



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

DIVISION OF RESEARCH PROGRAMS

Narrative Section of a Successful Application

The attached document contains the grant narrative of a previously funded grant application. It is not intended to serve as a model, but to give you a sense of how a successful application may be crafted. Every successful application is different, and applicants are urged to prepare a proposal that reflects their unique project and aspirations. Prospective applicants should consult the Research Programs application guidelines at <https://www.neh.gov/grants/research/collaborative-research-grants> for instructions.

The attachment only contains the application narrative, not the entire funded application. In addition, certain portions may have been redacted to protect the privacy interests of an individual and/or to protect confidential commercial and financial information and/or to protect copyrighted materials.

The application format has been changed since this application was submitted. You must follow the guidelines in the currently posted Notice of Funding Opportunity (see the Notice posted on the Collaborative Research program page linked above).

Project Title: Sovereign Kin: A History of the Cherokee Nation

Institution: Pennsylvania State University

Project Director: Julie Reed

Grant Program: Collaborative Research

Narrative

Project Overview

The most recent comprehensive history of the Cherokee Nation was written in 1963; it continues to sell more than 500 copies a year through an academic press. It fails, however, to address key issues, such as gender and race, raised by social and cultural historians since the 1960s, let alone cover the last sixty years of Cherokee history. Citizens and leaders of the Cherokee Nation, scholars, journalists, educators, and public historians have expressed to us their shared frustration with that text and the need for an up-to-date book written in accessible, engaging prose. We are working with an agent to pitch this project to presses capable of bringing this book to the widest possible audience. As we identify a publisher and seek funding, we already are writing *Sovereign Kin: A History of the Cherokee Nation*. With the support of the NEH Collaborative Grant, we intend to conduct two final research trips to Oklahoma that will include an archival trip to the Cherokee Nation and Oklahoma Historical Society and also to collect interviews with Cherokee leaders and community members. With course releases funded by the NEH, we will complete a draft of the manuscript by August 2025.

Significance and Impact

We seek funding from the NEH to support a collaborative project addressing the lack of readily available and accessible information on the comprehensive history of the Cherokee Nation. We are writing *Sovereign Kin: A History of the Cherokee Nation* for general audiences. We will synthesize the best of Cherokee Studies and historical, anthropological, linguistic, and community scholarship by and about Cherokees into a book that will serve as a resource for journalists, educators, and academics who seek accurate information; a reference for Cherokee and non-Cherokee people who want and need to understand Cherokee history; and a starting point for deeper learning and conversation about Cherokee sovereignty and survivance. We will integrate our original perspectives drawn from our work in the primary sources, within Cherokee communities, and as educators who teach this material to student and community learners.

This book is needed because while the word “Cherokee” is widely recognized today, our experience (and that of other scholars of Cherokees and of many Cherokee leaders and people) is that many non-Native people think all “real” Cherokees died on the Trail of Tears. To them, the term now refers to a sporty model of car or a common street name in suburban subdivisions. Even among those aware that Cherokees survived removal and rebuilt their nation, misinformation is widespread. For example, in May 2021, mainstream news outlets reported that the Navajo Nation had surpassed the Cherokee Nation as having the largest enrolled population. With approximately 392,000 citizens, the Cherokee Nation continues to add members to the tribal roll, however, and the two nations likely will continue to swap spots for the near future. Social media reacted, and the range of responses is instructive and representative of larger discussions around Cherokee history, culture, and identity. Many commenters, seemingly those who aren’t enrolled citizens, self-identified as also “being Cherokee.” Exemplifying “Cherokee Grandmother Syndrome,” which refers to non-Native (particularly white) appropriation of Cherokee identity, these people referenced ancestors -- almost always grandmothers -- and claimed belonging by tweeting/posting about wanting to enroll or having been refused enrollment. Usually citing family stories and historically implausible scenarios as their evidence and rarely able to produce documentation, these claimants to Cherokee identity often do so for professional or financial gain.

Other tweeters/posters, particularly those who identify as Indigenous people and the citizens of other Native nations, derided the large number and noted that Cherokee Nation citizenship stems from lineal descent from a roll created at the turn of the twentieth century by the federal government. Unlike the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and the United Keetoowah Band, the other two federally recognized Cherokee tribes, the Cherokee Nation *does not* require citizens to have a minimum blood quantum, which refers to a percentage of presumed ancestry. Jokes about “white Cherokees” abound. These are largely the legacy of racialized nineteenth-century Cherokee Nation citizenship laws that privileged the children of intermarried whites and excluded African-descended peoples.

