



(1890-1988)

Dr. Angie Debo

"Oklahoma's Greatest Historian"



“I am sometimes asked to state my goals and ambitions in writing.” I suppose I have only one: to discover the truth and publish it. My research is objective, but when I find all the truth on one side, as has sometimes happened in my study of Indian history, I have the same obligation to become involved as any other citizen.”¹
 — Angie Debo



Angie Debo in her home (1975). Photo # b63f46-0601. Courtesy Angie Debo Collection, Archives, OSU Library, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater.

Introduction

Historians are virtually unanimous in their recognition of Angie Debo as the first practitioner of what is known today as the New Indian History. Consider for example Western historian Richard White’s assessment of her legacy: “In a real sense, she invented the ‘new’ Indian history long before there was a name for it. She gave Indians a history that was more than victimization. In her books Indians were creative and resilient people engaged in a struggle to control their own lives and destinies.”² Noted Pottawatomie scholar Terry P. Wilson, author of *Teaching American Indian History* (1993) concluded that while “largely disregarded at the time, Debo’s work nonetheless foreshadowed the new Indian history of the postwar period.”³ Pulitzer Prize-winning author Larry McMurtry observed that “Debo had the ability, uncommon in an American historian, to deal with tragic subjects movingly but unsentimentally, with a kind of Roman measure: grief but no hair-pulling, as opposed to hair-pulling but no grief, which is what one finds in books about the destruction of the American Indian.”⁴ And later in her life Debo herself reflected: “Sometimes I play with a half-formed conviction that Savoie

Lottinville invented the word ‘ethno-history’ and I invented that kind of writing.”⁵

Debo’s body of work, however, contains more than just her Indian histories. Her biographer, Shirley A. Leckie, credited Debo with having “served as a bridge between the older school of western historians, heavily influenced by Frederick Jackson Turner and his frontier thesis, and the more recent New Western Historians who view Euro-American movement into the trans-Mississippi West through a darker lens.”⁶ Other scholars, however, have been less generous. One of the founders of the New Western History, Patricia Nelson Limerick, wrote of Debo’s *Prairie City*: “While a comparison to Jekyll and Hyde would certainly overstate the case, there do seem to be two public-record Angie Debos: Angie Debo #1, the justly-famous, often-reprinted, often-cited author who wrote critically and openly about the cruel, manipulative process of dispossession that made the modern state of Oklahoma possible, and Angie Debo #2, the much less famous, much less reprinted, much less cited author, who wrote cheerfully

Dr. Angie Debo: “Oklahoma’s Greatest Historian”
 by Karen A. Neurohr, Oklahoma State University (OSU)
 Library Professor and Kurt Anderson, OSU Library Research
 Professional
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Cover photo of Angie Debo (1948). Photo # b63f44-04. Courtesy Angie Debo Collection, Archives, OSU Library, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, (hereafter credited as courtesy Debo—OSU Archives).

Cover note: “Oklahoma’s greatest historian” from Danney Goble, “Preface” in Oklahoma Politics: A History, by James. R. Scales and Danney Goble (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982), xii.

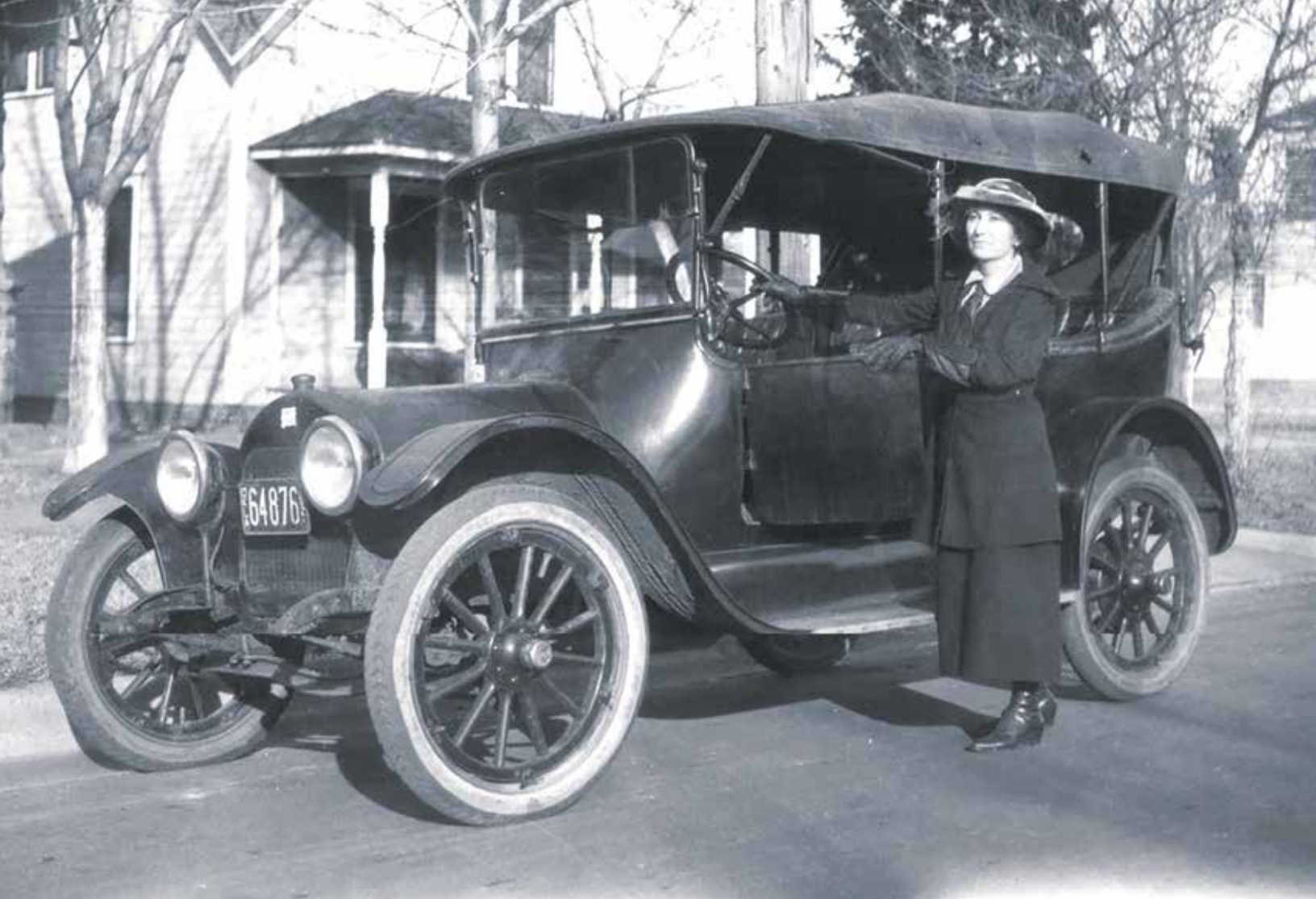
about pioneer courage and determination and who made and retained an easy peace with the frontier history associated with Frederick Jackson Turner.”⁷

The answer to this seeming paradox probably lies with Debo’s inclusive vision of westward expansion. The daughter of nineteenth-century pioneers who struggled to wrest a living from an unsettled land, Debo personally witnessed the processes described by Turner. Of Oklahoma’s first generation of settlers she wrote: “They know from their own experience the throes of settlement at Jamestown; the first harvest, the church, the Pilgrim Fathers; the constitution-making of the Founders of the Republic; the promotion and the railroad-building in the era of western settlement; oil, and the industrialism of the modern age; and the repercussions of world-shattering events. One generation had experienced all that and so that compressed the whole experience of American history into the lives of this one group of people.”⁸ But the depth of Debo’s intellectual curiosity also easily transcended the limitations of Turner’s frontier thesis, and of her approach to history she wrote: “When I start on a research project I have no idea how it will turn out. I simply want to dig out the truth and record it. I am not pro-Indian or pro-anything, unless it is pro-integrity. But sometimes I find all the truth on one side of the issue.”⁹ And as they have from the onset of her career, her readers today still appreciate the soundness of her research, the clarity of her writing, and the sincerity of her motives in searching out the truth.

— **Kurt Anderson, Ph.D.**, Research Professional, University Archives, Edmon Low Library, Oklahoma State University.

Angie Debo Room, Oklahoma State University Archives. Angie Debo bequeathed her literary papers, correspondence, and personal items to the Oklahoma State University Library where she was employed from 1947-1955. These books, furniture, and framed items came from her home in Marshall, Oklahoma.
 (photo by Nina Thornton, OSU Library)





Angie Debo (ca. 1930s). Photo #b63f45-06. Courtesy Debo—OSU Archives.

A Biographical Sketch

as written by herself ¹⁰

[Note: Tan passages contain added context and were researched and written by Dr. Kurt Anderson, 2017.]

I was born on a farm near Beattie, Kansas, January 30, 1890; in 1895 I was taken from the Beattie vicinity by my parents to a farm about twenty miles south of Manhattan. In 1889 my father bought a farm near Marshall, Oklahoma Territory, and brought his family—my mother, my younger brother, and me—there in a covered wagon. We arrived on November 8, 1899, and I have a distinct memory of the warm, sunny day, the lively little new town, and the greening wheat fields we passed as we lumbered slowly down the road to our new home. I attended rural one-room schools in Kansas and Oklahoma; passed a territorial examination and received a common school diploma at the age of twelve (1902); and then waited hopelessly around for a high school to open. I finally got one year of high school in the village school at Marshall, riding 3 ½ miles on my pony, then waited around some more. There was no library, no magazines, and only the one book our parents managed to buy for each of us children as a Christmas present.

Lina Elbertha Cooper (born in Kankakee, Illinois, September 27, 1865) moved with her father's family to the Beattie community in the fall of 1883. There she met Edward Peter Debo (born in Peru, Illinois, on September 7, 1862) who was living in the home of his sister, Lisetta, while he shucked corn for her husband, William Tilden. An energetic, hardworking young man, Edward had become known throughout the community as the "cyclone shucker" after he set a record for husking, hauling and cribbing one hundred bushels of corn – a pace he maintained all season long. Edward and Lina married on February 19, 1889, and set out to make their life together on the first of several rented farms in the area. Their first child, Angie Elbertha, was born the following January. Their second child, Edwin Forrest, was born on October 24, 1891.

Although the young couple steadily accumulated cattle and other property, they had always dreamed of owning their own farm; the

Oklahoma Territory Land Run of 1889 gave them that opportunity. By 1899 the Debos were ready and, because that land had been patented, Edward sold his cattle and whatever else would not fit into two wagons and bought a farm there for \$1,400. In one wagon he loaded his walking plow, mower, and some smaller tools, and set out followed by Lina and the two children in a covered wagon filled with as many of the family's personal possessions as it would hold and rigged for sleeping. The move to Marshall lasted about a week, and while the adults shouldered the heavy responsibilities of the trip, for the children the journey was one of pure excitement and adventure as they saw new sights, ate meals cooked out in the open, and slept under canvas in their very own "prairie schooner."

Angie Debo always cherished her memories of the family's first years in Oklahoma. Her father soon enlarged the farm's one-room shack into a three-room house, planted a fruit orchard, and built a sturdy barn. Her mother managed all of the household chores, gardened, and raised turkeys to buy a reed organ to give her daughter music lessons. Over time the Debos enlarged their farm, built a more substantial home, and formed new relationships at church and in the community.

Finally I became sixteen, then the legal age for a teacher's certificate. I took another territorial examination and started out as a rural school teacher, teaching in Logan and Garfield counties near Marshall. Then Marshall finally worked up to a four-year high school, and I went back and graduated with the first class in 1913, at the advanced age of twenty-three. There followed two more years of rural teaching. Then I entered the University of Oklahoma in 1915, and was graduated in 1918. There my college major was history, and I came under the influence of Edward Everett Dale and looked ahead to a career of historical writing. I continued teaching, however; I served as village principal at North Enid one year (1918-19), then taught history four years in the Enid High School (1919-23).

During her time in Enid, Angie Debo received the first of many honors that she would earn throughout her long career. In 1920, she was inducted into the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society.

