

Sabbatical Leave Application

Name Brad Sheese Department or School Psychology

Year of Appointment 2007 Tenure Granted in 2013

Total Number of Leaves Granted 2 Year of Last Leave 2015
(A report on the last leave must be filed in the Mellon Center before you can apply again.)

Title of Sabbatical Project Development of Visualization and Analysis Software for Behavioral Experiments with Zebrafish

Request is for (please check one and fill in the year)

Full Year Fall Spring of Academic Year 2021-2022

If your proposal is awarded, would you be willing for the Mellon Center to use it as an exemplary submission in the online *Handbook*? Yes No

Would you like to be considered for the Gardner Faculty Scholars Award? Yes No

Please complete the following checklist by placing a check mark against each item to insure that your application is complete. Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant without further consideration.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Sabbatical Application Cover Sheet | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Summary of the Project (≤150 words) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Supervisor's letter | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Narrative (≤2,500 words) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. IRB approval notice or verification that approval has been requested | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Curriculum Vita | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Report of previous Sabbatical or Junior Faculty/Pre-Tenure Leaves, if any
(File separately with the Mellon Center) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Electronic summary (email Word copy to fdc@iwu.edu) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Please Note: All applicants should notify any relevant interdisciplinary programs of their pending sabbatical application and indicate the courses that will not be offered by the applicant during the sabbatical leave.

Signature _____ Date 10/2/2020

Brad E. Sheese, Sabbatical Proposal for Leave in Spring of 2022

Development of Visualization and Analysis Software for Behavioral Experiments with Zebrafish

Summary

Zebrafish (*Danio Rerio*) are an important model organism for researchers interested in neural and behavioral development. Zebrafish offer several advantages over laboratory rodents, including cost of maintenance, speed of development, and transparent embryos that can easily be imaged and experimentally manipulated. These advantages have led to widespread use of Zebrafish in research examining development in response to environmental/pharmacological interventions. The current project attempts to further the utility of the Zebrafish research model by improving data analytic tools for quantifying behavior. Automated tracking enables the collection of large amounts of fine grained data and serves to improve the efficiency and accuracy of behavioral data collection. However, the volume of data produced presents its own challenges when it comes to using the data to gain insights about behavior. The outcome of the proposed sabbatical will be a software repository of data analytic tools that will facilitate undergraduate research with the ATLeS system by automating the visualization and statistical analysis of behavioral data.

Narrative

The primary focus of my scholarship over the last decade has been understanding environmental and biological influences on the development of behavior. My published work has typically considered genetics related to dopamine signalling in the brain and early environmental factors such as parenting, in relation to the development of cognitive functions in infants. Cognitive development tends to be a very complex subject to study. Research in my area and in a number of related areas has shown that many factors that are commonly studied in the lab show only small effects on outcomes. We are often studying weak influences that can be difficult to discern.

In my field, it has become particularly apparent over the last decade that studying factors with small effects with small sample sizes does not produce good replicable science. Conducting research on small effects with small samples produces unreliable results (false-positives and false-negatives) that often fail to replicate. The result is a science that cannot build upon itself to progress. With unreliable results, researchers have difficulty either confirming or disconfirming our theories. Instead, the field tends to explore one topic for a while then shift attention to another without reaching any clear conclusions.

If you are in my field and interested in addressing the issue of sample size, there are two obvious ways to proceed. The first is to abandon time consuming and expensive

laboratory based behavior assessments in favor of more cost- and labor-efficient methods such as survey research. Survey research is an important part of my field but it is only suitable for particular types of research questions and it is particularly poorly suited to examining the types of basic nature and nurture issues that I am interested in. The other way to proceed is to abandon human research in favor of an alternate model for studying developmental processes. Alternate models in developmental psychology have historically included primate models (Harlowe's studies of parenting in monkeys being particularly important examples of this approach), rodent models, and computer models (neural networks have been used to study the development of learning since the 1980's). Of these, rodent models are currently the most common, and while they allow for a great degree of control in the lab, rodents tend to be expensive to keep in large numbers and can be difficult to assess repeatedly over time. In the last ten years, fish have emerged as a popular alternate model for studying development, particularly brain development.

Zebrafish (*Danio Rerio*) are now commonly used in biomedical, pharmacological, and neuroscience research. For researchers interested in neural development, including genetic and teratological influences, Zebrafish offer several advantages over laboratory rodents, including cost of maintenance, speed of development, and transparent embryos that develop outside the womb that can easily be imaged and experimentally manipulated. Further, since Zebrafish reach adulthood in several months' time, it is also relatively easy to examine the long-term impact of early environmental disturbances on long-term functioning of the organism.

Of course, Zebrafish and humans are different in innumerable ways, but there are also a remarkably large number of developmental processes that are "conserved" between the two species. That is to say, at a very basic level, many processes that we find in humans are also apparent in the fish. By understanding these processes in fish we may also better understand them in humans. For example, almost all of the candidate genes I have studied in relation to dopamine signalling in human infants are also present in the fish and involved in dopamine signalling in the fish brain.

Since fish are inexpensive to acquire (30 cents a fish) and maintain, it is possible to get sufficiently large sample sizes to study factors with small to medium effects. However, when you look at the existing Zebrafish literature at studies focussing on behavior you still often see sample sizes of less than 40 fish. Although the fish are cheap, the behaviors often reflect the product of multiple integrated systems (for example, integration of visual and motor systems to control swim direction) and can be difficult to quantify. Behavioral assessment is typically highly labor intensive, involving human raters watching frame by frame video of behaviors, and often requires extensive training of multiple coders to achieve adequate reliability. Consequently, the easy to acquire fish can still be difficult to assess in mass, and the behavioral zebrafish literature is still plagued by low power, low sample size studies.

About seven years ago, I decided to start a new program of research to develop an

automated zebrafish behavior analysis system to make large sample behavioral analysis feasible. One goal of this system was to enable undergraduates to conduct high quality, large sample behavioral research. A single behavioral research study with animals at IWU typically takes an undergraduate working in a lab a full academic year to complete. Such lengthy investment in time often means experiments can not be corrected and repeated in an iterative fashion. My goal was to have an experimental system that would allow us to generate sample sizes at least twice large as any published study and to do so in a matter of weeks, rather than months of years. Another goal was to make the system cheap and freely available to anyone who would like to use it. Automated behavior tracking systems are commercially available, but they are enormously expensive and not programmable. They are commonly purchased with grant funding, and are only sold to labs, so they are priced accordingly. Overall, my goal was to develop an automated, inexpensive, general-purpose tracking system that would allow for high-throughput, reliable, and comprehensive assessment of fish behaviors.

My first attempt was a collaboration with Professor Deharak from the Physics department. Using relatively inexpensive hardware and modifications to widely-available software (Mathematica), we developed a system that produces high-quality and fine-grained continuous assessments of fish location allowing for both traditional behavioral assessments, as well as outcomes such as average velocity and frequency of changes in direction. Our system allowed for eight fish in eight separate tanks to be assessed simultaneously and the code produced information about each fish's x and y coordinate location 6 times per second.

We pilot tested our system by examining the test-retest reliability of a few select behaviors in the Novel Tank Paradigm. The Novel Tank Paradigm is a widely used behavioral assay of anxiety-related behaviors in Zebrafish. It is similar to open-field tests used with rodents. In the Novel Tank Procedure, Zebrafish are introduced to a novel tank, often following administration of anxiolytic or anxiogenic (anxiety reducing or anxiety enhancing) pharmacological agents, and their position within the tank is assessed over some period of time. Major outcomes traditionally assessed include latency to enter the top, time spent in the top, frequency and duration of freezing behavior and erratic swimming. Zebrafish that are challenged, are caused pain, or are given drugs associated with increased anxiety in humans exhibit a preference for the bottom of the tank. As Zebrafish in the wild tend to live in shallow dark freshwater pools, this bottom-preference when threatened is thought to be an adaptive behavior. Eliciting and altering the behavior is common in research. However, some basic psychometric properties of this assessment have not been established including its test-retest reliability and its convergent and discriminant validity. Put more simply, lots of people use this test without a good idea of how accurate and reliable the test may be and how it may overlap with other tests commonly used by researchers.

