

Application for Paid Sabbatical (Faculty Professional Development Long-Term Leave)

I. Applicant Information:

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Years at Lane under contract: 15 Previous paid sabbatical leave dates (if applicable): NA

of terms of paid sabbatical leave awarded in the past: NA

Term(s) requested: Spring: 2013

Sabbatical Project Title: Quileutes by Name: Nicknames and Stories of the Quileute Tribe

Leave Location(s): LaPush, Washington

II.

I have read the guidelines, and I understand them. If accepted, I agree to complete the sabbatical project as described in my application as well as the written and oral reports. I will contact the Faculty Professional Development Coordinator if I am unable to complete any portion of my proposed plan or if I would like to substitute a different activity for one outlined in my plan, and I understand that I may be asked to submit any proposed changes to the Paid Sabbatical Committee. I understand that I will not be granted a sabbatical in the future if I do not follow these guidelines and complete the oral and written reports. (The committee recognizes that there may be minor changes to the timeline and your proposed plan.)

Applicant signature: Jeffrey D. Harrison Date: January 30, 2012

III. Leave Information: “Quileute Nicknames”—Jeff Harrison **For Spring term 2013** **Submitted Feb. 2012**

Part 1, INTENT AND PLAN

In 2009, my good friend Roger Jackson, an elder in the Quileute Tribe in LaPush, Washington, told me that he wanted me to “make a book” about nicknames in the tribe. I knew what he meant, for I had lived for two years on the reservation (and it remains my “second home,” as my children and grandchildren live there), and I was somewhat aware of the importance of nicknames and the general role of names as a force in the local language. So we laughed about the idea a bit, and Roger and I both came away with a sense of vague possibility.

As my colleagues at Lane have encouraged me in recent years to apply for a sabbatical, it occurred to me that now is the time to pursue this project. Roger's idea has real meaning and purpose for the tribe, and it offers me the opportunity to do the kind of deep cultural research I've considered over the years. It's also now or never, since so many of the elders who know the stories are passing on.

So I've begun to imagine a study of Quileute nicknames as the core of a more general investigation of the role of naming in Quileute culture, in Native cultures more generally, and to some extent, as a general social phenomenon. Where do names come from? What do they represent? How do they relate to language and social structure—especially in an oral tradition? How free are we to change them—for ourselves, or for others? How important are nicknames? And more particularly, in LaPush, what are the stories behind these nicknames? How well are these stories known, and what role do they play in constructing identity within the community? (I also plan to investigate last names to some extent—a related issue, fraught with cultural and historical complexities.)

Since this project was, to some extent, requested by the Quileute Tribe, I plan to produce a document for them that will essentially be a collection of names, going back as far as tribal members' memories will take us, along with as many stories about the names as we can gather. This will then belong to the tribe; copies will be placed in the tribal archive and the tribal school. But my work on the project will extend further, involving theoretical and anthropological studies in naming, language, and culture. Developing this contextual layer will actually take more time; it will be the “scholarly” level of the work. When finished, it might be worthy of publication in various journals, or perhaps in *The Community College Moment*. My presentation to the school will consist of a summary of those findings and some exemplary stories, along with a written copy of the paper.

In visits to LaPush over the last year, I have begun talking with various tribal members about this project (Roger Jackson, Russell Woodruff, Chris Morganroth, James Jamie, and others), and have already gathered some stories, and have begun a list of nicknames. This part of the research—the gathering of names and stories—will be ongoing, and so will be well underway by the time of the sabbatical. If this proposal is approved, I will immediately write a piece for the tribal newsletter asking people to help by sending me lists of nicknames they know. In visits to LaPush, I will continue to gather names and stories.

I have already talked to Frank Hanson, the superintendent of the Quileute Tribal School, about the project and proposed that school children join me when I interview tribal elders to hear stories from them; Frank thinks it's a great idea. The children can also operate recording equipment that the school owns. These recordings will support my project, but more importantly, they will be archived in the school for future use. I've also recently submitted a request to use an office space in the tribal school (my old office, as a matter of fact) as daily work space.

