Charles Phelps Taft Research Center  
at the University of Cincinnati  
Center Fellowship Grant Application

Each section (I-IV) should be placed at the start of a new page. All required materials must be included in a single document, uploaded to the electronic submissions system, no later than 5PM on the published day of the deadline. Intradepartmental review and two external letters of support are required for this program. Applicants should submit their application with enough time to receive all letters of support prior to the close of the deadline. Taft does not accept an obligation to review applications that have not received the required letters of support by the close of the deadline.

I. General Information
   a. Name: XXXXXXX
   b. M#: XXXXXXX
   c. Department: XXXXXXX
   d. Position: Associate Professor
   e. Project title: Cherokee of the Cumberland.
   f. Potential external funding that might arise from this project: Cherokee of the Cumberland is a proposed anthropological book project about an overlooked community of Native Americans living in a remote region of the southeastern United States. This book will use a compilation of archival records, ethnohistories, and archaeological data to write a culture history of this poorly known Indigenous community. Completion of this book during a Taft Center Fellowship will enable me to apply for subsequent funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Native American Scholars Initiative (NASI) and the American Philosophical Society’s Center for Native American and Indigenous Research (CNAIR). These funding sources aim to promote greater collaboration between Native American scholars, archives, and Indigenous communities.
   g. Intended results of funded research, e.g., concrete plans for publication or conference presentations: Following completion of the Taft Center Fellowship, the book manuscript, Cherokee of the Cumberland, will be submitted for review to a Native American Studies press for publication (e.g., University of California Press, 2120 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, CA 94720; University of Nebraska Press, 312 North 14th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68588; University of Arizona Press, 1230 N. Park Ave., Suite 102, Tucson, AZ 85719; and University of Chicago Press, 5801 South Ellis, Chicago, Illinois 60637).
II. Taft Grant History

Please list your grant history with Taft for the last 5 years, in reverse chronological order. Please list project title, the name, date, and amount of award, as well as development of the project subsequent to the grant, e.g. publication.

Taft grant history (last 5 years)


2019. Taft International Conference Travel Grant *Climatic and Human Impacts of Catastrophic Volcanic Events during the late Holocene*. INQUA, Dublin, Ireland, $2,206.00.

2018. Charles Phelps Summer Fellowship. “The impact of maize on Native American agricultural soil.” $8,000.00


2016. Charles Phelps Taft Travel Grant. International Conference Travel Grant. “Removing Coal Contaminants from Chaco Canyon Radiocarbon Samples.” $1,684.00.

Resulting Publications:

Resulting Books:


Edited Volume


Resulting Peer-reviewed Book Chapters:


Resulting Peer-reviewed Journal Articles


2018. Soil analysis in discussions of agricultural feasibility for ancient civilizations: A critical review and reanalysis of the data and debate from Chaco Canyon, New Mexico. *PLOS ONE* https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0198290


2016 Catastrophic Volcanism and its Implication
III. Project Proposal (1000 to 1400 words)

Introduction

I am applying for a Taft Center Fellowship for a planned anthropological book project, Cherokee of the Cumberland. The proposed book is about an overlooked community of Native Americans living in a remote region of the southeastern United States. If funded, the Taft Center Fellowship will provide me with the much needed writing time and the interdisciplinary intellectual humanities community needed to write the book manuscript and prepare it for publication. The book will be an innovative culture history of the Cherokee who have lived in physiographic area of the Cumberland Mountains, Cumberland Plateau, and Cumberland River valley for more than 14,000 years.

Justification

The proposed Taft Center Fellowship book project, Cherokee of the Cumberland, will be a publishable work and a significant contribution in the field of anthropology. While books on the Cherokee have been written since the eighteenth century (e.g., Timberlake 1765; Kenney and Hall 1836; Mooney 1891; Brown 1938), they focused on the original southern territorial limits of the Cherokee Nation including the states of Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, and North Carolina. More recent books have concentrated on the forced removal of the Cherokee to Oklahoma (i.e., the Trail of Tears) and their subsequent survival and cultural adaptation to the western United States (e.g., Foreman 1932; King 1979; McLoughlin 1986; Ehle 1988; Green and Perdue 1995; Perdue 1998; Fitzgerald and Conley 2002). The original northern territorial limits of the Cherokee Nation, which include the Cumberland region of Kentucky and Virginia have been largely ignored. This situation has led to a geographic and cultural bias in our anthropological interpretations of the Cherokee.
The landscape of the Cumberland region of Kentucky and Virginia is known as karst, defined by characteristic topographic features such as sinkholes, sinking streams, springs, and caves. While the Cherokee call themselves AniYywíya, the Principal People, the word Cherokee, Tsalagi, comes from the Choctaw word Choluk, which means cave. The Mohawk word for the Cherokee is Oyata’ge’ronoñ, which means people who live in caves. The Catawba word for Cherokee is Mañterañ, people who come out of caves.

Archaeologically, the caves of the Cumberland region of Kentucky and Virginia are filled with evidence of ancient Cherokee exploration, mineral mining, and ceremonial activity (Tankersley 1996). One of the most distinctive Cherokee symbols found inscribed in charcoal on the walls of caves of this region is the “Booger Mask” (below). These ritual masks are worn by male dancers known as "Boogers" during the traditional Cherokee “Booger Dance.” The ceremony is performed in the dark during the late fall or early winter.

John Wesley Powell’s Linguistic Map of North America (above) shows that Cherokee, an Iroquoian language, was spoken in the Cumberland region of Kentucky and Virginia in 1881. It is still spoken by families of Cherokee heritage in Harlan, Clay, and Jackson counties Kentucky and in adjacent Scott County, Virginia. Many of these families also maintain Cherokee traditions and customs.

