colorado River Tribal Council in 1957.<sup>3</sup> There were a few

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<sup>1</sup> Edward G. Holley and Robert F. Schremser. The Library Services and Construction Act: An Historical Overview from the Viewpoint of Major Participants (Greenwich, Connecticut: JAI Press, Inc., 1983). p. 7

<sup>2</sup> Mary Linn Wernet, “Researching Indians of Louisiana,” LLA Bulletin 57 (Summer 1994): 13-20.

<sup>3</sup> Charles T. Townley, “American Indian Library Service,” Advances in Librarianship 4 (1978): 135-180.

small collections gathered to form tribal libraries in the 1960's.<sup>4</sup> "The years between 1957 and 1973 represent a period when American Indians and librarians sought to identify the domain and major dimensions of American Indian library service."<sup>5</sup> It was not until January 4, 1975 that the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act gave "the right of Indian citizens to control their own educational activities."<sup>6</sup> With the Act came funding, and so a growth in the number of publications on Indian libraries during the mid to late 1970's. With more publications came more awareness and more libraries.

### **The 1978 White House Pre-Conference**

In 1978 the White House Pre-Conference on Indian Library and Information Services On or Near Reservations was held in Denver and was "the first known national Indian meeting concerned with library and information services. The Indian conference convened a widely diverse group of American Indians to act as a citizens' forum on the needs of Indian communities on or near reservations, to represent them and to articulate library/media/information service needs in Indian America."<sup>7</sup> At that time there was a widely recognized necessity to explore the information needs of reservation Indians across the United States. The conference specifically covered federally recognized tribes because the pre-conference was funded by the Office of Indian Education Programs and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) which are federal departments. One of the results of the conference was the suggestion of the National Indian Omnibus Library Bill (NIOLB)

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<sup>4</sup> Lotsee Patterson, "Information Needs and Services of Native Americans," Rural Libraries 15 (1995): 37-44

<sup>5</sup> Charles T. Townley, "American Indian Library Service," Advances in Librarianship 4 (1978): 135-180.

<sup>6</sup> Francis Paul Prucha, Documents of United States Indian Policy, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), p.274-276.

<sup>7</sup> U.S., Department of Interior, Center for Information and Library Services, Self-Determination Requires Information Power! The Report of Record on The White House Pre-Conference on Indian Library and Information Services on or Near Reservations October 19-22, 1978



which provided for training for Native American library workers, materials, construction or remodeling of libraries, technical assistance, support for Indian studies programs in institutions of higher education, support for information needs surveys, and special purpose grants. The NIOLB, along with some of the other resolutions passed at the pre-conference, were included in the 1985 Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) in Title IV.<sup>8</sup>

### **Library Services Acts**

One source of funding for tribal libraries throughout the years has been various iterations of the Library Services Act (LSA). “On June 6, 1956, the Senate approved the Library Services Act on a unanimous vote and sent it forward for President Dwight D. Eisenhower’s signature. Eisenhower signed the bill on June 19, 1956.”<sup>9</sup> The Act was renewed and maintained as the LSA until President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) into law on February 11, 1964.<sup>10</sup>

On September 30, 1996 the Museum and Library Services Act was enacted. Subtitle B was the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). The LSTA includes specific incentives for incorporating technology in the library. Services for Native Americans is Subchapter B of the LSTA which states:

“From amounts reserved under section 221(a)(1)(A) for any fiscal year the Director shall award grants to Indian tribes and to organizations that primarily serve and represent Native Hawaiians (as the term is defined in section 9212 of the Native Hawaiian Education Act (20 U.S.C. 7912) to enable such tribes and organizations to carry out the activities described in section 231.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Pathways to Excellence: A Report on Improving Library and Information Services for Native American Peoples, US. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science Washington, D.C. December 1992, Available on the web at <http://www.nclis.gov/libraries/nata.html>

<sup>9</sup> Edward G. Holley and Robert F. Schremser. The Library Services and Construction Act: An Historical Overview from the Viewpoint of Major Participants (Greenwich, Connecticut: JAI Press, Inc., 1983). p. 23

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p.27.

<sup>11</sup> The Museum and Library Services Act of 1996, Available on the web at [http://www.ims.gov/whatsnew/leg/leg\\_mlsa.pdf](http://www.ims.gov/whatsnew/leg/leg_mlsa.pdf)

Two Louisiana tribal libraries have received funds of \$4,000 per year under this Act; the Chitimacha Tribal School Library and the Tunica-Biloxi Library.<sup>12</sup>

There are three types of grants available under the LSTA to federally recognized tribes. The *Basic Grant* currently distributes around \$4,000 to any eligible tribe that applies for it. The Basic Grant is small and limited, but Native Americans and librarians throughout history have found ways to make the dollars stretch. The second type of grant is the *Professional Assistance Grant*.

“These non-competitive grants support professional assessments of library operations. Consultants may provide advice for improvement of a full range of library services, including staffing, financial management, types and levels of service, and collections development and management.”<sup>13</sup>

*Enhancement Grants* are the third and largest grants given under the LSTA. They are competitive grants and limited to only a few per year. Tribal libraries must have a specific project dealing with an aspect of technology as listed in the application qualifications.<sup>14</sup>

### **1991 Hearing on the Condition of Native American Libraries and Information Services**

In 1991 a hearing was held before the Select Committee on Indian Affairs, the purpose of which was to “gain a better understanding of the condition of Native American libraries, archives and information services, to learn more fully what their needs are, and to consider what may be required to meet their needs.” The hearing heard witnesses from various influential people in the field of Native American librarianship, including people from the areas of education, law libraries, tribal college libraries, tribal

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<sup>12</sup> IMLS Grants in Your State, Available on the web at [http://www.ims.gov/closer/cls\\_sta.asp](http://www.ims.gov/closer/cls_sta.asp)

<sup>13</sup> Native American Library Services: Categories of Funding, Available on the web at [http://www.ims.gov/grants/library/lib\\_nat.asp](http://www.ims.gov/grants/library/lib_nat.asp)

<sup>14</sup> Applications for these grants can be found on the web at [http://www.ims.gov/grants/library/lib\\_nat.asp](http://www.ims.gov/grants/library/lib_nat.asp)

libraries, Native American studies programs, and government officials in library and information science. They each testified to the status of library services to Native Americans across the country, including Hawaii, and what should be done in the future to improve these services. Technology and funding were the two largest topics spoken on during the hearing. At the time the World Wide Web was just beginning and the possibilities seemed great for what it and the Internet could provide to native peoples.

### **Library and Information Services to Native Americans – Similar Studies**

The 1978 article by Townley was based on his extensive study during the pioneer times of tribal libraries. He looked at Native American community libraries, school libraries, and postsecondary and research libraries. He studied specific libraries in New Mexico, Arizona, North and South Dakota, New York, Ontario, Quebec, Iowa, Idaho, and Wisconsin. He found that “Indian communities possess specific information needs” and that “Native Americans believe they are the only ones capable of determining Indian information needs.”<sup>15</sup> He believed that “the range of services is much broader than that provided by library service to more traditional publics, “ and that “successful programs take materials to the community, work closely with school and other community organizations, develop specialized programming, operate communications systems, and create as well as use media.”<sup>16</sup> The funding sources for the libraries in this study were at the federal, state, and tribal levels.

In 1980, Heyser and Smith published an article “to determine the state of the art of public library services for Native Americans residing in Canada and the continental

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<sup>15</sup> Charles T. Townley, “American Indian Library Service,” Advances in Librarianship 4 (1978): 135-180.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

United States.”<sup>17</sup> This quantitative study produced a questionnaire which was sent out to libraries providing public services to Native Americans in the United States and Canada. The survey tool covered the five areas “general information, facilities, personnel, collection, and services.”<sup>18</sup> General information included demography, origin, guidance and support, and funding. Their findings corresponded in many ways with the results of this study. For instance, library services occurred in a variety of ways. Funding came from a variety of sources but was in general inadequate. Libraries were often housed with other tribal offices. Libraries were often staffed by one person who had only a high school degree, lacking the MLS. In 1980, “little [was] known about: the library and information needs of Native Americans; the successes and failures of programs designed specifically to meet Native American needs, the training of librarians who either are Native Americans or are serving them, the relationship between the tribes and local, state and federal governments; and many other aspects of the entire field.”<sup>19</sup> Louisiana’s tribal libraries seem to be in the same place as the rest of the nation’s were twenty years ago.

Jacobs et al published an article in 1988 on “Native American Library Services” which focused on tribes in New York.<sup>20</sup> In New York, “Indian libraries have been assisted by the State aid program, their participation in the public library systems, and Federal aid under the Library Services and Construction Act.”<sup>21</sup> This study focused on the types of services offered to the tribes in the New York area. At one library they found that there were “2,500 volumes on Indian life and culture.” The article also

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<sup>17</sup> Richard G. Heyser and Lotsee Smith, “Public Library Service to Native Americans in Canada and the Continental United States,” Library Trends 29 (Fall 1980): 353-368.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Margaret Jacobs, Ethel E. Bray, and Ramona Charles, “Native American Library Services,” The Bookmark 46 (Summer 1988): 245-8.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

explored bookmobile services, newsletter services, educational programs, and computers. At the time of the article “the library [had] eight Apple microcomputers for public use.”<sup>22</sup> Another library’s collection featured, “an extensive Indian collection of fiction, nonfiction, reference, legal books, and documents, Indian newspapers and letters, etc.” and “a well-rounded collection of books, magazines, newspapers, cassettes, videos, etc. which we are always increasing.”<sup>23</sup> Cultural aspects of the libraries studied included classes on beadwork, pottery, corn husk doll making, leather work, silver, and feather work. Other services included community meeting rooms, senior citizen book delivery, special services to the handicapped, tax information, employment news, and job references.

The 2000 study on the tribal libraries in Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Arizona researched how these libraries were structured, how they differed from each other, and what programs and ideas the researcher could bring to her home community’s tribal libraries. The researcher focused mainly on what part the cultural values played in the tribal libraries and how the library interacted with the “‘information keepers,’ ‘wisdom keepers,’ or ‘oral librarians’ in the community.”<sup>24</sup> She also found that, like Louisiana, “tribal libraries are usually adjacent to or in the midst of other social service agencies.”<sup>25</sup> Funding sources in her study came from grants and gaming operations. The “key granting agency for tribal libraries” was the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The IMLS administers the LSTA grants. Technology was also an aspect of the study. She found that most of the tribal libraries studied had limited Internet access and

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Bonnie Biggs, “Tribal Libraries: And Still They Rise,” MultiCultural Review 9 (March 2000): 20-23;55-56.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

had newly placed automation systems. Another source of funding and technology came from the Gates Library Initiative (GLI) which had just begun implementing technology in the tribal libraries.

## **Materials and Methods**

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to discover and describe the tribal libraries in Louisiana. The purpose was also to find out ways in which public libraries in Louisiana were serving the major Native American communities in the state. Because the tribal libraries had been undocumented, personal video interviews were chosen as the research method to get the most detail possible. The tribal libraries were also within reasonable driving distance for the researcher.

Print surveys were sent to public library directors in the ten parishes designated to be Native American communities by this study.<sup>1</sup> The surveys were open ended to allow the directors to respond with their thoughts on how their libraries were serving the Indians in the community. Print surveys were sufficient for this preliminary study to discover the services being provided for Louisiana Indians by the public libraries. Personal interviews were not feasible because of the number and distance of the parish libraries. The survey's format allowed for the directors to have time to discuss the survey questions with staff members who interact with the public, such as reference librarians. Library directors are also, in general, familiar with receiving print surveys.

Phone interviews were given to tribes without tribal libraries. The interviews consisted of questions regarding service to the tribal members by the parish libraries. Because there were no tribal libraries for these tribes, there were fewer questions asked and less detail needed. Telephone calls were also used to discover the existence of the

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<sup>1</sup> See Introduction of this study

tribal libraries. When a tribal spokesperson said that there was no tribal library, the questioning continued on to the service by the public libraries.

### **Tribal Video and Phone Interviews**

Louisiana tribal libraries were not listed, at the time of research, in the Louisiana Library Directory, something which is currently being rectified.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, part of the research goals was to identify tribal libraries in Louisiana. Pat Arnould at the Louisiana Governor's Office of Indian Affairs (OIA) provided critical information and guidance on who to contact to discover these libraries. Each tribe from the OIA's list was contacted by telephone initially by the telephone number on the list. If there was an education director or librarian as noted by the OIA, she was spoken to directly.

When no contact information was available, the person who answered the phone was questioned. It was assumed that the people answering the phones at the tribal headquarters had knowledge of the tribal members' information needs because of the nature of their jobs. The interviewee was asked if the tribe had a tribal library. If the tribe did not have a tribal library, the interviewee was asked if the tribe had a collection of books or videos that the tribal members were allowed to check out. It was important to clarify this because, in some cases, the tribe did not consider itself to have an official library, yet the tribe may have lent books to tribal members. If the interviewee still said the tribe did not have a tribal library, she was asked about the local parish library and about how that library serves the tribal members in general and the interviewee personally.

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<sup>2</sup> The researcher has submitted a list of tribal library contact information to the State Library of Louisiana to be considered for entry into the next Louisiana Library Directory.



For the tribes that had a library, appointments were made to interview the library staff person. Tribes without libraries were given the same set of questions over the phone regarding the parish library system.<sup>3</sup> The phone interviews were not taped because of the lack of equipment.

The video interviews began by explaining that the research was for a thesis for the researcher's Master of Library and Information Science. The researcher also was identified as being a member of the Delaware Tribe of Indians. This was done to make the interviewees feel more comfortable in answering questions and speaking in front of the camera. Each tribal member being interviewed was then asked a series of open-ended questions regarding the services provided by the library, the history of the library and building, the technology in the library, funding, culture integration, and the opinion of the interviewee of the parish library system and how it has served the tribal information needs.<sup>4</sup> Interviewees concluded the interview by adding other comments they wanted to make.

Patterson's 1995 study included a quote by an elder who was asked what he wanted in his library. The elder said he wanted "theses and dissertations" because he says that people are always studying his tribe. The researchers go away and the elder never knows what they write. He said, "We want copies of their studies so we can see what they write about us. We want our young people to see what others say about us."<sup>5</sup> Each participant in this study will receive a copy of the thesis for the tribe's collection.

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix A

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix A

<sup>5</sup> Lotsee Patterson, "Information Needs and Services of Native Americans," Rural Libraries 15 (1995): 37-44.

The questions for the video and phone interviews were not pre-tested because of the limited prospects for sample participants. After the initial interview, the questions were reviewed and found adequately cover the research topic.

Video taped participants also received a packet of information regarding resources for libraries and librarians in Louisiana.

### **Parish Library Print Surveys**

Ten parish library directors were sent print surveys. The Clifton Choctaw and Talimali Band of Apalache of Louisiana are in the same parish (Rapides) and one tribe is located in two parishes (the Coushatta tribe is in Jefferson Davis Parish and Allen Parish). The surveys included seven open-ended questions about services provided by the parish library system to the tribal members in their area.<sup>6</sup> The survey questions were not pre-tested because of the small number of the specialized group of participants. There would not have been a sample group to test the questions.

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<sup>6</sup> See Appendix B

## **Results**

### **Tribal Libraries – Video Interviews**

#### United Houma Nation<sup>1</sup>

The Houma tribal headquarters was contacted first about a tribal library. The representative said that there was not a tribal library and that the tribe primarily used the LaFourche Parish Library system. At a meeting of the Native American Student Association at Louisiana State University, the researcher spoke with some Houma students. The students said that there was a library at the Dulac Community Center which serves the tribe. The Houma tribe is in the Southeast part of Louisiana in an area with many bayous running through it. Because of this, the Houma tribe itself is divided geographically. There is the LaFourche side in Golden Meadow, LA where the headquarters is located. There is also the Terrebone Parish side where Dulac is located. The land divided by the bayous consists of narrow strips with room for a road down the middle and buildings that run along the road.

The Program Director at the Dulac Community Center is John Silver. He has no formal training in librarianship but is the closest thing to the librarian at the center. Mr. Silver is twenty-one years old and is a member of the United Houma Nation. He attends Nicholls University and is majoring in Psychology. He started the job four years ago as an intern with the Intertribal Council of Louisiana, which trains young Native Americans to gain job skills. Mr. Silver stated that he would like to stay at the community center after graduation, but is not sure about attending library school.

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with John Silver, Program Director of the Dulac Community Center, Dulac, Louisiana. Fall 2001.

The Dulac Community Center is governed by the Methodist Church and the General Board of Global Ministries. The library's collection began in the mid 1970's. The collection contains about 5000 items including a variety of books similar to a public library, such as children's materials, adult, religious, fiction, and reference. The books are categorized using the Dewey Decimal system. The library does not have a card or online catalog. The staff maintains a paper list of the collection. Almost all of the books the library has are used and have been donated. The library very rarely gets new books. The library has a Native American collection. The few books on the Houma tribe were checked out at the time of the interview. Mr. Silver said they are very popular.

Because the Methodist church sponsors the library, Mr. Silver was asked if the library had ever had any censorship issues. He was asked, if the library had the opportunity to get a book on abortion, would there be an issue. Mr. Silver said getting that type of book would pose no issue or problem for the library.

The library is open on request, but normally stays closed. The library is available to the public but mostly serves tribal members. The users of the library are primarily Native American women and children.

Mr. And Mrs. Carl Brunson, the directors, started the Indian Mission School 70 years ago. The building was built in the 1950's. After the parish school system took over, the mission changed to provide social and recreational service programs for the Native Americans and Cajuns of Terrebone Parish. The facilities are occasionally used by the school system to train teachers. The new administration building section was built in 1990 and survived hurricane Andrew in 1992. Faye Toups is the Executive Director of the center and is not Native American. The center has four full time employees and three

part time employees. It used to have a Head Start program but does not anymore. The community center also has a gymnasium which is used to hold a mini powwow in the fall.

One interesting feature that was common to another tribal library, and not common to most public libraries, was the sewing room. The Bayou Native American dance group uses the room to sew regalia. This type of cultural information source would be difficult to get from books alone. Having this type of resource near the library may further help maintain the tribe's culture.

The library's primary funding comes from the United Methodist Church. The center also solicits donations from the business and private sectors. The United Houma Nation does not have a reservation and so does not have a casino or other gaming. Mr. Silver said that the funding levels vary from year to year.

When asked for his wishlist for the library, Mr. Silver's main concern was having a full-time or even a part-time librarian, and then other staff to maintain the library. He would like to see readings for children. He said they only use the library for assignments now. He wants them to enjoy reading. He would like more computers and software. He feels that if the library were able to be open regularly, more people would come and use the library.

The Dulac Community Center has a computer lab with Internet access. They have about a dozen old computers, but are ordering nine new Dell PCs. Mr. Silver wrote a grant for the new Dells through the United Global Ministries. The center received \$15,000 for new computers and equipment. A Microsoft certified instructor will be teaching classes on how to use the computers and the Internet. The old machines were

donations and are outdated. The computers run Windows 95 and have some educational games.

In addition to the sewing room and the Native American collection, the library also sponsors some cultural events. On occasion they will have traditional arts and crafts. Sometimes there is have storytelling.

The Houma language is dead. Like some other tribes in Louisiana, the elder Houma Indians speak Cajun French. The library does have some books in Cajun.

The Terrebone Parish Library's nearest branch is the East Houma Branch seventeen miles from Dulac. Mr. Silver said there used to be a branch in Grand Callou, five miles away, but that it closed due to lack of funding. Mr. Silver said that the parish library personnel is aware of the tribe. Transportation is the biggest barrier for tribal members going to the public library. Mr. Silver was not aware of any special services or collection that the parish library offers. He was not aware of any contact between the center and the Terrebone Parish Library. Mr. Silver once spoke with the director of the Terrebone Parish Library to get ideas from him for services at the Dulac Community Center library. There was no further communication.

The community center offers other services, including piano lessons for ages 12-17 and the America Reads program, which uses tutors from the US Coastguard, volunteers, and staff. On the bulletin board and around the building, one can see the flyers for upcoming powwows, the Intertribal Council of Louisiana, and other events and services intended for Indians.

## Tunica-Biloxi Tribe<sup>2</sup>

Juanita DeCote is the tour guide at the Tunica-Biloxi museum. She has also served as the librarian there for six years. She was born and raised on the Tunica-Biloxi reservation and is a member of the tribe. She has an eighth grade education.

The library is located in the museum's kitchen and takes up one long wall about 20 feet wide, and half of the shorter wall about eight feet wide. The shelves are about twelve feet high. The collection consists of approximately 1000 items, mostly of Native American books, some Tunica-Biloxi, some from other tribes. The collection also includes archeology and art books, and materials for entertainment. The library has a fair sized collection of magazines like *Sports Illustrated*, *Time*, *Life*, and *Forbes*.

The collection is available to all tribal members to check out materials. The library is open to the public for reference use only. The primary users of the library are the school children from the tribe.

Ms. DeCote learned to catalog from a friend of the director of the museum. The woman came a year ago from the LSU Alexandria library and taught Ms. DeCote and a co-worker to catalog using the Library of Congress classification system, as a favor for the director. Ms. DeCote loves books and said that, while she was cataloging, she often got caught up in what she was reading and had to make herself go back to working. William Day was the original director of the museum and library. The library began around 1991 with donations of books. The museum was built two years before the library was started.