I also have begun gathering research materials for the general study of naming, naming practices, and nicknames (cf. Working Bibliography).

To summarize my goals: I plan to construct some answers to my theoretical and sociological questions about naming and nicknaming and write these up in a paper, at the core of which will be the materials I gather specifically on Quileute nicknames and stories.

Activities and Timeline

Preparation, before Spring 2012: Visit with tribal members and others in the LaPush community, especially elders (Roger Jackson, Russell Woodruff, Lela Mae Morganroth, Chris Morganroth, Aileen Penn, Bev Jackson Loudon, et al.). I have already talked with some of them, and they are excited about the project.

Work with linguist Jay Powell (University of British Columbia), who has studied Quileute language and culture for 40 years, and recorded several interviews with elders who have passed on. (I have already spoken with Dr. Powell, and he has offered support for the project.)

Publish article in *The Talking Raven* (Quileute monthly newsletter), eliciting memories, nicknames, and stories.

March, 2013 (spring break): move to LaPush

I plan to establish office space at the Quileute Tribal School, where I can work each day. Frank Hanson, school superintendent, has approved this. I'll start each morning by meeting with students and preparing for the scheduled interviews. Before lunch, we'll visit with elders and record the interviews. (Sometimes, based on interviewees' schedules, we'll do these later in the day or evening.) After lunch, I'll work in the office transcribing the stories. I'll also plan at least two hours a day to read and write from the materials in my bibliography.

Week 1: 1. Meet with teachers and students at Quileute Tribal School to prepare recording equipment and discuss the project.

1. Prepare list of nicknames and stories gathered so far.
2. Prepare schedule of interviews remaining to be done.

Week 2: 1. Continue reading from research materials
2. Interviews
3. Expand list and stories

Week 3: 1. Continue reading from research materials
2. Interviews
3. Expand list and stories

Week 4: 1. Continue reading from research materials
2. Interviews
3. Expand list and stories

Week 5: 1. Continue reading from research materials
2. Interviews
3. Expand list and stories

Week 6: 1. Compile lists of nicknames and stories
2. Compile research from readings

Week 7: 1. Write research report and conclusions

Week 8: 1. Continue writing
2. Format lists and stories
3. Prepare video materials

Week 9: 1. Continue writing
2. Format lists and stories
3. Prepare video materials

Week 10: 1. Finish writing
2. Complete the document of lists and stories for the tribe, and the contextual essay
3. Complete video materials

Week 11: Return to Eugene with completed documents and video materials; plan for presentation in September.

Part 2, GROWTH

One of the most important things I've come to believe, as a teacher of English, is that stories are central to who we are as well as to how we understand our world. As Muriel Rukeyser, an American poet who was politically active in the '30s and '40s, recognized, "The world is made of stories, not of atoms." This understanding has led to a relatively new area of academic and scholarly work called narrative psychology, or narratology, which examines exactly what I'm pursuing here: how people deal with experience by constructing stories and listening to the stories of others. This idea has become steadily more central to my teaching, and it has taken form in various ways. One of my main professional goals has been to find more and more ways of giving it form and practice—of helping students to understand what it means, and to become better tellers and readers of stories.

I teach literature courses (such as the American Lit survey and Intro to Fiction and Bob Dylan) and composition courses, and all of these offer students the opportunity to do that. In American Lit, we examine the wide variety of stories—often conflicting stories—that we tell about ourselves as a society. When students begin to understand how these stories have a huge role in constructing our national, cultural, and individual identities, they begin to see how important it is to learn their own stories, and take some control over telling them. I require my comp students to include themselves in their essays, explicitly, in anecdotes and stories; both they and their readers thus develop a clearer sense of who they are.

This project will be centered around stories—the stories that Quileute nicknames tell about individuals and about Quileute society, as well as the stories names and nicknames tell, generally. I expect that, through the project, I will become more aware of the role and power of stories, and more able to embody that awareness in practical pedagogical terms as a teacher.