We tested 103 fish in the Novel Tank Paradigm twice a day (morning and afternoon) for three days producing 618 assessments. Assessments were 20 minutes in duration,

producing a total of 206 hours of behavior to code from video. From these 206 hours, our automated system generated 4.8 million x,y coordinate pairs. These coordinate pairs were then reduced to produce the following outcomes: % of time in top of tank, latency to enter top of tank, mean vertical position in tank, and the skew of the vertical position in the tank. A human coded 20% of our assessments to check our human-computer inter-rater reliability and we found good to excellent levels of agreement. Our system worked.

I was left with the problem with what to do with 4.8 million x,y coordinate pairs. Our system has generated an exceptionally fine-grained assessment of behavior. The existing Zebrafish literature relies on humans making binary judgements (is it in the top or bottom 50%?) once every thirty seconds, while our system gave us precise coordinates six times per second from which we can calculate direction, velocity, and number of other metrics of behavior. When I first began working with this kind of data, the programs I typically used for analysis could not even open a file with 4.8 million rows of data. I realized I would need to learn new approaches and, in some cases, develop my own software to handle the data from the behavioral assessments.

I then began a long collaboration with Mark Liffiton from the Computer Science Department. Taking what I had learned from the initial project, we designed a new compact system that relied on infrared, rather than visible light, and tracked the fish in real-time, using no video recording. The new systems were also designed to allow experimenters to contingently respond to the fish and to train the fish. We began building prototyping in March of 2014 and completed testing of our basic system in May of 2018. In addition, to behavioral tracking and contingency responding, our system offers automated data visualization and statistical analyses. We have designed the system to be inexpensive (less than \$100 per tracking box), modular (as many tracking boxes can be added to the system as your lab space allows), and accessible to anyone. The hardware can be built with off-the-shelf components and the software is free for anyone to use or modify.

I have had undergraduates conducting experiments of their own design with the system as we have been developing it. To date, six different students have completed fourteen experiments. These experiments are particularly noteworthy for the size and fidelity of the behavioral data they have produced. The majority of these studies have examined the effects of alcohol or dexamethasone on learning or anxiety related behaviors.

It took longer than anticipated, but I feel that the system we have developed has met or exceeded all of my initial goals. My plan is to now expand on this work during my sabbatical by improving the system's automated visualization and analysis software. The system currently produces an array of visualizations of individual and aggregate fish behaviors. The system also produces a large quantity of summary statistics. Undergraduates working with the system find the sheer volume of information overwhelming and often struggle to extract the specific bits of information that are relevant to their specific experimental design and research question.

I intend to develop a new software module with undergraduate researchers in mind that will allow them to more directly connect data and visualizations to research questions. This will involve developing a computational 'notebook' that will walk students through the data analysis process, and allow them to specify specific types of analyses that are relevant to their experiments. The goal here is not to hide the data or the analysis process from the students, but instead, to offer them guidance and support as they seek to answer their own questions. The challenge in developing the notebook comes from the wide array of experimental designs that students have been interested in using. Coding a notebook to handle a single type of experiment would take a few weeks. I anticipate coding a notebook that can handle the array experiments that can be produced by our system will take an entire semester. Consistent with our commitment to open access, I will make the software free to use and modify for other researchers who might be interested. Completing this project will contribute to my professional development as both a teacher and a scholar. I believe the completed project will be of broad interest to researchers in my field, and that the completed project will greatly enhance research experience for undergraduates working in my lab.

Outcomes for previous funded IWU grants and leaves:

May 2015, ASD with Mark Liffiton, Fish Box: An Automated Apparatus to Study Learning in Zebrafish.

End products

- Loyet, C., Liffiton, M., & Sheese, B. E. (2016, May). Zebrafish response to contingent light stimuli during 30 and 60 minute training sessions. Poster presented at the annual conference of the Association for Psychological Science, Chicago, IL.

Fall 2014, Sabbatical Leave, High-Throughput Computer-Aided Tracking of Zebrafish in the Novel Tank Paradigm

End Products:

- Sheese, B. E., & Liffiton, M. (2017, September). ATLeS: A high-throughput open source system for behavioral experiments with Zebrafish. Invited seminar for the School of Biological Sciences at Illinois State University, Normal, IL.
- Open Source Project Repository: ATLeS: Automated Tracking and Learning System
 - <https://liffiton.github.io/ATLeS/>

May 2013, ASD, Differential Susceptibility to Environmental Influence during Development

End products

- Prats, L., Segretin, M. S., Frachia, C., Kamienkowski, J., Pietto, M., Hermida, J., Giovannetti, F., Mancini, N., Gravano, A., Sheese, B. E., & Lipina, S. (2017). Asociaciones entre factores individuales y contextuales con el desempeño cognitivo en preescolares de hogares con Necesidades Básicas Insatisfechas (NBI) - Associations between individual and contextual factors with cognitive performance in preschoolers from Unsatisfied Basic Need (UBN) homes. *Revista Cuadernos de Neuropsicología - Panamerican Journal of Neuropsychology*, 11, 42-77. doi:10.774/CNPS/11.2.201

May 2012, ASD, Software Platform for Personalized Questionnaire Feedback

End products

- This grant supported two computer science students who coded software that provides personalized feedback to study participants. A fully functional version of the program was completed in November of 2012.

December 2009, ASD, COMT and Attention Assessment through Eye-Tracking,

End products

- presentation: Sheese, B. E., Voelker, P. M., White, E. A., Jones, H. R., Gremo, K. A., Benko, R. A., & Sloan, K. (2012, May). Catechol-O-methyltransferase and methylenetetrahydrofolate reductase

interact to predict executive functions and personality. Poster presentation at the annual conference of the Association for Psychological Science, Chicago, IL.

- presentation: Sheese, B. E., Voelker, P. M., Rothbart, M. K., & Posner, M. I. (2013, May). Methylenetetrahydrofolate reductase (MTHFR) variations are associated with sensation seeking in childhood. Poster presentation at the annual conference of the Association for Psychological Science. Washington, DC.

May 2009, ASD, Attention Training in Childhood,
End products

- publication: Rothbart, M. K., Sheese, B. E., Rueda, M. R., & Posner, M. I. (2011). Developing mechanisms of self-regulation in early life. *Emotion Review*, 3(2), 207-213. doi:10.1177/1754073910387943
- presentation: Sheese, B. E. (2011, August). Parenting risky genes for attention and self-regulation. Plenary presentation at the annual conference of the American Psychological Association, Washington D.C.
- presentation: Sheese, B. E. (2010, June). Dopamine genes and differential susceptibility. Symposium presentation at the annual conference of the Jean Piaget Society, St. Louis, MO.

October 21, 2020

Re: Letter of support for Dr. Brad Sheese's sabbatical leave application

Members of the Committee:

Please accept this letter of recommendation as strong support for Dr. Brad Sheese's sabbatical application.

Significance for the leave's objectives in the discipline or field

A sabbatical leave will have a significant impact on Brad's ability to advance the understanding of behavior through the creation of an updated software program to track behavior and development using a zebrafish model.

Although the idea of studying fish to gain a better understanding of human behavior may seem odd to people unfamiliar with the field of development, it is actually one of the more popular and growing areas as researchers have come to realize the similarities between zebrafish and human development, along with the benefits of being able to study such a large sample size. In fact, while I was a graduate student at the University of Illinois, I attended a few seminar sessions taught by one of the world's leading personality development researchers. The topic of one of these sessions was about new and important research using Zebrafish to gain insight into human personality.

Importantly, through the proposed update of his previously-created automated system to track zebrafish behavior, his work will be of significant aid to researchers studying similar phenomena who cannot afford to purchase one of the commercially available systems or would like a system that they can make alterations to in order to better suit their research hypotheses. In other words, Dr. Sheese will not simply be advancing his own important research program, but aiding in the development of programs around the world.