The main source of funding for the library is grants. The library also receives some personal donations. Ms. DeCote was unaware of this, but the director had applied

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<sup>2</sup> Interview with Juanita DeCote, Library Staff, Marksville, Louisiana. Fall 2001.

for and received the Library Services and Technology Act grant for the past few years. The Tunica-Biloxi tribe does have a casino. As far as Ms. DeCote knows, the library does not receive any direct funding from the casino. The library was built before the casino, so it was not built with casino funding.

The building itself is the tribe's way of maintaining their culture and artifacts properly. The building is in the form of a sacred temple mound. A group of French and Indian artifacts known as the Tunica Treasure was stolen from ancestral graves. When the artifacts were returned to the Tunica-Biloxi, the tribe was unable to return them to their rightful place. So the temple mound was built to symbolically rebury the items.

When asked about her wishlist for the library, Ms. DeCote responded that she would like a better room for the library, since it shared space with the kitchen. She also wanted more Indian heritage and culture books, especially from smaller tribes, whom she felt are often misrepresented by the media.

The library does not have a computer lab, but Ms. DeCote did put her catalog into software at the museum. She would like to put it on the web eventually. She said they are "taking it slow" because they are waiting for new space for the library to be built.

The Tunica language died in 1921 with the last tribal member who spoke it. The tribe's second language had become Cajun French, like the Houma tribe, with English as a third language. Unfortunately, like other speakers of Cajun French, the Tunica-Biloxi and the Houma were forced to speak English and lose yet another language. There are still some elders who speak the French. Ms. DeCote would like to have some Cajun books in her collection and would like to teach French to the children. The library



currently does not provide services beyond the print collection, but Ms. DeCote would like to expand the functions of the library.

The Avoyelles Parish Library, the local public library is about two or three miles from the museum. Ms. DeCote is not aware of any communication between the parish library and the Tunica-Biloxi library. She is also unaware of any special services offered to the tribe by the public library.

### Coushatta Tribe<sup>3</sup>

The Office of Indian Affairs put me in touch with Shirley Doucet, the education director for the Coushatta tribe. Mrs. Doucet is a full-blooded Coushatta and has worked at the education complex for thirteen years. She has a high school education with vocational training as a secretary/office worker. The Resource Center has two hundred books which are bought on an as-needed basis, mostly for classes and workshops held there. The center has some encyclopedias, some Native American books, computer books, and others.

The resource center's primary users are students from elementary school and high school, and adult learners. The resource center loans books for two weeks to tribal members. There is after-school tutoring for students. The center offers computer classes and other adult continuing education. Like the Houma, sewing is important at the Coushatta resource center. The resource center offers classes in quilting to make the quilts like those given to participants by the head lady at the powwows. The computer lab has six new computers with flat screen monitors. Internet access by students is monitored, by sign-in and history checking. The students are only allowed to use the

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<sup>3</sup> Interview with Shirley Doucet, Education Director for the Coushatta Tribe, Coushatta Reservation, Elton, Louisiana. Fall 2001

computers for school. During the interview, Mrs. Doucet related an anecdote about one of the classes offered at the resource center. The center held an adult e-mail class attended mostly by elders. The elders could not understand why a computer mouse was called a “mouse”. Mrs. Doucet said she used the Coshatta word for mouse and the elders smiled and understood better, but were still a bit confused.

The Coshatta is the only tribe in Louisiana with an active tribal language. Mrs. Doucet said that young people speak the language fluently. There are not any books in Coshatta in the collection because, Mrs. Doucet believes, there were probably none written.

The tribe has a reservation and a casino from which the tribe receives funding. When asked about her wishlist, Mrs. Doucet could not think of anything, which could indicate that she had adequate funding for all her needs. Another reason for her content could be that the tribe has an excellent relationship with the parish libraries in the area. The tribe is served by the Jefferson Davis Parish Public Library System at the Elton Branch and the Allen Parish system. Allen Parish provides a bookmobile and the Jefferson Davis Parish Library goes out to the reservation to do a summer reading program especially for the tribe. The parish library has provided anything Mrs. Doucet has asked of it. When asked if this was because of their substantial financial worth, Mrs. Doucet said that the libraries served the tribe even before the casino was built when the tribe was terribly poor.

As an example of how tribal members use the library, Mrs. Doucet said that she and her husband use the Jefferson Davis public library. He gets how-to type books for mechanical things, word working, etc, and she likes to check out spiritual books.

### Chitimacha Tribal School<sup>4</sup>

Denise Hodge was born in 1950. She attended Louisiana Tech and graduated in 1972 with a double major in Library Science and Elementary Education. She received her Masters of Education from the University of Southwestern Louisiana in 1981. She attended the Louisiana State University library school for thirty hours but had to drop out due to a death in the family and her own illness.

Ms. Hodge worked in public schools for a while and in public libraries for six years. Ms. Hodge went to live with her sister after her sister's husband, the Chitimacha tribal chairman, was killed in a car accident. Ms. Hodge took the tribal school librarian position when it became available. Ms. Hodge wants to instill her love of reading in the students. When she reads sad books like "Where the Red Fern Grows" to the children, she cries. But, she says, the children never laugh at her for it.

The school is Kindergarten through eighth grade with 85 students. The library is centrally located in the school and is structurally open, lined by two walls and two hallways so that there is no door to the library. The library was built at the same time as the school. The openness of the library is good, she feels, to welcome the children in, but it can be distracting to have other students walk by during a lesson.

The collection consists of approximately 4500 books and videos. There is a small adult collection, open to the community, that was built by donations. The school library was originally supposed to be a community library. Ms. Hodge has applied for an expansion grant.

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<sup>4</sup> Interview with Denise Hodge, School Media Specialist at the Chitimacha Tribal School, Chitimacha Reservation, Charenton, Louisiana, Fall 2001.

All of the library's funding is through grants. The Chitimacha tribal school library receives the LSTA grant which is about \$4000 per year. Ms. Hodge feels that the \$4000 is not sufficient. The Chitimacha tribe has a grant writer. Ms. Hodge got the Indian Grant Directory and highlighted grants she thought would be applicable to the library. She brought it to the grant writer and said "show me the money."

Ms. Hodge was not aware of any money coming directly from the casino, unless it came through general funds, to fund the school or the library. The casino pays for the school prom and a Mardi Gras party. Ms. Hodge said it seems like there is less money now, even after the construction of the casino, because they always have to cut back. There was a time nine years ago when there was no librarian due to lack of funds.

Only Indian students are allowed to attend the school. Stepchildren of tribal members may attend, but have to pay tuition. Children of any tribe are allowed to attend; three children are from tribes other than the Chitimacha. Ms. Hodge feels like they "coddle the children" which is good and bad. The children get a lot of individual attention, but when they get to high school they cannot cope with the culture shock and many drop out. The school is starting to wean the children by bringing them on tours of the high school before they finish their education at the tribal school.

The school, once run by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), is now run by the tribe. The Tribal Council governs the school board which governs the Principal. The library and the school were built in the mid 1970's. The computer lab was added in 1996. Ms. Hodge feels that the only problem with the library's unique design is that it would be difficult to expand.

One of the services offered by the library is the Accelerated Reading Program. The program includes color-coded stickers on the books to indicate the reading level for the children.

The computer lab has six “limited, slow, old, and breaking computers.” Each classroom has two computers. Ms. Hodge would like to have at least 15-20 new computers because there are 12 students in a class. Ms. Hodge cares for the children. She feels that computer skills are a good way for them to succeed in the world today. Ms. Hodge has applied for grants for wireless computers and laptops, but she is not too optimistic about her chances of getting the grants.

In addition to the computers, Ms. Hodge’s wishlist includes keeping the reference materials up to date and adding more Native American books to their existing collection. She would like to find more Chitimacha books so that the children can learn about their culture.

No one actively speaks the Chitimachan language. Ms. Hodge said that the language was recreated by linguists. The children attend language class at the school four days per week. The children can say the Pledge of Allegiance in Chitimacha. The Christmas play was also in Chitimacha this past year. The children start with the language classes at pre-Kindergarten. The Culture Department of the tribe teaches the language to adults. The tribe is working on an alphabet book. The language teacher provides storytelling sessions. Once a week the children have culture class where they spend time doing beadwork, weaving their “famous double weave baskets that hold water,” and doing other crafts.

The nearest parish library is the new branch in Baldwin about five miles away in St. Mary Parish. The Iberia Parish Library is 23 miles away. Ms. Hodge says the parish library knows the tribe is there, but there has been no communication between her and anyone at the parish library. The pre-Kindergarten class goes to the library for story hour, but the stories have nothing to do with tribal culture. The students occasionally take field trips to the parish library. Ms. Hodge has not received any information on the Summer Reading program, but would like to. There has been no specific invitation to the tribe.

When asked if there was anything else that she would like to add, Ms. Hodge said that she wants the children to remember where they came from. The tribe and the school need to help the children finish high-school. Ms. Hodge thinks the school is a great place to work and that there is good food and good people. The only Chitimacha teacher there is the language teacher. There are some Chitimachan support personnel.

### **Results of Tribal Library Interviews by Topic**

The following tables break down each tribal library's position on the major topics researched: collections, users, technology, funding, cultural integration, and education levels and tribal affiliations of library staff.

**Table 2: Tribal Libraries - Collections**

<b>Tribe</b>	<b>Collections</b>
Chitimacha Tribe	K-8 <sup>th</sup> school books with Native American section, some adult fiction
Coushatta Tribe	Books and workbooks related to workshops given
Tunica-Biloxi Tribe	Large Native American collection with some fiction, reference, and magazines
United Houma Nation	Similar to a public library collection with special Native American collections and religion collections

**Table 3: Tribal Libraries - Users**

<b>Tribe</b>	<b>Users</b>
Chitimacha Tribe	K-8 <sup>th</sup> students, some adults from the community
Coushatta Tribe	All ages, tribal members only
Tunica-Biloxi Tribe	Open to the public for reference, open to tribal members for circulation, users are primarily school children
United Houma Nation	Open to the public, users are primarily Houma women and children

**Table 4: Tribal Libraries - Technology**

<b>Tribe</b>	<b>Technology</b>
Chitimacha Tribe	Six computers, old and limited, have an OPAC <sup>5</sup>
Coushatta Tribe	Six brand new computers, internet access
Tunica-Biloxi Tribe	No computer lab
United Houma Nation	Dozen old computers, Nine new computers on order, internet access

**Table 5: Tribal Libraries - Funding**

<b>Tribe</b>	<b>Primary Funding Source</b>
Chitimacha Tribe	Grants
Coushatta Tribe	Tribal funds
Tunica-Biloxi Tribe	Grants
United Houma Nation	Grants

**Table 6: Tribal Libraries - Cultural Integration**

<b>Tribe</b>	<b>Cultural Integration</b>
Chitimacha Tribe	Native American collection, students have classes on culture and language
Coushatta Tribe	Sewing/Quilting workshops, workshops often in the Coushatta language
Tunica-Biloxi Tribe	Majority of collection is Native American, located in a museum
United Houma Nation	Native American collection, arts and crafts workshops, sewing classes, powwows in adjoining facilities

**Table 7: Tribal Libraries – Education Levels and Tribal Affiliations of Library Staff**

<b>Tribe</b>	<b>Highest Education Levels of Library Staff</b>	<b>Native American/ Tribal Member</b>
Chitimacha Tribe	Master of Education	No
Coushatta Tribe	Vocational school	Yes
Tunica-Biloxi Tribe	8 <sup>th</sup> grade	Yes
United Houma Nation	Currently in college	Yes

<sup>5</sup> The OPAC is the Online Public Access Catalog which has computer records of the library's holdings.

## **Tribes without Tribal Libraries – Phone Interviews**

### Choctaw-Apache Community of Ebarb<sup>6</sup>

Carolyn Bolton is the enrollment specialist for the tribe. She participated in the interview. Mrs. Bolton is married to a tribal member but is not a member by blood.

The Choctaw-Apache Community of Ebarb does not have its own tribal library. However, the tribe has obtained land to build a tribal complex including an office, health center, youth center, and a library. Currently the tribe has a very small collection of books, 20 in all. She said that they used to loan them out to tribal members, but not everyone would return the books. The collection is still available for tribal members to use on-site.

Ms. Bolton feels that the Sabine Parish Library system is not adequate. She feels that the parish library's collection is mostly a very old history of Indians in general. The parish library does not have the current information in which she feels tribal members are interested, such as information on the powwow circuit, festivals, styles of clothing, etc.

The nearest large branch is 12 miles away in Many, LA. There is a small, one room branch in Zwolle, LA. The Zwolle branch contains mostly children's books, and Mrs. Bolton does not feel that it adequately serves adults in the community. She had even forgotten about the branch until, during the interview, when she was asked if there was a library in Zwolle. She feels that tribal members have a problem getting transportation to Many. Ms. Bolton said that tribal members take advantage of inter-library loan (ILL) with the Many branch. She said she has not tried ILL with the small branch in Zwolle. There is no bookmobile.

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<sup>6</sup> Telephone interview with Carolyn Bolton, Choctaw-Apache Community of Ebarb Tribal Enrollment Specialist. January 2002.



Mrs. Bolton felt that the tribe is often in contact with the library. Tribal members often go through Mrs. Bolton and the tribal offices for ILL requests. Mrs. Bolton feels that the parish library could improve services to the community by surveying to find out “what people really want.” She feels that the library “orders what they think [tribal members] want, but it's not always appropriate.”

Mrs. Bolton was asked about the new library that the tribe will build. She said that they are consulting with other tribal libraries across the United States for ideas. The tribe is an American Indian Library Association member. Mrs. Bolton was not aware of the other tribal libraries in Louisiana.

#### Clifton Choctaw Tribe<sup>7</sup>

Blanche Thomas is the temporary secretary for the tribe. The Clifton Choctaw do not have their own library, but the Rapides Parish Library sends a bookmobile out every two weeks. Ms. Thomas is a tribal member and an active user of the bookmobile services. She says that at her bookmobile stop there are usually five or six people who use it each time. The library provides a variety of books and will supply Native American books when asked. The library does carry books on the Clifton Choctaw tribe.

She does not feel that the bookmobile is lacking in anything. The bookmobile staff provides whatever the tribal members request. The bookmobile only provides books, no other services like training workshops or storytelling.

The tribe has an educational center which has after school tutoring for tribal members who wish to participate. The center also has six computers, which Ms. Thomas feels are sufficient for the tribe's needs.

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<sup>7</sup> Telephone interview with Blanche Thomas, Clifton Choctaw Tribe Temporary Tribal Secretary. January 2002.

### Four-Winds Cherokee Tribe<sup>8</sup>

Principle Chief, Billy Sinor, was interviewed about library services to his tribe. The researcher was able to speak to him briefly even though the tribe was currently in the middle of a lawsuit.

The Four-Winds Cherokee do not have a tribal library, but Chief Sinor thinks that the local Vernon Parish Library is "outstanding!" The parish library is about five miles away and is a relatively new branch. He really likes the genealogy research material that they have. He finds the staff to be friendly and helpful. The tribe has between 2500-5000 members and Chief Sinor believes that the library knows of their existence.

The tribe was recognized in 1997 by the State of Louisiana so the parish library does not have much information on the tribe yet. The library does have information on the Dawes Rolls and the Miller Commission which Chief Sinor considers to be good aids in finding Cherokee genealogy roots.

There is no communication currently between the tribe and the library, but Chief Sinor says that he will bring information to the library about the tribe after the lawsuit is over. He wants to include their rolls without the private information of the members.

### Talimali Band of Apalache of Louisiana<sup>9</sup>

Jeanette Bennett, who is married to a tribal member, answered the phone at the Talimali Band of Apalache tribal headquarters.

The tribe applied for state recognition, but the chief would have had to sign a 99-year contract that said they could not have gaming if they ever got federal recognition. It is not up to the chief, but to the tribal council to decide this. The council decided that

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<sup>8</sup> Telephone interview with Billy Sinor, Principal Chief of the Four-Winds Cherokee Tribe. January, 2002.

<sup>9</sup> Telephone interview with Jeanette Bennett, Talimali Band of Apalache of Louisiana Tribal Employee. January 2002.

they did not want to limit their children and grandchildren in this way. So the tribe will never have state recognition. The other tribes that do have state recognition got it before gaming was an issue. The tribe is currently awaiting processing for federal recognition.

The tribe does not have a tribal library, but they are gathering materials about their tribe. There are some publications about their people. The tribe currently has about twenty books that are available for reference but not to check out.

The Gunner branch of the Rapides Parish Library is about two miles away. Tribal members also use the branch in Alexandria and the LSU-Alexandria library for research purposes.

Tribal members use the parish library for internet access and reading. Ms. Bennett feels the parish library has excellent children's programming and that the library encourages children to read.

She feels the parish library is adequate. If the library does not have an item, the librarians will get it through ILL. In some cases librarians have bought books on the requests of tribal members. She could not think of a way to improve upon parish library at all because she felt their services are sufficient to meet the tribe's needs.

#### Caddo Adais Tribe<sup>10</sup>

There is no tribal library for the Caddo Adais Tribe. The tribe primarily uses the local university's library for genealogy and tribal history research.

Chief Rufus Davis was interviewed about the parish library's services to the tribe. The nearest public library is fifteen miles away which is a transportation problem for some tribal members. Chief Davis said that tribal members "do what they have to do during the day and leave the library 'til last" because of its distance. A bookmobile does

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<sup>10</sup> Telephone interview with Chief Rufus Davis, Caddo Adais Tribal Chairman. February 2002.

come out, but Chief Davis felt that it comes at the wrong time of day. He said that it comes during the day when the kids are in school. Chief Davis felt that it should come in the evening after school for the children to get the most benefit from it. When asked if the library served his population adequately, Chief Davis responded that “they [the library] do what they can,” but he felt that the bookmobile should come at a different time of day.

Chief Davis said that the library is aware of the tribe’s presence, but there have been no special services offered and no communication from either the library or the tribe.

#### Jena Band of Choctaws<sup>11</sup>

Christie Murphy is the Education Director for the Jena Band of Choctaws. The tribe has a small collection of about sixty books available for circulation to tribal members. The LaSalle Parish Library is located about four to five miles from the tribal headquarters. When asked, Ms. Murphy said that the parish library knows that the tribe is there. However, there has been no communication either from the tribe or the library. Ms. Murphy went into the library to evaluate how useful it would be to members of her tribe. She was able to find many items of interest in the catalog, but the materials were not on the shelves. She did not ask anyone why the books were not on the shelves. She was looking primarily for materials on Native Americans, books on battles like Little Big Horn, and fiction stories for children.

Ms. Murphy stated that if there were programs at the library intended for tribal members, she would assume that the library would contact the tribe.

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<sup>11</sup> Telephone interview with Christie Murphy, Jena Band of Choctaws Education Director. February 2002.

She said that her overall opinion of the library was that it was a small parish, rural library. “They do have a good supply of books, just not in the Native American field.” She was concerned that there were no materials available to kids for school assignments. She mentioned that the Internet was an available option now, though. She felt that if she would ask, the parish library could probably get books, but she has not asked. Her main concern was that they did not have books readily available that were relevant for tribal members.

### **Parish Library Survey Results<sup>12</sup>**

Of the ten surveys sent out to the parish libraries, six were returned completed for a sixty percent return rate. The following parishes replied: Allen, Avoyelles, Natchitoches, Sabine, St. Mary, and Vernon. The following parishes did not choose to participate: Jefferson Davis, Rapides, LaSalle, and Terrebone.

The following breakdown gives the responses from each parish library director.<sup>13</sup>

#### **Question 1**

What types of special services, if any, do you offer to this group? Please describe the services that are offered in the following areas: Collections, Bilingual materials, Programs (workshops, classes, cultural events, etc.), Oral Tradition/Storytelling.

#### Allen Parish (Coushatta)

Services: “We have sent our library van to the reservation to offer library cards and services. Very little participation”

Response to all sub-questions: “No”

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<sup>12</sup> Surveys were completed and returned between November and December 2001.

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix B for complete survey

Avoyelles Parish (Tunica-Biloxi)

Did not respond to Question 1

Sabine Parish (Choctaw-Apache Community of Ebarb)

Response to question and all sub-questions: "None"

Vernon Parish (Four-Winds Cherokee)

Bilingual: "English Only"

Storytelling: "General collection and programs and services for Americans"

No response to other parts of Question 1

Natchitoches Parish (Caddo Adais)

Services: "Basic Native American collection"

Response to all sub-questions: "N/A"

St. Mary Parish (Chitimacha)

Services: "We currently have eight books in our collection that focuses on the Chitimacha Tribe"

Bilingual: "None. The tribe is trying to trace the history of their language. Their language was lost over the years and English is now their primary language."

Programs: "We do not have any workshops or classes that focus on the Chitimacha Tribe. We provide workshops and classes for the general public."

Storytelling: "We do not provide anything special for the Chitimacha tribe, but they do come to the library with artifacts, literature and stories about their ancestry. The provide this to the public free of charge."

**Question 2**

If you do not offer any special services for this group, why is that so?