The project will also give me the opportunity to do more fully developed research work than I have been able to do in a long time. As a grad student being trained in the profession, I did research and writing constantly. Though I hoped to get work in a teaching institution rather than a research institution, and was fortunate to manage that, I have often thought about research I would like to do, given time. Such imagined projects have ranged widely in topic and scope, and in spite of my absolute joy in not having to research and publish, they have sometimes been rather tantalizing.

The prospect now of pursuing the most interesting, and, I think, valuable, of those visions offers tremendous growth in my professional development.

Part of my professional life at Lane has involved participation in the American Indian Languages project; since the late '90s I've worked with Jerry Hall and others to get classes in Native Languages established at Lane. In this proposed sabbatical project, I will re-engage with the Quileute language, the first Native language I ever started to learn. This will not only strengthen my role with AILP, but perhaps also open further ways to support Native students at Lane.

My work as a faculty member involves teaching students (literature and composition courses), supporting the college and department in various committee and meeting activities (e.g., department search committees, campus Curriculum Committee, Longhouse Committee, AILP), and—less formally but equally important—being a colleague with my fellow teachers. The first and last of these will be most directly impacted by this project: the teaching is perhaps more relevant to the next part of this application, but the collegial aspect fits here. I'm extremely happy to be in a department where colleagues are friends, and we spend a good deal of time together, visiting in each others' offices as well as away from campus. Over the years, I have enjoyed hearing colleagues discuss their sabbatical experiences; these conversations have improved, as all such conversations do, our work as members of a team with shared purposes. They also have helped me to understand our shared profession better. I look forward to the opportunities I will have to contribute the story of my own sabbatical in such conversations.

Part 3, RELEVANCE

Much of the value and relevance of this proposed project has been covered in previous comments. Here I will try to pinpoint particular aspects of the division and discipline that seem most relevant.

Among our division policies, commitments to diversity and to the value of minority rhetorics are central. Working with the Quileute tribe to draw out the stories behind the nicknames will engage directly with these ideals. I was actually hired on a diversity job posting, seeking teachers of particular ethnic literatures including Native American literature, and have worked in various ways to embody and practice the ideals of my hire, as well as the general ideals of the division. In my application I noted my relationship with Indian activist and poet John Trudell, whom I've been able to bring to campus twice; I also emphasized my connections—through experience as well as marriage and family—to both the Quileute Tribe and the Ponca Tribe of Oklahoma. I've tried to bring that part of who I am into my teaching, often helping non-Native students to discover a side of America (and of Lane County, and Oregon) that they have never seen. This project will allow me to deepen my relationship with Quileute culture; it falls in line with the things I teach and the ways I teach (as I discuss a bit in part 2) and some of what I think I offer both my students and the division.

My continued study of Native languages is, of course, apropos in the LLC division, where we teach Chinook and discuss other Native languages. And the English department is, at its heart, a venue for the exploration of stories. In both literature and writing courses, my work always involves the reading and writing of stories, narratives, ideas, that make us who we are.

Part 4. COLLEGE CORE VALUES/DIRECTIONS

Choosing just one of the college's core values or strategic directions is a challenge, since this project addresses so many of them: it prepares me to better foster the story-telling habit in my students, and the discovery that their stories matter; it explores a culture that is different from the mainstream white society and brings that exploration back to the college to further foster diversity; it responds to the growing population of Native students at the college; it partners with a tribal community and fosters mutual support between the tribe and the college; it fosters respect for individual lives, stories, names; it allows young students at the Quileute Tribal School to participate in the development of their own cultural learning opportunities; it cultivates connections to global communities and supports the maintenance of tribal culture through stories.

The relevance to the core value of diversity might be the most direct. "Working effectively in different cultural contexts to serve the educational and linguistic needs of a diverse community" describes this project pretty well. I will be working directly with the Quileute people, from children in the Tribal School to the elders, and directly serving the educational goals of that school and the cultural goals of that community; bringing my materials and my learning back to Lane will offer further opportunities for "Welcoming, valuing, and promoting diversity among staff, students, and our community" here through my classroom practices and curricula as well as making me more aware and respectful of the stories everyone in the Lane community has to tell.