Sarcastic and humorous comments on social media mask real gaps in historical and cultural understanding that have measurable negative impacts on Cherokee peoples. For example, despite laws that generously and repeatedly made concessions for Cherokees with European ancestry and intermarried spouses, officials with the Cherokee Nation estimate that over two hundred groups fraudulently claim to be Cherokee “tribes” today. By seeking to speak as Cherokees -- particularly to access resources, including government funds -- these groups, composed predominantly of white-presenting people, undermine Cherokee sovereignty. The “Pretendian” issue is one of many challenges faced by Cherokee elected officials, scholars, and community leaders. Issues related to public health (the Cherokee Nation’s handling of COVID and loss of elder language speakers) jurisdiction (*McGirt v. Oklahoma* in 2020), child welfare and adoption (the “Baby Veronica” case, or *Adoptive Couple v. Baby Girl* in 2013), representation in Congress, and the civil rights of freedmen and women (the descendants of those enslaved by Cherokees, including those with Cherokee ancestry) have all made headlines and prompted debate in the last decade. Who is providing context to understand these important issues? We have both advised journalists, given public lectures, Tweeted, and blogged. To enable the broadest public to understand the Cherokee Nation in the 2020s, we need to provide them with this information in one place.

For this reason, we are writing *Sovereign Kin* for diverse audiences within and beyond the academy. We want our colleagues to assign this text in their courses and students from other institutions who email us asking questions for their research projects to be able to find this material on their own. We also are able to address the common gaps in historical knowledge that we see in non-scholarly settings. Few non-Native people, including politicians and journalists as well as average participants on popular social media platforms, have knowledge about Cherokee treaties, governance, or social organization, which are the foundation of tribal sovereignty. Even though k-12 history textbooks almost universally touch on Indian Removal, the Trail of Tears, and the Supreme Court cases that resulted from the Cherokee Nation’s legal opposition to their dispossession, the takeaway is often a moral one instead of an emphasis on the legal outcome -- a United States legal precedent for the continued exercise of tribal sovereignty. Of equal importance, because of removal policy and multiple, subsequent federal Indian policies that divided Cherokee people from one another, and the broader forces prompting the emigration of rural people, Cherokee Nation citizens live in every state and around the globe. California hosts the most Cherokees outside of Oklahoma, but large populations of at-large citizens live in Texas, Arizona, Arkansas, Missouri, Colorado, Oregon, Washington, and urban areas across the US. As a result of this dispersion, many Cherokee people want to know more about this history so that they, too, can put current events in historical context.

Substance and Context

As educators and public scholars, we recognize the need for “big picture” books written in accessible language that provide comprehensive coverage of a Native nation or region. We look to successful models of books that were intentionally written for readers outside of the academy by historians deeply grounded in the discipline and committed to relevance and usefulness in equal measure. This includes the work of Brenda J. Child in *Holding Our World Together: Ojibwe Women and the Survival of Community* (Penguin, 2013) and *My Grandfather's Knocking Sticks: Ojibwe Family Life and Labor on the Reservation* (Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2014). In the former, Child provides a sweeping overview of three centuries of Ojibwe history centered around the narratives of women, both powerful and obscure, whose lives represent significant historical trends. In the latter, Child integrates family stories, oral history, community memory, and BIA records to tell the story of Ojibwe people on reservations throughout the Great Lakes in the late-nineteenth through mid-twentieth centuries. Likewise, we will begin each chapter with a vignette introducing readers to either widely unknown persons in Cherokee history or offering reinterpretations of known individuals. Child's skillful and elegant integration of documentary evidence and oral tradition also serves as a model for our work, in which we will incorporate extensive information from interviews conducted in the 1930s and 1960s and those we will collect ourselves.

We also were inspired by Damon B. Akins and Willie Bauer, Jr.'s *We Are the Land: A History of Native California* (University of California Press, 2021) to consider how stepping beyond the bounds of historical analysis to include a synthesis of a diverse array of scholarly perspectives integrated with an unapologetic commitment to telling Native stories is possible, particularly when covering diverse communities over a centuries-long period of time. Last, we see Nick Estes' *Our History Is the Future: Standing Rock Versus the Dakota Access Pipeline and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance* (Verso, 2019) as an example of how to write compelling historical narratives that center current-day crisis and enable readers to understand the centuries-long, complicated context through exciting prose that never reduces or simplifies. We've long known this book on Cherokee history was needed. We now have models of how to write it.