Allen Parish (Coushatta)

No Services Selections: “Do not have many patrons from this group use the library, Not enough funding”

Avoyelles Parish (Tunica-Biloxi)

No Services Selections: “Do not have many patrons from this group use the library, Other”

Other Explain: “We have made this group aware of our willingness to offer cooperative programs on assistance in any way. We do offer many programs and collection materials which would be of specific interest to tribal members but those are not limited to tribal members. There is, unfortunately, not much material or information published on the Tunica-Biloxi, but we do buy anything we find. There is no language, to my knowledge. I should say, no extant language; I'm sure there was one at one time.”

Sabine Parish (Choctaw-Apache Community of Ebarb)

No Services Selections: “Other”

Other Explain: “Their needs seem to be similar to the rest of the community. Also, they have a fairly large collection of library materials at their tribal headquarters.”

Vernon Parish (Four-Winds Cherokee)

No Services Selections: “Not aware of group in this area, Do not have many patrons from this group use the library, Not enough funding”

Natchitoches Parish (Caddo Adais)

No Services Selections: “Do not have many patrons from this group use the library”

St. Mary Parish (Chitimacha)

No Services Selections:” Do not have many patrons from this group use the library, Other”

Other Explain: “I am a new director at this library system (since April) and this will be a focus of mine once I get all of our current problems worked out.”

**Question 3**

Have you ever been approached by the tribe to provide a special service or to have the library used by the tribe for a special event? If yes, please explain.

St. Mary Parish (Chitimacha)

Response: “We have not been approached by the tribe to provide any special services. Children from their tribal school do attend and participate in our weekly story hours.”

All Other Parishes

Response: “No”

**Question 4**

Has your library ever done a needs assessment for this group? If yes, what was the result?

All Parishes

Response: “No”

**Question 5**

If the library has not performed a formal needs assessment for this group, what do you think are the needs of this group, from your perspective?



Allen Parish (Coushatta)

Response: “I think they need information about library services available to them. They probably need some basic literacy services. Computer instruction, job hunting information, adults' and children's programming are all things the Coushatta need. In short, they need the same things we all need but perhaps customized to blend with their culture.”

Avoyelles Parish (Tunica-Biloxi)

Response: “As far as special needs, separate from those of the average person, probably predominately cultural and historical needs.”

Sabine Parish (Choctaw-Apache Community of Ebarb)

Response: “I am not aware of any special needs of this group”

Vernon Parish (Four-Winds Cherokee)

No response

Natchitoches Parish (Caddo Adais)

Response: “I feel that the basic needs of this group would be the basic needs of any group. That is, the ability to access information freely and without limitation.”

St. Mary Parish (Chitimacha)

Response: “The Chitimacha Tribe is very self sufficient and does not require anything from us that is separate from what is supplied to the general public.”

**Question 6**

Do you plan to provide any special services for this group in the future? Please explain.

Allen Parish (Coushatta)

Response: "At present, no. However I do see this as an area we need to explore.

We are hampered by their lack of interest and the fact that they are much closer to the adjacent parish's library [Jefferson Davis Parish]. Also, we are stretched pretty thin ourselves."

Avoyelles Parish (Tunica-Biloxi)

Response: "We do plan to offer a program through the LEH [Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities] on Native American history and literature"

Sabine Parish (Choctaw-Apache Community of Ebarb)

Response: "No"

Vernon Parish (Four-Winds Cherokee)

Response: "No"

Natchitoches Parish (Caddo Adais)

Response: "Not at this time"

St. Mary Parish (Chitimacha)

Response: "We do not have plans to provide any special services to the tribe in the immediate future."

**Question 7**

November is National Indian Heritage Month. Does your library plan to do anything special for this?

Allen Parish (Coushatta)

Response: "Not aware of this so did not plan anything."

Avoyelles Parish (Tunica-Biloxi)

Response: “Not this year, although we may in the future”

Sabine Parish (Choctaw-Apache Community of Ebarb)

Response: “No”

Vernon Parish (Four-Winds Cherokee)

Response: “No - programs for Americans only - no special groups”

Natchitoches Parish (Caddo Adais)

Response: “Not at this time”

St. Mary Parish (Chitimacha)

Response: “We did not do anything special for this month other than our normal

Thanksgiving story tellings of the Indians and their role in the first

Thanksgiving.”

**Parish Library Statistics**

In all fairness, some public libraries have larger budgets or staffs than others.

Therefore, below are listed some statistics for the parish libraries surveyed along with satisfaction by the interviewees.<sup>14</sup>

**Table 8: Interviewee Satisfaction with Parish Libraries**

Parish Library	Tribe(s) Served	Interviewees	Generally Pleased with Public Library Service
Rapides	Clifton Choctaw and Talimali Band of Apalache of Louisiana	Blanche Thomas	Yes
		Jeanette Bennett	
Jefferson Davis Allen	Coushatta	Shirley Doucet	Yes
Vernon	Four-Winds Cherokee	Principle Chief Billy Sinor	Yes
Natchitoches	Caddo Adais	Chief Rufus Davis	No
St. Mary	Chitimacha	Denise Hodge	No
Sabine	Choctaw-Apache Community of Ebarb	Carolyn Bolton	No
LaSalle	Jena Band of Choctaws	Christie Murphy	No
Avoyelles	Tunica-Biloxi	Juanita DeCote	No
Terrebone	United Houma Nation	John Silver	No

<sup>14</sup> Louisiana, Public Libraries in Louisiana Statistical Report (State Library of Louisiana, 2000).

**Table 9: Parish Library Statistics 2000 – Buildings and Bookmobiles**

Parish Library	Tribe(s) Served	# of Buildings	# of Bookmobiles
Rapides	Clifton Choctaw and Talimali Band of Apalache of Louisiana	10	1
Sabine	Choctaw-Apache Community of Ebarb	8	0
Terrebone	United Houma Nation	8	0
Avoyelles	Tunica-Biloxi	7	0
St. Mary	Chitimacha	6	1
Jefferson Davis	Coushatta	4	1
Allen	Coushatta	3	0
Vernon	Four-Winds Cherokee	3	1
LaSalle	Jena Band of Choctaws	2	1
Natchitoches	Caddo Adais	1	1

**Table 10: Parish Library Statistics 2000 – MLS Librarians**

Parish Library	Tribe(s) Served	# MLS Librarians	Population Per One FTE MLS <sup>15</sup>	State Ranking out of 65
LaSalle	Jena Band of Choctaws	1	14,282	20
St. Mary	Chitimacha	3	14,570	21
Jefferson Davis	Coushatta	2	16,288	23
Natchitoches	Caddo Adais	2	19,540	28
Terrebone	United Houma Nation	5	20,901	32
Avoyelles	Tunica-Biloxi	2	23,045	37
Sabine	Choctaw-Apache Community of Ebarb	1	23,459	38
Allen	Coushatta	1	25,440	42
Rapides	Clifton Choctaw and Talimali Band of Apalache of Louisiana	4	31,584	46
Vernon	Four-Winds Cherokee	0	-	54

**Table 11: Parish Library Statistics 2000 – Total Income Per Capita**

Parish Library	Tribe(s) Served	Total Income Per Capita	State Ranking out of 65
Terrebone	United Houma Nation	\$37.96	7
St. Mary	Chitimacha	\$27.84	20
LaSalle	Jena Band of Choctaws	\$23.18	26
Allen	Coushatta	\$22.12	29
Rapides	Clifton Choctaw and Talimali Band of Apalache of Louisiana	\$21.94	30
Natchitoches	Caddo Adais	\$21.82	31
Jefferson Davis	Coushatta	\$19.77	35
Sabine	Choctaw-Apache Community of Ebarb	\$16.22	49
Avoyelles	Tunica-Biloxi	\$13.64	54
Vernon	Four-Winds Cherokee	\$13.22	55

<sup>15</sup> Full Time Equivalent Master of Library Science degreed employees

Both tribes in Rapides Parish were pleased with the library's services to the tribal members. The Rapides Parish Library had the most buildings of all of the libraries in the study, and it had a bookmobile. The Rapides Parish Library had more people per one FTE MLS, but it had *four* MLS librarians on staff, the next to highest number of MLS librarians in the survey. This library system also fell in the middle range for budget as compared with the other libraries in the survey. The statistics show that there is more outreach possible in Rapides Parish because of the number of branches and the bookmobile. The bookmobile was mentioned by the Clifton Choctaw interviewee as being beneficial to tribal members.

The Coushatta tribe was pleased with the service that it has received from two parish library systems. The Jefferson Davis and Allen Parish Library systems have a similar number of buildings.<sup>16</sup> From the print survey the Allen Parish Library claimed to have a smaller system than the Jefferson Davis system. The statistics show that the Allen Parish Library had more income per capita and only one building fewer than the Jefferson Davis system. The Allen Parish Library had one fewer MLS librarian and had a larger population per that one FTE MLS. Statistically the systems are similar, and fall in the middle range of each of the statistics reviewed.

Even though the Vernon Parish Library does not have an MLS librarian, the Principle Chief of the Four-Winds Cherokee Tribe found the library to be “outstanding.”<sup>17</sup> The Vernon Parish Library was also listed low on the statistics for the number of buildings and was last in the survey for total income per capita.

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<sup>16</sup> The statistics did not list Allen Parish's bookmobile that both the interview and the print survey results discussed.

<sup>17</sup> Telephone interview with Billy Sinor, Principal Chief of the Four-Winds Cherokee Tribe. January, 2002.

The four library systems with which Louisiana tribes were satisfied statistically had high, medium, and low resources as compared with other library systems in the survey. Rapides Parish Library had the highest amount of resources, Jefferson Davis and Allen Parish libraries fell in the middle, and the Vernon Parish Library had the least amount of resources. Yet all four of these library systems generally satisfied their tribal communities. This data shows that there was no correlation between resources and satisfaction with library service.

## **Discussion**

### **Summary of Results**

The results of this study show that there are a variety of tribal libraries in the state of Louisiana. There is a library in a community center, a library in a museum, a school library, and a resource center in the education department for one of the tribes. One tribe has future plans to build a tribal library. All of the collections have at least a special section, if not the focus, dedicated to Native American interests such as literature and history. In general the tribal libraries also have some the typical items found in most public libraries in Louisiana such as general fiction, children's books, and reference materials.

What makes the tribal libraries special is not necessarily their collections but their audiences. The missions of these libraries are all the same: to serve the information needs of the Indian population in the area. The tribal libraries do this not only through the collection, but also through the services they provide and how and where they provide them. All of the libraries are linked to a tribal oriented building like the community center, the tribal school, the education center, and the museum. The tribal libraries do not operate separately or independently.

### **Culture**

Culture was fundamental at the tribal libraries. Two of the four libraries offered sewing classes because sewing is an integral part of the culture. The two types of sewing represented were quilting and sewing for regalia. Products of both these types of sewing are prominent at powwows. The only tribe to have a living language held classes in both English and Coshatta. The Chitimacha tribal school held language classes. The other two tribes with libraries also had tribal members who spoke Cajun French. These

libraries held a minimal number of books in Cajun French. Arts and crafts classes were both a reality for some libraries and a dream for others.

### Service to Children

All of the Louisiana tribal libraries focus on serving the Indian children. Children's services included after school tutoring, collections, and reference services. In the case of the school library, of course, the entire focus was on children with the exception of the small adult fiction section for community adults.

### Funding

A primary source of funding for all of the tribes was grants and donations. The Coushatta were the only tribe who also received a major amount of funding from the tribe. Casinos were not influential in funding the tribal libraries. Ms. Doucet with the Coushatta was unsure if casino funds were included in the tribal funds that came into her department.

### Technology

Three of the tribal libraries had computer labs, ranging from state of the art to out of date computers. All had PC type machines running some version of Microsoft Windows, again ranging from the latest (MS Windows 2000) to older versions. There were between six and a dozen computers at each lab. The one library that did not have a computer lab did have their catalog on a computer with hopes to publish it on the web in the future. Cataloging practices included the Library of Congress Classification System, the Dewey Decimal System, and having only shelf lists.

### Public Library Service

The most successful parish library programs, according to the tribal members interviewed, were the ones that came to the tribal members. In the case of the Coushatta,



the Allen Parish library brought out their bookmobile and the Jefferson Davis Parish library brought out the Summer Reading Program to the tribe's resource center. A bookmobile also visits members of the Clifton Choctaw tribe. Ms. Thomas was satisfied with the bookmobile's service.

Another success story was found in genealogy resources. The Four-Winds Cherokee Chief found the parish library's genealogy collection to be "outstanding." The Caddo Adais tribe uses the local university's library specifically for its extensive genealogy collection.

Unfortunately, many interviewees felt that they were not being served adequately or at all by the parish library systems. The print surveys to the parish libraries support the interviewees' opinions that the services to tribal members are inadequate. The parish libraries in many cases are not offering special services to the Indian populations in their areas.

The Vernon Parish Library serving the Four-Winds Cherokee tribe stated that it had a "General collection and programs and services for Americans." This raises the question of what constitutes an American collection, programs, and services.

Many of the libraries responding to the surveys stated that they do not have many Indian patrons using the library. This also raises questions such as what are the methods the libraries are using to determine the ethnicity of patrons, and what are the reasons that Indian patrons are not using the library. Only *two* libraries responded that the reason they do not have special services is a lack of funding.

The Sabine Parish Library serving the Choctaw-Apache Community of Ebarb stated that the tribe's "needs seem to be similar to the rest of the community. Also, they

have a fairly large collection of library materials at their tribal headquarters.” The Sabine Parish Library stated in the survey that a needs assessment had not been done for the tribe. This raises further questions of how the library knows what those needs are. The parish library was misinformed of the “large collection.” The tribe has hopes to build a tribal library in the future, but currently they have about twenty books that they circulate.

The results of the surveys showed that there was no communication between the parish libraries and the tribes in either direction. None of the parish libraries had done an information needs analysis, yet they all had opinions on what “seemed” to be the needs of the tribal members. A popular response was that the needs of the tribal members are the same as everyone else. One parish felt that the tribe did not need the library.

Most parish libraries in the study did not plan to offer any special services in the future. One did plan to have something on Native American history and literature, while another wanted to be able to offer services, but did not have the resources. No one was planning anything for Native American Heritage month. One however does have the annual storytelling of “the Indians and their role in the first Thanksgiving.”

Unknowingly, the library could be offending some of its Indian patrons with such storytelling.

#### Lack of communication

Some of these tribal libraries have been around for decades. However, there was no documentation of the existence of these libraries except internally in the individual tribes themselves. Even the tribes of Louisiana were unaware of each other’s tribal libraries.

The biggest issue discovered during the course of research was the lack of communication between all parties involved including: Louisiana Indian tribes, the State Library of Louisiana, and parish library directors. In the cases where there was good communication, there were successful library programs like in the case of the Coushatta and Jefferson Davis Parish and Allen Parish Libraries. Ms. Doucet said that they were pleased with the service that both libraries had provided. There was a summer reading program brought out to the reservation and a bookmobile that visited.

In many cases, especially with the state recognized tribes because of the lack of the visible reservations and casinos, the response to the question, “Does the parish library know that your tribe exists?” was often “I think they do,” or “They should,” or even, “I hope they do.” This raises some questions. Is it the responsibility of the tribe to initiate communication with the parish library system? Or is it the responsibility of the parish library to contact the tribe? It is obvious in many cases in Louisiana that neither side believes that making the first communication is its responsibility.

Traditionally Indian tribes have dealt with government entities, dating back to when the first treaty was signed. The distrust of government entities also dates back. Based on the surveys and interviews the parish libraries in Louisiana, for the most part, are not familiar with the information and cultural needs of Native Americans in Louisiana. The lack of cultural knowledge only identifies one of the barriers of communication. Appendix F contains some guide pamphlets published in 1975 by the National Indian Education Association. While some of the technology mentioned is out of date, the cultural procedures still apply and are relevant across many tribes. “Establishing Indian Library Service Part I” is intended for libraries and librarians to

better understand the cultural and information needs of Native Americans. “Part II” explains to Indians the library’s point of view. These guides were intended to create better communication channels between public libraries and Native Americans.

### Lack of Knowledge of Resources

It was discovered during the interviews that the tribal library staff lacked the knowledge of the resources and funds available to them. Only two of the tribes were aware of the LSTA grants. No one knew about the Louisiana Catalog which contains materials about Louisiana including materials in Cajun French, the language of many Louisiana Indian tribes. The Chitimacha school librarian was the only one who knew about grants available beyond the immediate tribal level; she had attended thirty hours of library school and so knew about the resources available to her library. No one knew about the large collection of grant information available at the Centroplex branch of the East Baton Rouge Parish library system. Only one tribe had a membership in the American Indian Library Association (AILA). Most were also unaware of the State Library’s program for the blind and physically handicapped, including audio materials in Cajun French. During the course of the research, the lack of knowledge of resources for tribal libraries became clear. Therefore, the researcher provided a list of “Resources for Louisiana Tribal Librarians” to each tribal librarian interviewed.<sup>1</sup>

### What Constitutes a Library?

Questions were raised concerning the legitimacy and definitions of the tribal libraries. What constitutes a library? Why should these tribal libraries be classified as libraries? The LSTA defines “Library” as being one of the following:

“(2) LIBRARY- The term ‘library’ includes--

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix C

- `(A) a public library;
- `(B) a public elementary school or secondary school library;
- `(C) an academic library;
- `(D) a research library, which for the purposes of this subtitle means a library that--
  - `(i) makes publicly available library services and materials suitable for scholarly research and not otherwise available to the public; and
  - `(ii) is not an integral part of an institution of higher education; and
- `(E) a private library, or other special library, but only if the State in which such private or special library is located determines that the library should be considered a library for purposes of this subtitle.”<sup>2</sup>

Obviously two of the Louisiana tribal libraries qualified under this definition because they received the LSTA grant.

If a center has few books, but offers other services that a “library” offers, should that center be considered a library? The Coushatta resource center has a small collection of two hundred printed books, but it offers classes and workshops, has audiovisual equipment and a meeting room, and has a state of the art computer lab. Should it be considered a library? Who makes that decision? These are questions that could be considered for future research.

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<sup>2</sup> The Museum and Library Services Act of 1996. Available on the web at: [http://www.ims.gov/whatsnew/leg/leg\\_mlsa.pdf](http://www.ims.gov/whatsnew/leg/leg_mlsa.pdf)

## State Library of Louisiana

The role of the State Library of Louisiana is to support the parish public library systems. The State Library's five year plan under the Library Services and Technology Act of 1996 states:

“The State Library of Louisiana is dedicated to meeting that challenge with programs to enhance public library technology; to stimulate interlibrary cooperation and resource sharing; and to improve library and information services to people of diverse geographic, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, including individuals with disabilities, people with limited information skills, persons with difficulty using a library, children from families with incomes below the poverty line, and underserved urban and rural communities. Directly because of LSTA, the State Library can present an array of programs reaching the handicapped, the illiterate, the institutionalized, the aged, the economically suppressed, and others.”<sup>3</sup>

When contacted about the tribal libraries, a State Library consultant said that the State Library personnel was unaware that the tribal libraries existed. He stated that there was nothing that he was authorized to do for the tribal libraries beyond putting the local parish library in contact with the tribal library. The State Library was there to support the public libraries in the state, he said. The State Library's five-year plan specifically states that the State Library wants to improve services to people of diverse cultural backgrounds. The results of this study demonstrated that the Native American population was left out of the plan; this being the fifth year of their five-year plan and the State Library was unaware of their existence. Goal three under their five year plan states one of the activities is to: “Continue and expand the statewide book delivery system currently in 65 public libraries to include other types of libraries.” The State Library's five year

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<sup>3</sup> State Library of Louisiana. Five Year Plan For Improving Louisiana Library Services, 1998 - 2002. Available on the web at: <http://www.state.lib.la.us/TheLibrary/5year.htm>

plan specifically says, “to include other types of libraries.” Tribal libraries would be ideal for this relationship; however, nothing has been done in this area.

The tribal libraries were not listed in the Louisiana Library Directory as of the time of the study. Efforts are being made to include these libraries in the directory to increase awareness of them. This is the last year of the State Library’s five-year plan for 1998-2002. Now that it has been made aware of the tribal libraries, the State Library should keep them in mind when it is developing the next five-year plan.

### **Louisiana Voices**

One of the wonderful outcomes of this research was participation of the Louisiana Voices program. Louisiana Voices is under the State Library’s program for the blind and physically handicapped. Louisiana Voices records locally relevant print books into audio books for the blind and physically handicapped of the state. Many of these books are recorded in Cajun French. Volunteers are used to make most of the recordings.

The Program Manager, Christy Oliver Reeves, offered to make recordings, for any tribe who wants to participate, in their native language. For those who do not still have a living language, the invitation is still available to make recordings of traditionally oral stories or printed books in English or Cajun French. She has graciously offered to make, not only the audio format for the blind and physically handicapped, but a commercial quality version as well.

## **Summary and Conclusions**

### **Summary**

Until the writing of this thesis there has been nothing documented on the Native American tribal libraries in Louisiana. There is, however, documentation on tribal libraries in other states with larger Indian populations such as New Mexico, Arizona, and South Dakota. The first tribal library began in the late 1950's but the majority started in the mid 1970's.