As a white person living on a reservation, I have learned to respect and value the cultural, social, and historical differences between the Quileutes and me; I have also learned, slowly and humbly over many years, how to participate appropriately in many aspects of tribal culture. These learnings will have an opportunity to grow through this project; these learnings have had, and will increasingly have, an impact on my teaching at Lane. Some of the impact is on specific aspects of my pedagogy, as I've explained at various points of this application; but more generally I think these learnings allow me to participate effectively in the college's desire to "Create a diverse and inclusive learning college" and "Develop institutional capacity to respond effectively and respectfully to students, staff, and community members of all cultures, languages, classes, races, genders, ethnic backgrounds, religious beliefs, sexual orientations, and abilities."

Part 5, EVALUATION and DISSEMINATION

I look forward to the annual sabbatical presentations each year, and will be excited to stand before my colleagues to share this project through video images, stories, explanation, and narrative. Beyond that, copies of the paper will be archived with the Quileute Tribe as well as the Lane library. Further possibilities include publication in *The Community College Moment* (in some form) or various academic journals. I also hope that we can create a department colloquium at which we can share our sabbatical experiences and discoveries. The basic success of the project will be determined by the completion and archiving of my paper in both places, and the effective presentation in the oral sabbatical report.

More importantly, I will judge my success by the impact this project has on my teaching, on my students, and on the Quileute Tribe. If the tribal children become actively involved in the hearing and telling of cultural stories through the nicknames project, that will be a huge success. If the elders of the tribe have some satisfaction that these stories will not be lost, that will be a huge success. If I'm able to encourage students at Lane to pay more attention to other people's stories, and to tell their own stories, and to really understand what it means to live in a world made of stories, that will be a huge success.

APPENDIX

I. Working Bibliography—Quileute Nicknames project, Jeff Harrison

- Adams, Michael. "Power, Politeness, and the Pragmatics of Nicknames." *Names: A Journal of Onomastics* Volume 57, Number 2, June 2009, pp. 81-91.
- Braun, Joye. "What's in a Name? Tribal colleges cultivate students' cultural identity." *Tribal College Journal*, Spring2008, Vol. 19 Issue 3, p14-19.
- Bruner, Jerome S. "The narrative construction of reality." *Critical Inquiry*, 18, 1991. 1-21.
- Clark, Gregory R. *Words of the Vietnam War: The Slang, Jargon, Abbreviations, Nicknames, Pseudonyms, Slogans, Specs, Euphemisms, Double-Talk, Chants, and Names and Places of the Era of United States Involvement in Vietnam*. McFarland, 1990.
- Coles, Robert. *The Call of Stories*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989.
- Deschenie, Tina. "Our Names, Our Selves." *Tribal College Journal*, Spring2008, Vol. 19 Issue 3, p10-11.
- Handbook of Pseudonyms and Personal Nicknames*. Harold S. Sharp. Scarecrow Press, 1975. (Introduction)
- Hinchman, Lewis and Sandra Hinchman, Eds. *Memory, Identity, Community: The Idea of Narrative in the Human Sciences*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1997.
- Karell, Linda K.. "'This story I am telling you is true': Collaboration and Literary Authority in Mourning Dove's Cogewea." *American Indian Quarterly*, Fall 95, Vol. 19 Issue 4, p451, 15p.
- Laduke, Winona. *Recovering the sacred: the power of naming and claiming*. Cambridge: South End Press, 2005.
- Lawson, Edwin D. *Personal names and naming: an annotated bibliography*. New York : Greenwood Press, 1987.
- Littlecrow-Russell, Sara. *The secret powers of naming*. . Tucson: Arizona UP, 2006. (Poems)
- Mehrabian, Albert and Marlina. Piercy. "Differences in Positive and Negative Connotations of Nicknames and Given Names." *Journal of Social Psychology*, Oct93, Vol. 133 Issue 5, p737-739.
- Miller, Dallas. "Mythic Rage and Laughter: An Interview with Gerald Vizenor." *Studies in American Indian Literatures* University of Nebraska Press, 1995.
- Morgan, Jane, C. O'Neill, Rom Harre, .*Nicknames: their origins and social consequences*. Boston: Routledge, 1979.
- "The Name Game." *National Review*, 3/7/1980, Vol. 32 Issue 5, p268-268, 1/2p.
- Nuessel, Frank. *The Study of Names: A Guide to the Principles and Topics*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1992.