I spent the year 1923-24 at the University of Chicago, receiving my master's degree in 1924. My master's thesis turned out well and was published (with J. Fred Rippey, my supervisor, as co-author) in the *Smith College Studies in History*, under the title, "The Historical Background of the American Policy of Isolation." It was published in 1924.



Angie Debo (ca. late 1920s). Photo # b63f45-08. Courtesy Debo—OSU Archives.

During 1924-33 I was a member of the history department of the West Texas State Teachers College (now West Texas State University) at Canyon. The following year (1933-34) I served as curator of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum on the same campus. During this time I worked on my doctorate at the University of Oklahoma, receiving my degree in 1933. My doctoral dissertation was published as *The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic* by the University of Oklahoma Press in 1934. It was awarded the John H. Dunning Prize of the American Historical Association and was so well received by reviewers that I resigned from my academic position and went into freelance writing. During this time of writing I had some institutional connections one summer on the history faculty at Stephen F. Austin State Teachers College at Nacogdoches, Texas; some summers on the history faculty of Oklahoma State University (then Oklahoma A. and M. College); and a year or more as state director of the Federal Writers Project in Oklahoma.

In 1927 Angie was inducted into the Pi Gamma Mu National Social Science Honor Society. Tragically, on October 3, 1931, her brother Edwin died of Hodgkin's disease.

The years from 1934-1946 were some of Angie Debo's most productive. Beginning in 1934 she researched and began writing what arguably became her most important work, *And Still the Waters Run: The Betrayal of the Five Civilized Tribes*. Two years later she completed the manuscript. In 1937 she worked alongside Grant and Carolyn Foreman with editing and conducting interviews for the WPA Indian-Pioneer Project. They later became two of her dearest friends, and their joint project resulted in the Indian-Pioneer Papers. From 1937 to 1939 she researched and wrote the third installment of what Pulitzer Prize-winning Western author Larry McMurtry calls her Indian trilogy. Hoping to attract a wider audience for the book, she titled it *The Road to Disappearance: A History of the Creek Indians*. Originally slated to be published by the University of Oklahoma Press under director Joseph Brandt, there were political concerns about the content. Princeton University Press published it in 1940 as *And Still the Waters Run*. On October 27, 1984, Debo wrote to Brandt, "I have always been glad that it was I who said we should reconsider and not take the risk. And through the fortunate circumstance of your going to Princeton you were able to publish it after all." Yet despite the significance of the graft she had uncovered, the book was largely ignored, a circumstance Debo attributed in part to the public's focus on the German conquest of France and the Low Countries. From 1940 to 1941 she supervised the Federal Writers' Project in Oklahoma, a frustrating experience for Debo which nevertheless yielded the well-received *Oklahoma: A Guide to the Sooner State*. Nineteen



Angie Debo, rural school teacher, with her students (ca. 1906). Photo #b47f1.2-01b-1. Courtesy Debo—OSU Archives.

forty-one also saw the publication of *The Road to Disappearance*. In 1942 the Oklahoma City Chapter of Theta Sigma Phi, an honorary professional journalism fraternity for women, named Angie Debo the state's "Outstanding Woman." That same year she became an Alfred A. Knopf Fellow. In 1943 the University of Oklahoma Press published Debo's *Tulsa: From Creek Town to Oil Capital*. The next year Alfred A. Knopf published *Prairie City: The Story of an American Community*, her only work of fiction, albeit based on the history of Marshall and surrounding towns. That same year Angie lost her beloved father following a short illness. Also in 1944, she became a licensed local preacher for Marshall's United Methodist Church. In 1946 she became a Rockefeller Fellow at the University of Oklahoma.

I returned to an institutional connection in 1947 when I became a member of the library staff at Oklahoma State University and served there until my retirement in 1955. (I have had no library training, but this position did not require it; I served as curator of maps.) Later I spent another year at OSU to fill a leave of absence vacancy in the history department during 1957-58. But since 1955 I have spent most of my time at Marshall, where I still live.

Angie Debo's years at Oklahoma A&M (Oklahoma State University after 1958) were as eventful and productive as any period of her life. In 1949 the University of Oklahoma Press published *Oklahoma: Foot-loose and Fancy-free*. Funded in part by a Rockefeller Fellowship, it did not turn out the way her sponsors had hoped, and the disappointment felt by Edward Everett Dale over the final product sorely strained his relationship with Angie. Nevertheless, the rift was soon healed following Dale's attendance at a reception honoring Angie and the book's release at the Edmon Low Library in Stillwater. In that same year she conducted a survey of social and economic conditions in the full-blood settlements of the Five Civilized Tribes for the Indian Rights Association. [Terminology can change over time. Today, "Five Tribes" or "Five Tribes of the Mississippian Culture" are preferred terms for their neutrality.] In 1950 Angie was inducted into the Oklahoma Memorial Association's Oklahoma Hall of Fame. The following year she published the results of her survey in *The Five Civilized Tribes of Oklahoma: Report on Social and Economic Conditions*. In 1952 she began writing a column entitled "This Week in Oklahoma History" for the *Oklahoma City Times*, became a book reviewer for the *New York Times*, found herself inducted into Gamma Theta Upsilon, a national professional geographical fraternity, and initiated into Delta Kappa Gamma, a national honor society for women teachers. After years of frustration trying to find a publisher for

her edited version of Oliver Nelson's memoirs, to Angie's immense relief the Arthur H. Clarke Company finally published them in 1953 as *The Cowman's Southwest: being the reminiscences of Oliver Nelson, freighter, camp cook, cowboy, frontiersman in Kansas, Indian Territory, Texas and Oklahoma, 1878-1893*. Sadly, Angie suffered yet another deep personal loss in 1954 with the death of her mother, Lina, following years of declining health. Two years later, Angie once again immersed herself in her work on behalf of Native Americans as she became a member of the board of directors of the Association on American Indian Affairs, and under its auspices conducted a survey of the effects of the Relocation policy on Oklahoma's Indians. As Angie's tenure at newly-rechristened Oklahoma State University reached its end, she began editing the *Oklahoma Indian Newsletter* and celebrated Angie Debo Recognition Day in her hometown of Marshall. Then, happily retired from OSU, Angie made her first overseas trip to Europe and the U.S.S.R.



Angie Debo (1947), Oklahoma A & M College, Quonset Hut 23, where the library's map collection was located. Photo # b63f59-01. Courtesy Debo—OSU Archives.

The tumultuous decade of the 1960s saw Angie as active as ever. Following a trip to Mexico in the summer of 1960, the Oklahoma Historical Society awarded her an honorary life membership. In 1962 Debo's edited version of Horatio B. Cushman's *History of the Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Natchez Indians* was published, the Soroptimist Club of Oklahoma City awarded her a Certificate of Contribution to Oklahoma City, and she resumed her travels with trips to Canada and England. Three years later Angie found herself teaching at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico. In 1966 she visited Africa. In the final year of the decade she participated in Marshall's first annual Prairie City Days held in her honor, and traveled to Alaska, a trip which inspired her to spend the next six years lobbying successfully for the land rights of that state's native peoples.

Royalties from the 1970 publication of *A History of the Indians of the United States and Geronimo: The Man, His Time, His Place* in 1976 at last afforded Angie Debo the elusive financial security for which she had worked so hard, and her well-received biography of Geronimo, in particular, brought her ever greater recognition as a writer. The Border Regional Library Association honored Angie with its Southwest Book Award for Biography in 1977. One year later she received the Wrangler Award from the Western Heritage Association of the National Cowboy Hall of Fame and the Southwestern Library Association 1978 Book Award. Other tributes to her life and work included a lifetime membership in the Oklahoma Writer's Federation in 1974, the Henry G. Bennett Distinguished Service Award at Oklahoma State University in 1976, an Honorary Doctorate of Letters from Wake Forest University in

1978, and the Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History in 1979.

Angie Debo's last years capped her career with still greater honors as well as a documentary film featuring highlights of her long and productive life. In 1980 Oklahoma State University held a reception in her honor. From 1981-1985, OSU faculty members Gloria Valencia-Weber and Glenna Matthews interviewed Angie for an oral history project which, in conjunction with those conducted by the Institute for Research in History from 1982-1986, provided the basis for an installment of the PBS *American Experience* series titled *Indians, Outlaws, and Angie Debo*. In 1982 Oklahoma State University established the Angie Debo Award for Oklahoma History, and she received an honorary lifetime membership in the Payne County Historical Society. A year later Angie

was inducted into the National Cowgirl Hall of Fame, Hereford, Texas, and she received a Distinguished Service Citation from the University of Oklahoma Alumni Association. In 1985 the Cherokee Nation designated her an Ambassador of Goodwill, she received a Certificate of Recognition from the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, and, in what was perhaps her proudest moment, the State of Oklahoma hung her portrait in the Rotunda of the State Capitol – the first woman so honored. Angie received the Achievement Award from the American Indian Historians Association in 1986. In 1987 the American Historical Association granted her its Award for Scholarly Distinction, and in January 1988 Oklahoma Governor Henry L. Bellmon presented it to her at a special ceremony at her home in Marshall.

Angie Debo passed away on February 21, 1988, and was buried at North Cemetery in Marshall.

Dr. Anderson's Note on Sources

I derived all of my information from three primary source collections which are archived at the Edmon Low Library at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma. These collections are available for use by researchers and the general public upon request:

Angie Debo Collection
Collection No. 88-013

Dale-Debo Correspondence
Collection No. 94-023

Interviews with Angie Debo, 1981-1985
Collection No. 85-013

Angie Debo Biographical Timeline

Timeline by Heather M. Lloyd; additions by Karen Neurohr and Kurt Anderson



1890-1918

Jan. 30, 1890
Born near Beattie, Kansas, to Edward P. Debo (b. 1862) and Lina E. Cooper Debo (b. 1865).

1891
Brother Edwin F. Debo born.

Nov. 1899
Debo Family moved to Marshall, Oklahoma Territory.

1902
Received common school diploma.

1906
Attended one year of high school.

1907-1910
Obtained teacher's certificate and taught in rural schools near Marshall, Oklahoma.

1912
Edward and Lina sold the family farm, bought a hardware store, and moved into Marshall.

1913
Graduated from Marshall High School.

1913-15
Taught in rural schools near Marshall, Oklahoma.

1915-18
Student at the University of Oklahoma, Norman.

1918-1928

1918
Received bachelor's degree in history from the University of Oklahoma, Norman.

1918-1919
Principal, Village School, North Enid, Oklahoma.

1919-1923
Taught history at Senior High School, Enid, Oklahoma.

1923-1924
Graduate student at the University of Chicago.

1924
Received master's degree in history with an emphasis in international relations from the University of Chicago. Publication of the *Historical Background of the American Policy of Isolation*.

1924-1933
Member of the history department, West Texas State Teachers College, Canyon, Texas. Taught in a high school associated with the college. Studied toward her doctorate at the University of Oklahoma and worked on her dissertation.

1928
Brother Edwin married Ida Elizabeth Henneke of Enid.

1931-1935

1931
Brother Edwin Debo passed away. Buried at North Cemetery, a few miles from Marshall, OK.

1933
Received the Doctor of Philosophy degree in history from the University of Oklahoma. Dissertation entitled "History of the Choctaw Nation: From the Close of the Civil War to the End of the Tribal Period."

1933-1934
Curator of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, West Texas State Teachers College, Canyon, Texas.

1934
Publication of Debo's doctoral dissertation as *The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic*. Began a career as a freelance writer. Moved back to Marshall, Oklahoma.

1934-1936
Conducted research and completed manuscript for *And Still the Waters Run: The Betrayal of the Five Civilized Tribes*, funded by the Social Science Research Council.

1935-1941

1935
Taught summer school at Stephen F. Austin State Teachers College, Nacogdoches, Texas.

1937-1939
Researched and wrote *The Road to Disappearance: A History of the Creek Indians*, funded in part by a grant from the Social Science Research Council.

1937
Participated in editing and conducting interviews for the WPA Indian-Pioneer Project which resulted in the Indian Pioneer Papers.

1940-1941
Supervised the Federal Writers Project in Oklahoma.

