

THE PONCAS OF PONCA CITY: A STUDY OF
CONFLICTING VALUES AND POWER

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Before the white man can relate to others he must forego the pleasure of defining them.

Vine Deloria, Jr.
Custer Died For Your Sins:
An Indian Manifesto.

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Insofar as dedicating this study, it can only be reserved for its

central figures: the Ponca people and the people of Ponca--two separate and distinct entities.

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CHAPTER I

DELINEATION OF THE STUDY

A Philosophical Base

The heated criticism of America's institutions which rained down during the decade of the 1960's has cooled in the seventies. The classic design of conflict and confrontation appears to have subsided into a quiet rumbling. Many Americans seemingly have examined the criticisms of American institutions and have determined that regardless of their ethical shortcomings, a shaky existence is preferable to annihilation, or even drastic change.

Issue follows issue; but the issues change, and change rapidly. The problem of determining Richard Nixon's extent of complicity in the Watergate affair has been supplanted by a dilemma of apparent greater proportion, though the American life style remains the center of focus. The shortage of readily accessible, inexpensive energy presently bodes a shift in life style so fundamental perhaps, that the force of America's institutions may be unable to forestall its coming. A style of living based on the consumption of gross quantities of natural resources will most assuredly change direction if the quantity of resources are appreciably curtailed.

An alternative to a materialistic consumption-oriented society would be a no-growth system based on the interaction of people rather than on amassing large quantities of goods. Such a way of life is that

suggested by the Native American tribal structures. This idea represents nothing startling. There has long been a recognition that the life style of the Indian is oriented more to human considerations in the present, while the production-based, future-oriented life style of America stands almost in complete opposition. Rennard Strickland, writing in the Journal of American Indian Education,¹ speaks from the perspective of the deteriorating environment as a by-product of American life:

What does this all mean? We have failed in our duty to seek a vision - to weigh the costs and the benefits of technological processes. . . . We need to take time to make value-based decisions, to discriminate, to tell the scientists, to tell the businessman, to tell the politician the things that we value. Are we willing to continue to pay the price in air pollution for the unregulated automobiles? Do we know the costs for increased agricultural production through the use of chemical pesticides? We will have to engage in the difficult task of evaluating alternatives.²

In the end Strickland calls for the American people to look to the Native American as a source of ecological wisdom. One must question the viability of this, for when one examines more closely the relationship of Indian and non-Indian cultures, it seems doubtful that it will occur. Wilf Pellitier, Native American writer, expands Strickland's environmental perspective, and implies a relationship between non-Indian and Indian cultures in which non-Indian values are imposed on and control Indian values in all aspects of life:

Clocks and calendars regulate the flow of time in the same way that the military goose-step regulates the flow and rhythm of walking. Survey lines regulate the flow of space and fences violate the rhythmic waves of hills and valleys.
 Money regulates the flow of abundance.
 Education regulates the rhythm of learning.
 Games are the regulation of play.
 Marriage seeks to regulate love.
 Religion tries to regulate wonder and kills it in the cradle.³

Pellitier voices total pessimism regarding the success of such a relationship as he views the non-Indian world imposing one type of system on another in attempting to cope with life in general and Native Americans in particular.

The fact that differences exist between Indian and non-Indian cultures and values has been a focal point of Vine Deloria, Jr. Deloria and Strickland wrote during the same year, 1970. Both noted the rebirth of interest in Indians. Strickland wrote: "If ecology has become the crusade of the seventies, then the Indian has likewise become the minority of the decade. The year 1970 has been called 'the year of the Indian.'"⁴ Deloria made the same observation but more in a political context:

In 1969, non-Indians began to rediscover Indians. Everyone hailed us as their natural allies in the ancient struggle. . . . Conservatives embraced us. . . . Liberals loved us. . . . Blacks loved us. . . . Hippies proudly . . . showed us their beads. . . . Conservationists . . . sought out Indians for their mystical knowledge of the use of land. . . .⁵

The above underscores Deloria's view of differences between Indian and non-Indian cultures and their relationship. Deloria goes beyond the idea that non-Indians should look to Indians for a better life. He states that Americans have already moved in the direction of tribalism. Deloria defines the world of non-tribal person as being one of,

. . . linear sequence, in which A is the foundation for B, and C always follows. The view and meaning of the total event is rarely understood by the non-tribal person Non-tribals can measure the distance to the moon with unerring accuracy, but the moon remains an impersonal object to them without personal relationships⁶ that would support or illuminate their innermost feelings.

In sharp contrast he defines tribal society as being integrated toward a center: "It is holistic, and logical analysis will only return you to your starting premise none the wiser for the trip."⁷ His method

of comparing the differing worlds consists of constructing a circle representing tribal life with intersecting tangential lines being representative of non-tribal life. By considering the points of intersection one can analyze the relationship of the differing worlds.

Deloria builds a rationale on this model to show that America is beginning to go tribal. According to Deloria, linear directed, non-tribal society has traditionally separated knowledge into disciplines. Traditional knowledge, comparable perhaps to Galbraith's "conventional wisdom," when applied to issues or problems too often finds scholars from the various disciplines working at cross purposes, even when armed with the same data. Such represents the linear designed society.

Deloria points to the pre-depression period as the time at which the linear design was still workable. He notes that values of hard work and improvement through education still paid dividends. With the advent of radio as a pervasive electronic media the federal government beamed the depression message that there was nothing to fear. Borrowing McLuhan's idea Deloria cites a fundamental change in the medium of hard work of the pre-depression days:

Instead of living the credo of their parents, the stolid individualism of the past, the depression generation voted themselves every conceivable benefit which a government could bestow. . . . From cradle to grave they gave themselves benefits and never stopped talking about how they had 'made it' on their own.

Because of the greatly enlarged role of the federal government coupled with a greatly expanded electronic media, Deloria notes that McLuhan's medium and the message became one and created a new environment. Deloria's addendum to McLuhan is that in the process of transformation from the medium of self-help to the medium of interdependency, mythology and symbolism died:

This mythology--the chosen people, manifest destiny--has broken down completely for many of us. In its place the ugly revelation of Songmy stands as mute testimony to a world of reality that intrudes on our sensibilities and fantasies. We are unable to distinguish between what is happening and what it means. We tend to credit the difference in reception that exists in ourselves to outside and malevolent influences. We are inundated with data and concepts from one medium and we receive them in a knowledge structure forged by another medium.⁹

A change in the medium and the message; a loss of traditional mythology resulting in an inability to cope with fundamental issues; a concomitant electronic bombardment of the American people with superficial issues: these provide the basis for Deloria's argument that non-Indians are seeking to tribalize. Yet, Deloria claims that non-Indians are far from achieving tribalization--that they are presently grasping at a variety of mixed alternatives. In the meantime, Native Americans living in the structure of the tribe survive more handily. The inter-related circular nature of the tribal structure absorbs the flood of data and relates it to the tribal experience; consequently, tribal members feel far less the effects of media bombardment and a far smaller loss of efficacy.

Deloria's ideas are pertinent in that they provide a model of "structural" differences between Indian and non-Indian culture. The fact that structural differences exist between Indian and non-Indian cultures provides the philosophical foundation from which this study proceeds.

The Proposed Study

It is proposed that a descriptive and exploratory study be undertaken of the relationship between an Oklahoma Indian Tribe and a predominately middle-class, anglo community.

Populations

The non-Indian culture to be examined in this study is represented by Ponca City, Oklahoma, and the immediate surrounding area. Ponca City is a predominately middle-class, anglo community which bases its economy on the oil industry, agriculture, and trade. It is located in north central Oklahoma in the southeast corner of Kay County. The 1970 census reported a population of 25,500 for Ponca City. The Indian culture to be examined is represented by members of the Ponca Tribe of Indians who reside nearby. The members of the Ponca Tribe number between 1,800 and 1,900. There are no definitive geographical boundaries separating the two societies. Many members of the tribe have moved into the city, even though several families reside on tribal or individually allotted lands south of Ponca City. The overwhelming majority of tribal membership lives either in the city limits or outside of Ponca City. Less than 20% of the tribe has moved away.

Need for the Study

The Ponca Tribe and Ponca City society have been in contact for less than 100 years. Within this time period, there are indications that the Poncas have not fared particularly well. For example, death by violence for some Poncas seems to be a serious problem. During the years 1971 and 1972, twelve members of a tribe consisting of 1,900 people met death in extraordinarily violent ways.

There are other indications that poor relationships may exist between the Poncas and the citizens of Ponca City. The drop-out rate for Ponca students is high and there is evidence of a growing drug abuse and glue sniffing problems among the tribal youth. For the adult

members of the Tribe there is a high proportion of alcoholism, unemployment, and welfare.

These indications considered randomly and separately appear almost meaningless, but a study conducted by a BIA social worker in Ponca City between 1955 and 1971 shows the significance of the symptoms of the problem in that failure in school is as extensive as that of failure in the larger society. The population of the study represented 139 Indian students who entered the first grade at White Eagle School during the years 1955-1958. The drop-out rate before graduation from high school was 65%. Of the 35% that finished high school, 22% graduated from public school, or 7.7% of the 139. The remaining 78% graduated from Indian Boarding Schools. This group represented 28.3% of the original 139. The distribution by grade level of the 65% drop-outs follows:

- 15% dropped out after grade eleven.
- 10% dropped out after grade ten.
- 19% dropped out after grade nine.
- 16% dropped out after grade eight.
- 4% dropped out before grade eight.
- 1% went to Enid State School.¹⁰

With the drop-out rate in mind a look at what has happened to the 139 first graders is in order. Forty-four at the time of the study were chronically unemployed. Many were receiving some type of public assistance or depended on relatives who did. Many drank excessively and lived seemingly aimless lives. A large number had served time in some sort of correctional institution. Twenty-six were married to a more or less regularly employed person. Twenty-three were more or less regularly employed. Seventeen were in prison, while nine were confirmed alcoholics. Six of the original 139, were in job training of some kind, while five were in the military service. Five were deceased, and, finally, four were in some type of custodial institution such as mental

hospitals, state schools, or nursing homes. Perhaps the most startling aspect of this study is that all of the 139 subjects had not reached their 25th birthday when the study was completed March 26, 1971.¹¹

The data cited above establishes the need for the study as it regards the Poncas as a minority. The importance of Ponca City as a majority likewise needs to be established.

Robert Bierstedt has demonstrated that in a majority-minority relationship the majority must be given at least equal, if not greater consideration, than the minority. To Bierstedt, minority problems should actually be considered as majority problems since, "larger numbers can always control the smaller, can command its service, and secure its compliance."¹² Bierstedt calls this a "social not a cultural fact."¹³ By what means does the majority exert this influence?

According to Bierstedt, ". . . it is the majority that:

- sets the cultural pattern and sustains it.
- confers upon folkways and gives them coercive power.
- guarantees the stability of a society.
- requires conformity to custom and which penalizes deviation except in ways which the majority sanctions and approves.
- is the custodian of the mores and defends against innovations.
- provides the inertia which retards the process of social change.¹⁴

The rationale underlying this power of control lies within the majority's ability to thrust its support behind the mores of a society. Moreover, Bierstedt defines society as an informal organization and the state, a formal organization. He attaches laws to the state and mores to society. He notes a universal discrepancy between laws and mores and that when the discrepancy is wide the majority supports the mores. Concerning the mores of a society, Bierstedt notes:

When the mores are adequate, laws are unnecessary; when they are inadequate laws are useless. . . . The mores are adequate when they are supported by a large majority; they are inadequate when they lack this support. There is a power in the majority which can contravene any law.¹⁵

The Ponca people encounter problems in living adjacent to and within the Ponca City society. At the same time, the Ponca City society, because it is the majority, stands, possibly as the cause of these problems of the Ponca people. Because of this it is necessary to examine the relationship of the Ponca people and Ponca City society to reach some conclusions regarding the problems of the Ponca people.

Review of Literature

The Native American has been the focus of examination in studies conducted by scholars from virtually every field. Every aspect of the Native American life style has been carefully scrutinized. Centers for the study of various Indian tribes have been established, as well as data and information dissemination centers. Compiling the massive amounts of data has gone beyond the scope of one organization. Concerning education, the U. S. Office of Education, Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) for Indian studies is located at New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, New Mexico. The official designation of the center is ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools (ERIC/CHESS). There are other centers such as the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs at the University of Minnesota. The list becomes endless. The studies reported are innumerable; consequently, this section will deal with some of the major studies that have been undertaken.

The classic study of Indian education is the Meriam Report.¹⁶ The two-year investigation that culminated in the report's publication in

1928 was prompted by the widespread abuse of Indian tribes and their lands brought on by the Allotment Act of 1887. Although the Meriam report covered all aspects of tribal life, it included a primary emphasis on education. The report noted that the education provided to Native Americans by the Bureau of Indian Affairs boarding schools was inadequate owing to generally inferior quality of physical plants, teaching staff, and food and health services. John Collier, who held office from 1932 until 1945 as Commissioner of Indian Affairs based his efforts at improving Indian education on the Meriam Report.

At the same time, studies dealing with intelligence testing were undertaken during the decade from the early 1920's to the early 1930's.

Miles V. Zintz summarizes these studies:

They generally concluded that Indians were inferior to whites, but approached white norms more closely in cases where there was white blood in Indian veins. It was felt that full blooded Indians were unable to rise above mediocrity as measured by the culturally-biased standards of the dominant group, and further, that this inability was due not to test-related factors, but to a lower mental ability in the Indian.¹⁷

The Indian Education Research Project funded in 1941, largely through the efforts of John Collier, broadened the scope of the study of Indian education by bringing into the same arena of study the disciplines of anthropology, psychology, linguistics, and education.¹⁸ Out of this project came several major studies aimed at defining personality development of Native Americans.¹⁹ In 1958, the broad area of school achievement was included in the study of Indian Education with the publication of the Coombs study.²⁰ The study of school achievement scores, included over 13,000 Indian students in the sample and found that Indian children were close to the national norms for school achievement in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades; but, thereafter, gradually fell farther

and farther behind. The Coleman Report, completed eight years later, included achievement data for Native American students and essentially confirmed the findings of the Coombs study.²¹ In that same year, the Bryde study of Sioux children was published.²² It is representative of studies that attempt a broader approach by integrating variables such as achievement, personality, self concept, and school grade placement.

A final study, possibly the most recent study of Indian education on a large scale is the "National Study of American Indian Education" which was initiated in 1967 and directed by Robert J. Havighurst and Estelle Fuchs.²³ It has since been published in book form under the title, To Live On This Earth.²⁴

The Fuchs and Havighurst Study, an outgrowth of the National Research Conference on Indian Education held at Pennsylvania State University, May 24-27, 1967, involved the study of 30 Indian communities nationwide. The study utilized four broad categories of research methods: tests of school achievement and data on educational attainment; social-psychological test of personality, attitudes, and adjustment; observation by trained observers, interviews and questionnaires.

A major conclusion of the report was that Indian control of education would enable Indians to meet their goals of education which, "are to enlarge the area of choice of Indian people and to help them maintain their dignity."²⁵

The report concerning the attitudes of parents and children toward school concluded that both had little knowledge of schools beyond their immediate experience. The report did note that while the majority of parents were moderately favorable to the schools, ". . . the less favorable parents had children in schools where the majority were

non-Indians, and they were likely to have children in high school."²⁶

Community leaders were found to be more active in their understanding of the education system:

Principal problems of the school, as perceived by the local community leaders, were: parental apathy, lack of motivation by pupils, irregular attendance by pupils, poor home life, and lack of clarity and decision concerning the educational goals of the school. . . . Local community leaders, even more than parents, want to see the Indian influence made stronger with respect to education. But they are not clear how this should be done. . . . On the whole, the parents and local community leaders are a mildly conservative group, wanting orderly progress.²⁷

A final aspect of the study worthy of noting is the summary of attitude data for teachers of Indian students: ". . . they have sympathy and understanding for specific problems and aspects of their students' lives, but their comprehension of the total situation of the Indian community is restricted."²⁸

There are hundreds of other studies of Indians that can be categorized as lesser versions or replications of the major studies. The major studies illustrate the areas of central concern in the study of Indians and education:

- intelligence, or innate capacity,
- self concept,
- personality,
- school achievement,
- efficacy of BIA schools and public schools.

Among the broad areas there seems to be agreement on the innate capacity of the Native American student. The researchers generally conclude that Indian students are equal to non-Indians in intelligence. Concerning the self-concept there is disagreement with many studies noting a poor self-concept for Indian youth and others such as Fuchs and

Havighurst reporting a positive self-concept. There is an equal discrepancy in personality information while there is general agreement that Indian children do not academically achieve as well as non-Indian children. The efficacy of BIA as opposed to public school continues to be argued although this may become academic since more Indian children are attending public schools.

What this admittedly brief sketch of Indian studies shows is that there is considerable disagreement among scholars concerning major aspects of Indian education. More importantly, these reports and studies can be categorized as "official" since they were invariably commissioned by some agency of government and were authorized in order to serve a specific purpose. Because of this they are open to the criticism of being self-serving.

A second type of "research" that has emerged in recent times directs quite a bit of its energy toward confronting the official research noted above, particularly the motives of the researchers. These writings have one thing in common--they direct a constant stream of biting criticism at the handling of Indian affairs and are sympathetic to the plight of the Indian. Their criticism invariably spills over into Native American education. Further, the writers are involved in a concomitant discussion of activism in Native American leadership, which has profound implications for the scholars noted previously. A sampling of two writers will serve to illustrate this.

The first of these is Stan Steiner, who wrote The New Indians.²⁹ Steiner's main point in The New Indians is that during the decade of the 1960's there emerged the "Red Power" movement from the traditional Native American tribal structures. According to Steiner, the movement

adopted the symbolism and terminology of the Black Power movement. The red power leaders that he dwells on are young activists whose statements are invariably spoken in anger and intone a certain finality that seems irrevocable. The incidents that are analyzed throughout the book represent not only conflict between the Indians and non-Indian segments of society; but, at the same time illustrate a split in tribal leadership as the younger activists moved to coopt the traditional tribal leadership.

Steiner dates the beginnings of Indian activism with the formation in 1944 of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), which became the established mouthpiece for American Indian Leadership. Secondly, Steiner cites the combined impact of WWII and the Korean War on Native American peoples. During the time of these wars, thousands of Indians left the reservation either to enlist or to work in factories. Also during the early 1950's the dual policies of termination and relocation forced many Native Americans into urban centers. The effect was disruptive of tribal life, but more importantly brought the reservation Indian into contact with the totality of non-Indian life. One result of this was a move on the part of younger Indians to the college campus, and the emergence, according to Steiner, of the Native American intellectual. When the NCAI met in Chicago in 1961, the stage was set for the emergence of the National Indian Youth Council, as many of these intellectuals were in attendance. It was shortly after the convention that the NIYC was formed.

Among the founders of the NIYC, Steiner devotes considerable attention to the late Clyde Warrior, member of the Ponca Tribe, and prominent leader in Indian affairs. Steiner calls Warrior the "Academic

Aborigine," and sketches his participation in the overall development of the NIYC up until that time that Warrior became President of this organization. Further, Steiner details the role of the "Red Muslims" in the various fishing and hunting rights protests and their role in the War on Poverty. Steiner's message is clearly this--that the activist leadership in Indian affairs may come to dominate.³⁰

The year following the publishing of The New Indians, the classic modern work on Native Americans was published, Custer Died For Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto.³¹ The subsequent publication of two other works by Vine Deloria, Jr. has shown him to be a respected Native American writer and thinker. The philosophy of Deloria as espoused in his We Talk, You Listen has been previously reviewed.³² His third major work, Of Utmost Good Faith, represents a compilation of editions of major court cases, legislation, and treaties throughout Native American history.³³

In writing Custer Died For Your Sins, Deloria, among a host of other tasks, undertook to respond to Steiner's idea that the activist leadership of Native American tribes would come to set the tone for Native American affairs. In general, Deloria carefully draws a line between "Black Power" and the so-called "Red Power" Movement. He does so principally by differentiating between "militants" and "nationalists." According to Deloria, militants seek individual "progress by reacting against" white society.³⁴ In contrast, he defines nationalists as those ". . . interested in the progress of the tribe. . . ."³⁵ He seems to be responding directly to Steiner's use of Warrior as a model of militancy: "Clyde Warrior . . . was a true Indian nationalist. . . . Clyde refused to join the Poor People's March because he knew the

difference between nationalism and militancy. . . .³⁶ Deloria also makes specific comparisons between approaches of militants and nationalists. This writer has summarized these:

MILITANCY

- Use short-term TACTICS.
- Deal with single, immediate, and pressing issue.
- Resolving single issue causes activity to cease.

NATIONALISM

- Use long-term STRATEGY.
- Concerned with a multiplicity of ongoing issues.
- Resolving one issue causes emphasis to continue on other issues.

Besides the issue of activism Deloria delineated and illustrated equally important areas of concern and controversy in Native American affairs. He is critical of the attitude that the church has toward Indians and is particularly antagonistic to the historic missionary stance that the church has maintained and continues today. He reiterates the widely held view that American government has reneged, historically, on major treaties and agreements that it has made with the tribes, and that this practice continues. He provides insights by describing Indian leadership and many of the problems that are inherent in merging an anglo structure with a kinship-tribal system of decision-making. Much of this description is devoted to clearing up non-Indian misconceptions of Native American decision-making. He provides further insights into the Indian point of view through an exploration of Indian humor. A chapter is devoted to an open attack on educators and anthropologists, whom he feels have interfered in Indian affairs too long. His point of view concerning scholars in Indian programs can possibly

best be summed: "Before the white man can relate to others he must forego the pleasure of defining them."³⁷

This brief consideration of the parameters of research in Native American education shows that a fundamental shift has occurred in recent years. The scholars that have conducted the official research have haggled over virtually every aspect of Native American education for many years. The result is that the researchers agree on a very few points. A fundamental challenge has been issued to this official arena of conflicting research by a substantial portion of the Native American community. There is little doubt that this trend exists. A study conducted during the summer of 1970 reported, that, "The dominant impression to emerge from the in-depth, tape-recorded interviews was that Indians have become very aware that they, collectively, can materially transfigure their own lives for the better."³⁸ Seemingly, Native Americans have moved in the direction of self-determinism by which they seek to determine the nature of their educational system. The passage of the Indian Education Act of 1972 (Sec. 401-53 86 Stat. 334-45 Pub. L. #92-318 U.S. Congress) allows Native American Tribes to incorporate their own "local education authority" (LEA).

Because the official position in Native American Education has been challenged by leadership in the Native American community and because there is a wide disparity between the two positions, this study will somehow attempt to embrace both the official position and the unofficial position of social criticism.

Background of the Study

There were two studies conducted at about the same time of the

Ponca Tribe and education. In 1967, the National Indian Youth Council contracted with the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development to study the education of Indian children at 10 sites in the United States. White Eagle, Oklahoma, the recognized community of the Poncas located five miles south of Ponca City was one of the 10 designated sites. The resultant report, Who Should Control Indian Education? details incidents that occurred between the years 1967 and 1969 within that community that led to the closing of the White Eagle elementary school.³⁹ These incidents are categorized as "'community efforts' and represent a manifestation, of pride and confidence which are absolute prerequisites for the Poncas if they are to control their lives and their children's future."⁴⁰

The second study conducted was the previously cited Fuchs and Havighurst study. The White Eagle elementary school and the Ponca City High School were included under two separate categories in the study. White Eagle elementary school placed in the category of "Rural and Small City with proportions of Indian Students, 70-100 percent Indians." Ponca City High School was included in the category of "Rural and Small City with low proportions of Indian Students, up to 25 percent Indians." The portions of the report dealing with the Poncas consist of a brief description of Ponca City and also recognizes the Ponca efforts noted by the first report to exert some degree of influence over the education of their children.⁴¹

Framework of the Study

This writer proposes the following framework for this study which consists of an accounting of:

- The majority outlook and policy,
- The minority outlook and goals,
- The relationship of the majority policy
to minority goals.

George Eaton Simpson and J. Milton Yinger detail criteria that represent the various policies a majority can undertake in relation to a minority:

ASSIMILATION. Here the minority is eliminated as a minority--it becomes an integral part of the majority. This process is termed 'forced' if the majority denies the minority the practice of their language, religion, customs, etc. It is regarded as an extreme manifestation of ethnocentrism. 'Permitted, or peaceful assimilation, in contrast, facilitates adaptation over the long run. The minority 'absorbs the dominant patterns in their own way and at their own speed.' The majority will, at the same time, undergo a reciprocal assimilation of some of the minority patterns.

PLURALISM. In this case the majority will accommodate the existence of the minority with its differing culture. The majority 'must give up its claim to cultural dominance and superiority.' The minority must relinquish political and economic policies that are separatist.

LEGAL PROTECTION. This policy relates to pluralism, with the basic difference being that the policy is official.

POPULATION TRANSFER. As the name implies the majority moves the minority to a new geographical location. If the transfer is termed 'direct,' the minority transfer is specifically required and directed. The 'indirect' transfer consists of making life so unbearable for the minority members that they choose to move.

CONTINUED SUBJUGATION. In this case the dominant society is seeking neither to include or exclude the minority. The minority is allowed to remain but only as long as they remain 'in their place'--subservient and exploitable.

EXTERMINATION. Unable to resolve the conflict between the majority and minority, the majority actively seeks to exterminate the minority.⁴²

The minority at the same time will pursue goals or objectives that they view as being in their best interests; however, majority policy

will exert a certain influence in the minority selection of specific goals. In the latter, one can consider the minority selection as a response to the majority policy. Louis Wirth outlines four minority objectives or goals, one of which the minority will typically select:

ASSIMILATION. The minority seeks absorption by the majority. This will occur if the majority accepts the idea.

PLURALISM. Here the minority seeks to live peacefully, with its culture intact, side-by-side with the majority.

SECESSIONIST. Here the minority seeks economic, political, and cultural independence. This often occurs when the minority is frustrated with assimilation or pluralism.

MILITANCY. The minority goes beyond the desire for equality to a desire for dominance--a complete reversal of statuses.⁴³

It will be within the above framework that the following questions will be explored:

- What are the majority outlook and policy and what are the implications for the problems of the Poncas?
- What are the minority outlook and goals and what are the implications for the problems of the Poncas?

Some Limitations

There are limitations to this study that are probably inherent in many of the studies of Native Americans. These limitations stem from one difficulty--the inability to arrive at a universally agreed upon definition of Indianness. The Bureau of Indian Affairs provides the following information:

There is no general legislative or judicial definition of "an Indian" that can be used to identify a person as an Indian. . . . To be designated as an Indian eligible for basic Bureau of Indian Affairs services, an individual must live on or near a reservation or on or near trust or restricted land under the

jurisdiction of the Bureau, be a member of a tribe, band, or group of Indians recognized by the Federal Government, and, for some purposes, be of one-fourth or more Indian descent. .
 . .⁴⁴

Part of this legal-administrative definition is incorporated in the Tribal Charter of the Ponca Tribe. The Charter of the Ponca Tribe requires that members be of at least one-fourth Indian descent. If lineage were the only criteria for being Indian, then a legal definition would suffice. Unfortunately, this is not the case. For example, the Oklahoma State Department of Education defines Indianness as follows: "A person is considered as an Indian if he lives in an Indian community, and classifies himself as an Indian by his way of life, rather than by degree of Indian blood."⁴⁵

The "way of life" criterion immediately suggests a cultural definition of Indianness. Included in a cultural definition of Indianness are found classifications of values unique only to Indians. One area of cultural study is represented by the identification of Indian personality types. A study representative of this approach was published by George and Louise Spindler in 1957.⁴⁶ They differentiated Indian "pivotal and core features" of psychological structure on the basis of sex and also of geographical location for specific Indian cultures. Further, they differentiated general psychological types of Indians based on the degree of alienation from their tribal culture:

- Native Type
- Reaffirmative Native Type
- Transitional Type
- Special Deviant Type
- Acculturated Type⁴⁷

Research such as the above appears to be based on early attempts by anthropologists to categorize cultures. Franz Boas at a very early time attempted cultural studies by investigating the relationships of

behavior within total culture. Out of this he defined cultural traits, complexes, and areas, the latter consisting of behaviors classified by geographical location.⁴⁸ Ruth Benedict, in her classic, Patterns of Culture, used psychological terms, which formerly had been applied only to individuals to describe the configurations of three cultures.⁴⁹

The problems that accompany such studies of Native Americans are twofold. First, portions of the Native American community have issued challenges to these definitions. The late Clyde Warrior published his much reprinted classification of Indian types:

- Type A: Slob or Hood
- Type B: Joker
- Type C: Redskin "White-Noser" or the Sell-Out
- Type D: Ultra-Pseudo-Indian
- Type E: Angry Nationalist⁵⁰

The point to be made about the Warrior typology is that he places it in perspective of expectations of the dominant society, rather than the perspective of cultural attributes. Although he noted the latter type to come the closest to Indianness, his final statement is revealing: "None of these types is the ideal Indian. . . ."⁵¹

Secondly, the extent of cultural diffusion, particularly among the Poncas, seems to be extensive. James Howard, anthropologist at Oklahoma State University, has attempted to reconstruct the Ponca Culture, and cites a basic problem that he encountered in his work:

The reconstruction of Ponca culture of the precontact period, or even of the early historic era before the tribe had adopted much of the European pattern, is quite difficult. The Ponca were visited by the White traders in the 18th century and acquired horses and a variety of trade goods well before we begin to get extensive descriptions of their way of life. Furthermore, for the Ponca we lack the precontact archeological sites which provide an 'aboriginal baseline' for some other groups.⁵²

Howard produced a sketch of early practices of child-rearing and

family life among the Poncas. Howard notes that games and "kidding around" were quite common. The children were allowed considerable freedom and discipline was not overly important. Seldom did it become physical punishment: "I was impressed, while living among the Ponca, at the small amount of physical discipline used with the children."⁵³ Games and contests consumed much of the children's time. At an early age though, they began to learn from their elders. The women taught the girls what they needed to know. The boys, as well, learned from the men and would begin going on the warpath at an extremely young age.⁵⁴

Marriage, too, took place at an early age, especially for the girls. It was not an exceptionally ritualistic event among the Ponca, although it was a fairly respected contract for them. Polygyny was an accepted custom but usually only the older, more influential men participated. Divorce could be obtained quite easily in comparison and both the man and woman were free to remarry afterward. The children usually went with whoever was willing to take them, although the wife could not take them without the husband's consent.⁵⁵ Extramarital sex relations were not condoned by the tribe, especially on the part of the woman. Any woman caught in the act of infidelity was subject to physical punishment by the cuckold husband.⁵⁶ The people were not necessarily concerned with chastity among the young girls prior to marriage, but too much promiscuity was discouraged.⁵⁷ One can readily see that the family unit was essential to the Ponca tribe and the breaking of this unit was discouraged. The very existence of the tribe depended upon its strength.

The ritual of the Sun Dance has been identified in the Ponca Culture by Howard⁵⁸ and described by Owen Dorsey.⁵⁹ In addition,

Howard lists other ceremonial dances of the Poncas, which include Pipe, War, Kettle, Going-to-War, Ghost, Gourd, Coyote, Medal, Scalp, Soldier, and Snake dances.⁶⁰ Howard also recognizes the annual "Ponca Pow Wow" held late in the month of August and includes, in addition to the dances noted above, the "stomp" and the "49."⁶¹ Howard has further described the role of religion in the Ponca culture, noting the role of the shaman in specific medicine societies.⁶² Finally, Howard addresses himself to the issue of the Peyote Cult and the related institution of the Native American Church.⁶³

The problem with assuming that the above represents the "substance" of the Ponca Tribal culture is illustrated in the reporting of the language data. Howard points out that the Poncas spoke D̄egiha dialect of the Siouan language.⁶⁴ Based on an informal census taken in 1961, Howard also notes that only ten individuals under the age of 25 could conduct a lengthy conversation in D̄egiha.⁶⁵ This point is crucial, for if "language makes culture possible. . . ." and the Ponca language is only infrequently spoken, then this vital aspect of the Ponca culture is difficult to study.⁶⁶ At the same time, other questions are posed: Can it be said, for instance, that the above description represents the authentic ceremony and ritual of the Ponca people? Do all members of the Ponca tribe participate fully in this ritual ceremony?

Another way of viewing this problem of culture definition and description is from the perspective of the so-called American culture. George Kneller indicates that in the American culture there are certain patterns of behavior such as, "brushing the teeth, watching television, playing baseball, and electing a president."⁶⁷ Not only do the Poncas participate in these activities, they participate in all aspects of the

"American culture." Hence, there is justification for Warrior's response with a satirical list of personality types. Moreover, Vine Deloria, Jr., has noted the impact of studies of Indian cultures:

Tribes have been defined as one thing, the definition has been completely explored, test scores have been advanced promoting and deriding the thesis, and finally the conclusion has been reached-Indians must be redefined in terms that white men will accept, even if that means re-Indianizing them according to a white man's idea of what they were like in the past and should logically become in the future.⁶⁸

If there can be no agreement on what constitutes the Ponca culture in either early or modern times, there can be no agreement on what constitutes a Ponca Indian. There is a possibility that out of this study there will emerge the description of the only "true" Poncan, but the prospects are not good. At the same time, it is this elusive cultural/legal identity that sets the Ponca people apart from the majority and from other groups. This separation requires that the findings of this study be limited to the Ponca people.

FOOTNOTES

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⁵Vine Deloria, Jr., We Talk, You Listen (New York, 1970), pp. 14-16.

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⁷Ibid., p. 13.

⁸Ibid., p. 21.

⁹Ibid., p. 24.

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¹²Robert Bierstedt, "The Sociology of Majorities," American Sociological Review, 13 (December, 1948), pp. 700-710.

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¹⁴Ibid., p. 709.

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¹⁶Lewis Meriam, ed., The Problem of Indian Administration (Baltimore, 1928).

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- ²⁵Havighurst, p. 3.
- ²⁶Ibid., p. 7.
- ²⁷Ibid., p. 11.
- ²⁸Ibid., pp. 18-19.
- ²⁹Stan Steiner, The New Indians (New York, 1968).
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- ³¹Vine Deloria, Jr., Custer Died For Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto (New York, 1969).
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- ³³Vine Dloria, Jr., ed., Of Utmost Good Faith (New York, 1972).
- ³⁴Deloria, Custer Died For Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto, p. 237.
- ³⁵Ibid.
- ³⁶Ibid., p. 270.
- ³⁷Ibid., p. 175.
- ³⁸G. Louis Heath, "Red Power and Indian Education" (Normal, Illinois, 1970) ED 045 238.
- ³⁹P. McKinley, S. Bayne, and G. Nimmicht, "Case Study I--White Eagle Community," Who Should Control Indian Education? (Tempe, Arizona, February, 1970).
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⁴²G. E. Simpson and J. M. Yinger, Racial and Cultural Minorities (3rd ed., New York, 1965), pp. 20-25.

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⁴⁴"Answers to your questions about American Indians" (Washington, D. C., April, 1970), p. 2.

⁴⁵Library Resources and Oklahoma Curriculum Improvement Commission, "A Guide for Teachers and Librarians With Suggestions for Teaching Indian Students" (Oklahoma City, 1972), p. 1.

⁴⁶George D. Spindler and Louise S. Spindler, "American Indian Personality Types and Their Sociocultural Roots," in Staten W. Webster, ed., Knowing the Disadvantaged Learner (San Francisco, 1969), pp. 89-103.

⁴⁷Ibid.

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⁴⁹Ruth Benedict, Patterns of Culture (Boston, 1934).

⁵⁰Clyde Warrior, "Which One Are You: Five Types of Young Indians," in Stan Steiner, The New Indians (New York, 1968), pp. 305-307, and Murray L. Wax, Indian Americans, Unity and Diversity (Englewood Cliffs, 1971), pp. 188-189.

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⁵²James H. Howard, The Ponca Tribe (Washington, D. C., 1965), p. vii.

⁵³Ibid., p. 21.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 146.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 149.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 143.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 142.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 104.

⁵⁹George Dorsey, "The Ponca Sun Dance" (Chicago, December, 1905).

⁶⁰Howard, The Ponca Tribe, pp. 99-117.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 116.

⁶²Ibid., p. 119.

- ⁶³Ibid., p. 161.
- ⁶⁴Ibid., p. 5.
- ⁶⁵Ibid., p. 7.
- ⁶⁶Nicholson, Anthropology and Education, p. 20.
- ⁶⁷George F. Kneller, Educational Anthropology (New York, 1965),
p. 7.
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CHAPTER II

THE PONCAS AND PONCA CITY: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Introduction

There are indications that the Poncas assume a subordinate and possibly inferior or second-class status in respect to the majority society which is overwhelmingly white and economically middle class. There is some evidence that this relationship has existed for a number of years and is both regularized and possibly institutionalized. Moreover, the pattern of responses coming from members of the majority society concerning the Poncas is short, to the point, and is stereotypical. In that same respect, responses concerning the majority society that are made by members of the Ponca Tribe are short, to the point, and are also stereotypical. Each perceives the other as a group. Little effort is made on the part of either to discern individuality. There is virtually no intermingling of the two groups on a social basis even though interaction takes place mainly in the school system, and in school-related activities.

Historically, much has been written about the Ponca Tribe and of the development of Ponca City, but in virtually all of the writing specialized topics are emphasized while the relationship of the Poncas and Ponca City remains vague. The roles of principal subjects tend to

merge and the outlook and goals of the two groups become, to a large extent, inseparable.

Vine Deloria, Jr. addresses himself to the problem of minority history in terms of stereotyping. One historical interpretation he labels as the "patriot chief" interpretation:

Fundamentally it is a good theory in that it places a more equal balance to interpreting certain Indian wars as wars of resistance. It gets away from the tendency seen earlier in this century, to classify all Indian warriors as renegades. But there is a tendency to overlook the obvious renegades, Indians who were treacherous and would have been renegades had there been no whites to fight. The patriot chiefs interpretation also conveniently overlooks the fact that every significant leader of the previous century was eventually done in by his own people in one way or another. Sitting Bull was killed by Indian police working for the government. Geronimo was captured by an army led by Apache scouts who sided with the United States.¹

Deloria evaluates other historical interpretations in the framework of the various attempts at getting minority studies into the school curriculum. One of these involves the "cameo theory" of history:

Under this theory members of the respective racial minority groups had an important role in the great events of American history . . . it takes a basic 'manifest destiny' white interpretation of history and lovingly plugs a few feathers, wooly heads, and sombreros into the famous events of American history. . . .

. . . the cameo school smothers any differences that existed historically by presenting a history in which all groups have participated through representatives. Regardless of Crispus Attuck's valiant behavior during the Revolution, it is doubtful that he envisioned another century of slavery for blacks as a cause worth defending.²

A third historical interpretation that Deloria examines is that which he calls the "contribution" theory:

The other basic school of interpretation is a projection backward of the material blessings of the white middle class. It seeks to identify where all the material wealth originated and finds that each minority group contributed something. . . Under this conception we should all love Indians because they contributed corn, squash, potatoes, tobacco, coffee, rubber, and other agricultural products.