Owen, David. "Call Me Lloyd: The Strange Power of Nicknames." *New Yorker*, 2/11/2008, Vol. 84 Issue 1, p84-89.

Oxford Dictionary of Nicknames. Andrew Delahunty (introduction)

Rainwater, Catherine. *Dreams of fiery stars: the transformations of native American fiction*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999

Silko, Leslie. *Yellow woman and a beauty of the spirit : essays on Native American life today*. New York: Touchstone, 1996.

Toomey, Noxon. *Proper names from the Muskogean language*. St. Louis, 1917.

Vizenor, Gerald. "The ruins of representation." *American Indian Quarterly*, Winter93, Vol. 17 Issue 1, p7.

vom Bruck, Gabriele and Barbara Bodenhorn, Eds. *The anthropology of names and naming*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge UP, 2006.

Welsch, Roger L. "The hyphenated American." *Natural History*, Mar94, Vol. 103 Issue 3, p24.

Wong, Hertha Dawn. *Sending my heart back across the years : tradition and innovation in Native American autobiography*. New York: Oxford UP, 1992.

Yellow Bird, Michael. "What we want to be called." *American Indian Quarterly*, Spring 99, Vol. 23 Issue 2, p1.

II. Tentative Interview Questions

1. What nicknames have you had over the years?
2. What are the stories behind them?
3. What nicknames do you remember from your childhood in LaPush?
4. Do you know the stories behind them?
5. What about over the years, and today? What other nicknames can you think of? What other name stories do you know?
6. Do you think nicknames are more or less common these days than they have been in the past? (Or as far as you can tell, is it pretty much the same?)
7. Do you think most people in the community know the stories behind the nicknames? Do you think it matters if people know the stories or not?
8. What social role do you think nicknames play in Quileute culture?
9. What names have become common words in the community language (like “mup” or “JD” as verbs, or “lela” as a noun)?
10. What about naming generally? How many people do you know in the community who have, or have taken on, Quileute names? Has this practice declined over the years? Why do you think some people do this, and some people don't?
11. What about last names? Do you know where your last name comes from?
12. What do you think of these questions, and this project?

These are the questions that will guide my interviews with tribal elders (and others in the community). They also can be used as activities in Tribal School classes. I will publish them in the tribal newsletter, too, so that tribal people outside of LaPush can participate in the survey.

III. Some brief examples

Last summer (2011) Russell Woodruff told me about his nickname, Rags, which I had never heard before. When Russell was young, he did a lot of house painting, and often wore ragged, paint-splattered clothes, thus garnering that name. But when his son grew and people started calling him Little Rags, Russell essentially passed the name on to him, so he is the one now called Rags. This raises another interesting issue: owning and passing on a name. (Wally, “Sluggo,” Jackson is another example of this: his father Oliver was Sluggo—and I am eager to find out the story behind that.)

Sandy Baker (Tom) got his nickname because, supposedly, he was born on the beach.

Dinky Jaime (James) told me just this past Christmas about his name. His older brother was called “Winky,” so when he himself was a baby his parents called him “Dinky,” so they had Winky and Dinky. Winky died young, though, and most people don't realize that Dink basically got his name from him.

IV. Why nicknames?

Besides the particular request from Roger Jackson, and the value, always, of learning people's stories, this project embodies an important cultural force reflected in the freedom to assert one's name. Many American Indians bear the last names of historical figures considered important by white society, but problematic in Indian history—“Jackson,” for example. Usually when young ones were taken away to boarding schools, such names were imposed on them as part of the assimilationist project of these institutions. “Naming” has always been more flexible in Indian cultures than white: a person could change his name, or the tribe could change someone's name, for many reasons, and sometimes many times. The assertion of a nickname is thus, to some degree, a way to re-claim one's identity through either self- or tribal-naming.