Cherokee Studies also has matured such that multiple path breaking texts have emerged to shape the broader historiography about the South, Native peoples, race, and women and gender, but no one has yet crafted a comprehensive narrative of these groundbreaking works that tell a current, up-to-date version of Cherokee history for the mass market. In a way, historians of Cherokees have meaningfully reinterpreted Southern history, Native history, and US women's history, but no one has yet explained that contribution to non-specialist readers. Several texts on Cherokee history motivate this book. We want to center two, in particular. First, we are scholars trained by Theda Perdue, whose *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835* revolutionized Native and US women's history (Bison Books, 1999). Challenging generations of (mostly) male historians whose interpretations rendered Native women invisible and insignificant and feminist historians who assumed the catastrophic declension of women's power resulting from colonization, Perdue demonstrated how centering women in our research methods and narrative construction enables us to identify both change and continuity and explain Cherokee cultural persistence and survivance. Pathbreaking for its time, Perdue's analysis ends at removal and invites us to craft a social history that centers women and gendered analysis, including of Cherokee masculinity, through the nineteenth, twentieth, and into the twenty-first centuries.

Of equal importance, multiple scholars have invited consideration of Cherokees and race. The most significant of these is Tiya Miles in *Ties That Bind: The Story of an Afro-Cherokee Family and Slavery and Freedom* (University of California Press, 2005), which she followed in 2010 with *The House on Diamond Hill: A Cherokee Plantation Story*. In the former, Miles invites us to consider the most far-reaching and significant questions about race, settler colonialism, and tribal sovereignty in her analysis of Shoe Boots and Doll, a Cherokee warrior and enslaved African woman who was both his partner and property. In the latter, Miles laid to rest questions about the supposed leniency of slavery among Native slaveholders and instead lays bear the violence that permeated the Vann Plantation, still standing in Chatsworth, Georgia. Like Perdue, Miles ends her analysis in *Ties That Bind* in the nineteenth century, and yet her framing of Cherokee identity and race from within the lens of family history begs continuation in the years following allotment and statehood.

Tiya Miles's *House on Diamond Hill* also prompted a larger scholarly conversation on how southerners remember and capitalize on the history of Indian Removal. More recently Andrew Denson added to this conversation through his 2017 book, *Monuments to Absence: Cherokee Removal and the Contest Over Southern Memory*. These scholarly conversations map on to larger debates over public memory, race, and statues and monuments playing out across the United States. In June 2020, the Cherokee Nation removed two Civil War monuments from the lawn of its capitol building. These debates within the Cherokee Nation contained more nuanced discussions of race and memory that were lost among the larger public, which our work will help elucidate and contextualize.

Having each published one monograph and nearing completion of a second, we are deeply immersed in the primary sources documenting the Cherokee past. From colonial-era travelogues; military and pension records; tribal, state, and federal papers; newspapers; missionary records; oral histories; ethnobotany; archaeology; ethnographic and anthropological studies; and artistic representations, one or both of us has read it and analyzed it. Cherokees are the most thoroughly documented Native nation in the United States, and the sheer volume of material documenting Cherokee experiences of the past is staggering. This enables us to craft a narrative rooted in the methods of social history that invites readers to understand the origins of Cherokee society; the dominant themes of Cherokee culture; the major impacts of settler colonialism; the significant strategies of resistance enabling survival; and the patterns of revitalization and resurgence that characterize modern Cherokee history.

Sovereign Kin will be divided into six major sections, comprising two to four chapters each, and an introduction and epilogue. Each chapter will introduce readers to ancestral Cherokees and Cherokee individuals and families. Some will be familiar to readers somewhat versed with Cherokee history, but others will likely be strangers. These are people we have come to know through our research and whose lives and experiences exemplify the complex questions and challenges faced by Cherokee people over time and the diversity of decisions reached by subsets of Cherokee people. We have invited a Cherokee graphic artist to create a portrait for each. Beginning and ending the book with the present is a conscious choice to remind readers that Cherokee people and their governing bodies still exist and flourish today and that this past shapes our present. Intentionally connecting the past to present in each chapter emphasizes survivance and makes Cherokee ways of being legible to those alive today. We do this with an allusion to Cherokee Nation citizen Tracey Sorrell's award-winning 2018 children's book, *We Are Grateful: Otsaliheliga*, emphasizing common threads uniting a diverse Cherokee people.