. . . the ludicrous implication of the contribution school visualizes the minority groups clamoring to enter American society, lined up with an abundance of foods and fancies, presenting them to whites in a never-ending stream of generosity.³

Hazel W. Hertzberg, Professor of History at Columbia University, in a similar vein has pointed out other types of distortions that enter into minority literature: the noble savage, the ignoble savage, and the victim. In terms of the "noble savage," Hertzberg notes that:

. . . it pictures the Indian as living in a simple, happier, state, in harmony with the world of nature. He is proud, silent, loyal, honorable, reverent, and magnanimous . . . with civilization . . . seen as inherently corrupting.⁴

She points out the popularity today of the noble savage as the technological world speaks up; but, more important, she indicates that "many believers in the noble savage have been able to reconcile their admiration for Indian virtues with their acquiescence in the submergence or destruction of Indian societies."⁵ One can readily see the compatibility of Deloria's "cameo theory" and Hertzberg's "noble savage." The opposite of the noble savage is the "ignoble savage" which Hertzberg portrays as being "merciless, cruel, dirty, lying, violent, implacable, vengeful, full of duplicity and guilt."⁶ Hertzberg shows that the ignoble savage concept provides a good basis for extermination. The final image, that of the "victim," shows the Indian to be "passive, dependent, inert, apathetic, helpless, powerless."⁷

In examining the histories of both the Poncas and Ponca City, their relationship, as previously noted, remains vague. Virtually all of the pitfalls pointed out by both Deloria and Hertzberg are readily apparent throughout. The basic theme is that the Poncas have an annual pow-wow that somehow is a part of the history of Ponca City along with various Indian artifacts that are on display in various parts of the city. A

select number of early Ponca leaders are recognized with appropriate markers having been erected. In reality not much attention has been directed toward the role of the Poncas in Ponca City history. Accordingly, the early history of the Poncas and of Ponca City needs to be reassessed in order to analyze the mutual relationship and the role of the Poncas. From that point the early relationship as a foundation of the existing relationship can be considered. To that end there emerge four distinct groups or forces that have been instrumental in shaping both Ponca City and the Ponca Tribe; and, at the same time, have determined the historical limits of the relationship of the Poncas to the greater Ponca City society. These groups are:

- the federal government,
- the Ponca Tribe of Indians,
- the Miller family, and
- E. W. Marland and the oil boom.

Early History, Removal, and Relocation

Sketching the origins of the Ponca Tribe is a somewhat chancy affair. The most acceptable theory, based on remnants of the tribal culture, is that the Poncas originally lived east of the Mississippi River as a part of a larger Indian nation, which eventually split up and migrated to locations west of the Mississippi. The area of settlement chosen by the Poncas was along the Missouri and Niobrara Rivers near the present day boundary of Nebraska and South Dakota.⁸

Reports of early white contacts with the Poncas are incomplete, but it appears that the acquisition and exploration of the Louisiana Purchase signaled the beginning of pressure against the Poncas to

relocate. Journals pertaining to the Lewis and Clark expedition indicate that these explorers came into contact with the Poncas in 1804 in the area of the Niobrara and Missouri Rivers.⁹ At that time their numbers were estimated at 200.¹⁰ It is generally agreed that over the next fifty years their numbers increased to about a thousand.¹¹

It was during this early part of the nineteenth century in which the federal government was contemplating a general Indian policy of removal that the government in 1817 entered into a treaty of "peace and friendship" with the Poncas.¹² A second treaty was negotiated in 1825, in which the Poncas admitted that "they reside within the territorial limits of the United States, acknowledge their supremacy, and claim their protection." They further agreed to the:

. . . right of the United States to receive the Poncars (sic) tribe of Indians into their friendship and under their protection, and to extend to them from time to time such benefits and acts of kindness as may be convenient, and seem just and proper to the President of the United States.¹³

It should be remembered that shortly thereafter the U. S. Government signed into law the Indian Removal Act and the efforts of Andrew Jackson and the government were directed toward the removal of the Five Tribes. The Poncas felt this increasing pressure in 1858 when the federal government negotiated a third treaty by which Ponca lands were reduced in size in exchange for a promise of protection and a permanent home on the Niobrara.¹⁴ As in the case of treaties negotiated with many other tribes the intent of this agreement was to restrict the movements of the Poncas and to domesticate them.

During the next ten years the Poncas suffered much. The government was lax in enforcing its part of the bargain. White settlers repeatedly intruded on the Ponca lands. The Poncas were continually attacked by

neighboring tribes, as well as by soldiers. In 1863, a small group of Poncas was attacked by members of "B" Company of the Seventh Iowa Cavalry. "The soldiers fired on them, wounding one woman by a ball through her thigh; another, with a child on her back, by two balls through the child's thighs, one of which passed through the mother's side."¹⁵ Later the soldiers spotted additional members of the party who had attempted to hide in some willows:

The soldiers immediately turned on them . . . and deliberately shot them dead as they huddled helpless together--three women and a little girl. One of the murdered women . . . had three balls in her head and cheek, her throat cut, and her head half-severed by the sabre-thrust; another the youngest woman, had her cloth skirt taken off and carried away, and all her other clothes torn from her body, leaving it naked.¹⁶

Though the federal government in 1865, attempted to make restitution with a \$15,000 supplementary payment and a slight expansion of Ponca lands,¹⁷ their generosity was negated in 1868, through a grievous bureaucratic blunder in which the Ponca holdings were mistakenly ceded to the Teton Dakota, enemies of the Poncas.¹⁸ During the next few years the pressure on the Poncas increased significantly as the Teton Dakotas sought to exercise their rights of ownership on the Ponca lands and white settlers continued to press settlement of the same territory. As a result, in 1876 Congress authorized the removal of the Poncas to Indian Territory. This decision was reached following the change in the government's treaty-making policy, by making treaties easier to ratify. It should also be remembered that it was in this post-Reconstruction era that the attention of the American nation was being redirected to the idea of developing new lands and the building of railroads.

A contingent of Poncas was moved to Indian Territory in 1876, but immediately returned. In the following year on April 30, 170 were

"voluntarily" removed and a second group followed on May 16.¹⁹ On the trek southward, the Poncas underwent great suffering. Ponca Indian removal and relocation differed little from other Indian removals undertaken by the U. S. Government during the nineteenth century. The Ponca "Trail of Tears" was simply one more indicator of the federal government's mishandling of Indian affairs during the nineteenth century.

By July of 1877, the last of the Poncas arrived in Baxter Springs, Kansas, which is located in the extreme southeast corner of the state of Kansas.²⁰ There were 681 members of the tribe who had been transferred to Baxter Springs, the site of their temporary home, from which they would eventually be relocated in Indian Territory.²¹ While the Poncas had been enduring the hardships of both army and Indian attacks and later the removal and relocation at Baxter Springs, several hundred miles away in Lincoln County, Kentucky, events were unfolding that would affect the lives of the Ponca people.

The Impact of the Miller Family

George Washington Miller was born February 22, 1841, in Lincoln County, Kentucky, the son of a well-to-do plantation owner. During the next twenty years, George Miller was raised and schooled in all the finer points of living on and operating a large plantation. In the midst of this, however, the Civil War intervened and virtually wiped out the plantation system. By 1870, it was apparent to Miller that the plantation was no longer a paying proposition, and with his bride he headed west hoping to rebuild his fortunes in California. Thus, the Miller migration became a part of the post Civil War-Reconstruction expansion that is characterized as being a renewed attack on Indian

holdings. Instead of California, however, Miller settled near Baxter Springs, Kansas, in 1871. There he set about building a cattle ranch, and at the same time began making cattle drives into Texas. The last of George and Mollie Miller's four children were born near Baxter Springs in 1881. The oldest of the Miller children was Joe, with Zack, George, and Alma following. It was these children who had the great impact on the lives of the Poncas.

When the Poncas arrived in 1877 and were temporarily placed on the Quapaw lands near Baxter Springs, the Millers had established their cattle business and were in the process of expansion into new grazing lands. The senior Miller had pushed westward into central Kansas toward present-day Winfield, Kansas. By 1881, his permanent headquarters was in that town and he was pushing into Indian Territory seeking, along with many other ranchers, to pick up leases on the Cherokee Strip. The Cherokee Strip was that part of Indian Territory set aside for the Cherokee Tribe of eastern Indian Territory to pass through on their way to their hunting grounds in the Rockies.

As the Miller empire expanded, the Poncas moved into Indian Territory to their present-day location. On May 27, 1878, Congress authorized the removal of the Poncas from their temporary location near Baxter Springs. The removal was undertaken in that same year, and they were located south of present day Ponca City. The land represented a part of the east end of the Cherokee Strip. The Cherokees were compensated by an act of March 3, 1881. The land was designated as trust lands to be held in common by the Ponca Tribe, and amounted to 101,894 acres. The tribal status of the lands, however, changed with the

passage of the Dawes Act. The Ponca lands were allotted into tracts of 160 acres by the Dawes Act in 1887.

Angie Debo has pointed out some of the methods used by colonists to obtain Indian lands that the Indians held by individual title. She has also noted the increased sophistication of these techniques during the early part of the nineteenth century. She further comments on the general methods utilized following the passage of the Dawes Act:

Enterprising scouts gathered up the fullbloods, brought them in and sold them to the highest bidders among the grafters at ten, twenty-five, or even thirty dollars a head. The grafters then assisted them in making their selections and directed them to sign another paper, which always turned out to be a lease of their 'surplus' and usually carried an illegal contract to sell it as soon as it should become alienable. The Indian received perhaps five dollars, perhaps a small rental, and returned to his distant home. The grafters also added to their holding the 'surplus' of the recalcitrants who refused to accept allotments; there was nobody to contest their possession. . . .

. . . the most revolting form of grafting was the plundering of children through professional guardians appointed by the probate courts. At first these guardians specialized in orphans; then when it became apparent that parents could not qualify through the legal formalities, their children also became the victims. The grafters reckoned his property by his guardianships he owned. He used up the rental from the agricultural land or he chose allotments for his wards in the pine belt and sold off the timber. . . .

. . . the grafters also found ways of having restrictions removed from the land they controlled. An allottee could apply to the agency and establish his competence to manage his lands, but many applications were made without the knowledge of the Indian by dealers who held sales contracts or merchants who had extended extravagant credit . . . some of them had given powers of attorney to a merchant to whom they owed money; then as soon as the bill was enacted, he gave deeds to a fellow conspirator.²²

It cannot be readily ascertained if these general methods were used specifically against the Poncas; however, an analysis of the Miller holdings will shed light on this matter. In that respect, it should first be understood that in the early 1880's pressure was building to open the entire Cherokee Strip for general settlement, including those

lands held by the various Indian tribes, including the Poncas. Settlers moving west were seeking homestead sites. Cattlemen such as the Millers were leasing the Strip lands, and the potential homesteaders were aware of this. Charges were made that cattlemen were given unfair advantage in their leasing of this land. In that respect, it has been noted that the Millers paid 2¢ per acre to the Cherokee Agency for grazing land in the Cherokee Strip.²³ By 1879, the Millers had leased 60,000 acres in Indian Territory and had established a headquarters called the Salt Fork Ranch south and west of present day Ponca City. This was considered the base of the "101" ranch until 1893.²⁴ By 1892, this pressure had reached a head in terms of opening the Cherokee Strip for settlement, and as a result the Strip was cleared and on September 16, 1893, the now famous land run occurred in which the lands of the Cherokee Strip including the "surplus" Indian lands were divided into settlements.

Prior to the run the Millers recognized that they were soon to lose their vast grazing acreage. In that respect they sought to utilize the newly allotted lands of the Poncas to replace those lands lost in the run. Fred Gipson, in detailing the history of the Miller's empire has noted that,

Being forced off his holdings on the Cherokee Strip was an aggravation to Miller and a disruption of some well-laid plans. But he would have been the first to admit that he wouldn't be bad hurt financially. He was ready to move over into the Ponca lease he'd arranged for before the opening.²⁵

These leases themselves represent an important issue in determining the tone of the relationship between the Poncas and the emerging dominant society. In 1892, the chief of the Poncas was White Eagle. According to Gipson,

At his recommendation (White Eagle's) the government agent for the Poncas leased one hundred thousand acres to the 101 at 1¢ an acre a year, payment to be made when Miller took over. White Eagle went further than that. He promised that the lease could be renewed for years.²⁶

Ellsworth Collings, in the 101 Ranch discusses the nature of these leases. He first notes that the greatest acreage owned by the Millers was 17,492 acres. This amount was attained in the year 1930. The remainder of the Miller acreage was leased land and the total acreage of the 101 Ranch he estimates to have been in the neighborhood of 110,000 acres. Collings then estimates that 92,500 acres of the 101 were leased lands. He points out that, "in the early days practically all of the Ponca and Otoe reservations were under lease."²⁷ Regarding the actual leases, Collings defines two types of leases. The "preferential" lease gave the Millers the right to bid above everyone else or to take the lands at other bids. Collings indicates that the acreage involved in the preferential arrangement totaled approximately 10,000 acres, and that the "acreage varied little from year to year." The rate paid was 98¢ per acre with \$10,200.⁴⁴ paid for 10,509.28 acres of tribal land in 1930.²⁸ The lands owned by the Millers and the lands leases on a preferential basis together account for only one-fourth of the 101 acreage. This leaves three-fourths of the 101 acreage unaccounted for. Accordingly, Collings defines a second type of lease that was "secured from individual Indians and other parties and were recorded in the Indian agencies in the names of various individuals." The practice of using different names, according to Collings, enabled the Millers to circumvent certain aspects of the laws concerning leasing the Indian lands. In that respect he points out that:

. . . the policy of the Office of Indian Affairs in effect at that time looked with disfavor upon extensive tracts leased

to individuals and corporations and, for that reason, many of the leases obtained from individual Indians or other parties were recorded in names of persons other than the Miller brothers. Since the records of the Indian Agencies handling these leases are incomplete at the present time, the exact number of acres leased in this manner is unknown.²⁹

W. A. Brooks, who fenced grazing lands for the 101, estimated that the Millers had control of 70,000 acres of Ponca lands, while Louis McDonald, himself a Ponca, and who handled Indian leases for the Millers, estimated that Indian lands under contract by the Millers totaled 90,000 acres including the preferential leases.³⁰

The Millers over a period of about ten years built a cattle empire in southern Kansas and the Cherokee Strip. When the strip was opened for settlement their empire was threatened and they set out to build another. The Ponca lands provided the least difficult and least expensive means of rebuilding this empire. The Ponca lands in the north had been mistakenly given to another tribe and they had been forcibly removed from their home in the north and resettled. When they were finally relocated in Indian Territory they were wholly dependent on and under the control of the federal government, who obviously did not have the Poncas' interest in mind. The Millers had little difficulty in capitalizing on this situation, as they went about expanding the cattle business. In the final analysis, it must be said that the means used by the Millers to secure the Ponca land were, at best, questionable:

In 1920 indictments were returned by the Federal Grand Jury charging them (Millers) with fraudulently obtaining large tracts of land from the Ponca Indians. The charges were general at first, and for that reason, George Miller demanded that the government furnish a bill of particulars of the alleged fraud. Federal Judge J. H. Cotteral after hearing the arguments, granted the request and instructed the government to furnish Miller's counsel dates and issues of patents and copies of alleged reports made by the land superintendent to the Indian Office.

Following Judge Cotteral's decision, the Federal government, through its attorneys, presented forty-eight counts against the Miller brothers. The particular counts alleged that they, first knowing, certain Ponca Indians owning land near the 101 Ranch were incompetent, conspired to induce them to make application for patents to the Secretary of Interior containing false statements, and second obtained deeds from the Indians, who were heavily indebted to them at the time. The case was tried before Federal Judge A. G. C. Bierer at Guthrie, Oklahoma. After hearing the evidence and argument, Judge Bierer rendered a decision in favor of the Miller brothers.³¹

The Supreme Court of the United States on October 17, 1932, refused to review the case; however, Judge Bierer rendered a further decision:

The court, however, found that twenty of the Indians from whom purchases had been made, were incompetent despite government ruling to the contrary at the time the purchases were made. The court, furthermore, ordered that these lands be returned to the Indians with government paying back in full to the Miller brothers the purchase price of \$30,649.90.³²

With relative ease, the Millers were able to avail for themselves the ownership and use of the greater portion of the Ponca lands. The basis for this as indicated by Collings was sheer gratitude on the part of Chief White Eagle and the Ponca Tribe. He describes the concern of the senior Miller over the plight of the Poncas when they were temporarily quartered at Baxter Springs. He further points out that as a result the senior Miller sent his oldest son Joe to convince the Poncas that they should settle at the location they eventually chose. Because of this Collings concludes that White Eagle was later eager to lease the tribal lands to the Millers in 1892.³³

Collings, however, fails to mention that the Poncas in 1881, were living on their newly assigned lands in Indian Territory on the verge of starvation. In that instance it was not the generosity of the Millers whose ranch was nearby that saved the Poncas. It was the extensive publicizing of the scandalous treatment of the Poncas that forced

Congress to ease the crisis by appropriating \$165,000 in emergency aid for the tribe on March 3, 1881.³⁴

Obviously, this brief background of the Poncas lends itself to some of the distortions suggested by both Deloria and Hertzberg. At the same time, however, it serves to offset many of the other distortions that exist in the available literature, particularly the "contribution" theme which dominates the literature. Secondly, this brief background demonstrates that the experience of the Poncas was similar to that of the larger Indian experience in America. Finally, and possibly most important, it demonstrates the character of the initial relationship of the Poncas and the larger society. To that end it should be understood that in some cases the Poncas did not fully comprehend what was transpiring. The mistaken cession of the northern lands; their hurried and forced removal; the leasing and selling of their lands in Oklahoma, all represent instances in which the Poncas were not fully apprised of the situation. At the same time, the fact that some Poncas returned to the northern lands, and that there exists even today a northern group of Poncas indicates a readiness on the part of the Poncas to resist what was happening. Moreover, the now famous case of Standing Bear stands as testimony to the idea that they assumed a subordinate role with the white society, not necessarily as a matter of choice. In 1878, Chief Standing Bear's son died, and with 66 tribal members, he sought to return to the northern lands to bury his son. His flight was successful, but he was arrested in Nebraska. At his trial his impassioned pleas, coupled with the support of a sympathetic press and public, resulted in the famed decision in which Standing Bear was recognized as a person, the same as an anglo. Because of this Standing Bear and his

followers were allowed to remain in the north; however, the requests of the members of the tribe that remained in the south to return to their homelands were denied:

If the Poncas were permitted to leave their new reservation in Indian Territory and walk away as free American citizens, this would set a precedent which might well destroy the entire military-political-reservation complex.³⁵

It has also been shown that the federal government, charged with protecting the rights of the Poncas, too often abdicated this role. In the case of the Ponca lands, it appears that the government agents went beyond their duties in certifying certain Poncas as "competent" so that their lands could come under the control of the Millers. In terms of the Millers, it could be said that they were merely good businessmen-- that they simply capitalized on the existing situation. It is doubtful, however, that the Millers can be held blameless. Joseph Klingensmith, in his research on the Poncas, commented on the issue of the Ponca lands and allotment:

Certain ranchmen wanted to purchase a foothold within the reservation; this was impossible until after the allotments were made, and some were up for sale. So considerations were offered to those in favor of the allotment idea if they could prevail upon Congress and the tribe to accept it.³⁶

This initial period of Ponca history is easily categorized as a difficult period for the Poncas. Further, it is readily apparent that the Poncas were thrust into a clearly subordinate role in the case of the government and of the Millers. There can be little doubt also that their exploitation was to a large extent the result of the passage and implementation of the Dawes Act. It becomes imperative to continue the examination of the development of this early relationship. In that respect, the Poncas were brought into contact with the third group under consideration: E. W. Marland and the oil industry.

E. W. Marland and the Oil Boom

The third and final group that was instrumental both in shaping Ponca City and in determining the historical limits of the relationship of the Poncas to the greater Ponca City society is represented by E. W. Marland and the oil industry. Ernest Whitworth Marland was born May 8, 1874, in Pittsburgh.³⁷ His father was English-born and had achieved a moderate degree of success as an industrialist in that city. Marland's birth, it should be noted, occurred at roughly the time that attacks on the Poncas by the Teton Dakotas and pressure by settlers to take Ponca lands from them on their northern reservation became intense.

Marland was graduated from the University of Michigan Law School in June of 1893, the same year in which the land run into the Cherokee Strip occurred.³⁸ Two years later the oil industry was booming in Pennsylvania. In the midst of this, E. W. sought to claim a piece of the action. His first position was with a coal firm, but his eagerness to form his own company resulted in his investing in a copper venture, which quickly proved to be a failure as the site had previously been mined out.³⁹ By 1904, Marland was the president of the Pittsburgh Securities and Guaranty Company which deteriorated in that same year. From that point, Marland actively pursued the idea of building an empire in the coal industry. In that respect, Mathews casts Marland in a mold similar to that of Carnegie, Mellon, Rockefeller, or Morgan. He pursued the study of geological formations dealing with coal and located potential coal fields in the West Virginia-Ohio area. However, in drilling for coal, Marland's crew struck oil; and in the ensuing excitement, the entire field was claimed by a variety of people, and Marland was left only with his original lease.⁴⁰

In the panic of 1907, which followed shortly thereafter, Marland lost his infant company which at that point was valued, according to Mathews, at one million dollars. It is also at this point that Marland came into contact with the Miller brothers and the Ponca Tribe. Marland's nephew, Franklin Kenny, was stationed at Ft. Sill which is situated in the southwest portion of Oklahoma. During his stay in Oklahoma, he became a regular visitor at the "101" Ranch. Knowing the plight of his uncle, he sought to convince Marland of the possibilities of coming to Oklahoma to start oil exploration. At the same time, he convinced the Millers that they should lease some of the holdings to Marland. Marland came to Oklahoma, which proclaimed statehood in the previous year 1907, and immediately set out to explore for oil on the Miller's land. It has been noted that:

. . . he secured a lease from the Miller brothers on the famous 101 Ranch. Additional leases were obtained from the Indians who owned land in the vicinity and in February, 1909, the location was made for a well. . . .⁴¹

Marland's leasing of Indian lands is further described by Collings, author of the 101 Ranch:

Convinced that the Indian cemetery was a distinct oil formation, Mr. Marland told George L. Miller he would agree to drill a test well if he would give him a lease on the 101 Ranch lands and help him obtain the necessary leases from the Ponca Indians.⁴²

Collings sheds light on Marland's attitude in gaining the use of the Ponca lands:

We had a lot of trouble with the Indians . . . before we got a lease on their cemetery and on the surrounding land. But after a lot of palaver, smoking and squatting we got the lands leased up and were ready to drill.⁴³

Marland, according to Collings, was able to secure 10,000 acres of 101 Ranch land and 4,800 acres of Ponca lands.⁴⁴ It has been shown that

the Millers had been able to lease virtually all of the Ponca lands, and were able to secure title to a portion of these lands. Marland's drive to discover oil necessitated oil and gas leases; therefore, it would appear that he had little difficulty in leasing the Ponca lands with the help of the Millers.

A brief analysis of the nature of the oil boom in northern Oklahoma will provide insight into the question of why Ponca lands were readily leased and why the Poncas had little or no concept of the workings and importance of these leases. James L. Gilbert, in analyzing a portion of the oil boom of Oklahoma notes that:

. . . during the 1920's the United States produced approximately sixty-five percent of the world's crude oil and over half of the nation's production came from the Mid-Continent oil fields. Before the World War, the oil bonanzas of Glenn Pool, Healdton, Cushing, and Garber had been the magic names among the state's oil fields. These discoveries and numerous smaller ones had caused Oklahoma's annual petroleum income to increase in value from \$75 million in 1900 to nearly \$1.3 billion in 1920. But Oklahoma's zenith did not come until the 1920's when the discoveries of Burbank, Tonkawa, Seminole, and Oklahoma City allowed Oklahoma to lead the nation from 1920 to 1928.⁴⁵

With the promise of riches noted above, it is little wonder that the area from Tonkawa to Burbank became a flurry of activity. It is this activity that Gilbert gives careful scrutiny. In drilling an initial well in unproven territory, a variety of financing schemes were utilized. In some instances, stock was sold to raise drilling capital. In others, "dry hole money" was contributed by others who held leases in the vicinity and who stood to gain from the geological information provided by the first well. Based on this information, the various companies would decide to spend money on drilling additional wells; or they could simply sell their leases to another company. Additional options included "farming out" their leases with the landowner. Gilbert

indicates that "Prarie Oil and Gas Company contributed \$2,500 in dry hole money to Marland, and the Kay County Gas Company, a subsidiary to Marland Oil gave \$5,000 to finance . . . one well."⁴⁶

Another example of the intricate financing used by Marland involved first the selling of one-half interest in a 640 acre section to Cosden Oil Company. Lacking \$16,000, Marland then prevailed on Southwestern Oil Company to purchase 160 acres of the 320 acre tract; one-half of which had been "farmed out" to Marland by the Humphrys Petroleum Company. By the mere act of arranging financing, Marland brought into play the interests of Marland, Cosden, Southwestern, and Humphrys Oil Companies.⁴⁷

There appears to be a real reason for the use of these elaborate schemes of finance. Gilbert points out that the smaller companies such as Kenny-Cleary and the Tom James companies were large enough only to participate in the field production phase of the oil industry. The larger companies such as Marland were clearly in control of production, refining, transportation, and retailing which obviously gave the larger companies tremendous leverage in controlling the market. A second aspect of the small company was that they depended heavily on the "wildcat" well, or that initial well in unproven territory. However, once the wildcat well was proven the smaller companies were unable, due to the lack of capital, to expand this into a large field; hence, they often sold their leases to a larger company. In the case of the Kenny-Cleary and Tom James companies they joined with Marland who agreed to put up 60% of the necessary capital.

Marland himself reorganized his company to facilitate the development of other leases. In July, 1921, Marland combined three Marland

Oil Company subsidiaries into the Comar Oil Company. These subsidiaries were: Ozark Pipeline Company, Kay County Gas Company, and the Marland Refining Company. Roxanna Petroleum Corporation was permitted an equal share of Comar in September. In this case Marland turned over his interest in the Tonkawa field to Comar, and Roxanna agreed to provide \$2 million in development capital. Management of Comar was vested in Roxanna who also held 51% controlling interest in Comar.⁴⁹ Gilbert points out further that "The procedure for developing a field by creating a separate corporation and leaving the field operations in the hands of one of the parent companies was common practice of the time."⁵⁰

In addition to oil company finance schemes, there is also the companion issue of oil leases. The main approach to leasing involved the securing of mineral rights on unproven lands in hopes that a nearby oil discovery would enable the lessee to sell to a company at a profit. It should be noted, however, that "each large company had a land department which consisted of lessees who were paid on a commission basis."⁵¹ Further, there was the company practice of checkerboarding or scattering leases in unproven areas in order to increase the chances of success. Finally Gilbert notes situations "where wells were actually capable of producing but were plugged and temporarily abandoned."⁵²

The individual leases were negotiated for five to ten year periods, and if they were signed prior to the boom the companies benefited handsomely; if not, they often had to pay large bonuses for their leases. Gilbert relates the story of Sam McKee, whose farm was centered in the Tonkawa field. Unfortunately, McKee had agreed to lease years before the boom for only ten cents per acre, a token payment.⁵³ In a brief

description, Gilbert details the typical lessee and his method of operation:

The echo of the "lease hound" was resounding throughout the land. Lease brokers could be found in all the hotel lobbies with geological survey maps in their pockets. So keen was the rivalry among lessees that they did not wait to have a lease recorded or the abstract examined. When the owner of a farm affixed his signature to a lease form, the lessee paid him off immediately in cash.⁵⁴

Finally, regarding leasing, companies apparently sought to lease any and every type of land that could contain oil, including yards of farm homes, school houses, churches, and cemeteries. There appeared to be a superstitious belief in respect to the latter, that oil would be found near gravesites. George Knox attempted to put a well in the northern Oklahoma field on a lease that included the Prairieview Church property and cemetery. The parishioners forcibly blocked Knox and in a later court case Knox was forbidden to drill on the church lands. Marland, however, apparently received no opposition in drilling for oil on Ponca Indian burial grounds. Another aspect of the northern Oklahoma oil boom that deserves attention is that of oil royalties:

Royalty was usually sold on the unit basis and figured by the barrel . . . an eighty acre tract would normally be divided into eighty units of royalty. Since the royalty constitutes one-eighth of the entire production one unit would be $1/640$ of the acres total production.⁵⁵

Buying and selling oil royalties then was an added means of speculation, and of making a profit from the oil boom:

The local banks served as clearing houses for the royalty bankers, who were the link between the field and outsiders desiring to purchase royalties in the field. By obtaining either a written or spoken agreement with farmers or other holders of royalty, the brokers could place the papers, including the abstract, in the bank. Then they would contact buyers at home offices and bargain for the royalties which had been pledged.⁵⁶

There were several royalty trusts at work in northern Oklahoma during the oil boom, but most were from outside the state. The only major royalty company that was Oklahoma based was the Northern Royalty Trust Company, which was composed of executives from the Marland Oil Company.

It should be readily apparent at this point that the oil boom of northern Oklahoma was indeed a speculative undertaking. The schemes detailed above further show that it was an extremely intricate and complex affair. As Gilbert has shown, the various companies were able to put together a variety of financial schemes and likewise were able to bring into play the resources of several companies. The nature of the oil business, in terms of leasing royalties, is further evidence of its complexity.

The discovery of oil in the northern region added to the bustle of booming activity that accompanied the land run of 1893. In turn, this activity should be considered as a part of the larger frame of rapid industrialization that was sweeping the nation. At the same time, it was the heyday of the industrial giant--a period in which fortunes and empires were built and lost overnight. In the midst of this, one finds the Ponca Tribe with their lands standing in the middle of the oil boom. While Gilbert has described a variety of financial schemes, leasing arrangements, and general oil company policies that he applies to an area adjacent to and including only a small portion of the Poncas lands, it is apparent that these practices were also used when Ponca lands were explored and leased. A survey of the land transactions undertaken by the major oil companies reveals that virtually every tactic described by Gilbert was utilized by the various oil companies in gaining access to

Ponca lands. Township 25N, R2E, and Township 25N, R3E of Kay County make up approximately the northern one-third of the original Ponca restricted lands.⁵⁷ This area is made up of 57 complete sections of land and 12 partial sections of land. In reviewing the early transactions concerning these lands, the following parties were listed as having leased, bought, sold, or assigned to another party, acreages in every section in the two townships described above:

E. W. Marland
 Marland Oil Company
 Marland Refining Company
 Continental Oil Company
 Kay County Gas Company
 Marland Gasoline Company
 Marland Production Company
 Ozark Pipeline Company
 Gypsy Oil Company
 Alcorn Oil Company
 Comar Oil Company
 Roxanna Petroleum Company
 White Eagle Oil and Refining Company
 Kenny-Cleary Oil Company
 Joe Miller
 George L. Miller
 Alma Miller England
 Mollie Miller
 Zack T. Miller
 W. H. England⁵⁸

The most noticeable thing concerning the review of the Index is is that a pattern emerges as one studies the leases, purchases, and assignments that were made. Invariably Marland or the Millers made first acquisition and soon followed up with assignment to one of the other groups noted above. In virtually every section of land surveyed in the transaction index, there is a clear indication that the lands, either by ownership, lease, or assignment moved constantly among all of the groups listed.

For the Poncas to have comprehended the in's and out's of oil company practices and policies would have required expert legal and

business representation which they did not have. Such representation would have enabled the Ponca Tribe to benefit to the maximum from the oil leases and speculation. Indeed, the impression has been left that they did benefit handsomely. A publication of the Kay County Gas Company, a subsidiary of the Marland Oil Company stated in 1919, "The Poncas kept their lands. They are now drawing immense royalties from the oil fields on their reservations."⁵⁹ It should be recognized, however, that while the Ponca Tribe as a unit did not benefit, certain members of the tribe possibly reaped rewards. Joseph Klingensmith, writing in 1941, comments on the oil boom as it came to the Poncas:

There are still some wells producing for the Poncas, but nothing like they used to. The oil boom is gone, and the large fortunes derived there from are gone as effectively as though there had never been an Indian agency.⁶⁰

The payment of "large fortunes" is supported by this sole footnote: "Willie Cry is reported to have had one million dollars to handle in twenty years."⁶¹ In the case of Willie Cry, the money paid may well have been a substantial amount for it was his lands on which Marland drilled his initial wells. For the majority of the Poncas, however, there is no evidence that any great amount of money was ever paid them. In that respect, the issue of "Indian oil money" suggests that all Indians have received and continue to receive oil company largess.

In the case of the Poncas, their situation is too often confused with that of their neighbors to the east, the Osages. When allotment came with the Dawes Act, the Osages eventually divided the surface rights among the members of the tribe, but somehow managed to keep their mineral rights intact. The result was that when oil was discovered on Osage lands during the northern Oklahoma oil boom, the oil companies were forced to deal with the tribal unit rather than the individual

members of the Osage tribe. As a result, the Osage tribe has continued to benefit over a period of years as the members received payments from the tribe which has, in turn, maintained and protected the oil leases. Unfortunately, this subtle difference is not always brought out when discussing Indian oil money. In the final analysis, the inability of various Indian tribes, including the Poncas, to benefit significantly from the oil boom must be included in the legacy of the Dawes Act, allotment, and the general bungling of Indian affairs by the federal government.

The End of Marland and the Millers

With the various parties noted firmly in control of Indian lands, the saga of northern Oklahoma oil boom was played out in short order. As Marland's infant oil company blossomed into one of the major oil producers of the early twentieth century, Marland suddenly found his company to be in difficult financial straits. E. W. Marland has been portrayed as a lavish spending entrepreneur-philanthropist; a remnant of the nineteenth century. Mathews indicates that to a great extent Marland's problems arose from his profuse personal spending. He further points out that Marland paid generous salaries and bonuses, particularly to his top executives. Further, Mathews illustrates Marland's philanthropy by citing his support of Ponca City's Girl Scout and Boy Scout organizations, Y.M.C.A., and American Legion Orphan's Home. Similarly, Marland financed a dictionary of the Osage Indian language which was undertaken by the Smithsonian Institute. Likewise, Marland constructed and outfitted two complete mansions in Ponca City both of which remain today.⁶²

Mathews details a social event put on by Marland that typifies his lavish spending. In December, 1922, Marland constructed a hunting camp southwest of Ponca City. The camp consisted of tents outfitted with electricity, hot and cold running water, food, and liquor. "To make the scene more picturesque, an Indian village was erected near the camp, with a Ponca chief as host, and Colonel Joe Miller of the 101 Ranch arranged for Indian dances."⁶³

Mathews further describes a poker game, one of Marland's favorite pastimes:

There was . . . a celebration to honor the fact that the land department of Marland Oil Company had made a two-million dollar profit from a ridiculous investment of two hundred thousand dollars. After the second or third cocktail, the game started. All night they played, the dinner lay untouched.

When dawn came there were checks under piles of treasury notes, and silver dollars in stacks all over the place. The floor was soiled with cigarette ashes, and there were burnt spots where they had been allowed to die without attention.⁶⁴

In short, although Marland was a man of considerable wealth, he spent it both readily and rapidly. Mathews notes that Marland simply could not be concerned with computing his total wealth. Because of his lack of concern with financial detail, Marland, during the 1920's and 1930's found himself constantly plagued by the problem of a cash deficit. It was also at this time that the Standard oil giant and the Morgan banking family began eyeing the growing and apparently successful Marland Oil Company. Continental Oil Company, a stagnating firm controlled jointly by Standard Oil and Morgan's, became the intermediary through which the eventual merger was accomplished. In January, 1924, Marland, in attempting to expand his cash reserve, sold 3,000,000 shares at \$30 per share to the Morgan banking family. A further agreement

gave the Morgans the option to buy 335,000 additional shares at \$39 per share.

This transaction gave the Morgans and Continental Oil Company the foothold they needed to eventually take control of the Marland holdings. Losses in both 1927 and 1928 resulted in 1929, in the actual merging of Marland Oil Company into Continental Oil Company, the present-day Ponca City oil company that will be discussed in later chapters. Though Marland at that time maintained a certain power in the company, his influence beyond that point waned rapidly.

In 1931, Marland found himself to be in personal financial difficulties. On August 11, 1931, the Marland Estate, Inc., was auctioned to another oil baron, W. H. McFadden. Shortly thereafter, Marland entered politics, and was elected to serve in Congress in 1932. In November, 1934, he was elected to serve as governor of Oklahoma. Marland lost U. S. senatorial races in 1936 and 1938. In 1939, Leon C. Phillips became governor of Oklahoma. On October 3, 1941, E. W. Marland died.

In a manner similar to that of Marland, the star of the Miller family rose rapidly and was suddenly snuffed out. The extent of the Miller land holdings has been previously described. In addition to the extensive land and livestock holdings, the Millers undertook, at the same time, a comprehensive farming program that included orchards and a variety of experimental crops. In addition, the headquarters of the 101 Ranch, which was located 10 miles south and west of present day Ponca City, was a hub of activity that included a tannery, a dairy, a store, and a school. It was at the headquarters that the 101 Wild West Show and Rodeo originated. The wild west show achieved international

fame, and included members of the Ponca Tribe as well as the famed Black bulldogger, Bill Pickett. Finally, it should be noted that the ranch served as a regular visiting place for national business leaders, Hollywood stars, and other such dignitaries.

The initial relationship between Marland and the Millers has been noted concerning the Ponca oil leases and land purchases. In addition, the Millers started the 101 Ranch Oil Company, which Marland eventually took over. Clearly the business interests of Marland and the Millers were closely entwined. Ironically the demise of the Miller empire transpired at about the same time as that of the Marland empire. The Wild West Show continued from 1908-1916. A second Wild West Show was put on the road on April 21, 1925, where it went \$119,000 in the red in the following year. A second blow was dealt the Millers when Joe Miller was accidentally killed by carbon monoxide poisoning on October 21, 1927. A third tragedy struck the Millers in February, 1929, when a second of the brothers, George Miller, died from injuries in an auto accident. In 1930, along with two nephews, Zack attempted to carry on the Miller tradition but lost \$301,064.08. On August 27, 1931, the 101 Ranch buildings were auctioned and the lands leased out. On July 5, 1936, the final curtain of the Miller saga was rung down as the famed 101 Ranch White House was sold at auction.⁶⁵

The Early Relationship

The late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries represents a highly active, highly charged period of northern Oklahoma history. Prior to the land run of 1893 the region represented one of the few undivided, undeveloped areas remaining in the United States. The

discovery of oil in this same area acted as a catalyst to this activity. The pace was stepped up with the coming of WWI and reached a fevered pitch as the nation roared into the 1920's only to subside with the Crash and the Depression.