Significance of sabbatical for applicant's professional development as a teacher and/or scholar

I believe the proposed sabbatical will have a significant impact on Brad's development as a scholar. While Brad has established himself in the field of the genetic and environmental impacts on human behavior, and is gaining recognition for his creation of the zebrafish tracking program, the proposed sabbatical will allow Brad to expand his scope of inquiry into the field of Zebrafish even more fully by allowing for more nuanced data collection and analysis (in addition to making it easier for students to aid in conducting his research studies).

Brad has an excellent track record of presenting and publishing his research, easily on level with researchers at an R1 university. Not only does he have an extremely high number of publications, these publications are respected and impactful: His papers have been cited nearly 5,000 times. A successful sabbatical will help further establish Brad as a leader in the understanding of human development while also helping him develop this relatively new area of inquiry.

As Brad wrote in his proposal, there are two main limitations in the field of developmental psychology (along with many disciplines in psychology): Small sample sizes and the time-consuming nature of conducting intensive, longitudinal research that allows one to observe changes over time. Brad's automated system has already solved both of these problems by allowing him and others to observe a *large* number of zebrafish go through important development changes in a relatively *short* period of time (since they develop so rapidly). As Brad noted, his design may have worked too well: Now that he has the ability to collect such large quantities of valuable data, he and other researchers need a way to better understand it, hence the proposed creation of a new software program. In the long term, this program, along with Brad's automated system, will allow for a more in-depth and accurate understanding of the influences on behavior.

Assessment of applicant's previous grants and leaves

Brad has previously received a junior faculty leave, a sabbatical leave, and five ASD grants. Brad has had great success in using these awards to firmly establish his research program and reputation in his field. Numerous publications in top Psychology journals and presentations at prestigious national and international conferences are the direct result of previously awarded grants. Based on his successes fulfilling the objectives of the previously awarded ASD grants and leaves, I have no doubt Brad will also successfully fulfill the objectives described in his sabbatical application.

Staffing Plan

We are able to cover Brad's courses with our current faculty. No hiring of adjuncts or visitors is needed.

Overall summary

I believe Brad's proposal is a very strong one and that, if granted, would have a significant impact on his scholarly development. Brad has the necessary expertise to complete the

proposed project and the project will have significant impact on the field as a whole. Overall, I strongly support Brad's proposal for a sabbatical leave.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amanda Vicary". The signature is written in a cursive style with a circular flourish at the end.

Amanda Vicary

Associate Professor and Chair

Psychology Department

Sabbatical Leave Application

Name JOANNE DIAZ Department or School ENGLISH

Year of Appointment 2008 Tenure Granted in 2014

Total Number of Leaves Granted 1 Year of Last Leave 2015
(A report on the last leave must be filed in the Mellon Center before you can apply again.)

Title of Sabbatical Project LA RUTA: WALTER BENJAMIN'S FINAL PASSAGE
Request is for (please check one and fill in the year)

Full Year/Half Pay Fall Spring of Academic Year 2022

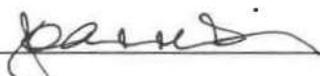
If your proposal is awarded, would you be willing for the Mellon Center to use it as an exemplary submission in the online *Handbook*? Yes No

Please complete the following checklist by placing a check mark against each item to insure that your application is complete. Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant without further consideration.

1. Sabbatical Application Cover Sheet
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3. Supervisor's letter
4. Narrative
5. IRB approval notice or verification that approval has been requested
6. Curriculum Vita
7. Report of all previous leaves, if any
8. Electronic summary (email Word copy to chorner@iwu.edu)

N/A

Please Note: All applicants should notify any relevant interdisciplinary programs of their pending sabbatical application and indicate the courses that will not be offered by the applicant during the sabbatical leave.

Signature 

Date 10/31/20

**Joanne Diaz, Department of English
Sabbatical Request for Spring 2022**

SUMMARY

During my semester-long sabbatical in Spring 2022, I will complete work on my fourth poetry project titled *La Ruta: Walter Benjamin's Final Passage*. This collection includes a series of ekphrastic poems that focus on the life and writing of Walter Benjamin, one of the most important philosophers and critics of the twentieth century; in addition, my work also engages with our current global refugee crisis and the status of exiles in the twenty-first century. During my sabbatical, I will read Benjamin's work, theories of ekphrasis (or poetry inspired by visual art), documentary poetics and the poetics of exile; and I will write the rest of my poems for this project. By the end of this sabbatical, I will be ready to submit excerpts of the project to literary journals and submit my completed manuscript to book publishers.

NARRATIVE

Objectives and goals for this sabbatical

During my sabbatical, I will complete work on *La Ruta: Walter Benjamin's Final Passage*, a project that draws inspiration from three major sources: my own hike across the Pyrenees in 2018, Walter Benjamin's life and work; and a series of photos that Jason Reblando took in 2017.¹ The majority of my work requires careful viewing and reading and is not contingent upon the completion of international travel. Therefore, I am confident that I can complete this project in the time that I have allowed for it. Ultimately, I hope that this completed project will contribute to a rich tradition of ekphrasis that interrogates themes of exile and displacement.

The idea or question to be studied

In 1940, after seven years of living in exile, Walter Benjamin made the arduous trek across the Pyrenees in hopes of eluding the Nazis who were set on persecuting him. Benjamin, a German Jewish intellectual, was a renowned cultural critic and philosopher of the Frankfurt School. He is best known for his essays on culture and technology, including "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction"—one of the most influential theorizations of photography—and *The Arcades Project*, which he referred to as "the theater of all [his] struggles and all [his] ideas."² His years in exile, his final hike across the Pyrenees, and his eventual suicide in a small hotel in Portbou, Spain have, as Rebecca Solnit has said, "acquired something of the aura of a legend."³

Smuggler's route, military buffer zone, route of evasion and escape: for millennia, the Pyrenees have been the site of many kinds of crossings. Just a year before Walter Benjamin crossed the Pyrenees on foot, 500,000 Spaniards covered the very same ground—traveling in the opposite direction—

¹ Please note that Jason Reblando's photographs are entirely separate from my project. He finished taking his photographs of Walter Benjamin's final journey across the Pyrenees in 2017, well before I ever wrote any of my *La Ruta* poems. He has completed his work on his project, and I am merely responding to that completed work in my poems.

² "Introduction" to *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), x.

³ *Storming the Gates of Paradise: Landscapes for Politics* (University of California Press, 2007), 69.

escaping persecution in Franco's Spain and entering France as refugees. For those Spaniards who survived the journey, most died of dehydration and overexposure in refugee camps in the south of France; those who survived that calamity died in concentration camps scattered throughout Europe. To this day, the border towns between France and Spain feel like a no-man's land full of ghosts.

The work of Walter Benjamin has always meant a lot to me, but in 2017, my interest in his life and work became further ignited by two phenomena: the migrations, and often deaths, of thousands of African refugees on the coasts of Greece, Italy, and Spain; and the election of a new American president whose rhetoric about migrants at the U.S. border dehumanized those desperate to find a better life. Worldwide, the sheer number of people who are affected by statelessness and its deprivations is staggering: as of this writing, 70 million people all over the world have been forcibly displaced from their homes due to war, famine, natural disaster, or some other catastrophe. It is this global problem that I aim to represent and critically consider in this project.

Methodology to be used

As I have created this work, I have had three kinds of resources at my disposal: my memories of my own walk across the Pyrenees, Walter Benjamin's writings, and Jason Reblando's photographs of La Ruta Walter Benjamin. In 2018, I walked La Ruta Walter Benjamin, a challenging eight-mile hike from Banyuls-sur-Mer—the southernmost point in France—to Portbou, Spain. To me, this hike was essential to the project. In order for my poems to become maps that cross boundaries of identity and experience, I needed to engage with the landscape. In addition, though, I needed to see how annotated markers created by MUME (the Museu Memorial de l'Exili) and Generalitat de Catalunya (the Catalanian government) have commemorated the life and work of Walter Benjamin at various points in the journey. Once I crossed the border from France into Spain, it was easy to see Portbou, the small seaside town and terminus for the Spanish railroad system. Once in Portbou, I visited Benjamin's grave and the various memorials surrounding it.