1940
Publication of *And Still the Waters Run: The Betrayal of the Five Civilized Tribes* after some revisions made to the manuscript.

1941
Publication of *The Road to Disappearance: A History of the Creek Indians*. Publication of *Oklahoma: A Guide to the Sooner State*, a product of the Federal Writers Project in Oklahoma.

1943-1949

1943
Publication of *Tulsa: From Creek Town to Oil Capital*.

1944
Publication of *Prairie City: The Story of an American Community*, Debo's only work of fiction, based on the history of Marshall and nearby towns. Father Edward P. Debo passed away. Buried at North Cemetery, a few miles from Marshall.

1946
Taught summer school at Oklahoma A&M College.

1947-1955
Served on the faculty of the Oklahoma A&M College Library as curator of maps.

1949
Published *Oklahoma: Foot-loose and Fancy-free*, funded by a Rockefeller Fellowship.

1951-1956

1951 Published *The Five Civilized Tribes of Oklahoma: Report on Social and Economic Conditions*.

1952-1954
Wrote "This Week in Oklahoma History" for the *Oklahoma City Times*.

1952-1961
Book reviewer for the *New York Times*.

1953
Publication of Oliver Nelson's *The Cowman's Southwest: Being the Reminiscences of Oliver Nelson, Freighter, Camp Cook, Cowboy, Frontiersman in Kansas, Indian Territory, Texas, and Oklahoma, 1878-1893*, edited by Debo.

1954
Mother Lina E. Debo passed away. Buried at North Cemetery, a few miles from Marshall, OK.

1955
Retired from Oklahoma A&M College Library.

1956
Conducted survey of the Relocation policy for the Association on American Indian Affairs.

1956-1966
Member, Board of Directors, Association on American Indian Affairs.

1957-1969

1957-1958
Taught Oklahoma history at Oklahoma State University.

1958
Traveled to Europe and U.S.S.R with European Seminar of the Council for Christian Social Action.

1958-1959
Edited *Oklahoma Indian Newsletter*.

1960
Visited Mexico for a summer seminar.

1962
Publication of Horatio B. Cushman's *History of the Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Natchez Indians*, edited by Debo.

1962
Visited Canada.

1963
Visited England.

1965
Taught at the Institute of American Indian Arts, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

1966
Visited Africa.

1969-1975
Lobbied for land rights of Alaska Natives.

1969-1988

1969
Prairie City Days (annual celebration), Marshall, Oklahoma. Traveled to Alaska.

1970
Publication of *A History of the Indians of the United States*.

1975
Appointed member of the Oklahoma Bicentennial Commission.

1976
Publication of *Geronimo: The Man, His Time, His Place*.

1980
Reception held in Debo's honor, Oklahoma State University.

1982-1986
Filmed by Institute for Research in History for PBS American Experience Series.

1988
Angie Debo passed away on February 21 and was buried on February 24 at North Cemetery, Marshall. Governor Bellmon ordered flags flying over state agencies to be lowered to half-mast.

*"Angie Debo, one of Oklahoma's most astute observers... demonstrated that history as a profession was a sacred calling and made for a life worth living."*¹⁹ —W. David Baird, Ph.D.

(Timeline photos, References 11-18, p.33)





Main table for guest of honor Angie Debo at the celebration dinner for *Oklahoma, Fool-loose and Fancy-free*. Left to right: Head of OAMC Library Edmon Low, OAMC President Henry G. Bennett, Angie Debo, University of Oklahoma Professor Edward Everett Dale, Miss Mary Graves, Dr. T. H. Reynolds, Mrs. Dale (OSU Stillwater, November 9, 1949). Photo # b64f115-02. Courtesy Debo—OSU Archives.

The Enduring Friendship of Angie Debo and Edward Everett Dale

by Kurt Anderson, Ph.D.

By the time Angie Debo enrolled at the University of Oklahoma in 1915 at the age of twenty-five, her experiences with education in a sparsely-settled region had been both frustrating and rewarding. She received her common school diploma in 1902 at the age of twelve, and then waited impatiently until 1906 before attending the only year of high school in Marshall that the town then offered. In 1907 she obtained a teacher's certificate and then taught in nearby rural schools until 1910. Angie returned to Marshall High School once it offered a full secondary school curriculum, finally graduating in 1913. Then, having taught in rural schools near Marshall for two more years following her graduation, she made the fateful decision to pursue an undergraduate degree in English at the University of Oklahoma. And it was there that she met Edward Everett Dale, the man who would become her revered instructor, inspirational mentor, and cherished friend until his death in 1972.

The story of Dale's pursuit of an education on the Texas and Oklahoma frontiers around the turn of the century was even more circuitous than Angie's. He was born of rugged pioneer stock in Texas in 1879. When he was nine years old his father moved to what is now Greer

County, Oklahoma, near the Kiowa-Comanche reservation. At the age of ten he attended a school taught by a woman with a fine library and a love of English literature who, over the course of the four-month term, inspired Dale to see the history of his frontier region through the romantic lens of Dickens, Scott, and Cooper. At the age of seventeen he earned an eighth-grade diploma from the Board of Education of the Territory of Oklahoma. Then, after trying his hand at cowboying, ranching, and picking cotton for wages, he passed an examination at the county seat, received his certificate, and accepted his first job as a school teacher in a one-room country school at thirty-five dollars a month for a three-month term. Two years later Dale became the principal of a six-teacher school, and soon thereafter began to attend summer sessions at the territorial normal school (Dale referred to it as the "sub-normal" school) at Edmond. He subsequently graduated with a high school diploma and then, by continuing his studies whenever he could find time away from teaching, received his bachelor's degree from the University of Oklahoma in 1911. A promising scholar, Dale enrolled at Harvard two years later where he earned a master's degree in the spring of 1914. He then returned to the University of Oklahoma as an instructor in the history department where he met Angie Debo,

*"The dinner was perfect. I have never been so happy over anything. Dr. Bennett called off a trip to Tennessee to be there..."*²¹ —Angie Debo diary entry.

the woman who would later become his most accomplished student and one of his closest friends.

Dale's influence on Angie's life and career began the moment she first attended one of his undergraduate history classes. Believing at first that she wanted to major in English, Dale's sophomore class in American history quickly convinced her otherwise. At Harvard, Dale had come under the direction of Frederick Jackson Turner, the brilliant scholar whose "frontier thesis" so clearly articulated the process of westward expansion which Dale had himself experienced growing up in Texas and Oklahoma. When Dale joined the faculty at the University of Oklahoma he inspired his own students with Turner's passion for historical research. Dale showed his students how to take notes, organize material, and format outlines. Instead of simply allowing his students to work on their term themes on their own and then hand them in, Dale spent the entire semester teaching them the same techniques of historical investigation and writing that he had been taught at Harvard. It was Dale's dedication to his profession that Angie later credited as the main reason why she changed her major and graduated from the University of Oklahoma with a bachelor's degree in history.

With her degree in hand, Angie gained even more experience as an educator before becoming a student once again. The 1918-1919 school year saw her serve as the principal at the Village School in North Enid, Oklahoma, and for four years after that she taught history at Enid's Senior High School. Then in 1923 Angie began her work in international relations at the University of Chicago under the guidance of J. Fred Rippey, graduating the following year with a master's degree in history with an emphasis in international relations.

In the meantime, Dale had returned to Harvard under Turner's supervision once again, and by 1922 had become a Doctor of Philosophy. Soon thereafter he rejoined the faculty at the University of Oklahoma, and, in the same year in which Angie graduated with her master's degree, he became the head of the history department. The following year the two began to correspond by mail, a practice they continued for the next forty-seven years.

From 1924 to 1933 Angie was a member of the history department of West Texas State Teachers College, Canyon, Texas, and although Angie

shared with Dale her initial satisfaction at having found employment, her correspondence soon began to express an interest in pursuing further graduate study. In a letter to Angie dated January 5, 1928, he assured her that she would be welcomed back to the University of Oklahoma, and before the year was out she had enrolled there under his supervision.

*"I changed my major, first to geology and then to history. And Mr. Dale a lowly instructor, back with a master's degree from Harvard, happily taught us undergraduates all the techniques of historical writing and publication. That determined my field."*²²

—Angie Debo letter to Joe Brandt (October 27, 1984).

While she always credited Dale with suggesting the topic of her dissertation, entitled *History of the Choctaw Nation: From the Close of the Civil War to the End of the Tribal Period*, their correspondence throughout the time she worked on it revealed her unwillingness to accept any criticism of her writing even when it came from her own respected advisor. In a letter dated October 14, 1931, in which he tried to soften his criticism of her work, Dale explained that he could not imagine arguing with Professor Turner, the director of Dale's thesis, and that he had long ago vowed never to argue again with a student about anything in a dissertation. But then in the same letter he offered his sincere condolences over the death of Angie's brother Edwin as a measure of his personal affection for her.

Before she had even received her Ph.D. Angie wrote to Dale in December of 1932 that she planned to apply for a fellowship to research and produce, as she put it, "a study of the process by which the land embraced in the old Indian Territory passed out of the possession of members of the Five Civilized Tribes to whom it was allotted, and into the possession of the whites." One month later Angie appealed to her mentor for a letter of recommendation for an open position in history at Western Reserve University. Dale willingly complied with her request, and from that time forward unflinchingly wrote letters of support in her behalf both to prospective employers and to sponsors of fellowships such as the American Association of University Women, the Social Science Research Council, Houghton Mifflin, and Alfred A. Knopf.

In September 1933 Angie wrote Dale with good news. She informed him that despite her troubles at West Texas State Teachers College she had found employment "of a sort" as curator of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum. She also let him know that Joseph Brandt, University of Oklahoma Press director, had secured approval for the publication of her dissertation, titled *The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw*

Republic (1934), as the sixth installment of the Press' *Civilization of the American Indian* series.

From 1934-1936 Angie researched and wrote what she always thought was her most important work, *And Still the Waters Run: The Betrayal of the Five Civilized Tribes* (1940). Unfortunately, however, the resistance she encountered from the University of Oklahoma Press over its publication permanently altered her relationship with Dale. Ironically, not only had it been Dale who had earlier suggested the subject to her as a possible dissertation topic, he had also been instrumental in helping Angie secure the fellowship from the Social Science Research Council which made it possible for her to write the book. But when she uncovered how corrupt the process of allotment had been in Oklahoma, as well as the fact that many of the principal grafters she exposed were still living and still prominent in the state's affairs, the university press refused to publish it out of a fear of being sued for libel. Sadly, while it was actually a protégé of Dale's, Professor Morris Wardell, who had recommended that the book not be published, Angie always held her mentor personally responsible. Whether or not she ever suspected Wardell's role in rejecting *And Still the Waters Run* for publication, Angie later wrote on the flyleaf of her copy of Wardell's book *A Political History of the Cherokee Nation, 1838-1907* (1938): "This is one of the shoddiest books I ever read."

On June 19, 1937, Angie wrote to Dale asking if he would consider hiring her to replace one of the two history faculty members he had recently lost. But while she was very frank regarding her one disqualification – being a woman – she reminded Dale of her straight "A" record throughout graduate school, her extensive teaching experience, and the fact that she had already published two books with one, her *Choctaw Republic*, winning the prestigious John H. Dunning Prize from the American Historical Association. She ended by saying that she "hesitated to write this letter because it introduces a new element into the pleasantest relationship I have found in all my academic career . . . [and] it is to your interest and encouragement that I owe whatever successes I have achieved in historical studies. There is therefore no occasion for embarrassment if I have made one request that you do not care to grant." He did not, then or ever.

Frustrated by the delay in publishing *And Still the Waters Run* (Brandt eventually published it in 1940 under the auspices of the University of Princeton Press), Angie nevertheless pressed ahead with the next installment of her Indian histories, titled *The Road to Disappearance: A History of the Creek Indians* (1941). Although she had chosen that particular title in an effort to generate sales, her hopes went unrealized due to the general lack of interest in Indian studies among the wider public. Still unable to support herself by writing despite the high quality of her research and the favorable reviews of her work by academics, Angie carefully chose the subject of her next book with the hope that it would be a commercial success.

