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THE SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF THE INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES OF THE AMERICAS

*** SSILA BULLETIN ***

An Information Service for SSILA Members

Editor - Victor Golla
Associate Editor - Scott DeLancey

Number 21: August 4, 1995

CONTENTS:

21.0 ERROR ON SSILA ABSTRACT FORM
21.1 SSILA ATLAS PROJECTS: ONE ENDED, ANOTHER CONTEMPLATED
21.2 CORRESPONDENCE

21.0 ERROR ON SSILA ABSTRACT FORM

There is an unfortunate error on the Abstract Submittal Form for the January SSILA/LSA meeting. The directions for preparing the SHORT ABSTRACT (inside the black-lined box) are incorrect in one crucial particular. The third sentence reads: "If proportional spacing is used, type must be smaller than 12 point." In accidentally dropping a negative particle, this seems to encourage exactly what LSA & SSILA are trying to avoid, i.e., abstracts in unreadably small print. The sentence was supposed to read "...type must NOT be smaller than 12 point."

21.1 SSILA ATLAS PROJECTS: ONE ENDED, ANOTHER CONTEMPLATED

A special SSILA meeting was held in Albuquerque on Friday, July 7, to discuss the Society's role in providing a replacement for the deeply flawed North America section of Routledge's ATLAS OF THE WORLD'S LANGUAGES (R. E. Asher & C. Moseley, eds, 1994). As many of you will recall, SSILA was aghast at the number and seriousness of the errors in this section. Early in 1994 the publishers contacted the Society and invited us to prepare a corrected version for insertion in future editions of this major work. An ad-hoc committee was organized and worked for nearly a year on the project.

This Spring, however, Routledge told SSILA that they no longer intended to publish a corrected version of the North America section, and instead proposed that we work with them on a small, commercially-oriented atlas specifically for North American indigenous languages. A senior editor met with several members of the SSILA Atlas committee in Berkeley in early May and outlined a proposal. The Albuquerque meeting was called to discuss this proposal further with as many interested members as possible.

In the intervening two months we received no further communication from Routledge, except for an ominous statement that the project would have to be even more commercially oriented than had been discussed in May. The Albuquerque meeting began with a review of the current Routledge proposal. Ives Goddard was then invited to speak about the map and classification of North American languages that will appear in Volume 17 (Language) of the Smithsonian's Handbook of North American Indians. This was followed by a long discussion. It was decided that what still needs to be undertaken is a comprehensive survey of the location, status, classification, and ethnohistory of North (and Meso-) American languages. The meeting decided that Routledge's proposal fell far short of this, and, there being now no prospect of the Routledge Atlas being corrected, it recommended that SSILA end its relationship with Routledge. Instead, it was decided to establish a committee to explore the possibility of SSILA entering into a relationship with another publisher for a full, scholarly, and definitive atlas of North American and Mesoamerican languages.

The following committee was appointed by the meeting: Ives Goddard, Dale Kinkade, Michael Krauss, Yolanda Lastra, and Richard Rhodes. William Bright, SSILA President, will serve ex-officio, and Victor Golla will serve as coordinator. Robert Rundstrom, an SSILA member who is also a member of the Geography faculty at the University of Oklahoma, will serve as the committee's cartographic consultant.

The aim of the committee is draft a prospectus for presentation to prospective publishers and/or granting organizations. The questions that need to be focused on first include: What would be the purpose of an SSILA-sponsored atlas? To whom should it be of interest? What should be its contribution to the literature? After this general purpose is hammered out, the committee will address questions about the precise area of coverage, choice of base maps, range of scales to be depicted, size (dimensions), and format (method of reproduction).

It is likely that the committee will call another open meeting to discuss these and other matters at the SSILA/LSA meeting in San Diego next January. In the meantime, all SSILA members with an interest in

the topic are urged to contribute their ideas and suggestions. Messages may be sent to any member of the committee:

William Bright (brightw@spot.colorado.edu)
Ives Goddard (mhan009@sivm.si.edu)
Victor Golla (gollav@axe.humboldt.edu)
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Michael Krauss (fyanlp@aurora.alaska.edu)
Yolanda Lastra (ylastra@servidor.unam.mx)
Richard Rhodes (rrhodes@cogsci.berkeley.edu)
Robert Rundstrom (rundstrom@coga.gcn.uoknor.edu)

21.2 CORRESPONDENCE

>From Gus Palmer (airdgus@ionet.net) 28 Jun 1995:

I am compiling a list of Native American language programs, including addresses, telephone numbers, etc. I am interested in hearing about the existence and current status of all such programs, especially those in the Midwest, Northeast, and Southeast regions. I will be happy to share the information I compile.

Gus Palmer
American Indian Research & Development, Inc.
Norman, Oklahoma
airdgus@ionet.net

>From Russ Bernard (ufruss@nervm.nerdc.ufl.edu) 12 Jun 1995:

My colleague, Jesus Salinas, at Celiac in Oaxaca, would like to do some research in the Archives of the Indies in Seville. Does anyone know how one goes about getting permission to do research there? He, and other Indian colleagues at Celiac (from various language groups) are interested in finding and examining the earliest written records of their languages.

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