This project requires enormous amounts of research. Benjamin was a prolific writer whose interests included political history, the history of film and photography, the histories of various toys, postcards, building materials, and the commerce and technology of modernity. Benjamin's work weaves in and out of mine: sometimes I use a quote of his in an epigraph; other times I incorporate a phrase of his into the body of a poem; and other times I'll use information from his work as a springboard for a concept in my work. For example, in a poem called "The Contents of the Briefcase," I drafted a 13-part poem to reflect Benjamin's obsession with the number 13. In addition, though, the poem becomes the contents of the briefcase that he brought with him on his final journey. The briefcase was lost after his death, and ever since, scholars and historians have wondered about its contents. In this poem, I used found material from a *New York Times* article to suggest that the contents of Benjamin's briefcase are actually the stories of migrants from the Middle East in the year 2019, thus forging a relationship between their refugee status and his across time and space.

In addition to actually walking on this route and visiting Benjamin's grave, it has also been essential for me to engage with the photography of Jason Reblando. Jason is a documentary photographer whose work attends to place and space. In 2017, he also trekked from France to Spain in order to understand Benjamin's arduous final journey. When considered together, Jason's photos and my poems engage with the intersections of landscape and the complexity of exile. Ultimately, I hope that this work gives some insight into the experience of walking La Ruta; in addition, I hope that the

project draws upon and engages with Benjamin's own interests; as Howard Caygill has observed, "the relationship between word and image is crucial to both Benjamin's concept of experience and his criticism."⁴ I want this project to encourage readers to meditate on how word, image, and materials interact and contemplate the palimpsest-like nature of landscapes laden with human experience.

I am not the first writer to have an interest in Benjamin's final journey and gravesite: essayist Rebecca Solnit, anthropologist Michael Taussig, philosopher Hannah Arendt, graphic novelist Frederic Pajak, and literary scholar Esther Leslie have all written extensively about the symbolic value of what his exile and death have meant to the shape of history and philosophy.⁵ I am engaging with these writers and many more in order to understand the long legacy of Benjamin's life and work. In addition, I'm thinking of the complexities of place, and the mythological origin stories related to them. For example, the first poem in the sequence, "The Origin of a Border," relies on the story of Pyrene, a daughter of Berbryx who was seduced by Hercules; and elsewhere, I borrow from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Dante's *Inferno* to foreground the motifs of transformation throughout the work.

The next stages of the project will include creating new poems based upon my ongoing concerns with exile and borders, as well as Benjamin's interests in the flâneur, wandering, technology, ephemera, and modernity. This sabbatical will enable me to continue to experiment with the pairing of image and text, and to further explore and foreground the enduring concerns of Walter Benjamin's work and life.

Significance of the work to your scholarly/artistic community and teaching

For decades, contemporary American poets have been politically and historically engaged in their work: Martha Collins' *Blue Front* (2006) draws from archival materials from the U.S. Custom House Museum in Cairo, Illinois, the Cairo Public Library, and the Illinois State Historical Library to explore the events surrounding a lynching of an African American man that occurred there in 1909; Tarfia Faizullah's *Seam* (2014) relies on interviews she conducted with the *birangonas* (war heroines) who were raped during Bangladesh's war of independence from Pakistan in 1971; and Mark Nowak's *Coal Mountain Elementary* (2009) serves as another excellent example of documentary poetics and ekphrasis. As diverse as these examples are, they all represent a form of engagement that provokes, investigates, and argues with the world.

Like these poets, I regularly engage with some form of research for all of my poetry projects. With *The Lessons* (2011), I frequently relied on the history of science, the Spanish Civil War, and even archival documents from my home town of Billerica, Massachusetts, in order to create connections between private and public histories. With *My Favorite Tyrants* (2015), I relied on histories of the authoritarian regimes—especially those of Spain, Cuba, and the Soviet Union—to create an interrogation of tyranny in its various forms. In *Septimania* (under consideration with publishers now), I draw upon classical and contemporary texts, as well as photographs, to create a psychological investigation of gender, ecological crisis, and political corruption. Methodologically,

⁴Walter Benjamin: *The Colour of Experience* (Routledge, 1998), 80.

⁵Rebecca Solnit, *Storming the Gates of Paradise*; Michael Taussig, *Walter Benjamin's Grave* (University of Chicago Press, 2006); Hannah Arendt, introduction to Benjamin's *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections* (Schocken Books, 1969); Frédéric Pajak, *Uncertain Manifesto* (New York Review of Books, 2019); and Esther Leslie, *Walter Benjamin* (Reaktion Books, 2008).

then, my work on *La Ruta* is part of my decades-long practice of incorporating research into my work.

La Ruta departs from my other projects in one key way: the final manuscript will incorporate photographs alongside the poems so that readers can interact with both word and image. My project will contribute to a poetic tradition that is informed by deep historical research and visual art. In truth, these two large fields often intersect and overlap. Consider, for example, the case of Jessica Hagedorn and Marisa Roth's *Burning Heart: A Portrait of the Philippines* (1999). For this project, writer Jessica Hagedorn collaborated with *New York Times* photographer Marisa Roth in order to create a series of poems and photographs that illustrate the complexity of life in the Philippines. Claudia Rankine's *Citizen* (2014) is a scathing indictment of racism in America and a tremendous example of ekphrasis and documentary poetry. Similarly, it is my hope that the interplay between word and image in *La Ruta* will inspire readers to create their own relationships between word and image.

This sabbatical will no doubt be essential to my teaching as well. I have taught ENGL 101: Introduction to Creative Writing every year since I arrived at IWU in 2008. Each time I teach it, I ask students to write a poem that is inspired by an art object. This is a very generative exercise: sometimes students choose painting, sometimes a photograph or sculpture, but always they choose an object that challenges them to describe, and perhaps even argue with, visual art in compelling ways. During my sabbatical, I will have the opportunity to read a great deal on picture theory and the transaction that occurs between words and images throughout art and literature. I am convinced that that research for my personal work will no doubt inform and improve my pedagogy as well.

IRB Approval:

N/A

My record of accomplishment on previously IWU-funded grants and leaves

I have worked at IWU since Fall 2008, and I have received ASD and CD grants almost every year that I have been here. In the interest of time, I will list the ASD and CD grants I have received since 2015 (my last sabbatical) and what I did with the grant support. As you will see, I have a record of steadily working on both scholarly and creative projects over the past six years. I have already submitted complete summaries to the Mellon Center for all of these grants.

ASD Grants:

- 2020: Research and development of a book chapter for the *Routledge Companion to the Literary Magazine*. With the assistance of an ASD grant, I wrote a book chapter that examines the defining features of literary magazines in the twenty-first century. The chapter will be included in the *Routledge Companion to the Literary Magazine* edited by Tim Lanzendorfer (forthcoming in 2021).
- 2019: Research for and writing of "Teaching and Taming in *Love's Labor's Lost* and *Much Ado about Nothing*." With this grant, I drafted an essay that focuses on how to teach Shakespeare in a general education course. This essay will be included in a book titled *Teaching Shakespeare Beyond the Major*, edited by Professors Tyler Sasser and Kelly Neil. This book is forthcoming.

- 2017: Research for the development of *La Ruta: Walter Benjamin's Final Passage*. This grant allowed me to travel to Spain so that I could hike La Ruta Walter Benjamin and take notes along the way; in addition, I gave a poetry reading at the Desperate Literature Bookstore in Madrid.
- 2016: Research for, and writing of, "Comedies of Tough Love." This grant allowed me to write an essay that was included in *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespearean Comedy* (Oxford University Press, 2018).