The Library Services Act has had many iterations, its latest is the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). This federal Act provides funding specifically for tribal libraries. Two of the Louisiana tribal libraries currently receive funding because of this Act.

The purpose of the study was to identify and describe the tribal libraries in Louisiana and to discover how the parish libraries were serving the needs of Indians in their communities. Technology in the tribal libraries and funding from casinos were specifically studied. The research was conducted using video taped, in person interviews at the tribal libraries for these tribes: Chitimacha, Coushatta, Tunica-Biloxi, and the United Houma Nation. Phone interviews were used for tribes without tribal libraries including the Caddo Adais, Choctaw-Apache Community of Ebarb, Clifton Choctaw, Four-Winds Cherokee, Jena Band of Choctaws, and the Talimali Band of Apalache of Louisiana. Print surveys were sent to each of the parish libraries where there were major populations of either federally or state recognized Indian tribes. The parishes included: Allen, Avoyelles, Jefferson Davis, LaSalle, Natchitoches, Rapides, Sabine, St. Mary, Terrebone, and Vernon.



The results of this study showed that culture was deeply integrated into the tribal libraries including sewing, arts and crafts, and workshops in the native language in the case of the Coushatta. All but one of the tribal libraries in the study lacked sufficient funding. None of the tribal libraries received money directly from casinos instead, most received funding from grants. All but one tribal library had computer labs with technology ranging from old to new. All of the libraries had all or part of their collections dedicated to Native American materials. The users of the libraries tended to be mostly children, but some adults used the facilities as well. The education levels of the library staffs ranged from eighth grade to a Master of Education degree.

Tribal members interviewed in four of the parishes were satisfied with the services provided by the public libraries. In general tribal members in the other six parishes were not please with the parish libraries. The levels of resources including number of buildings and bookmobiles, number of MLS librarians on staff, and funding were examined for each library with which the Indian users were pleased. The levels of resources ranged from high to medium to low for each of the parishes in which tribal members interviewed were satisfied with parish library services.

Overall there was a general lack of communication between the tribes and the parish libraries. There was also a general lack of knowledge of the tribal librarians as to the resources available to them. The researcher provided to each tribal librarian a list of resources for tribal librarians in Louisiana.<sup>1</sup>

The State Library was unaware of the existence of the tribal libraries and so had not included those libraries in their actions taken under their five year plan for the LSTA state library grant they received.

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix D

Louisiana Voices is at the State Library and records audio books for the blind and physically handicapped. The director of the program has offered to record published or non-published stories in the native languages of any tribe who wishes to participate. The director has also offered to make a commercial quality version of these recordings in addition to the format normally used by the blind and physically handicapped audio book program.

## **Conclusions**

### Compromise

Townley pointed out that even if a public library plans programs for Indians, it could only be successful if the library involves people from the community, which is generally the case with most library programs.

“After planning and developing a program which they thought would be of use to Indian people, librarians were amazed to encounter indifference or hostility on the part of the community. Successful programs employ community residents. Libraries are new to Indian people. They must be introduced by someone the community trusts.”<sup>2</sup>

The tribal libraries are run by tribal members and often by the tribes. In these instances the trust is automatically there unlike with the public libraries, which are run by people from outside of the tribe. Herein lies the compromise. Parish librarians working with tribal librarians can provide much more relevant and structured services than either group could alone. The parish libraries could save money and staffing time by providing services through the tribal libraries while the tribal members would gain the rewards of the services without having to go through the barriers that there are in the public library. This could be the starting point to slowly introducing tribal members to the programs and

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<sup>2</sup> Charles T. Townley, “American Indian Library Service,” Advances in Librarianship 4 (1978): 135-180.

services the public library has to offer. Once the trust has been built, it could eventually lead to tribal members going to the public library's building in situations where transportation is viable. The public library is almost always concerned with increasing the patron base. This would offer a unique way to involve members of the community in the library's activities.

This compromise would still work even for tribes without tribal libraries. Parish libraries can work with the tribal leaders or education directors to provide services for tribal members. None of the tribes interviewed were opposed to working with the public libraries.

### Future Research

This study was only a preliminary survey of the existence of tribal libraries and library services to Native Americans in Louisiana. In the future there should be more in depth and longer studies performed on the individual aspects of tribal libraries and their relationships with public libraries. This research has paved the way for future studies on tribal libraries in Louisiana. Some topics for possible future work include: studies of user information needs from each tribe; in depth funding source research including the role of casinos in funding tribal libraries; measuring improvements the state and parish libraries will have or have not made since this study; how changes in technology affect tribal libraries; is oral tradition being replaced, supplemented, or encouraged by libraries; and studying the efforts for recruiting of Native American students by the Louisiana State University School of Library and Information Science. Because the research area of tribal libraries in Louisiana is so untapped, the possibilities for studies are vast.

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## APPENDIX A

### Tribal Library Interview Questions

1. Make them feel comfortable with me and the camera, so start out slow
  - a. Tell them about me, what I'm doing, and why
2. Tell me about yourself
  - a. Background
  - b. Affiliation with the tribe
  - c. How you got this job
  - d. How long have you been working there
3. Tell me about your library
  - a. Collection
  - b. Users
  - c. Funding sources
    - i. Do you receive any gaming money?
  - d. Building
  - e. History
  - f. Future plans
    - i. What more would you like to do if you had the funding?
  - g. Technology
    - i. What do you have?
    - ii. What do you want/need to have?
  - h. Can you show me your facilities?
  - i. Tribal culture integration
    - i. Bilingual or tribal language materials
    - ii. Library used as a meeting place
    - iii. Oral tradition – story telling
    - iv. Etc.
4. Tell me about your local parish library?
  - a. How far is the closest one?
  - b. What parish is it in?
  - c. What branch is it?
  - d. Do they know you're here?
  - e. Do they serve your population adequately?
  - f. Are they sympathetic to your information needs?
  - g. Do they offer any special services for your tribal members?
  - h. Has anyone from the parish library or another agency ever contacted your tribe to assess your information needs that you know of?
  - i. Have you or anyone else ever contacted them to provide your tribe services? Who? When?
5. Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about?
6. Would you like a copy of?
  - a. Thesis
  - b. Video tape

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Parish Library Cover Letter and Print Survey**

[Date]

**X** Parish Library  
Address  
City, State Zip Code

Dear **X** Parish Library Director:

I am a student at the School of Library and Information Science at LSU in Baton Rouge conducting research for my thesis on the role of libraries in Native American communities in Louisiana. There are nine Indian tribes in Louisiana; the **X** Tribe is located in your Parish with a population of at least **X** according to the latest census report.

Please take a few minutes out of your schedule to fill out the enclosed survey. Since I am only surveying Parish libraries that have these communities, your responses are very important to my research. Please feel free to use input from other librarians and staff when answering the questions.

In order to be able to include your responses in the research, please mail the completed survey in the envelope provided by December 1, 2001. I appreciate your cooperation in my project and will gladly send you a copy of my thesis when it is complete sometime this spring.

Sincerely,

Becky Hebert

Encl. 2

1. What types of special services, if any, do you offer to this group? Please describe the services that are offered in the following areas:
  - A. Collections
  - B. Bilingual materials
  - C. Programs (workshops, classes, cultural events, etc.)
  - D. Oral Tradition/Storytelling
2. If you do not offer any special services for this group, why is that so? Please check as many as apply.
  - ☐ Not aware of group in this area
  - ☐ Do not have many patrons from this group use the library
  - ☐ Not enough funding
  - ☐ Don't know who to contact about their informational needs
  - ☐ Don't feel that group is large enough to warrant special services
  - ☐ Other
3. Have you ever been approached by the tribe to provide a special service or to have the library used by the tribe for a special event? If yes, please explain.

4. Has your library ever done a needs assessment for this group? If yes, what was the result?
5. If the library has not performed a formal needs assessment for this group, what do you think are the needs of this group, from your perspective?
6. Do you plan to provide any special services for this group in the future? Please explain.
7. November is National Indian Heritage Month. Does your library plan to do anything special for this?



## APPENDIX C

### Resources for Louisiana Tribal Librarians

- Library Development Consultants
  - At the State Library in Baton Rouge, LA
  - Free service to all libraries
  - Gary Ralstead 225-342-4931
  - Help with the startup/growth of new and small libraries
- Library Services and Technology Act IMLS Grants
  - [http://www.imls.gov/grants/library/lib\\_nat.asp](http://www.imls.gov/grants/library/lib_nat.asp)
  - Available to all Federally Recognized Tribes
  - Non-competitive and competitive grants
- LA Catalog
  - A free catalog that contains books regarding Louisiana
  - Also has Cajun French books and audio items
  - 1-800-375-4100
- East Baton Rouge Parish Library – Centroplex Branch
  - Has a large collection of Grant related information
  - (225) 389-4964
- Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped
  - Located in the State Library building in Baton Rouge, LA
  - Patrons sign up for service, must prove they have a disability (includes learning disabilities)
  - Patrons select book choices
  - Patrons are mailed audio books (with players) or Braille books
  - The service is free and open to all Louisiana residents
  - State Library of Louisiana  
Section for the Blind and Physically Handicapped  
701 North Fourth Street  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802
  - Open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m to 4:30 p.m.  
The Louisiana state-wide toll-free telephone number is (800) 543-4702.
  - <http://www.state.lib.la.us/Dept/SpecServ/sbph.htm>
  - They also have a program where they record print books to audio books
- Louisiana Association of Nonprofit Organizations (LANO)
  - Has information for non-profits
  - PO Box 3808, Baton Rouge, LA 70821
  - Ph: 225-343-5266
  - Fax: 225-343-5363
  - [www.lano.org](http://www.lano.org)
- American Indian Library Association (AILA)
  - Sub-organization of the American Library Association (ALA)
  - Will be having a conference in New Orleans, LA in January, 2002
  - <http://www.nativeculture.com/lisamitten/aila.html>
- LSU School of Library and Information Science

- They can help you if you decide you want to get a Master's of Library and Information Science.
- They can give you information about scholarships
- <http://slis.lsu.edu/>
- In addition to the Baton Rouge site, classes are offered as distance education at many locations throughout the state, including:
  - New Orleans
  - Lafayette
  - Eunice
  - Lake Charles
  - Alexandria
  - Monroe
  - Shreveport
  - Thibodeaux

## APPENDIX D

### Listing of Louisiana Tribal Libraries

<b>Tribe</b>	Chitimacha Tribe
<b>Address</b>	Chitimacha Tribal School Library PO Box 661
<b>City, State, Zip</b>	Charenton, LA 70523
<b>Phone</b>	(337) 923-7215
<b>Fax</b>	(337) 923-6848
<b>Email</b>	denhod@chitimacha.gov
<b>Contact Name</b>	Denise Hodge
<b>Contact Phone</b>	(337) 923-9114
<b>Parish</b>	St. Mary
<b>Type of Library</b>	School Library with small adult section
<b>Approx. Size</b>	~4500+ books & videos and a computer lab
<b>Open to:</b>	School children and adults of the community
<b>Tribe</b>	Coushatta Tribe
<b>Address</b>	Education Center PO Box 818
<b>City, State, Zip</b>	Elton, LA 70532
<b>Phone</b>	(337) 584-2261
<b>Fax</b>	(337) 584-2998
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Contact Name</b>	Shirley Doucet
<b>Contact Phone</b>	(337) 584-1420
<b>Parish</b>	Jeff Davis and Allen
<b>Type of Library</b>	Resource Center
<b>Approx. Size</b>	~200 books and a computer lab
<b>Open to:</b>	Tribal members
<b>Tribe</b>	Tunica-Biloxi Tribe
<b>Address</b>	Museum Library PO Box 1589 150 Melancon Dr.
<b>City, State, Zip</b>	Marksville, LA 71351
<b>Phone</b>	(318) 253-9767
<b>Fax</b>	(318) 253-9791
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Contact Name</b>	Juanita DeCote
<b>Contact Phone</b>	(318) 253-8174
<b>Parish</b>	Avoyelles
<b>Type of Library</b>	mostly Native American collection, in a museum
<b>Approx. Size</b>	~1000 books & magazines, cataloged
<b>Open to:</b>	The public for reference, tribal members for circulation

<b>Tribe</b>	United Houma Nation
<b>Address</b>	Dulac Community Center PO Box 349 125 Coast Guard Rd.
<b>City, State, Zip</b>	Dulac, LA 70353
<b>Phone</b>	(985) 563-7483
<b>Fax</b>	(985) 563-7826
<b>Email</b>	dcc1@mobiletel.com
<b>Contact Name</b>	John Silver
<b>Contact Phone</b>	
<b>Parish</b>	Terrebone
<b>Type of Library</b>	Community Center library
<b>Approx. Size</b>	~5000+ books and a computer lab
<b>Open to:</b>	The public

## APPENDIX E

### Consent Form

1.     **Study Title:**                   The Role of Libraries in Louisiana Native American Communities
2.     **Performance Sites:**        Dulac Community Center, Chitimacha Tribal School Library, Tunica-Biloxi Museum Library, Coushatta Resource Center
3.     **For information contact:**   Becky Hebert  
  School of Library and Information Science  
  267 Coates  
  Louisiana State University  
  Baton Rouge, LA 70803  
  (225) 578-3158
4.     **Purpose:**                    The study is to identify and describe different types of tribal libraries throughout Louisiana as well as discover the relationship of the parish library and the tribe and to educate the tribal librarians on the resources that are available to them.
5.     **Interviewees:**             Librarians over the age of 18.
6.     **Number of Interviewees:**   Unlimited
- Interview Procedures:**   This interview will focus on:  
  
  Discovering information about the tribal libraries such as collections, technology, funding sources, services, and interactions with parish libraries.  
  
  The interview will be conducted in sessions lasting a length of time to be determined by the you, the interviewee. At the end of each session you will be asked to sign a written release form giving copyright of the tape and transcript to the LSU School of Library and Information Science. This release form allows the Library School to keep this tape. This release form also enables the Library School to make your interview available to researchers and gives us permission to use the tapes in public presentations including but not limited to

audio or video documentaries, CD-ROMs, Internet publications, slide-tape presentations, or exhibits.

You may place restrictions on the tape of your interview or portions thereof. Because we are conducting these interviews to preserve the history and culture of Louisiana, we want these tapes to be made available to researchers and require that you restrict your interview for a limited number of years -- ten years, twenty-five years, fifty years, etc. The Library School will not place a permanent restriction on an interview.

7. **Benefits:**

This interview will help to document the history and culture of Louisiana tribal libraries and be a useful research tool for scholars. It will also preserve your memories and experiences for future generations of your family.

If you would like a copy of the tape of your interview, the Library School will give you one copy free of charge.

8. **Risks:**

The only risk is the inadvertent release of sensitive information. However, you may restrict any information that you believe is sensitive at any time during the process.

9. **Right to Refuse:**

You may end the interview at any time or tell the interviewer to turn off the video camera if you want part of your conversation to be "off the record". You may also refuse to answer any question or line of questioning.

10. **Privacy:**

This interview may also be used in part or as a whole in public presentations. If you want to remain anonymous or to restrict the use of your interview, please inform tell your interviewer or phone Becky Hebert, at (225) 578-3158.

11. **Signature:**

The study has been discussed with me and all my questions have been answered. I may direct additional questions regarding study specifics to the LSU School of Library and Information Science. If I have questions about interviewee's rights or other concerns, I can contact Robert Mathews, Institutional Review Board, (225) 578-8692. I agree to participate in the study described above and acknowledge the researchers' obligation to provide me with a copy of this consent form if signed by me.

**Signature of Interviewee**

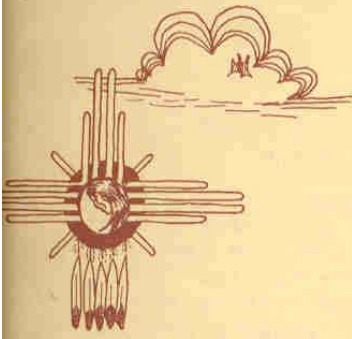
**Date**

## **APPENDIX F**

### **Guide Pamphlets**

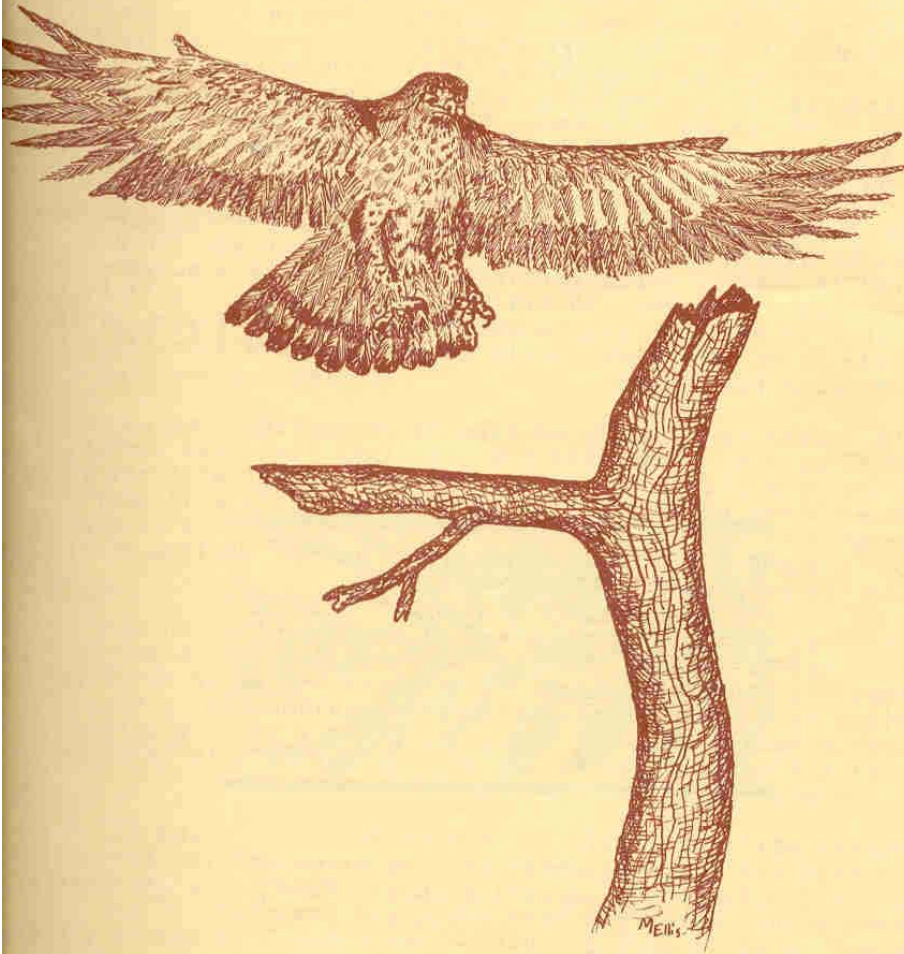
The following are guide pamphlets produced by the National Indian Education Association:





Establishing  
Indian Library Service  
by  
Rosemary Christensen

Guide Number 1  
Part I



LibSci  
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1975

## PREFACE

Libraries and information centers are rapidly becoming an integral part of Indian life. Individuals, organizations, and tribes have come to the decision that libraries and the information services that they offer are necessary to meet Indian goals. These goals may vary widely, from improved access to education, cultural information, information on available social services, to leisure reading. They are all based in a component or institution designed to process information - a library.

As yet, only limited resources are available to meet this fast growing demand. Funding must usually be garnered from other programs. Professionally qualified Indian librarians and trained Indian technicians are in critically short supply. Books and other informational resources still contain racist information. Experience in developing programs and services which meet the local community's needs is slight. Specific sensitivity to Indian ways and alternatives is just developing as library and information services develop in Indian communities.

The purpose of these guides is to provide initial direction and provide alternatives to those planning or engaged in developing Indian library and information systems. Each guide discusses basic policies, initial steps, or discreet activities that appear to be essential to successful Indian library service. Each guide gives the reader basic direction and alternatives for development in his locale.

The reader is strongly advised to recognize these guides for what they are - ideas and programs that have been successful in the communities where they are used. They will not solve all the problems of Indian library service. They will provide the reader with some ideas, programs, and concepts to be considered in light of informational needs in the specific Indian community to be served.

Three basic types of information are presented in the guides: societal coping skills, basic considerations for implementation; and descriptions of services unique or critical to Indian libraries. These guides are supplemented by the Appalachian Adult Education Center's, Library Service Guides. The excellent Appalachian guides deal primarily with services in small communities.

Coping skills are given in two guides, (#'s 1 and 2). Organization and implementation will be discussed in five of the guides (#0,3,9,10, & 11) which cover: funding, organization, assessing needs, materials selection, and training. Five guides will discuss services unique or critical to Indian Library Service (#4,5,6,7, & 8). These guides cover: cataloging, urban services, adult education, program elements, and information services.

Charles Townley, Editor



Working With Indian Communities and Agencies  
To Establish Indian Library Services.

Rosemary Ackley Christensen

Guide 1

Rosemary Ackley Christensen, Chippewa, is an educational consultant and resides in St. Paul, Minnesota.