It would be easy to label this era a carryover of America's "manifest destiny;" indeed, it would seem logical. In that respect, the Poncas would be cast in the role of "participants," even "contributors," to the extent that they merely acted out their role in this panorama of events. The Standing Bear incident; the permanent return of certain members of the tribe to Nebraska; and the partially successful challenge of the Miller's land acquisition tactics, however, indicate that if the Poncas are to be cast in the role of contributors, it should be pointed out that they did so reluctantly. In these instances, where Poncas did not comply with the sequence of events that were transpiring, it appears that they understood what was at stake. At the time the governmental protections guaranteed the Poncas seemed to be functioning, at least partially. The fact that the Osages were able to salvage their mineral rights while in essentially the same situation as that of the Poncas, serves to further weaken the "manifest destiny" or "contribution" interpretation of the early relationship.

There is the possibility that the Ponca's failure to capitalize on the opportunities provided by the boom period was a result of their being "sold out" by their leadership. A "patriot chief" or "ignoble savage" interpretation obviates the fact, however, that prior to 1950 the Ponca leadership, in effect, did not have a clear and viable role as leadership in the sense that they held decision-making power over a body politic. It should be understood that while the decision-making

structure of the tribe was in operation, it occupied a subordinate position to the anglo white legal, political, and economic institutions that dealt with Indian affairs and interests. Because of this, the decisions made by the tribe were subject to the interpretation and approval of these institutions.

It can be concluded that the Ponca Tribe's position, in general, was subordinate to that of the dominant society. In almost every instance considered within this chapter, the Poncas occupied a subordinate role. The fact that they could only occasionally and successfully resist the decisions that they understood to be adverse is further evidence of the subordinate position.

From this point it becomes imperative to determine if the impact of this early relationship continues within the Ponca-Ponca City relationship. To that end it is essential that the Ponca City outlook and goals be analyzed to determine if the historical dimensions have relevance for today.

FOOTNOTES

¹Vine Deloria, Jr., We Talk You Listen (New York, 1970), pp. 38-39.

²Ibid., pp. 39-40.

³Ibid., p. 40.

⁴Hazel W. Hertzberg, "Issues in Teaching About American Indians," Social Education, 36 (May, 1972), p. 481.

⁵Ibid., p. 481.

⁶Ibid., p. 482.

⁷Ibid., p. 482.

⁸James Howard, The Ponca Tribe, Smithsonian Institution Bureau of Ethnology Bulletin 195 (Washington, 1965); William E. Unrau, The Kansas Indians: A History of the Wind People, 1673-1873 (Norman, 1971).

⁹Helen Jackson, A Century of Dishonor (Boston, 1892), p. 186; Dee Brown, Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee (New York, 1972), p. 335.

¹⁰Jackson, A Century of Dishonor, p. 186; Brown, Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee, p. 335.

¹¹Brown, Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee, p. 334.

¹²Jackson, A Century of Dishonor, p. 189.

¹³Ibid., pp. 189-190.

¹⁴Howard, The Ponca Tribe, p. 31; Brown, Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee.

¹⁵Jackson, A Century of Dishonor, p. 193.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 194.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 194-195.

¹⁸Howard, The Ponca Tribe, p. 32; Brown, Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee, p. 334.

- ¹⁹Howard, The Ponca Tribe, p. 33; Brown, Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee.
- ²⁰Howard, The Ponca Tribe, p. 34.
- ²¹Ibid., p. 35.
- ²²Debo, Angie, A History of the Indians of the United States (Norman, Oklahoma, 1970), pp. 277-278.
- ²³Fred Gipson, Fabulous Empire (Boston, 1946), p. 6.
- ²⁴Ellsworth Collings, The 101 Ranch (Norman, 1938), pp. 15-17.
- ²⁵Gipson, Fabulous Empire, p. 86.
- ²⁶Ibid., p. 82.
- ²⁷Collings, The 101 Ranch, pp. 50-53.
- ²⁸Ibid., pp. 50-53.
- ²⁹Ibid., pp. 50-53.
- ³⁰Ibid., 50-53.
- ³¹Ibid., pp. 48-49.
- ³²Ibid., pp. 48-49.
- ³³Ibid., pp. 22-25.
- ³⁴Howard, The Ponca Tribe.
- ³⁵Brown, Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee, p. 344.
- ³⁶Joseph Klingensmith, "History of the Ponca Indians of Oklahoma," (unpub. Ph.D. dissertation, Oklahoma State University, 1941), p. 20.
- ³⁷John Joseph Mathews, Life and Death of an Oilman: The Career of E. W. Marland (Norman, 1951), p. 8.
- ³⁸Ibid., p. 18.
- ³⁹Ibid., p. 34.
- ⁴⁰Ibid., p. 53.
- ⁴¹Kay County Oklahoma (Kay County Gas Company, 1919), p. 38.
- ⁴²Collings, The 101 Ranch, p. 103.
- ⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵James Leslie Gilbert, "Three Sands: Oklahoma Oil Field and Community of the 1920's," (unpub. M. A. thesis, Oklahoma State University, 1967), p. 36.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 15.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 15.

⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 13-14.

⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 19-20.

⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 19-20.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 20.

⁵²Ibid., pp. 22.

⁵³Ibid., p. 22.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 23.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 22.

⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 51-54.

⁵⁷According to the map headed: "Restricted Indian Land Pawnee Ponca Otoe and Tonkawa Reservations," Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Pawnee Area Field Office, Pawnee, Oklahoma, February 1, 1970.

⁵⁸Index of Transactions, Kay County Clerk's Office, Kay County, Newkirk, Oklahoma.

⁵⁹Kay County Oklahoma (Kay County Gas Company, 1919).

⁶⁰Klingensmith, "History of the Ponca Indians of Oklahoma," pp. 23-24.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 24.

⁶²Mathews, Life and Death of an Oilman, pp. 149-151.

⁶³Ibid., pp. 153-156.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 152.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 169.

CHAPTER III

PONCA CITY: OUTLOOK AND POLICY

Introduction

In determining the outlook and policy of Ponca City, Oklahoma, a select number of issues will be examined in order to capture the essence of the outlook. The approach will be historical for it is felt that changes that have occurred in the structure of Ponca City over a period of years will best illustrate both the outlook and the policy.

Background

Ponca City was born out of the land run of 1893 that served to settle a large portion of north central Oklahoma. The Ponca City Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution has published the reminiscences of the pioneers who made the run and settled in and around what was to be Ponca City. The book, The Last Run, provides some insight into the early period of Ponca City history.

The run itself was a harried affair with the participants charging into Oklahoma Territory at the appointed time in order to stake their claims in the designated areas. According to many who made this run, the claimants who were able to break away from the main group set fire to the grass in an attempt to block the progress of their slower competitors. Staking a claim in itself was no guarantee of ownership. Many tracts had multiple claimants with many disputed claims being tied

up in court for considerable lengths of time. The primacy of Ponca City as the sole municipal site was established when the nearby town of Cross was induced to merge with Ponca City.

Life in Ponca City was hard at first. Many of the pioneers recount tales of disease, suffering, and deprivation. At the same time, life in this early period of Ponca City history, has been described as somewhat raucous with some pioneers recounting upwards of 23 saloons on the main street of Ponca City.²

A municipal government was established immediately following the run and consisted of a mayor and five councilmen.³ The representative Mayor-Council form of government was replaced in 1919 by a strong commission form of government which continues in effect today.

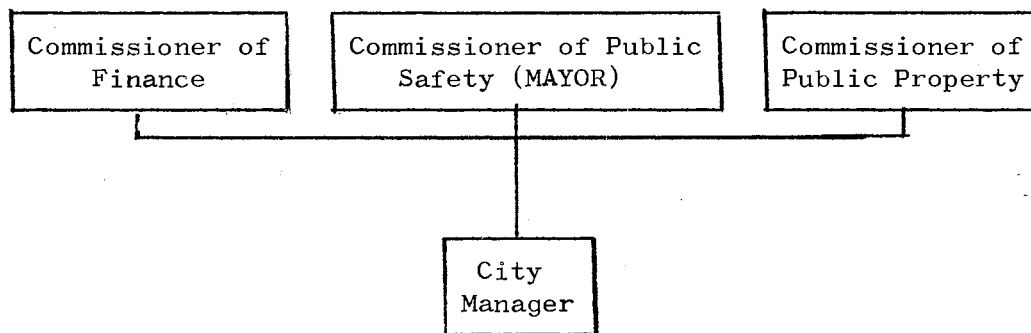


Figure 1. Ponca City Municipal Government, 1919 to Present

This system is labeled "strong commission" because there is no separation of the legislative and executive powers. Both functions are carried out by the Board of Commissioners. The City Manager is

appointed for annual terms and functions as an administrator. The commissioners themselves serve three-year staggered terms with one being elected each year. Decisions made by the Board of Commissioners requires agreement by two of the three members of the board.⁴

Of possibly greater importance than the change in municipal government was the role played by a few wealthy and influential leaders. In Chapter II, it was noted that Marland was active in his support of Ponca City institutions and programs, such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Y.M.C.A., and the American Legion Home.⁵ In addition, James Eatherly, author of the study, "The Economic Effect of Continental Oil Company on Ponca City, Oklahoma," has also noted Marland's generosity:

The man who became Oklahoma's tenth governor made large donations to practically every church in town, provided land for City parks, provided land for a country club, and founded the Security Bank of Ponca City . . . he built a hospital for the City, paid for the construction of the big high school athletic field, complete with grandstand and clubhouse . . . he donated \$100,000 to build a building used to house both the American Legion Post and the Alfred Marland Masonic Blue Lodge . . . one of his most memorable and spectacular gifts was the creation and promotion of the Pioneer Woman Statue . . . in 1929. . . .⁶

There were other influential leaders in Ponca City. Among them one finds names such as Wentz, McFadden, and Donahoe, all of whom conjure up images of wealth, influence, and philanthropic largess.

It is apparent that from 1893 to the Depression Ponca City developed rapidly. The generosity of the men noted above enabled Ponca City to develop services, institutions, and cultural and recreational facilities with great rapidity and with little cost to the people. Adopting the strong commission plan of government in 1919 only served to facilitate this rapid development.

The Depression, however, did not pose devastating problems for

Ponca City. The City was able to start some WPA projects, one, for example, designed to expand the selection of books in the municipal library.⁷ Perhaps indicative of the state of financial affairs in Ponca City is the fiscal condition of the municipal government from 1932 to 1945. A Ponca City Chamber of Commerce study published in 1945 reports that:

The operating expense of Ponca City as well as the retirement of its bonded indebtedness is met by the earnings of the municipally owned and operated electric and water plants. There have been no ad valorem taxes on property lying within the corporate limits of Ponca City for city purposes for the past 13 years.⁸

For the post-war period the report voiced optimism; but, there were some stipulations:

The immediate post-war outlook is bright. In the longer period the outlook for Ponca City will depend upon conditions in the oil refining industry unless the employment base can be extended. When increasing numbers of workers finding employment in many diversified fields the conditions of economic well being are less influenced by a single industry's problems.⁹

Marland brought considerable wealth and growth to Ponca City. The impact of his financial downfall which coincided with the Depression was cushioned by the merger with Continental Oil Company. While the 1945 Chamber of Commerce study reflected optimism, it is also obvious from the report that the boom period had ended. A look at the population growth of Ponca City from its beginnings also confirms a leveling of activity of growth that took place in 1930. (see Figure 2).

Secondly, the Chamber study recommended that future growth would necessarily have to come not only from existing industries, but would also entail campaigning for new industries; and, further, that this campaign should be directed to diversification:

- establish and assist established industries in every proper manner.
- industries based upon local raw materials principally agricultural should be encouraged.
- steps should be taken to attract diversified industries, employing skilled workers.¹⁰

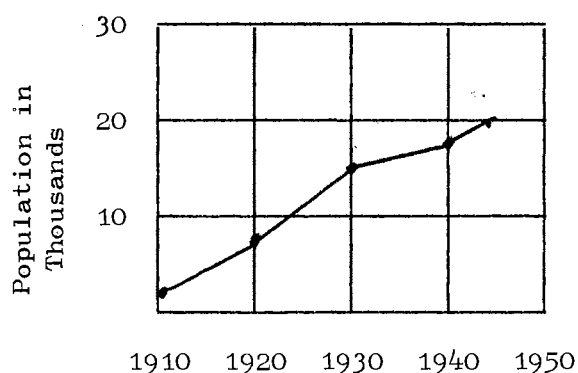


Figure 2. Ponca City Population, 1910-1945¹¹.

With the boom period over, there seemed to be a sudden realization that Ponca City was indeed dependent on the oil industry and that this situation was economically unhealthy. There is another consideration concerning this situation that has since born itself out. In his study completed in 1971, James Eatherly, Ponca City banker, aptly summarizes this consideration. Eatherly goes beyond the economic impact of Continental Oil Company and addresses himself to the relationship of CONOCO to the City government:

Realizing the vital importance of CONOCO to Ponca City's economy, the city fathers built their city government and

community plans around the needs of the industry . . . non-Conoco city fathers have been eager to cater to their prime employer and have encouraged city growth in the directions that met the needs of CONOCO'S employees . . . for the past forty years at least two of the three commissioners have been employees of CONOCO.¹²

What Eatherly was saying, in effect, was that Ponca City was a "company town." A good case can be made for this since CONOCO has consistently employed over 25% of the Ponca City labor force. Yet, further investigation is in order, particularly regarding efforts to diversify Ponca City's economy.

Some Theoretical Considerations

In considering some theoretical foundations of this study, its limitations must be mentioned. It does not seek to identify universally defined issues and variables for incorporation into a comparative study of several cities. Instead the focus of this theoretical consideration is aimed at exploring and describing the outlook and policy of Ponca City, Oklahoma. As a consequence, the literature selected will reflect broad trends, primarily historical, that have been, or are at work in the development of any community's structure. For the purposes of this study, the definition of "city" will be that provided by Max Weber:

. . . we wish to speak of a 'city' only in cases where the local inhabitants satisfy an economically substantial part of their daily wants in the local market and to an essential extent by products which the local population and that of the immediate hinterland produced for sale in the market or acquired in other ways. . . . In the meaning here the city is a market settlement.¹³

This definition has been selected as it implies the need for a ruling class of some type, which in turn suggests "power." In defining power, this writer again turns to Weber:

. . . we understand by 'power' the chance of a man or of a number of men to realize their own will in a communal action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action.¹⁴

Additionally, C. Wright Mills has endeavored to separate power into types or gradations: manipulation, authority, and coercion.

"Manipulation" Mills defines as, "power that is wielded unbeknown to the powerless;" while "authority" is "power that is justified by the beliefs of the voluntarily obedient." The final form of power, "coercion," is placed in the category of the "last resort" by Mills.¹⁵ Hence, it can be said that a city is a market system that includes a power structure of some type that exerts influence through manipulation, authority, or coercion.

In terms of a power structure, one could define an absolute or elitist structure through any of these gradations of power outlined above. For the United States, C. Wright Mills has delineated what he considers to be the power elite.

They rule the big corporations. They run the machinery of the state and claim its prerogative. They direct the military establishment. They occupy the strategic command posts of the social structure, in which are now centered the effective means of the power and the wealth and the celebrity which they enjoy.¹⁶

For small town America in the 1920's and 1930's, Robert and Helen Lynd likewise delineated the power elite. The Middletown study centered on the town of Muncie, Indiana, and the reigning family "X." The Lynds found family "X" to be the controlling influence in banking, legal affairs, housing, health, education, charities, the local newspaper, and retail trade. In their restudy of Middletown in the 1930's, the Lynds noted a new class of people emerging although family "X" continued to rule.¹⁷ In 1958, C. Wright Mills, in The Power Elite, observed the

demise of the old monolithic ruling elite to be a universal American phenomena.¹⁸ Along with this, Mills identified the emergence of a new upper class, the result being that the remnants of the old economic ruling class exists along side the emerging ruling class that derives its power from places such as the corporation and political office. He dates this shift to the depression and WWII.¹⁹

If this change actually occurred it was not reflected in a classic community study published in 1953. Floyd Hunter's study of Atlanta revealed a "pyramid of power" in which existed differing levels of community leadership which coincided with socio-economic status. Even though these subtle distinctions were made, Hunter concluded that Atlanta was controlled by a small relatively cohesive economic elite.²⁰ Although the changes noted by Mills may have occurred across America, the Hunter study held that popular sway until it received a fundamental challenge from Robert Dahl, in his study Who Governs?.²¹ Dahl like Hunter delineated levels of leadership in New Haven, Connecticut; but he concluded that because the influence of the old ruling class was dwindling and the emerging class was less well equipped in terms of wealth and prestige, there existed a ruling political plurality, by which participation was facilitated.²² At about the same time, a major community leadership study of Syracuse, New York published in 1960 also seemed to support Mill's idea that the old order was dying. The report found the leadership structures of Syracuse to be,

. . . the old single unit . . . but . . . with the presence of several independent industrial, commercial, and legal firms there is some consequent dispersion of power; the political affairs of the community are shared by these firms and the number of groups participating in all sorts of community affairs increases.²³

Donald A. Clelland and William H. Form further refined the issues

of the ruling class by posing the basic question of whether a community is governed by an "economic elite" or by "political pluralists." The theory they sought to validate is Robert Schulze's "bifurcation of power." The Schulze theory holds that "economic elites tend to dissociate themselves from local politics when the companies they manage were absentee-owned or integrated into national markets."²⁴ The result of the above is that a bifurcated structure evolves comprised of, "two crucial and relatively discrete power sets, the economic dominants and the public leaders."²⁵

If the city of Ponca City has been in tune with the broad trends noted in the literature, then there are three possible conclusions that can be reached concerning the structure of Ponca City. The first possibility is that the structure continues to be dominated by a monolithic ruling class, a situation similar to that of the early period of development. A second possible conclusion would hold that with a decline in the monolithic structure a new ruling structure emerged. The third possibility is dependent on the viability of the first two. If the emergent theory can be confirmed, further determinations must be made concerning the nature of the existing structure. Does it, for example, consist of Clelland and Form's public leaders and economic dominants? If so, is this dual structure dominated by one group possibly more than by the other? What effects do various issues have on the leadership structure? By dealing with these questions, consideration can be given to the existing outlook and policy of Ponca City.

A Period of Transition

If diversification became a major issue in Ponca City following

WWII it was not readily apparent; nor, did it become readily apparent for some time. Seemingly, the leadership in Ponca City was content to continue relying on CONOCO. There were two issues that spurred city officials and other leaders to reexamine this relationship and to consider diversification seriously.

The first of these issues clarified itself in the sixties when it became obvious that the Ponca City population was not achieving the levels that had been projected in the middle 1950's. A study conducted by the Ponca City Chamber of Commerce indicates what was predicted in terms of population growth.

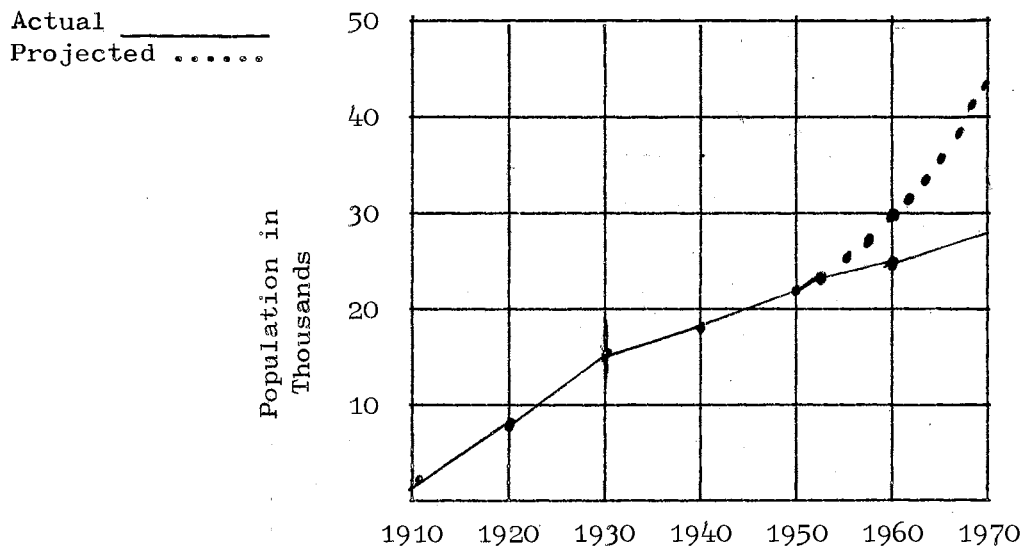


Figure 3. Ponca City Population Growth, 1910-1970²⁶

The population of 30,000 predicted for 1960 turned out to be only 24,266, while the projection of 42,500 for 1970 was in reality 25,940. Actually, the predicted population for 1970, based on the actual population recorded in 1960 had been adjusted downward to 30,000. Even the discrepancy of 4,060 caused considerable concern.²⁷

A second issue that evolved was that dealing with the status of CONOCO in Ponca City. In the early 1950's, "the headquarters," composed of top level management in the company, was moved from Ponca City to Houston. This has posed the problem of whether or not Ponca City would continue to enjoy the high level of employment afforded by the presence of CONOCO. This issue did not become critical until 1969.

In April of 1969, the announcement was made by CONOCO officials that a feasibility study was to be made into the possibility of moving part of CONOCO's facilities out of Ponca City-Research and Development. Research in Ponca City accounts for roughly 16% of CONOCO employment. In 1971, Eatherly noted 572 employed in the department, with 21% holding the doctorate degree.²⁸ Such an announcement did not seem to bode well for Ponca City, as the loss of this sector from the economy would have represented a significant drop in revenues.²⁹

Perhaps of greater importance was the additional announcement that accompanied the explanation of the feasibility study. CONOCO management in addition suggested that, "Perhaps Ponca City's biggest problem is that Ponca City is relying too much on its biggest employer. . . ." ³⁰ It was pointed out that over a 20-year period the character of Continental Oil had changed from a domestic oil company to that of a total world-wide energy company. Because of this, it was concluded that the

research services must be utilized to best meet the needs of the company's world-wide stature.³¹

In addition, CONOCO was critical of Ponca City's transportation and recreation facilities. The decision concerning the possible move according to the CONOCO officials, "cannot be made on the basis of friendship. It must be on an economic basis."³² The officials concluded by recommending that Ponca City undertake a drive to diversify its industrial base. A CONOCO official stated: "I don't think Continental is going to get much bigger in Ponca City. I think it's about as big as it's going to get."³³

CONOCO officials also addressed themselves to the proposal to build a vocational-technical school in the area. They pointed out that CONOCO would be unable to absorb the number of graduates contemplated.³⁴ In sum the announcement of the proposed feasibility study represented a public statement and acknowledgement of a shift in CONOCO's position that had been in process since the end of WWII.

Events subsequent to the announcement have reinforced the proposition that factors outside of Ponca City carry almost total influence on corporate decisions made by Continental Oil of Ponca City. While the research facilities for the most part remained in Ponca City, major transfers were effected in other departments in the CONOCO facility.³⁵ Compensating transfers have enabled Continental Oil Company to maintain a fairly substantial level of employment of from 3,500 to 3,700 during the period, 1968 through 1972.³⁶ Any growth in company employment would be attributed primarily to the acquisition of the Sequoyia Refining Company, a small oil producing firm located adjacent to the CONOCO facilities in Ponca City.

A second area that indicates CONOCO preoccupation with external factors is seen in continued acquisitions of foreign oil interests. These acquisitions include oil interests in the countries of Ecuador, Norway, Belgium, France, Costa Rica, Malaysia, Thailand, and Kuwait.

A third area that has caused Continental Oil concern, is that like many large corporations, they have come under attack by a variety of social critics. For CONOCO, the focus of the attack was directed to Consolidation Coal, a large coal producing firm with which CONOCO had merged.

J. Davitt McAteer, through the auspices of the organization, "Campaign Continental," has authored the pamphlet, "Continental Oil Company Consolidation Coal Company, A Citizens' Report 1972."³⁷ The list below summarizes the points that McAteer makes in his critical analysis of Continental and Consolidation:

- Extensive amounts of coal are removed from Appalachia with little being done by the companies to upgrade the quality of life in this area.
- Consolidation has had the highest record for mine deaths 1961-1971.
- Measures undertaken by Consolidation to improve mine safety are inadequate.
- Consolidation has a poor record concerning land reclamation as regards strip mining and slag piles.
- Taxes paid by both companies are at a rate less than taxes paid by coal miners.
- Both companies grant scholarships only to the children of company employees while operating in areas with concentrations of illiteracy.
- The companies resort to intimidation in order to ward off regulatory legislation.³⁸

Regardless of the validity of McAteer's allegations, it must be said that CONOCO's operation will possibly come under tighter regulation concerning mine safety and the environment, and this will have an affect on company expenditures, company policy, and decision making which may affect Ponca City. In the light of the so-called "energy crisis,"

CONOCO policies, procedures and decisions, like those of most oil companies, will probably come under closer scrutiny by federal regulatory agencies. Again, these are factors which are external to Ponca City, but which can also affect Ponca City.

In sum it must be said that CONOCO's decisions as they affect the overall economic well being of Ponca City lie with factors external to Ponca City over which the city leaders have no control. The decisions of company expansion or withdrawal, unlike the days of E. W. Marland, will be made strictly on an economic basis in order to enhance the corporate financial picture.

Finally, it can be said that even though CONOCO remains as Ponca City's largest employer, no longer can it be assumed that, "what is good for CONOCO is good for Ponca City." The reality speaks to the issue that what is good for CONOCO may be transpiring half way around the world or in the seat of our nation's government. Clearly, the interests of CONOCO and Ponca City have become separated.

Issues and Outcomes

If the premise can be accepted that during the time period of the oil boom in the early period of Ponca City history, through and including the announcement by CONOCO officials in 1969, a fundamental change occurred in the outlook of CONOCO and its leadership, then possibly a change may have occurred in the outlook and policy of Ponca City leaders. The purpose of the foregoing is to determine if any changes have actually occurred.

If the business community in Ponca City did not fully heed the recommendations of the 1945 Chamber of Commerce study to diversify, they

seemed to react almost instantaneously to the advice given by the management of CONOCO. Within months of the announcement the business community took immediate and decisive steps to diversify the economy. The goal was simply to attract a variety of new industry. This was effected through the merger of the Chamber of Commerce and the city government, both of which,

. . . agreed to join forces and pool portions of their resources by reorganizing the Ponca City Industrial Foundation as a combined subsidiary program for Ponca City Area.

Members of the Board of Directors of the Foundation and the Executive Committee are drawn from both the city government and the Chamber of Commerce offices and executive manager.³⁹

In order to circumvent legal obstacles, it would appear that a second organization was generated, "The Ponca City Development Authority," or the "Trust." The legal technicalities seemingly come from the organization of the Airport Industrial Park which involved leasing municipally owned buildings, facilities, and properties.⁴⁰ The merger itself is designated the Ponca City Area Development Corporation (see Figure 4).

The primary purpose of this structure, "is to benefit the community as measured by increased employment, payroll, business volume. . ."⁴¹ Since its inception, the Industrial Foundation has launched a nationwide campaign to bring new industry to Ponca City. The "Trust" has endeavored to facilitate the location of new industry by moving to create the Airport Industrial Park. The Trust did this by leasing the municipal airport and surrounding lands which contains 710 acres. In addition, the Trust assumed control of all hangars, buildings, and warehouses. The period of the lease extends to the year 2,000.⁴² In addition, plans have been made to extend the airport runway, while

tracts adjacent to the airfield have been developed into potential industrial sites. Roads have been built, utilities added, and pre-fabricated steel buildings have been erected for future occupancy. Buildings from WWII are also included and are located nearby. These structures had been partially occupied by industry prior to the creation of the Trust.

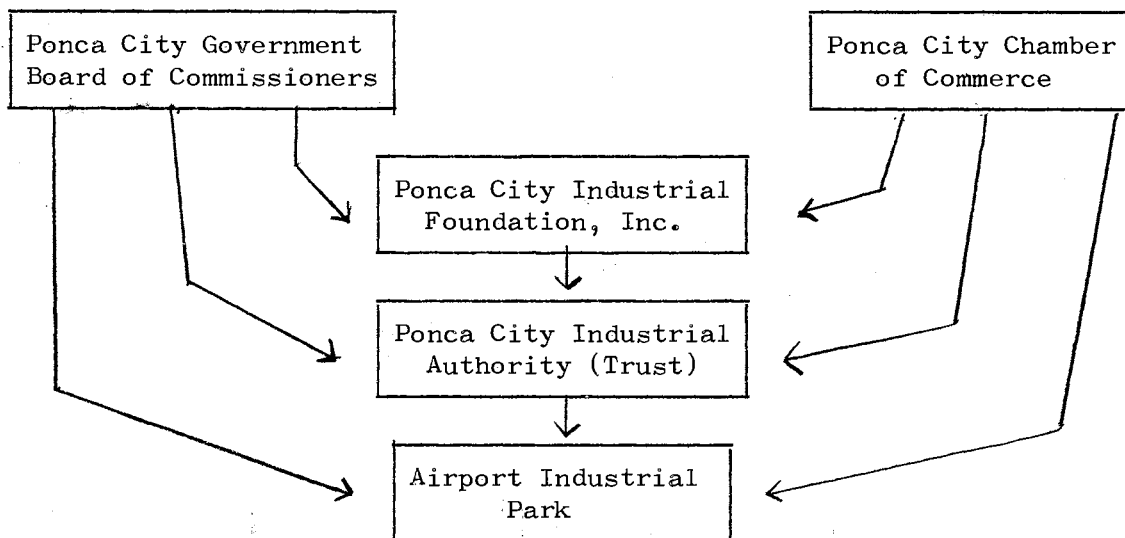


Figure 4. Ponca City Area Development Corporation, 1969

In addition to overcoming legal technicalities, the Industrial Foundation and Trust were formed as a vehicle to raise the necessary funds for the development project. By itself, the city government could not have raised enough money.⁴³ The economic powers of the Industrial Foundation in this respect are broad and include the following:

- Borrow or raise moneys for any of the purposes of the corporation and from time to time without limit as to amount, to draw, make, accept, endorse, execute and issue promissory notes, drafts, bills of exchange, warrants, bonds, debentures. . . .
- To lend funds with or without security.
- To purchase, lease, hold, and operate property.⁴⁴

There is a certain compatibility between these broad economic powers and those economic powers granted to the city commissioners.

James Eatherly has described the pervasiveness of the powers vested in the board:

They possess the power to buy all property needed for any municipal purpose whatever and to sell and dispose of the same. They can buy or sell property without a vote of the people. Other grants of powers under the charter are just as broad.⁴⁵

Hence it can be said that a fundamental change took place in the organizational structure of Ponca City and is seen in the merger of city government with the Chamber of Commerce, in a drive to diversify the economy. It is this merger and drive that provides the framework in which to consider some issues relating to the outlook and policy of Ponca City.

Two major issues that have relevance to this study evolved prior to the merger. The first of these is the Kaw Dam Project. The project is located 7.5 miles east of Ponca City and represents only one of many such projects that make up the Arkansas Navigation Project. The latter provides for barge shipping on the Arkansas River from Tulsa, Oklahoma, across the state of Arkansas to the Mississippi River. By damming the Arkansas River and its tributaries at a variety of sites, the Corps of Engineers will be able to control the level of the river along the barge route. Such is the purpose of Kaw Dam. The \$86 million project, however, promises some secondary benefits. Ponca City is looking to the

projected lake area to develop into a tourist recreation area. At the same time there is some potential for Kaw Dam to provide additional water supplies for industrial and general population growth.

The second issue that evolved prior to the formation of the Trust was that dealing with a turnpike linkup to Tulsa. The promise for diversification here lay in the fact that Ponca City could get a modern highway hookup to Tulsa and the barge channel to the Mississippi. In the early 1960's, then Governor of Oklahoma, Henry Bellmon announced his legislative package called "Giant Stride." Included in this series of proposals was a turnpike system for the state. One possibility announced was a turnpike to be built from Interstate 35 to Tulsa. Unfortunately, the precise location was not pinpointed and competition developed among several cities to have the road built near their respective city limits. The scheme below illustrates this situation.

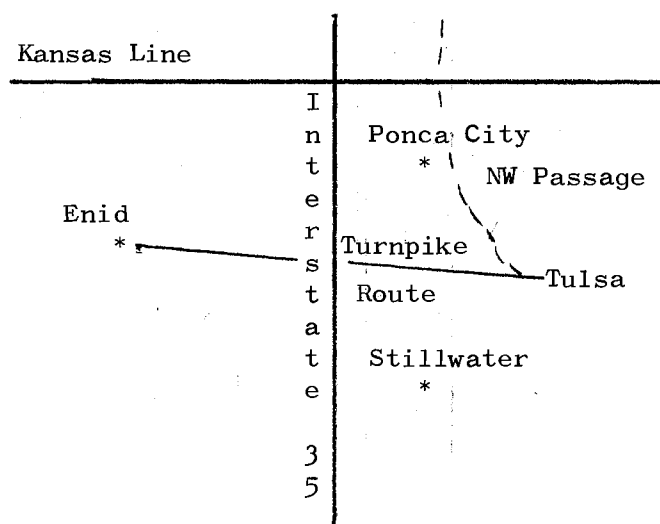


Figure 5. Cimmaron Turnpike (Under Construction) and Northwest Passage (Proposed)

As it turned out, the proposed route favored Enid, Oklahoma, and when this became apparent to Ponca City, various leaders set about to create a highway trust by which the "Northwest Passage" could be built. This route would enable Ponca City to achieve a hook-up with the barge canal. To get this route, passage of state legislation was necessary. Republican Governor Dewey Bartlett vetoed the legislation in 1970 while Democratic Governor David Hall refused to sign the bill in 1972, thus letting it die with the end of the legislative session. The issues of Kaw Dam Project and the Northwest Passage are cited here as they appear to be part of the Trust's drive for diversification. One must be cautious, for the primary function of Kaw Dam is for flood control down-river. Further, the Kaw Dam project was initiated by the Corps of Engineers, an arm of the federal government. In an identical manner, the issue of the turnpike route was raised by the State of Oklahoma. As a result these issues should be considered as "external" to Ponca City's drive to attract new industry and to diversify the economy. The Chamber of Commerce and city government have merely capitalized on these issues and incorporated them into the diversification program.

There is a second set of issues that developed following CONOCO's announcement and the subsequent formation of the Trust. All three dealt with the development of the downtown area of Ponca City, and all three were put into the context of developing and diversifying Ponca City's economy.

As early as 1965, Ponca City had considered ways to expand parking facilities in the downtown area. Among the goals adopted by the Chamber of Commerce in that year there was included the task of seeking "ways and means of providing more off-street parking. . . ." ⁴⁶ This goal had

apparently reached fruition in the fall of 1970 when it was proposed that parking lots be built one block off the main street of Ponca City's downtown shopping area. The proposal required that businesses and buildings be removed for the parking lot's construction. The proposal was to be funded by bonded indebtedness and required the vote of the people. This issue was decisively defeated at the polls.

A second issue that involved improvement of the downtown area was the proposal to add an indoor swimming pool to the new Y.M.C.A. building. The "Y" building had just been completed prior to the proposed addition of the pool. The pool project would have served not only the Y.M.C.A. membership but also would have been used by physical education classes at East Junior High School which is located across the street from the "Y" building. Approximately one-half of the estimated \$650,000 cost of the pool addition was guaranteed by a HUD grant. The remainder was to be raised by bonded indebtedness. As in the case of the parking lot proposal the voters decisively rejected the swimming pool proposal.

A third issue dealing with the development of Ponca City is that embodied in the proposal to build an underpass beneath the Santa Fe railroad tracks that would facilitate traffic movement. The Santa Fe line runs along the west side of the Ponca City business district. The proposal was put on the ballot in October, 1972, shortly after the defeat of the swimming pool proposal. Like the two preceding proposals, it was also defeated.

There is a third set of issues worthy of consideration; but not from the point of view of economic diversification being the prime consideration. These issues have two points that they share; the first

being that each one depends to some extent on federal funding. The second point is that these issues have been resolved and the resulting projects initiated. While the projects are not specifically aimed at diversifying the economy they do, in most cases, serve to enhance the development of Ponca City. In some cases they are made visible by the Chamber of Commerce as strong points in advertising to attract new industry.

The first issue to be dealt with revolves around a basic municipal service--sewage treatment. During the latter part of the 1960's, Ponca City government found its sewage treatment plant to be inadequate and sought to expand the capacity of the treatment plant and add modern, up-to-date equipment. The city government was able to fund the sewage plant construction through a federal matching funds project and the project was undertaken and completed. There was no apparent opposition to this project.

A second issue that evolved during the 1960's resulted in the formation of the Housing Authority of the city of Ponca City. The issue originally evolved around proposals by the Municipal government to adopt a Uniform Housing Code for the city in 1968. In the hearings that were held on the code, opposition to it was fierce. It was revealed then that to qualify for federal housing funds the city would have to adopt the Code. Shortly thereafter this requirement was dropped and the Housing Authority was formed. Since that time the Authority has proceeded with two plans concerning federal housing. The first, a 120-unit nine-story high rise apartment building for the aged was approved in May, 1972.⁴⁷ This project, funded through HUD at an estimated cost of \$2,399,963, is to be located approximately three blocks

from the business district in an area that borders on light industry and business. The second plan includes the building of 80 units of low rent housing at a cost of \$1,431,359, and is also funded through HUD. Both programs have been challenged by a petition seeking to halt the activities of the Authority.⁴⁸ The projects are, however, being continued.

The third project that involves federal money is the Vocational-Technical school which is currently in operation. The school is located in the vicinity of the Airport Industrial Park and serves both secondary school students and post-secondary students. Unlike the three issues discussed previously, the Vocational-Technical school received good support at the polls.

The final project to be considered is the Bi-State Mental Health Foundation. This organization serves six counties in Oklahoma and one in Kansas. Its activities include patient psychiatry, speech and hearing services, pastoral counseling and consultation, community planning and development, and a variety of in-service and consulting services to the schools, welfare agencies, and the courts. The program was started in 1958 as the Kay Guidance Center and has since been expanded into the broad program noted above. Expansion was facilitated in 1966 through an ESEA Title III grant and in 1968 through the provisions of Public Law 88-164.⁴⁹

Of the four projects noted above, the Bi-State Mental Health Foundation and the Vocational-Technical School are included in Chamber of Commerce literature which is designed to attract new industry.⁵⁰ The sewage treatment plant is not advertised as a calling card, but it does provide the potential for expanding the population.⁵¹ The fourth

project, the housing authority, has at this point no clear relationship to attracting industry, although it could be argued that the authority and its activities represents an added industry.