CD Grants:

- 2019: Curriculum Development Grant to develop ENGL 220: Shakespeare and Film. With this CD grant, I developed and taught a new course that directly contributes to the English major and Film Studies minor.
- 2019: Diversity Grant to develop ENGL 355: The Global Renaissance. With this Diversity grant, I developed and taught a new course that diversified and updated our English curriculum.

10-26-20

Dear Faculty Development Committee,

Joanne Diaz has asked me to write a letter in support of her application for a spring semester 2022 sabbatical, and I am delighted to do so. I was chair of English during Joanne's first few years at IWU, and it's been satisfying to watch how quickly she became one of our most accomplished teacher-scholars and campus leaders. Joanne has been by far the best chair English has had during my 32 years at IWU (and that includes some pretty darned good ones). Because she agreed to stay on as chair for an additional year beyond her elected term and has had to put her creative agenda on hold, she's well deserving of a sabbatical. She has poured all of her energy into leading the department at a time when budget cuts, Covid-19, and administrative requests to re-envision curriculum have made the job more difficult and demanding than ever. Joanne didn't just give her creative and scholarly projects less priority; she put them completely on the back burner and put the stove in storage. She's devoted all of her time and energy to her teaching and to department and university service, and a sabbatical will give her much-needed time to focus on her fourth book of poetry, *La Ruta: Walter Benjamin's Final Passage*.

One concern during the time of Covid is travel, and since Joanne's inspiration comes from the happy convergence of three things—her 2018 hike across the Pyrenees, her reading of Walter Benjamin's life and works, and a collection of photos that Jason Reblando took in 2017—she will not need to travel. She only needs time to focus on the additional careful reading and reflection it will take to create a series of poems based on the Reblando photos, one poem per photo. But the idea of combining her interest in Benjamin, her physical trek across the Pyrenees mimicking Benjamin's final hike, and Reblando's photos of that very same journey is exciting.

Ekphrastic poetry—poems written in response to an existing art object, photographs included—constitutes an interdisciplinary dialogue between language/poetry and art, so that the objects considered separately and then holistically become more than the sum of their two parts, yielding additional insights. Since John Keats' "Ode on a Grecian Urn," hundreds of well-known writers—among them Anne Sexton ("Starry Night") and Joyce Carol Oates ("Edward Hopper's Nighthawks, 1942")—have been inspired to create poems based on art. Usually, though, these are single poems that are later included in a collection of otherwise unrelated poetry. What Joanne proposes is a unified collection that not only presupposes a thematic and aesthetic interplay between individual poems and photos, but an implied discourse spanning the entire collection of photos and the weight of all those photographs, poems, and their cumulative interplay. In other words, it's a fairly unique and exciting project that nonetheless reflects Joanne's approach to

poetry: research, research, research. And what Joanne learns in the process she will, as always, impart to her students, finding new ways to create assignments that bring the best out of our students.

Joanne's reputation as a poet earned her a nomination for Illinois Poet Laureate, and her record of award-winning poetry books: *The Lessons* won the 2009 Gerald Cable Book Award; *My Favorite Tyrants* won the 2013 Brittingham Prize in Poetry and the Midwest Book Award. She has demonstrated both a consistency in quality of writing and dependability of creative output. In other words, Joanne isn't just highly motivated and highly productive. She's really good. Because this is her fourth book of poetry and she has demonstrated an ability to deliver quality projects on time, I have no doubt whatsoever that Joanne will have a completed manuscript by the end of her sabbatical, if she is granted one. History says likewise. Joanne has always delivered when she's been awarded an ASD grant or leave.

We'll miss her, of course, but we have people who can cover her classes while she re-energizes herself after serving four years as English department chair at the expense of her own creative projects. Joanne has given her all to the university, and I sincerely hope that the committee will vote to give her the support that she deserves in order to complete this unique book of ekphrastic poems.

Sincerely,

(virtual Covid signature)

Jim Plath

R. Forrest Colwell Endowed Chair and Professor of English

Sabbatical Leave Application

Name James Simeone Department or School Political Science

Year of Appointment 1992 Tenure Granted in 1999

Total Number of Leaves Granted 4 Year of Last Leave 2014
(A report on the last leave must be filed in the Mellon Center before you can apply again.)

Title of Sabbatical Project Varieties of American Peoplehood: Mormon Nationalism from Deseret to Mountain Meadows

Request is for (please check one and fill in the year)

Full Year Fall Spring of Academic Year 2021

If your proposal is awarded, would you be willing for the Mellon Center to use it as an exemplary submission in the online *Handbook*? Yes No

Would you like to be considered for the Gardner Faculty Scholars Award? Yes No

Please complete the following checklist by placing a check mark against each item to insure that your application is complete. Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant without further consideration.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Sabbatical Application Cover Sheet | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Summary of the Project (≤150 words) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Supervisor's letter | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Narrative (≤2,500 words) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. IRB approval notice or verification that approval has been requested | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Curriculum Vita | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Report of previous Sabbatical or Junior Faculty/Pre-Tenure Leaves, if any
(File separately with the Mellon Center) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Electronic summary (email Word copy to fdc@iwu.edu) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Please Note: All applicants should notify any relevant interdisciplinary programs of their pending sabbatical application and indicate the courses that will not be offered by the applicant during the sabbatical leave.

Signature James Simeone Date 10/30/20

**Varieties of American Peoplehood:
Mormon Nationalism from Deseret to Mountain Meadows**

Sabbatical Leave Proposal

Fall 2021

**James Simeone
Political Science**

Summary

My sabbatical research project will result in an article-length manuscript on the development of Mormon nationalism in mid-nineteenth century America. Expelled from Illinois and the United States in 1846, the Mormon people moved to the Rocky Mountains to create their own state. They managed the separate state they called “Deseret” until 1850 when the federal government created the territory of Utah. The Mormon approach to peoplehood was influenced by governance that exhibited weak capacity to enforce the law and relied on civil society groups to provide regime services. The Jacksonian regime prioritized “rough justice,” a civic ideal which dismissed due process as elitist and took a punitive stance toward the socially marginal. Using content analysis in a case study framework, the research will assess the extent to which Deseret officials and civil society members adopted or rejected rough justice scripts to perform Mormon citizenship.

Introduction

Who were the mid-nineteenth century Mormons? They were a religious sect born out of the fervent American Protestantism practiced in western New York State during the 1820s. They formed as the followers of Joseph Smith, a young charismatic evangelical who produced the *Book of Mormon* in 1830 as a narrative of dissent against Second Great Awakening pluralism. Serially rejected for publically expressing their religious dissent, the Mormons also became a political people in the Biblical tradition: a nation searching for a promised land. Moving from Ohio to Missouri and then Illinois, they created at Nauvoo their own state, the desired accoutrement of most modern peoples. Their state within a state in Illinois led to a backlash and the assassinations of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. After an exodus out of the United States, they recreated their government as Deseret. My research reframes the first decade of the Mormon experience in the Rocky Mountains as an episode of American new nationalism. The goal is to bring into focus broad patterns and lessons applicable to the varieties of new nationalism today.

My subfield, American political development (APD), uses the comparative method to uncover relationships between governmental structures and political agency. I situate Mormon nationalism in its Jacksonian setting to explore how their collective agency and peoplehood emerged from a specific institutional and cultural configuration or “regime,” a ruling set of ideas, institutions, and policies which shapes political outcomes. For this case study, I am interested in how regimes impact civic identity and social power leading to differential outcomes for different social groups. For example, the Jacksonian regime created a set of policies which advantaged white farmer settlers and removed Native Americans. In the early American republic, the newly-formed settler states of Indiana, Mississippi, Illinois, Alabama, and Missouri opened like a curtain to the west, each preparing the way for national regime policies by pushing Native peoples out of their area. In Illinois, settler democracy produced a civic narrative of peoplehood that privileged the “independent producer.” The narrative excluded Native Americans who were

deemed independent but not producers. Politicians from both the Democratic and Whig Parties retailed political messages to the electorate using the independent producer image.