On February 6, 1942, Angie wrote Dale asking if he remembered a history of her hometown of Marshall that she had once submitted to him as a graduate student. She went on to say that she was planning a history of such a community, although in the interest of objectivity

probably not Marshall. She questioned if such a study of a fictionalized composite community could be considered history if she were "to use reminiscences of old-timers for color and detail, and check them by careful research." Angie also asked that if he did feel such a study qualified as history would he be willing to say so in a letter to Alfred A. Knopf to whom she was applying for a fellowship. Dale did, in fact, write the letter to Knopf which convinced him to grant Angie the award. The result was her only work of fiction, titled *Prairie City: The Story of an American Community* (1944). In appreciation for his efforts the book's dedication read: "To Edward Everett Dale who has taught the children of pioneers to love the story of their origins."

But perhaps she had another reason for the dedication beyond mere gratitude. By this stage in their relationship, Dale had moved beyond addressing his letters "Dear Miss Debo" or "Dear Dr. Debo;" he now addressed them "Dear Angie." After the first time he had done so she wrote: "I am so pleased with your informal address that I am thinking of framing the letter. I hope you will continue the good habit." He did, although he never extended to Angie his permission to address him as anything other than "Dr. Dale."

Two years after the publication of *Prairie City*, Angie secured a Rockefeller Fellowship at the University of Oklahoma under the supervision of Savoie Lottinville, Brandt's successor as director of the University of Oklahoma Press, and chairman of the Committee on Fellowships of which Dale, too, was a member. Angie had received the fellowship to write her interpretation of the spirit of Oklahoma, and from the first she clashed with both Lottinville and Dale over her progress. In a letter dated May 6, 1946, Dale wrote: "Speaking not as a member of the committee but merely as an old friend, I might suggest that in my opinion, you are underestimating your present knowledge of Oklahoma and your capacity for work in thinking it will require seventeen months to do the study." He added that she should "be able to deliver the completed manuscript within twelve months at most." But when Angie replied: "I hope you are right about the time required – and you may be at that. But I always feel safer to allow myself a little latitude in time and money," Dale responded sharply that "as to time and money . . . the amount you indicate is considerably more than we have ever yet allocated to anyone else." It was only the beginning.

Twelve months later Angie submitted her manuscript for review by the committee. Dale returned it with his wish that she would "not be offended by anything in my comments because you know that my only desire is to be of service if possible." Nevertheless, the title of Dale's memorandum, "Oklahoma: Where the Tall Superlatives Grow," was itself an indication of his overall assessment of her manuscript. He concluded by saying that "it will take more hard work to make this book the best you can do. And don't be stubborn and insist on your own wording or pet phrase. Only a genius like G.B.S. [George Bernard Shaw] can afford to be disagreeable in his writing. You and I must write to please our readers as well as to inform them."

Angie spent nearly a year revising her manuscript before resubmitting it. Somewhat surprised with the result, Dale wrote: "You have accepted far more of my criticisms and suggestions than I had

any right to expect and naturally I think the manuscript is greatly improved." And knowing how difficult it must have been for Angie to rewrite it, he added that he "would not have 'rushed in where angels fear to tread' had it not been that the situation was very bad and I felt a certain measure of responsibility because of having suggested both the study and you as the proper person to do it." He then concluded by saying that he was "deeply grateful for the evidences you have given of your continued friendship and goodwill."

Finally, more than three years after she had received the Rockefeller Fellowship, *Oklahoma: Foot-loose and Fancy-free* (1949) was ready to go to print, and Angie had retreated as far as she intended. In a letter to the editor of the University of Oklahoma Press objecting to the many unauthorized changes that she had made to her manuscript, Angie wrote: "I am standing on my rights. I shall not allow anything to go out in my name that I cannot approve. It is better for us to have that understanding now. If the Press has any counter proposal to make, I am ready to listen; but the work as it stands now, is in a few places not acceptable to me, and I shall not accept it." Then almost apologetically she added: "I hate to close on this note." In the end she got her way, and whatever bitterness remained between her and Dale after publication of the book soon faded.

From 1947-1955 Angie worked as curator of maps at the Edmon Low Library in Stillwater, and soon after publication of *Oklahoma: Foot-loose and Fancy-free* the library staff held a reception in Angie's honor. Her mother was there, and Dale was the guest speaker. In a letter to Angie soon afterward, Dale wrote: "It was a grand party and I sat there swelling with pride and of course taking to myself a little of the credit for your success," although he then generously added: "I know that you owe any success you ever attained far more to your mother than you do to anybody else."

Dale retired from the University of Oklahoma in 1952 after which, although he was no longer an active influence in Angie's work, they remained the closest of friends. In a letter to her shortly before his death in 1972 he wrote: "It seems a long time since I have had a chance to go over the old times with you when you were my student, or when you received the prize money from Alfred A. Knopf, who had written me asking if I regarded your manuscript as history and I told him it certainly was. Please send me a copy of your book with bill attached and I will send you a check for it at once." He then somewhat uncharacteristically signed off with, "Love and best wishes to you always." In her response to Dale and his wife, Rosalie, Angie wrote: "I am sending the book, but I am not sending you a bill. Please let me give you this book as a small indication of how much I owe you." She also reminisced about her years at the University of Oklahoma under Dale's tutelage and the lessons she had learned in his classrooms: "I think much of my later career in writing developed out of the techniques I developed then. It is my opinion that much bad historical writing is the result of faulty note-taking and organization – the very things I learned to avoid under your guidance. Love to both of you, Angie Debo."

—Dr. Kurt Anderson is a Research Professional at the Oklahoma State University Library in Stillwater, Oklahoma. He holds a Ph.D. in history, specializing in the history of the American West from Oklahoma State University; an M.A. in history, specializing in United States History to 1877 from the University of South Florida; an M.L.A. from Texas Christian University; and a B.S. in Zoology from Michigan State University.

For Anderson's note on sources, see page 7 of this book.

"Gerry Schaefer (bless her) called this morning and asked if I wanted her to take me to Dr. Dale's funeral. I wanted very much to go, so she took me. He has had a strong influence on my life and writing. I was in his class my freshman year when he was a beginning instructor, and all the years since. . ." ²³ — Angie Debo diary entry (May 30, 1972) .

Geraldine "Gerry" Schaefer and Angie Debo were dear friends. Gerry was a high school English teacher in Marshall and Covington, OK, and wife of Robert (Bob) L. Schaefer and mother of Ronald D. Schaefer.

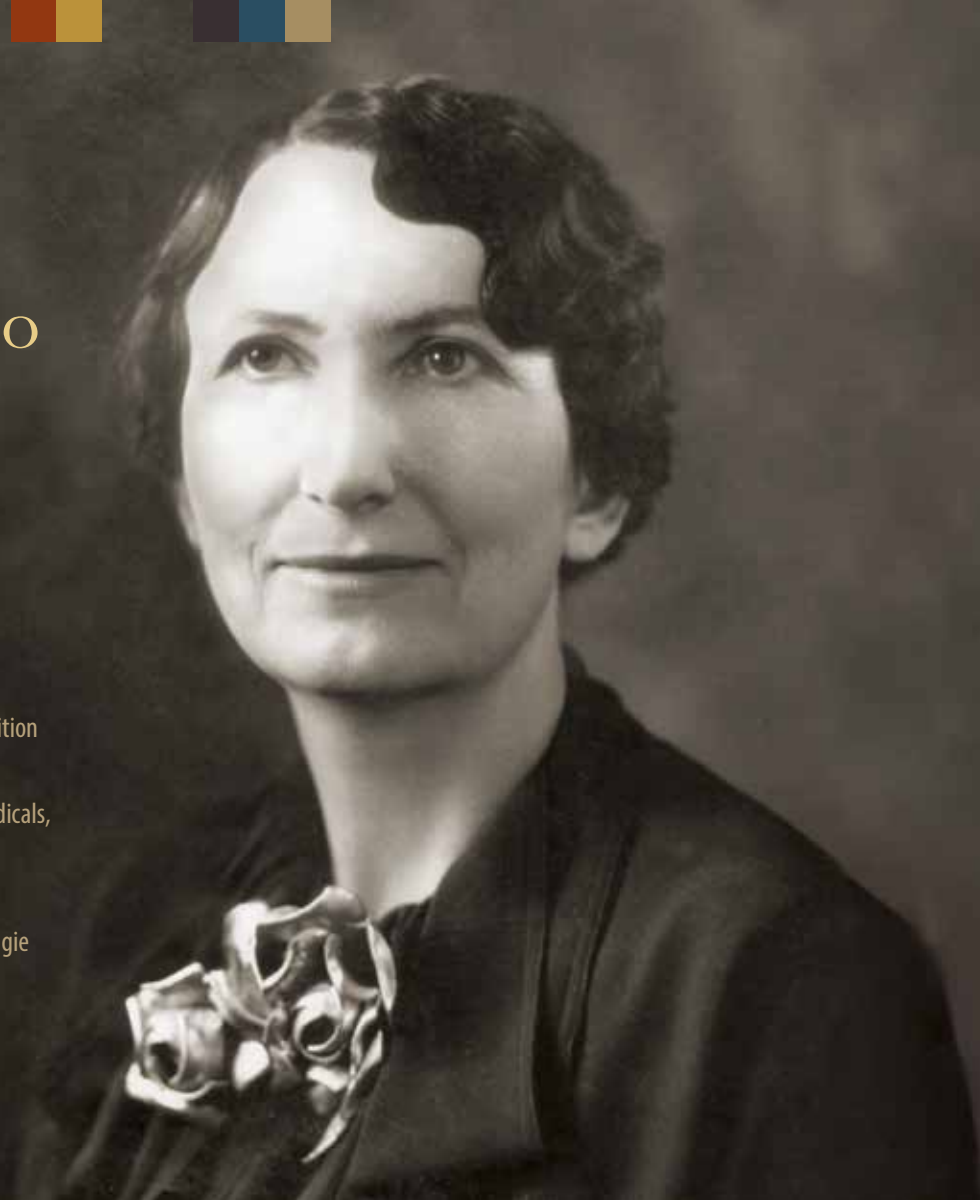


Painted lady butterfly on liatris, in a field near Marshall, OK (2017). Photo by Karen Neurohr.

Books authored by Dr. Angie Debo

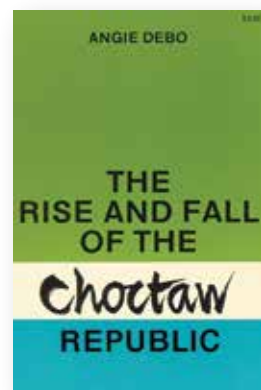
—by Karen Neurohr, Ed.D.

Dr. Angie Debo was a prolific researcher and writer. In addition to the nine books she wrote, she also wrote three book chapters, edited three books, contributed articles to periodicals, contributed to almanacs, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and newspapers, and wrote book forewords and 61 reviews of books and articles. Her publications are available in the Angie Debo Collection at the OSU Library, Stillwater, OK.



Angie Debo (1940). Photo #b63f44-02. Courtesy Debo—OSU Archives.

*“The remarkable thing about Angie’s histories is that if you look at the first chapters, she always gives a description of the indigenous people, the Native Americans, as their societies, their cultures, their governments existed before Europeans enter. And then there’s always some description, if not a separate history, of the environment, the landscape, the geography, the plants, how this was part of the productive economic cycle.”*²⁴ — Gloria Valencia-Weber, oral history interview (Oct. 23, 2010).