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"The project presented or reported herein was performed pursuant to a Grant from the U.S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Office of Education and no official endorsement by the U.S. Office of Education should be inferred."

**Front Cover Artist:**

**Marshall K. Ellis, Oneida, of Oneida, Wisconsin illustrated the eleven Guide covers. Marshall is sixteen years old and a Junior High School student at the Institute of American Indian Arts, Santa Fe, New Mexico.**

## I. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Library, the word conjures certain images in the librarian's mind consisting perhaps of a building filled with books, other media materials meticulously catalogued in many small drawers mysteriously labeled with fragments of English words and guarded by library staff who, more often than not, ask for quiet, and when one wants a book, are quick to ask, "where is your card" and if one wants a magazine, are told "you can only take out the old ones", and the room has seating arrangements built around tables with hard straight back chairs and it is open only during certain hours...which is why, perhaps, Indians use the public library or the school library sparingly if at all.

The term-library-needs a new definition. It should be a place where members of the Indian community can go to for materials to further their tribal knowledge, or non-Indian knowledge or whatever kind of information the tribal person wishes to locate. It should be a place not already defined in the librarian's head, but with careful listening, and listening again and asking the right questions the librarian will help make the library one meant for Indians, used by Indians. The Indian library should have comfortable furnishings and be a comfortable place. A modicum of rules should exist. A smoking area should be designated and as many elder Indians chew tobacco, spittoons should be provided in the smoking area. Books and other library materials should be viewed not as ends in themselves to be displayed, catalogued, treasures piled here on earth but should be seen as tools, as a means to information. Treasures piled here on earth eventually rust and must be thrown out. How much better if they are given out, are used, are even removed to be used somewhere else.

Information should be provided the Indian community on an easy access basis on a variety of issues. A needs assessment could be taken on what information the community desires. Information needs could then be categorized and materials could be found to provide the needs. Both Indian and non-Indian information ought to be provided. Care should be taken to provide information through various means. If the first language in the community is the tribal language then information should be given in that language. Blurbs announcing library services should be in the tribal language with English interpretation provided. An information person should be available in the library. This person should be bilingual (if necessary) and know the manners observed in the community. In many communities it is important to observe certain courtesies to the older people. Information is not only what you provide but how you provide it.

Know the language requirements to be understood, know the customs, the local manners and make an effort to provide the information at the time and within the space the Indian community accepts and uses information.



Indian community, the controversy over who is an Indian and how one identifies an Indian continues. Librarians should not allow themselves to be put in the position of deciding who is an Indian. In most communities, (although not in urban communities) there is an elected or otherwise recognized Body politic who governs the Indian community. An Indian community can be a geographically enclosed community such as the Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians governed by the tribal council with a chairman or it can be a loosely affiliated group of people who share a common reservation upbringing or are enrolled in a tribe but live in an urban area such as St. Paul, Minnesota; Chicago, Illinois; or Seattle, Washington. Frequently there is an Indian neighborhood in cities, but just as frequently Indians are scattered throughout the city area. American Indian political scientist, Dr. Frances Svensson, University of Michigan in her monograph entitled, The Ethnics in American Politics: American Indians, devotes several pages to a discussion of who is an Indian. She discusses three separate categories; racial, cultural, and social. Another book to read for help in understanding who is an Indian is The Right to be Indian by Ernest Schusky available through The Indian Historical Press, Inc., San Francisco, California for \$2.00. Dr. Svensson's article is available from Burgess Publishing Company, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1973. Also depend on the local Indian governing body for a definition of the Indian community.

Dr. Svensson says:

Who, then is an Indian? Clearly, there are many answers, dependent on who is asking and for what purposes. For the United States government, racial and to a lesser extent cultural (so far as reservation residence expresses a cultural orientation) factors are primary. For the Census, social definition is sufficient. From the point of view of most reservation people, even after several hundred years of attack by European society on the foundations of Indian communalism, Indian identity is tied up in membership in a specific tribe, kinship bonds among its members, familiarity with cultural traditions, appearance. They are suspicious of those who claim an Indian identity too easily, who think an Indian is anyone who wears feathers and beads, who suddenly appears when benefits and claims settlements become available. Indians amongst themselves often refer unfavorably to the emergency of such "instant Indians," as well as to those whose Indianness is literally no more than skin deep ("Apples" in contemporary Indian parlance - red on the outside and white on the inside). They also express a sense of being able to "feel" who is Indian and who is not. While probably few Indians could pinpoint the behavioral characteristics which define Indianness, virtually all Indians agree that such patterns exist. The fact that the existence of an Indian style of behavior is generally accepted,



however much vagueness and disagreement there may be as to its definition, places limitations on Indian social and political behavior in the non-Indian world. He who acts in a non-Indian way risks losing his constituency. Therefore, in the political arena, it is not a racial or cultural identity which alone determines the Indian actor; instead, it is the complex interaction between these factors. At its heart, Indianness is a state of being, a cast of mind, a relationship to the Universe. It is undefinable. (Page 9)

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The art of communication may be your biggest problem. Indians are aware of the services libraries may be able to offer at least as far as the general concept of libraries are concerned. Librarians, however, ought to make a special effort to put together an attractive brochure or statement emphasizing the kinds of services that libraries can offer to Indian citizens. The statement ought to be printed in English and the tribal language. As services other than books are available through libraries, these services ought to be made known to the general Indian public. One of the needed services that Indian communities will use if libraries offer it, is books and materials on legal matters concerning Indian affairs. Pamphlets are available from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, books such as Felix Cohen's Handbook of Federal Indian Law as well as Charles Kappler's book Treaties and Agreements of the United States of America with Indian Nations ought to be available as reference materials. Additionally, the library ought to have bibliographies available listing pertinent materials interested persons can obtain, through inter-library loans. Such a service is especially pertinent to tribal people who are attempting to educate themselves, educators working with schools and community people who serve on the variety of boards that exist in Indian country. Although, Indians are aware they need information, they are unsure how to approach the librarian or others who may have access to the information. Further, many non-Indian librarians are not aware that the above mentioned services exist. Librarians ought to make themselves aware of these special services available on Indian-related materials. For example, the University Microfilms Center located in Ann Arbor, Michigan has a special bibliography on Indian-related doctoral dissertations available on microfilm or microfiche. It would be appropriate for Indian libraries to have these bibliographies available along with appropriate machines.

The various Historical Societies with their accumulated wealth of material, can be made known to the Indian community. Librarians might begin by making themselves aware of the history of the surrounding community, locating materials on the community from whatever sources are available including local and state historical societies and the National Archives in Washington. Perhaps a display of the local history could be planned with in-



vitations to the local Indian governing body to open the exhibit or have a ceremony opening such a display. Be sure and invite the local tribal chairman or whoever the local Indian leaders are. The best person(s) to begin communicating with is the local recognized tribal leader(s). Ask permission to speak to the rest of the community, ask advice on how to proceed. It is important that librarians observe a few courtesies that may be different from white society. Always be courteous to older people. Elders in the Indian community are respected for their wisdom gained from experience and Indians are trained to exhibit respect to elders even though one may have more education or degrees than the older Indian person. Women librarians should be especially careful to not show an overly aggressive manner to tribal leaders. Indians generally, and especially Indian men do not care for overly aggressive women. Do not tell Indian people what to do, ask their advice, offer assistance, but don't tell anyone what to do and do not emphasize your book learning. It is important to remember that Indians may speak in a slower manner so don't be in a hurry to interrupt. Many older Indians raised in a traditional fashion will not respond further if once interrupted during conversation. It is noticable in white society, that interruptions are common and apparently acceptable. Begin listening again if you wish to communicate with Indian community members. Some tribal people may use anecdotes, stories, or seemingly irrelevant statements to communicate on a particular issue. This kind of communication is slower, but interaction is accomplished and communication is effective. Listen, be slow to speak, don't interrupt (especially for elders) and listen to Indians. In order to establish good communication be aware of the physical surroundings used for meetings. If you are responsible for a meeting be sure to invite parents and their children. Indians are not bothered by having children around and prefer to go to meetings when they can bring them along (in most communities). Provide ashtrays and serve refreshments. Indians are hospitable people, traditionally, and they expect hospitality from people that invite them to meetings. Therefore, serve coffee and perhaps, sandwiches, or dessert. Try to arrange informal seating arrangements away from the ubiquitous rigid rows. Try for a circle, if possible and make sure the older people have the most comfortable chairs.

#### A PROBLEM OF SKILLS

Indians, contrary to stereotypes, are not dumb people uncaring about their children or their daily livelihood. Ask how the library can help, ask what services Indians may need, then put together an array of services that can be provided through the library. Some services that can easily be provided but that may not be usual services at libraries could be, interpreting services (reading English to a non-English reader, such as in letters received). Tribal people whose first language is Indian, who perhaps speak enough English to get by but who can't read English are really handicapped when it comes to everyday bureaucracies. A simple water bill statement may not be understood or worse may be misunderstood and feared. Such a service should



cost nothing, and it would take little time for persons on duty. This service could be provided on a daily basis for the Indian community. Depending on staff time, letterwriting services may also be provided. Libraries can provide meeting rooms for community meetings. It can offer research, referral and retrieval services as constraints allow. Whatever services the Indian community identifies, the library should examine its staff, its time, its resources and then present to the Indian community exactly the services it can provide and which must be referred to other agencies. It is important to make clear what the library can do and what it cannot do. However, arbitrary cutoffs should not be made until a complete, honest evaluation is done of the needs of the Indian community and the resources, time and funding the library can offer to these needs. In order to provide a real service, it may be necessary to allow some here-to-fore standard sacred requirements for libraries go hang until the real needs of the Indian community are met. It may not be necessary to catalog every acquisition immediately and cataloging perhaps can be less extensive than standard practices. Remember, if you don't provide what the Indian community needs, they won't use what you do offer.

#### A PROBLEM OF MONEY

Money is always a problem. Sometimes Indian community members have ideas and know funding sources unknown to non-Indians. Ask them, but don't expect the purse of the tribal council to be deep, wise and handsome. Sometimes, funds can be obtained through councils, but usually council funds are limited and life support needs come first for tribal money consideration. Refer to the Guide to Funding Sources for American Indian Library and Information Services compiled by Rebecca Cawley and obtainable through National Indian Education Association, 3036 University Avenue, S.E., Minneapolis, Minnesota or U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Library Services, Washington, D.C. 20240, 1974. Be aware of funding that can be obtained through the Indian Education Act described in the Guide, especially under Part B of Title IV, described on page 48. There are proposal deadlines for the federal funds and these dates must be observed. Part B deadline is usually at the first of the year in late January or February. The date is set each year by the Office of Indian Education and published in the Federal Register. If you are going to send a Title IV proposal Part A or B or C, you will need to begin the process sooner than a few weeks prior to the deadline date. Title IV proposals mandate Indian participation. In order to meet the mandate of Part A, for example, the proposal must come from a school district, have a parent committee selected by the Indian community and have a publicized public hearing for the Indian community. These activities take time. Part B proposals usually need Indian sponsorship. Again, these activities take time. Indians expect their participation and cooperation will be asked prior to deadlines so they will have adequate time to ponder the proposal, make their statements and make decision on whether or not to sponsor or participate in the activity. Proposals, of course, should be written with the



active participation of the Indian community. Don't make the mistake of going to them with an already written proposal. No one likes to be asked to be a rubber stamp, Indians especially are tired of being asked to accept, in total, concepts written and conceived by non-Indians for the benefit of Indians. However on the other hand, don't expect the Indian community to have the necessary expertise to write the proposal. It is sometimes necessary for others to assume the actual writing responsibility. However, Indians can and will give ideas for the proposal, suggest changes, react to written objectives and generally say how and what they want if they are asked in time. Possibly some members of the Indian community may be able to help write proposals, but many times, Indian community members who are skilled in this activity may not have time. Professional librarians who are acquainted with proposal writing can provide a great service to the Indian community if they will share this skill with Indians.

#### WHY BOTHER?

The problems librarians may encounter in working with Indian communities to establish Indian libraries and information may seem insurmountable. But take heart, it is not. With a modicum of good will, some flexibility and a minimum of courtesy, Indians and non-Indians can interact for the benefit of any enterprise. And who knows, perhaps, the information you finally are able to present to the Indian community fitting their needs can be a small step in helping Indian communities attain their place in the sun. Information and communication given in a helping manner can do more to improve relationships between Indians and non-Indians than any of the previous help the B.I.A. attempted to give in all its years. If just one librarian helps just one person in the Indian community achieve something of importance to him then all of the help Indians have given white people from the first time they touched the shores when corn was given to starving whites, to the saving of someone's head in early times, to the help each of the early explorers received from their Indian guides, will have been repaid in some small measure. Indians are in the final analysis citizens of the United States and as such ought to have the same services received by other citizens. But because Indians are culturally different, have different lifestyles and live in a different manner, speak a different language and use different methods of communication, it behooves the offerer of the service to take cultural differences into account. Therefore, if the quality, caliber of services are to be as high and competent as any white citizen expects from his local library, then, the librarian must study the process of service, amend it where necessary and then trust that the end result, the actual service does indeed serve the Indian person as well as the services offered the white community. As to "why bother", it is your job!

#### III. THE INDIAN WAY OR HOW INDIAN COMMUNITIES FUNCTION AND MAKE DECISIONS



In order for librarians to promote services in a way acceptable to the Indian community it will be necessary for the librarian and other staff to have some notion of how Indian communities function and make decisions. One of the old bromides, known by Indian professionals and non-Indian veterans of Indian affairs is that, it is true that all Indians are individuals. Indians differ in tribal affiliations, language, cultural matters and lifestyle. According to D'Arcy McNickle, The Indian Tribes of the United States (Oxford University Press, London, New York, 1962, p. 5) it is estimated that 300 Indian languages were spoken in the area north of Mexico at the time of contact (by White man) and he estimates at least half of that number are still in use. The languages spoken that differ from one to another are an indication of the real differences that exist between American Indian tribes. Other differences occur as some tribal members remain on the reservation, others travel to urban areas, and others elect to assimilate so entirely into white society they no longer consider themselves Indian. Indians differ as to economic levels just as non-Indians do. Although many Indians are poor, being poor does not necessarily mean that one's way of living reflects only the economic level. Indians are culturally different regardless of economic class. Nancy Lurie in North American Indians in Historical Perspective (Random House, New York, 1971) discusses the contemporary Indians mentioning behaviors in common of many tribal people.

"...there seem to be very old common Indian elements that have always transcended local differences of language and culture and that can be properly termed Pan Indian."  
(Page 444)

She discusses a "persisting cluster of core values and related, predictable behavior that give Indian people a commonality of outlook they do not share with people of European cultural tradition." Lurie discusses ten characteristics but perhaps her first is most germane,

"...there is preference and relaxed patience for reaching decisions by consensus. While often baffling to the white observer, the process is patterned, and Indian people of widely varying tribal backgrounds are able to conduct business together according to mutually understood "rules"."  
(Page 444)

Stuart Levine in The American Indian Today (Everett Edwards, Inc., 133 South Pecan Avenue, Delano, Florida 32720, 1965) discusses the Indian way of arriving at decisions by consensus using the American Indian Chicago Conference of 1961 as a case in point.

"...Indian people tend to behave in such the same way in their relations with the dominant culture, and particularly with government agencies...a great deal of decision-making is a matter of personal conversation, give and take, and practical compromise. It is precisely this process at which



Indian people are most skilled." (Page 6)

Stuart summarizes by characterizing most Indians as solving problems by bargaining and negotiation with flexibility and pragmatism foremost.

The Commission on the Rights, Liberties, and Responsibilities of the American Indian issued a report titled, The Indian America's Unfinished Business compiled by William A. Brophy and Sophie D. Aberle. The entire document is recommended as an introduction to Indians and an overview of basic kinds of information about Indians albeit light on the matter of assigning chapters to Indian authors. The report covers many areas of Indian affairs especially congressional activities during the many years of Federal-Indian relations but the introduction is especially pertinent. The authors mention immediately how important it is for Indians to be totally involved in any program designed for Indians.

"No program imposed from outside can serve as a substitute for one willed by Indians themselves. Nor should their ostensible consent to a plan be deemed sufficient. Such "consent" may be wholly passive, indicating only a surrender to what seems unavoidable; or their consent may be obtained without their full understanding for before they are either able or desire to shoulder additional obligations. What is essential is to elicit their own initiative and intelligent cooperation." (Page 4)

This introduction labeled Indian values and attitudes discusses some of the major behavior differences Indians exhibit compared to non-Indians. Anyone attempting to understand Indian decision making ought to be aware that Indians are first, different, from other tribal groups, but Indians share some common values which may mean that Indians arrive at decisions in a different manner than non-Indians. The Commission report emphasizes two ideas, that of unity or mutual assistance and a reverence for Mother Earth. Each individual voluntarily works with the community (on which rests status as well as personal security.) Commission authors say this selflessness derives from the community venerating elders and their wisdom. However, the Commission cautions that these conceptions, are not consistently achieved. Modifications and exceptions to the norm exist in every group. Which is a simple way of saying that although Indians differ from one tribal group to another, from Indian to Indian within the tribal group and although Indians hold some ideas and possible behaviors in common still it also means that many Indians arrive at decision making in an entirely different manner than white folks but perhaps using the same outer shell such as meeting together, and possibly using some semblance of Roberts' Rules of Order. Indians and Indian behaviors cannot be generalized in an acceptable fashion for white folks to make up rules for easier interaction or to facilitate their understanding of the Indians. Perhaps the Commission said it best when they advised,



"...neighbors and local officials must make it a point to help the Indian participate on a basis of equality in their political and economic life. Let them not expect him to conform to their image of how he ought to be, but accept him as the fellow human creature he is, with freedom to shape his own life as they do."  
(Page 5)

#### IV. FIRST CONTACTS

Meet the community in the acceptable way in Indian communities. Contact the tribal council, the chairman or someone on the council. Ask for time on the agenda of the next tribal meeting. Ask them to advise you how to proceed. Ask if there is an appropriate subcommittee of the tribal council you ought to meet with, or another tribal branch of government, or another organization in the Indian community such as a parent committee or an advisory group to the local school. Just about every Indian community has some branch of government. Follow up on contacts advised by the tribal council. If they advise none, then make your own contacts but ask their blessing on your endeavors. If the council is unable to give you ideas on whom to contact, try the local school. Ask if there is a local parent committee, a Johnson O'Malley committee. Most communities have such a committee. Ask who the chairman is, and ask the chairmans permission for space on the agenda for the next meeting. Go slow and carefully. Proceed with caution. Try not to be overly aggressive. Do not show your anxiety at new customs, and do not show surprise at things strange to you. If you show surprise at something that is foreign to your upbringing, Indians will just laugh at you, and the stories will get around the community. News travels fast in the Indian community as in any community. Indians speak of the moccasin telegraph. The moccasin telegraph lives! and it is fast, efficient and reliable.

#### V. DEVELOPING A RELATIONSHIP

One of the most difficult items in your search in working with Indian communities to establish Indian library and information services is determining community interest. The first item is to make sure the community understands what you are trying to do. Then you can begin assessing community interest. One of the most thorough and effective ways open to people interested in assessing interest is to visit people in their homes or have them visit you in yours to speak of common interest. If you are new in the community this may be a bit difficult unless you have some local people help you. Ask your local contacts you have developed by now through the council or related agencies to advise you of key families to visit. If such an approach is one you rather would not take you could put on a feast and invite the community to it and tell them of what you are trying to do. A feast is the time honored way of many Indian groups to announce a venture, to assess opinions or to ask for help. A feast should feature as many Indian foods as you can obtain. Ask for the names of Indian women that will help you arrange and cook



the feast. Depending on your budget it would be good public relations to hire some Indian women to organize and cook and serve the feast. Such a person can also be responsible for obtaining wild meat if such is available, as buffalo, venison, wild turkey, fish, or another Indian food. Most Indian tribes recognize fried bread as a pow-wow food and this is a good item to feature. In the Midwest, wild rice should be served as well as some form of corn soup. Your menu will vary depending on the part of the country you are in but depend on your local contacts for advice. The best money you can spend is to hire a person to organize your feast. This way you will make yourself and your project visible to the Indian community in the best possible way. Also see if you can find a responsible Master of Ceremonies. Such a person should be known in the local Indian community. This person would be in charge of the program. Do not yourself assume this task unless you are very sure of yourself and your knowledge of the Indian community. A good master of ceremonies can make or conversely, a bad master of ceremonies can break your feast. Tell the master of ceremonies what you wish to accomplish during the feast, give him/her all the necessary information, sit back and relax. The feast, the generosity of providing good food and a good program will give you the ears of the community. Ask them for specific comments on what kind of feedback you wish to obtain. Do not expect you will get the feedback immediately. The feast is just to introduce yourself and your program to the community. Tell them of your program and tell them you will visit them later regarding their ideas and their interest. Then attempt to set up a visiting schedule for yourself with whomever you can schedule visits with. During the visits, after the people have had a chance to think about your program, you can then assess their interest. Again depending on your budget, bring a small gift with you on your visit. Be sure and accept graciously the hospitality you may be offered when you visit the Indian community. Don't forget the small gift. It could be something as small as a package of cheese, a box of candy, apples or a pretty candle. But bring something. If nothing else, offer your host a cigarette. Tobacco is an important item to many Indians and with many tribes, tobacco still has a religious significance and can bless a meeting or a visit.