What was the total impact of the drive for diversification of the Ponca City economy? The Ponca City Chamber of Commerce lists a total of 190 new jobs added to the Ponca City economy which includes 10 industries. The period of time noted is from January 1, 1970, through January 1, 1972.⁵² Apparently the drive has met with success.

At the same time, it should be pointed out that a petition drive was launched in Ponca City to amend the city charter, so that the powers of the commission would be separated. Further, the petitioners sought to expand the commission membership and to have the members represent specified wards. In effect, the petitioners were seeking a Mayor-Council form of government. Though sufficient signatures were gathered on two occasions, the drive eventually failed.

Although the move to modify the city government failed, it was apparent that many people in Ponca City were dissatisfied with the drive to diversify the economy. It was also apparent to the leadership in the community. The incoming president of the Chamber of Commerce stated in January, 1973:

When a city this size repeatedly produces a two-thirds negative vote on almost every issue, a valid assumption is that the community has become disorganized within itself . . . and that perhaps the Chamber, and the City Commission, have unconsciously and unintentionally alienated themselves from the people. . . .⁵³

As a result, the Chamber of Commerce made some internal changes in its organization. A "President's Club" was created to be made up of 25 members of the Chamber's membership. Secondly, a "Community Relations Committee" was added to the Chamber committees; and finally,

the "Metro Development Committee" was created in order to deal with the separate areas of urban and suburban Ponca City.⁵⁴

Ponca City: Outlook and Policy

For Ponca City, the idea that a power elite exists as the prime decision-making structure for the city has merit at particular points in its history. From 1893 to 1919 it would be difficult to label the leadership structures as an elite. First, the city was in the infant stage of development. Its growth was rapid, and the plan of government allowed for citizen input. Finally, leadership had not emerged. With the coming of Marland in 1908, the picture began to change. His oil empire coupled with a change to a centralized model of municipal government would enable a power elite to form. Moreover, the influence of Marland and other magnates through their spectacular gifts and donations would tend to dwarf, in comparison, the power and influence of Ponca City institutions. It does not stand to reason that Marland's influence totally declined when Marland Oil Company merged with CONOCO. Indeed, he continued to be active in Oklahoma politics up until his death in 1941. It must be said that the Marland influence coupled with that of other wealthy leaders could be labeled as "absolute" for no more than ten to fifteen years. The time span would encompass the change in government in 1919 through the Company merger in 1929. Beyond the limits in either direction Marland's influence would be proportionately less.

The 1945 Chamber of Commerce report speaks to an economic condition that it feels is unhealthy--dependence on a single industry. When one considers the dichotomous issues of economic elites versus political

pluralists the Eatherly data which shows CONOCO control of an almost autonomous Board of Commissioners, the suggestion is a continuation, of sorts, of a ruling elite in Ponca City. The only drawback concerning this lies in the issues. For the decade of the 1950's, the visible issues concerning diversification are virtually nil. One could argue based on Eatherly's data that CONOCO, because of its low profile in the national and world market, sought to inhibit growth of Ponca City. Secondly, one could argue that diversification was virtually ordered by CONOCO in 1969. Relevant factors here would be CONOCO's shift to an international stance and the fact that this stance spoke to a possible withdrawal of company facilities. Moreover, CONOCO has since maintained a consistent level of employment in Ponca City; and, at the same time has remained active in the Ponca City campaign to attract new industries. From that perspective, one can say that an elite decision-making structure exists. With the official merger of city government and the Chamber of Commerce, one could further conclude that the elite consists of the business community, CONOCO, and the city government.

The only problem here lies again, with the issues. Those issues put before the voting public in the name of diversification have been decisively defeated. As a result, it is difficult to document the existence of a ruling power elite. Concerning those projects that have been successfully initiated, they were not submitted to the vote of the people, except in the case of the vocational-technical school. It could be determined that the will of the people was circumvented by the elite. The nature of these issues, however, virtually assures their acceptance regardless of a vote. Few would argue against the need for improved and expanded sewage facilities particularly in light of increasingly

stringent federal requirements for sewage treatment. Nor, can one deny the need for improved housing for those on lower incomes, or housing for the aged. Similarly, the need for improved mental health services have been proven. Even the formation of the Development Corporation and the Trust may have been given voter approval. It carried with it no apparent increase in costs to the voter. Though there was some opposition, it can be said that the so-called "power elite" was exercising Weber's "manipulative" or "authoritative" powers in the non-voting issues. In the cases of those projects which were taken to the voter and were defeated, the elite could be said to have applied "coercive" power. In the latter issues the series of defeats in effect remove the label of "elite."

The supposed power elite which held sway in the early period of Ponca City history consisted of a few men who had the personal wealth that enabled them to make extremely large grants of money and resources to the city and its institutions. In doing so, these few men were actually more forceful than the institutions. The individuals then "facilitated" the existence and rapid development of the institutions.

Today, it would seem that the reverse is true. First Ponca City has a rather large and growing middle class. (See Table I.)

In addition, the diverse corporate structure of CONOCO has replaced the monolithic structure of the Marland Oil Company. The attitude of this collective structure has apparently obviated any grants to the city and its institutions. This is seen in means of raising funds for social services and charitable causes. Whereas, Marland is cited as the principal supporter of organizations such as the Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., Boy Scouts, and Girl Scouts, the principal support of these and other

charitable causes comes from the United Way. The structure of this organization is comparable to that of a large corporation. The annual drive is conducted by an ad hoc structure that divides the effort into sectors of the Ponca City economy, with each sector having a leader responsible for collecting funds from that part of the economy. This "collective" effort stands in sharp contrast to the individual support provided by a few wealthy individuals in the early period. Hence, it can be said that the institutions now facilitate the leadership, whereas the reverse was true in the earlier period.

TABLE I

PONCA CITY INCOME DISTRIBUTION, 1968-1971⁵⁵

	\$0-2,999	\$3,000- 4,999	\$5,000- 7,000	\$8,000- 9,999	\$10,000 or over
1971	17.3%	9.6%	15.7%	12.5%	45.0%
1970	17.9	9.7	16.5	13.3	42.6
1969	19.0	10.1	18.0	15.5	37.4
1968	20.6	10.9	20.3	17.9	30.3

Concerning the fundamental issue of diversifying the Ponca City economy, the above noted relationship of institutions and leaders has importance. If E. W. Marland could produce a donation or grant almost instantaneously, the Development Corporation, an amalgamation of public

and private leaders, promises to do the same. The only drawback is that the resources are not the collective's personal resources. Because the leadership must resort to institutions rather than individuals the development process is much slower as it is subject to the structural limitations of the institutions.

For the future, it must be said that the collective decision-making process will continue to be utilized as the decision-making structure continues with its drive to diversification. Modifications have been made in the organization. There is, for example, the recognition that the Development Corporation has moved too rapidly. The addition of a Community Relations Committee to the Chamber of Commerce hierarchy is evidence of that. Also, the Chamber leadership has realized that attention can no longer be focused on the downtown area at the expense of the outlying portions of the city. The addition of the Metro Development Committee is evidence of this.

For the most part, the findings of this chapter have nothing to do with the Ponca Tribe. They are not specifically included in the Ponca City drive for economic diversification. In general, their relationship to Ponca City is much the same as it was with the founding of Ponca City. In 1895, the Ponca City Board of Trade provided Indian dances at a social event.⁵⁶ Similarly, in 1972, the Ponca City Chamber of Commerce, in making plans for the parade attendant to the annual 101 Ranch Rodeo, announced that Indian dances would be included.⁵⁷ Moreover, the Ponca Tribe recognizes the attitude of Ponca Citizens toward the Ponca way of life. William Penseno (Penseneau), member of the Ponca Tribe has stated:

In Ponca City, there is a group of white people who make money dressing up in Indian costumes and doing our dances, our

sacred dances. These people avoid Indians in the same town like the plague. Our artifacts are more real to them than we are.⁵⁸

The outlook, or possibly the spirit of Ponca City is much the same as it was during the early period--there continues to be an intense interest in economic development. The policy, however, has changed. Gone are the philanthropists. In their place is the efficiently run, collectively oriented, decision-making structure which has been described. One noticeable aspect of this collective's decisions and projects is the reliance on federal money.

Most cities in America today have turned to "grantsmanship" as a means of maintaining and improving city services and development. For the Poncas, however, this aspect of Ponca City policy may well have implications, for the Poncas themselves have a program for community development that includes, among other things, a housing authority and youth programs designed to reduce the school dropout and delinquency rate. These programs will be considered in subsequent chapters.

FOOTNOTES

¹The Last Run: Kay County, Oklahoma (Ponca City, Oklahoma, 1939).

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⁶J. R. Eatherly, "The Economic Effect of Continental Oil Company on Ponca City, Oklahoma" (unpub. paper, Southwestern Graduate School of Banking, 1971).

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⁸Ponca City Chamber of Commerce, The Economic Outlook for Ponca City, Oklahoma, 1945, p. 100.

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¹⁰Ibid., p. 3.

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¹⁵C. Wright Mills, "The Structure of Power in American Society" in Lloyd Saxton and Walter Kaufman (eds.), The American Scene: Social Problems of the 1970's (Belmont, California, 1971), p. 247.

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²⁶Ponca City Chamber of Commerce, 1955.

²⁷United States Census, 1970 Report (Washington, D. C. 1970).

²⁸J. R. Eatherly, "The Economic Effect of Continental Oil Company on Ponca City, Oklahoma," pp. 16, 26, and 30.

²⁹Ponca City News (April 30, 1969).

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ponca City News (January 9, 1973).

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³⁷J. Davitt McAteer, Continental Oil Company, Consolidated Coal Company, A Citizen's Report, 1972, Campaign Continental (Washington, 1972).

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³⁹Industrial Development Division of the Oklahoma Industrial Development and Park Department, "Oklahoma PEP," Vol. 6, No. 2 (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, February, 1970).

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⁴¹J. R. Eatherly, "The Economic Effect of Continental Oil Company on Ponca City, Oklahoma," p. 34.

⁴²Airport Industrial Park, Lease Agreement, p. 2.

⁴³Ibid., p. 1.

⁴⁴J. R. Eatherly, "The Economic Effect of Continental Oil Company on Ponca City, Oklahoma," pp. 34-35.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 16.

⁴⁶Ponca City News (January 20, 1965).

⁴⁷Ponca City News (May 25, 1972).

⁴⁸Ponca City News (August 22, 1972).

⁴⁹Robert E. L. Johnson and William F. Gandy, "Rural Mental Health Care: A Fourth Year Report," Journal of the Oklahoma State Medical Association, 65 (August, 1972), pp. 336-338.

⁵⁰Ponca City Chamber of Commerce, "Community Data, Ponca City, Oklahoma, 1972," Ponca City, Oklahoma, p. 5.

⁵¹J. R. Eatherly, "The Economic Effect of Continental Oil Company on Ponca City, Oklahoma," p. 32.

⁵²Ponca City Chamber of Commerce, "Community Data, Ponca City, Oklahoma, 1972," p. 2.

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⁵⁴Ponca City News (January 7, 1973).

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CHAPTER IV

TWENTIETH CENTURY TRIBAL STRUCTURE

Introduction

As Ponca City came to develop its political and economic institutions and mold them into some sort of outlook so did the Ponca tribal structure. During the twentieth century many things occurred that shaped this tribal outlook. The deleterious effects of the Dawes Act were stopped with the passage of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. The act had its eventual impact on the Ponca tribe through the Oklahoma Indian Welfare Act of 1936. By 1950, the Poncas had approved a Tribal Charter and ratified a Tribal Constitution and Bylaws. A second factor in shaping the outlook of the modern Ponca Tribe has been the onset of the so-called Red Power movement. The late Clyde Warrior, member of the Ponca Tribe, played more than a prominent role in the formation of the National Indian Youth Council, an organization which came to challenge the traditional Native American leadership role of the National Congress of American Indians. Not only was Warrior's impact on Native American affairs felt on the national scene, his force had a tremendous impact on his own tribe and, as a consequence, the city of Ponca City. It is the purpose of this chapter to describe the modern-day Ponca Tribe from both an official and informal perspective and reach a determination in terms of modern tribal outlook and goals.

Official Tribal Structure

The structure described herein should be considered "official" in that it has sanction and recognition of the Federal government--the Bureau of Indian Affairs of the Department of the Interior. It is the only structure of the Ponca Tribe that has this recognition.

With the passage of the Oklahoma Indian Welfare Act in 1936, the tribes residing within the State of Oklahoma were delegated the right of setting up an official governing body for their memberships. For the Poncas, the Constitution and companion Bylaws were not officially adopted until September 27, 1950. During the period from 1936 to 1950, the tribal governing body was generated by the tribal structure. It was during this period that the Bureau of Indian Affairs as chief representative of the Ponca people began to relinquish control of the tribe to the council. In 1950, the council was elected for the first time by the voting membership of the tribe, and took on the additional function of administering the tribe's business affairs.

The Ponca Indian Tribe of Oklahoma became officially incorporated by the federal government on September 20, 1950. This was facilitated by legislation enacted June 26, 1936. Among the powers granted by this act are:

- The right to sue and be sued.
- The right to complain and defend in any court.
- The right to enter into contracts.
- The right to counsel.
- The right to appropriate funds for public purposes of the Ponca Tribe.
- The right to appoint subordinate officers for transacting tribal business.¹

Although this is not a comprehensive list of the powers of the Ponca tribe, it does represent the basis by which the Ponca Tribal

Business Council was formed. The specifics of the formation and operation of the Council are contained in the Constitution and Bylaws of the Ponca Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma. Article III, section I of this document states:

The governing body of the Ponca Tribe of Indians shall be a Business Committee consisting of seven members elected by vote of the tribal membership. The terms of office of each committee shall be two years from the date of installation. . . .²

Section 2 further states:

The Business Committee so organized shall elect from within its own membership (1) a chairman, (2) a vice-chairman, and from within or without (3) a secretary-treasurer. . . .³

Article I, section 1 of the Bylaws states:

Chairman.--The chairman shall preside at all meetings of the tribe and of the Business Committee . . . he shall have general supervision of the affairs of the tribe and of the Business Committee and shall perform all duties pertaining to the office of chairman.⁴

In essence, the Constitution and Bylaws of the Ponca Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma represents the imposition of an artificial anglo organizational structure on the kinship organization of the Ponca Tribe. This is the dilemma of the Ponca Tribal Council, and is reflective of the dilemma of the Ponca Tribe.

The dilemma lies essentially between the dichotomous relationship of social functioning and economic functioning in the dominant anglo society. Historically, the Ponca Tribe was communal with total integration of economic and social functions. Land ownership by deed and European business methods were totally alien concepts and cost the Poncas dearly. But, what about the present? Since the period of colonization and the development of the American nation, business and financial institutions have become extremely complex and increasingly

sophisticated. As a result, the early dilemma of social versus economic functioning for the Ponca continues today. It can be seen in a comparison of the views of two contemporary Ponca leaders, one who understood twentieth century capitalism and one who operated along the lines of the ancient communal system. These differences illustrate well some of the difficulties and anomalies facing the Poncas in their relationship to the predominately anglo society of Ponca City.

For the sake of anonymity, these leaders will be referred to as P. L. and T. R. In recounting his term as Chairman of the Ponca Tribal Business Council, T. R. reflected both optimism and despair. When he took the helm of the Council he found that the tribal fund was virtually depleted, and that the morale of the tribe was at a low point. He first attempted to unite the Council and to place the tribal fund on a firm financial foundation. He discovered that tribal lands were being leased at a fraction of their true worth. He set about to have future leases negotiated on a competitive basis. His efforts resulted in a fivefold increase in the amount of revenue gained from these leases. In a like manner, he was able to change the lease agreement on a tribal gravel pit from a token lump sum payment to a rate based on the cubic yards of gravel removed from the pit. He recalled that as the economic situation of the Council and of the tribe improved their esteem with various white power groups, such as the Ponca City Chamber of Commerce, rose appreciably. T. R.'s wife, however, noted that as he started the tribe on an economic uphill climb and the situation improved, factions arose in the Council and he was defeated for the chair. T. R. finally noted that within a brief period after having left the Council, the large sum he had managed to accumulate was soon dispersed by the Council.⁵

P. L. who served either as Council member or Council Chairman for twenty years, at first glance represents a direct contrast to T. R. His concept of the Council, and particularly of the chairmanship takes into consideration more of the tribal folkways and less of the political and economic aspects. Specifically P. L. spoke of the Chairman's obligation to cry with every family which has suffered a loss of one of its members. Also, the Chairman must respect the word of the elder members of the tribe and of the Council though he may later act in opposition to the ideas of the elder member. This is not to say that P. L. does not recognize the importance of economic and political functions of the Council. His efforts to secure college grants and increased educational opportunities for Indian youth are evidence of this. Moreover, he feels that these considerations must be made, but not to the exclusion of cultural amenities, which must always have first priority.⁶ In contrast, T. R. outlined the role of the Chairman and of the Council in primarily a political and economic framework. The previously noted decisions that he made indicate this clearly.

The Howard study of the Ponca people, likewise, underscores this difference. Government in the tribe, according to Howard, was quite informal compared to white standards. Major decisions were made by the Council of Chiefs, but the decisions were required to reflect the voice of the people as much as was possible. The chieftanship was primarily inherited although provisions were made whereby an ambitious warrior could become chief if the circumstances permitted. It seems then, that leadership was neither entirely inherited nor earned but was a mixture of the two depending on the need of the time.⁷

There are other issues over which P. L. and T. R. have differing

views. One of these is the central issue of tribal lands. It has previously been noted that tribal lands have been severely diminished over a period of years. A point that is often debated is whether or not these lands can be reclaimed. On this issue, T. R. voiced optimism as he detailed a plan for reclaiming the lands. His idea was based on the fact that much of the land is held by as many as 100 heirs, and that these heirs may receive as little as 35¢ per year when the rent money is divided. His plan involves the use of tribal funds to purchase this land from individual tribal members. The land would then be leased back to members of the tribe, with the revenue going into the Council fund for the purchase of additional tribal land. Also a portion of the money would be utilized for the purchase of farm machinery in order that a tribal member who had virtually nothing could afford to make a beginning.⁸

In direct contrast, P. L. holds little hope for rebuilding tribal lands. He notes that it is essentially a matter of being able to back out on a business agreement. That is, having sold the land, it is virtually impossible for the tribe to say: "I've changed my mind, I want my land back."⁹

From an anglo point of view, it is difficult to say which man's outlook on the Chairmanship is the best. Whichever the case may be, both men had obviously expended the greatest effort in executing their duties and responsibilities, regardless of whether they were social or economic in nature. Both described sessions that extended into the wee hours of the morning. In short, the role of Chairman makes impossible demands on the occupant. This seems to hold true for many tribes. Vine Deloria, Jr. states it this way:

Today a man holds his chairmanship as long as he produces, or at least appears to produce, for his tribe. Without making substantial progress or having the ability to present a fighting image, a man's term in tribal office is short and severe. Demands are great. Some tribes have never had an incumbent reelected because tribal goals far surpass any conceivable performance.

. . . other tribes throw out chairmen with such regularity it's almost an annual event¹⁰

The situation is made more complex by the fact that the chairmanship is often not a full-time paid position. For the Poncas, the duties of the chairmanship are assumed in addition to what the chairman does for a living. In that respect, council members receive \$12.00 per meeting. Meetings are held on two or three occasions per month; consequently, there are no significant economic gains to be made by being a member of the Council. There are serious doubts as to whether one man could fulfill both the social and economic duties and responsibilities demanded of the chairman.

Because of this, the Poncas in recent years have delegated some business responsibilities to other tribal officers as provided in the Corporate Charter; ". . . the right to appoint subordinate officers for transacting tribal business."¹¹ Specifically, the Poncas have put into operation a Housing Authority and more recently have created the office of Tribal Business Manager. A description of these new agencies will provide a greater understanding of the officially recognized tribal structure.

The Ponca Tribal Housing Authority was formed September 21, 1965, as an extension of the Ponca Tribal Council. Although it was organized as a part of the Tribal Council the administration, operation, and most important, the control is not directly in the hands of the Council. The Chairman and Executive Director are both anglo, while the Executive

Director, a salaried employee, works full-time and exerts a great amount of influence over the direction of the authority. The Housing Authority is involved in home construction, medical services, and a host of other services involved with designing, setting up, and operating a community. In terms of the housing alone, it is funded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development; however, the total service organization is funded roughly in the following manner:

HUD-----	40%.
BIA-----	20%.
Public Health-----	40%. ¹²

The initial goal of the Housing Authority is the construction of 200 homes. The quota set in 1966 of 20 mutual help homes was achieved in 1969. A second phase of the program calls for the construction of 50 mutual help homes. The third phase calls for the construction of 10 low rental units, while the fourth and fifth phases call for a total of 120 mutual help homes to be constructed.

The houses themselves are divided into two categories: mutual help and low rent. Mutual help programs are designed to facilitate home ownership. The participant earns \$1,250 worth of equity in his home by working on a per hour basis in the various stages of construction. He then signs a note for the remainder of the balance over a 20 to 40 year period with payments of \$9 to \$52 per month on the participant's income. The utilities are paid by the participant with the size of the tracts ranging from .625 to 1.25 acres.¹³ The low rental units cost a flat rate of \$35.00 per month. The cost of mutual help homes is noted below (see Table II).

The process of applying for and receiving a house from the Ponca Tribal Authority is a long and arduous task, and can be blocked at any

stage. The participant initially makes application for home and simultaneously for a home site. This application is made through the Bureau of Indian Affairs. If the applicant is approved, then the Public Health Service will run a percolation test on the site location in order to determine if the soils will support a septic tank. If this test is positive, then a well is drilled on the site to insure a water supply, unless that particular site is to rely on the White Eagle Community Water System. While all of the above is taking place, title to the land must be cleared.

TABLE II

ESTIMATED BASE PRICES FOR THREE TYPES OF AVAILABLE
HOUSING, PONCA TRIBAL HOUSING AUTHORITY¹⁴
(September, 1972)

	3 Bedrooms	4 Bedrooms	5 Bedrooms
House	\$13,965.00	\$14,883.00	\$17,048.00
Water Well	830.00	830.00	830.00
Septic Tank	675.00	675.00	740.00
Site Survey	60.00	60.00	60.00
LP Gas Hookup	210.00	210.00	315.00
	<u>\$15,740.00</u>	<u>\$16,658.00</u>	<u>\$18,993.00</u>

Since the houses are built on tribal lands and the Authority is technically an extension of the Tribal Council, the land must be cleared

of all heirs and the deed placed in the hands of the Authority. Since there are as many as 100 heirs to one small tract, all heirs must agree to certify a "gift" deed in order for the title to be cleared.¹⁵ If one refuses, the land cannot be utilized in home building. The Executive Director noted that this occurs in 50% of the cases. If however, everything goes smoothly, the application is approved and a lease agreement is signed. The minimum time that elapses between filing an application and signing a lease agreement is 8 to 9 months. This process can extend to as long as five years and end in stalemate. Once a lease agreement has been completed, construction can begin. The Authority immediately assigns \$250.00 equity to the account of the participant. In turn, the participant must contribute \$1,250 in "sweat equity" by performing 300 hours of labor on the housing project, but not necessarily his own home.¹⁶

The Mutual Help and Occupancy Agreement represents the final agreement and in effect the participant agrees to make equity payments not to exceed 20% of his annual income. He further agrees to maintain the property in a manner approved by the Authority. On this point the participant agrees to semi-annual inspections and must have the approval of the Authority to, in any way, alter the structure and appearance of the home. Deficiencies are to be made up by the Authority, while destruction is a responsibility of the participants. The Authority retains the right to void the agreement if the participant "fails to fulfill any of his obligations and responsibilities." The participant takes over ownership once he has completed the terms of the lease but does not retain the deed unless he applies for and receives clear title to his land, but then it becomes taxable. If the participant does not

apply for a fee patent then the deed remains with the Housing Authority, but he avoids paying taxes.¹⁷

This writer inspected some of the homes and found them to be completely outfitted short of furniture but including the larger kitchen appliances. The homes that were visited were three bedroom, brick, with a single bath. They represent a vast improvement over the tin sheds that members of the Ponca Tribe only recently vacated, and which stood as stark testimony to the housing conditions of the Poncas.

While many criticisms have been directed at the Housing Authority, the Executive Director pointed out that the Housing Authority is actually getting houses built. In contrast, he indicated that while the Kiowas have had 450 houses in the planning stages for five years, they had not, at that time, built any houses. He further stated that this was the case with many Indian Housing efforts.¹⁸

Even though the Executive Director was convincing in his argument that the Authority is fair in administering the housing program even to the point of requiring minimal compliance there are some issues worth examining. The Mutual Help and Occupancy Agreement, required of participants, has so many fine points that in the wrong hands participants could easily be evicted. The Executive Director cited only two cases of eviction; one on the basis of abandonment and the other because the occupant refused to make the minimum \$9.00 monthly payment for over one year. A major criticism of the Housing Authority lies in the total cost of the houses. Even though the housing is designated as "low income" it is argued that the lower price and special arrangements for payment still put the houses out of the range of many tribal members.

In response to this argument, the Executive Director produced a list of over 170 applicants for the originally projected 200 homes.¹⁹

The tribal Housing Authority represents the first major delegation of tribal decision-making power by the Tribal Council. A second major delegation of tribal authority is that involved in the creation of the position of Tribal Business Manager. This office was created in March, 1972, with the purpose in mind of looking after the business affairs of the Ponca Tribe on a full-time basis:

. . . . It shall be the duties of the Ponca Tribal Management Program to maintain a direct line of communication and contact between the Ponca Tribe and Bureau of Indian Affairs. It shall be the duties of the Ponca Tribal Management Program to coordinate and direct enterprise to achieve objective and ownership for the Ponca Tribe.²⁰

A third delegation of authority by the tribal council can be seen in the creation of a Ponca Tribal Development Authority. The five-member board appointed by the Tribal Council looks to the development of the remaining tracts of tribally held land through its authority, ". . . to acquire land, plan and executive improvements to the land, hire administrative personnel, accept grants and loans, and otherwise carry out the objectives of this Overall Economic Development plan."²¹

A final delegation of authority is embodied in the creation of a five-member body, the Ponca Mini-Hospital and Clinic Committee, which is to explore "ways and means to construct and build a new Mini-Hospital located at White Eagle, Oklahoma."²² Thus, the expanded model of tribal government for the Poncas can be diagrammed as shown in Figure 6.

The goals for this operational system are categorized below in the stated terms of "operational responsibilities":

- I. Economic Development
 - A. Industrialization Job Creation
 - B. Business Development (Indian Owned)

- C. Technical Training (Job Skills)
 - D. Arts and Crafts
- II. Environmental Development
- A. Housing
 - 1. Home Improvement Program
 - 2. Mutual Help
 - 3. Low Rent
 - B. Recreation
 - C. Health Facilities
 - D. Open Space Program
- III. Land Management
- A. Land Use Planning
 - B. Land Acquisition
 - C. Assistance to Individually Owned Trust Land
 - D. Market Studies
- IV. Tribal Governmental Affairs
- A. Maintaining Tribal Rolls
 - B. Finance Management (Claim Funds)
 - C. Tribal Elections
 - D. Tribal Loan Program
 - E. Tribal Funeral Expenses
 - F. Water Rights of the Ponca Tribe.²³

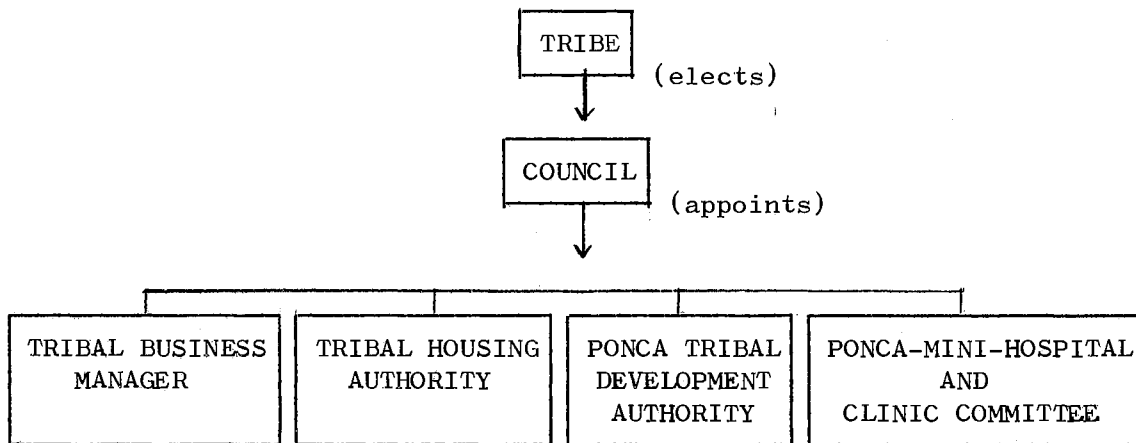


Figure 6. Expanded Model of Tribal Government, Ponca Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma

There has been drawn up, at the same time an Overall Economic Development Plan for the Ponca Tribal lands. Among other things, it provides that the Ponca Tribal Development Authority (PTDA) will:

- Create a tribal land master plan.
- Develop an industrial park and related neighborhood facilities.
- Promote the relocation of existing industry to the new industrial park.²⁴

The greatly expanded framework of tribal government with the delegation of major responsibilities and basic services should be viewed within the framework laid out by the differing viewpoints of the former councilmen noted previously. Within this perspective, it can be conjectured that the expanded government and the subsequent division and delegation of responsibility serves to bridge the gap between these contrasting points. In effect, the alterations to the Ponca tribal governing structure are an attempt to accomplish both aspects of the everyday operation of the tribe: the social and the economic dimensions. By delegating the business affairs to subordinate committees the larger Tribal Council is then theoretically free to attend to the social amenities within the tribal structure.

Viewed from a second perspective, the expanded government structure represents nothing startling. In fact, it is comparable in design and operation to a mayor-manager form of city government in which the mayor is characterized as more of a figurehead, while the City Manager occupies himself with the everyday nuts and bolts of government operation. Moreover, the expanded design of Ponca tribal government could be characterized as a model of Ponca City government, which has been previously described. In fact, it can be said that the Ponca Tribal Development Authority with its expressed purpose of constructing industrial

parks and attracting industries is a replica of the Chamber of Commerce Industrial Foundation. In itself, there is nothing particularly wrong with this, but the question arises: Does this represent the will of the tribal membership? It was noted in Chapter III that some criticism from the people of Ponca City had been directed toward the Ponca City Industrial Foundation, in terms of its decisions being remote from the people of Ponca City. Could not this same criticism be made of the newly expanded tribal government?

Moreover, it should be asked: What could be the logical outcome of making the tribal governing structure more complex--of dividing and delegating the powers and responsibilities of the Ponca tribal governing body? A fairly recent publication by the National Committee to Save the Menominee People and Forests, Freedom With Reservation, tells the story of the destructive effects on the Menominee people as the decision-making power became more remote from the people.²⁵

The tragedy of the Menominee people unfolded in 1953 when the tribal governing body voted to distribute one-half of the \$10,000,000 which the tribe had accumulated through its forest and logging operations and through settlement of claims against the Federal Government. In 1954, P. L. 83-399 was passed which not only provided for this disbursement; it also terminated the Menominee Tribe. Some of the immediate effects are noted by Deborah Shames, the Coordinating Editor, of the Freedom With Reservation:

- Termination of the tribal roll,
- Termination of the legal status of the Menominee as a people,
- Termination of U. S. services,
- Termination of Menominee reservation status--reorganization into a county unit,
- Termination of the tax exempt status of this land,

- Termination of effective employment, health, and education opportunities.²⁶

In carrying on their uphill fight to regain their reservation status and subsequent Indian identity, the Menominees created the Menominee Enterprises, Inc. (MEI). Over this was superimposed a Voting Trust and a Menominee Assistance Trust, both representative of divisions and delegations of authority. The problems involved with this somewhat enlarged and sophisticated structure are summarized by Ms. Shames:

. . . the Menominee people under a county form of government and as shareholders in a complex corporation exercise less self-determination and control over their own affairs and must cope with more outsiders having decision-making power over them than was ever the case as a reservation tribe under Indian Bureau Administration.²⁷

Specific problems arose as the Menominees attempted to deal with the more sophisticated governing structure: part of their land was sold; other tracts were leased; land developers moved in; environmental destruction became commonplace; and, the Menominee were beset by a host of non-Indian dwellers. According to Ms. Shames, the tide was turned only after the Menominee returned to a more direct means of governing through the formation in 1970, of ". . . a grassroots organization . . . Determination of Rights and Unity for Menominee Shareholders (DRUMS)."²⁸ Only through a march on the state capital, numerous lawsuits, and constant political pressure, according to Ms. Shames, have the Menominees been able to approach the return to some semblance of the proud, dignified, and self-sustaining people that they once were.²⁹

Does the expanded structure of Ponca tribal government promise the same destructive results as that of the Menominees? Certainly, the potential exists for this occurring, even though the various appointive committees could theoretically be recalled by the Tribal Council. For

one thing, there seems to be no evidence that the proposals detailed previously are thoroughly understood by the Ponca people. As a consequence, there is some doubt that they have broad support in the Ponca membership. This is particularly true in the case of the Poncas regarding the proposed Overall Economic Development Plan. Such was the case with Menominee termination and the subsequent formation of the M.E.I., the voting Trusts, and the Assistance Trusts. The organization and the operation of the Tribal Housing Authority is well under way. Over 50% of the originally planned houses have been constructed and are occupied. In accordance, binding agreements have been signed. Homeowners have discovered that in actual practice their houses are not their homes-- that they are subject to regulation. If they seek to remove these restrictions they must obtain a "fee patent" on their property. The result is that their property becomes subject to property tax. Apparently, this had not been explained beforehand.

In brief, the situation attendant to the Tribal Housing Authority can be summed. Firm legal and economic commitments have been made to various federal agencies such as HUD. Involved in these agreements is the organization the Ponca Tribal Housing Authority. If the housing program fails as a financial enterprise then the problem arises as to who is culpable. Seemingly, it would be the Ponca Tribal Business Council, since the authority is an extension thereof. Since the Council is the basic governing body of the Poncas, financial disaster for the Authority could spell disaster for the Ponca people. In sum, it should be noted that the Ponca Tribal Housing Authority possesses a certain potential for the Ponca people, but mainly in terms of providing services for the people. In that respect, it can be conceptualized as an

extension of the BIA. There is no valid control by the tribe, as it appears that the Authority makes decisions independent of the tribal will. Further, it is doubtful that "sweat equity" gives the participant a sense of involvement as this reflects basically an external socialization process. It does not facilitate entrance into the Ponca City society. The terms that the participant must agree to may help in maintaining the condition of houses, but serves more of a function of controlling the participant and of insuring external control of the tribe. The authority does represent a potential for the Poncas to command over \$2,000,000 worth of economic power (which is something that Poncas have been unable to do to this point), and still be able to sustain concrete benefits. Whether or not the Authority operates too remotely from the Ponca people remains to be seen. The Poncas, whether they like it or not, are committed at least to the Authority and apparently have little to say about the direction that the Ponca Tribal Development Authority will take or the Ponca Tribal Management program. One exception to this stems from a recent settlement that the Poncas were awarded. Following 20 years of litigation the Poncas were successful in their fight for compensation for their abrupt removal in the 19th century. In an open tribal meeting, the tribe voted to disburse all but 10% of the money. While the settlement amount of approximately \$3,000,000 may seem formidable, one should keep in mind that the obligation of the Tribal Housing Authority is well over \$2 million. Also, one should keep in mind that the settlement was dictated by the courts, thus obviating any move to channel the money into the newly created committees discussed here. The decision of how to distribute the funds of the recently won tribal settlement brought a challenge to the

official tribal structure. The Ponca Indian Tribal Rights Committee was incorporated under Oklahoma Statutes as a non-profit corporation, and immediately called upon members of the tribe to participate in the meeting concerning the disbursement of the tribal settlement.³⁰ The PITRC called for an immediate lump sum settlement on a per capita basis, whereas, the Council, including its committee structure, had suggested a scheme by which the funds would be invested with a resulting smaller per capita settlement. In the end, the tribe voted to allot all but 10% of the settlement with this portion going into a burial-scholarship investment. In the process, fears of "termination" were voiced.

Seemingly, the Poncas' decision to allot the majority of the \$3 million seems economically short sighted. Indeed by investing a sum this large the tribe would have a tremendous amount of economic power. From this writer's perspective, however, the disbursement seems logical--almost vital. The Poncas have an apparent thriving existence at this point with housing, health, and employment programs in various stages of development. On the surface, the prospects for the Poncas appears rosy. Such was the case with the Menominees. They had accumulated \$10 million and voted to allot half of it. Moreover, the Menominees had been able to pay for their own services. They were a self supporting people at the time of their termination--a termination that brought them disaster.

The PITRC has issued other challenges. The Chairman of the PITRC Committee has questioned the right of two tribal members to hold office in the governing organizations; one on the basis of residence, the other stemming from the fact that he had resigned from the Council in order to enter the Tribal Management Program. The chairman of the PITRC

contended that this individual should be considered a federal employee; consequently, his continued role as decision maker in the tribal structure was in violation of the Tribal Charter, Constitution, and Bylaws.³¹

The PITRC made additional allegations. The Chairman stated that the Ponca Tribal Business Council needed to have more open meetings. The implication in this proposal was that the Business Council's decision making was remote from the tribal membership. An allegation was made by the PITRC was that the land leases to HUD for a forty-year period are illegal, and that tribal lands can be leased for a ten-year period only. Finally, it was charged that the Tribal Council had been selling off tribal lands.³² The latter point of contention raises serious questions about the future of the Ponca people as they become increasingly legally liable to outside institutions for commitments of land and money.

The issues delineated as well as many others are yet to be resolved as they concern an expanded and divided tribal decision-making body. The resolution, however, must take place within the larger tribal structure; consequently, it is not the purpose of this writer to go deeply into these issues. A description of the direction that the official Ponca tribal governing body has taken in terms of development of community suggests that it is more in the direction of economic development rather than social development. While the challenges of the PITRC illustrate specific differences over definite issues, fundamental division of social and economic functioning has not been dealt with. In short, the resolution of the conflict between PITRC and the official structure will probably occur, but, it will not appreciably

alter the direction of community development--that being economic. This direction should continue as long as it is successful. If it becomes less than successful then community development among the Poncas should undergo a fundamental change. For several years there has been a fundamentally different approach to community development attempted by another informal organization among the Poncas. The White Eagle Community Development Association, chartered in 1968, seeks development of Ponca resources, but based on the existing informal tribal structure rather than through a series of committees as extensions of the Business Council. An analysis of W.E.C.D.A., its background, history, and present status will illustrate the nature of a fundamentally different approach--different from the official structure's outlook.