Courtesy OU Press

The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic

Debo’s doctoral dissertation, originally published in 1934, is a historical record of the Choctaw Nation’s people, “whose forced migration from their ancestral homes in the South to what is now Oklahoma and whose subsequent efforts from the Civil War to the close of the century to maintain an autonomous government and institutions form a distinctive and arresting chapter in the history of the West.”²⁵

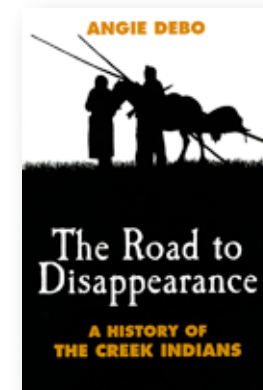


Courtesy OU Press

And Still the Waters Run: The Betrayal of the Five Civilized Tribes

First published in 1940, Debo’s classic work conveys the disastrous story of how promises to the Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Creek, and Seminole nations were broken after passage of the Dawes Act of 1887. This book “fundamentally changed the way historians viewed, and wrote about, American Indian history.”²⁶

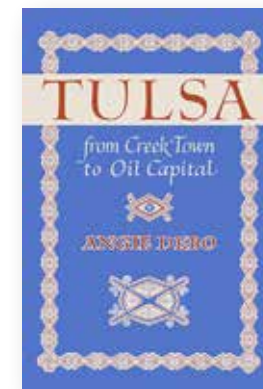
*In a 1984 letter to Joe Brandt, Angie wrote, “It is my most important work. In fact if it were put on one side of a balanced scale and everything else I have ever written were placed on the other side it would outbalance them all. And after so long a time it is now safe for our Press to publish it.”*²⁷



Courtesy OU Press

The Road to Disappearance

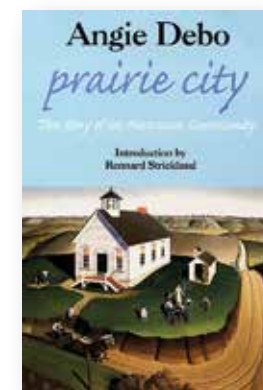
First published in 1941, “*The Road to Disappearance*, tells for the first time the full Creek story from its vague anthropological beginnings to the loss by the tribe of independent political identity, when during the first decade of this century the lands of the Five Civilized Tribes were divided into severalty ownership.”²⁸



Courtesy OU Press

Tulsa: From Creek Town to Oil Capital

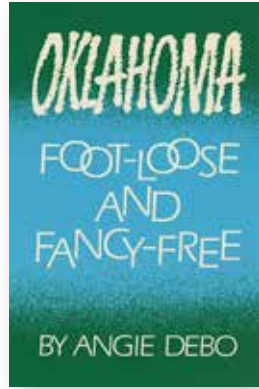
Debo’s history of Tulsa was originally published in 1943. In the preface, she indicated that she hoped those who contributed their time with her research of Tulsa’s history, “will be pleased with this attempt to interpret the forces that made their city.”²⁹ She also acknowledged that she placed an emphasis on Tulsa and its Creek history, reasoning that there was more of a need to share this “deeply buried” history than “more recent developments.”³⁰



Courtesy OU Press

Prairie City: The Story of an American Community

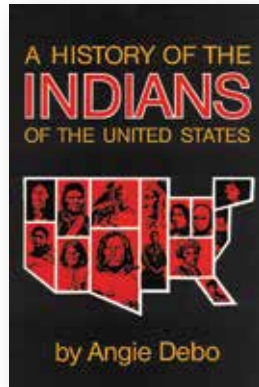
First published in 1944, the fictional *Prairie City* offers a social history of the birth, growth, and life in a representative Oklahoma town, a composite, Debo says, of several “typical” communities in Logan county, including her hometown of Marshall and nearby counties. Well-researched and based on statistical facts, articles, and oral histories, the time period spans the Oklahoma Land Run of April 22, 1889, through World War I, the Great Depression, and World War II. Debo covers various changes such as economic conditions, state and national politics, transportation, and community values and attitudes.



Courtesy OU Press

Oklahoma, Foot-loose and Fancy-free

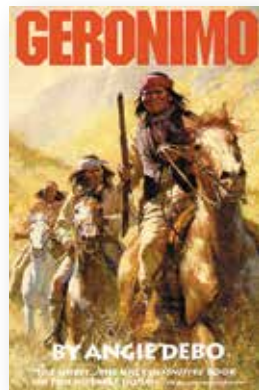
First published in 1949, Debo describes Oklahoma's physical setting, its historical background, and her late 1940s interpretation of the people and conditions of Oklahoma. The 1987 edition of this book presents a reflective epilogue and clarifications written by Debo in 1981, and in Debo's epilogue for the 1987 printing, she states, "Now, as I glance through the pages, I see that many outward changes have come to Oklahoma since it was written. But the more I examine the spirit of the state, the more I am convinced that the 1949 setting forms the base. Here are the roots, not only of the present but of the future."³¹



Courtesy OU Press

A History of the Indians of the United States

First published in 1970, "... this book is an in-depth, historical survey of the Indians of the United States, including the Eskimos and Aleuts of Alaska, which isolates and analyzes the problems which have beset these people since their first contacts with Europeans. Only in the light of this knowledge, the author points out, can an intelligent Indian policy be formulated."³²



Courtesy OU Press

Geronimo

Debo's biography of the great Apache warrior, first published in 1976, was her final book. Several decades in the making, in the book's preface, she said her "task was to explore Geronimo's individual experiences, his motivations, his personal life and character."³³

Geronimo: The Man, His Time, His Place "is as persuasive a portrait of a nineteenth-century Indian leader as we are likely to have..."³⁴ — Larry McMurtry



The Five Civilized Tribes of Oklahoma: Report on Social and Economic Conditions

Published in 1951 by the Indian Rights Association of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Debo described it as a "sequel" to her book *And Still the Waters Run*. For this report, Debo wrote, "The survey was conducted in the summer of 1949. Some time was spent at the Agency in Muskogee collecting statistical information, but most of the work was done in the field."³⁵

Books Edited



The WPA Guide to 1930s Oklahoma

Debo served as a co-editor with John M. Oskison for this title originally published in 1941 as *Oklahoma: A Guide to the Sooner State*. Entries were compiled by workers of the Writers' Program of the Works Project Administration in Oklahoma. *Oklahoma: A Guide* was sponsored by the University of Oklahoma. Reprinted in 1986 as *The WPA Guide to 1930s Oklahoma* with the addition of Debo's essay, "History," which was omitted in the 1941 edition, and a new introduction by Anne Hodges Morgan.

The Cowman's Southwest: Being the Reminiscences of Oliver Nelson, Freighter, Camp Cook, Cowboy, Frontiersman in Kansas, Indian Territory, Texas and Oklahoma, 1878-1893.

Written by Oliver Nelson and edited by Angie Debo. Published in 1953 by A. H. Clark Co. in Glendale, CA.

History of the Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Natchez Indians

Written by Horatio B. Cushman and edited by Angie Debo. Published in 1962 by Redlands Press, Stillwater, OK.



Angie Debo in her home (ca. late 1970s).³⁶ Courtesy Debo—OSU Archives.



Angie Debo Room, Oklahoma State University Archives. Photo by Nina Thornton, OSU Library.



Marshall High School Seniors 1913. Angie Debo on far left. Photo #b64f102-01. Courtesy Debo—OSU Archives.

Education— Gratefulness, Goals, Achievements

—by Karen Neurohr, Ed.D.

In *Prairie City*, an historically accurate fiction book loosely based on the founding of Marshall, Oklahoma, Angie described the organization of public schools in 1891. She wrote that out of all the students, just “two or three found in their tattered books a mystic summons to a realm beyond the boundaries of time and space, and the urge for further schooling became within them a consuming flame.”³⁷ She might have been describing her own experience. As a youngster, the school she attended only went through eighth grade, and she had to wait until the founding of Marshall High School to continue her education. In the film *Indians, Outlaws and Angie Debo*, she said this waiting was “one of the most miserable times of her life.”³⁸

In correspondence dated October 27, 1984, to Joseph A. Brandt (editor at Princeton University Press who, in 1940, published her book *And Still the Waters Run: The Betrayal of the Five Civilized Tribes*) she wrote, “...Learning to read at age five in a country school was a joyful experience for me. With no routine promotions I happily went through one McGuffy’s reader after another. And I think everyone who enjoys reading plans to write and some of them do. I planned my first book at age 7 — all about the flowers my brother and I saw on the Kansas prairie, but I lacked contacts and skills and guidance in

rural Kansas and pioneer Oklahoma. I taught rural schools, graduated from the new little high school at Marshall, and finally made it to the University of Oklahoma at age 20. . .” In the same letter to Brandt, Angie said, “When I went to the Univ. of Chicago I had the aim of writing a thesis that would be published. And it was. Same of my doctoral dissertation at OU.”³⁹

In 1942, Debo was awarded an Alfred A. Knopf History Fellowship which helped fund her work on *Prairie City*. She spent some time at OU in Norman writing. Her stay on campus inspired this diary entry:

April 29, 1942

“I am extremely fortunate in my chance to stay at the Graduate House. The meals are so good I marvel at Mrs. Knox’s ability to finance them, the girls are capable and interesting, and there is every opportunity for study and quiet.”

“I worked on my book today; consequently I feel a little discouraged over the possibility of writing on such a complicated subject. I seem to remember that is my usual reaction in beginning a book.”

“The campus is unbelievably beautiful with the trees in their tenderest green. And a different Angie Debo meets me at every turn – the freshman so eager to enter college that she trembled until she could hardly enroll (and what a dark rainy day it was!), the disillusioned and lonely girl who carried on her studies, the horror and protest against the World War, the eager girl with the final cap and gown, the happy girl who returned for Phi Beta Kappa initiation, the graduate student, the lonely woman out of a job and carrying on research against all sensible reasoning, and so on and on. And from a personal standpoint – disregarding the horror of the world outside – my present residence is probably the happiest I have ever spent here.”⁴⁰

In an oral history interview, Glenna Matthews, Ph.D., shared that Angie “bristled” to Matthews’ comment that Angie’s “rural teachers must have not been very inspiring.” Matthews said that Angie “chided” her by saying, “They walked in glory among us. They represented the life of the mind.”⁴¹

— Glenna Matthews (Nov. 19, 2010)



Pin image courtesy Phi Beta Kappa



Angie Debo (1945). Photo #b63f44-01. Courtesy Debo—OSU Archives.

Angie Debo’s induction into Phi Beta Kappa by the University of Oklahoma in 1920 was one of her earliest academic honors. Phi Beta Kappa, an honor society for college students, was founded in 1776 at the College of William and Mary. She often wore her Phi Beta Kappa “key” in studio photographs. The many other academic honors and awards (see pp. 20-21) that she earned attest to the quality of her academic research and writing.

Angie’s college diplomas (descriptions, p. 18).



1918



1924



1933

Angie Debo Awards and Honors Timeline

Timeline by Heather M. Lloyd; additions by Karen Neurohr and Kurt Anderson



1920-1950s

1950s-1970s

1970s

1970s-1980s

1980s

Posthumous

- 1920**
Inducted into Phi Beta Kappa.
- 1927**
Inducted into Pi Gamma Mu National Social Science Honor Society.
- 1935**
The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic awarded the John H. Dunning Prize of the American Historical Association.
- 1942**
Named state's "Outstanding Woman" by Theta Sigma Phi, honorary professional journalism fraternity for women, Oklahoma City chapter. Alfred A. Knopf History Fellow.
- 1946-1947**
Rockefeller Fellow, University of Oklahoma.
- 1950**
Inducted into the Oklahoma Memorial Association's Oklahoma Hall of Fame.
- 1952**
Inducted into Gamma Theta Upsilon, national professional geographic fraternity. Initiated into Delta Kappa Gamma, national honor society for women teachers.

- 1953**
Member of Phi Kappa Phi honor society.
- 1956-1966**
Member, Board of Directors, Association on American Indian Affairs.
- 1958**
Angie Debo Recognition Day, Marshall, Oklahoma.
- 1961**
Awarded honorary life membership in the Oklahoma Historical Society.
- 1969**
Queen of Prairie City, Marshall, Oklahoma.
- 1971**
Received the award for best non-fiction for *History of the Indians of the United States* from the Oklahoma Writers Federation.
- 1972**
Honored by Navajo Community College, Tsaile, Arizona.
- 1973**
Received Distinguished Service Award from the Oklahoma Heritage Association.