#### ESTIMATING LIBRARY CAPACITIES

Decide on what the Indian library and information center will hold after you assess community interest. It is possible you will need to prioritize your capacity concurrently with the interest of the Indian community. It is possible that what you as a librarian thinks important to the Indian community, the Indian community will find totally unimportant. In other words, don't rush to fill your library with the standard reference materials such as two or three kinds of encyclopedias when the Indian community would like a section of Indian law/treaties reference shelf. Remember the needs of the white community and the needs of the Indian community are different. Therefore, assess your space available, ask the Indians what they will use in the way of services and make out your priority list. Also



depend on the advice of your Indian contacts. Meet regularly with community groups. If necessary organize a library committee made up of Indian people. Actually organizing a library committee is a good idea but don't demand a library committee.

#### COMMUNITY MEETINGS

To maintain your contacts and developing relationships with the community, it is wise to attend as many community meetings as possible. Do not pass up local pow-wows or other such social gatherings. Indians welcome visitors to these events, and it is a good opportunity to meet the people and more importantly become known to the community. However, before you attend all community gatherings nilly, willy, ask your tribal contacts whether or not it is appropriate. For example, it might be possible that religious meetings (native religion) may be closed to non-believers. In other communities it is okay. So check with your local experts so you don't commit a social faux faux right off. When you are at community meetings, wait until you are asked for your opinion before you speak out. As non-Indians are naturally aggressive they tend to dominate Indian meetings, they are not aware of manners of not interrupting slow speakers, and they commit other such sins, therefore, it is wise to keep quiet until asked for your opinion. In some Indian communities, it is not unheard of for newcomers to be new for several years. They are silent for that long at meetings before it is considered seemly for them to open their mouths. However, when your opinion is asked for, give it and then resume your apprenticeship. Don't think it weird if there are moments of silence at meetings, this occurs frequently, and it is not unusual. Don't think you have to fill the silence void. Sit and enjoy it.

#### WRITING A JOINT STATEMENT OF NEEDS AND AN ACTION PLAN

The most important thing to remember in writing a statement of need and an action plan is, do not have a preconceived agenda. Indians do not like to be asked to rubberstamp projects (ostensibly designed to help Indians) written from preconceived notions of white people. The statement should be a real joint statement. The action plan should be also a joint venture. This does not mean, however, that the Indians on whom you are relying for consultation and advice will do the actual writing of the statement and the action. Be prepared with probable statements or objectives, ask for responses, changes and additions. Emphasize in your demeanour you are presenting ideas for reaction, not a plan for adoption. Frequently, some of the best interchange can come from well planned joint meetings to draw up goals, objectives and action plans if you have no preconceived notions when you begin, are not stuck on one way of doing things and are ready to re-write, following the meeting. Your committee, or community reactors can possibly be a great help in finding material resources for you. Frequently Indians know of written materials unknown to librarians.

The action plan should be ratified in some way by the

Indian community. Perhaps this is the time for another feast. Again get advice from your sounding group, or the tribal council or both on how to proceed in getting the entire community to view your action plan document. Possibly, it can be ratified through the elective process, whatever you do, make a real attempt to present it to all segments of the Indian community. If there is a community newspaper, you might have an article written about your plan of action, and ask for reactions from the community in the article.

#### VI. DO'S AND DON'TS

Your first and foremost goal is to serve the Indian community, their needs, their informational desires, not yours. If you have done a good job of communicating with the community, assessing their needs, soliciting and receiving their help in writing up a plan, then you will not need any further admonishments on what you should do and not do. Do listen and listen hard to Indian people and don't become an Indian expert.

#### VII. FURTHER READING

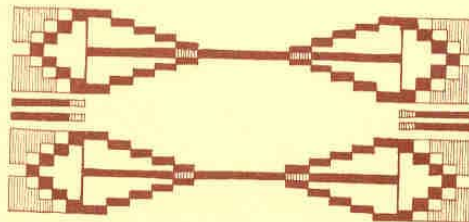
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National Indian Education Association  
Ivy Tower Bldg. - 2nd Floor  
1115 Second Avenue South  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55403

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Project ILSTAC Staff

Loretta V. Ellis  
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(Oneida)

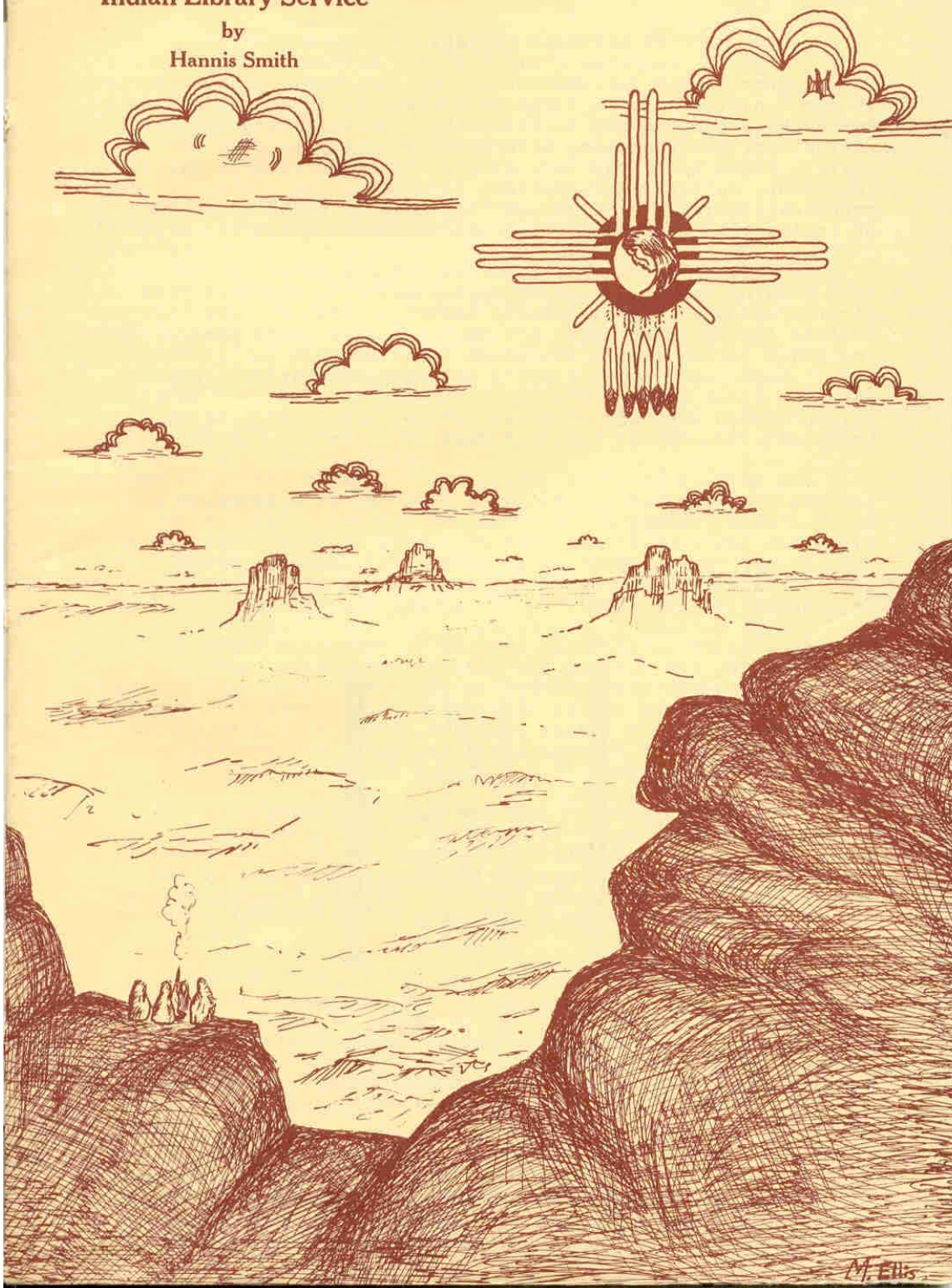
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Establishing  
Indian Library Service

by  
Hannis Smith

Guide Number 2  
Part II



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## PREFACE

Libraries and information centers are rapidly becoming an integral part of Indian life. Individuals, organizations, and tribes have come to the decision that libraries and the information services that they offer are necessary to meet Indian goals. These goals may vary widely, from improved access to education, cultural information, information on available social services, to leisure reading. They are all based in a component or institution designed to process information - a library.

As yet, only limited resources are available to meet this fast growing demand. Funding must usually be garnered from other programs. Professionally qualified Indian librarians and trained Indian technicians are in critically short supply. Books and other informational resources still contain racist information. Experience in developing programs and services which meet the local community's needs is slight. Specific sensitivity to Indian ways and alternatives is just developing as library and information services develop in Indian communities.

The purpose of these guides is to provide initial direction and provide alternatives to those planning or engaged in developing Indian library and information systems. Each guide discusses basic policies, initial steps, or discreet activities that appear to be essential to successful Indian library service. Each guide gives the reader basic direction and alternatives for development in his locale.

The reader is strongly advised to recognize these guides for what they are - ideas and programs that have been successful in the communities where they are used. They will not solve all the problems of Indian library service. They will provide the reader with some ideas, programs, and concepts to be considered in light of informational needs in the specific Indian community to be served.

Three basic types of information are presented in the guides: societal coping skills, basic considerations for implementation; and descriptions of services unique or critical to Indian libraries. These guides are supplemented by the Appalachian Adult Education Center's, Library Service Guides. The excellent Appalachian guides deal primarily with services in small communities.

Coping skills are given in two guides, (#'s 1 and 2). Organization and implementation will be discussed in five of the guides (#0,3,9,10, & 11) which cover: funding, organization, assessing needs, materials selection, and training. Five guides will discuss services unique or critical to Indian Library Service (#4,5,6,7, & 8). These guides cover: cataloging, urban services, adult education, program elements, and information services.

Charles Townley, Editor



Working With Library Agencies To  
Establish Indian Library Services

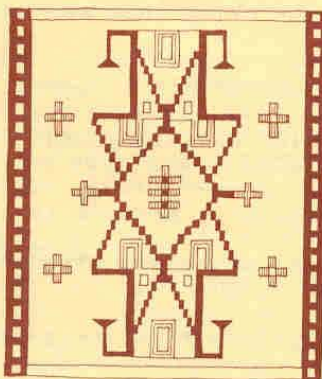
Hannis Smith

Guide 2

Hannis Smith is Director of the State of Minnesota's Office of Public Libraries and Interlibrary Cooperation, St. Paul, Minnesota.

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**Front Cover Artist:**

**Marshall K. Ellis, Oneida, of Oneida, Wisconsin illustrated the eleven Guide covers. Marshall is sixteen years old and a Junior High School student at the Institute of American Indian Arts, Santa Fe, New Mexico.**

## I. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Library. A collection of library materials which has been organized in a way to make it possible to locate any of its contents.

Library Materials. The knowledge, information, experience and creative art of mankind, which has been recorded in any form which makes it possible for people to locate it and to make use of it for their own individual or group purposes.

Library materials take many forms. They range from the early engraved sun dried clay tablets, through palm leaves, papyrus, animal skins and paper for print and illumination; to our modern recording discs, tapes for sound, film and videotapes for sight and sound.

Library and Information Services. An all inclusive term used to cover one, many, or all of the following in combination.

- (1) The identification of useful recorded knowledge and information.
- (2) Securing such knowledge and information in usable form.
- (3) Organizing such forms so that they may be located easily and quickly, whenever needed.
- (4) Locating and retrieving them and delivering them to users.
- (5) Lending library materials to users.
- (6) Helping users find what they want in the masses of recorded materials.
- (7) Locating and providing answers to specific questions.
- (8) Providing special programs, like story hours or adult education.
- (9) Providing appropriate facilities where users can be served.
- (10) Preparing and producing its own library materials.

Indian Library and Information Services. Any of the above which are directed specifically toward the interests and concerns of the Indian community.

Indian Community. Used to cover any group of native Americans, in spite of Columbus' mistake, whether they are or are not living on a reservation.



## II. THE PROBLEM

One of the major problems which is faced by much of the general public is getting to understand the many kinds of libraries and library agencies which exist; and then to find out what services they offer and what responsibility each has for delivering library and information services. And further, it is often difficult to find out who the library agency is supposed to serve.

The following kinds of libraries, and the services they offer, can be readily identified:

Public Libraries: Public libraries are library agencies which provide the wide range of library and information services to all people in a specific community or area. They range in size from very small ones which serve a single village, through large city, county and multi-county (regional) libraries. Their services are designed to meet the needs of the general public of the governmental unit or units which support them.

Academic Libraries: These libraries provide library and information services designed specifically for users from the college or university community. Some will permit use by users from outside that community, but many permit use only by people from the institution in which they are located.

School Libraries: These libraries are also frequently called "media centers". They direct their efforts primarily to serving the curricular needs of the teachers and students in a school system.

Special Libraries: These library agencies are of two general types: (1) Those created to serve the needs of a specific organization such as a business or industry, an association, or a governmental agency; and/or (2) Those created to collect, preserve and provide knowledge and information about special subjects, such as science, technology or history.

State Library Agencies: This library agency has been listed especially since the term is being used by the federal government to designate the arm of state government which administers state and federal aids for public libraries and interlibrary cooperation between various kinds of libraries. In some states such agencies may operate one or more special libraries, but they will be given importance here because of their responsibility for assisting with the establishment and improvement of library and information services.

Library Agency Responsibility: Most academic, school and special libraries are responsible for serving a specific clientele and have no responsibility for serving users from outside their organization. Public libraries are usually responsible for service to the entire community, but only from the areas of governmental unit or unit which provides their financial support.

Public libraries are, with the exception of a few endowed ones, usually supported by a combination of taxes and other public funds.

Public libraries are supposed to serve all of the age, ethnic, cultural or other kinds of sub-groups residing in their service area. Obviously, some are much better able to do this than others are. The very small library, with little money and open only a few hours a week, is in no position to provide library and information service in the sense being used here. On the other hand, some of our largest public libraries have expanded the concept of library and information service with various "outreach" techniques and the use of highly developed communications technology.

It is important to remember the State Library Agency at this point. While many of them are not responsible for the actual provision of library and information service to users, all are responsible for the further development of library services through the establishment of such services where they do not exist, and for the improvement of those services where they are inadequate. The State Library Agency is important to the Indian Community, for that very reason.

Some Words of Caution. Where there is a public library, that library has the responsibility for providing service to Indians. But some just do not have the capability for doing so, and even some of the largest public libraries have not recognized any responsibility toward service for ethnic or cultural groups different from the majority.

In order to work with any library service agency, the first thing one has to know is: Who decides what? The individual or group with authority will be referred to as the decision makers. For example, in the United States, most public libraries are governed by library boards which are appointed by the governing body or bodies of the city, county, or groups of counties. They usually have the authority to decide how the library budget will be spent. But usually they do not have the authority to determine how much money will be in the budget. The governing body or bodies which appoint them keep this authority for themselves. Some times it can be very difficult to find out where decisions are made -- or even to get them made -- when there are so many different groups involved in making them.

This, of course, provides the perfect opportunity for the old "run-around". The Indian Community will recognize this trickery immediately.

The State Library Agency has the authority to determine how the federal funds allotted to it will be spent. They are usually governed by a board or commission, where again the decision process may be difficult to identify. Although the state library agency and local public library boards do have authority to make money decisions, Indians must remember that these boards are



subject to (and usually responsive to) community pressure to spend the funds available for some services and not for others.

Many of these people in authority, including the people hired to administer or conduct the library and information service programs, do not know, or have not realized, that they have Indians among their constituents. In some cases, the decision makers are prejudiced against paper-backed books, in spite of their low costs and easy handling. There are some who are not familiar with, nor favorable to, the use of audio and audio-visual forms of library materials.

A Double Caution. The Indian Community, in thinking about library and information services needs to remember an important point: Public libraries are designed to serve the interests of the majority culture, first of all. While much of the content of public library collections of library materials are useful to everyone, much of it is also designed to strengthen the majority culture. For example, the maintenance manual for an automobile or other piece of machinery can be useful to any owner, but Indians may find it difficult to find meaningful quantities of materials which reflect the concerns and interests of the Indian Community.

Indians who depend on using the library and information services of public libraries, without using their influence to insure the provision of materials reflecting their interests are running the risk of losing ground in their quest for cultural identification -- their "Indian-ness."

### III. FIRST CONTACTS

Most of the cities and counties in the United States have some form of public library agency, which is charged with the responsibility for the provision of library and information service, which is "free". There are also many of the other kinds of libraries in the country, such as school and college. Therefore, the first step is to identify what library agencies there are. Several things have to be learned.

- (1) What kinds of library and information services do they provide?
- (2) To whom do they provide these services?
- (3) How good are those services -- in general terms?
- (4) How good are those services -- in Indian terms?
- (5) Do people from the Indian community make any use of these services?

The next step is to determine if the Indian community really wants library and information services. By this, we mean: Does the Indian Community have sufficient needs and/or desire for

library and information services to make use of them if Indian library and information services are provided? Library and information services cost real money. The funding sources, whether taxing bodies or grant sources, have begun using the term "cost/benefit analysis" to help decide how they will spend or grant supporting funds. They will need convincing of the potential benefit to people before they will be interested in providing funds.

There is another angle to this question. Does the Indian Community need or want a library, at least in the organized sense? It might be that in an Indian Community of a few families, that collections of materials in homes, and a telephone for calling the nearest public library reference department might be the best solution.

What Services Does the Indian Community Want? When you have determined that the Indian Community does need and want library and information services, the next step is to decide what services you want to have. And what form you want them to take.

For example, many public libraries operate bookmobiles. These are circulating libraries on wheels, which are used to provide basic library and information service to scattered populations in suburbs and in rural areas such as many Indian reservations. They are a friendly sort of way for serving people who might be shy about going into a formal looking - (forbidding looking?) - building.

For another example, many city libraries have opened small branches or information centers in store-front buildings which also attract people who shy away from the more formal structure typified by the customary library building with its many steps.

Make a "shopping list" of the kinds of services which the Indian Community wants. It should be in specific terms. And put in your own priority order. The following is a list of library and information services which some Indian communities have identified as desirable. They are not in any kind of order of importance, and certainly the list is not to be regarded as complete.

- (1) Materials and information on Indian history.
- (2) Materials and information on Indian culture.
- (3) Materials in and about Indian language/s.
- (4) Materials and information about Indian arts and crafts.
- (5) Materials and information about community services available to Indians.
- (6) Materials and information about "How to Do It" with things mechanical.



You are now armed with knowledge of: (1) What and where your library agency is; (2) You have convincing evidence that the Indian Community wants and needs library and information services; and (3) You have identified some of the specific kinds of library and information services which the Indian Community wants.

Before making your introductory contact with the library agency, there is one more important step. Find out who runs the library. The governing authority, such as a library board, may be the real decision makers. On the other hand the head librarian, some times called the director, who is the manager, may also have the delegated authority to make decisions. Remember that in libraries of any size, the people who answer questions or check the books in and out are not the decision makers. When you make your contact with the library agency, ask for the head librarian or director. This person, if responsive, can help the Indian Community to identify the kinds of library and information services which will meet their wants and needs.

If the head librarian or director is not responsive, ask for the names of people on the library board.

Some Words of Caution. The members of the Indian Community must keep in mind that the library decision makers may be uninformed about Indian interests and concerns. Not only uninformed but perhaps they are misinformed. And also they may have false notions about Indians and the status of Indians in the community.

Indians do not have to be told about the various stereotypes but Indians may not realize that many people in the American majority culture think that there are vast sums of money available to Indians from the federal government through the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The library authorities may believe this, and therefore think that local taxes should not be spent on services to Indians. Although you may have to counteract this misconception, you should also keep in mind that, with increasing frequency in recent years, there are funds from a variety of sources which would be available for projects especially for the Indian Community. In any case, the people from the Indian Community should keep in mind the fact that, if they are to work successfully with an established library agency, a well developed relationship of close cooperation and mutual reinforcement on both sides is a necessity.

#### IV. DEVELOPING A RELATIONSHIP

We have been speaking of Indians and the Indian Community in somewhat abstract terms. Actually, if there is to be a good relationship developed with the library agency, there must be continuity of the people involved. Therefore, there should be a library committee or a library council to carry on the negotiations with the library decision makers. The council, or library committee, now knows three important things:

- (1) You know the facts to demonstrate clearly that the Indian Community needs and wants library and information services;
- (2) You have identified the specific library and information services that your Indian Community needs; ranked in your own priority order, and;
- (3) You have learned who the library agency decision makers are.

Now you are ready to take the next step; a phone call to the decision maker's office for an appointment. The first request might be for a small committee or part of the council to visit the director's office. Or it might be a good idea to invite the director to meet with a group on the Indian Community's home grounds. In either case, those Indians who make this contact must be people who can present a positive aspect of leadership, and convey a sense of responsibility for their opinions and decisions.

When you meet with the decision maker or makers, Indians should remember that most librarians come from the white middle class of the majority culture. Such people place a high value on appearances. Therefore, the initial Indian leadership group should be:

Neatly dressed. Indian clothes and artifacts - YES!  
Polite and dignified.