Cherokee history is the story of kinship, of family written through common culture, political struggle, and persistence.

The Cherokee word for history and story are one in the same, *kanohesgi*. In the same spirit, *Sovereign Kin* will thread the stories of Cherokee people's lives together to construct a history of the Cherokee Nation. Because the book will span generations and cover hundreds of years and move hundreds of miles, the human characters may change, but the threads of Cherokee social, political, community, and cultural connections that adapted to meet Cherokee people's needs over time are what tie the book together from beginning to end. This is appropriate for an additional reason, the word *kanohesgi* refers to story and to history without an emphasis on chronological time. Cherokee story, history, and the present can all coexist in the here and now and in the past. *Kanohesgi* defies time. This seems fitting since Native people, scholars of Native American history, and critics of educational materials about Native American history make consistent calls to not relegate Native people to the past. Conceptually, for Cherokee speakers and thinkers, *kanohesgi* contains the past, present, and the future.

Methods and Execution

Trained as ethnohistorians, we read primary sources for evidence of change over time informed through the lens of culture, or the non-instinctual aspects of collective human behavior. By centering Cherokee ways of thinking and being in our analyses, we center Cherokee voices using evidence from documents sometimes written by but as often written about Cherokees by outsiders. In addition to our original interpretation of the primary sources, we will synthesize the best of Cherokee Studies and historical, anthropological, linguistic, and community scholarship.

Both chapters in Section One "Roots" will rely heavily on archaeological, linguistic, ethnobotanical, and geographic sources and oral tradition. It will also draw from oral traditions, art and the material culture of the larger Southeastern region. Through narrative histories like that of Grandfather Buzzard and Granddaughter Water Beetle's creation of the world together, "Roots" will emphasize the rules of kinship as the political, social, and economic fibers that tied interconnected Cherokee families and autonomous Cherokee towns together and linked Cherokee people to the other-than-human beings with whom they share this world. It will emphasize the durability of Cherokee ways of being prior to the arrival of the Spanish in 1540.

Section two, "Resilience," comprising two chapters covering the eighteenth and first decades of the nineteenth centuries, emphasizes the ways in which Cherokee society evolved in relationship with the expansion of settler colonies in proximity to and then in their homeland; while not downplaying violence of settler colonialism. This section lays out the impacts of the deerskin and the Transatlantic slave trade on Cherokee people as well as the political decision-making that led to the formation of what is today the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, one of the other three federally recognized Cherokee tribes. Although the long eighteenth century is filled with disruptions and violence, our work avoids a reactive framework by centering the durability of key aspects of Cherokee culture and Cherokee agency.

Section three, "Detachments," contains three chapters. It picks up on discussions of divisions within the nation and outmigration, emphasizes the disruptive outcomes of settler colonialism resulting in removal (through detachments and detachment from homelands) and the decades of violence among Cherokees over it and the future of the nation, which resulted in detachments from customs of kinship and cultural checks on intragroup violence. This section argues that Cherokee removal must be understood as a process that unfolded over generations as opposed to a single event, the Trail of Tears, that occurred from 1838-1839. Cherokee people

today understand that some of their family members, overwhelmed by the violent intrusions of settlers and disenchanted with some aspects of the Cherokee's Nation's governmental reforms, moved west decades before forced removal. Less acknowledged by Cherokee people today, but equally important, others relinquished their political rights to citizenship through treaty provisions in 1817 and 1819. These individuals chose to remain in the east on individual 640-acre reserves. Some of those who remained in the east were slave-holding Cherokee women. Many of these individuals initially benefited from their "civilized" status as Christian, bicultural, market-driven capitalists. Others took contiguous tracts of land in North Carolina and form the base of those who are the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in Cherokee, North Carolina today. Individuals from both groups, some through coercion, others by choice, removed to Indian Territory after the Civil War in the late 1870s and early 1880s. This longer chronology of removal is a more accurate rendering of Cherokee Removal, but it requires a more nuanced understanding of the generations-long pressures to remove and the unique experiences of removal faced by subsets of Cherokee people. This book asks readers with a working, but likely incomplete, knowledge of Indian Removal to reconsider their understanding of even familiar topics.