- 1974**
Awarded lifetime membership, Oklahoma Writers Federation.
- 1975**
Appointed member of the Oklahoma Bicentennial Commission.
- 1976**
Angie Debo Day declared in Canyon, Texas. Received the Henry G. Bennett Distinguished Service Award, Oklahoma State University. Received Pride of the Plainsman Award from Enid High School. Received Bicentennial Medal from the Oklahoma Library Association.
- 1977**
Oklahoma Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) established the Angie Debo Award "to recognize those who have provided exceptional defense to the Bill of Rights throughout the year or throughout their lives."
- 1977**
Selected by the Border Regional Library Association of El Paso, Texas, to receive its Southwest Book Award for Biography for *Geronimo: The Man, His Time, His Place*.

- 1978**
Received Honorary Doctorate of Letters from Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Received the Newsmaker Award from the Tulsa Chapter of Women in Communications. Received the Wrangler Award from the Western Heritage Association of the National Cowboy Hall of Fame for *Geronimo: The Man, His Time, His Place*. Received 1978 Book Award from the Southwestern Library Association for *Geronimo: The Man, His Time, His Place*.
- 1979**
Received Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History. Awarded an honorary degree from Phillips University, Enid, Oklahoma.
- 1980**
Reception held in Debo's honor, Oklahoma State University.
- 1981**
Received Award of Merit from the Western History Association.
- 1982-1986**
Filmed by Institute for Research in History for PBS *American Experience* series.

- 1983**
Inducted into the National Cowgirl Hall of Fame, Hereford, Texas. Received Distinguished Service Citation of the University of Oklahoma Alumni Association.
- 1984**
Inducted into the Oklahoma Women's Hall of Fame by the Oklahoma Governor's Advisory Commission on the Status of Women.
- 1985**
Designated as an Ambassador of Goodwill by the Cherokee Nation. Received Certificate of Recognition from the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. Honored by the State of Oklahoma by hanging her portrait in the Rotunda of the State Capitol.
- 1986**
Received the Achievement Award from the American Indian Historians Association.
- 1987**
Granted Award for Scholarly Distinction from the American Historical Association.

- 1988**
Documentary film, *Indians, Outlaws and Angie Debo*, debuts on Public Broadcast Station (PBS) *American Experience*.
- 1994**
Inducted into the Oklahoma Historian's Hall of Fame by the Oklahoma Historical Society.
- 1994**
Principal Chief Wilma Mankiller placed flowers on Angie Debo's grave for befriending "the causes and rights of the Cherokee Nation far beyond any obligation of humanity."⁵²
- 1995**
Edmond Public Schools dedicated Angie Debo Elementary School.
- 1997**
Received the Ralph Ellison Award from the Oklahoma Center for the Book.
- 2001**
Inducted into the Oklahoma Writers Hall of Fame by the Oklahoma Center for Poets and Writers at Oklahoma State University-Tulsa.
- 2004**
Oklahoma State University Library and Marshall, Oklahoma, dedicated as National Literary Landmarks in honor of Angie Debo. (see p. 28 in booklet).
- 2010**
The Stillwater Public Library in Stillwater, Oklahoma, dedicated a life-size bronze statue of Angie Debo by sculptor Phyllis Mantik. (see p. 27 in booklet).

Angie Debo receiving Oklahoma Writers' Federation Award (1971). Photo #b63f49-06. Courtesy Debo—OSU Archives.



50



51

(Timeline photos, References 42-49, p.33)

Oklahoma State University Library



Angie Debo in front of Edmon Low Library at OSU, Stillwater, OK (1956). Photo #b63f59-03. Courtesy Debo—OSU Archives.

Angie Debo

Dr. Angie Debo bequeathed her papers, books, and literary rights to Oklahoma State University, “with the sincere wish that anything which proves worth keeping in this bequest will be of use to future students of the University.”⁵³

The Angie Debo Collection, housed in the Archives of the Oklahoma State University Library, consists of research material, including manuscripts of publications and presentations by Debo and related legal papers, correspondence, notes, etc. Unpublished manuscripts include some by Debo as well as Grant Foreman’s “The American Indian and the Law” and World War II correspondence. The collection also contains personal and business correspondence, and memorabilia, diaries, articles, newspaper clippings, awards, books, maps and photographs dealing with Debo’s writings and personal life.

The Angie Debo collection includes 92.25 linear feet of materials (59 records cartons, 3 document boxes, 13 oversized boxes, 10 map folders, 85 reels of microfilm [all in storage]; and awards, memorabilia, 593 books and furniture in the Angie Debo Room).

Through the OSU Library website, access to finding aids, and numerous photographs, and other materials are available: <http://info.library.okstate.edu/c.php?g=151950&p=997579>

Angie Debo Diaries

Angie Debo’s diaries are part of the Angie Debo collection at the Oklahoma State University Archives. Her earliest diaries began with her childhood in 1898 and 1901.

She continued her diary writing from 1940-1942, then 1948 through July 3, 1987. In her entries she comments on everything from her daily activities, to her neighbors and friends, the Marshall community, the weather, historical and political events, people she knew, her travels, and her activism. Her words provide insight into her life and values, her sense of humor, and the time period.

Typewriters

Over the years, Debo commented in her diaries on her various typewriters, expressing her frustration when they didn’t work well or broke, or her appreciation:

October 29, 1940

“I bought a new typewriter yesterday, and I am using it for the first time this evening. It runs so smoothly, and the lines are so nice and straight. I wrote two books on my old one. Somehow I feel a strong attachment for a typewriter on which I have written books. There is no machine with which one enters into such apparent companionship. It is almost like the horse one rides, and of course every rider loves his pony. If I could afford to be sentimental and if I had the place to store it, I should never trade in an old typewriter. But I let Pegasus go after I had finished the CHOCTAW REPUBLIC, and now after AND STILL THE WATERS RUN and THE ROAD TO DISAPPEARANCE I have parted with the faithful Blitzen. I hope my association with my new friend, Ananias, will be as fruitful.”



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Presidential Election

November 9, 1960

“Got up several times during the night to listen to election returns. Kennedy got necessary electoral vote when Minn. went to him at eight. I went out and scraped the Kennedy tag off my car, not wanting to gloat. Nixon more admirable in defeat than ever in victory. Cold day. I attended Guild but stayed away from lodge. Too busy.”



Angie Debo childhood diary cover and entry (March 22, 1898)⁵⁶.
Courtesy Debo —OSU Archives.

The Apollo 11 Moon landing

July 20, 1969

“...Watched the moon landing this P.M. Tense experience. Very moving when it succeeded. Time 3:17 P.M. Then watched the moon walk. Enormously moved. Stayed up till 1:00 A.M. to see if the men were in contact & O.K.”

July 21, 1969

“I was pretty tired today but I couldn’t go to sleep because I had to help the astronauts. I tensed all my muscles to help them in the lift-off. Truly, I was worried. It would have been so terrible if anything had gone wrong. The whole thing has been moving beyond words.”

July 22, 1969

“I let the astronauts take care of themselves while I slept last night and worked on my MS today. Through all the joy of their achievement I am distressed about Edward Kennedy. I think we have lost our last Kennedy.”

Activism

Several diary entries illustrate Angie's activism toward the rights of Alaska natives. Author Larry McMurtry wrote, "In her seventies, fearing that what had happened in Oklahoma was about to happen again in Alaska, she roused herself to lobby for the Native Claims Settlement Act."⁵⁷

November 1, 1969

"The typewriter did come on Mistletoe Express. I spent the day on odds and ends I had neglected. As soon as I get a full day I want to use the typewriter in behalf of the Alaska natives."

November 4, 1969

"I wrote to members of Congress in behalf of Alaska natives...."

November 5, 1969

"Wrote the rest of the letters –six in all, very carefully written to chairmen of the committees, our senators and my rep. & to Pres. Nixon. Will not date the last and will hold it till response to his VietNam address tapers off. I also sent material to several friends who will write, I hope."

November 23, 1970

"The University Press had an autograph party for me at Norman. Frances [?] took me and Ramona down there. It was a nice party and I met lots of people. I slipped one of my mimeographed letters about the Alaska native land issue into every book I autographed."

Capitol Portrait Dedication

January 9, 1985

"Rained all forenoon, cloudy and dark all day. A Creek woman (really a Euchee) with a nice voice called me. She is Miss Sunshine King who is in charge of the Creek Museum in the Creek capitol. Called to tell me how happy she is about the picture of Charles Banks Wilson is painting to put in the state capitol. She says all the Creeks appreciate the history of the tribe I wrote. It pleases me very much when Indians approve of my writing. My beloved Pat came by this evening."



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Angie Debo Room, OSU Archives, Stillwater, OK.⁵⁹

Updating Books

May 5, 1987

"It was cloudy this morning but cleared up and didn't rain. We need rain very badly. I had to stop work on books to check my bank statement today. My working time is very short. I have finished my Creek history and want to start on Tulsa."

June 23, 1987

"It was sunny all day –didn't rain. I suppose most of the wheat is harvested by now. Nothing in particular happened. I have every one of my books brought up to their final form. I am not sure of the future of Tulsa. It went through only one printing. I have everything ready for a final one. I am hoping the OU Press will give it to Council Oak Books and Council Oak will do a new printing as they did with Prairie City."

Final Diary Entry

July 3, 1987

"Lovely day – not too hot. Nothing in particular happened."

Indians, Outlaws and Angie Debo

The film *Indians, Outlaws and Angie Debo* was written and directed by Martha Sandlin, produced by Barbara Abrash and Martha Sandlin, and edited by Mona Davis. Principal consultants were Gloria Valencia-Weber and Glenna Matthews who conducted seventeen oral history interviews with Angie Debo between 1981 and 1985.⁶⁰

Part of the acclaimed WGBH *American Experience* series *Indians, Outlaws and Angie Debo* was first broadcast to a national audience on PBS in 1988. The documentary is structured around interviews with Debo in her nineties and chronicles her life and career. Highlights include an examination of the controversy surrounding her book *And Still the Waters Run*, which revealed how Oklahoma Indians were systematically defrauded of their land.

In 2011, the OSU Library presented one free copy of *Indians, Outlaws, and Angie Debo* to all Oklahoma public, school, tribal, and academic libraries (approx. 3,000 copies total). This distribution was limited by an agreement with PBS. Library patrons outside of Oklahoma might be able to borrow the DVD through interlibrary loan at their local library.



Gloria Valencia-Weber, Angie Debo, Glenna Matthews, and Aletha Hollis (May 13, 1982), participants of oral history interviews for *Indians, Outlaws and Angie Debo*. Photo #b64f118-01. Courtesy Debo —OSU Archives.

"I'm going back to those early days of my childhood in Oklahoma. When I was eleven years old, I was thinking about the life that would stretch out before me. I didn't expect it to last until I was 95, but I did think that it would last a long time. And I decided to commit that life. And I decided that service and integrity were the important things. That did dominate my choices, and I still think that that is the creative use of a life rather than to try to grab what one can."⁶¹
— Angie Debo

"She said, 'Glenna, you might wonder why I've cooperated with the film and then also with the portrait [at the Oklahoma Capitol].' She said, 'It's not vanity. It's that no author ever set pen to paper that didn't want his or her books to be read, and I feel that this film is going to give my books a wider circulation, and that's deeply gratifying to me.'⁶²

— Glenna Matthews oral history interview (Nov. 19, 2010).

The Oklahoma Oral History Research Program of the OSU Library

The Oklahoma Oral History Research Program (OOHRP) was founded in 2007 as part of the Oklahoma State University Library, with the goal of documenting and making accessible the history of Oklahoma and OSU through oral history interviews. In written versions of history, the contributions and perspectives of many individuals and groups are left undocumented, and details and nuances are often excluded from the record. The methodology of oral history allows researchers to fill some of the gaps by interviewing individuals about their firsthand experiences and then making that material available to researchers and the general public.