Be direct and firm, but remember that in beginning relationships the decision makers may be indirect or round-about in their replies.

On time!

Remember some of the "do's" and "don'ts":

DO assume that the decision maker/s know very little about the needs and concerns of the Indian Community;

DON'T show a critical attitude toward them because of this;

DO be patient in getting them to learn about the needs and concerns of the Indian Community;

DON'T be militant about your proposals -- at least not for a while. Some people scare easy!

Most public librarians and their associates are accustomed, and many of them have been taught, to approach problems calmly and reasonably. Their interest, concern, and even their sense of responsibility can be "turned off" by what they regard as "rude" or "crude" behavior. And definitions of "crude" and "rude" differ in different parts of the majority culture, as well as between different cultures. You can catch more flies with a cup of maple syrup than with an Indian fly swatter!



The Library Movement and the Community. If the Indian Library Service promoters have come from the Indian Community, and are in rapport with it, and if they have succeeded in enlisting the genuine interest and active support of the local library service agency, they are ready for the next step.

This is to develop a tentative plan for public discussion. We can find no complete agreement of opinion on how this should be done. The professionals at the library service agency should certainly be involved, since they are the "experts" on how things are done. But they may be hung-up on their own pre-conceived notions of what to do and be unwilling to be innovative. So the Indian Community must also be involved. This means that a series of public meetings should be developed. To get these off to a good start, there should be something concrete to present. A considerable amount of experience with the majority middle class indicates there should be several important elements in the first presentations. These include the following:

- (1) A clear presentation of the need for library service.
- (2) Indications that the Indian Community wants it.
- (3) Kinds of services the Indian Community wants and needs or a list of priorities.
- (4) Alternatives which have been identified as means and methods for providing the service.

These meetings should be held in, or near, the center of the Indian Community, but invitations should not be limited to members of the Indian Community itself. You will also want to have some of the decision makers (including elected officials) from the library service agency and representatives of the state library agency. If you can identify any other potential funding sources, ask them to come as well.

In presenting the ideas and alternatives which have been developed in the planning, stress the fact that the planners need suggestions, additions, and alterations from those at the meeting, and that the plans will be adjusted to include all new ideas which can be fitted into it. Too often, at meetings like these, the presentation of a plan gives the impression that it is already engraved on stone tablets, and the community does not feel that it has really been involved in its development. It may take longer to do it with community involvement, but real community involvement can provide insurance of the success of the service if and when it is provided. The lack of community involvement will defeat the entire project. These meetings should be held as many times and in as many places as needed to arrive at a full understanding of the developing plan and its purposes, in both the Indian and the majority community.

While the local and state library agencies must be kept involved in these meetings, the Indian Community library leader-

ship should have the initiative for planning and organizing these meetings, and in keeping the movement going.

Estimating the Library Agency Capabilities. During this process of discussion, especially with the library authorities and decision makers, the librarians who have had specific education and/or experience in the delivery of library service to users, will help the Indian Community in estimating a number of things:

- (1) Does the Indian Community need a special, or exclusively Indian, service outlet?
- (2) What needs of the Indian Community can actually be met by library and information services?
- (3) What relationships should be established between the library and information services in the Indian Community, and other library and information resources and centers?
- (4) What will library and information services for the Indian Community cost?

Writing the Plan. If the Indian library leadership has prepared the way it is now ready for the actual writing of a plan. Let's review the work which has already been done.

The needs of the Indian Community for library and information services have been established.

Evidence has been gathered to demonstrate that the Indian Community will use those services.

The kinds of library and information services which will meet the needs and interests of the Indian Community have been identified.

The leadership and decision makers of the appropriate library service agency/ies have been approached, and their interest and concern secured.

The proposals for the provision of library and information services have been discussed widely in the Indian and majority communities.

And, all appropriate library agencies, governing bodies, and potential funding sources have had an opportunity for learning about the library movement.

Now you are ready to write a plan for action. If done right it will be something which the library agencies, the decision makers and the Indian Community will all endorse and recommend for carrying out. The plan does not have to be an elaborate document, but it must be specific.



Cover these points, at least:

- (1) What will be the agency to operate the Indian library and information service? The local library service agency? A new agency?
- (2) How will this library and information service be "governed"? That is, how and by whom will policy be determined?
- (3) What kind of service outlet will be created or designated to serve the Indian Community? An existing library building or bookmobile? Something new, and perhaps different?
- (4) How will the outlet for library and information service be staffed? All Indians? Can you get an Indian librarian? Should staff be Indian first? And librarians second?
- (5) What library and information services will it provide and what library materials will it keep in stock?
- (6) What will be the relationship between the Indian library service outlet to other library resources, and what will be its means of access to them?
- (7) What will it cost, and where is the money coming from?

#### V. SOME EXAMPLES

There are many different ways of providing library and information services to Indians. And there is no reason for conforming to any previously developed pattern or method. Some of the other papers in this series will describe what Indians have done and are doing in various places, and under various conditions.

The Indians who are involved in planning and working for library and information services for their own Indian Community can adopt or adapt what has been tried and found successful in other Indian situations. It is better to learn from others, whether success or failure (maybe especially the failures), than try to re-invent the wheel.

#### VI. THE GOALS FOR INDIAN LIBRARY SERVICE

The goals for Indian library and information services are like those for these services in general, but tailored to the needs and interests of the Indian Community. The broad goal can be stated shortly and simply, as follows:

The Goal of the American Library Association is: "The promotion of libraries and librarianship to assure the delivery of user-oriented library and information service to all." - From

the January, 1975, press release from the American Library Association.

A slightly different way of saying this is in a speech made in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in 1966: "Every human being, regardless of his place of residence, his age, his economic or social status, and his intellectual attainments, should have available to him the right of convenient access to any and all of the recorded knowledge and ideas of mankind for which he has a need, and which he is able to use."

The goal of Indian library and information service is to accomplish the provision of a system of library and information service which will guarantee to every Indian the opportunity to exercise the right of convenient access specifically to the kind of library and information service which meets the specific and particular needs of the Indian Community.

How to Find Out More. The two best ways of finding out more about what you need to know about are: (1) Asking somebody who knows, and (2) Looking it up in published material. The first can be directed toward many sources, the second is a service provided by any good library. Many times you could identify the person or persons to ask from published materials, but there is also a quantity of know-how which still has not been written down. An old "bit of wisdom" says that the people who are really doing things never have time to write about doing it. So the people you talk to may depend on where you are, and whom you are near. But for looking it up, go to a good library.

The list of sources, and the bibliography which follow are short, but in themselves constitute ways of locating new sources additional materials, and useful information.

#### Sources of Additional Advice and Information

##### Organizations:

American Library Association. Office of Library Services for the Disadvantaged. 50 E. Huron Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611. This organization has an active interest in the development of libraries and library service, and shows a definite interest in library and information service for Indians. They have much information on what is going on throughout the country and have staff which can provide some consultant service.

National Indian Education Association. NIEA Library Project. 3036 University Avenue, S.E., Minneapolis, Minnesota 55414. This organization has secured funds to conduct a four year experiment in library and information service to Indians, and has developed the most substantial amount of expertise on the subject now existing.

State Library Agencies. (see American Library Directory for names and addresses). There is one of these in each state,



and although their responsibilities may vary, they are key agencies for contact.

Books:

American Library Directory...A classified list of libraries in the United States and Canada. New York: Bowker, 1974. This is an invaluable source of the names, addresses, librarians and library statistics, for all kinds of libraries. It is arranged geographically, so that it is easy to find information about any state, and about any community in any state. The only libraries it does not list are those in elementary and secondary schools.

Brown, Eleanor Frances. Library Service to the Disadvantaged. Meuhthchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1971. This has some information about library and information service for Indians, but not much. Most of it concerns the general principles and factors regarding library service to disadvantaged economic, cultural and ethnic disadvantaged groups.

Klein, Barry T. Reference Encyclopedia of the American Indian. 2nd Edition. Rye, N.Y.: Todd Publications, 1973. In spite of its BIA bias, this could still be useful in locating various organizations, periodicals and other publications, and Indian reservations and tribal councils.

National Indian Education Association. A Design for Library Services. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Bureau of Field Studies, 1972. This is the initial planning for the NIEA Library Project listed above. It is the most complete material, with the most careful planning and advance research, on which library and information services to Indians has been based thus far. It should be extremely helpful.

Magazine Articles and Pamphlets:

Cawley, Rebecca. Guide to Funding Sources for American Indian Library and Information Services. Washington, D.C.:1974.

Cunningham, William D. "Anto Wicharti: The Responsibility of State Libraries to Provide Direction and Programs in Library Service to Indians." Library Journal, 99:4496-99, Dec. 15, 1969.

"Guidelines for the Evaluation of Indian Materials for Adults," ASD Newsletter, Vol. 8, No. 3, Spring, 1971.

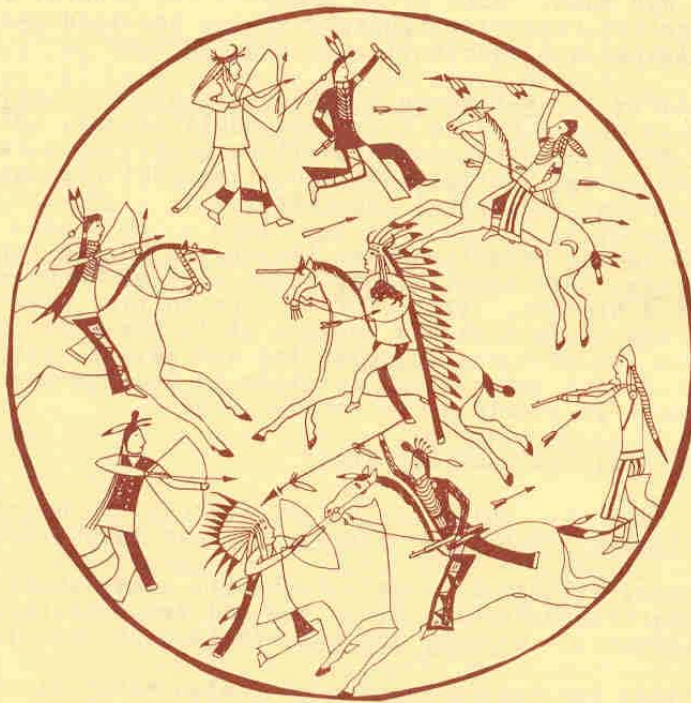
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Richardson, Bernard E. "By Red Rocks: Notes on Library Service to Native Americans," Road Runner, Vol. XVII, No. 3, January, 1974. Pages 1-17.

"Serving Disadvantaged Adults: An Institute for Public Librarians held at the College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, Minnesota, June 2-13, 1969: Proceedings," Minnesota Libraries, 22:275-303, Summer, 1969.

Smith, June Smeck. "Library Service to American Indians," Library Trends, 20:223-238, October, 1971.





NOTES

## NOTES

National Indian Education Association  
Library Service Guides

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 0. Guide to Funding Sources for American Indian Library and Information Services.     | 5. Urban Indian Library Services.   |
| 1. Working with Indian Communities and Agencies to Establish Indian Library Services. | 6. Adult Education and Indian Libraries.                                    |
| 2. Working with Library Agencies to Establish Indian Library Services.                | 7. Promoting Indian Library Use.  |
| 3. Initial Organization and Staffing Patterns for Indian Library Services.            | 8. Locally Generated Information and Referral Services in Indian Libraries. |
| 4. Alternatives to Standard Classification and Cataloging for Indian Libraries.       | 9. Assessing Information Needs in the Indian Community.                     |
|   | 10. Materials Selection for Indian Libraries.                               |
|   | 11. In-Service Training in Indian Libraries.                                |



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| Techniques for Teachers: Teaching the Application of Basic Skills to Everyday Life Problems. | Interagency Cooperation: The Public Library and Agencies that Serve Disadvantaged Adults. |

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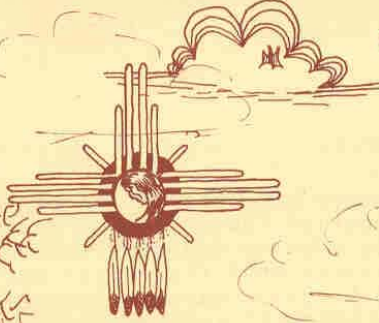
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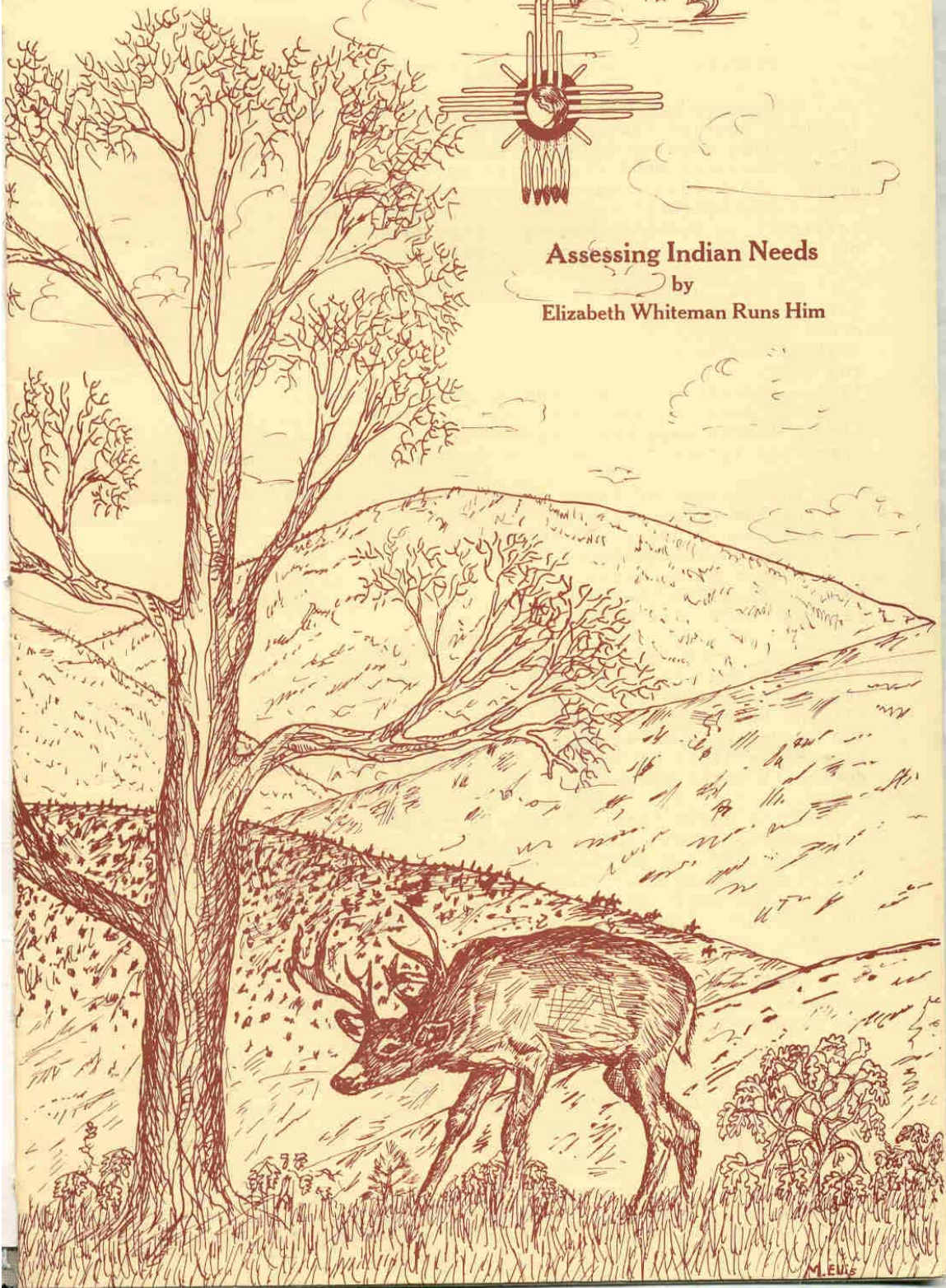


Guide Number 9



## Assessing Indian Needs

by  
Elizabeth Whiteman Runs Him





## PREFACE

Libraries and information centers are rapidly becoming an integral part of Indian life. Individuals, organizations, and tribes have come to the decision that libraries and the information services that they offer are necessary to meet Indian goals. These goals may vary widely, from improved access to education, cultural information, information on available social services, to leisure reading. They are all based in a component or institution designed to process information - a library.

As yet, only limited resources are available to meet this fast growing demand. Funding must usually be garnered from other programs. Professionally qualified Indian librarians and trained Indian technicians are in critically short supply. Books and other informational resources still contain racist information. Experience in developing programs and services which meet the local community's needs is slight. Specific sensitivity to Indian ways and alternatives is just developing as library and information services develop in Indian communities.

The purpose of these guides is to provide initial direction and provide alternatives to those planning or engaged in developing Indian library and information systems. Each guide discusses basic policies, initial steps, or discreet activities that appear to be essential to successful Indian library service. Each guide gives the reader basic direction and alternatives for development in his locale.

The reader is strongly advised to recognize these guides for what they are - ideas and programs that have been successful in the communities where they are used. They will not solve all the problems of Indian library service. They will provide the reader with some ideas, programs, and concepts to be considered in light of informational needs in the specific Indian community to be served.

Three basic types of information are presented in the guides: societal coping skills, basic considerations for implementation; and descriptions of services unique or critical to Indian libraries. These guides are supplemented by the Appalachian Adult Education Center's, Library Service Guides. The excellent Appalachian guides deal primarily with services in small communities.

Coping skills are given in two guides, (#'s 1 and 2). Organization and implementation will be discussed in five of the guides (#0,3,9,10, & 11) which cover: funding, organization, assessing needs, materials selection, and training. Five guides will discuss services unique or critical to Indian Library Service (#4,5,6,7, & 8). These guides cover: cataloging, urban services, adult education, program elements, and information services.

Charles Townley, Editor

# Assessing Information Needs in Indian Communities

Elizabeth Whiteman Runs Him

## Guide 9

Elizabeth Whiteman Runs Him, Crow, is an educational consultant and resides in Arden Hills, Minnesota.

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**Front Cover Artist:**  
Marshall K. Ellis, Oneida, of Oneida, Wisconsin illustrated the eleven Guide covers. Marshall is sixteen years old and a Junior High School student at the Institute of American Indian Arts, Santa Fe, New Mexico.



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## I. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Informational Needs and Resources. Knowledge, data, facts, materials, knowledge of services, programs, and activities which may or may not be available to individuals.

Informational Needs Assessment. A study conducted to find out what information is required by residents of a given area or community. Knowledge, data, facts, materials, information about local services, programs, and activities. A needs assessment is a study conducted to determine what a community's needs are and what information resources might be available.

Indian Community. A localized group of individuals living in a common area. This localized body of people recognize themselves and/or are recognized by others as being American Indian people.

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

### A. Why Should You Have An Informational Needs Assessment?

#### 1. General Background of the Problem:

In order to begin making any decision in the establishment or expansion of a library program in your community, you must first be able to define and understand the role your library program can play in meeting the informational needs of the community. It has often been the case that a library staff will remain in their library quarters and will make decisions without consulting anyone not in the library profession. These decisions vary, of course, depending on the resources available to the library program and depending on the priorities which the library staff has determined for their program. However, it has been shown that in minority communities, and specifically, Indian communities, the development of library programming which serves the informational needs of Indian people is very inadequate. (It is the contention of this writer that informational needs of Indian communities are not being met because of a failure to conduct a thorough and extensive informational needs assessment in the Indian community for which library services are being developed and/or expanded.) Previous experience in identifying informational needs of minority people, specifically Indian people, has shown that meaningful Indian involvement in the development and implementation of an assessment study would be more acceptable and would produce meaningful and relevant informational programming in the Indian community.

#### 2. Specific Reasons for an Informational Needs Assessment:

An informational needs assessment will identify who you are now serving and for whom you need to expand your services. An assessment will also help you to identify gaps in your library



services, programs, and materials for the total Indian community in which you wish to develop or expand library services.

1. You must determine whom you are now serving. It is a well documented fact that public libraries and most private libraries serve only one-third of the children and merely one-tenth of all adults in any given community. The Library and Technology Bureau of the United States Office of Education recognizes that similar statistics in minority communities, specifically Indian communities, are much higher.

2. You must determine areas in which your services are not now addressed or are not adequate.

3. The assessment study is necessary in order to enable you to learn more about the people in your community. This information will assist you in identifying the types of materials, print and non-print, which they may want and which they can use.

4. In order to make decisions about your services, you must also be aware of the services and materials which are currently available from other programs, organizations, and institutions in your area. You must be able to determine their use and adopt or modify your programming to insure supplementing their efforts and not duplicating them.

5. Complementing the above item, it will be necessary for you to identify resources which other groups, programs, or individuals might wish to share with your library.

6. By getting out into the community to conduct your study or survey, you will be able to talk with members of your community, other organizations, and programs. You can effectively inform the community and increase their awareness of your services, programs, materials and facilities.