White Eagle Community Development Association

Before one can deal adequately with W.E.C.D.A., consideration must be given to its originator, Clyde Warrior. Only through a glimpse at his life and beliefs can one truly understand his philosophy of development in a Native American community.

On August 31, 1937, Clyde Warrior was born. Not much attention was paid to the event in Ponca City, but some 31 years later, on July 7, 1968, when Clyde Warrior died, it was apparent that he had clearly left his mark on Ponca City, and on the Ponca Tribe. Many people mourned; others in Ponca City commented that they were glad to see "that trouble-making redskin go." There were some that attached no significance to his death. What specifically had Clyde Warrior done to arouse such strong feelings? His early life, at least on the surface, does not offer anything extraordinary. Clyde attended the Ponca City Schools,

where he was an above-average student. He participated in tribal affairs to the extent that Ponca youth are allowed, and excelled as a champion War Dancer. Like any youth he aspired to the American Dream of the good life and pursued his goal at Northeastern State College in Oklahoma. In the latter part of the 1960's, he returned to Ponca City. It was at that point that much of the controversy surrounding Clyde Warrior arose and it was shortly thereafter that he died.

One might speculate that the college campus transformed Clyde into a radical. This would be a good common sense explanation in light of the turmoil on college campuses found in the 1960's. In that respect, Stan Steiner, in defining The New Indian, sought out so-called "Red Muslims," including Clyde Warrior.³³ While at Northeastern State College Warrior told Steiner:

We have a Southern social structure in Eastern Oklahoma. The only way you can change that structure is to smash it. You turn it over sideways. And stomp on it. It appears to me that will happen around here. I think violence will come about. As far as I am concerned the sooner the better.³⁴

Warrior was commenting on the incident involving the arrest of a young Cherokee for illegal hunting and possession of game. Concerning the trial, Warrior noted that:

. . . they (Cherokee Nation) fail to see that in the American system nothing is done legally, honestly, truthfully. Now, when they find out, they are going to be pretty damn mad. If that (the legal way) fails, then violence will take place. The country should take heed.³⁵

In his press statement following his inauguration as President of the National Indian Youth Council, Warrior blasted the federal government: "White colonialists, racists, facists, Uncle Tomahawks, and bureaucrats staff the United States government agencies dealing with Indians."³⁶

The preceding comments have been clear indicators to many that Clyde Warrior was transformed into a radical by the college campus-- that he was a rebel who had no real interest in the Ponca Tribe. On the other hand, there is evidence to the contrary: that he simply came into his own on the college campus; that the angry articulate Warrior that emerged in the 1960's was initially a product of the Ponca City society. The campus had enabled him to articulate his frustration. A white high school classmate describes Clyde as a "mean Indian" who seldom backed down from any conflict. One of his high school teachers recalls Clyde as an able scholar, but often restless to the point of total frustration.* For those who knew him, the potential for his becoming an activist existed long before he reached the college campus.

Steiner notes Clyde's role in the first stages of the development of the National Indian Yough Council as early as 1960.³⁷ Up until the time of his death in 1968, Warrior continued his work in the Council, yet this was not his only activity. He worked with the University of Chicago Anthropological Team on the Carnegie Project among the Cherokee. He was a researcher at the University of Kansas.³⁸ In 1963, he studied a community development program on the Ute Reservation, a program similar to the one that he proposed for the White Eagle Community in 1968.³⁹ By 1965, his general philosophy for community development was clearly forming. In the context of a presentation on poverty, he wrote:

. . . when a people are powerless and their destiny is controlled by the powerful, whether they be rich or poor, they live in ignorance and frustration because they have been deprived of experience and responsibility as individuals and as communities. In the modern world there is no substitute for this kind of experience. One must have it to make

*Based on personal interviews.

rational choices, to live in a world you feel competent to deal with and not be frustrated by. No one can gain this experience without the power to make these decisions himself with his fellows in his local community. . . .⁴⁰

From the context of the War on Poverty, Warrior seemed to be saying that community development--authentic community development--must come from within the core of the community. What did this outlook translate to in terms of application? In 1967, Clyde Warrior addressed himself to this point:

. . . . Community development must be just what the word implies, Community Development. It cannot be packaged programs wheeled into Indian communities by outsiders which Indians can 'buy' or once again brand themselves as unprogressive if they do not 'cooperate.' Even the best of outside programs suffer from one large defect - if the program falters helpful outsiders too often step in to smooth over the rough spots. At that point any program ceases to belong to the people involved and ceases to be a learning experience for them. Even the failures must be Indian experiences because only then will Indians understand why a program failed and not blame themselves for personal inadequacy. A better program built upon the failure of an old program is the path of progress. But to achieve this experience, competence, worthiness, sense of achievement and the resultant material prosperity, Indians must have the responsibility in the ultimate sense of the word. Indians must be free in the sense that other more prosperous Americans are free. Freedom and prosperity are different sides of the same coin and there can be no freedom without complete responsibility. And I do not mean the fictional responsibility and Democracy of passive consumers of programs; programs which emanate from and whose responsibility for success rests in the hands of outsiders - the federal administrators or local white elitist groups.⁴¹

Warrior's initial action regarding his people took place in April of 1968, when he launched a voter drive for the purpose of putting an Indian member of the White Eagle community on the school board of the White Eagle School. A report published by the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development describes that particular situation:

This small public elementary school (enrollment 67), exclusively attended by Ponca children, was described by one local 'middle class' Indian as a 'blight' on the community. Attendance was sporadic, achievement was far below state norms, and the dropout rate by the sixth grade was 87%. Little communication took place between school personnel and the Indian community and many Indians reported that teachers held a very low opinion of their children. Efforts were periodically made by Ponca City white and middle-class oriented Indians to close the school and send the children to integrated schools in Ponca City. The majority of the Indian community, however, preferred to keep the school open, to improve it, and to convert it into a community-controlled school.⁴²

As Warrior and his wife pressed on with the meetings on voter registration, voting, and the functions of a school board, they discovered the reasons for the White Eagle School having an all-white school board for over 20 years:

. . . local officials had convinced the Poncas that registration procedures were extremely complicated and would put them in jeopardy of having their land taxed . . . many Indians were afraid that they would be evicted from their rented homes if they alienated the white community, as eviction had been threatened in the past.⁴³

Hence you have what could be considered as Warrior's first attempt at unifying the White Eagle Community. What was the reaction to this? The school was closed in 1969 and the children that had attended White Eagle were bussed into the Ponca City Schools. What can be said about Warrior's role in this incident?

Emotionalism would hold that the experience brought to the Poncas by Clyde Warrior was in itself unique and that Warrior was only a troublemaker. Quite to the contrary, innumerable cases can be cited among Native Americans in which tribal awareness evolved during this same period. For example, in the case of the Mohawk Nation, a school boycott was undertaken on April 22, 1968. Linked with the boycott were legal and legislative efforts aimed at changing a New York State law

which prevented Native Americans from serving on school boards. Also, the Mohawks in the same time span blockaded a bridge on their lands in protest of treaty violations.⁴⁴ The Mohawks' active drive for their rights met with the same success that other efforts by Indian Tribes have. Moreover, the study, "Red Power and Indian Education" (reported in Chapter I) concluded that Native American activism in education is becoming commonplace and that it is vital if Indian youth are to get a good education.⁴⁵ It is, therefore, impossible to sweep Warrior's efforts aside as a mere incident.

To understand Warrior's drive, one has to consider the circumstances of the time. The year, 1968, was an extremely volatile year. College campuses were active, but possibly not as active as the Civil Rights Movement. Dr. Martin Luther King had conducted marches through many American cities. Suddenly, his life was snuffed out. Dr. King's assassination occurred, ironically, at the time Warrior's voter registration drive was taking place. Also it was in the month of May in 1968 that the Poor People's Campaign took place with the march on Washington. The National Indian Youth Council elected to participate in the campaign, and Warrior delivered a speech against white racism, which received national press coverage.⁴⁶ For this, ". . . he was denounced as a Communist by Ponca City whites and evicted from his home."⁴⁷ It was also during this time period that Warrior had a private interview with Robert Kennedy during which Warrior stomped out angrily. Since Kennedy was assassinated on June 6, 1968, and Warrior died shortly thereafter, the true substance of this meeting was never known.⁴⁸

There is one question that must be answered before proceeding:
Was Warrior truly the fire-breathing radical that he was made out to be?

A partial answer can be seen in the NIYC and its supposed support of the Poor People's Campaign. It is not at all clear that the National Indian Youth Council unilaterally supported the campaign. Deloria cites a fundamental difference between Blacks and Native Americans, even though they are often indiscriminately lumped together. He points out that the Native American drive for progress has always been tied to the land, whereas the Civil Rights Movement has never had a land base. Deloria states: "No movement can sustain itself, no people can continue, no government can function, and no religion can become a reality except it be bound to a land area of its own."⁴⁹

Because of this fundamental difference Deloria notes that Native Americans have been traditionally skeptical of the Civil Rights movement with its sole legalistic foundations. Further, he details this resistance to Civil Rights through the fact that Native Americans did not participate in the 1963 march, and that only one organization, Coalition of Indian Citizens, participated in the encampment at Resurrection City in 1968. His one concession to the Black Power movement is that it has acted as a catalyst:

Black Power as a communications phenomenon, was a godsend to other groups. It clarified the intellectual concepts which had kept Indians and Mexicans confused and allowed the concept of self-determination suddenly to become valid.⁵⁰

Beyond this he notes no other parallels between Black movements and Native American movements.

The pressures on Warrior were obviously great - the demands terrific. Maintaining a role in the NIYC; sustaining contact with the Poor People's Campaign; and, most importantly, his efforts to organize W.E.C.D.A. were extremely taxing, a point which brings up the issue of his death. The simplistic explanation often offered for his death,

"that he drank himself to death" is probably inadequate. Vine Deloria, Jr. comments on Clyde's death: "Warrior died in July of 1968, some say of alcoholism, most say of a broken heart!"⁵¹

Before his death, however, Warrior was able to put together the White Eagle Community Development Association with Warrior himself as Executive Director. In April of 1968, a proposal was submitted to the Episcopal Church. A grant of \$20,000 was made to the association in September, and the first installment of the grant was received on October 24, 1968. The third renewal of the grant was made on June 2, 1971. The church, however, has failed to renew subsequent requests for funds. The philosophy of W.E.C.D.A. is stated below:

- That the Ponca Indians needed to have an organization to rally the dissident factions in the community, to the end that common goals might be developed.
- That the Ponca Indians needed to have an organization that is as free as possible from political interference. Like most Indians the Ponca tribe's only meaningful organizational experience has been with the bureaucratic and institutional organizations. In other words, the association has to be one which is developed, organized, and conducted by the Ponca Indians themselves.
- That the Ponca Indians needed to have experience in operating their own organization. The limitations that they would confront in the process of operating their organization might result in training programs which would be more meaningful than those which have often been imposed upon them. It was believed that the Ponca Indians needed some successful experience as a group; that they had the potentiality, talent, and the ability to confront many of the challenges which face them. One of the dilemmas that faces the Ponca Indians is that they have a very strong pride in being Ponca Indians when operating within the context of their own community and within their own culture, yet, when they face the outside world, its demands and its competition; it is with a very poor image of themselves. One of the objectives of the association would be to provide them with an opportunity for some successful experience taking advantage of the strong Ponca pride usually reserved for themselves as an 'In-Group' and projected to the outside world. There is a feeling among the Ponca Indians that as long as they fulfill the image that they now project

they will continue to be ranked in the social strata as second class persons.

- That the Ponca Indians needed a strong successful organization which would face the other organizations in the larger community with dignity and respect. This would not be interpreted as replacing some of the organizations that have traditionally represented the Ponca Tribe, but would add to the effectiveness of these organizations.
- That an organization was needed to foster the development of programs under local control. As an example of what can be done when people realize that they have the power to make changes that will benefit them and make possible a true local participation in the voter registration drive which resulted in the election of an Indian School board member to the White Eagle School for the first time in over twenty-five years. Much thought needs to be given to the developing of programs that would benefit the young people of the Ponca tribe such as: recreational programs; library facilities; tutoring programs; remedial classes; development of parent groups to work closely with schools and guidance counselor programs. In addition some thought should be given to the development of feasibility studies for business enterprises.
- That an association was needed to represent the needs and desires of the rank and file of the Ponca Indians that could be presented to private industries, the federal government, foundations, churches, and others, as a true working example of a real grassroots effort.
- The most important objective is to have members of the Ponca tribe to gain local control over their affairs and be provided with the opportunity to make choices and decisions, not by playing the role of passive, subjected and dependent people, but as an energetic and fully participating citizen in their community.⁵³

The program that Warrior proposed based on this philosophy contained several elements. The immediate part of the program was a summer 8-week tutorial designed to prepare sixth and seventh grade students from White Eagle School for transfer to Ponca City Junior High School:

. . . . An 8-week program with courses in current events, English writing and grammar, mathematics and social studies, and discussions of Ponca culture and history was developed to bridge the educational gap between the Ponca student and their white classmates.⁵⁴

A second part of the W.E.C.D.A. program was a course in Ponca Culture proposed to the White Eagle School Administration to be taught in the fall of 1968 in the White Eagle Schools. This proposal was denied. Besides this Warrior secured an additional \$10,000 grant in order to carry out a tribal history project, a compilation of Ponca History and culture from the Ponca perspective. Prior to these activities, the Association in January of 1968 had begun a 15-minute weekly radio broadcast in order:

- to serve the cultural and educational needs of the Indian Community.
- to discuss the Indian's position in society and clarify the nature of their problem.
- to serve the Ponca City community by providing a forum for discussion between Indians and non-Indians.⁵⁵

It can be speculated that Warrior was the driving force in all of these programs before his death in the summer of 1968. Following his death, the Association continued its efforts through Warrior's wife, Della, members of Warrior's family, and a select membership of the Ponca Tribe. In November of that year, the Association was successful in getting a cafe owner to remove a sign from display that read: "No beer served to Indians."⁵⁶ Further, the Association found that a bar in Ponca City was excluding Indians on the basis of a city ordinance--an ordinance that they discovered did not exist.⁵⁷

In December, the Association set up a food cooperative in a building in the White Eagle Community. The store provided groceries to the community at a reduced cost with the profits going back into the store.⁵⁸ During the summer of 1969, the Clyde Warrior Upward Bound Program was instituted on the campus of Northern Oklahoma College. Upward Bound is designed to provide enrichment experiences for older, "so-called" disadvantaged youth.

What is the status of W.E.C.D.A. as of this writing? The cooperative food store closed as the owner of the building refused W.E.C.D.A. its continued use. The data for the history project was collected with portions of it going to Oklahoma University for publication. The Upward Bound Project was never replicated after 1969; nor was the summer tutoring. In short, "After a year . . . the organization tended to fall into inaction without important issues."⁵⁹

It Depends on Who You Talk To

From the foregoing, some attempt should be made to determine the outlook of the modern Poncas. The initial framework laid down was that of the artificial anglo governing structure superimposed over an informal kinship-type structure. The dilemma this has posed was illustrated by the somewhat opposing views of the two former Ponca Tribal Chairmen. The resulting expansion in the official tribal structure was portrayed as an attempt to accommodate both economic and social functioning. The data presented indicates fairly consistently that the outlook is oriented more toward economic functioning and less toward social functioning.

Admittedly attempts have been made to maintain a balance toward the latter. For instance, the Tribal Housing Authority included early in its development a Housing Aides Program. Members of the tribe were trained in the various aspects of home repair: plumbing, furniture reupholstering, and sewing for the home. This writer accompanied one of the aides and noted that she was received favorably. By giving proper recognition to that particular Ponca family unit as members of the tribal structure, she was able to bridge the gap between social and

economic functioning. She was able to merge the social structure of the tribe with the economic structure. As a result, that family felt more a part of the Tribal Housing Authority. Unfortunately, the program, partially funded and directed by Oklahoma State University, has been discontinued. What this seems to say is that social functioning in the newly expanded official structure will be recognized only when it is economically feasible. Clearly, the outlook of the official structure is economically oriented.

A second means of affirming this outlook is by assessing the impact of Warrior's W.E.C.D.A. and possibly some differences between this informal organization and the official organization. Concerning W.E.C.D.A., the first issue that has to be dealt with is the man, Warrior. Steiner⁶⁰ and Deloria both recognized Clyde's support of Goldwater in 1964:

Warrior had already been a rebel in 1964 when the majority of tribes had lined up to support the Johnson-Humphrey ticket in the general election. Clyde supported Goldwater. His basic thesis in supporting Goldwater was that emotional reliance on a Civil Rights bill to solve the blacks particular cultural question was the way to intergroup disaster. Warrior had been right.⁶¹

Judging by Warrior's political philosophy, it would seem that Warrior sought something more substantive for Native Americans than that offered by the War on Poverty and the Civil Rights movement. Also, it can be said that Warrior, at a very early time, sought the same "self-determination" that President Nixon in 1971 voiced for Native Americans. Moreover, Warrior's proposals, though possibly radical for Ponca City at that time, have since come to be embraced or coopted by Ponca City's institutional social services as will be shown in later chapters. Warrior's philosophy of community development would fit

quite handily into the concept of revenue sharing with its emphasis on returning control to local communities and governing bodies.

If Warrior's political philosophy could roughly be categorized as conservative and his activities and proposals could be considered as less than earth shaking, then why did his program stagnate? It is this searcher's position that his program waned because of his death. In August, 1968, Deloria wrote in tribute to Clyde Warrior:

It is indeed tragic that Clyde is now gone. He would have eventually united Indian people as a cultural unity which is, historically and realistically, the only way Indian people can unite. . . .

It is perhaps more tragic for Indians than for Clyde. There is not another person around today with the Charisma of Clyde to take his place. No other Indian can freely roam the Indian world and immediately enter into the lives of the different reservation people like Clyde could. . . .

With Clyde gone, Indian affairs is becoming desperately out of focus as to its goals. No longer, it seems, do many of us come together because we want to come together, but merely perform the organizational tasks required of us. We need Clyde's sense of reality to keep things balanced. But Clyde is gone, and we shall not see his kind of man again.⁶²

Hence, alternative arguments that Warrior was too much of a radical become moot because of his death. This is certainly true when one considers how he was received by the official structure.

Former Chairman T. R. and his wife were skeptical of programs that stressed the cultural heritage of the Poncas, noting that the Ponca youth who participated in such programs as Upward Bound have exhibited distaste for both Indian and white societies in Ponca City. On this point, T. R. emphasized the idea that Indians must live in a modern technological world, for they cannot survive as their ancestors did. Yet he like Warrior further emphasized the need for the Poncas to take pride in their Indian heritage. T. R.'s wife interjected on the idea of Indian pride, the problem of Indians exploiting other Indians.

Specifically, she questioned the motives of those who seek to stress solely the cultural heritage of the Poncas. She continued by noting that those living in the white society often take advantage of their fractional Indian heritage to further their own interests.⁶³

Although former Tribal Councilman P. L. at first indicated disagreement with Clyde Warrior, he finally noted that "Clyde was right in his own way." It would appear that the central difference between Clyde and P. L. was the "means" by which tribal goals would be accomplished. In that respect, P. L. again referred to his role in backing Indian education programs as early as the 1930's, noting that he had constantly wrestled with the question of what the world would be like in ten, twenty, or even thirty years in which the Indian would be living.⁶⁴

Similar differences are noted when the subject of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is broached. The BIA, of course, exerts a tremendous amount of control over the lives of Indians. In that respect, it is easy to see the W.E.C.D.A. goal of Indian self-determination and BIA policy would frequently conflict. P. L. recounted several incidents that brought him into contact with the BIA as Tribal Chairman. He cited inertia, inaction, and stagnation on the part of the BIA, but he noted that the BIA would respond when tribal officials demanded action, at the area Bureau headquarters.⁶⁵

T. R. and his wife seemed to think that the BIA should not be subjected to such harsh criticism as it is by certain groups including some members of the Ponca Tribe. They noted that the BIA in the past had provided many worthwhile services and facilities, among which were the sanitation services and housing that T. R. had helped engineer as Chairman of the Tribal Council. They voiced concern that eventually

such programs would be eliminated, much to the detriment of the tribe, if constant and harsh criticism were to be continued. Still there was a note of distrust of the BIA by both T. R. and his wife.

T. R.'s wife gave a clue to their skepticism when she recalled that in a conversation with former Secretary of the Interior, that she had told him that there were too many groups and individuals involved in directing Indians and the too few of these groups were Indians, had lived as Indians, and understood the Indian. T. R.'s wife suggested that it appeared that many of the programs and grants were developed for creating employment for the white society, as she reiterated the point that too many non-Indians are involved in administering Indian programs.⁶⁶

It becomes readily apparent that within the tribe there are factions based on clans that work to block unification on matters under consideration.⁶⁷ T. R. illustrated this point, by indicating that he was both Pottawattomie and Ponca, while his wife was full blood Ponca. Intermarriage is common in the Ponca Tribe. The fact, however, that there is little agreement on what should be done tends to mask the fact that there is virtually complete agreement on the problems that plague the tribe. One might advance the counter-argument that the means of solving the problems are interwoven with the problems themselves. If that is the case, then it would seem that the question of which group or faction is right must be dealt with. This writer would like to offer an answer: the fact that all of the factions are right.

All of the factions are a part of the Ponca Tribe. All agree on the problems that confront the tribe. Their differing solutions tend, however, to be a product of the background of each faction, family, or

individual. In essence, each has certain needs that require fulfilling; their outlook reflects these needs. Clyde Warrior, T. R., and P. L. may not have agreed on how to accomplish certain goals but the goals were the same. It becomes, to a certain extent, a matter of who will "call the shots."⁶⁸

The real issue beyond who in the Ponca Tribe should have the representation and decision-making power, lies in the fact that neither the official structure of the tribe nor the unofficial organizational structure approaches any sort of "self-determinism." That is simply that Warrior's self-help approach to community development was somewhat short-lived, and even though the official approach seems to continue to hold sway, it does so only because of external funding. If this funding is discontinued and the official structure crumbles, then Poncas will return to a Warrior type philosophy by necessity.

Only time will tell if community development on a grandiose scheme, such as advocated by the official structure, will be a success. If Indian time is truly timeless, there is no need to make a decision. What is apparent is that both formal and informal structures of the Ponca Tribe continue to be subordinated to the wishes of the dominant society. This will become even more apparent as one reads further.

Some Preliminary Conclusions

It is imperative that some sort of conclusions be attempted concerning the majority policy toward the minority. Based on the findings of Chapter IV, the obvious conclusion is that Ponca City is, for the most part, indifferent to the Poncas, except when economic considerations are made. With this limited policy in mind, Simpson and Yinger's

majority alternatives of "legal protection," "population transfer," and "extermination" are eliminated since each of these three policies entail a deliberate effort on the part of the majority, which is not apparent. The remaining policies of "assimilation," "pluralism," and "continued subjugation" remain as viable possibilities in that majority efforts in each of these cases requires less deliberation of effort.

For the minority outlook and goals, the level of "militancy" exhibited by members of the Ponca Tribe does not support the conclusion that they desire to go beyond equality to dominance of the majority. The level of militancy, moreover, is directed only to the development of tribal institutions and community. Because of this, however, the alternatives of "assimilation," "pluralism," and "secessionism" remain. Efforts at tribal and community development could be directed toward any three of these goals. Hence, the possibilities diagram as follows.

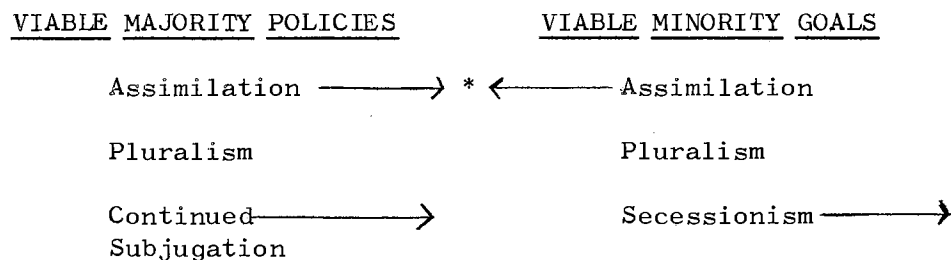


Figure 7. The Viable Alternatives of the Ponca Tribal/
Ponca City Relationship

As noted by Simpson and Yinger, assimilation would involve the majority consent, and at the same time would include the majority

adopting minority patterns. To be sure, many Ponca families have moved into the city, a fact which could be interpreted as a move to assimilate. At the same time, there is no evidence that the majority is adopting minority patterns, except in the case of collecting artifacts for display, which cannot be equated to adopting minority patterns of culture. Continued investigation is necessary before conclusions concerning assimilation can be made. Pluralism would involve a mutual respect, and in this case, seems to be contingent on the success of the Ponca's development programs, both official and informal. Again, continued investigation is necessary. If the policy of the majority is continued subjugation and the Poncas continue development programs, the outcome may be that the Ponca people may withdraw. Chapter V represents an endeavor to resolve the remaining possibilities into a conclusion.

FOOTNOTES

¹United States Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Corporate Charter of the Ponca Indian Tribe (Washington, D. C., 1951).

²United States Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Constitution and Bylaws of the Ponca Tribe of Indians (Washington, D. C., 1951).

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Interview, T. R., September 11, 1971.

⁶Interview, P. L., September 24, 1971.

⁷James H. Howard, The Ponca Tribe (Washington, D. C., 1965), p. 92.

⁸Interview, T. R., September 11, 1971.

⁹Interview, P. L., September 24, 1971.

¹⁰Vine Deloria, Jr., Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto (New York, 1969), p. 204.

¹¹Corporate Charter of the Ponca Indian Tribe.

¹²Interview, Executive Director, Ponca Tribal Housing Authority, September 27, 1971.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Data supplied by Executive Director, Ponca Tribal Housing Authority, September 7, 1972.

¹⁵Interviews, Executive Director, Ponca Tribal Housing Authority, September 27, 1971 and October 1, 1971.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Interview, Executive Director, Ponca Tribal Housing Authority, October 1, 1971.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ponca Tribe of Indians, "Tribal Governmental Procedures and Plan of Operation for Conducting Business," p. 1.

²¹Ibid., pp. 2-3.

²²Ibid., pp. 3-4.

²³Ibid., pp. 5-6.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 7-8.

²⁵National Committee to Save the Menominee People and Forests, Freedom With Reservation, ed. Deborah Shames (Madison, Wisconsin, 1972).

²⁶Shames.

²⁷Ibid., p. 11.

²⁸Ibid., p. xi.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ponca City News (May 12, 1972).

³¹Ibid. (May 12, 1972 and October 20, 1972).

³²Ibid. (October 20, 1972).

³³Stan Steiner, The New Indians (New York, 1968).

³⁴Ibid., p. 4.

³⁵Ibid., p. 12.

³⁶Ibid., p. 66.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid., p. 72.

³⁹F. McKinley, S. Bayne, and G. Nimnicht, "Case Study I--White Eagle Community, Who Should Control Indian Education?" (Tempe, Arizona, February, 1970).

⁴⁰Clyde Warrior, "Poverty, Community, and Power," White Eagle Community Development Association Newsletter, 1971.

⁴¹Clyde Warrior, "We Are Not Free," in Alvin M. Josephy, Jr. (ed.), The American Indians' Fight for Freedom (New York, 1971), p. 76.

⁴²McKinley, Bayne, and Nimnicht, Who Should Control Indian Education?, p. 26.

- ⁴³Ibid.
- ⁴⁴St. Lawrence University, "Educating the Educator," ed. by Roy H. Sanstrom (New York, 1971).
- ⁴⁵G. Louis Heath, "Red Power and Indian Education," (Illinois State University, 1970), RC 004 872.
- ⁴⁶McKinley, Bayne, and Nimnicht, Who Should Control Indian Education?, p. 26.
- ⁴⁷Ibid., p. 27.
- ⁴⁸Correspondence, Stuart Levine, American Studies Department, University of Kansas, December 6, 1972.
- ⁴⁹Vine Deloria, Jr., Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto, p. 179.
- ⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 180-181.
- ⁵¹Ibid., p. 184.
- ⁵²White Eagle Community Development Association, "Purposes and Objectives of the White Eagle Community Development Association," 1968.
- ⁵³McKinley, Bayne, and Nimnicht, Who Should Control Indian Education?, pp. 27-29.
- ⁵⁴Ibid.
- ⁵⁵Ibid.
- ⁵⁶Ibid.
- ⁵⁷Ibid.
- ⁵⁸Ibid.
- ⁵⁹Ibid.
- ⁶⁰Stan Steiner, The New Indians, p. 70.
- ⁶¹Ibid., p. 71.
- ⁶²Unpublished Manuscript, Citation pending approval of Vine Deloria, Jr.
- ⁶³Interview, T. R., September 11, 1974.
- ⁶⁴Interview, P. L., September 24, 1971.
- ⁶⁵Interview, P. L., September 24, 1971.

⁶⁶Interview, T. R., September 11, 1971.

⁶⁷McKinley, Bayne, and Nimnicht, Who Should Control Indian Education?

⁶⁸Vine Deloria, Jr., Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto, p. 217.

CHAPTER V

THE PONCAS OF PONCA CITY

Introduction

To this point, the historical foundations of the relationship of the Ponca Tribe to Ponca City and other major institutions have been reassessed. The inability of the Poncas to cope effectively with either the Federal Government or the local institutions has been delineated. The Ponca experience concerning the federal institutions is not particularly unique insofar as Native Americans are concerned. Moreover, removal and relocation with the broken promises attendant thereto, can be counted on as an integral part of the experience most Native Americans have had in dealing with the Federal Government. In terms of their relationship with the local Ponca City structure, the Poncas did not fare much better; the decisions made concerning the tribe and subsequent actions that were taken by the local structure can be viewed as extensions of the federal policies and attitudes manifested toward Native Americans.

An examination of the modern institutions that comprise the Ponca City structure has revealed some interesting insights. In general, a large portion of the economic and political structure that formed the early foundations of Ponca City society has been maintained. The outlook of Ponca City and the outlook of its institutions toward the

Ponca Tribe has remained essentially the same as it was during the earlier period.

This can be seen particularly in the economic realm. Many of the financial institutions that came into existence during the early period are in existence today. The frontier spirit remains as a significant aspect of the dominant society in Ponca. This ghost of the past continues to haunt the Poncas. The frontier spirit is manifested in a variety of ways and has an impact on the lives of the Poncas. The most visible sign of the frontier spirit as it relates to the Poncas is seen in the continued glorification of a questionable past. The activities, literature, and tourist information sponsored by the Ponca City Chamber of Commerce stresses clearly the fact that the Ponca Tribe has no historical "present."

The emphasis on the past masks some significant changes that have occurred in Ponca City. Gone are the philanthropic days of E. W. Marland, even though his cultural heritage remains. In its place has come the coolly efficient force of the corporation, which does not view its role as including the maintenance of the Marland heritage. In addition, because of the collective nature of the drive to expand Ponca City's economy, a change has taken place in Ponca City policy. In short, a discrepancy exists between the outlook and the policy for maintaining this outlook.

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the relationship of the Ponca people to Ponca City. It is hoped that some determination can be made regarding the three possible relationships: assimilation-assimilation; pluralism-pluralism; and, continued subjugation-secessionism. It could be assumed that the Poncas are not really

dedicated to real improvement--that they are simply biding their time, and that it continues to be the dominant society's burden to somehow civilize the savage. In that respect, there are continuing tribal problems in the areas of employment, housing, and health. These problems would suggest that tribal programs are ineffective and that the Ponca people are incapable of real improvement.

If one carefully examines the modern relationship of the Ponca people to Ponca City, one finds that this simplistic conclusion does not hold up. Moreover, it can be hypothesized that the substance of the traditional relationship of dominance to subordination continues and, that while the Poncas recognize the need to move forward and are trying, they are stymied, and will continue to be stymied. Some of the reasons for continued domination of the Poncas by an Anglo society will be discussed within this chapter.

On Being a Ponca of Ponca City

In order to test the suggested hypothesis, it is necessary to describe the general status of the Ponca people. Members of the Ponca tribe are maintained in a second class citizenship and are held in extremely low regard by the people of Ponca City. The data supplied in Chapter I are indicators of this. Secondly, even though lip service is paid to equality there continue to be discrepancies in the areas of employment, housing, and health.

The employment picture for the Ponca people does not seem to be particularly glowing. The Pawnee Agency reported for 1971, a composite unemployment ratio of 77% for the Kaw, Otoe-Missouri, Pawnee, Ponca, and Tonkawa Tribes.¹ In addition, the Pawnee Agency for 1971, reported a

combined unemployment/under-employment ratio of 81% for these tribes.²

The Fuchs and Havighurst study had this to say concerning employment among the Ponca people:

The Indian population in and around Ponca City are engaged primarily in low level service jobs. There are no professionals, with the exception of one nurse, who is held in high regard by the junior high girls as a model of achievement. Many of the young people leave Ponca City in their late teens, going off to larger cities for employment.³

A survey undertaken in the spring of 1972 of Ponca employment shows that there were 74 Poncas with jobs. One-half of these jobs involved working for federal agencies, or in jobs provided by federal grants. Viewed from a different perspective, it can further be said that half of the 74 jobs are in federal agencies such as the B.I.A. or the local tribal agencies such as the Tribal Housing Authority.

Forty percent of the total Ponca employment can further be said to have been created by the Poncas themselves. These jobs come from the general effort in the previous chapter of the tribe to better their lot. The jobs in which Poncas work directly in Ponca City and the immediate area can be categorized as shown in Table III.

With an extremely high ratio of unemployment, one would automatically expect to see a high ratio of tribal members on welfare rolls. The data, unfortunately, does not support this. Figures reported as of June 1, 1971, show total Indian assistance case load for Kay County of 183. This constitutes 9.8% of a reported Indian population of 1,860⁴; one-half of these cases were for aid to dependent children, and one-fifth of the cases constituted aid to the aged.⁵

TABLE III
PONCA TRIBAL EMPLOYMENT - MAY, 1972

Job Classification	Poncas Employed
Oil industry	6
Unskilled service	9
Skilled service	3
Construction (related)	9
Health	2
Mattress factory	7
City of Ponca City	<u>2</u>
	38 jobs
Federal/tribal jobs	<u>36</u> jobs
	74 Ponca employed

The assistance data is revealing when compared to the unemployment ratio. If a majority of the tribe is unemployed and a small minority seeks assistance, then one must contemplate the standard of living for the Ponca people. The mean per family income reported for the Ponca people for 1969 was \$1,212.⁶ For that same year, the per household income for Ponca City was set at \$9,972.⁷

An income differential of this magnitude dictates life styles of differing orientation. In essence, there are varying degrees of successful adjustment among members of the tribe to the requirements of the majority, Ponca City. A theoretical framework that is compatible with the idea of a variety of life styles among the Poncas is the "marginal man" theory detailed by Antonovsky. It may be helpful as a theoretical

framework in considering the employment situation of the Ponca people:

- two cultures, or subcultures, are in lasting contact
- one is dominant in terms of power and reward potential. Of the two this is the non-marginal culture. Its members are not particularly attracted to, or influenced by, the marginal culture.
- the boundaries between the two are sufficiently permeable for members of the marginal culture to internalize the patterns of the dominant culture as well as their own.
- the patterns of values between the divergent cultures cannot, in their entirety, be easily harmonized.
- having acquired some of the goals of the dominant culture, members of the marginal group are pulled by the promise of greater rewards offered.
- the barriers between the two tend to be hardened by discrimination from one side and by pressure against 'betrayal' from the other side.
- marginality acquires particular intensity when the clash persists through more than one generation.⁸

The Antonovsky framework is relevant because it includes a basic attribute of the dominant society; that is, the power and reward potential. Also, while Ponca City society represents the power and reward potential for the Poncas, it must be said that the attraction or influence of the Ponca Tribe is virtually nil as regards the majority society. It can be argued that the Poncas have an attraction for the dominant society when there is the prospect of monetary gain, yet it is doubtful that this can be categorized as a genuine attraction--one stemming from the tribal structure per se. This phenomena stems from the fact that Ponca City represents the majority--it can continue in pursuit of its policy undeterred.

If marginality and differing life styles can be tentatively accepted, then it follows that members of the Ponca Tribe, have, to

varying degrees, internalized elements of the dominant culture. At the same time they have adhered, to varying degrees, to the elements of their cultural order. Because the patterns are divergent and inharmonious, there is a constant attraction-repulsion between cultures. The phenomena of 'betrayal' has been described in Chapter IV in which it was noted that differences exist between subgroups of the Ponca Tribe over the means of improving the Ponca situation.

For the individual members of the tribe, the degree of marginality is a product of subgroup membership and the requirements of the majority society. In the course of everyday living, Ponca families make certain decisions that collectively make up a life style. For example, a Ponca family may ponder the decision whether to live in the city limits or on the tribal trust lands south of Ponca City. A vital factor weighing in this decision comes in the form of various tribal organizations both official and informal that the family affiliates with. At the same time, the force of the dominant society comes into play since some of the Ponca organizations are more readily acceptable to the dominant society than others. Hence, if a Ponca family associates with more acceptable Ponca organizations they will find themselves more socially acceptable to the dominant society, and, possibly less acceptable to tribal membership. The reverse can also be true. This accounts for a wide variance within the "spectrum of marginality."

The spectrum of marginality includes for the Poncas decisions about occupations and work. In that respect, there seem to be several possible answers to the phenomena of high unemployment. The first is that portrayed in the stereotype image of the Indian as a lazy, drunken sort who is supported by regular payments from the Federal Government. An

aspect of this belief is that found in the situations where Poncas are employed. A statement that typifies the anglo attitude is: "You know how those Poncas are--when one of them gets a job, the others move in on him."

The surface indicators in the streets of Ponca City seemingly give strong support to the belief that Poncas are not worthy of employment. Groups of adult male Poncas frequently can be found gathered along Grand Avenue, the main street of the downtown business district of Ponca City. Arrests among Ponca adults for public display of drunkenness is frequent. During 1971, 35.3% of the county arrests were Indian.⁹ In addition, the Reconciliation Committee, an organization to be discussed in Chapter VII, reported 60% of the municipal arrests, in 1971, to be Indian.¹⁰ Deaths have occurred among tribal members which have been directly related to the use of alcohol or other substances considered harmful or even poisonous. It is out of the above description that emerges the image of the drunken Indian, a person prone to alcoholism and unfit for the world of work.

A theoretical explanation for this condition could come from Antonovsky's model. It could be said that members of the Ponca Tribe, because of the partial dissolution of their culture coupled with an attraction for the majority culture, have found themselves trapped between the two cultures; have lost their identity; and, as a result, escape into alcoholism.