In 2009, the “Spotlighting Oklahoma” Oral History Project was officially launched as a way to document the development of Oklahoma by recording its cultural and intellectual history. As a result, a series of individual oral history projects fall under the “Spotlighting” project, including several “Remembering Angie Debo” interviews. <https://library.okstate.edu/oralhistory/digital/spotlighting-oklahoma/>

In 2010 and 2011, Dr. Jennifer Paustenbaugh, former Associate Library Dean for Planning and Assessment, conducted five interviews for “Remembering Angie Debo.” These interviews offer personal insight into Angie Debo and her life and legacy. Dr. Paustenbaugh interviewed Gail McDonald, Dr. Gloria Valencia-Weber, Hugh (Pat) O’Neill, Barbara Abrash, and Glenna Matthews. Angie Debo’s civic engagement and love for her community are two qualities mentioned by several interviewees. Transcripts of these interviews are available through the OSU Library website. Additional “Remembering Angie Debo” interviews are in progress.

Gloria Valencia-Weber Interview (Oct. 23, 2010)

(Renowned for her deep knowledge and teaching of Indian law; pioneer in establishing the first and second Indian Law Certificate programs in the United States; instrumental in the production of the documentary film *Indians, Outlaws and Angie Debo*.)

“Angie had very strong feelings about misrepresentation of any kind of history fact and especially about Oklahoma. She dearly loved Oklahoma, even though she probably revealed some of the worst of facts that people cared about. But she felt that was part of her view of ethics personally and ethics professionally, as a historian. But she loved Oklahoma, and she wanted to write the correct story.”⁶³

“...many people don’t realize how much, at times, Angie faced economic hardship.... If you look at the original manuscripts and her materials in the archives at OSU, the cost of typewriter paper alone was a concern to her so she types on both sides.”⁶⁴

Barbara Abrash Interview (Nov. 18, 2010)

(Was Head of Media Projects at the Institute for Research in History in New York City and co-producer of *Indians, Outlaws and Angie Debo*.)

“There were people who wanted her to be a certain kind of feminist, but she was a woman who did her work and cared about equality and cared about justice and whether it was men or women, you know, you should all work hard and go for equality and justice.”⁶⁵

Glenna Matthews Interview (Nov. 19, 2010)

(Academic historian; with Gloria Valencia-Weber, conducted seventeen interviews with Debo and served as a principal consultant for *Indians, Outlaws and Angie Debo*.)

“...she had a very rich emotional life because of her community involvement.”⁶⁶

Gail McDonald Interview (April 14, 2011)

(Served on the Oklahoma ACLU with Debo; helped secure funding for *Indians, Outlaws and Angie Debo*.)

“...we would have the most delightful time talking with Angie and hearing about her work. She was so well-read. She really challenged you to think about things and to be invested intellectually in issues. She was just a delight. I, of course, was very amazed by her.”⁶⁷

Hugh (Pat) O’Neill Interview (July 15, 2010)

(Hugh O’Neill took two history classes at Marshall High School from Angie Debo in the early 1940s which led to a lifetime friendship. He and his wife Ramona lived near her in Marshall.)

“You could never visit with Angie that you didn’t feel like you came away with something you didn’t know previously.”⁶⁸

“When asked what characteristic was most prominently displayed in the Charles Banks Wilson portrait (at the Oklahoma Capitol), Angie said, ‘Drive’.”⁶⁹

Additional Sites of Interest —by Karen Neurohr, Ed.D.



“I chose to show Angie Debo as a young woman to focus on her character and highlight that at an early age she chose the life of a scholar rather than what was expected for a woman of her time.”⁷⁰

— Artist, Phyllis Mantik

Angie Debo Statue (2010), photo courtesy Stillwater Public Library.

Stillwater Public Library

1107 S. Duck, Stillwater, OK. http://library.stillwater.org/angie_debo_statue.php

The Angie Debo statue at the Stillwater Public Library was dedicated on Thursday, Nov. 18, 2010. “Oklahoma State University President Burns Hargis served as Master of Ceremonies and Oklahoma City University President Robert Henry and Chickasaw Governor Bill Anoatubby were guest speakers. Surrounding the base of the statue are seals of the 38 federally recognized Oklahoma Native American tribes. A Native American prayer and blessing by Dr. Pete Coser with helper Checotah Powless was performed after the unveiling. Attendance at the event was over 200.”⁷¹

“From start to finish, the statue project took three years. ‘It began with a donation from former Library Director Della Bennett to the Friends of the Stillwater Public Library. The Friends wanted to do something special with this donation and after committing additional funds they formed a community-wide committee to investigate the possibility of having a sculpture at the Stillwater Public Library which would be the first sculpture on Stillwater City property,’ stated Library Director Lynda Reynolds.”⁷²

“The committee, chaired by Friends past-president, Bob Darcy, sent out a nationwide request for proposals seeking a sculpture that would ‘evoke a combination of libraries, reading, Stillwater, and/or Oklahoma.’ The committee received 16 nationwide proposals from 11 artists and selected Stillwater artist Phyllis Mantik and her proposal for a statue of Angie Debo.”⁷³

“Dr. Debo was selected as the subject of the sculpture due to her international recognition for books on Oklahoma’s Native Americans, her work at the OSU Library, her home in nearby Marshall, her portrait recognition at the State Capitol and no known sculpture of Debo anywhere else in the nation.”⁷⁴

Stillwater, Oklahoma

OSU Campus

Dr. Angie Debo is one of the recipients of the Henry G. Bennett Distinguished Service Award. Names are engraved in granite beneath the statue of Henry G. Bennett located east of Whitehurst Hall and facing Library Lawn.

According to campus directories, Angie lived at the following Stillwater addresses:

[1947-1949] 619 ½ S. Lewis. Small frame house is occupied and located behind office of Pickens Auctions.

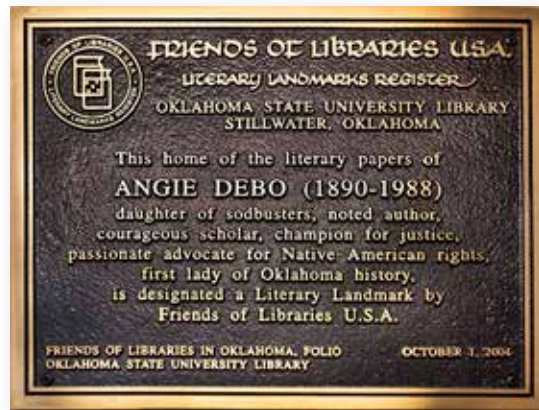
[1949-1953] 117 N. Knoblock. House is no longer there; current site of Qdoba parking lot.

[1953-1955] 520 W. Maple. House is no longer there; current site of Qdoba. Boarding housemates were Vesta Etchison (Student Union Social Director), Mrs. O.N. Smith (OAMC Post Office clerk), and Esther H. Anderson (OAMC Bursar’s Office Payroll Clerk). Their landlord was Mrs. Allnut.

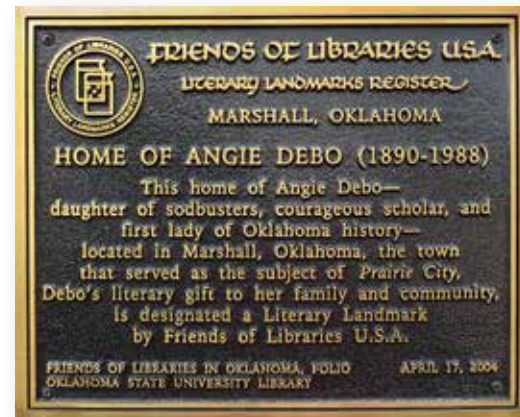
National Literary Landmarks

Literary Landmarks,[™] nationally designated sites honoring deceased writers, are granted through United for Libraries, a division of the American Library Association, http://www.ala.org/united/products_services/literarylandmarks.

In 2004, the OSU Library and Friends of Libraries in Oklahoma (FOLIO) oversaw the dedication of two Literary Landmark sites in Oklahoma that honor Angie Debo. FOLIO, a statewide, non-profit organization, has sponsored Oklahoma's Literary Landmarks since 2001.



Angie Debo Literary Landmark, Edmon Low Library, 2nd floor center. Photo by Nina Thornton, OSU Library.



On April 17, 2004, Angie's hometown of Marshall was dedicated during the town's 36th annual Prairie City Days celebration. The plaque is located on a red brick building on Main Street.

On October 1, 2004, the Edmon Low Library at Oklahoma State University was designated a Literary Landmark. Michael Wallis, historian, biographer, and honorary chair of Oklahoma's Literary Landmarks project through FOLIO, served as the Master of Ceremonies and provided closing remarks. Sheila Grant Johnson, Dean of OSU Libraries, welcomed guests to the ceremony. Remarks were provided by FOLIO member Julia Brady Ratliff and President Tom Terry. Bernice Mitchell, Chair, Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women, introduced keynote speaker, Dr. Gloria Valencia-Weber, Professor of Law, University of New Mexico School of Law. <http://info.library.okstate.edu/debo/landmark>

Marshall, Oklahoma

The original quarter section of land that Angie's father purchased in 1899 was "three miles south of Marshall, where I-74 intersects with Highway 51, and you go one mile west. It's on the south side of the highway. ... [In 1912] Mr. Debo sold the farm and moved to town." — Hugh O'Neill (7/15/2010).⁷⁵



Angie Debo with her parents at home (1940)⁷⁶, 200 N. Oklahoma. The house is currently occupied.



St. Paul's United Church of Christ, 119 S. Kansas.⁷⁷

Angie Debo was a lay pastor and Sunday school teacher for many years. She became an active member of St. Paul's church when the Methodist church (SE corner of N. Oklahoma and E. Market) closed. The Methodist church sits diagonally to Angie's house.

Literary Landmark plaque is located on the red brick Marshall City Hall building, NE corner of Main and N. Kansas, about 1/2 block west of the Marshall Post Office on Main St.



Angie was instrumental in ordering and dedicating Marshall's Centennial Marker (July 25, 1976), located on Hwy 74E.⁷⁸



Angie Debo, her parents, brother and his wife, and other family members are interred at the North Cemetery. Signage reads IOOF (International Organization of Odd Fellows). From Hwy 74, go west 2 miles on Bison Rd. From 74E, go north on Iowa/MacArthur two miles, then west ~1/4 mile. Enter the second gated entrance, look in the third row to your left. Angie is interred next to her parents. Her brother Edwin and his wife Ida are one row over. In 1987 Angie wrote that she has "15 family graves" in the cemetery.⁷⁹



Angie Debo Memorial Highway (2017)⁸⁰.

Additional Sites of Interest Enid, Oklahoma

Enid is 36 miles northwest of Marshall. Angie worked in Enid 1918-1923. Throughout her life she traveled to Enid for such things as retail business and medical services.



81

Public Library of Enid and Garfield County, 120 W. Maine St.

The Library is a National Literary Landmark (Marquis James, two-time Pulitzer Prize winner) and on the National Register of Historic Places for its New Formalism Style of architecture. On Nov. 13, 1970, Angie wrote in her diary, "They had an autograph coffee for me at the Enid library. Winnie took me up. Maxine brought me back (after dark when I don't drive). So many old friends came. And they bought 20 books and wanted more...." ⁸²



83

The Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, 507 S. 4th St.

Angie Debo exhibit, Ward & Meibergen Exhibition Hall, The Land & The People Gallery. "The Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center in Enid, Garfield County, Oklahoma, is a historical museum telling the fascinating story of the settlement and development of Northwest Oklahoma, beginning with the Land Run of 1893." ⁸⁴



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Railroad Museum of Oklahoma, 702 N. Washington.

The Railroad Museum of Oklahoma has "over one million pieces of railroad memorabilia, including a world-class collection of dining car china and silverware, a vast library of reference books, photos and videos, operating HO, N-scale, and Lionel model railroads," along with The Yard's collection of authentic train cars, cabooses, and crossing signals. ⁸⁶



87

Enid High School, 611 W. Wabash.

Angie Debo taught at Enid High School and received the Pride of the Plainsmen Award in 1976. Enid attorney and history enthusiast Gary Brown compiled a history of Enid High School in 2004. ⁸⁸



ANGIE DEBO
History
University of Oklahoma, A. B.

Teacher Page from Enid High School Yearbook, *The Quill*, (1923). ⁸⁹

Additional Sites of Interest



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Mrs. Charles Banks (Edna) Wilson, Charles Banks Wilson, State Representative Penny Williams, and Dr. Bobby Woods, and Angie Debo (April 8, 1985). Photo # b64f130-06. Courtesy Debo—OSU Archives.