Thus, when you conduct an informational needs assessment, you will be able to determine not only the informational needs but also the informational resources available in your community. This information will then help you determine the kinds of library services, materials and programs the community needs and wants.

#### B. What Information Is Needed?

1. The National Indian Education Association's Areas of Concern:

The National Indian Education Association's Library Project identified eleven areas of concern as to the informational needs of Indian people:

Family Life: The Indian family has been threatened by federal Indian policies and intense social problems. A clear understanding of family life styles, individual roles and relation-

ships can assist in promoting Indian family solidarity. What services and or information is necessary to help meet these needs?

American Indian Culture: Indian culture has not been preserved in a written literary tradition, the written record of the Anglo society has presented a negatively biased image of Indians in American life. What kinds of art and other materials are needed?

The American Indian in Urban Society: Indian people are part of the trend toward urbanism in the United States. Indian people need to anticipate the effect of urban settings on their life styles and the adjustments they must make. What information regarding living conditions for Indians in urban areas is available?

Service Agencies: Indian people continue to suffer hardships because they are unaware of available help and resources. What information in regards to service agencies is necessary in order to try to affect the quality of life in the Indian community?

Legal and Civil Rights: Indian people are often oppressed individually and collectively because they lack access to legal and civil rights information. What information would be helpful regarding legal actions and civil rights? Where is this information currently and how accessible is it?

Recreation: Unemployment, underemployment, isolation, and other factors present special problems in the utilization of leisure time in the Indian community. Indian people need to be aware of the many and varied recreational options available to them. What are these options and how accessible are they to Indian people?

Consumer Information: Indian communities have traditionally been consumer-oriented rather than production-oriented. Knowledge and understanding of the basic consumption processes will assist Indian communities in determining alternatives to maximize their effectiveness.

Occupations and Vocations: Economic growth and employment opportunities will continue to affect Indian communities and the need to know of these opportunities has implications for them. What information regarding occupations and vocations is currently available and where is it?

Academic Disciplines: Indian people need access to a variety of educational media in order to meet their need to know a variety of information and skills and also to supplement and provide enrichment to the formal educational process.

Health and Safety: Indians have a documented history of problems in the areas of health and safety which could be reduced



by the availability and utilization of appropriate specialized knowledge. In order to provide for this informational need a library program must determine what is available in the area of personal and community health and safety and where it is available.

Contemporary Events: Very often, because of isolation and lack of resources, Indian communities do not have access to information related to contemporary happenings. Often, when the community does receive this information, it is well behind times. The library program must ascertain what information to contemporary events is available and determine their role in making this information accessible.

Of concern also would be what social, economic and geographic characteristics of the reservation area would have a bearing on the type of library informational services and delivery mechanisms necessary to meet the identified needs.

## 2. What Community Information Should you Collect?:

There is a great deal of demographic information which you should collect in order to determine the most feasible assessment study. This information will help to define and/or explain possible needs, program material, information and direction.

- a. What is the population of your community?
- b. What is the tribal composition of your community?
- c. What is/are the languages spoken in your community?
- d. What are the age group concentrations?
- e. What are the educational levels of your adults?
- f. What are the economic levels in your community-what is the concentration?
- g. What are the businesses and industries?
- h. What career training programs exist?
- i. What are the cultural activities in your community?
- j. What social and service clubs exist?
- k. What educational opportunities are available?
- l. What community resources are available as related to recreation, social services, media, transportation?
- m. What is the tribal political complexion and organiza-

tion?

Once you have answered these questions, you will be able to identify areas of need and will be able to assess your library program in terms of meeting the identified needs. You will then be able to define ways in which you can address the needs. Some examples would be: a) you have a large concentration of your population with less than a high school education (adult) and very little educational opportunities. Your library could secure and make available some information on the GED program, perhaps even arrange to have GED courses offered in the library; b) there is a great deal of social activity in your community yet there is limited media resources. Your library could gather activity information, produce a community activities calendar and circulate it regularly; c) the Crow and Cheyenne languages are spoken a great deal in your community yet there is little or no material available in these languages. Your library could secure audio-visual materials in these languages, perhaps attempt to offer language classes with native speaking instructors.

This collection of information about your community can help you make decisions on expanding your library services. You can compare your existing services, programs and materials with what is needed.

#### C. Where Can This Information Be Found?

The place where you will find this information is in your community. Remember, the definition of the community is comprehensive and inclusive; individuals, programs, organizations, institutions, service agencies, and schools. As indicated earlier, many library programs are planned according to priorities established by the staff of the library without going into the community to determine if, indeed, those are the community's priorities. Regardless of whether your library staff is Indian or non-Indian, it is still impossible to define the informational needs of your community without assessing your community to find out:

1. From individuals, elementary and secondary students, college and post high school students, adults.
2. From organizations and program staff. There are many groups in the community which you must include in your study. Some examples include the Indian Community Action Program, Title IV programs, local education associations, local cultural programs, etc.
3. From service agency heads such as the County Extension Agents, Community Health Representatives, Bureau of Indian Affairs' Social Service Director, etc.
4. Local government officials and community leaders such as your tribal officials, educational committees, city and county officials, service clubs, etc.



These individuals, organizations, groups, programs, and institutions can provide you with the type of data you need. In some instances, some organizations and service agencies have information in their files which could be of use to you. As an example, studies may have been conducted of the community which would provide some community statistics as to economics, education, etc.

#### D. How Can This Information Be Found?

Quite simply, you must conduct a study. Foremost however, there must be a thorough study to determine what studies already exist or if similar information is available which you seek. It is very possible that some similar studies have already been conducted for various reasons. If you first canvass your community to determine if any such information exists, then your work will be that much easier.

What kind of assessment you conduct is dependent on several factors:

1. Your staff capabilities;
2. Your financial resources;
3. How much information you have determined is available and how much you have already collected;
4. The degree of rapport you have established with other programs, agencies, or organizations and subsequently how much support and cooperation you can expect.

You must be able to determine that the cost of your assessment is not excessive to the point that it exceeds the benefits to be gained from it.

There are several processes by which you may secure information. These processes vary in funds and staff time required. To begin with however, you must be sure to carefully study options available to you and select the one most compatible to your means and to the size of your community. You must also determine your assessment process to the community. It is recommended that an advisory committee composed of community members, namely representatives of each group defined as composites of your total community membership be established. If this advisory group works with you to identify an assessment process which would be productive in your community then you can proceed with confidence that the informational needs of your community can be determined.

Information can be secured in a variety of ways, foremost of which would be a comprehensive community survey. This pro-

cess would require you to secure information through some type of survey form such as a questionnaire. Questionnaires can be completed on an individual basis (face to face, on the telephone, through the mail), in a large group (each individual completing the form individually), or collectively with your respondent group providing consensus answers. Your community survey would also require collections of demographic data.

It is important to be aware of the fact that your costs/benefits become even more difficult to gauge as the number of interviews increase. The size of your sample population and the extent of your target areas will play a large part in determining your cost factor.

### III. A COMMUNITY SURVEY - ONE OPTION

#### A. The Instrument

1. Construction - In order to collect the data necessary, you must clearly define the research questions for which you seek answers in your survey. Samples of questions have been suggested in the earlier section on NIEA Areas of Concern as well as the community informational needs suggestions. Your community consists of elementary students, secondary level students and adults. It is suggested that survey instruments be developed for these three main respondent groups according to your defined research questions. These instruments furthermore, should be addressed to elementary and secondary teaching staff to gather data on their perceptions of student informational needs. Therefore, it is proposed instruments be designed for the following respondent groups:

- a. Elementary level student information needs,
- b. Secondary level students and out of school youth,
- c. Elementary level teachers,
- d. Secondary level teachers,
- e. Adult information needs.

It is further suggested that an inventory of your library and your community be conducted, therefore some type of checklist must be developed. Within each of your defined informational needs categories (e.g. American Indian Culture) you will need to construct relevant questions. If you determine that there will be ten informational needs categories, your survey instruments should each contain ten categorical sections. Each section (e.g. American Indian Culture) should have an adequate number of questions (e.g. Are you interested in learning about other tribal groups-their history, customs, language? Have you ever studied about other tribal groups?) The questions would provide an evaluation of the informational needs in that category. It will be necessary to modify each respondent groups survey form in



order to meet the comprehension level and specialized needs of each group. For example, the questions will be slightly different for adults and for elementary students. You must also consider whether English language is the dominant language or whether it will be necessary to translate your survey questions into an appropriate native language in order to maximize comprehension.

In constructing your instruments you must be aware of possibilities of surveying individuals who cannot or will not read and write. Construction must allow for oral administration and oral response. In addition, it is cautioned that measures be taken to insure confidentiality and to avoid invasion of privacy. It would be advisable to have your interview schedule and survey items written by Indian people to insure sensitivity to the feelings of Indian people. You must avoid personal questions not directly related to informational needs. You should avoid any personal identification of the respondents.

2. Validation - It is suggested that pilot studies be conducted for each respondent group survey form. You will be able to determine the degree of validity by comparing the degree of congruence with the sample group. In addition, the research staff should present the survey forms to your advisory group and other individuals in the community who would have extensive experience with problems of informational accessibility in Indian communities.

3. Approval by Community - In retrospect, you should have the community's approval of your survey procedure and process long before you are ready to administer your instruments if you have utilized an advisory committee as suggested. Not only can you maintain on-going communication and hopefully eventual process approval but your committee will be able to share their personal experiences with informational accessibility problems with your staff which would contribute a great deal to your instrument construction and validation.

#### B. Administration

1. Selection of random sample - Your respondent groups have been identified as elementary students, secondary and out of school youth, and adults, with two additional groups encompassing elementary and secondary teachers reflecting their perception of their student's informational needs. Your framework for selection of random samples must necessarily be drawn from the total student and adult population. It is advisable to utilize the most current community census in order to identify your adult population while the total student population can be identified by school enrollment.

In selecting your adult sample, a table of random numbers could be employed to select 10% of the adult population. It is recommended that an additional replacement pool numbering at least 5% of the total selected population also be randomly chosen



to be used if the originally selected adults are not available.

It is suggested that all attempts be made to survey as many students as possible in the elementary and secondary school in your community. Therefore, it is necessary to obtain the cooperation of your local schools administration. A timetable must be devised to insure the students are surveyed during a high attendance period. It is suggested also that all available teaching staff be so surveyed. Provisions should also be made for communities that do not maintain a local high school. There are many communities that must send their secondary students out of the community either daily or weekly to attend school. It is necessary to devise interview schedules and identification procedures to insure inclusion of data from this group.

2. Administering the Instrument - In order to insure objective and uniform data collection, it is very important to train the interviewers. They should be Indian, they should thoroughly understand all aspects of the survey form and they must practice administering the survey form and filling out the answer sheets. In order to insure uniform data collection you should train all interviewers together, if possible, otherwise be sure to train all with the same procedure. Each interviewer should follow identical administration procedures, each giving identical directions according to the respondent group. It would be wise to print an administration procedure sheet for each interviewer to refer to during each survey administration session.

Your library inventory should be very comprehensive indicating not only those materials, programs, services, and facilities available but also the extent of their applicability and the utilization by the community--students and adults. You can get much of this information in your records.

Your community inventory will determine the organizations, groups, agencies, programs, the economics, total population, education level, recreation, health, safety, welfare facilities and programs, other community services, etc. This inventory is very comprehensive, so pay close attention. Many of the specific individualized concerns of agency heads, etc., will come out in the adult interview so you need not be concerned with that informational need in this inventory.

3. Collecting the Results - It will be necessary to define your data collection timetable. You will be able to conduct your community and library inventory prior to the administration of your survey forms to your respondent groups. However, you must establish survey dates with school administrators well in advance of the actual survey. It is recommended that follow-up dates be selected also in the event that the absentee rate was exceptionally high. The number of days interviewing will be dependent on the size of your interviewing staff in relation to the student population.

Your adult survey will be necessarily time consuming. You



must contact all the randomly selected individuals, explain your project in detail, secure the individual's consent to be interviewed and then determine a date, time and place for the interview. The logistics for the time, such as evening, will need to be worked out with your interview staff. You must consider and allow for the working adult and the limitations of time.

Every effort must be made to contact each selected adult. When the names of all selected adults have been exhausted and the necessary number of respondents is not sufficient, then it will be necessary to take names from your randomly selected pool. Do set time limits of a certain amount of weeks to gather your data. Your time frame will be dependent on the size of your community, the isolation of home areas, etc. Your data could become unreliable if the collection is prolonged unduly.

4. Compensation - Dependent on the process of conducting your assessment study, you might consider compensation for community interviewers. Your assessment study could be very intense and you might have to hire additional part-time assistance to conduct your field work. It would be necessary to determine a realistic method of compensation, by the hour, by the interview and etc.

There is another compensation consideration in the adult survey. In order to insure cooperation of the adult sample, it might be a wise investment to provide a nominal compensation to each adult participating in the study. The amount of the compensation will be dependent on your financial resources. However, the investment would be wise. Realistically, it would be an imposition to ask for an hour of an individual's free time for an interview, and it would only be logical foresight to arrange for some type of compensation. The realistic compensation amount can be determined with your advisory committee.

### C. Analyzing and Reporting the Results

1. Organization - Because of the comprehensive nature of the community informational needs assessment, you should consider the utilization of electronic data processing. However, the cost can be high when computer facilities are not readily available. Your only alternative is to develop a set of charts in order to tally the questionnaire results.

An analysis of data will provide a program defining number and percent of responses for all items in each category. The distribution of responses can be tabulated for each category in each questionnaire and adult interview schedule. Average weighted responses can be calculated for each category by instrument to obtain priority ranking by category for each respondent group. You will be able to interpret your data in such a way that needs can be identified clearly, based on answer ratings to the informational questions.

Once you have computerized or in some systematic way, orga-

nized your data you will be able to analyze the results based on rating scales and therefore determine informational needs. If your questions necessitate answers by rating one to five, the higher the numerical rating, the more the interest or need. This process will thus enable you to analyze your data in such a way that the informational needs will be evident.

2. Analysis and Reporting - Your reporting procedure will enable you to determine your priorities for developing and/or expanding your library programming. You will be analyzing all data from the respondent groups to the community and library inventories. You will be able to determine who you are serving, whom you should be serving, what gaps in your materials, programs, services, and/or facilities exist. You are in a position to make decisions and implement your expanded program.

Do not forget your advisory committee. They could be very important in the decision-making process. Their recommendations in reaction to the analyzed data could be very important and you must not ignore them at this critical stage.

#### IV. OTHER INFORMATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT METHODS

##### A. Interviewing Social Service and Related Agencies

The cost factor of a needs assessment must play an important role in the decision making process of determining how much you can do. Ideally, you should take advantage of each and every opportunity to gather information. Unfortunately, however, most programs cannot afford to do so. You might opt to only do a limited community survey, determining on a sample basis individual perceptions of informational needs. However, if you have the opportunity to expand your study, the following informational methods are recommended.

In most Indian communities, there are quite a number of social service and related agencies. Due to the nature of their programs, social services personnel are often in close communication with many members of the community. Thus, these people should be aware of some informational needs of their clients and their families.

You could devise a uniform interview form which would elicit some of the following:

1. What is the nature of their social services?
2. What is the mechanism for delivery of services?
3. What is the extent of their clientele?
4. Are there any related services which could be offered through a local informational/media center?
5. What informational materials does your agency distribute



that could become a part of the library's collection?

6. Have the social service agents perceived any special informational needs of their clients?

If you have an on-going program, you might provide a list of the current library services of your library and ask which services would be of use to that individual or to the agencies clients.

The nature of your responses will require much record keeping. You should limit your interview questions as most will require lengthy answers and you must also be prepared to handle a great deal of paper work. However, if your interview staff is limited, then your interviews will be more uniform. In addition, it will be easier for your interviewers to delineate composites of the interviews which directly relate to the scope of the study.

B. Questionnaires for the Local Officials in Responsible Positions

If your community is in a reservation area, your immediate concern would focus on the tribal leaders, traditional and elected. Your areas of concern are:

1. To determine what the tribal leaders perceive as problems in communication in the community. Problems in communication could be defined as failure to receive information and inadequacy to disseminate information.
2. What specific problems might exist for individuals as related to the utilization of and participation in community services, programs, and activities.
3. What specific informational needs could be identified for tribal leaders?
4. What are perceived as critical areas related to the informational needs of tribal people?
5. What library programming is of use to tribal leaders?
6. Are there any tribal studies available which might be of value in determining areas of informational need?

C. Community Interviews, Individual and Group

Individual interviews will be secured in your community survey. However, if you are unable to conduct the comprehensive community survey, you may opt to only randomly interview individual members eliminating services, programs, schools, etc. You would be seeking the same information utilizing the same process as identified in Section III. However, the data will be limited to your community inventory, library inventory, and individual responses.



If your study is limited to these three data sources, you should conduct group interviews if possible. Most tribal groups do have regular reservation, district and/or community meetings and gatherings. Or, there often is an opportunity available to Indian people to call a meeting, be it by poster, mailed print out, radio, newspaper, or the moccasin telegraph. However possible, get together groups of people and explain your program and what you want to do. Ask them what their informational needs are. If you choose to establish a set of "research" question areas as discussed in Section III you could go over them orally and ask the group to respond to each collectively. However, if your group is large, you will have difficulty eliciting response. If possible keep your groups small enough to allow group discussion.

If you anticipate many group meetings, it is recommended that a uniform data sheet be developed and the Indian interviewers be prepared to conduct and participate in the meetings in a standard manner.

Many of the questions posed to tribal leaders should be included in these interviews also. In some communities group meetings are often the only way to elicit the type of information you seek from community members. Reasons for this exist within community customs that frown on Indians acting presumptuously in an individual decision making process which might affect the total community.

#### D. Suggestions for Developing Alternative Methods

Because communities differ so greatly it is not easy to standardize any method of securing information in order to define priorities for programming. Your ultimate concern is to find out how your program can best serve the people in your community. Because of unique community situations, surveys, interviews and questionnaires are not always advisable. It is difficult to advise specifically what to do in any specific situation. In order to determine how you can get the data you need, you must employ the counsel of a community committee. Through discussing your program objectives with your committee it will be possible to determine areas of concern related to data collection processes which will/will not work, etc. Eventually after much trial and error discussion you should be able to determine the most suitable process.

#### V. RECOMMENDED READINGS AND RESOURCES

A great deal of the information for this article has been taken from the National Indian Education Association's Library Project annual reports. Also a great deal of information was taken from the Appalachian Adult Education Center's Community Survey Guide. These two excellent sources must be listed as "must" readings and resources for your project.

Community Survey Guide for Assessment of Community Informa-

tion and Service Needs. Appalachian Adult Education Center, Bureau of Research and Development, Morehead State University, Morehead, Kentucky. Pricilla Gotsick, Library Services Specialist.

A Design for Library Services for Indian Communities, The National Indian Education Association's Library Project (Grant Number OEG-0-71-4564, Library and Technology Bureau, U.S. Office of Education) as subcontracted to the Bureau of Field Studies and Surveys, Division of Educational Administration, College of Education, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, Minnesota.



National Indian Education Association  
Library Service Guides

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 0. Guide to Funding Sources for American Indian Library and Information Services.     | 5. Urban Indian Library Services.   |
| 1. Working with Indian Communities and Agencies to Establish Indian Library Services. | 6. Adult Education and Indian Libraries.                                    |
| 2. Working with Library Agencies to Establish Indian Library Services.                | 7. Promoting Indian Library Use.  |
| 3. Initial Organization and Staffing Patterns for Indian Library Services.            | 8. Locally Generated Information and Referral Services in Indian Libraries. |
| 4. Alternatives to Standard Classification and Cataloging for Indian Libraries.       | 9. Assessing Information Needs in the Indian Community.                     |
|   | 10. Materials Selection for Indian Libraries.                               |
|   | 11. In-Service Training in Indian Libraries.                                |



Appalachian Adult Education Center  
Library Service Guides  
Selected Titles

- |  |   |
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| Using Pamphlets with Disadvantaged Adults.   | Expanding Library Services to the Elderly.  |
| The Recruitment of Disadvantaged Adults: Effective Publicity.                                | ABE - What Is It?   |
| Techniques for Teachers: Teaching the Application of Basic Skills to Everyday Life Problems. | Interagency Cooperation: The Public Library and Agencies that Serve Disadvantaged Adults. |

Order Appalachian Guides from:

Appalachian Adult Education Center  
Morehead State University, UPO 1353  
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Director  
(Oneida)

Irma Lopez  
Secretary

## **Vita**

Becky (Bollich) Hebert was born in 1974 in Arkansas. As the daughter of an Air Force Officer she moved extensively during her childhood. She is a member of the Delaware Tribe of Indians. After graduating from Eldorado High School in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in 1992, she entered the University of Southwestern Louisiana in the fall of 1992. She graduated from that university with a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in biology and minor in chemistry in May of 1996.

She traveled to Mexico and spent five months there studying Spanish. On her return to Louisiana in 1997, she worked as a database application programmer. In January 2001, she entered the Master of Library and Information Science program at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana where her interests were in science libraries, public libraries, and Native American tribal libraries. She expects to receive the Master of Library and Information Science degree from LSU in May of 2002.