Similarly, Robert K. Merton has developed a typology of adaptation. Through this typology, Merton holds that deviance stems from the structure of society rather than from the individual--that while society

exerts pressure to conform--resulting behavior is adaptive. Merton illustrated five types of adaptive behavior on the basis of whether or not there is a positive or negative orientation to first, the cultural goals being sought, and secondly, to the institutionalized means of achieving these goals (see Table IV).

TABLE IV

R. K. MERTON'S TYPOLOGY OF MODES OF INDIVIDUAL ADAPTATION¹¹

Mode of Adaptation	Cultural Goals	Institutionalized Means
1. Conformity	+	+
2. Innovation	+	-
3. Ritualism	-	+
4. Retreatism	-	-
5. Rebellion	<u>+</u>	<u>+</u>

In the typology the most common adaptation is that of conformity in which cultural goals are reached successfully via institutional means. However, if the institutional means of achieving the goals are blocked or the goals themselves become inaccessible, then deviance is exhibited in the form of Innovation, Ritualism, Retreatism, or Rebellion. Deviance in the form of ritualism involves the blurring of goals, but the institutionalized means are adhered to almost compulsively. Retreatism comes about when both goals and means are removed: "The

escape is complete, the conflict is eliminated and the individual is associalized."¹² Rebellion is probably the most complex of the modes of adaptation. It involves basically feelings of ambivalence toward both the goals and the means of achieving the goals. In illustrating this ambivalence, Merton first borrows Nietzsche's concept of "ressentiment" which consists of essentially three elements:

- diffuse feelings of hate, envy and hostility.
- a sense of feeling powerless to express these feelings against the person or social stratum evoking them.
- a continual reexperiencing of this impotent hostility.¹³

Ressentiment, as viewed by Merton, involves the condemnation of what one secretly craves; however, it differs from rebellion in that it does not involve a fundamental change in values. Rebellion, according to Merton, involves genuine transvaluation, a fundamental change in which the person comes to regard the institutional system itself as the barrier to the satisfaction of legitimate goals.¹⁴

The sum of this theory is that the Ponca is cast adrift in the sea of society without a place of reference. The resulting state or condition, developed by Emile Durkheim, is called "anomie." Anomie is defined as "a state of normlessness, of being pushed into a realm where the rules are either ill-defined, contradictory or lacking."¹⁵ For Durkheim, anomie represented a prerequisite condition for the escape via suicide--anomic suicide. Merton does not limit the escape device to suicide as his modes of adaptation illustrate. Adaptive behavior for the Poncas could then involve "deviance" of some type which would include alcoholism. Paulo Freire, author of The Pedagogy of the Oppressed, puts it this way:

Self-deprecation is another characteristic of the oppressed, which derives from their internalization of the opinion the oppressors hold of them. So often do they hear that they are

good for nothing, know nothing and are incapable of learning anything--that they are sick, lazy, and unproductive--that in the end they become convinced of their own unfitness.¹⁶

A combination of Antonovsky's and Merton's theories is well worth considering as an explanation for an apparent high incidence of alcoholism as a cause of a high ratio of unemployment. The problem, however, may not be that complex. While alcoholism is a problem among the Poncas it cannot be assumed that alcoholism is unique only to the members of the Ponca Tribe nor to Native Americans in general. For the American people alcoholism has come to be touted as the number one problem--more serious even than the issue of drug and narcotics abuse. It can, therefore, be logically assumed that there exists among the non-Indian population a certain amount of alcohol abuse and alcoholism. Another problem is found in the Reconciliation data reported previously. It cannot be relied upon as a measure of the extent of alcoholism. It is simply a measure of arrests for public "display" of drunkenness. Finally, it is impossible to conclude that alcoholism is a cause of unemployment when the reverse relationship may be the reality.

A second possible explanation for the high unemployment may be the fact that the Poncas lack the educational attainment to be considered for employment. The dropout data noted in Chapter I seems to confirm this. Data to be dealt with in a subsequent chapter, however, suggests that the Poncas are actively pursuing post secondary studies.

A third explanation tied to the education hypothesis lies in the view that Ponca City is a racist society that excludes the Ponca people from full economic participation in Ponca City society. A Ponca woman relates an event in her life: She had attended business college concentrating in studies in accounting in which she maintained an almost

perfect average through to graduation. Upon applying for jobs in the Ponca City area she was told: "The attitude toward Ponca Indians in Ponca City being what it is," she could not possibly be hired for a particular position as she would be sitting at "the front desk," in view of the public.¹⁷

It is difficult to determine if this illustrative case can be generalized to a large number of tribal members. Moreover, the issues of alcoholism, lack of education, and racism are subject to interpretation. The fact that Poncas do hold down jobs speaks to their ability to enter the world of work, in spite of exhortations to the contrary. Likewise, the low incidence of welfare dependence among the Ponca people severely weakens any conclusions concerning the Poncas and employment.

The level of household income noted for Ponca City brings to mind the production-consumption orientation suggested in Chapter I. Similarly, the much lower family income for the Ponca people plus the high unemployment ratio eliminates the orientation to production and consumption. Differing life styles, it will be remembered, is an assumption on which this study has proceeded. The fact that Poncas, by economic necessity, elect a different life style can be accepted; which, in turn, suggests the existence of a cult of poverty in the Ponca Tribal structure. What is necessary is to determine if this is an adopted life style or if it is imposed by the majority.

In order to make such a determination, an analysis will be made of a joint effort to improve the tribal employment picture--a cooperative venture by Ponca City and the Ponca Tribe. Preliminary indications suggest that several factors discussed herein coalesce to maintain the Poncas in a subordinate status.

The Mattress Factory

The plans for the mattress factory emerged in the latter part of the 1960's, appropriately enough at the same time that similar undertakings were proving to be less than successful. Stan Steiner, author of The New Indians, summarizes the effectiveness of the federal government in terms of facilitating development of Indian resources:

Unsuccessful in its attempts to bring all of the tribal Indians into the competitive economy, the government has sought to bring the competitive economy to the tribal Indians. In one decade--from the mid-1950's to the mid-1960's--the Bureau of Indian Affairs cajoled, persuaded and helped finance the relocation of seventy-six outside corporations onto the reservations. The Commissioner's report for 1965 declared that in that year alone twenty new plants had begun operation. And these industrial and commercial enterprises employed three thousand workers, of whom, it was said, 60 percent, or eighteen hundred, were Indians.

Yet, the triumphant statistics faltered. Of these . . . twenty-four had ceased operation, or were temporarily bankrupt. And that was 30 percent; one of every three plants.¹⁸

The purpose of White Eagle Industries, Inc., is ". . . to help employment for the Ponca Indians in that community."¹⁹ Accordingly, in 1968, four individuals from the Ponca City business and professional community joined together in this venture to build and operate a mattress factory on tribal lands south of Ponca City. There were, at the same time, a significant number of organizations instrumental in planning and development of the factory. The Bureau of Indian Affairs acted as a facilitator in that they promised to construct a spur line from the factory to the main rail line one-fourth mile away. A second organization, the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education, provided a design for the factory operation and for materials flow. The Ponca City Area Development Corporation appears to have had the greatest impact in getting the factory going, particularly regarding

site and building acquisition. The details of the business venture were ironed out and the factory went into production during the latter part of 1970.

Since that time the mattress factory appears to have developed into something more than a moderately successful undertaking. In June of 1972, the president of White Eagle Mattress announced that the firm had joined Bemco Associates, Inc., an international bedding group of High Point, North Carolina. The announced purpose of this merger was that the "association afforded the company identification with a nationally advertised group of bedding and would hopefully expand marketing."²⁰

The first issue that underlies the mattress factory is whether or not it fulfills the announced purpose of aiding the tribe's sagging employment picture. Further, it needs to be determined if the factory has had a significant impact on tribal life in general. An analysis of the factory will show whether it is living up to these promises.

The mattress factory can be more readily put into perspective when one considers the means by which the land and building for the factory were acquired. Records indicated that this "owner" of the 1.25 acres of land on which the factory is located is the Northwest District of the Oklahoma Indian Mission Conference of the United Methodist Church. This tract is located south of Ponca City on the Ponca trust lands. The "lessee" is listed as the Ponca City Area Development Corporation, discussed in Chapter III. It should be remembered that the PCADC is essentially a business arm of the Ponca City Chamber of Commerce. The Northwest District of the Oklahoma Indian Mission Conference of the United Methodist Church leased the land to PCADC for 25 years for the sum of "One dollar (\$1.00) each year in advance."²¹ The PDADC agreed to

construct a building on the property and are allowed to sublease to whomever they choose. Further, the agreement provides that the construction and improvements undertaken by the PCADC do not require the approval of the owner, the Ponca Indian Methodist Church. The PCADC has the right to move the building when the lease is terminated, but also agrees to restore the property at the end of the lease. The PCADC has the option to renew the lease for an additional 25 years providing the Indian Methodist Church is given six (6) months advance notice prior to the end of the original 25 year lease, scheduled to terminate March 19, 1995.²²

The transaction reviewed above, took place on March 19, 1970. On that same day, the Ponca City Area Development Corporation made an "assignment" of this land to White Eagle Industries, Inc., or the four business and professional men previously cited. The assigned acreage was the 1.25 acres leased from the church by the PCADC. The assignment to White Eagle Industries, Inc., is for 25 years with the identical option to renew for an additional 25 years. Further, the PCADC agreed to construct a building on the site, while the four owners of White Eagle Industries, Inc., agreed to make necessary improvements. These owners also agreed to pay rent on the buildings over a 20 year period or the equivalent of 240 installments. The wording of the agreement concerning the rent payment follows:

It is understood and agreed that the cost of the building and interest on money borrowed for the same shall not exceed the sum of \$110,000. It is further understood and agreed that the cost of machinery and fixtures and interest on money borrowed for the same shall not exceed the sum of \$50,000. The cost of rental under the lease on the premises shall be \$1.00/year.²³

By this agreement, White Eagle Industries, as represented by the

four Ponca City businessmen, is required to reimburse the PCADC the sum of \$1.00 per year plus the cost of the building and machinery over a 20 year period.

By the first agreement, the Ponca City Area Development Corporation secured the lease of an industrial site on tribal lands for a token payment of \$1.00 per year. Further, it should be noted that, with the renewal option in effect, the land is available to the PCADC for 50 years. Finally, there is no apparent restrictions on the PCADC in terms of who they lease the building to. The PCADC is required to:

- construct a building on the site
- restore the site if they remove the building.

The obvious question is: Why was the lease made to the PCADC; which, in turn, assigned the land to White Eagle Mattress, Inc., on the same day? It would seem that a logical leasing agreement would involve a direct lease from the Indian Methodist Church to White Eagle Mattress, Inc. At least a partial answer can be found in the method of financing the factory.

The total cost of the venture, by the terms of the assignment to White Eagle Mattress, Inc., is placed at not more than \$160,000 including building and machinery costs. In addition, White Eagle Mattress is required to pay \$1.00 per year to the PCADC which, in turn, reimburses the Indian Methodist Church \$1.00 per year. The \$160,000, the amount needed for starting capital, was raised in the following manner: ". . . the Local Development Company put up 10%, a participating lending institution--25%, and the SBA, the remaining 65%."²⁴ It is because of the participation of the Small Business Administration, that it appears the indirect lease was arranged. The White Eagle Mattress enterprise

qualified for a Section 502 Development Company Loan Program; however, "a loan under this program is not made directly to the small business concern, but through the Local Development Company."²⁵

Although the factory had as its purpose the improvement of the Ponca tribal life, the most noteworthy thing is that the Poncas have no strong tie to the factory in terms of ownership and control. While the land technically belongs to the tribe, White Eagle Mattress, Inc., through the Ponca City Area Development Corporation, has control of the land for 50 years. At the same time, White Eagle Mattress has the right to terminate its lease and move to a separate location. The PCADC according to the lease agreement can then sublease to another firm. The business itself is owned solely by the four Ponca City businessmen. There are absolutely no provisions in either agreement for tribal ownership of anything, including the building. In addition, it should be understood that by the terms of the second agreement and the SBA agreement, the owners were not required to provide any of the initial capital:

Small Business Administration 65%	\$104,000	
Lending Institution 25%	40,000	
PCADC 10%	16,000	26
	<u>\$160,000</u>	

It should also be understood that the 10% or \$16,000 contribution of the PCADC could "be in the form of cash, land, buildings, purchase machinery, and equipment."²⁷

Also, it is widely believed in the Ponca City area that the arrangements underlying the mattress factory promise much to the Ponca Tribe--much more than is actually provided. The impression given Ponca City area residents is that by the terms of agreement, the owners are required to hire Indian workers. In a news release, the plant

superintendent of White Eagle Industries pointed out that, ". . . 90 percent of the personnel employed by the plant ultimately will be Indian."²⁸ It should be reemphasized that neither the lease agreement nor the assignment agreement contain provisions regarding Indian employment. Also, the president of the company has pointed out that he is "not required to hire any Indian workers."²⁹ Secondly, the public has been led to believe that the Tribal Council receives a 5% commission on all sales.³⁰ In reality, the commission is paid to the Tribal Council only on government orders that are non-competitive. When asked how much of the business was of this type, the factory president replied that \$25,000 to \$30,000 per year was the maximum, and further that he hoped to be able to rely more on sales to retail stores, as there is a greater profit margin than with government contracts.³¹

In terms of actual Indian employment, the president indicated at the time of the interview there was a total of twelve employees. Of this number, seven were members of the Indian community and of the Ponca Tribe. Of the seven, three were women who work at cutting and stitching the mattress covers; one man was the custodian and night security guard. The fifth, a man, operated the quilting machine. He could be classified as skilled; while the sixth assembles the box springs and would probably be classified as semi-skilled. The seventh production worker who was a member of the Ponca Tribe operates the tape machine, which joins the sides and covers together, would be classified as skilled or possibly highly-skilled, as it was stated by the factory president that 2-3 years of on-the-job training is required to become a proficient taper. Of the remaining five employees, three women worked in the front office, two were non-Indian and one was Indian, but not of the Ponca community.

The warehouseman was non-Indian while the plant superintendent was also non-Indian.³²

The foregoing narrative, no doubt, appears to be totally confusing with its apparent ambiguities and complexities. It reflects, however, the variety of forces at work in the building of the factory, and oddly enough, sheds some light and understanding on the outlook of the dominant society's financial and business institutions. Perhaps, more importantly, there are different interpretations that can be made concerning the impact of the factory on the Ponca Tribe. By considering only the employment picture, for example, it can readily be concluded that the Ponca Tribe had benefited to the tune of seven new jobs. In addition, even though there is an obvious misrepresentation concerning the commission paid to the Ponca Tribal Business Council, it can be further concluded that the tribe is deriving at least a token income from the factory. At that, even the \$50.00 paid the Indian Methodist Church for the use of their land over a 50 year period represents some sort of progress. Yet there seems to be something missing. These benefits, as well as the inducement to seek employment because the factory is located in the tribal community, seem to fail in generating tribal enthusiasm and support for the factory. Evidence of this was demonstrated by the fact that few, if any, members of the tribe knew any specific details about the factory.

It is because of this that attention should be directed to the issue of ownership. The fact that the tribe is excluded from owning any part of the factory and its production, which also includes the market, could conceivably account for the lack of tribal support. The issue of non-Indian ownership of a purported Indian industry conjures

up the method of leasing the land. The control of the land was transferred from the Indian Methodist Church to the PCADC to the four businessmen in Ponca City. The apparent reason for this was to enable the business to qualify for the 90% capital financing guaranteed by the SBA and a separate lending institution. Yet, even this is not clear, since the four men claim membership in the Chamber of Commerce, which the PCADC represents.

In short, while an argument could be made that the seven jobs and the token commission and rent payments represent progress for the tribe, a separate argument could be made: in providing these jobs, the owners and the PCADC gained access to cheap land and cheap labor. Most important, because they gave the appearance of being concerned about unemployment among the Poncas, they became eligible for a loan that provided the building and machinery for the factory. Moreover, this collective approach for industrial expansion is identical to that detailed in Chapter III. Further, it can be shown that while White Eagle Mattress has publicly stated that the business would provide 30-35 full-time jobs, the actual total number of job slots at the factory were less than half that many.³³ Edgar Cahn has noted this trend in other tribal industries:

Many plants promise to hire Indians in order to secure permission to build on the reservations, but they end up hiring a few. A baby furniture company said it would hire 100 Navajos, but after a year employed only 10. A garment factory which promised jobs for 125 Pima women was, after 17 months operation, employing only seven. Many businesses provide little training for the Indians they hire, and so they have a high turnover rate.³⁴

On the other hand, the possibility of the bedding industry having a highly competitive market could account for a slow growth rate; and in that respect, the merger with Bemco could be counted as a logical

move. By expanding the market, production would increase, and the work force at the factory would be expanded. The only drawback to this line of thinking is that mattress production does not, by nature, appear to be a labor intensive industry.

The construction and operation of White Eagle Industries, Inc., appears to be synonymous with the welfare of the Ponca Tribe. Most assuredly, the business itself is on a sound financial footing. Shrewd business decisions are seen in the fact that the land and building are guaranteed for a 50 year period. The fact that the plant will be paid for in a lesser period of 20 years is indicative of careful planning. The methodological accumulation of capital, and the drive to expand the company's market are further indicators of sound business practices. White Eagle Industries, Inc., appears to have escaped the fate of those businesses described by Steiner. Unfortunately, it is these sound business practices that have relegated the welfare of the Ponca Tribe to a subordinate status. The PCADC; the BIA; the SBA; the lending institution; the owners; the parent company, Bemco--the requirements of these agencies and institutions will necessarily come before the needs of the Ponca Tribe. The design and structure of these groups are not geared to the needs of the tribal structure.

In that respect, the factory becomes analagous to the "101" ranch and the oil boom. These situations promised much for the Ponca Tribe, but the outcome in both instances was minimal and even demoralizing and divisive in terms of tribal well being. Moreoever, these situations have shown significant financial gains for the dominant society, or for at least select portions of the dominant society, at the expense of the Poncas and their holdings. Obviously, the Ponca Tribe has little

invested in the factory in terms of real wealth; consequently, the most that they can lose is the use of one and one-fourth acres of land for 50 years. The factory has had little influence, if any, insofar as dividing the tribe. In fact, one could say that its impact on the tribe has been virtually nil.

From this narrative, the conclusion can be reaffirmed that the majority society is making an all out drive for industrialization. While the factory was supposedly born out of the idea of bringing employment to the Poncas, it has since been added to the list of new industries published by the Ponca City Chamber of Commerce.³⁵ It is no longer made visible as an experiment in social programming. In effect, the experiment does confirm some of the findings of Chapter III in that the structure of Ponca City has come to embrace institutional programs as a means of expansion. In itself, this places the Poncas and Ponca City on common ground, possibly in competition for similar programs. That being the case, it would seem that the needs of Ponca City are more apparent to organizations such as the SBA and the BIA than are the needs of the Poncas.

In terms of outright discrimination, there is nothing in this description that points to this. Through the mattress factory, there is illustrated again the outlook of Ponca City which does not include the welfare of the Ponca people. While interaction took place between the structures of the Ponca Tribe and Ponca City during the planning for the factory, such is no longer the case.

Thus we return to whether or not the cult of poverty is imposed? Apparently it is not. The factory is located in the White Eagle community--the jobs have been made available. Unfortunately, this

situation is a duplicate of the "take it or leave it" attitude of Ponca City. Finally, there remains the issue of job discrimination with the Ponca City society. This point becomes moot. The structure of power speaks to a consumption-production orientation. If the individuals in the Ponca Tribe are unwilling to select the appropriate life style, then they are not acceptable. Even at that, they may not be acceptable to the majority society. The lesson provided by the mattress factory would seem to confirm this.

Housing and Health

For the Poncas, housing presents a similar dilemma, one closely tied to the employment dilemma. As in the case of practically any city in America today, the quality of housing in Ponca City is tied to the income level. Because of the income discrepancy between Indian and the general Ponca City work force--there is a discrepancy in housing. Fuchs and Havighurst's study described the Ponca housing situation in Ponca City as follows:

Many Indian homes are located south of Grand Avenue, the major business street and west of the north-south Santa Fe railroad tracks. Again, these homes do not seem to reflect the general economic affluence of the white community.³⁶

The area above delineated by the Fuchs and Havighurst study represents an older housing area. Most of the homes are rentals, many of which are badly in need of repair. Further, these homes border on an area of light manufacture and commercial business locations, with many of these businesses interspersed among the houses. The Fuchs and Havighurst study did not specifically cite the area east of the north-south rail line. It is in this area that one also finds a second

concentration of Native American families, similar to that west of the Santa Fe railroad tracks.

In the previous chapter, the Ponca Tribal Housing Authority and its role and function was described. It is clear that the authority, with the established goal of 200 new homes clearly within reach, has the potential for rectifying the housing situation of the Poncas. It should be understood, however, that these activities have been restricted to the rural areas. Attempts to secure housing sites within the city have been blocked.³⁷ Moreover, the suggestion has been made that the Ponca City Housing was formed to obviate moves on the part of the Tribal Housing Authority to extend its activities into the city limits of Ponca City.³⁸

A final area of consideration to be made is that dealing with the health of the Poncas. Three generalizations concerning Native American health are offered by Cahn:

- Indians have the highest infant mortality rate.
- Reservation Indian life expectancy is 1/3 shorter than the national average.
- Rare diseases are not rare among Indians.³⁹

None of these generalizations can be applied to the Poncas with any degree of certainty. Data is not available regarding specific conditions of health among the Poncas. Although the Pawnee Indian agency collects data on health for all tribes within its jurisdiction, unfortunately, there is nothing that can be concluded from this data as the report, "An Index of the Social Indicators of the American Indian in Oklahoma," does not single out health data for the Ponca people.⁴⁰

A second issue which Cahn brings up that can be examined is the Public Health Service which was created in 1955 as the Division of Indian Health of the U. S. Public Health Service. It is the PHS that

Cahn refers to in looking at Native American health:

Like the educational system, Indian health care has the effect of a form of cultural war. Indians often must reject their traditions to secure the white man's medicine--a more-than-metaphoric choice between life and death. The Indian submits, but submission is not surrender. As the Indian child thwarts his BIA teachers with failure and by dropping out, so the Indian resists white man's medicine with alcoholism, with suicide and with accidents that are thinly disguised efforts at self-destruction. In this many-faceted war between cultures, the PHS--like the BIA educators--pursues a policy of health care in which the Indian is an object, not a participant.⁴¹

What this comes down to according to Cahn, is that while PHS has made some inroads toward improving health conditions, there continues to be bad health for Native Americans. As evidence of this, Cahn describes the phenomena in which PHS make application of a health program and cites, accordingly, certain improvements. Yet, there continues to be a generalized lag in good health for that tribe. Cahn accounts for this because the PHS fails to understand the culture of the Native American:

A scientific drug-oriented, biochemical approach to health constitutes an assault upon a culture where people define themselves in terms of their relationship to others, where they view illness as a sign of being out of harmony with the universe.⁴²

The problems described by Cahn that Native Americans encounter in seeking health services through official channels, as noted, are hard to document for the Poncas. The central problem for the Poncas that Cahn consistently documents for other tribes is the distance factor. In order to avail themselves of the services of the Pawnee Indian Hospital, members of the Ponca Tribe must travel from 80 to 100 miles round trip. This problem has been recognized by the tribe and accounts for why the "mini-clinic" for the White Eagle community is being sought.

In sum, it can be said that unemployment continues to be a problem

in that a majority of tribal employables are unemployed. However, because a minority of the tribe are on the welfare rolls, the unemployment picture may not be so much of a problem. The Poncas may be choosing to share their meager resources. If, by a stretch of the imagination, this can be counted as an attribute of Indianness, then it can be said that the Poncas are insisting on maintaining their membership in the Indian community. That being the case, the fiasco of the mattress factory as an experiment in social programming is understandable as is Warrior's criticism of packaged programs wheeled into Indian communities.

If it can be said that the Poncas for the most part are looking to progress on their own terms, then the fact that Ponca City Housing Authority may be blocking the Tribal Housing Authority is of little consequence. It simply means that for the present, members of the Ponca Tribe who live in Ponca City will continue to live in the housing areas along the railroad tracks. Similarly, if health services continue in the near future to be geographically remote, the impact will be minimal. The Poncas will continue to adapt by one means or another.

Concluding Statements

Conclusions must be reached concerning the alternatives stated at the beginning of this chapter. To do this, the position of the "typical Ponca" must be considered. Marginality, with the idea that the Poncas are stuck between two cultures, carries with it negative connotations. Similarly, "culture shock" comparable to marginality, presents the same picture. As defined by Alvin Toffler, culture shock is ". . . the effect that immersion in a strange culture has on the unprepared

visitor."⁴³ For the Poncas, this phenomenon would occur in the immediate day-to-day interaction with the Ponca City society. Toffler's description of the effects of culture shock include:

- evidence of confusion, disorientation, or distortion of reality.
- signs of fatigue, anxiety, tenseness, or extreme irritability.
- apathy and emotional withdrawal set in.⁴⁴

These effects are readily identified in the Ponca membership by social workers, teachers and law enforcement officials, in the dominant society. There exists the distinct possibility, however, that the Poncas may not retreat or withdraw into alcoholism or other modes of adaptation. The Poncas may well find solace in membership in the tribal community. Even though this would result in marginality, it is a marginality of a different type.

While the dominant society may seize on obvious surface indications that the Poncas suffer a loss of identity and that they should "learn" to select the best from both cultures, the reality of the situation speaks to the probability that the Poncas have been doing so since their first contact with the white culture. They have historically been involved in a process of selection from both cultures as a matter of survival. Viewed from this perspective, the relationship of the Poncas to Ponca City may take on a slightly different light. Certainly it can be said that the age old argument of whether or not Native Americans will assimilate becomes moot.

Assimilation, by definition, involves majority concessions. These concessions are not occurring; hence, assimilation is a viable relationship cannot be determined, therefore it must be eliminated. Continued subjugation by the majority is a possibility, but the fact the Ponca

people continue to progress in the face of obstacles weakens this determination. Pluralism as the condition of the existing relationship is probably the most realistic consideration. There are stipulations to this, however, for the mutual respect necessary for pluralism to exist is contingent on the Poncas being able to maintain momentum in their programs for tribal progress. It does not appear that the majority will change its policy, which would be necessary to afford authentic respect to the Poncas. Such a change would involve recognition of the Poncas as more than a tourist attraction. Moreover, it would involve a concentrated effort to support the tribal programs. So far, it would appear that Ponca City is in competition with the Poncas for similar programs. Based on this it is necessary to explore the school situation to determine if education in the Ponca City schools represents an avenue of success for Ponca youth.

FOOTNOTES

¹ Joseph E. Trimble, "An Index of Social Indicators of the American Indian in Oklahoma," (Office of Community Affairs and Planning, State of Oklahoma, January 19, 1972), Table II-7.

² Ibid., II-7.

³ Estelle Fuchs and Robert J. Havighurst, To Live On This Earth (New York, 1972), p. 94.

⁴ Joseph E. Trimble, "An Index of Social Indicators of the American Indian in Oklahoma," p. 229.

⁵ Ibid., p. 231.

⁶ Overall Economic Plan for the Ponca Tribal Lands, 1972, p. 2.

⁷ Chamber of Commerce, "Statistical Data Economic Growth Factors," Ponca City, Oklahoma, 1972, p. 1.

⁸ Aaron Antonovsky, "Toward a Refinement of the Marginal Man Concept," in Miles V. Zintz, Education Across Cultures, 2nd ed. (Dubuque, Iowa, 1969), pp. 123-125.

⁹ Joseph E. Trimble, "An Index of Social Indicators of the American Indian in Oklahoma," p. 263.

¹⁰ Subgrant Application No. 72c01/07-001, submitted to the Oklahoma Crime Commission by the Reconciliation Committee of Ponca City, Oklahoma, Inc., pp. 5a and 5b.

¹¹ R. P. Cuzzort, Humanity and Modern Sociological Thought (New York, 1969), p. 83.

¹² Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (New York, 1968), pp. 175-248.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ R. P. Cuzzort, Humanity and Modern Sociological Thought (New York, 1969), p. 45.

¹⁶ Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed (New York, 1970), p. 49.

- ¹⁷Interview, T. R., September 11, 1971.
- ¹⁸Stan Steiner, The New Indian (New York, 1968), p. 132.
- ¹⁹Correspondence, Small Business Administration, September 11, 1972.
- ²⁰Ponca City News (June, 1972).
- ²¹"Lease Agreement" from Miscellaneous Records, Kay County, Oklahoma, Book 316, pp. 378-391, Reception No. 97583, transacted March 19, 1970; Recorded April 23, 1970.
- ²²Ibid.
- ²³"Assignment and Lease Agreement" from Miscellaneous Records, Kay County, Oklahoma, Book 316, Reception No. 97584, transacted March 19, 1970; Recorded April 23, 1970.
- ²⁴Correspondence, Small Business Administration, September 13, 1972.
- ²⁵Mimeo, Small Business Administration Program Number 502.
- ²⁶"Lease Agreement"; "Assignment and Lease Agreement"; and Correspondence, Small Business Administration, September 12, 1972.
- ²⁷Mimeo, Small Business Administration Program No. 502.
- ²⁸Ponca City News (September 12, 1971).
- ²⁹Interview, President, White Eagle Mattress Factory, September 24, 1971.
- ³⁰Ponca City News (September 12, 1971).
- ³¹Interview, President, White Eagle Mattress Factory, September 24, 1971.
- ³²Ibid.
- ³³Ponca City News (September 12, 1971).
- ³⁴Edgar S. Cahn, ed., Our Brother's Keeper: The Indian in White America (New York, 1969), p. 96.
- ³⁵Chamber of Commerce, "Statistical Data Economic Growth Factors," Ponca City, Oklahoma, 1972, p. 5.
- ³⁶Estelle Fuchs and Robert J. Havighurst, To Live On This Earth, p. 93.
- ³⁷Interview, Executive Director, Ponca Tribal Housing Authority, September 7, 1972.
- ³⁸Ponca City News (August 22, 1972).
- ³⁹Edgar S. Cahn, ed., Our Brother's Keeper: The Indian in White America.

⁴⁰Joseph E. Trimble, "An Index of Social Indicators of the American Indian in Oklahoma."

⁴¹Edgar S. Cahn, ed., Our Brother's Keeper: The Indian in White America, p. 56.

⁴²Ibid., p. 65.

⁴³Alvin Toffler, Future Shock (New York, 1970), p. 2.

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 347-348.

CHAPTER VI

EDUCATION FOR THE PONCA TRIBE OF INDIANS

Introduction

The description and exploration to this point has established that a fairly consistent relationship has evolved between the Poncas and Ponca City. Historically, the Poncas were subjected to the will of all sorts of agencies, interests, and power groups. This subordination included exploitation of Ponca resources, invariably in the name of concern for the tribe's best interests. Further exploration and analysis has shown that even though they have encountered some obstacles, the various subgroups within the Ponca tribe are coming forth with concrete proposals and programs for community development. In addition, even though the official and informal tribal groups may have differing viewpoints, the total tribal development outlook speaks to the idea of progress that is controlled, understood, and acceptable to the tribal community. Based on the above, a tentative conclusion has been reached that the Ponca-Ponca City relationship is pluralist, with some exceptions.

In this chapter, a major exception to the pluralist conclusion will be examined. A large majority of Ponca children attend the Ponca City Schools. If the pluralistic conclusion is to have any validity, then it must follow that the schools must support this concept. The dropout data supplied in Chapter I would suggest the contrary is occurring.

This chapter will consist first of all of a description of the foundations of the Ponca City School system, in order to determine the direction or orientation of the education system. Secondly, an examination will be made of the Ponca Indian children within this structure. Finally, an examination will be made of some of the educational choices available to Poncas in terms of post-secondary educational opportunity.

Foundations of the Ponca City Schools

The school system is composed of nine elementary schools, two junior high schools, and one senior high school. Five grade schools, one junior high school, and a considerable portion of the high school plant are of recent vintage. While the remaining school structures are somewhat older, they are maintained in a fairly high state of repair. In the last few years, Ponca City has added a media center complete with a T. V. studio, located in the board of education building.

It would seem logical that the orientation of the Ponca City Schools would to a large degree reflect the orientation of the majority society, Ponca City. Since there can be little argument that Ponca City can be classified in socio-economic terms as a middle-class city, one would expect to find an orientation to middle-class values. An examination of school finance data for Ponca City may shed some light on this issue. Figures for per-pupil expenditures show that during the time period 1970 through 1973 Ponca City provided less per pupil support to education than the state average and far less support than that provided by Bartlesville, Oklahoma (see Table V).

TABLE V

PER PUPIL ADA EXPENDITURES, PONCA CITY, ENID,
AND BARTLESVILLE, OKLAHOMA, 1970-1973¹

	State Average	Ponca City	Enid	Bartlesville
1970-71	623.29	571.87	657.21	617.65
1971-72	677.94	602.08	699.01	743.45
1972-73	716.47	643.06	670.16	718.96

Bartlesville is located in the wealthiest county in Oklahoma, while Enid is located in a county with far less wealth than Ponca City and Kay County. Additional information supplied by the Finance Division of the Oklahoma State Department of Education shows that Ponca City is voting the maximum millage allowable under law for the building and general funds. Further, the Finance Division reports the ratio of "assessed value" of property to the "true value" of property is 20% with the maximum allowable ratio (35%). In order to provide more local support to education, the assessed value of property would have to be raised. The Finance Division also notes that if the assessed value of property is raised there is a reduction in state support. In terms of dependency on state support, it was noted that Ponca City is ". . . not dependent on state support more than most other districts."²

The "Salary Survey" undertaken by the Oklahoma Public School Research Council reports a salary of \$23,300 for the Superintendent, the highest of the 38 schools involved in the study.³ The salary of \$16,800

for the high school principal is also the highest level reported for this level of administration.⁴ The teacher salary schedule reported shows that Ponca City ranks behind Bartlesville in starting salaries for teachers holding the bachelor's or master's degrees. For the maximum salary at each degree level, Ponca City ranks slightly ahead of Bartlesville (see Table VI).

TABLE VI
TEACHER SALARY SCHEDULES OF PONCA CITY, BARTLESVILLE,
AND ENID, OKLAHOMA, 1971-1972⁵

	Bachelor's Degree		Master's Degree	
	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
Ponca City	\$6,500	\$9,000	\$6,900	\$9,400
Bartlesville	7,035	8,820	7,350	9,135
Enid	6,600	8,250	7,000	8,650

It can be concluded from the financial data that the financial structure of the Ponca City Schools is reflective of the middle-class economic structure of Ponca City. It can be said that the constituency seems to be supporting the school system to the best of its abilities. To increase local support would mean higher levies on property and a concomitant loss of state revenues. In brief, it can be said that Ponca City is roughly "average" in school financing support, even though per

pupil expenditures indicate that Ponca City is below the state average.

A second aspect of the foundations of the Ponca City School is its orientation to college preparation. Elementary education represents training for the junior high school which, in turn, represents training for the high school. The entire structure then gives primary consideration to college preparation. A statistic made public annually by school officials is the high proportion of graduating seniors requesting transcripts for college entrance. Concerning the 1971-1972 graduating class numbering 522, for example ". . . 76% or 400 requested transcripts for college enrollment . . .," for the 1972 fall term.⁶

If there is an inordinate emphasis placed on college preparatory study in Ponca City, this could be related to a high concentration of parents with college degrees, which in turn, relates to their employment in the oil industry. James Eatherly, in his study on CONOCO and Ponca City, notes:

The educational level of the city is one of the highest in the nation. A large amount of money is paid to a relatively few families within the community. The correlation (sic) between income and education is very high.⁷

What would follow then would be pressure from these parents for the schools to maintain the high level of academic excellence required for college entrance. The influence of the oil industry was noted in the Fuchs and Havighurst study:

Since the oil companies employ many professional people (Engineers, etc.), they (CONOCO) have been strong supporters of the school system. School officials are quick to point out the good working relationship with the oil companies. Also, a number of the wives of company employees hold teaching credentials which allow them to be employed by the local school system.⁸

Regarding employment of teachers whose spouses work in the oil industry, it was found that in the 1971-1972 school year 92 of 300

classroom teachers, or 31%, were in this category. These teachers were distributed as follows: 45 in the grade schools, 25 in the junior high schools, and 22 in the senior high schools.⁹ Seemingly, Ponca City demands a certain academic excellence from its schools while providing only an average financial support. This situation is, of course, analogous to Ponca City's change in policy described in Chapter III. Eatherly has described gifts made to the city of Ponca by philanthropists. Several gifts and grants were likewise made to the school system.¹⁰ Since that time, the Ponca City Schools have come to rely more on the local collective efforts, primarily taxation. Moreover, the school system has come to include federal grants and programs in the financing of the schools. Within the last two years, the federal school lunch program has been adopted. This program, which relies partially on federal subsidies, has enabled Ponca City to add a hot lunch program for the elementary schools. Also, the schools have embraced the Title I program of federal support. The thwarted attempt (described in Chapter III) at adding a swimming pool to the Y.M.C.A. building was supported by school officials. It will be remembered that a junior high school was to make use of this facility, which was to be funded by a HUD grant as well as local support.

A final issue that further illustrates the relationship of the schools to the Ponca City society is found in the building of the Vocational-Technical school. In Chapter III, this project was included with others as a part of Ponca City's drive for industrial expansion. In order to place this in its proper perspective, a certain amount of background information is necessary.

In 1940, Cecil Callarman polled Ponca City High School graduates

(1934-1938) in order to determine if the four tracks of college preparatory, vocational, commercial, and general were meeting their needs. He concluded that the college preparatory, the commercial, and the vocational tracks were serving their purpose.¹¹ He noted, however, that the general track which comprised over one-third of the Ponca City High School enrollment, was ". . . not serving any function except that of a 'catch-all' for those who have no definite goal. . . ." ¹² Recommendations made by Callarman included the introduction of a guidance program and an increased emphasis on vocational training. From 1940 until Ponca City came to support a separate vo-tech school, the contention was that the existing training in the public school was sufficient preparation for entry into the job market following graduation.