In three chapters, section four, "Reconciliation," explains the reconciliation of Cherokees through their political system after the United States Civil War, particularly as expressed through their civic institutions. In the wake of the United States dissolution of the Cherokee Nation through allotment of their communal lands and Oklahoma statehood, Cherokee people reinvigorated their ceremonial spaces and intervened in Oklahoma civic institutions when necessary to protect community members. Without downplaying the violence and intrusion and allotment, we emphasize Cherokee agency as Cherokee people reconciled themselves to allotment and statehood.

In six chapters, section five, "Endurance" and section six, "Resurgence" will cover nearly the entirety of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st. These sections will mark the first scholarly attempt to synthesize this history for a wide audience. There is remarkably little attention to the Cherokee Nation's history post-statehood, except for the fieldwork completed by anthropologists in the 1960s, most notably Robert K. Thomas and Ray Fogelson. Section five will examine the multipronged efforts of social organizations, towns, and individual families to mitigate the tremendous economic and social losses that resulted from statehood with attention to gaps between public political strategizing and on-the-ground community organizing, often bolstered by the efforts of Cherokee women. Section six highlights the formal political reorganization of the third federally recognized tribe, the United Keetoowah Band (UKB), in the late 1950s and the formal reorganization of the Cherokee Nation in the 1970s as well as its legacies through the current day. It will include a discussion of the resurgence of historical conflicts over race including the controversy over the inclusion of the descendants of freedmen and women. These sections will require most of our research time with the support of the NEH. We intend to conduct research at the Oklahoma Historical Society and in the Cherokee Nation's archives. We also intend to conduct interviews with former employees and elected officials, some of whom have agreed to read and offer feedback on the manuscript. Additionally, we have sought out readers who have taken vastly different political positions within the Nation over time. This certainly complicates our task, but also presents a real opportunity to lay the groundwork for those seeking to better understand the core political disagreements among community members in more recent history.

History of the project and its productivity

This project began long before we became involved. By this we mean that scholars of Cherokee history and Cherokee leaders have seen the need for a new narrative history of the nation for decades. When we were graduate students in the early 2000s, this conversation was ongoing. We can provide two examples. First, the Cherokee Nation sought to address the lack of shared knowledge through the creation and offering of its own history course beginning in the 1990s. Designed for tribal employees and citizens, this continuing education course is offered in Tahlequah, the capital of the Cherokee Nation, or other communities in northeastern Oklahoma with large Cherokee populations. Rose took the course while researching her dissertation in Oklahoma, and even then the instructor expressed her frustration with a lack of suitable texts. The course pack is dense and full of primary sources and selected secondary records (including work by Julie and Rose), but the narrative overview is provided in the class meetings, and it is not comprehensive. The Cherokee Nation history course was neither designed to be nor can it be scaled to be inclusive of the general public. Moreover, it has evolved to provide that content most relevant to tribal employees whose success in their jobs best serves the Cherokee people. Second, Robert J. Conley, an enrolled citizen of the United Keetoowah Band and novelist, wrote a history of the Cherokee Nation published in 2008. Although anticipated by many, the book was immediately criticized for inaccuracy and a lack of documentation. It is not widely used within or beyond the academy.

As scholars of Cherokee history, we have been researching this project for our entire careers of two-decades now. While working on our second individual monographs and collaborating on side projects, we recognized that this was the next logical step as scholars and colleagues. In 2021, we created a shared Google Doc and began writing the proposal for *Sovereign Kin*. We have submitted that to an agent and are in discussions about revisions before submission. Nearing the completion of our second book projects, we both have committed to this as our third monograph.

Collaboration

We are well positioned to successfully write this book and attract a wide audience. We are experts on Cherokee history with multiple scholarly publications, decades of award-winning teaching with different demographics of learners, and a track record of engagement with broad audiences within and beyond the academy. We have intentionally sought out opportunities to collaborate with community scholars and Indigenous cultural heritage and genealogical employees, write for diverse readers, work with educators, and engage those who share our passion for Cherokee history and that of the broader Native South. This book project is the logical evolution of the work we have done for the last two decades and the kind of publicly accessible scholars we have become with intention.

