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## Notes and News- Winter 1981

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# NOTES & NEWS

## THE CENTER FOR GREAT PLAINS STUDIES

The Center for Great Plains Studies is an interdisciplinary program at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for the encouragement of research, teaching, and appropriate service activities relating to the Great Plains region. The Center defines the Great Plains broadly as the area stretching westward from the Missouri River at Kansas City and Omaha to the Rocky Mountains and northward from the Texas Panhandle into the Canadian provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta.

Administratively a unit with the UNL College of Arts and Sciences, the Center was organized in 1976 with the aid of a planning grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. In 1977 the Center was awarded an NEH challenge grant; matching gifts were contributed by the Woods Charitable Fund, the University of Nebraska Foundation, and several individual donors. From the start, the Center has stressed its interdisciplinary character and has directed projects that treat the human and physical resources of the Great Plains region.

The Center has supported a wide range of research projects in Great Plains studies. Conducted by University of Nebraska-Lincoln faculty members and graduate students, these include a major study of Germanic languages on the plains. The Center has also sponsored projects in Great Plains geography, musicology, anthropology, and literature.

Great Plains research is also encouraged by means of a series of annual symposia held each spring since 1977. These conferences have consistently attracted the participation of distinguished scholars in many disciplines from many parts of the United States, Canada, and western Europe. Always interdisciplinary in conception, past meetings treated the inter-

action of environment and culture; ethnicity; natural resources and environmental management policies; and the climatic and other environmental controls that have conditioned the evolution of the Great Plains region during the past 12,000 years. Future conferences will analyze pioneer landscapes and comparisons between the Canadian and American plains experiences.

The Center supports an extensive publications program in which the *Great Plains Quarterly* is the major element. In addition, several books published jointly with the University of Nebraska Press have developed out of past symposia. Future publications will include volumes based on the 1979 and 1980 conferences. Another major publication project is the production of a new definitive edition of the journals of the Lewis and Clark expedition of 1804-1806. The Center also sponsors a publishing venture in which definitive editions of the works of Great Plains authors will be produced.

Teaching activities have also been a significant aspect of the Center's work. Students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln may major in Great Plains studies. The Center has sponsored the development of courses in Great Plains history, geography, sociology, art, and the humanities. Among the first projects undertaken by the Center were the Nebraska Curriculum and Teacher Training Institutes in Native American Life. Funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the United States Office of Education, more than forty teaching units have been produced on Pawnee, Omaha, Winnebago, Santee Sioux, and Teton Sioux culture for use in elementary and secondary schools.

Other Center activities are related to the cultural life of plains residents. The Small Towns Institute in the Humanities, for example, has provided opportunities for university

faculty and small-town residents to work together in evaluating the resources of local communities. Such studies are designed to enrich civic pride, strengthen local leadership, generate local projects, and broaden communication between the towns and the university. Two successful institutes, held in Auburn and Aurora, Nebraska, have produced book-length cultural histories and resource catalogs. The Center has also sponsored two traveling photographic exhibits, "Dreams in Dry Places" and "Of Dustbowl Descent."

#### THE CHRISTLIEB COLLECTION OF WESTERN ART

The nucleus of a major collection of Western American art valued at more than \$3 million has been donated to the Center for Great Plains Studies by Dr. and Mrs. John M. Christlieb of Bellevue, Nebraska. The collection consists of 176 sculptures and 183 paintings, watercolors, etchings, prints, and lithographs and includes works by Frederic Remington, Charles Russell, Karl Bodmer, Albert Bierstadt, Gutzon Borglum, Karl Kauba, William H. Jackson, Robert Scriver, and many other Western artists. The gift also includes a library of 3,000 volumes of Western Americana, plus a collection of manuscripts and other archival materials valued together at more than \$200,000.

The Christliebs have also given three farms to the university for the care and maintenance of the collection. Eventually these properties will provide an endowment of approximately \$1 million. Income from these gifts will be used to remodel a portion of the Don L. Love Memorial Library at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for the permanent display of the collection. Jon Nelson, formerly associated with the university's Sheldon Gallery, has been engaged as curator. Additions to the collection will be made as other gifts are received.

#### A NEW EDITION OF JOURNALS OF THE LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION

The Center for Great Plains Studies has

undertaken the production of a new and complete edition of the journals of the Lewis and Clark expedition of 1804-1806. Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, along with four other members of the party of exploration, filled thousands of notebook pages with observations of the trans-Mississippi West. The purpose of this project is to reproduce these manuscript diaries in print as faithfully as possible to the writers' intent and to add explanatory annotations.

The most recent edition was produced seventy-five years ago by Reuben G. Thwaites. Since that time new manuscripts have been discovered, much more extensive and more accurate information about the West has been obtained, and more precise methods of documentary editing have come into use. Nearly a decade of research, editing, and publishing will be required to produce the new ten-volume edition, which will include a book of maps and a volume of natural history that will consist principally of illustrations and explanations of herbarium specimens collected by Lewis along the route of the expedition.

Cosponsored by the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia, which owns most of the original manuscripts, the project is partially supported by a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. The University of Nebraska Press will be the publisher. The editor is Dr. Gary E. Moulton, associate professor of history at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Moulton is the author of a biography of Chief John Ross of the Cherokees and editor of a three-volume edition of the John Ross papers. He is assisted by Dr. Thomas W. Dunlay, Jr.

#### THE 1981 SYMPOSIUM: "AMERICAN PIONEER LANDSCAPES"

The fifth annual symposium sponsored by the Center for Great Plains Studies will be held at the UNL Nebraska Center for Continuing Education, 33rd and Holdrege Streets, Lincoln, Nebraska, April 29 to May 1, 1980.

Presentations will be made by twenty-eight scholars from the United States, Canada, Britain, and Australia, representing the fields of geography, history, American studies, literature, art history, landscape architecture, and horticulture. Papers will treat elements of landscape as they were encountered by pioneers and subsequently assimilated into American culture. Topics to be treated will include aspects of the presettlement and settlement periods, ethnicity, modes of perception, landscape planning, symbolism, literature, and art.

The conference will begin on Wednesday evening at 8 p.m. with a presentation by art critic Phyllis Tuchman in the Sheldon Gallery auditorium on the UNL campus at 12th and R Streets.

There will be a registration fee of \$10.00 for the conference. Housing and meals will be available at the Nebraska Center. For additional information contact Barbara Dunn Craig, Center for Great Plains Studies, 1214 Oldfather Hall, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, Nebraska 68588.

#### THE 1982 SYMPOSIUM: CALL FOR PAPERS

The 1982 symposium will be held on March 18 to 20, 1982, on the topic "Intersections: Studies in the Canadian and American Great Plains." The symposium committee invites papers in three major categories: (1) physical and geographic conditions; (2) social, political, and historical constructs; and (3) imaginative orderings and reconstructions.

Persons interested in presenting papers at the symposium should submit 150- to 200-word proposals to the symposium committee by July 1, 1981. Papers with at least an implicit cross-national or cross-disciplinary theses are preferred, although papers on any aspect of the Great Plains in Canada or the United States will be considered. General topics include land use and settlement patterns; pastoral and agricultural pursuits; educational, religious, or political institutions; vernacular and folk customs and beliefs; fine arts; and literature.

Proposals should be sent to Professor Frances W. Kaye, Department of English, Andrews Hall, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, Nebraska 68588.