When CONOCO announced in April of 1969 that Ponca City could no longer rely on CONOCO for expansion, discussion also included the possibility of building a vocational-technical school. At that time CONOCO officials stated that the company would be unable to absorb the graduates. From the time of the announcement by CONOCO, it would seem that the support for a vocational-technical school became extremely strong. In 1971, James Eatherly in his study urged that a vocational school be built. "Industry needs available labor supplies. It is not here! A Vocational-Technical School is needed to provide and add to the labor force."¹³

Based on the foregoing, it can be assumed then that the vocational-technical school has been put into operation as a part of the drive for economic diversification and expansion. The real momentum for supporting the building of the school came with the formation of the Ponca City Area Development Corporation. Secondly, the school does not

function in an economy with a high unemployment ratio. Indeed, employment in Ponca City appears to be somewhat modest and reinforces

Eatherly's exhortation of a shortage of labor:

Unemployment in Ponca City¹⁴

- Jan., 1971 3.8%
- Jan., 1970 3.6%
- Jan., 1969 2.7%
- Jan., 1968 2.8%

Finally, it should be noted that the Chamber of Commerce has added the vocational-technical school to its literature. From this literature, one finds the defined role and function of the vocational-technical school: "Special courses will be offered as needed in the interest of training labor for new or existing industry."¹⁵

Based on the fact that Ponca City provides only average financial support to an educational system that is primarily geared to college preparation and "academic excellence," it can be concluded that the Ponca City schools find it difficult to support specialized programs. This is seen in the inclusion of federal programs as a part of school finance. To financially sustain such endeavors alone, Ponca City would have to increase its state and local support.

Many incidents can be related of a personal nature that would further highlight the orientation of the Ponca City Schools. Suffice it to say that the Ponca City School system, like the majority of middle class schools, is an instrument of a middle-class society. It is also the school system in which the majority of Ponca Indian children are educated.

The Poncas in the Ponca City School System

At present, there is no available source that has a comprehensive

set of data on Ponca children and education. School records, of course, are maintained; however, the Parent's Advisory Committee, to be discussed later in this chapter, has insisted that this data not be made public. There is justification for this insistence, as Ponca children to a certain extent have become pawns when educational programs are designed and implemented. This issue will be dealt with in Chapter VII. Suffice it to say at this point that the welfare of the children is of vital concern to the committee. Because of this, the data in this chapter will center on that which has been made public.

The data presented in Chapter I suggests that Ponca children and the school system are mostly incompatible. The cumulative drop-out ratio of 65% as reported from the study conducted by the BIA social worker is formidable. At the same time, the study does not specify the schools which the children attended. A portion of the tribal membership send their children to the Marland schools located southwest of the White Eagle community. Ponca children can be found in the BIA schools of Concho, Riverside, and Chiloco, all of which are located in Oklahoma. Even though Ponca children are somewhat scattered, during the 1971-72 school year Ponca City schools listed slightly less than 500 students as being Indian, defined as being of one-fourth or more Indian heritage.¹⁶ The majority of Ponca Indian children, therefore, attend the Ponca City schools.

Moreover, there is other data to be considered. For Native Americans, the Coleman Report shows an overall regression of median tests scores from 53.0 on a nonverbal scale in the first grade to 47.1 on the same type of scale in the 12th grade. On a verbal scale, regression of median scores was from 47.8 in the first grade to 43.7 on a

similar scale in the 12th grade.¹⁷ Data summarized by Fuchs and Havighurst, "place Indian pupils just below the national average during the first four school years, and then they drop substantially."¹⁸

A study conducted by John Bryde reports achievement scores for Sioux children at a level comparable to national norms. However, at the seventh and eighth grades, the "cross-over" phenomena occurs and the scores drop sharply.¹⁹ Endless studies can be cited in which the phenomenon of sudden decline in school achievement occurs somewhere between the fourth and eighth grades for Indian children. Since data on Ponca student achievement is not ethically attainable, this writer will assume that the high drop-out ratio is a fair indicator of school related problems.

The sudden decline in school achievement and the dropout data together provide the foundation for considering the Ponca student in the school system and reasons possibly for leaving school prior to graduation.

On the surface, it would appear that the Ponca City schools are attempting to remediate reading deficiencies among the Ponca Indian elementary students. A spot check of elementary schools during the spring of 1972 revealed that 34 Indian students were attending remedial reading classes. These classes are provided through the expenditure of Title I money.

A second program designed to facilitate success for Native American students is the Johnson-O'Malley Indian aides program. The program was initiated by the Parents Advisory Committee of the Ponca Tribe.

The Parents Advisory Committee was formed in July, 1969, initially as a reaction to a series of bus incidents that had occurred in that

school year, the first year for busing White Eagle elementary students into the Ponca City Schools. The incidents involved the harassment and manhandling of Indian children on the school buses. The committee went to the Superintendent of the Ponca City Schools and succeeded in having the bus driver removed and replaced by explaining the situation as concerned parents. Beyond this initial incident the Advisory Committee maintained continued interest in the schools. The Advisory Committee to the Superintendent of Schools and to the Board of Education in the Ponca City school system have officially stated:

We represent the Indian children in the Ponca City School System, as parents on any problem concerning our school children.

The purpose of the representatives is to bring parents, students, and teachers together so they understand each other and the needs and problems of the Indian students.

The representatives will act as a liaison between parents and the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools.

The representatives will represent the Indian children when a proposal is written on Title I, Johnson-O'Malley or any other federal program concerning the Indian children in the Ponca City School system.

The representatives do not handle any kind of money. We're not funded as an organization but are recognized as an Advisory Committee by the School Board and the Superintendent of Schools.

The representatives are not affiliated with any organization, nor are we a subsidiary of any organization.

The Committee encourages the Indian parents' involvement into school activities both in education and extracurricular activities.

We do not represent the Ponca Tribe, we represent the Indian children in the Ponca City School system.

We are just concerned parents interested in the education of our children.²⁰

The Advisory Committee is composed of six members, each of which

is a member of the Ponca Tribe and a parent of school-aged children. Each represents a geographical area in which Indian families live. While the committee was born out of confrontation, since its inception its activities have become fairly routine. The foremost of these activities deals with the selection of tribal members for teacher aide positions for the Ponca City Schools; the aide program is funded by Johnson-O'Malley money.

In having Indian aides placed in the school system for the first time, the committee recommended a list of Indian parents, mostly mothers, that they felt could suitably occupy those jobs. In the 1970-71 school year, the Superintendent of Schools hired three aides based on these recommendations. Since that time, the aides program has been expanded to approximately seven positions, with aides positions added at both junior high schools. An aide position was also created for the high school, for the 1973-1974 school year.

If Native American students have at their disposal remedial reading services at the elementary school level, and at the same time, have the support of paraprofessionals from their own community, then a basic question is posed: Why do Native American students continue to have difficulty?

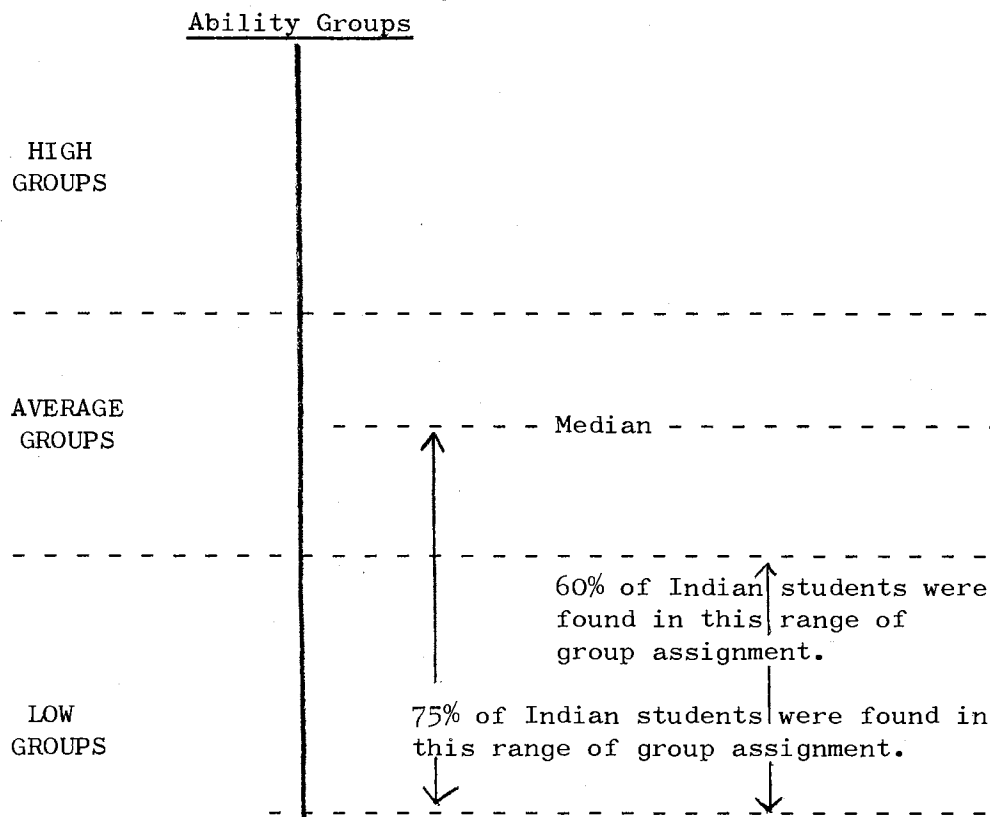
In answering this question, this writer would like to suggest a series of factors which together may account for the high dropout frequency.

First of all, there is a deficit of remedial programs at the junior high level. This deficit appears to be justified on the basis of a study conducted by Loren Smith in 1967, which was directed at determining the utility of remedial reading at the secondary level in a

Ponca City junior high school. Smith screened sixth graders who were having reading difficulties and designed a remedial program to be set up the following year at West Junior High School. The students were grouped in class sizes of no more than 15 and were given two to three 55-minute classes per week of remedial instruction. The teacher was an elementary and language arts teacher with some reading preparation. Diagnosis was undertaken via observation. The activities included diverse independent reading, maintenance of a vocabulary notebook, practice of dictionary skills, with the underlying emphasis being on comprehension which included rereading passages in order to find the correct answers. Smith found no significant difference in speed, accuracy, vocabulary, improvement, overall skills development, and personality adjustment between the control and experimental groups.²¹ With findings such as this, there would be little difficulty in concluding that remedial instruction at the junior high school level is of little value. Smith's conclusions, however, did not stop there. He further concluded that ". . . the special instruction provided was not superior to the instruction provided in the regular curriculum for improving speed and accuracy."²² In the end, Smith recommends that consideration be given to the study of utilizing a reading teacher specifically trained for junior high reading.²³ The Smith study was never replicated using a secondary reading specialist. Ironically, the remediation that takes place is provided through English classes much the same way that it was handled in the Smith study.

A second factor that may work against the success of the Native American student is the school system's official policy of grouping students according to "ability." A random check of Indian student

schedules showed the low position of students in the tracking system at East Junior High School.



*I.Q. and grades are used to determine student placement.

Figure 8. Ability Group Distribution of Indian Students, East Junior High School, Ponca City, Oklahoma, 1971-1972

The capstone of the screening and sifting process comes in the ninth grade at the junior high level. The Iowa achievement tests are administered with the scores being added to the student's file. These scores along with the I.Q. levels and cumulative grade average is used

to determine the course of study or track in which the student will be placed at the high school level. Tracks at the high school level include college preparation, vocational, and general study.

A third factor that may coalesce with the first two is community attitudes toward compensatory education. The NAACP Legal Defense Fund has conducted investigations into alleged abuses by school districts using Title I and Johnson-O'Malley funds. The report indicated a general resentment toward federal programs for Native American children.

Much of the antagonism of whites toward Indians arises from the federal funds that Indians are thought to be getting. Whites resented what they consider Federal subsidies for Indians. . . . The fact that Indians live on non-taxable reservation land leads many people to think that Indians do not contribute to the economy, even though Indians pay sales taxes.²⁴

A fourth factor is that seen in Chapter II. In that chapter, it was noted that the role of the Poncas in the founding of Ponca City remains vague, almost purposely. For the Ponca student, there is very little in the orientation of the Ponca City schools that enables him to take pride in being Indian. The schools require that the Ponca child accept the historical loss of resources and of tribal identity and membership as an act of fate. Further, it requires that he should exhibit some sort of gratitude for this having happened. Indeed, there is little in the Ponca City Schools that works to build a positive Indian identity, and much that is corrosive of this identity. John Bryde has noted the significance of such a situation:

By ignoring the Indian culture, or treating the Indian as though he had no culture, the school system has also ignored the only psychologically feasible way of motivating the Indian student, namely by his value system.²⁵

Bryde's observation is buttressed by a recommendation to school counselors that they respect students' membership in the Indian

community. He calls for ". . . them to help the Indian student become what he wants to become while remaining Indian. . . ." ²⁶

Moreover, there is implicit in the above the suggestion that the schools should foster the Indian student's identity by offering courses in Indian history and culture. W. Roger Buffalohead, member of the Ponca Tribe and of the faculty at the University of Minnesota, has pointed out the need for Native American studies programs at the university level. ²⁷ It could be assumed for Ponca City that the college preparatory course for Indians would sustain Ponca students since attending college would insure participation in Native American studies. There are some problems with this simplistic viewpoint. Buffalohead supplies the explanation of one of these problems: Oklahoma, in general, is not amenable to Native American studies programs. ²⁸ Secondly, drop-out data clearly shows that most Ponca students will not make it to the university. Both of these problems focus attention to the public school level. John Bryde points out the problem with postponing the support of the Indian student's identity to the later years:

Another handicap under which the counselor . . . labors is that by the time he receives him as a client in junior high school or later, the Indian student's personal development potential may have been severely damaged by his school experiences. ²⁹

A fifth factor that may be at work is that of the attitude of the schools toward Native American students. The Fuchs and Havighurst study noted this concerning the attitude of Ponca City School officials:

. . . officials were quick to point that they did not work with youngsters on the basis of their being Indian, Negro, or White. Their apparent egalitarianism resulted in attention to the needs and problems of the minority groups. ³⁰

Most assuredly the educational situation of the Poncas weakens the pluralist relationship of the Poncas and Ponca City. Indeed, for the

institution of education, "forced assimilation" would be a more appropriate designation. Viewed from this perspective, it is not realistic to expect that the Ponca City Schools will restructure much of their philosophy, curriculum, and resources to reverse this internal cycling of failure.

Beyond the Public Schools

If a Native American student does graduate from Ponca City High School and his value orientation is in tune with the prevailing philosophy, then he is likely to seek college entrance. This involves not only being accepted by a college, but more importantly, requires that the student be able to afford the expense of attending college. The extremely low annual income for the Ponca tribe virtually eliminates Ponca families from sending their children to college. Many states provide educational aid to Indians living within their borders, who seek to continue into high education.³¹ Oklahoma, however, is not one of these states. Many tribes maintain scholarship and loan programs as means of helping members of the tribe to attend college.³² The Poncas' scholarship program, noted in Chapter IV, has yet to be developed.

The available means of support for Ponca students seeking to attend college, more often than not, comes from the Bureau of Indian Affairs scholarship fund. To qualify for this support, the Ponca must be "enrolled" as a member of the tribe and make application to the area office at Anadarko, Oklahoma. Support then is forthcoming--that is, if the funds are available.

Even at that members of the Ponca Tribe do strive to further their education beyond the high school level. One method of accomplishing

this with limited resources has been to attend Northern Oklahoma College, a two-year school located approximately 15 miles west of White Eagle. This enables the members of the tribe to commute from their homes, thereby cutting expenses. Yet there are other problems that Poncas encounter in attending Northern.

A study conducted in the spring of 1973 at Northern Oklahoma College suggests that the Poncas as well as other area Indians are not ready for college work.³³ The academic records of 118 Indian students were screened who had attended NOC between 1968 and 1973. Fifty-seven of these or 48% of the population came from the Ponca City and Kay County area. The data reported from this study is not encouraging. Of the 118 students enrolled during the six year period, only 4 graduated. Achievement data indicated that the group as a whole was ill-prepared to begin college work. ACT scores showed that the group was:

- 3.5 points below the NOC mean on Composite ACT scores.
- 4.3 points below NOC means on English ACT scores.
- 3.4 points below NOC mean on Social Studies scores.
- 4.6 points below the NOC mean on Natural Science ACT scores.
- *Above scores constitute one standard deviation below mean.³⁴

The study continued by noting that the mean number of semesters completed by the group was 1.4, and that the mean grade average for first semester English was 1.22 on a scale of 4.00. For Math, the mean average for the first course was 1.35.³⁵ The report also noted that at NOC, the average age of the freshman college Indian student is rapidly increasing; and that in the last two years of the study, considerably more female Indians were attending college than men.³⁶

Pursuant to the study, the following recommendations were made:

- Indian students should be encouraged to take all remedial courses offered by the college.
- Indian students should be encouraged to join group counseling sessions with emphasis on developing good study

habits and exploring occupational choice.

- Indian students should be encouraged, regardless of age, to take both orientation electives, effective listening and effective note taking.
- A full-time Indian counselor should be hired to work with the Indian students. The counselor should give particular emphasis to:
 - Vocational information and choice
 - Study skills
 - Personal counseling (alcohol problems)
 - Class attendance
- All Indian students should be encouraged to take not more than 13 maximum class loads to begin with.³⁷

A second dimension of Ponca post high school education deals with adult education. Adult members of the tribe seek the high school equivalent diploma through attending Adult Basic Education classes. The Oklahoma State Department of Education was unable to furnish data reporting the number of Native Americans in Kay County who had passed the GED and had received the equivalency diploma because there is:

. . . no way of knowing how many Indians or, for that matter, how many other people in Kay County received GED certificates because of the many testing centers that these people might go to in other counties.³⁸

Enrollment information, however, indicated that for the 1970-1971 period, of 211 total enrollees for Kay County, 27 or 12.8% were Native Americans.³⁹ Of the 257 enrollees for the 1971-1972 period, 50 or 19.4% were Native American.⁴⁰ Data was also furnished for enrollment in White Eagle Adult extension classes (see Table VII).

The ABE data along with the NOC data suggests that adult Poncas are pursuing, in the face of continued deficiencies, post high school education. The fact that they attend ABE classes carries with it no small amount of irony, for ABE instruction is provided by the Ponca City Schools, the schools from which the Poncas consistently fail to receive their public school education.

TABLE VII
 NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN WHITE EAGLE ADULT BASIC
 EDUCATION EXTENSION CLASSES, 1970-1972⁴¹

Period of Enrollment	No. of Students
October 1, 1970 to May 30, 1971	13
October 5, 1971 to January 27, 1972	9
February 1, 1972 to May 30, 1972	15

Conclusions and Implications

Education for the Poncas of Ponca City is fraught with as many obstacles as adult life in the Ponca City society. The orientation of life in Ponca City is to middle-class values. The society uses this standard as the basis for denying the Poncas a similar level of life. The process begins in the schools and is a methodical process that categorizes the Ponca as being remedial--possibly permanently remedial. Remediation, then becomes a way of life, an eternal process.

The promise of elementary compensatory education seemingly does not pay off. Poncas continue to be academically deficient at the junior high school level. They also begin to drop out. The fundamental contrast with elementary education at this level is that while high standards of academic achievement are insisted upon, the means for Poncas to achieve these standards are not provided.

To be sure, there are Poncas that "measure up" to the high academic standards of the school and system and eventually go on to a successful

college experience. Unfortunately, these instances are rare, and seldom do these members of the tribe return to Ponca City. Ironically, it is these successes that are made most visible by the dominant society. There is no mention made of those Poncas that show up in the statistics of the nature reported by the NOC study.

A conclusion that is implicit in this chapter is that the educational organization structure of the Ponca Tribe is new. Every structure and program put together by the Poncas dates no further than 1967. It can be conjectured then that the Poncas could have no real understanding of education as a vehicle of progress into the middle-class mainstream. On the other hand, it could be just as logically supposed that the Poncas have a fairly good grasp of the implications of education. That being the case, the somewhat modest programs and proposals in the area of education conceivably could be accommodating what they see as their needs. The latter becomes a viable hypothesis when one examines efforts on behalf of the Poncas to further remediate their children--to make them more acceptable to an unaccepting majority.

FOOTNOTES

¹Data supplied by Finance Division, State Department of Education, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, January 10, 1974 and January 28, 1974.

²Ibid.

³Oklahoma Public School Research Council, p. 2.

⁴Ibid., p. 6.

⁵Ibid., pp. 16-17.

⁶Ponca City News (December 15, 1972).

⁷J. R. Eatherly, "The Economic Effect of Continental Oil Company on Ponca City, Oklahoma" (unpub. paper, Southwestern Graduate School of Banking, 1971), p. 30.

⁸Estelle Fuchs and Robert J. Havighurst, To Live On This Earth, p. 93.

⁹Continental Oil Company Employee Directory, May, 1972 and Personnel Directory, Ponca City Public Schools, 1971-1972.

¹⁰J. R. Eatherly, "The Economic Effect of Continental Oil Company on Ponca City, Oklahoma."

¹¹Cecil Clarence Callerman, "A Study of the Post-High School Activities of the Graduates of Ponca City High School for the Years 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937 and 1938" (unpub. Master's thesis, Oklahoma State University, 1940), pp. 22, 47-49.

¹²Ibid., pp. 47-49.

¹³J. R. Eatherly, "The Economic Effect of Continental Oil Company on Ponca City, Oklahoma, p. 35.

¹⁴Ponca City Chamber of Commerce, "Statistical Data, Economic Growth Factors," Ponca City, Oklahoma, 1972.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Ponca City School Mimeograph, "Ponca City Public Schools: Indian Students, ¼ or More Degree Indian, 1971-1972."

- ¹⁷James S. Coleman et al., Equality of Educational Opportunity (Washington, 1966), p. 20.
- ¹⁸Estelle Fuchs and Robert J. Havighurst, To Live On This Earth, pp. 123-124.
- ¹⁹John S. Bryde, The Sioux Indian Student: A Study of Scholastic Failure and Personality Conflict (Vermillion, South Dakota, 1970).
- ²⁰The Advisory Committee to the Superintendent of Schools and to the Board of Education in the Ponca City School System, "Statement of Purpose."
- ²¹Loren Walter Smith, "A Study of Retarded Readers in Special Reading Classes Compared With Retarded Readers in Regular Classes" (unpub. Ed. D. dissertation, Oklahoma State University, 1967).
- ²²Ibid.
- ²³Ibid.
- ²⁴NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., "An Even Chance: A Report on Federal Funds for Indian Children in Public School Districts," p. 43.
- ²⁵John F. Bryde, Indian Students and Guidance, Guidance Monograph Series (Boston, 1971), p. 2.
- ²⁶Ibid., p. 3.
- ²⁷W. Roger Buffalohead, "Native American Studies Programs: Review and Evaluation," in Indian Voices: The First Convocation of American Indian Scholars (San Francisco, 1970), pp. 161-190.
- ²⁸Ibid., p. 161.
- ²⁹John F. Bryde, Indian Students and Guidance, p. 4.
- ³⁰Estelle Fuchs and Robert J. Havighurst, To Live On This Earth, p. 94.
- ³¹United States Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, "Scholarships for American Indian Youth, 1969" (Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1969), pp. 17-19.
- ³²Ibid., pp. 20-26.
- ³³Clane Alan Kirtley, "A Retrospective Study of the Academic Records of Indian Students Who Have Attended Northern Oklahoma College" (unpub. study, April, 1973), 8 pp.
- ³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Correspondence, Adult Education Section, Oklahoma State Department of Education, January 5, 1973.

³⁹Data furnished by Adult Education Section, Oklahoma State Department of Education, January 5, 1973.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid.

CHAPTER VII

THE PONCAS AND PONCA CITY: A RECONCILIATION OF SORTS. . . .

Introduction

An examination of the foundations of the early relationship of the Poncas to Ponca City has shown that the Poncas in numerous situations were thrust into subordinate status. Secondly, it has been demonstrated that even as the dominant Ponca City society developed into a modern industrial city, the basic elements of this dominance over the Poncas were maintained in a status quo relationship. This was evidenced further in the development of the modern tribal institutions, agencies, and programs. When the structure of modern day Ponca City and the tribal institutions attempt a joint effort such as the mattress factory, the wants and needs of the Poncas continue to be relegated to a subordinate status. A description of the Ponca City School system has been made, which included the structural obstacles that confront Ponca students and which could account for their alienation from the schools.

This chapter will consist of a review of a program designed and operated outside of the school system by various segments of the dominant society for the benefit of the members of the Ponca Tribe. There is a somewhat vague promise in this program that the debilitating forces of the dominant society can be offset, and that the youthful members of

the Ponca Tribe who participate in the program can claim full membership in the Ponca society sometime in the future. A description and analysis of this program, it is believed, will show that such is not the case.

A brief background of this program can be stated simply. First, the following data was furnished to the Oklahoma Crime Commission by a group seeking funding for a Juvenile Incentive Project to run from September, 1972 to September, 1973.

During the calendar 1971 there was a total of 125 Juvenile Court hearings in Kay County. Forty-seven percent of these, or 49, were involving Indian youth. About 2000 people of Indian extraction, primarily of the Ponca Tribe, live in the project service area. They compromise approximately 4.1% of the total population of Kay County (48,791 as of 1970), but furnish 47% of the persons before the Court on juvenile matters. . . .¹

The target of the program was a reduction of the alleged disproportionate incidence of juvenile crime among the Poncas. To accomplish this goal, the proposed juvenile project consisted of four major areas:

- pre-school program for children ages 2½ to five,
- tutoring program after school hours,
- teen center,
- summer recreation program (all programs are conducted in Ponca City).²

The group seeking funding for the project represents a conglomerate of Ponca City organizations that operate under the organizational heading of the "Reconciliation Committee." The Executive Board of the committee, while it can claim Indian membership, was basically composed of members of the United Methodist Church of Ponca City at the time of this study. The proposal was funded by the Crime Commission in the amount of \$50,000, with various organizations providing \$37,630 in

services. Thus, the total value of the Juvenile Incentive Project was \$87,630.

The Reconciliation program sketched briefly represents a significant expansion of the program run by the committee in previous years. In that respect, it should be understood that the United Methodist Church, prior to 1972, had run a modest summer recreation activities program for Ponca youth with a token annual budget of \$1,000. The Crime Commission grant of \$50,000 then represents a formidable increase over previous years' expenditures.

An initial survey of Kay County Juvenile records which involved 437 cases for the years 1968 through 1972 brings into question the basic data utilized by the Reconciliation Committee in its request for funding from the Oklahoma Crime Commission: ". . . in 1971 there was a total of 125 Juvenile Court hearings in Kay County.³ Forty-seven percent of these, or 49 cases, were involving Indian youth."⁴ Contrary to the Reconciliation figures citing 125 juvenile hearings, the hearings load for 1971 as indicated by the "Judge's Notes" was only 90. Secondly, a breakdown by individuals rather than by hearings reveals the following distribution of juvenile cases during the five-year period (see Table VIII).

It should be noted from the figures given in Table VIII that while the supposed portion of Indians involved in juvenile cases was put at 47% by the Reconciliation proposal, the juvenile records for 1971 indicate that Indians comprised 30% of the individuals brought before the court in that year. A second noticeable aspect of the data is that 1971 represents a somewhat abnormal year in terms of proportions of Native Americans involved in Kay County juvenile crimes.

TABLE VIII
 YEAR-TO-YEAR DISTRIBUTION, INDIAN/NON-INDIAN JUVENILE
 CASES, KAY COUNTY, OKLAHOMA, 1968-1972

	Indian	Non-Indian	Total	% Indian
1968	12	82	94	12.8
1969	3	35	38	8.0
1970	20	97	117	17.1
1971	30	70	100	30.0
1972	20	68	88	22.7
	85	352	437	Average 19.4%

The Incidence of Juvenile Crime Among
 the Poncas, 1968-1972

While the Reconciliation Committee was making application for funding, the Ponca Tribal Housing Authority, located in the White Eagle community, had submitted, at approximately the same time, a slightly different proposal to the Oklahoma Crime Commission. The announced intent of the proposal was to bring order to the White Eagle Indian community, which also had a purported high rate of crime and drug abuse. Currently the community is under the legal jurisdiction of the County Sheriff whose office is approximately 21 miles north of White Eagle. This distance makes it virtually impossible for law enforcement officers to be effective. The municipal police in Ponca City, six miles to the north, have no jurisdiction beyond the city limits.

Although the Tribal Housing Authority was turned down by the Oklahoma Crime Commission, a sum of \$6,400 was scraped together in order to employ four night "security guards" on a temporary basis for the White Eagle community. At the same time, the Tribal Housing Authority was successful in getting a \$25,000 HEW grant for a White Eagle program similar to the Reconciliation program for the Indian youth in the Ponca City area.

At first glance, it would appear that the various state and federal agencies feel that the Poncas are unable to police their membership in the White Eagle area. Unfortunately, in funding the Reconciliation Committee and rejecting the Ponca Tribe, little attention was given to the incidence of juvenile crime among the Poncas in the White Eagle area, nor was the incidence of crime among the Poncas in Ponca City considered in the case of the funding of the \$25,000 HEW tribal grant. While the Reconciliation Committee data is significant though possibly distorted, the program designed to alleviate the problem assumed that the traditional Ponca City institutions could solve the problem both in Ponca City and at White Eagle. In a similar manner, the Tribal proposal assumes, with its Indian law enforcement agency and the HEW financed youth program, that it could do the same. I suppose it can be argued that both programs are vital if the problem is to be tackled in a comprehensive manner. This would probably be true if there was a close cooperation between the two programs. There is, unfortunately, a discernible competition between the two programs.

The tribal program and the Reconciliation program, both were set up to deal strictly with Indian delinquency, and both promise to deal with the problems at White Eagle and in Ponca City. It is this latter

issue that arises over the fact that the Indian population is divided, part in White Eagle, part in Ponca City, that suggests the primary focus of this study be placed on the spatial or geographical dimension of Indian juvenile crime. (For an analysis of the geographic aspects of crime, see footnote 5.)

The 1971 Report by the Oklahoma Council on Juvenile Delinquency Planning voiced concern over the urban-rural distribution of delinquency and of subsequent treatment programs:

When three counties produced more than half of the adjudicated delinquents in the state, there is concern that the other 74 counties will fail to get their fair share of attention. Even in rural areas, where few delinquents are adjudicated, a need exists for youth development programs. All too often, youthful offenders from these areas find their way into the adult correctional system, leading to the speculation that earlier attention might well have reversed the situation.⁶

An Oklahoma delinquency study, using an urban-rural differential with the variable of recidivism found:

- that delinquency-related problems usually associated with urban areas are also present in rural areas,
- that a large proportion of juvenile recidivists come from rural areas,
- that juvenile services in rural areas are grossly inadequate,
- that more than half of rural recidivists are from low income groups,
- that more than half of rural recidivists are from minority racial groups.⁷

Because of the urban-rural (Non-Indian-Indian) competition for delinquency grants, it would appear that the initial question that must be dealt with is: Where is the juvenile problem most acute in terms of Native Americans living on trust lands and those living in Ponca City? If it can be shown that there is a disproportionate number of crimes committed by Indian youth on tribal trust lands who also live in that rural area, then it would seem logical to place the program in the

hands of the tribe to be administered in that area. Further, the same principle would apply if there were a significant number of delinquent acts committed in the rural area by Ponca Indian youth who reside in the city. If on the other hand, the Ponca delinquency problem seems to be concentrated in the limits of Ponca City, then it would seem logical to base the program in Ponca City. Such an analysis should include both Ponca youth living in Ponca City and those living on the trust lands. The analysis was undertaken by determining the geographical distribution of juvenile crime on the basis of two variables, address of the crime and address of the accused.

With this in mind, the geographical or spatial dimension of juvenile crime was analyzed. It should first be noted that the variant, "address of the victim," originally included in the proposed study, was omitted from the data analysis because the overwhelming majority of the cases reviewed were non-personal crimes. Of the 437 cases under consideration, only 5 involved crime against persons, or 1.05%. The raw data pertaining to this dimension is listed in Table IX.

The Chi Square formulation was applied to the data in Table IX and yielded a significance level of .001. The elements of the four propositions are stated below with the percentages figured on the basis of 85 total cases involving Native Americans.

Indians living in Ponca City committing crimes in Ponca	
City	78.7%
Indians living on lands south of Ponca City and	
committing crimes in Ponca City	10.5%
Indians living on lands south of Ponca City and	
committing crimes in that locale	8.4%

Indians living in Ponca City and committing crimes on
 Indian lands south of Ponca City 2.0%

TABLE IX

THE GEOGRAPHICAL VARIANT OF JUVENILE CRIME AMONG
 THE PONCA TRIBE OF INDIANS, 1968-1972*

Address of Crimes	Address of Accused		Totals
	City	Indian Lands	
City	67	9	76
Indian Lands	2	7	9
	<u>69</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>85</u>

*For purposes of this study, findings at and beyond the .05 level will be considered significant.

Obviously, the geographical variant should be recognized when one considers that 89.2% of Ponca children were involved in juvenile incidents within the city limits of Ponca City during the five year period under consideration. The significant level of .001, further strengthens the importance of the geographical variable when it comes to designing and implementing a youth program.

Another outcome measured within this study was that dealing with the proportion of juveniles, Indian and non-Indian, that either underwent adjudication or dispositional proceedings. The Taylor study noted the heavy incidence of low income, rural, minority group children in the

data concerning recidivism. He notes the possibility that children from minority groups in Oklahoma do not receive equal justice as evidenced by the fact that a disproportionate number are institutionalized.⁸ Such a theory would include the fact that the various authorities that comprise the juvenile justice system held essentially differing values than those of the youth in a minority group, and as a result, dispense a significantly harsher degree of justice to those groups. The breakdown of Indian-non-Indian youth who underwent adjudication or dispositional proceedings is noted below.

TABLE X
ADJUDICATION/DISPOSITION OF JUVENILE CASES,
INDIAN/NON-INDIAN, KAY COUNTY,
OKLAHOMA, 1968-1972

	Adjudication/ Disposition	Non- Adjudicated	Total	Percent
Indian	80	5	85	94%
Non-Indian	300	52	352	85%
	<u>380</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>437</u>	<u>87%</u>

Of the 85 cases involving Indian juveniles, 80 cases were carried through either adjudicatory or dispositional proceedings. For the Indian population, the proportion of "convictions" was 94%. In contrast the 352 non-Indian juvenile cases carried a conviction rate of

85% for 300 convictions. The Chi Square formulation yielded a significance level of .05. While this level meets the requirements of this study, one should proceed with extreme caution in concluding that the juvenile justice system of Kay County dispenses an inequitable quality of justice to Indian children. This is particularly true when one further examines the 380 cases that went through both adjudicatory and dispositional stages, and resulted in institutionalization (see Table XI).

TABLE XI
 INSTITUTIONALIZED/NON-INSTITUTIONALIZED, INDIAN/NON-INDIAN
 JUVENILES, KAY COUNTY, OKLAHOMA, 1968-1972

	Institutionalized	Non- Institutionalized	Total	% Ins.
Indian	22	58	80	27.5%
Non-Indian	83	227	300	24.3%
Total	95	285	380	25.8%

While the percentage of Indian juveniles that were institutionalized (27.5%) is somewhat higher than that of non-Indians (24.3%), the Chi Square formula yields a significance level of only .75, which makes it even more difficult to conclude that Ponca Indian children received an inferior brand of justice from the juvenile courts. Indeed, even the data supplied by the Oklahoma Council on Juvenile Delinquency Planning

concerning commitments of minority group members cannot be approached:

"Among racial minority groups, commitment to juvenile institutions is almost three times as high as it is among Caucasians."⁹

The only possibility remaining concerning differential court treatment of Poncas would lie in the fact that they may receive inadequate legal representation when brought into court. There is, in that respect, clear prospects for abuse in the "assigned counsel" arrangement:

Such a system is necessary as a last resort, although an inherent problem is that the assigned counsel, at least potentially, is more responsible to the court than to the client. Another potential problem with the assigned counsel is that the attorney usually receives a fixed fee which is lower than prevailing fees in private practice. Therefore, there may be a tendency to dispose of the case as quickly and expediently as possible.¹⁰

Replacing the assigned counsel with a public defender offers little more in terms of adequate legal representation, for "these are heavily overloaded with adult criminal cases."¹¹

A third area that was explored in this study was that dealing with the type of crime committed by both Indian and non-Indian juveniles. Initially, there were only two categories of juvenile crime utilized in the study. The first, categorized as "A" incidents involved situations in which juveniles had been brought before the court under circumstances that were beyond their control. Examples of these situations include: parental neglect, adoption, illegitimacy, and custody hearings stemming from divorce. The second classification, labeled "B" class incidents are represented by juveniles having exhibited behavior that violates social norms and public law. For purposes of illustration and further investigation, the latter category, the "B" classification was sub-categorized further:

- B1 Beyond Parental Control and Supervision,
- B2 Crime against property,
- B3 Crime against person,
- B4 School related, and
- B5 Use of narcotics/alcohol/paint/glue.

The initial breakdown into two categories is noted in Table XII.

TABLE XII

"A"--"B" CATEGORIES OF INDIAN/NON-INDIAN JUVENILE
CRIME, KAY COUNTY, OKLAHOMA, 1968-1972

	"A"	"B"	Total	% A	% B
Indian	32	53	85	37.6%	62.4%
Non-Indian	169	183	352	48.0%	52.0%
Total	201	236	437	46.0%	54.0%

The data breakdown indicates that the majority of juvenile cases in Kay County over a five-year period were class "B" crimes. There is a noticeable discrepancy, however, between Indians and non-Indians. In the case of Indian juveniles 37.6% of the cases reviewed were classified as class "A" crimes, while 48% of the non-Indian cases come under that same classification. At the same time, 62.4% of Indian juvenile cases were class "B" cases, while 52% of the non-Indian juvenile cases were classified in the "B" category. The Chi Square formulation yielded a

level of significance of .10. The percentage figures at first suggest that Ponca youth exhibit "deviant" behavior more frequently than non-Indian juveniles, however, the significance level is insufficient to support such a conclusion. In terms of the "B" classification of crime, the following distribution of crime was noted.

TABLE XIII
 BREAKDOWN OF "B" CLASSIFICATION OF JUVENILE CRIME,
 INDIAN/NON-INDIAN, KAY COUNTY,
 OKLAHOMA, 1968-1972

Type	Indian	%	Type Description	Non-Indian	%
B ₁	19	16.5%	Beyond Parental Control and Supervision	96	83.5
B ₂	26	21.3	Crime against property	96	78.7
B ₃	1	20.0	Crime against person	4	80.0
B ₄	22	30.1	School related	51	69.9
B ₅	28	63.6	Narcotics/alcohol/paint/ glue	16	36.4

The Chi Square formula was not applied to these categories as they are not mutually exclusive divisions. Both Indian and non-Indian youth frequently committed offenses in as many as four of the five classifications. Because of this, the data does not lend itself to any statistical analysis other than observation. In terms of the latter, there seems to be one category worth noting, that being category B₅. In the

B₁ through B₄ categories non-Indians accounted for a greater percentage of the various crimes. In the B₅ category, however, there was a reversal of this trend with Indian juveniles accounting for a large majority of B₅ type crimes.