More about Julie:

I became an unofficial historian of Cherokee history at the age of seven after I discovered my first primary document, my father's original birth certificate. The document "had the wrong last name." It listed the surname Smith, his birth name before he was legally adopted by his non-Cherokee stepfather as a teenager. Although I always knew I was Cherokee, the more complicated family history, which included a biological Cherokee grandfather I had never met, launched me on a circuitous personal and academic journey. Institutions--the Air Force, the Methodist church, and public education--have provided the foundations for and often the barriers

to my personal and intellectual explorations. After graduation from college, I attended Perkins School of Theology at SMU in Dallas, Texas where I earned a Master's of Theological Studies. During seminary, I wrote my major paper on Cherokee women's spirituality, which included interviews with former Principal Chief Wilma Mankiller and her adult daughters. For the next six years, I worked for and with the School District of Hillsborough County as a high school teacher and a case manager for middle school students. My experiences as a public-school teacher and the relationships I formed with the students I served taught me more about the inequities embedded in educational institutions than any book ever could. This knowledge underscores the importance of creating accessible materials for a broad audience. Throughout this period, I knew what was next professionally. My academic training culminated in an MA and PhD in American History from UNC Chapel Hill. I spent the first eight years of my professorial career working at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville on the traditional homelands of my ancestors. Since 2019, I have been a professor of American History at Penn State.

Although I am unapologetically, first and foremost, a historian of Cherokee history, I am also a historian of social welfare and American education. I have published one book on Cherokee history, *Serving the Nation: Cherokee Sovereignty and Social Welfare, 1800-1907* and recently submitted (b) (4)

[REDACTED]. Since 2015, I have been working with an interdisciplinary team of Cherokee and non-Cherokee archaeologists and cavers to examine early uses of Sequoyah's syllabary in caves throughout the southeast. As a result of this work, I have co-authored articles in *Antiquity* and *American Antiquity* and been featured in news articles and documentaries related to this work. I am frequently called upon as an historical expert on Cherokee history within the Cherokee Nation and beyond. I have appeared in several documentaries including the documentary film *Searching for Sequoyah* released on national PBS affiliates in November 2021. I have been regularly featured on the Cherokee Nation produced series *OsiyoTV* and been interviewed by the *Washington Post*, NPR, and BBC.

More about Rose:

My interest in Native American history also stems from early childhood experiences. Of settler descent, I grew up immersed in images of Indians that normalized settler colonialism. The daughter of a member of the John Wayne fan club, I was socialized to believe that classic Western films accurately represented Native cultures and relations among Native peoples, settlers, and the US government. I also grew up surrounded by images of Chief Illiniwek, the University of Illinois's faux Indian mascot, and believed I was honoring Native people each time I sang "Oskee Wow-wow" at halftime. As an undergraduate at UIUC, my curiosity prompted me to sign up for an alternative spring break trip to the Lac du Flambeau reservation in Wisconsin. During that week, I learned that I actually knew nothing about Native histories, cultures, and experiences and what I had been taught was inaccurate. Two things changed: first, I began studying Native American history because I can't imagine anything more interesting or important. I thought that twenty years ago. I still believe that. Second, I became committed to community education as a tool for social change and joined the Native students already organizing to retire the mascot. I decided to continue my education and subsequently earned my M.A. and Ph.D. in History from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. From 2006-16, I was a member of the faculty in American Indian Studies and History at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke (UNCP), an historically Indigenous-serving institution located in the

homeland of the Lumbee people. Since 2016, I have been a professor of History and Gender and Sexuality Studies at Davidson College.