Scholarly objectives

Because APD is comparative in approach, it can make connections to work being done on nationalism as it is expressed today across the globe. From the haunting ethno-nationalism in places like Serbia or Hungary to the rise of successionist insurgencies in Catalonia or Scotland, the salience of new nationalist movements in contemporary European countries has prompted scholars to explore the dynamics of new nationalism generally (Beiner 1998). The United States has experienced several episodes of new nationalism, most prominently in the episodic movements among African Americans, Native Americans, Chicanos, Hawaiians, Puerto Ricans, and Mormons. The first five of these were nationalisms developed by national minorities whose aspirations for self-determination were driven by the extremes of slavery, war, and colonialism, but none led to political action as an autonomous unit. In the case of the Mormons, self-government was achieved in Deseret and after, if only fleetingly, as a consequence of organized opposition to a self-described inclusive liberal democracy. The dynamics of oppositional nationalism, which are frequently illiberal, are worth studying in their own right. But the Mormon experience exposes patterns the European secessionist movements, also opposed to inclusive democracies, could benefit from considering.

Theories of the emergence of nationalism from within subnational units focus on the importance of majority societal cultures (Kymlicka 2005). Subnational minority groups are pushed by majorities to endorse nationalism, the principle that “the political and the national unit should be congruent” (Gellner 1983, 3). In the Mormon case, resistance and intolerance by majority culture Americans prompted the sect’s separatism. In *The Saints and The State*, I argue that the Mormons were rejected under Illinois’ societal cultural terms: they were deemed producers but not independent enough to be accepted as full-fledged citizens. The Illinoisans resented that the Mormons lived in their own city and used bloc voting to attain political dominance in Hancock County. Scholars have distinguished political, economic, and ethically-constitutive stories of peoplehood (Smith 2003). I intend to use content analysis to determine which factors predominated in the Mormon regime of 1846-1860. Finally, I expect to draw lessons from the Mormon case applicable to today’s nationalism of newly independent states (Mandelbaum 2000).

Question to be studied

The research question is to determine the extent to which Deseret officials and civil society members adopted rough justice scripts in the process of performing citizenship. Rough justice involves citizens taking the law into their own hands and mob actions (Pfeifer 2006; Waldrep 2002), not unlike what occurred at the Mountain Meadows massacre (Walker, Turley, Leonard 2008). Transposing the question into contemporary terms: did the new Mormon regime develop a populist variety of new nationalism? Did Mormon civil society learn from its own treatment as a socially marginal group to be more or less tolerant of difference? What was the attitude toward government justice and due process among Mormon leaders and followers? More broadly, do emerging state forms in democratic settings encourage respect for legal procedure or the rough justice of vigilantism? Scholars have made connections between developing democracy and vigilantism in places like South Africa India, and Indonesia, uncovering patterns strikingly similar to those I found in 1840s Illinois (Smith 2018; Pfeifer 2017).

Methodology and need for the leave

Beside comparison, the method I employ is content analysis. I will make a close reading of the rhetoric expressed by the Mormons of this period and especially during the Mountain Meadows massacre of 1857. This was when approximately two hundred western emigrants, crossing Mormon land on their way to California, were isolated and murdered by Mormon settlers and their Native American allies as an act of war against the United States. While the episode occurred over a century ago, Mormons were careful letter writers and journal keepers. The record they have left is extensive and will be examined in full. Several newspapers and every constitution the Mormons drafted from 1846 to 1860 will be consulted. Most of these sources are now online, but some are still held in archives like the Newberry Library in Chicago and Brigham Young University in Salt Lake City. I will use my travel funds to visit these archives. Most important, I will have to spend literally hundreds of hours looking through the letters of civic leaders like Brigham Young and participants on the ground in Mountain Meadows like “commander” John D. Lee. Eventually hanged for his role in the massacre, Lee is a character I know well as he joined the Mormons in Illinois in 1835. He was the subject of a powerful vindication by Juanita Brooks in a book which gained national attention (Brooks 1961).

I seek to determine how state authority was constituted under Mormon leaders like President Brigham Young and how it was understood by followers like John D. Lee. Scholars still don't know whether the massacre was ordered by Young or was led by rogue officers including Lee who took the law into their own hands. My working hypothesis is that the rough justice nationalism the Mormons absorbed under the Jacksonian regime set up the conflict through the forms and policies they brought with them from Illinois. Following Andrew Jackson's example, American vigilance committees often “took the responsibility” to provide the regime service of protection when they perceived governance capacity was weak and lacking (Simeone, forthcoming). These public performances of citizenship in defense of the American majority and the people's self-determination demonstrated openly the worth of independence civil society members valued in citizens. It is plausible that the Mormons in Utah, having been found lacking in independence back east, sought to establish their reputation for it in the west.

In the case of Mountain Meadows, it was the American emigrants who were targeted as unworthy. Thus, I will look in the archival material for descriptions of American outsiders as somehow unworthy. Specifically, I will look for evidence of “misrecognition,” an ascriptive pattern in which the agency of the socially marginalized is distorted, reconfigured, or erased (Harris-Perry 2011; Markell 2003). While this lens has been turned on other groups in the literature of anti-Mormonism, it has not been used on the Mormons themselves. I will then set the case study in a comparative framework in order to facilitate connections to today's new nationalisms. I will document the Mormon “story of peoplehood” and use Rogers Smith's typology of political, economic, and ethically-constitutive stories to determine which factors predominated in the Mormon regime of 1846-1860 (Smith 2003).

Significance

For half a century, the Mormons existed as a quasi-independent people within the United States, until 1896 when Utah was admitted into the union as a state and the Latter Day Saints were incorporated as national citizens. Prior research establishes that the Mormons were influenced by Illinois' settler state context to establish their own prototype of the Jacksonian regimes common in frontier states. Understanding the patterns involved in how new nationalism

arises from oppositional settings requires both that we trace how a people responds to “othering” and whether they take up the illiberal (populist) practice themselves. We know that the Mormons exited the United States in response to Jacksonian exclusion. The follow-on question I particularly seek to ask is whether groups like the Mormons practically reflected on their experience: Did they develop and acknowledge procedural forms protecting the legal rights and civil status of outsiders as a result of their own treatment as a socially marginal group? Applying these ideas to other nationalisms domestically and globally is the final upshot of the project. Identifying a range of variation potentially allows us to begin making sense of the peculiar configuration of resentment and privilege that constitutes populist nationalism.

The sabbatical project presented here is the first half of a planned book-length study of American nationalisms during the nineteenth century. The second half will focus on the development of Black nationalism, beginning with the proto-state located on 400,000 acres of land confiscated from South Carolina following General Sherman’s Field Orders issued in 1865. It is not yet sufficiently understood that both Mormonism and Black nationalism were parallel peoplehood projects being carried out under similar regime conditions. I expect to submit the Mormon/Black nationalism paper for presentation at the national conference of the American Political Science Association following the sabbatical.

Importance to professional development and teaching

The Saints and the State: The Mormon Troubles in Illinois, due out in February 2021, lays the foundation for my claims about statebuilding in nineteenth-century Illinois. The key premise of the book is its view of antebellum Illinois as a developing democracy. Typical of such democracies, Illinois had weak capacity to enforce the law while demands for popular justice were quite strong. I document how the Mormons were influenced by Illinois’ settler state context to establish their own prototype of a Jacksonian regime. The sabbatical project takes the Mormon part of the story to its next chapter beginning with the statehood efforts of 1846 and culminating with the 1857 Mountain Meadows massacre.

The Mormons were acting in a decade Europeans called the “springtime of the nations” (Kedourie 1993, xii). The sabbatical project will allow me to explore this context and solidify my understanding of the secondary literature addressing nationalism. In the field of political science, the topic belongs in the subfield of comparative politics, outside my specializations in American political thought, law, and APD. Knowledge of how comparativists think about nationalism, combined with my existing knowledge of how they think about democratization, will reap many benefits for my teaching and the curriculum in political science. The department embarked two years ago on a team-taught, 200 level-course, The Democracy Seminar, which aims to develop students’ oral communication and synthesizing skills (it was patterned off the “bridge” courses majors would offer in “The IWU Experience” general education plan). While open to non-majors, the course also serves as an important norming and community-building tool for majors. Having additional knowledge of comparative politics will aid me when my turn to helm the course comes around in the near future.

