Title

User's Handbook for the Siouan Languages Archive. By David S. Rood.

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Journal

American Indian Culture and Research Journal , 7(3)

ISSN

0161-6463

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Publication Date

1983-06-01

DOI

10.17953

Copyright Information

features translations of tape recordings made during first-hand experiences at sweat lodges, calling helpful spirits through song, a vision quest and celebratory feasting. The uncluttered recounting of the entire process captures an affinity with ritual purity, creation of sacred space and dependence on spirit beings that do not depend on theological explanation for validity. Readers need to immerse themselves in the narrative; and detached discussion of stones, tobacco bundles or cloth flags will not capture the book's effectiveness.

On a more analytical level Powers provides here a carefully chosen and crafted report, drawn from more than thirty years of acquaintance with Lakota ceremonials. While much of his work is to help us see with the camera's eye, he is also concerned to explain and interpret as a guide leading us through new territory. He sees Yuwipi ceremonies as an important contemporary ritual, one that incorporates aspects that are over 150 years old. On the structural side Powers sees this new combination of religious activities as a continuation of Native spiritual sensibilities that have been preserved from White scrutiny and interference. A complete Yuwipi performance involves vision quests and sweat lodges, each independent in themselves but necessary components in modern synthesis. Thus some of the oldest features of precontact religion survive alongside and receive reciprocating vitality from this relatively new emphasis on curing ceremonies. Some may debate his ultimate claim that Yuwipi is the most meaningful expression of Oglala spiritual values. But Powers has undoubtedly done all of us a service by describing how modern Lakotas are adding some of the oldest ritual patterns to present-day ceremonials for coping with problems that threaten physical and spiritual survival.

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User's Handbook for the Siouan Languages Archive. By David S. Rood. Boulder, CO: Department of Linguistics, University of Colorado, 1981. 110 pp. NP Paper.

In 1977 David S. Rood, assisted by Allan R. Taylor, both linguists at the University of Colorado (Boulder), established the Siouan Languages Archive, a computerized information retrieval system

for data in and on the sixteen languages in the Siouan family. Their goals were ambitious: to centralize in Boulder copies of the vast body of Siouan linguistic material in published and unpublished sources scattered throughout the country; to store it in the computer; and to develop the necessary programming to enable linguists and others interested in these languages to request computer searches of the stored data to assist their researches. Over a five year period they have been successful in achieving these objectives for almost all sources and additional data are continually being added to what is already there.

Included in the storage system are the contents of grammars, dictionaries, word lists, collections of texts and letters—whatever is extant for every Siouan language except Kansa. The amount of material for each language varies, of course, depending largely on the amount of existing documentation. Thus there is more material for Sioux, especially the Teton (Lakota) dialect, since there are so many written records of it, whereas for languages like Quapa and Biloxi the inventory is much more restricted because of the relative paucity of documentation.

The *User's Handbook for the Siouan Languages Archive* provides a concise description of the material content of the archive, what a potential user might find in it and what the procedures are for utilizing it. The archive is not a source for obtaining copies of complete works, e.g., a dictionary, a grammar, or an entire manuscript. Someone who desires a copy of a book or a manuscript in full must look elsewhere. The archive is geared to providing specific kinds of information: "finding the places in the various documents which discuss particular topics or illustrate particular grammatical phenomena." The questions given to it can be posed in either English or in one of the Siouan languages itself, or in both. The computer then finds the answers to the questions by locating specific words or phrases in a document, copying the passage containing the key word(s) and providing for the user the passage and its location.

To make use of the archive a potential user must follow certain steps, which briefly are as follows. (The *Handbook* discusses in detail the problems involved at every step and suggests that one contact the archive for the latest changes in their capabilities and procedures.) First, one must determine precisely what the research question is and then which specific *words* in the documents are likely to reveal the information sought. Next, one must inspect the archival bibliography given in the *Handbook* to

determine which documents will be of interest, i.e., should be searched. One then decides the "levels" of information to be sought. There are a total of 24 such levels, or lines of information, described; they range from lines in the Native language, and in free or literal English translation in texts, to morphological decomposition of a form in a dictionary. One then chooses one of the two available sizes of paper desired for the print-out. Once all the decisions have been made, one writes the Archive specifying all this information; and, "if all goes well," one should receive a computer print-out containing the results of the search through the stored material.

A warning to the potential user: do not expect the material in the print-out to be in the same form as it is in the original source. Computers have their own orthographies, developed by those controlling them. Consequently the print-out will reproduce the material in a form that utilizes a combination of the English alphabet and a set of special symbols that indicate such matters as capitalization, italicization, accent and other features denoted by diacritics. The read-out is thus in a "code" language that must be translated (converted) back to the original orthography occurring in a document. Unfortunately, one of the shortcomings of computers is their inability to accept and regurgitate in the same form all the symbols employed by linguists and other language recorders in writing different languages. The latter failure notwithstanding, the Siouan Languages Archive is a tremendously valuable research aid for the linguist.

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