In my early scholarship, I focused on gender and federal Indian policy. I joke that I had to write my dissertation only to realize that I had written it wrong. Originally a study of allotment policy, I recognized that for readers to understand the impact of this federal policy mandating the subdivision and privatization of communally-owned tribal land, they needed to read about it not from the perspective of those who debated it in the halls of Congress or implemented it through the Indian Service but through the common experiences of those who were allotted. I rewrote my dissertation into my first monograph, a “bottom’s up” study of allotment focused on the experiences of Cherokee people in one community, Chewey. *Sustaining the Cherokee Family: Kinship and the Allotment of an Indigenous Nation*, published by the University of North Carolina Press in 2011, won the Willie Lee Rose Prize from the Southern Association of Women’s Historians. While writing my first book, I was teaching at UNCP, a regional institution with a commitment to public engagement. My fellow educators regularly asked for recommendations of accessible material on Native people in the South. Recognizing the need for an accessible monograph written for broad classroom use, I proposed *Barbara Hildebrand: A Cherokee Life in the Age of American Empire*.^{(b) (4)} Hildebrand was a common Cherokee woman from an unremarkable family who was born in the Old Nation before removal, survived the Trail of Tears, participated in the California gold rush, and immigrated to the Kingdom of Hawaii in time to witness its overthrow. With an eye toward connecting the scholarship on the Atlantic and Pacific worlds and the scholarship on a “Long Native Nineteenth Century,” I am writing the book I want to teach and recommend to my colleagues. Hildebrand’s exceptional life enables me both to humanize and complicate Cherokee experiences of these major events in their -- and the US’s -- history. I am aiming to complete this manuscript in spring 2022. In addition, I have published over a dozen scholarly articles and essays; won as many fellowships and grants to support my work; have worked on multiple web-based projects on community history at UNC and Davidson College in collaboration with students and other scholars; and have given over fifty conference presentations and invited talks.

Our strengths balance one another, and our combined skills will enable the success of this project. Julie comes to this as a citizen of the Cherokee Nation who has been engaged with other Cherokee people debating the complicated constellations of choices posed by current affairs. As a non-Native scholar engaged in anti-racism work, Rose meets other white people where they are and is practiced at “calling in” and making “hard history” accessible to those who want to understand but often feel excluded from scholarly conversations about topics like white supremacy and settler colonialism. Although we were trained as ethnohistorians, meaning in research methods rooted in history and cultural anthropology, we have developed our disciplinary expertise in different directions since graduate school. To study the significance of syllabary text in caves, Julie has delved into archaeological and linguistic studies that have taken her back in time. Prompted by her research interests in the long term experiences of allotment policy on Cherokee people, her collaborative work within the Lumbee community while faculty at UNCP, and her public-facing work on the history of Davidson College, Rose has become adept at oral history collection among the living and analysis of current and previously-recorded interviews. Our facility in the traditional textual archives and ability to work in these other sources are essential to the production of the most engaging, inclusive narrative.

Moreover, we are eager to co-author this book, and we have been working together for years toward this logical outcome of our growth as scholars. We have co-authored one article on

the healing impact of tribally-based historical education with collaborators in other disciplines. We have also worked together on the full book proposal for this project. Colleagues since graduate school, we have supported one another's work for over fifteen years. During this time, we have read and provided feedback to one another, presented together, and repeatedly discussed the kind of book we wish existed on Cherokee history. Increasingly engaged with broad audiences outside of the academy through web-based projects and public lectures, DMed by journalists asking questions for rapidly-approaching deadlines, and invited to collaborate by Cherokee-serving organizations, we recognize the need for an accessible, comprehensive, and current history of the Cherokee Nation. When asked to clarify, recommend, and suggest, we find ourselves summarizing scholarship that often exists behind paywalls or that is written for specialist audiences. Inspired by the Cherokee people and non-Cherokees who continuously ask good questions, seek insightful answers, and push us to be better tellers of these stories, we share a commitment to crafting a narrative that integrates the current scholarship on the Cherokees, the Native South, gender and race in the region, and US Indian policy into a story centering the range of Cherokee experiences of persistence and adaptation to settler colonialism. In addition to our passion for this project and desire to see this resource made available to broad readership, we recognize our obligation to the citizens of the Cherokee Nation whose story we tell.

In light of this commitment and because we simply can not properly analyze the history of the Cherokee Nation since the 1970s without their knowledge and insights, we request funds for honoraria for the Cherokee Nation citizen advisors and readers who have agreed to offer interviews and editorial feedback throughout the process. We have already secured five Cherokee Nation citizen readers, each of whom brings a unique background, expertise, and political position to the more recent political history of the Cherokee Nation. In addition, we have identified a short list of potential academic scholars who have successfully written books on Native American history for trade presses or that have had crossover appeal. We value both sets of readers and consider both essential for helping us craft an accurate narrative that appeals to broad readership. Our Cherokee community advisors are as follows:

Former Principal Chief **Chad Smith** has agreed to read completed chapters and offer comment on the full manuscript if needed. Not only did Chad Smith serve as Principal Chief from 1999-2011, he also served the Cherokee Nation under Chiefs Ross Swimmer (1975-1985) and Wilma Mankiller (1985-1995). He is an attorney by training and an astute student of Cherokee history. He rose to prominence during a Cherokee constitutional crisis under his predecessor Joe Byrd and presided over the Cherokee Nation when Cherokee voters voted to disenfranchise descendants of Cherokee freedmen.