In addition, with the university unable to replace the tenure line left vacant by Kathleen Montgomery’s retirement, the department is in a process of transformation. Given that after Min-Hyung Kim’s departure his line also was not replaced, we will be left with three Americanists and one comparativist/internationalist. This makes us untenable as a political science department *tout court*. But it also makes us untenable as our particular department, which is currently structured on two tracks, an American track and a comparative/international track, culminating in

separate senior seminars. We have combined the seminars into one class, but this means that those who teach it must have some knowledge of both sides of the curriculum to deliver it effectively. My previous forays into multiculturalism, realism, and democratization theory have allowed me to obtain some familiarity with the comparative/international side of the discipline. Time to learn and apply comparative nationalism will make me a much more viable guide to students pursuing that area as well. Indeed, I can foresee being able to offer a course on Nationalism and its Critics in order to help bolster the missing half of our curriculum.

Previous grants and leaves

I have used previous grants and leaves efficiently in the past. I used a Junior Faculty Leave to complete my first book and the ensuing sabbatical to develop needed courses in multiculturalism and environmental ethics. I used a teamwork Curriculum Development grant to jump start the Action Research Center (ARC) with Jim Sikora in 2003 and spent a second sabbatical writing grant proposals for ARC. While these proposals were successful in netting a ten-year funding commitment from State Farm, no other large funders were attracted. I used an Artistic and Scholarly Development grant to fund research for an article laying out my theory of Jacksonian political culture and a third sabbatical to begin researching and writing the Mormon book.

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November 2, 2020

To the Faculty Development Committee

Dear Colleagues:

It is a real pleasure to write a letter in support of Professor Jim Simeone's application for a sabbatical leave in Fall 2021. This is an exceptionally well-earned leave. Not only did Jim give a substantial portion of his time over the past several years to lead the task force designing a new General Education program (ultimately not approved by the faculty), but he did so while completing a substantial scholarly monograph, currently in press. The completion of that book has provided him with substantial professional momentum that provides a foundation for his new project on new nationalisms in an old America (my formulation). The project that he proposes for this sabbatical provides a bridge from one to the other. In addition, this project will help him to build disciplinary skills that are important to the Political Science department as it reconfigures its curriculum to meet the exigencies of a new, scaled-down, reality. In short, this is a highly timely application, both in terms of Jim's professional development and in terms of benefits to the institution.

The article that Jim intends to write during this sabbatical leave promises to make an influential, and potentially path-breaking, contribution to his disciplinary sub-field, American Political Development (APD). As a scholar in the field, Jim has long been intellectually pre-occupied with the challenge of specifying and explaining the illiberal strains in American democratic traditions that delimit the reach of democratic inclusion in the polity. Closely examining the ways in which political cultures are forged in the cut and thrust of everyday political conflicts, he has explored these illiberal strains particularly effectively in the 'rough justice' regime of Jacksonian democracy in nineteenth-century Illinois, focusing in his latest book on how these illiberal strains drove the exclusion of Mormons (as well as native Americans) from full participation and citizenship in the 'democratic' polity. In his proposed article, he takes this approach a step further, into the realm of comparative political analysis, to advance the novel thesis that secessionist movements such as the Mormons, having imbibed the illiberal political cultures that led to their own exclusion from citizenship, come to resemble aspects of the 'new nationalism' currently sweeping across Europe and the United States.

As a comparativist, I find this to be a deeply intriguing thesis. In my view, it promises to deliver novel insights not only about the lineaments of social exclusion in American democratic traditions, but also about the political cultures of indentitarian secessionism more broadly. There is a rising literature in the field of comparative politics that explores what has come to be known as the 'new nationalism.' This form of nationalism, first

theorized by Michael Ignatieff to analyse the ethnic conflicts of the late-twentieth century Balkans, is perceived especially in the recent upsurge of national populism in Europe and the United States. As an ideology of peoplehood, the new nationalism is understood as deeply identitarian, exclusionary, and nativist. It is also widely understood as a kind of backlash to modern cosmopolitanism, and in that sense a ‘post-modern’ or ‘post-national’ phenomenon. A core concern in this literature is how new national identities get constructed, through what narrative techniques and from what political, cultural, and linguistic sources. With this article, Jim Simeone joins that debate, proffering one answer to the question from an unexpected direction: the secessionist state-building project of nineteenth-century Mormons in frontier America. He argues that the Mormons developed their political culture in response to their treatment by the dominant Jacksonian ‘rough justice’ regime of the frontier settler state that eschewed strong adherence to principled legal rights and governmental probity, and he posits that the nature of this response will offer broader comparative insights on ‘the peculiar configuration of resentment and privilege that constitutes populist nationalism.’ It is a compelling proposition.

To be sure, this is a theoretically ambitious project. But it rests on an analytical framework that Jim has refined through much of his earlier work, and elaborated in his new book. Moreover, he has carefully limited the empirical scope of the project to cover only the decade of Mormon ‘sovereignty’ that defined their state-building enterprise. He is well practiced in the research methodology which, while eclectic, is clearly defined. Thus, while the project engages ambitiously with two different sub-fields in the discipline, it does so through a defined and focused research strategy that makes it both do-able and discrete. I expect it to be a success.

There are at least three reasons why this sabbatical is important to Jim Simeone now (other than the fact that he has thoroughly earned it). First, the research methodology that he employs – content analysis and what Clifford Geertz would call ‘deep description’ – demands a substantial block of time for concentrated interpretive analysis. This method, which is characteristic of APD scholars, is methodologically eclectic. In particular, it draws on closely observed textual and contextual analysis of cultural and political practices and discourses. Jim Simeone’s previous work has demonstrated that he is an exceptionally careful, painstaking, and nuanced practitioner of this method. But it takes time and the kind of sustained attention that a sabbatical leave makes possible if it is to be done effectively.

Second, while the project is a discrete entity, it is positioned as a transition from one large research project (*The Saints and the State*) and another large research project (the parallel peoplehood projects of Mormonism and Black nationalism). In this sense, the project will do more than produce a publication; it will create the momentum to launch a larger



research endeavor that will sustain the faculty member over several more years. This is, after all, one of the principal objectives that drive a sabbatical policy.

Third, this sabbatical will help Jim to hone skills and knowledge in comparative analysis that are sorely needed by the Political Science department as we move into an era of straitened resources and a reduced faculty. It is clear to the department that all the faculty will need to re-tool in some respects in order to reach across sub-disciplinary boundaries we have not felt the need to question in the past. As a scholar of APD, Jim Simeone is already well-placed to make this adaptation, and he has already started to do so in courses such as “Multiculturalism and its Critics.” But the new expertise in the comparative analysis of ‘new’ nationalisms that he will develop in the course of this sabbatical will be invaluable to the department going forward.

Jim Simeone has an excellent record of using his leaves and sabbaticals productively, both to advance his scholarly agenda and to advance the mission of the university. Over the course of a junior leave and three sabbaticals, he has produced two substantial monographs. The first is highly regarded as a pivotal contribution to the political history of Illinois; the second is being published in a highly regarded series by an excellent press. He has also used his sabbaticals to develop several new courses that contribute to our core curriculum. And he used a sabbatical to advance an innovative institutional initiative that is today a signature program of the university – the Action Research Center. When Jim Simeone goes on sabbatical, we all gain.

Needless to say, we will miss Jim in the department during his sabbatical. As a political theorist, he is more or less impossible to replace directly with an adjunct instructor – they are very difficult to find. We have a threefold strategy for replacing his teaching responsibilities. First, we will re-shuffle our departmental resources. One of the courses that Jim is scheduled to teach in Fall 2021 is our senior seminar; we will simply change our rotation so that a different faculty member teaches it and the senior seminar will not be disrupted. In addition, Greg Shaw will teach a theory class to ensure that our students have continuity in meeting that requirement; Greg will forfeit one section of his introductory course, which will have an unfortunate but unavoidable short-term impact on our General Education offerings. Second, we will forego the First Year Experience course that Jim currently teaches. That course can be replaced by a Gateway elsewhere in the university. Third, we will request one adjunct in comparative and/or international analysis to ensure that our students have sufficient course offerings to meet the broader needs of the curriculum. For a department already feeling the stress of reduced resources, this will be painful. But we believe the pain will be manageable in the short term.