Oklahoma State Capitol

2300 N. Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City

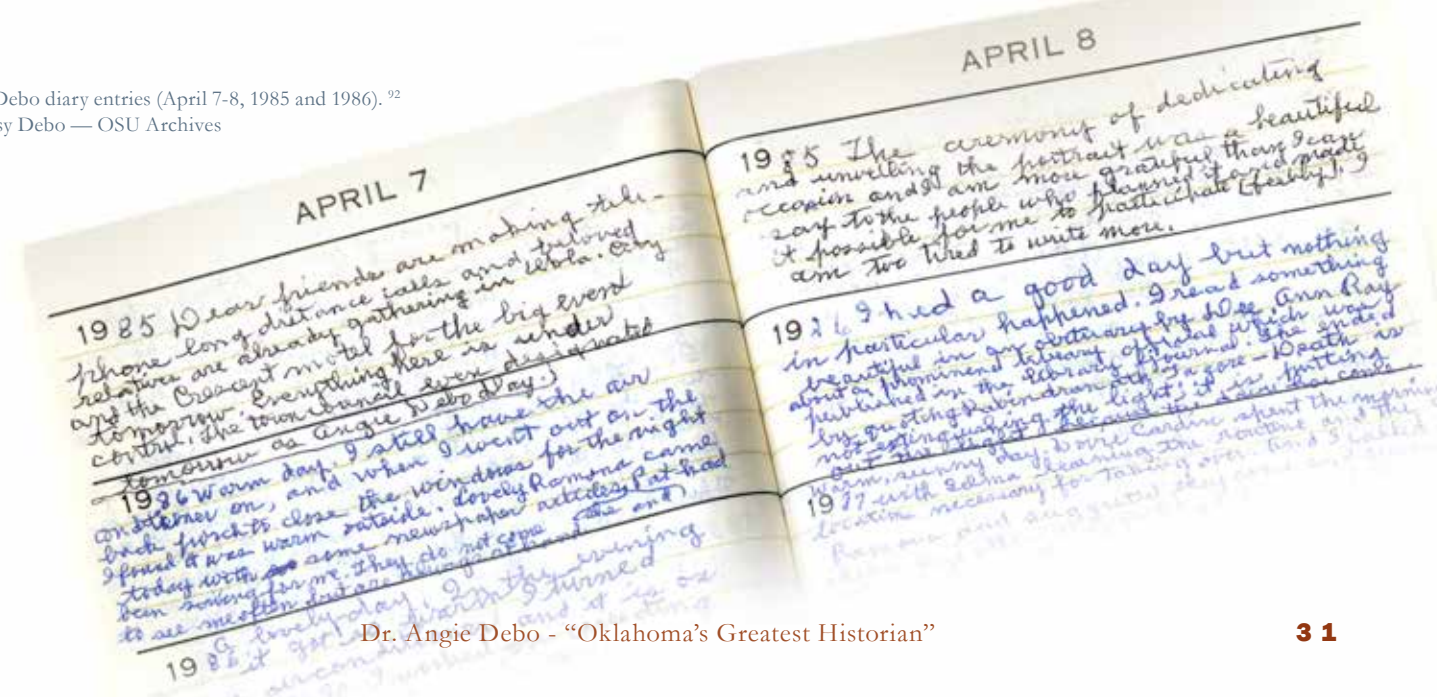
Dr. Angie Debo's portrait was the first portrait of a woman to hang in the public area of the Oklahoma State Capitol. Oklahoma artist Charles Banks Wilson was commissioned by then State Representatives Robert Henry and Penny Williams for the painting. Wilson's portraits of Will Rogers, Sequoyah, Robert S. Kerr, and Jim Thorpe also hang at the capitol.

Angie's portrait was unveiled on April 8, 1985, by Governor George Nigh.

Portrait Information: http://www.arts.ok.gov/Art_at_the_Capitol/Capitol_Collection.php?c=cac&awid=50

(Due to capitol renovations, portraits are in storage until 2022.)

Angie Debo diary entries (April 7-8, 1985 and 1986). ⁹²
Courtesy Debo — OSU Archives



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64. Gloria Valencia-Weber, 20.
65. Barbara Abrash interview by Jennifer Paustenbaugh (November 18, 2010, 8) in Stillwater OK, transcript, OOHRP. <http://dc.library.okstate.edu/cdm/ref/collection/Spot/id/101>
66. Glenna Matthews, 20.
67. Gail McDonald interview by Jennifer Paustenbaugh (April 14, 2011, 5) in Oklahoma City, OK, transcript, OOHRP. <http://dc.library.okstate.edu/cdm/ref/collection/Spot/id/452>
68. Hugh O'Neill, interview by Jennifer Paustenbaugh (July 15, 2010, 34) in Marshall, Oklahoma, transcript, OOHRP. <http://dc.library.okstate.edu/cdm/ref/collection/Spot/id/95>
69. Hugh O'Neill, 39.
70. Stillwater Public Library, Stillwater, OK. http://library.stillwater.org/angie_debo_statue.php
71. Stillwater.
72. Stillwater.
73. Stillwater.
74. Stillwater.
75. Hugh O'Neill, 7.
76. Photo of Angie and parents at home. Photo #b63f68-07. Courtesy Debo—OSU Archives.
77. Photo of St. Paul's church (2017), courtesy Karen Neurohr.
78. Angie Debo by highway marker. Photo #b64f100-01. Courtesy Debo—OSU Archives.
79. Angie Debo diary entry (May 25, 1987). Courtesy Debo—OSU Archives. Photo of North Cemetery/IOOF (2017), courtesy Karen Neurohr.
80. Angie Debo Memorial Highway, Logan County, OK. "SH51 from the Junction of SH74 West to the Kingfisher County Line and SH74 from the Junction of SH51 North to the Garfield County Line H. C. Res. 1093, Okla. Session Laws 1996, pg. 1909:Commission Item 139 (A), 8-5-96." <http://www.okladot.state.ok.us/memorial/htmls/listd.htm>. Photo courtesy Karen Neurohr (2017).
81. Photo of Enid Library, by Karen Neurohr (2016).
82. Angie Debo diary entry (11/13/70). Courtesy Debo—OSU Archives.
83. Photo courtesy Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center.
84. Quote from Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center website <http://www.scrhc.org>.
85. Photo of Railroad Museum. Courtesy Margo Holmes (2017).
86. Quote from Railroad Museum website <http://www.railroadmuseumofoklahoma.com>.
87. Photo of Enid High School north entrance with date of 1911 over the door by Karen Neurohr (2017).
88. Gary Brown, Enid High School History, <http://www.brownlaw-ok.com/enidhistory/articles/enidhigh.pdf>.
89. Yearbook photo of Angie Debo, courtesy Aaron Preston, archivist, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center.
90. Photo of Angie Debo portrait ceremony at Oklahoma state capitol. Artist Charles Banks Wilson at podium. Governor George Nigh seated by Angie Debo. Photo #b64f130-10. Courtesy Debo—OSU Archives.
91. Photo of OK state capitol portrait ceremony. Angie Gebaur, Penny Williams at podium, Gov. Nigh and Angie watching. Photo #b64f130-15. Courtesy Debo—OSU Archives.
92. Photo of diary pages, courtesy Debo—OSU Archives. Photo by Nina Thornton.
93. Photo of forthcoming book cover, courtesy Oklahoma Hall of Fame.
94. Governor Brad Henry quote is from http://wayback.archiveit.org/2082/20110107204210/http://www.gov.ok.gov/inaugural_address_2007.php [Note: Debo's quote is from her book, *Oklahoma: Foot-loose and Fancy-free* (p. vii.). Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.]
95. Photo of sculpture used with permission of artist. Photo by Nina Thornton.
96. Glenna Matthews, 18.

About this book

Dr. Karen Neurohr is Professor, Community Outreach Librarian at the Oklahoma State University (OSU) Library in Stillwater, Oklahoma. She holds an Ed.D. in Higher Education from OSU, an M.S. in Library Science from North Texas State University, a B.A. in Secondary Education English from Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, OK, and an A.A. from Carl Albert State College. Dr. Anderson's credentials are listed on page 13. Inquiries about this book may be directed to karen.neurohr@okstate.edu.

This book was produced in conjunction with "One Book, One Community: Enid Reads *Prairie City* by Dr. Angie Debo." Co-coordinators were the Oklahoma State University Library and the Enid Public Library. In addition to this book, the project consisted of seven public programs, two film screenings, a guided tour of the OSU Library Archives, and ten book discussions of *Prairie City*, all of which took place from Sept. 21, 2017 through Oct. 24, 2017.

Guest speakers for the public programs at the Enid Library were Dr. Ron Schaefer, Dr. Patricia Loughlin, Dr. Roger Hardaway, and Dr. Kurt Anderson. Will Hill, a full-blood Muscogee-Creek Indian performed "Legends Nagonagoo" at Enid Symphony Hall and Hayes Elementary School in Enid. *Prairie City* book discussions were led by volunteers and held in Enid at the Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Railroad Museum of Oklahoma, Callahans, Enid Public Library, Five80 Coffeehouse, and Lifelong Learning Institute, Central Christian Church.

THANK YOU!

Dr. Angie Debo "Oklahoma's Greatest Historian" Book Sponsors:

Oklahoma Humanities (OH), National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), Park Ave. Thrift, Union Pacific Foundation, and Oklahoma State University Library, Enid Public Library. Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in the programs or booklet do not necessarily represent those of OH, NEH, or any other sponsors or partners.

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In 2007, Governor Brad Henry quoted Angie Debo in his inaugural address:

"Some years later, in 1949, Dr. Angie Debo, our state's greatest historian, also recognized that Oklahoma was a different kind of state and expounded in this way: 'Oklahoma is more than just another state. It is a lens in which the long rays of time are focused into the brightest of light. In its magnifying clarity, dim facets of the American character stand more clearly revealed. For in Oklahoma all the experiences that went into the making of the nation have been speeded up. Here all the American traits have been intensified. The one who can interpret Oklahoma can grasp the meaning of America in the modern world.' Angie Debo was right. All of the best American qualities converge here, at the crossroads of our country, in this proud state that became the nation's 46th star with the bright intensity of a nova."⁹⁴

Dr. Angie Debo sculpture by Lou Moore Hale (1999). Courtesy Debo Collection—OSU Archives.⁹⁵

The underlying flower pattern here and on the cover is replicated from Angie Debo's chair pillow [see page 3]. Courtesy Debo—OSU Archives



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Dr. Angie Debo's historical achievements were honored with the American Historical Association Award for Scholarly Distinction in 1987.



Governor Henry L. Bellmon presenting Dr. Angie Debo with the American Historical Association Award for Scholarly Distinction at Raymond Bryson's home, Marshall, Oklahoma (January 24, 1988). Photo #b63f51-02. Courtesy Debo—OSU Archives.



Dr. Glenna Matthews explained how the award was presented to Dr. Debo, “. . . Then I did receive the award on her behalf and I gave it to David Baird [Dr. W. David Baird, Dean Emeritus of Pepperdine University/Seaver College Howard A. White Professor Emeritus of History] who brought it back to Oklahoma, and then of course as you know, Governor Bellmon delivered it. Then she died in her sleep a few weeks after that. If you put this in a novel, people would say it strains belief. It was just such a perfect way to end a beautiful life. To have the governor of her beloved Oklahoma personally deliver this award.”

— Glenna Matthews, oral history interview, (Nov. 19, 2010).⁹⁶

The purpose for this “Dr. Angie Debo: ‘Oklahoma’s Greatest Historian’” book is to educate and enlighten people about the life and important historical legacy of Dr. Angie Debo, thus highlighting the humanities through Oklahoma’s regional history and literary heritage. Book distribution included the Garfield, Logan, Kingfisher, Noble, and Payne Counties’ public, academic, and high school libraries and high school history teachers; Oklahoma tribal libraries and tribal college libraries; and participants of the Fall 2017 community project, “One Book, One Community: Enid Reads *Prairie City* by Angie Debo.”