Some Implications of Juvenile

Crime Among the Poncas

The initial purpose of the exploratory survey was to gauge the weight that geographical variant bears on the incidence of juvenile crime among the Ponca Tribe. Additional analyses were made of the data collected. Based on these considerations, some sort of recommendations should be made concerning programs designed to reduce Ponca juvenile delinquency. In that respect, the high proportion of Indian juveniles committing crimes in Ponca City seem to suggest that there is a need for youth programs based in the city for Native American youth. The Reconciliation program represents such a program, yet, the effectiveness seems so far to be at least questionable, at best, controversial. Specifically, the pre-school program appears to be achieving success in that Indian parents seem to be willing to allow their children to participate. In sharp contrast, the program built around the Teen Center does not seem to enjoy a comparable level of Indian support. What accounts for the difference in tribal support?

The preschool program was in existence long before the Reconciliation Committee assumed responsibility for its operation. Even after it became part of the Reconciliation program, there was a firm insistence that tribal members continue to staff the preschool program. Conceivably this could account for the tribal support of the preschool program.

This explanation seems applicable when one considers the lack of support for the Teen Center and tutoring program, both of which were staffed with non-Indian personnel, at the time of this study.

Even though the geographical distribution of Indian juvenile delinquency points to the city as the site for youth programs, there is the suggestion that such programs be controlled and staffed by members of the tribe if they are to succeed. Non-Indian organizations such as the Reconciliation Committee that contemplate such programs are then faced with the prospect of relinquishing control of these programs to the Poncas. At the same time, the geographical distribution suggests to the Ponca Tribal Council that programs such as those set up at White Eagle by the \$25,000 HEW grant should be planned to include not only youth in the White Eagle area, but city Indian youth as well. In that respect, the Council would either base a portion of any future programs in the city limits or as an alternative provide transportation for city youth to and from programs based at White Eagle.

The fundamental issue, however, that underlies the foregoing is essentially one of who should control and run programs designed for Indian youth. Considering the problem from the perspective of "control" brings the political variant into conflict with the cultural variant, for it would seem that while the Poncas seem quite willing to run their own program, various agencies which include the Oklahoma Crime Commission seem to feel that they are incapable of doing so. This raises the question of whether or not the Poncas have the expertise to operate a juvenile program. Even if they have this expertise, will there be resistance to the tribal programs from traditional institutions in Ponca City? There appears to be some evidence that the traditional

organizations believe that the Poncas lack the ability to run their own youth programs. In addition, there are some indications that these institutions resist and possibly interfere with tribal youth programs already in operation. The insistence that the preschool program remain in operation is evidence that not only does the tribe seek to run their own programs, but also that they resent the program being coopted by the Reconciliation program. Secondly, interference with tribally-run programs is seen as Reconciliation program has sought to bus children into the city from rural areas where tribal programs are already in operation. The control factor is indeed a formidable issue.

An issue related to the control factor is that of crime in the White Eagle area. In seeking funding for a law enforcement agency at White Eagle, the Poncas have cited an increase in crime in the White Eagle area. While the data shows only 9 juvenile incidents in the White Eagle area in the five year period under consideration, these cases occurred during the last two years under study. Moreover, one must consider the non-reporting factor in that the official investigating officer, in traveling 20 miles to investigate a crime, too often arrives too late to make an arrest, hence, there exists the distinct possibility that lawlessness at White Eagle is much more serious than is reflected in the court records. If there is a real need for a law enforcement agency at White Eagle, it is imperative that it have the sanction of an official political body, such as the county government.

In sum, it can be said that while the initial investigation of juvenile records pointed up certain trends and discrepancies in terms of Indian delinquency in Kay County, there remains much that goes unexplained and unaccounted for. There has been no consideration of the

individual child and his feelings. Indeed, there appears to be an unending web of interrelated but often conflicting attitudes of all of those involved in the Reconciliation program, none of which seem related to the welfare of the child.

Theoretical consideration of the causes of delinquency must be undertaken. When this is done possibly a start can be made in considering the welfare of the Ponca children, and of the youth programs designed for the purpose of alleviating delinquency among the Poncas.

Some Theoretical Considerations

Organizations representing the majority society have proposed a definite program for the Ponca youth. The need for such a program is based on an alleged disproportionance of juvenile crime among the tribal youth. The rationale underlying the Reconciliation proposal, in itself, represents an explanation of the cause of the supposed problem of deviance:

They (the Poncas) are caught between the two ways of life. They are unfulfilled by the one and rejected by the other. . . . Their inability to communicate on a meaningful level with the school and work power structure, their low self-esteem, cultural differences, sense of rejection and isolation tends to perpetuate the problem. They drift inevitably into delinquency, alcoholism, dependency and then adult crime.¹²

Like the Reconciliation program, the causation theory is definitive. It appears to strike at the heart of Native American delinquency, leaving no stone unturned. It is also puzzling, for at Ponca City Board of City Commissioner's meeting held April 30, 1973, approximately eight months after the beginning of the Reconciliation program, a juvenile officer for the Ponca City Police Department stated: ". . . during the

past two years there has been less trouble with Indians and blacks and the number of these juveniles handled is decreasing."¹³

A statement such as this obviously belies not only the Reconciliation data concerning Ponca delinquency; but is in conflict with the data reported in this study. Further, it should be noted that the general topic of discussion at the Commissioner's meeting centered on delinquency in general in Ponca City. In this context, the juvenile officer offered this: "The problems as I see them to develop in the northeast section of Ponca City and they are children of 'newly acquired affluency.'"¹⁴

The obvious conflicts between the Reconciliation proposal and the juvenile officer's statement, as well as conflicts with this study seem to suggest that not only are the causes and extent of delinquency among the Poncas not clear; they apparently have not been delineated in the dominant society either as further evidenced by other statements made by various officials and citizens at that same meeting:

First Juvenile Officer: . . . the names of 56 children had been sent to the District Attorney's office by March 28 . . . little action being taken. . . .

District Attorney: . . . (directed to juvenile officer) can you give the state the burden of proof beyond a reasonable doubt. . . .

Director of the Kay County Youth Service Center and Shelter: . . . (I) don't think 56 cases need to be prosecuted . . . some have been referred to the Bi-State Mental Health Foundation and others to counselors. . . .

Second Juvenile Officer: . . . of the 52 cases handled during March, 35 were traffic offenses. . . .

Citizen: . . . the problem might be an incompetent judicial system . . . I . . . have lost confidence in law. . . .

Kay County Health Department

Director: . . . youth say they do vandalism, but that they are not involved in crime . . . there is an apparent need for 'value reorganization'

Junior High Principal: . . . students who achieve are being rejected by their own peer groups. . . .

First Juvenile Officer: . . . churches and parents are not getting together, and . . . parents are not taking their children to church . . . parents are letting children do anything but study. . . .

Second Juvenile Officer: . . . we should hear from the youth. . . .

Second Citizen: . . . maybe we should be sitting down and listening to kids . . . we are too involved in activities . . . youths don't have time to sit down and find themselves. . . .¹⁵

The importance of the majority has been stated. Bierstedt has noted the majority to be pervasive; Merton further categorizes the majority as the source of deviance. A third theory, that of "social disorganization" follows in a logical manner. Mabel A. Elliot and Francis E. Merrill note that the American society is both dynamic and disorganized. The dynamism in modern society has produced an extreme rate of change in the stabilizing factors of society: folkways, mores, laws, and institutional patterns. The result is social disorganization or ". . . the process by which the relationships between members of a group are broken or dissolved."¹⁶ When one applies the idea of a breakdown in relationships between group members to the Poncas as a community, then one could theorize that the intratribal relationships of the Poncas has suffered disintegration, the result being delinquency. Such an idea would, of course, embody the majority viewpoint as being the force disintegrative of the tribal structure. In that respect, Elliot and Merrill take a stand similar to that of Bierstedt:

. . . the upper middle class is the defining group and constitutes the ruling class in our particular variety of democracy. Social consensus then favors the overlooking of all offenses by the ruling class unless the community is outraged.¹⁷

An example cited by Elliot and Merrill is that provided by the "ecological school" of delinquency in which the prime concern lies within the force of community.¹⁸ For the Poncas, a possible increasing incidence of crime on tribal trust lands could be accounted for by the social disorganization that could accompany the rapid expansion in federal housing in that area.

These general ideas fail, however, to explain what happens to the specific Ponca child who becomes delinquent. There is perhaps an explanation in Elliot and Merrill's discussion of "roles" and "statuses." The writers state that society assigns various individuals "statuses" based on age, sex, birth, and other characteristics. The "role," then describes the part played in that status, and is likewise assigned by society. It is then pointed out that society has two types of statuses: ascribed and achieved. The writers then reiterate the existence of an organized society as one consisting of ascribed statuses through which "the majority of persons pass through a regular progression . . . a series of prescribed statuses."¹⁹ In sharp contrast, the dynamic or disorganized society, "is marked by the proportion of statuses which are achieved rather than ascribed."²⁰ For the individual Ponca child, living in the supposed organized structure of the tribe, it could be theorized that his status is an ascribed status, and that he lives a well-ordered life. Unfortunately, when the Ponca child comes into contact with the disorganized dynamic society of Ponca City, his "ascribed" tribal status is ignored and he is then forced into a

situation in which he must achieve his status. His reaction to this and resultant behavior could be termed socially and legally delinquent by the dominant society.

What this collection of theory seems to come down to is the Poncas have a timeless tribal culture, the substance and practice of which is deemed deviant by the dominant Ponca City society. That being the case, it would seem that the disproportionateness noted in the Ponca delinquency data could be accounted for simply because the Ponca Indian youth are adhering to a tribal way of life.

There is some merit to this viewpoint. Gibbens and Ahrenfeldt, in defining delinquency, delimit a series of three cultural stages a society can go through in terms of delinquency: tribal, transitional, and industrial. The tribal stage has a low incidence of delinquency due primarily to the fact that the cohesiveness of the tribal unit inhibits its manifestation. The second stage of development, the transitional stage, is marked by the destruction of both the tribal and family unit, as the tribe interacts with the dominant technological society. It is also during this stage that official juvenile law evolves that is external to the tribal structure. As the transitional stage approaches the fully industrialized state, the external law is more fully developed with the emphasis on prevention becoming pervasive. In short, the means for controlling delinquency moves, during these three stages, from "internal" structure of the tribe to the "external" structure as represented by the dominant society.²¹ (For theory on deviancy between different cultures, see footnote 22.)

Conceivably the Ponca structure could be portrayed as a society "in transition." Members of the tribe are found both in Ponca City and

in the surrounding rural areas. Moreover, the fact that the majority of Ponca delinquency, as noted previously, occurs in the city would seem to suggest the destruction of the influence of the tribal structure. An alternative to this idea would be that tribal influence does not extend into the city but is limited to the rural areas south of Ponca City.

The sketch of early Ponca life provided by Howard contains many of the elements identified in the Eskimo society which the Cavan's felt were responsible for the extremely low incidence of delinquency in that culture. It could logically follow then that the Ponca structure could have held delinquency at a minimum during their early history. One could further theorize that as the Ponca structure came into contact with the dominant white society, the tribal structure began to undergo social disorganization manifested in part by an increase in delinquency. This would include the hastily contrived removal and relocation of the Poncas during the nineteenth century that was noted in Chapter II. In particular, the latter would represent a drastic blow to the disciplining force of both the Ponca family and to the tribal structure.

This line of thinking, however, must remain speculative because of the "reconstructionist" approach of the Howard study. Another problem is found in the application of social disorganization theory itself. Even if the disorganizing effects of the dynamic Ponca City society on the static tribal structure can be tentatively accepted, what about the application of social disorganization theory to Ponca City itself? The relative affluence of Ponca City could account for youthful deviance. Indeed, this was the point made by the juvenile officer in the city commission meeting. One could thus speculate that the social forces at work underlying juvenile delinquency for the Poncas are also at work in

the non-Indian Ponca City society. This, in turn, would suggest that the abrasive action of the Ponca City social structure is nonexistent and that the tribal structure has been wrent asunder by larger forces at work in the larger American society. But how does one differentiate between the forces at work in the locale of Ponca City and of those at work in the larger society? One does not. This is not to say, however, that the values held by the social structure of Ponca City are identical to those of the larger society. Indeed the conservatism manifested by the Ponca City society may be counted as reflective possibly of a traditional "Oklahoma outlook," but certainly cannot be compared to a much larger common value orientation, if indeed one exists. The issue then becomes one of the matrix of the social structure rather than the actual substance of the values of that structure. In that respect, it should be noted that the matrix of the local Ponca City society is compatible with that of the larger society. In brief, it could be stated: The tribal structure does not have the necessary institutions that parallel those of the dominant society, while the community of Ponca City apparently does have these necessary institutions.

The major obstacle to this conclusion, however, is that there is considerable evidence to the contrary. The Poncas as well as most of the other tribes have developed the required paralleling institutions necessary to operate their own programs. Vine Deloria provides some background information supportive of this position:

Indian tribes already had parallel institutions in most cases. Thus they were ready to fund programs as soon as the War on Poverty was announced. Tribes had been self-governing entities fully capable of waging war, entering into treaties, conducting commerce with other nations, and policing themselves for centuries before the white men came. . . .²³

Deloria continues, noting the influence of the Indian Reorganization

in the building of the modern day tribal institutions:

In 1934 the Indian tribes received the benefits of the Indian Reorganization Act. This law gave them the basic rights of self-government on the reservations. Under IRA, the reservations were organized as federal corporations. . . . In almost every other area tribes were allowed to begin building parallel institutions. . . .²⁴

Finally, Deloria evaluates the impact of the IRA on the building of paralleling institutions as it applies to tribal law enforcement:

Tribes have done extremely well under the Indian Reorganization Act. With their own law-and-order programs they have greatly eased the friction between themselves and the neighboring white communities off reservation. In spite of some shortcomings in administration, there has been more justice for Indian people in tribal courts than there would have been had everyone been under the control of non-Indians residing off the reservations. . . .²⁵

There can be little doubt that the Poncas have had for a considerable time the required paralleling institutions for carrying on their own affairs. The Oklahoma Indian Welfare Act of 1936, a follow-up to the IRA, provided the means for the formation of a Ponca Tribal Business Council in 1950. Subsequently, the tribe has formed a number of committees, organizations, and institutions that parallel those both of the local Ponca City structure and of the larger American society.

Ponca Youth

The issue of what happens to the individual Ponca youth must also be considered. The Indian youth is a member of a structure, the tribe. This structure suffers from a certain loss of status and in effect has become an outgroup. Membership in this outgroup, consequently, could cause the Ponca child much difficulty, particularly in terms of his social acceptability. Secondly, it can be conjectured that the Ponca child is not able to participate directly in the social structure of

Ponca City. If he is not acceptable either directly as an individual in the Ponca City society or indirectly as a member of the Ponca tribe, then ultimately it would seem he must find refuge of acceptability.

What then are the options available to him?

It can be conjectured that even though larger socially disorganizing forces would affect both the Ponca Tribal and Ponca City structures, the forces emanating from the dominant society could be specifically disorganizing and debilitating to the tribe, particularly in the case of the Reconciliation program which is a cooptation of the legitimacy of the tribal institutions. Yet, all of this seems to hinge on one factor; that being whether or not the outlook of the Ponca youth is appreciably different from that of the non-Indian youth. Rosalie H. Wax has commented on the force of the peer group in observing Sioux children in the Pine Ridge school:

We marveled at the variety and efficiency of the devices developed by Indian children to frustrate formal learning-- unanimous inattention, refusal to go to the board, writing on the board in letters less than an inch high, inarticulate responses, and whispered or pantomime teasing of victims called on to recite. In some seventh and eighth grade classes there was a withdrawal so uncompromising that no voice would be heard for hours except the teacher's plaintively asking questions or giving instructions.²⁶

At the same time Ms. Wax noted that the influence of the peer group could be mobilized to bring about total cooperation within the school setting. The director of the 1972 summer recreation program for the Reconciliation Committee volunteered this same observation. He noted that in participating in activities among themselves there existed absolutely no conflict among the Ponca children. He did, however, note an increase in tension and divisiveness when the group was approached or given directions by a non-Indian member of the project staff.²⁷

This writer, during his four years as a teacher, observed the identical phenomena at work with Ponca children in the junior high school. What is suggested here is that the Ponca children find the much needed reference within their own group, and in effect, are both members and participants in a subculture, and are somehow able to offset the supposed "anomie" that they suffer in being blocked from full participation in the Ponca City society.

In claiming membership in a small group within the larger dominant culture, the Ponca youth set themselves apart from the larger society. But under what circumstances do the Ponca youth form a subculture? If the Poncas could be labeled a lower class group, then a theory explaining a sort of innate lower class subculture would apply. Kvaraceus and Miller subscribe to such an idea noting that the subculture has the concerns, values, and patterns of behavior of a well-formed cultural system.²⁸ In the case of the Poncas, the theory has a certain degree of merit, especially when one considers the high frequency of adult arrests noted in Chapter V.

The supposed high proportion of both juvenile and adult Indian crime hints strongly that a lower class subculture exists. Further, this idea holds that the youthful members of the tribe are emulating their adult counterparts and are merely participating in a socialization process. Unfortunately, there is no adequate explanation for why there exists an adult subculture with a high incidence of crime in the first place. A common sense explanation would hold that while adult Poncas are rejected in Ponca City the younger members are only emulating the adults. In essence, the totally simplistic yet completely distorted image of the Ponca as a "drunken Indian" emerges; consequently, it

would follow that when a Ponca child came at cross purposes with the juvenile justice system, an equally distorted image would emerge. Indeed, the latter could be confirmed by a disproportionate number of Ponca delinquents who are involved in narcotics, alcohol, paint and glue sniffing. On the other hand, if one considers that the Ponca youth encounters the same rejection and frustration and as a result exhibits similar behavior to that of the adults without necessarily emulating adult deviant behavior, then one is hard pressed to confirm the existence of an innate lower class subculture. Neither explanation can adequately account for the disproportion level of Ponca crime.

Ruth Shonle Cavan provides at least a partial explanation by differentiating between a subculture and a contraculture. She points out that a subculture differs from a main culture in that there exists different values and behavior. In the case of the "contraculture," not only are the values and behavior different, they further oppose those of the main culture, and subsequently, membership in the contraculture accounts for sharply deviating types of behavior.²⁹

In sum it can probably be agreed that there exists a subculture of Ponca youth. Yet, it can hardly be concluded that it is in itself a criminal subculture. Moreover, it can probably be said that the Ponca subculture exists as much for positive reasons as it does for negative reasons. In the case of the latter, one would look mainly to rejection by the dominant society. In the case of the former, common physical traits, beliefs, and membership in a specialized, albeit somewhat demoralized tribal structure would account for the cohesive substance of the subculture. The foregoing has relevance since the Reconciliation program promises to correct a negative self image:

This project proposes to reduce the destructive aspects of the dichotomy by helping the youth to gain self esteem and a better understanding of their role in society. . . .³⁰

An approach such as this is not only logical, it is both workable and viable. Walter C. Reckless, as well as other delinquency researchers, have pointed up the role of a positive self concept as an "insulator" against delinquency:

In our quest to discover what insulates a boy against delinquency we believe we have some tangible evidence that a good self concept, undoubtedly a product of favorable socialization, veers slum boys away from delinquency while a poor self concept, a product of unfavorable socialization, gives the slum boy no resistance to deviancy, delinquent companions, or the self strength, such as a favorable concept of self act as an inner buffer or inner containment against deviancy, distraction, lure, and pressures. Our operational assumptions are that a good self concept is indicative of a residual favorable socialization and a strong inner self, which in turn, steers the person away from bad companions and street corner society, toward middle class values, and to awareness of possibility of upward movement, in the opportunity structure.³¹

The intent of the Reconciliation Committee to build a positive self image among Ponca youth; the applicability of such an approach as viewed by Reckless et. al.; both of these factors seem to hinge on one other basic fact: That the Ponca youth actually has a negative concept.

The Fuchs and Havighurst study which includes the Ponca people revealed that the self-concept of Native American children as measured by the Self Esteem Inventory and the Semantic Differential was comparable to that of the non-Indian children in the study, when the socio-economic levels were comparable.³² Further, the Havighurst study indicated that the Native American children showed a positive orientation toward the future. Also, Fuchs and Havighurst reported that the "adolescence crisis period" usually held to be standard for Native American children is also indicated for non-Indian children, by an

identical drop in scores. The Fuchs and Havighurst study states simply that the "Indians have about the same level of rather favorable self-evaluations as non-Indians."³³ Probably the most significant aspect of these findings is that they run contrary to previously held views concerning the self image of the Native American--that being that Indian youth for the most part are badly demoralized, and as a result, have a negative self image.

If the results and conclusions of the Fuchs and Havighurst study can be tentatively accepted, then it could be hypothesized that the self esteem of the Ponca youth is not necessarily negative. That being the case, it could further be said that the subculture in which the Ponca youth claims membership represents a positive force in his life, and further it can be hypothesized, that if the self-concept of the Ponca child is indeed comparable to that of his non-Indian counterpart, then the previously noted rationale underlying the Reconciliation Committee program is, by and large, incorrect.

Secondly, even if the test data were available and the results indicated a negative self-concept, then these findings would be subject to the challenge presented by the Fuchs and Havighurst study.

It must be concluded that while the Reconciliation proposal flatly states that the Ponca youth suffers from a significantly reduced self appraisal, there is a total lack of hard data to support this. Further, if it can be supposed that the subculture provides at least as much positive as negative inducement to membership, then one can as easily conclude that the Ponca youth have a pretty good estimate of themselves, insofar as their subculture has supportive power.

FOOTNOTES

¹Subgrant Application No. 72c01/07-001, submitted to the Oklahoma Crime Commission by the Reconciliation Committee of Ponca City, Oklahoma, Inc., pp. 5a and 5b.

²Ibid., pp. 5e and 5f.

³The writer wishes to express his sincere appreciation to Judge Lowell Doggett for his cooperation in initiating this study. Gratitude and appreciation are expressed to the entire staff of the Office of the Court Clerk, Kay County, Oklahoma, for their guidance and patience as the data was collected.

⁴Subgrant Application No. 72c01/07-001, pp. 5a and 5b.

⁵Phillip D. Phillips, "A Prologue to the Geography of Crime," Proceedings of the Association of American Geographers, IV (1972), pp. 86-91. In reviewing the major works relative to the study of the geographical aspects of crime, Phillip D. Phillips recognizes two fundamental schools of thought. The first, the Cartographic School of Criminology, a nineteenth century European effort, took essentially a regional approach in relating crime to variables such as sex, age, seasons of the year, education level, wealth, population density, and urban and rural differences. The Ecological School of Criminology initially took a "typological" approach to crime in that crime was associated with certain physical defects, feeble-mindedness, and psychopathology. Phillips then notes that the spatial dimension entered in when sociologists borrowed ecologist's concepts such as "axiate growth," "symbiosis," and "community and natural areas." The ecological school, "delineated natural areas of American cities based on crime and other social problems and attempted to show that they were arranged according to the 'concentric zone'." Also ecologists took a metropolitan rather than the regional approach, assumed by the Cartographic school. While Phillips suggests that much of this early work concerning the spatial dimension of crime has since proven inapplicable, he nevertheless contends that the spatial variable is viable and worthy of continued study.

⁶Oklahoma Council on Juvenile Delinquency Planning, Youth in Trouble . . . A Shared Concern (State of Oklahoma, Oklahoma Public Welfare Commission, Department of Institutions, Social and Rehabilitative Services, May 26, 1971), p. 15.

⁷George Shedrick Taylor, "A Comparative Study of Differentials and Similarities Between Rural and Urban Juvenile Delinquency Recidivism," (unpub. Ph. D. dissertation, Oklahoma State University, 1972).

- ⁸ Ibid., pp. 16-17.
- ⁹ Youth in Trouble . . . A Shared Concern, p. 117.
- ¹⁰ Ibid., p. 78.
- ¹¹ Ibid.
- ¹² Subgrant Application No. 72c01/07-001, p. 5c.
- ¹³ Ponca City News (May 1, 1973).
- ¹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁶ Mabel A. Elliott and Francis E. Merrill, Social Disorganization Theory (4th ed, New York, 1961), p. 20.
- ¹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ T. C. N. Gibbens and R. H. Ahrenfeldt, "Definition of Juvenile Delinquency," in Ruth Shonle Cavan (ed.), Readings in Juvenile Delinquency (2nd ed., Philadelphia, 1969), pp. 20-24.
- ²² Ruth Shonle Cavan and Jordan T. Cavan, Delinquency and Crime: Cross Cultural Perspectives (Philadelphia, 1968), pp. 13-41. In studying deviancy among different cultures, Jordan T. and Ruth Shonle Cavan have applied social disorganization theory to the Eskimo culture. This study will be considered for purposes of further illustration. The researchers first cite a lengthy list of attributes of the traditional Eskimo culture which they contend account for the fact that there was little or no delinquency in Eskimo villages:
- Complete incorporation of each child into an extended family.
 - Integration of families into a compact community.
 - Adaptation to avoid conflict in these tightly bound groups--allowances made for the splintering into nuclear family units.
 - Uniformity of culture, with an absence of social class.
 - A high degree of cooperation to maintain physical survival.
 - Control by community concensus, rather than by autocratic authority.
 - Pressure reducing mechanisms (infanticide, a religious Shaman, etc.).
 - Child rearing geared to complete compliance with the social order.
 - Absence of an adolescent period of development as the child was prepared for immediate involvement in the appropriate

²²(Continued) adult role.

These attributes clearly represent the elements of an "organized" society with well defined "ascribed" statuses. Secondly, the Cavans detail briefly the coming of the European-American culture into the Northern regions, with the total impact being a breakdown of the Eskimo system of family control. An example of a change wrought in the traditional Eskimo culture cited by the Cavans was the complete reversal of the status of the aged. In the traditional society the aged represented a liability in terms of the universally accepted value of community survival. With the coming of the white culture with its companion social programs for the aged, elderly members of Eskimo society became a source of income, and their status in Eskimo society rose significantly. The total effect on Eskimo society is noted:

They are unable to socialize their children into compliance with the white culture in which the children are at least destined to live. Schools, churches, community centers, and the police have assumed the functions of child-training. The taverns and street corners groups give socialization of another kind, into deviant behavior. Eskimo culture is neglected. The adherence of the older people to Eskimo culture and the socialization of children into white culture makes a rift between the generation and reduces the effectiveness of parental control.

In terms of the many Eskimo communities, the Cavans point out that all are in various stages of "transition" insofar as the impact of white culture is concerned: "the degree of change of culture depends primarily upon frequency, continuity, and depth of contact with Caucasians."

²³Vine Deloria, Jr., We Talk, You Listen (New York, 1970), p. 109.

²⁴Ibid., p. 110.

²⁵Ibid., p. 110-111.

²⁶John R. Howard, Awakening Minorities (New York, 1970), p. 31.

²⁷Interview with Director, Reconciliation Committee Summer Recreation Program, August 16, 1972.

²⁸William C. Kvaraceus and Walter B. Miller, "Norm-Violating Behavior and Lower-Class Culture," in Ruth Schonle Cavan (ed.), Readings in Juvenile Delinquency (2nd ed., Philadelphia, 1969), pp. 37-47.

²⁹Ruth Shonle Cavan, "The Concepts of Tolerance and Contraculture as Applied to Delinquency," in Ruth Shonle Cavan (ed.), Readings in Juvenile Delinquency (2nd ed., Philadelphia, 1969), p. 15.

³⁰Subgrant Application No. 72c01/07-001, p. 5c.

³¹Simon Dinitz, Frank R. Scarpitti, and Walter C. Reckless, "Delinquency Vulnerability: A Cross Group and Longitudinal Analysis," in Ruth Shonle Cavan (ed.), Readings in Juvenile Delinquency (Philadelphia, 1969), p. 15.

³²Estelle Fuchs and Robert J. Havighurst, To Live On This Earth
(New York, 1972).

³³Ibid., p. 144.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PROSPECTS FOR THE PONCAS OF PONCA CITY

Conclusions Regarding Deviance

The previous two chapters have relevance to this study in that together they deal with a major stipulation to concluding that the Poncas and Ponca City live side by side in a pluralist relationship. The difficulties that the Poncas encounter in the educational system have been illustrated.

In Chapter VII, consideration was given to an alternative which lies outside of, but which relates to, the educational system. Also within the latter chapter several broad questions, both theoretical and practical, were posed. These questions have been directed to the heart of the issue of education as an exception to pluralism. An attempt should be made to reach some conclusions concerning these questions.

The only identifiable theoretical thread is that dealing with the majority. Bierstedt, Elliott and Merrill, Merton, and the Cavans; all subscribe to the theory that the majority in a specific society sets the dominant theme. Alternatives to this theme undertaken by certain outgroups, particularly minority and subordinated groups, are likely to be classified by the majority as "deviant."

A second dimension added to this phenomena comes from social disorganization theory. Not only is the majority itself a force, but the nature of a modern majority society being a progressive dynamic society

seems to have an abrasive effect on the structures of the society.¹

To a certain extent, the dual impact of dominance and social disorganization can be seen at work against the Ponca Tribal structure. Beyond this statement, there is little that can be said with any degree of certainty. The Howard study has illustrated the difficulty of determining the exact structure of the early Ponca culture, subsequently it is difficult to determine the extent of deterioration of that culture. Secondly, the impact of social disorganization can be assumed to be at work against the majority structure. This further makes it difficult in reaching conclusions about any fundamental theory of causation underlying Native American delinquency.

In the final analysis, a consideration of Native American delinquency must come to test with the individual. Durkheim's theory of anomia as presented by Merton provides insights into what may happen when an individual is blocked from full participation in society. If one further considers that the Ponca youth adapt by claiming membership in a type of subgroup, then it is the nature of this subgroup that must be considered. All that can be said is that this subgroup may have as much positive as negative influence in the lives of the members. At the very least, it provides a minimal level for social functioning. At the most, it could have a totally positive and sustaining impact on its membership. Because of this, it is unfortunate that the Reconciliation program does not recognize the positive aspects of this subgroup.

Yet, this conclusion should be qualified because Ponca subgroup may be so strong that it overrides the impact of the Reconciliation program, and that the Ponca youth continues to function in spite of the fact that the program may have an abrasive effect on his subgroup. Further, such

a theory would hold that Ponca youth participate in the program because it affords an opportunity to interact with the members of the subgroup.

Another problem related to the Reconciliation program is that seen in a lack of causation theory of delinquency for both Indian and non-Indian delinquency. If the members of the majority society charged with the decision-making power as it regards juvenile delinquency cannot attain some common focus on the incidence of juvenile crime either in Ponca City or in the Ponca Tribe, then a basic question must be answered: How can an organization such as the Reconciliation Committee detail and recommend a program for the Poncas?

Part of the answer to this question has already been supplied. Deloria has noted the paternalistic attitude of the church toward Native Americans. This paternalism is evidenced in the fact that the Reconciliation Committee had attempted for three previous years to introduce an expanded program over the objections of the tribe. Also, the operation of the program, which includes the hiring of a predominately non-Indian staff at the time of this study, and the interference with tribal programs further illustrates the paternalistic attitude of the church.

Closely tied to this attitude is the outlook of the Oklahoma Crime Commission. If the application of the Reconciliation program to the Poncas is questionable from a variety of viewpoints, then why did the Oklahoma Crime Commission, an agency responsible for law and order in Oklahoma, support and fund the program? In talking to officials and administrators at the Commission, this writer gained immediate insights into this question.

During this interview it was found that only one organizational

meeting was held prior to the beginning of the program. At this meeting, the Ponca Tribe did not have bona fide representation. Officials at the Commission did note that members of the tribe had been invited and that they were perplexed by their absence. When this writer suggested that their absence may have represented a strong vote of disapproval, it was pointed out that the program was to be introduced regardless. Further, when shown a copy of the Reconciliation proposal, none of the workers at the Commission could explain any of the technicalities involved. Moreover, there existed an obvious vacuum of information on the part of the Commissions' employees interviewed regarding the theory behind and operation of the Reconciliation program.²

In summary, it can be concluded that the Reconciliation program designed for the Poncas was an inevitability--that, in effect, the program was imposed on them as a people, regardless of their wants and needs. In that respect, the paternalism of the church should be recognized as a dominating force while the complicity of the Crime Commission should be recognized as a force supportive to that of the church.

Moreover, the Reconciliation program should be viewed from the perspective of "administrative expediency," as it would appear that little in-depth consideration was given to theoretical considerations of Ponca delinquency. This is particularly apparent in the City Commissioner's meeting in which various Ponca City officials and citizens conflicted over the issue of juvenile delinquency without reaching any conclusions; and, at the same time, seemed to summarily sweep aside any in-depth consideration of Native American delinquency. It is also apparent in the attitude of the Crime Commission which used not only an administratively expedient criteria for funding, but also a "politically

expedient" criteria in complying with the wishes of the majority society.

It is doubtful though that the Crime Commission takes this stance as a direct means of coopting the Poncas. Instead, the situation has arisen for two very basic reasons. First, is the remoteness of the Crime Commission from the program. The staff noted that they had in progress over 80 projects with little available time for checking or administrating. Secondly, there is currently the belief that if possible, delinquency problems should be handled within the community in order to obviate the use of custodial corrective means as a solution to juvenile delinquency. Yet, the end result of this outlook, regardless of intent, is that the legitimacy of the tribal structure is coopted. The Crime Commission reinforces the attitude of the local community, and the Poncas with an obviously different community perspective must comply with the majority wishes.³

One can conclude that deviance for the Poncas is defined by the majority. This includes not only defining the causes of deviance, but also the means for correcting the deviance. For the Poncas of Ponca City, this involves even greater sacrifices in terms of personal adjustment to achieve a somewhat doubtful acceptance.

Further Conclusions and Observations

Within the last twenty years the Ponca Tribe has constructed a viable structure capable of carrying out programs in government, housing, and health. The Poncas have the necessary vehicle to undertake community development and have proceeded to do so. Secondly, it can be stated that the Poncas include the maintenance of their Native American

heritage in their move to community development. The insistence on the Native American identity is the case even though there are factions within the tribal community.

The city of Ponca City at the same time continues a community development that was started with the founding of the city. This development is based on a spirit or outlook of dynamic economic growth. The exception to the early period of community expansion for Ponca City is that recent programs have embraced a different working policy. A change from monolithic leadership to a collective leadership has brought about an economic policy that necessitates the use of federal programs as a central means of economic diversification.

This has brought the Poncas and Ponca City into the same arena of economic development, which has a competitive aspect in that both structures are vying for support for similar programs from the same sources of funding. This situation has implications for the Poncas. Too often the majority society is recognized as the only legitimate "community" capable of carrying out the programs. Even at that, the Poncas have succeeded in carrying out a program of community development. Because of this it can be concluded that the Poncas and Ponca City maintain for the most part a pluralistic relationship.

A major exception to the pluralist relationship is found in the education of Ponca youth. The Ponca City system either cannot or will not allocate its resources to insure that the Native American student maintains his Indian identity. Moreover, the schools seem to deny the Indian student this heritage. The Reconciliation program in a similar manner seeks to adjust the Ponca youth to an anglo middle-class standard. The perspective of deviance, however, categorizes the

Reconciliation program as an extreme manifestation of the school system.

It is within the above framework that some observations should be made concerning the prospects for the Poncas of Ponca City. In 1937, Ellsworth Collings wrote of the Ponca people:

Despite the advantages of civilization, the protection of the government, and the benefits of peace, the Indians of the 101 Ranch will soon be a memory. Swiftly the grim ferryman is beckoning these red men across the dark river to the councils of their forefathers. The handful of Poncas remaining on the ranch today includes nearly all the survivors of this once powerful and populous tribe.⁴

There is contained in Collings' observation a possible prospect for the Poncas of Ponca City. Conceivably, the Poncas through continued diffusion of their culture could cease to exist as an entity separate from the mainstream. One, however, has to take into consideration events that have transpired with the elapse of 37 years since Collings' statement. The Poncas have not become extinct. Indeed, they have grown stronger. More than that, they have created a structure that seemingly guarantees their existence indefinitely. Clearly, the decline and disappearance of the Poncas cannot be seriously considered as a prospect.

A second prospect for the Poncas is seen in a change of outlook on the part of the majority. Such a change would involve adopting an attitude such as recommended by Charles W. Archibald, Jr.:

The Indian's natural tendency to seek groups of persons most like himself should be accepted, and whites should be content to support these efforts from behind the scenes, rather than to encourage early participation in non-Indian social and recreational groups to overcome the tendency to retain their Indian identification for their own good.⁵

For Ponca City this would further involve giving recognition to the Poncas as something more than a tourist attraction. This possibility, like the first, is also unrealistic. It would require the majority to

reflect on its cultural heritage and would require that it not be inculcated and in many instances would require denial of some aspects that are destructive of the Indian heritage.

The third prospect for the Poncas is probably more realistic than the previous two considered. It would involve the removing of Ponca children from the Ponca City schools and the setting up of a separate school system for these children. The success of such a move would depend on a number of factors. First, employment data suggests that the Poncas provide themselves as many jobs as the majority provides them. Secondly, the Housing Authority promises adequate housing, at least for those living in the area of the trust lands. Finally, the Tribal Business Management Program seeks expanded health services as well as additional jobs. The sum of this view is that the Ponca programs for employment, housing, and health could be fully realized. If at that point Ponca children are continuing to have difficulty in the Ponca City schools, then Ponca parents might give consideration to some workable alternatives. Successes in the areas of housing, health, and employment could provide the impetus for the Poncas to consider including education in their package of community development. At this stage of community development, it is of course too soon for the Poncas to reach this conclusion. Discounting any serious legal or technical obstacles, withdrawal from the school system exists as a viable alternative and is consistent with a pluralistic relationship.

For the present, the prospects for the Poncas of Ponca City remain about as they are described in this study. It can be concluded

that the Poncas of Ponca City are a people in the process of becoming--
of developing a community facing neither imminent disaster nor unbounded
hope for the future.

FOOTNOTES

¹Robert Bierstedt, "The Sociology of Majorities," American Sociological Review, 13 (December, 1948), pp. 700-710; Ruth Shonle Cavan, "The Concepts of Tolerance and Contraculture as Applied to Delinquency," in Ruth Shonle Cavan (ed.), Readings in Juvenile Delinquency (2nd ed., Philadelphia, 1969); Ruth Shonle Cavan and Jordan T. Cavan, Delinquency and Crime: Cross Cultural Perspectives (Philadelphia, 1968); Mabel A. Elliot and Francis E. Merrill, Social Disorganization Theory (4th ed., New York, 1961).

²Interview, Staff, Oklahoma Crime Commission, December 6, 1972.

³Ibid.

⁴Ellsworth Collings, The 101 Ranch (Norman, 1938), p. 141.

⁵Charles W. Archibald, Jr., "The Mainstream--Where Indians Drown," (1970). EDO40776.

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