David Cornsilk, a professional Cherokee genealogist who has worked for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and is a community scholar, has also agreed to read and offer comment on portions of or the entire manuscript. Cornsilk has held a variety of positions for the Cherokee Nation including most recently as a researcher for the tribal enrollment office. He has been an outspoken critic of multiple elected officials, including Smith's, and published an independent newspaper often at odds with the paper published by the Cherokee Nation.

Stacy Leeds, Dean Emeritus, University of Arkansas School of Law and former Cherokee Nation Supreme Court Judge has also agreed to read and comment on portions of the manuscript. Dean Leeds staged an unsuccessful bid for Principal Chief against Chief Smith in 2007. More recently, she has been integral as a foremost expert on the *McGirt v Oklahoma* decision. She currently serves as a district court judge for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and as

the Foundation Professor of Law and Leadership at the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University.

Catherine Foreman Gray currently serves as the History and Preservation Officer for the Cherokee Nation. In this capacity, she regularly consults with authors writing books related to Cherokee history and culture. She organizes and presents programming within the Nation on Cherokee history and oversaw revisions to the Cherokee Nation History course in recent years. She also worked as a Park Ranger for the National Park Service in Fort Smith, Arkansas.

Lastly, **Jack Baker**, a former at-large tribal council member (2003-2017) and noted Cherokee community historian, has agreed to read and offer feedback. Baker currently serves on the board of directors of the Oklahoma Historical Society (OHS); he is also a past-president of the OHS. He was recently appointed as an inaugural member of the newly formed Cherokee National Historical Society, an organization that supplanted a former body known as Cherokee National Historical Society, Inc., which he had served for twenty-one years. He has served as the National Trail of Tears Association President for more than twenty years.

We have already benefited from the collective expertise of these five Cherokee citizens and look forward to their knowledge and political perspectives enriching this book.

Work Plan

We intend to submit the manuscript for publication by August 2025. We plan to complete shared research trips to Oklahoma in year one and two. Summer funding for both co-authors over the course of the award supports summer research, in-person and follow-up zoom interviews with Cherokee leaders and officials, and writing at different points. We intend to take staggered leaves from teaching, including a one semester leave for Reed in year one and a one semester leave for Stremlau in year two to complete the bulk of the shared writing on the draft. The staggered semester leaves for writing also enables us to continue moving forward with other sections of the book while Cherokee advisors are reading and evaluating portions of the manuscript. We intend to connect through zoom for check-ins throughout the writing process, but we also intend to have two face-to-face writing workshops in years one and two that enable us to edit and streamline the sections written primarily by the other collaborator. In year three, Penn State will host a final manuscript workshop with Penn State history faculty who specialize in Native American history and invited academic readers who have had success writing engaging yet scholarly publications for wide public audiences. We will determine those readers later based on the needs of the manuscript at that time.

We have included the requested chart in the proposal attachments, which highlights the specific timeline for the work to be completed by the collaborators and the advisors over the course of the three years.

Final product and dissemination

We are currently working with an agent, who reached out to Julie after an interview she did with NPR, to craft a proposal to pitch to trade presses. Although university presses have expressed interest in the project, we seek the widest possible audience, immediate release in paper, and the lowest possible price point. This book must be accessible to the diverse audiences for whom we are writing it, particularly students within the 7,000 square mile area over which the Cherokee Nation exercises tribal jurisdiction. We also plan a supporting web page for educators that provides links to the primary sources we relied upon and suggested lessons. This page will be created by History grad students at Penn State under our guidance.

The dissemination and promotion of the book within the Cherokee Nation is made easier by the fact that both authors' have connections to Cherokee organizations eager to host the authors and promote publication of new books on Cherokee History. The Cherokee Nation Museums also regularly feature the work of Cherokee authors on their webpages and in their museum gift shops. Additionally, Julie is a part of a Cherokee Scholars group who highlight the publications of Cherokee academics work through a web page and list-serv. Both Rose and Julie have extensive connections to academic networks eager to promote new books through podcasts and list-servs. Additionally, part of the choice to use an agent for this book is to make sure we maximize the resources available to us through the press for publicity.