In addition to contemporary Cherokee cultural practices, this area contains a plethora of detailed recorded oral histories and written local histories about the lives of little known figures in Cherokee history, military history against the Cherokee, the missionary movement, racism, nationalism, and a lack of ethical restraint (e.g., Addington 1972; American State Papers 1789-1813, Bird 1792; Brown 1936, 1971; Cole 1978; Collins 1847; Dickey 1898; Draper 1755-1815; Evans 1976; Kutsche 1986; McDowell 1970; Miller 1906; Rowland 1917; Seiver 1796-1801; Starr 1922; Walker-Burns n.d.; Washington 1792; Wilson 1978, 2002). For more than 20 years, I have amassed an extensive collection of oral histories, local written histories, and
archaeological site data from the Cumberland mountains, river valley, and plateau areas. These collections provide an ethnohistorical goldmine for writing the culture history of the Cherokee who have lived in this area for more than 14,000 years. This information will be used to diachronically reconstruct the culture and livelihoods of the Cherokee in this region. Unfortunately, I have not had the much needed uninterrupted writing time and the interdisciplinary intellectual humanities community environment needed to write the book manuscript and prepare it for publication.

Established Record of Research

For some four decades, I have conducted research on Native Americans in eastern North America. This research has resulted in more than 160 peer-review publications and has been featured on the National Geographic Channel, the Discovery Channel, the History Channel, the Animal Planet, the Weather Channel, BBC Nature, NOVA, and PBS. My two most recent books (2018 Piqua Shawnee: Cultural Survival in their Homeland, co-authored with Ruth Morgan, Janet Clinger, and Barbara S. Lehmann, and 2016 Dr. Charles Louis Metz and the American Indian Archaeology of the Little Miami River Valley, co-authored with Robert Newman) used comparable compilations of oral and local histories and archaeological data to write innovative ethno- and culture histories.

Contribution to the Scholarly Literature

The book project, Cherokee of the Cumberland, will bridge the gap in Cherokee scholarly literature that has either focused on the original southern territory of the Cherokee Nation, the forced relocation of Cherokee from their ancestral homelands to the Indian Territory west of the Mississippi River in 1831 known as the Trail of Tears, or the establishment of the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma. This book project will focus on a group of Native Americans who refused to move, retreating into the wilderness of the Cumberland region, inter-marrying with white traders and settlers. In some cases, family members escaped the removal process and found their way back to live in their homeland. Their survival depended upon their ability to suppress their culture and heritage publicly, generation after generation. Despite almost two centuries of cultural concealment, the Cherokee of the Cumberland have survived in this region for more than 14,000 years.

Contributions to a Multidisciplinary Intellectual Environment

If funded, the Taft Center Fellowship will permit me to regularly interact with members of the Taft Research Center and other Taft Fellows. In addition to sustained quality writing time, the Taft Center Fellowship will provide me with opportunities to participate in synergistic, multidisciplinary, and innovative discussions and seminars on a wide variety of humanistic subjects. The intellectual environment and
interdisciplinary community of the Taft Research Center is crucial to the success of my proposed book project, *Cherokee of the Cumberland*, because it will give me invaluable insights into timeless humanitarian questions that extend far beyond my traditional anthropological training and perspectives. As a Native American anthropologist, I also believe that I can contribute positively to both the intellectual environment and cultural diversity of the Taft Center Fellows.

**Proposed Project Schedule**

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<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Writing Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2020</td>
<td>August-September 2020</td>
<td>Chapter 1. Geographic and Cultural Setting of the Cumberland Region.</td>
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<td>October 2020</td>
<td>Chapter 2. People of the Cave (Mythology and Oral Histories)</td>
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<td>November 2020</td>
<td>Chapter 3. Prehistory of the Cumberland Region (Cherokee Archaeology)</td>
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<td>December 2020</td>
<td>Chapter 4. Early History of the Cumberland Region (European Contact to the 18th Century—European Conflicts)</td>
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<td>March 2021</td>
<td>Chapter 7. Conclusion</td>
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<td></td>
<td>April 2021</td>
<td>Introduction, Preface, Table of Contents, and Index</td>
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<td></td>
<td>May 2021</td>
<td>Final Editing and Submission</td>
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Proposed Format for Final Publication

Following completion of the Taft Center Fellowship, the book manuscript, *Cherokee of the Cumberland*, will be submitted for review to a *Native American Studies* press for publication (e.g., University of California Press, 2120 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, CA 94720; University of Nebraska Press, 312 North 14th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68588; University of Arizona Press, 1230 N. Park Ave., Suite 102, Tucson, AZ 85719; and University of Chicago Press, 5801 South Ellis, Chicago, Illinois 60637).

References Cited:


Bird, R. 1792 *Extracts of Correspondence on Indian Affairs*, October, Washington.

Brown, J. P. 1936 *Eastern Cherokee Chiefs*, *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, 16(1).


Foreman, G. 1932 *Indian Removal*, University of Oklahoma Press.


McDowell Jr., W. L. 1970 *Documents relating to Indian affairs, 1754-1765*. South Carolina Archives Department, Columbia.


Perdue T., 1998 *Cherokee Women*, University of Nebraska Press.


Washington, G. 1792 *Extracts of Correspondence on Indian Affairs, October 1792*, National Archives, Washington.

Wilson, J. D. 1978 *When They Hanged the Fiddler*. Possum Trot University Press, Manchester.