

REACTIONS FROM PANEL MEMBERS

Robert Case, Librarian
Lancaster City and County Librarian
Lancaster, PA

I will offer my point of view as a library administrator. As I listened to the presentations this morning, I thought of the contrasts that exist between urban and rural lifestyles. The Commissioners of Lancaster County hold the view that they don't have to provide sewers, daily paper services, and other amenities for people who chose to live in rural areas. Yet, it is the rural areas with their isolation and poverty that make Lancaster County eligible for federal programs.

I went through several areas coming here this morning. First I passed through a whole county which is presently under quarantine, as some five counties are, with avian flu. What impact does that have on the people and the economy of that rural area? What can librarians do in a situation like this? A humanities program could explore this process of history in the making. When you bring three-hundred experts from all over the country into a county to handle a situation like this, there has to be some impact on sociology, on economics, on the people who live there.

After leaving the avian flu area, I went by Three Mile Island. This was once thought of as the Brigadoon of Lancaster County. The incident at Three Mile Island has made an impact on all of us no matter where we live. When I see bumper stickers that read "Nuclear energy is the only way to go" I wonder whether a nuclear

research scientist is driving the car or whether someone who lives downwind of Three Mile Island is driving.

As I drove through Lancaster County, I thought of the three thousand Vietnamese, Cambodians, and Laotians who have moved there in the past five years. They are attempting to assimilate into a plain community culture, but we are doing nothing to record their influence on our lives. The Mong Laotians who have settled in Lancaster County are some of the most talented seamstresses in the world.

After leaving the Three Mile Island area, I drove through Harrisburg. Harrisburg is experiencing problems right now. The downtown area is having problems that hinder urban development. Coming up the Susquehanna River, I was reminded that Maryland is cooperating with the federal government on a project designed to clear up the Chesapeake Bay watershed. How does this project affect the people who live in the Chesapeake Bay area?

Next I passed through some rural areas that had been strip mined. I stopped at a truck stop. I don't often think about truckers, but when I stopped at the truck stop I realized that truckers live in a unique cultural environment. They drive back and forth across this country doing their jobs. They have homes and families, and are always in transit. This lifestyle resulted from the development of freeways. How isolated the people who live in this part of the state must have been before Interstate 80 went through. The federal highway system has had a significant impact on the economy of rural America and the lifestyle of rural

Americans.

I want to speak about the humanities from the perspective of a library administrator. The Lancaster City and County Library employs a staff of 55, and we serve approximately 400,000 people. Many demands are placed upon my time. I am responsible for keeping the door open, for keeping the staff there, for keeping the books, and for meeting a budget and a payroll. In addition to this, I am expected to provide programming. I feel frustrated because I don't have enough time to do all that is expected of me, so I can appreciate the problems you may encounter in trying to write grant proposals when you have a limited number of staff members.

You don't need to worry about \$100,000 grants. In your case it might be best to start with small proposals, gain confidence, and then move on to larger projects. There are ten participants here from Clarion University alone. I hope that these ten people will get together and discuss the issues that have been raised during this conference. Here is a core of people who have already been indoctrinated with the idea that humanities programming has great potential. In addition to that, you have good working relationships with people from Curwensville, and Foxburg, and Summerville (places I had never heard of), and this group could use this conference as a stepping-stone to develop some humanities programming.

Ms. Preston indicated this morning that a rural library is one of the central cultural elements in rural society. If the library does not offer humanities programming, who will? I

want to offer the following suggestions. First of all, you must identify the people to work with. As Tom Phelps pointed out, every other exit on the freeway advertised a college or an academic institution. The colleges, universities, and seminaries that are located in rural areas employ scholars who are experts in their subject fields. You should talk with them, stretch your mind, and get started on some programming ideas.

I noticed that the "Guidelines for the State Humanities Program" were missing from the program packet today. Since you are rural librarians, you will probably not apply to Tom Phelps for help because he handles proposals from larger libraries. I encourage you to contact your State Humanities Council first.

During the period from 1980-1982, the Pennsylvania Humanities Council funded grants in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and in other major cities. Only eight of the grants that were issued went to libraries. I urge you to get a copy of the Guidelines and investigate the possibility of writing a grant proposal.

Assess your community's needs, but don't bite off more than you can chew. You can start small and grow from there. Your first idea may be a stepping-stone to something bigger. Don't assume that you should try for the \$10,000 grants.

Don't get discouraged, and don't be nervous about the deadlines that Tom Phelps talked about this morning. If you have submitted any type of report to your county government or the State Library, you have experienced the pressure of working to meet a deadline. If you missed the deadline for this year, don't despair. Another

deadline is coming up in the fall, and you can use the extra time to polish your proposal.

Take one step at a time. Get in touch with local resource people, and then get in touch with your state committee people.

I can't emphasize enough how valuable the staff of the State Humanities Councils can be in helping you to shape your ideas, and to refine your objectives. They will give you the same kind of advice that Tom Phelps and his staff give to larger proposals.

You don't always need to create original programs. Sometimes plagiarism is quicker and cheaper. Some of the programs that have already been implemented offer excellent ideas that you can adapt and modify. The Vermont reading program that was discussed this morning was successful in New Hampshire and Massachusetts, and a variation of it might work for you.

Remember that in-kind contributions of time and talent are very, very important. They can add up to a big plus when you are trying to receive matching funds. Many of you have never had experience in writing grant proposals. But these proposals don't need to be as grand as you might think. If you are working with a local humanist, and he has the support of his academic institution, I see no reason why the development office of his college or university would not help you write your proposal. These people are familiar with grant writing, and institutions are looking for ways to use their staff to connect the academic community and the environment in which that community exists.

Many rural areas have county extension agents, craftsmen, historical

society members, and sociologists who are just waiting for someone to come to them with an idea that will start the ball rolling. By working together, we can accomplish some very exciting things in our communities.

REACTIONS FROM PANEL MEMBERS

Jane Grey
Former Director of Library Development
State Library of Iowa
Des Moines, Iowa

I want to tell you what my reactions were to this morning's program as a library user, and as the former Head of Library Development at the State Library of Iowa. Iowa is a rural state. It does not have as large a population as Pennsylvania does, but it certainly has as many libraries. Iowa has approximately 512 libraries, and 85 percent of these libraries are located in towns with less than 5,000 people. Many Iowa librarians feel isolated, but this problem also exists in urban areas.

I had the distinct pleasure of writing a grant that was funded by the State Council in Iowa for the Des Moines Public Library. The title of this project was "Confluence of People and Resources."

Des Moines is a river town. The grant produced an historical walking tour of the town. This was taped so that individuals could carry a cassette recorder and take the tour independently. Large groups have also taken the tour. This project was very successful. It introduced newcomers to Des Moines to the city's history and its historical buildings. It provided a sense of place and explained how Des Moines grew.

I was struck by what Tom Phelps said about the humanities and how they involved the search for connections. I think we should consider the connections that exist between people. We need to celebrate the differences that exist in our country because they are what makes America great. As we celebrate our differences,

we can learn to appreciate our similarities. The two things result in expanding our tolerance and that is very important, because expanding our tolerance improves the quality of our lives. I think that may be a basic need for all of us--that desire to help in creating a caring community.

I think that the library represents a perfect marketing vehicle for sharing some non-competitive aspects of our lives. Many of us face a very strong competitive situation in our place of work. We need to have someplace where we can compare our differences and similarities in a non-competitive way. Perhaps the library should sponsor programs which would allow us to do this. Every community is unique in some way and every library's collection is unique.

I remember from my days at the State Library that in-kind contributions are a difficult concept to understand. We should think of it as bartering. We barter time and abilities. If we think of in-kind contributions as a type of bartering, then it is far easier to understand how this fits into a large grant.