In short, the Political Science department supports this sabbatical proposal wholeheartedly. The project is clear and discrete, and likely to make an influential contribution



to the sub-field of APD as well as the wider comparative study of nationalism and identity. The theory that Jim will hone and deploy in this project will also enrich our curriculum by facilitating cross-overs and connections between our sub-fields in productive ways that meet student interests. I am very pleased to recommend this application.

If you require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at wmunro@iwu.edu.

Yours sincerely

William A. Munro
Betty Ritchie-Birrer and Ivan Birrer Ph.D. Professor of Political Science
Chair, Department of Political Science

Fall 2013 Sabbatical Leave Proposal-Bollivar

Genomic characterization of *Rhodobacter capsulatus* bacteriophages.

Sabbatical proposal for David Bollivar

(Fall 2014)

Summary

The proposed project will apply techniques first developed as part of the Human Genome Project to the study of viruses that infect the bacterium *Rhodobacter capsulatus*. Working in collaboration with students, several new viruses that infect this bacterium have been isolated. Sequencing of five of these viruses is nearly complete. Once the sequence is completed, further experiments based upon the DNA sequence will be performed and an analysis of the relationships between viruses will be performed. This will result in a publication describing these viruses and their relationships. This work will contribute to the growing knowledge about the evolution of viruses that infect bacteria.

Narrative

Introduction

This sabbatical proposal will focus on one of the ongoing research projects that I will work on during my sabbatical, the isolation and characterization of bacteriophages that infect the photosynthetic bacterium *Rhodobacter capsulatus*. The sabbatical will provide the time necessary to bring this project to the point of publication. Work will also continue on projects related to chlorophyll biosynthesis that are not described here due to space limitations.

Background

One of the newer fields in biology is the field of genomics, or the study of genomes. A genome is commonly defined as all of the genetic material (DNA) present in a cell or virus. The most familiar application of genomics is probably the Human Genome Project. The Human Genome Project determined the complete human sequence of the 3 billion DNA subunits (bases), identified all human genes, and made this information accessible to researchers for further biological study. The immense amount of data and contributions made to the field of genetics by the Human Genome Project is beyond the scope of this proposal. Importantly, this international and long term project led to development of a new, better and faster set of techniques for determining and analyzing large, complex DNA sequences.

In the fall of 2010, Loni Walker and I wrote a grant and encouraged Illinois Wesleyan University to participate in the Science Education Alliance (SEA) program funded by Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI). The focus of the HHMI supported project is to introduce first-year students to the practice of science by immersion in a research program. The research focuses on isolating, purifying, and characterizing the genomes of viruses that infect a specific kind of

bacteria, called *Mycobacterium smegmatis*. Many viruses are only capable of infecting a single type of bacteria. Students isolate (from soil samples) and characterize their individual viruses during the fall and then present their findings at the end of the semester to the class. Based on the student presentations, they then vote to determine which genome will be sequenced over the winter break. During the spring semester students use a series of computer programs and a process called annotation to characterize the sequenced genome; they determine the number of genes that code for proteins, determine the presence of additional important DNA sequences, determine gene function where possible and design small research projects that delve further into characterizing the genome.

This work with the HHMI program has re-ignited my interest in bacterial viruses. As a graduate student I did research on the bacterium *Rhodobacter capsulatus*. Biologists have studied *Rhodobacter capsulatus* primarily because it is able to perform photosynthesis (it can convert carbon dioxide in the atmosphere to carbohydrate, a process that basically allows the vast majority of organisms to survive on this planet). Although there is a relatively large group of scientists that study *Rhodobacter capsulatus* (a recent literature search indicated 1354 papers related to this bacterial species), only two viruses that infect *Rhodobacter capsulatus* have been sequenced and annotated (Fogg PCM et al. 2011; Lang AS and Beatty JT, 2001). During the 2011-2012 academic year, two students working with me developed and applied the techniques to isolate and purify viruses that infect *Rhodobacter capsulatus*. These students, Matthew Bockman and Brooke Bernardoni were able to isolate and purify four viruses. The process of bacterial virus isolation involves mixing samples from soil or water with the host bacterium and placing the bacteria and soil sample on petri plates to allow the bacterial cells to grow across the plate in a very dense population. When viruses are present they infect the bacterium, lyse the bacterial cells and start the infection process over with neighboring bacteria. After 24-36 hours the presence of multiple rounds of infection can be observed as a clear spot (called a clearing) on the plates. This clear spot represents an area where bacteria are being killed by the virus (see Appendix A for a picture of clearings on a plate of cells.)

During the 2012-2013 academic year, an additional three viruses that infect *Rhodobacter capsulatus* have been isolated and purified by a Junior Biology major, Brenda Miller. Her work was presented at the John Wesley Powell conference last spring. At this point we have accumulated seven viruses that infect *Rhodobacter capsulatus* that can be sequenced.

To determine the sequence, genomic DNA must first be isolated using standard techniques that have been developed previously. Once genomic DNA is isolated it is sequenced using the advanced techniques that have been developed specifically for large and complex DNA. Since genome sequencing uses advanced techniques and instruments not available here at Illinois Wesleyan University, I initially solicited help from the sequencing facility at the University of Pittsburgh (which does the sequencing for the universities participating in the HHMI program). At the end of the academic year (2012), colleagues at the University of Pittsburgh agreed to sequence the genome (gratis) for two viruses, but only because we were a part of the HHMI

undergraduate program, and as a one-time favor to IWU. We received the sequence for one of the genomes several months ago and this genome was annotated by two Senior Biology majors, Madeline Cross and Marlena Szewczyk. The second virus is currently being annotated by another Biology major, Manish Mandava.

Sequencing of multiple viruses is important so that we are able to discern how much diversity exists in viruses that infect *Rhodobacter capsulatus*. Part of the significance of this project is to characterize the diversity of viruses that infect *Rhodobacter capsulatus*, but it will also be informative if some of the viruses share similar genome characteristics. It is important to have multiple genomes sequenced to allow for these comparisons. With support from an ASD grant to Loni Walker and me, the sequence of the remaining five viruses has just been determined.

Objectives

With the completion of five additional genome sequences, we will be positioned to begin to assess the variation in the genomes of bacteriophages that infect *Rhodobacter capsulatus*. The objectives for this project will be to 1) complete sequencing and computer aided annotation of the genomes of bacteriophages that infect *Rhodobacter capsulatus*. 2) Design and complete experiments that will characterize features of the bacteriophages. 3) Prepare and submit a manuscript that describes the genomes of these bacteriophages and their evolutionary relationships.

1) The initial genome sequence that we just received will require additional experiments to provide the completed sequence. The technologies used for analyzing these large sequences sometimes leave small gaps in the information. These gaps must be filled before the annotation step can begin. The process used to fill the gaps, known as “finishing” may be simple or it may require significantly more work depending on the size and number of the gaps. This will likely take several additional weeks. Once the sequencing aspect of the project is completed we will begin the computer aided annotation of the genomes. The analysis involves using free software programs to predict the presence of genes followed by additional steps to identify genes from other organisms that might have similar function. This portion of the project uses approaches identical to those used in the class described above. Completing the annotation of the five genomes will take considerable time and effort.

2) Once we have the genomes annotated, we will be able to do experiments that are based upon predictions from the genome sequence. It is not possible to predict exactly what those experiments will be until we have annotated the sequence. One possible example of this might be to analyze the possible hosts for the bacteriophage. It is quite common for bacteriophages to infect only one species of bacteria, but there are also examples of bacteriophages that can infect multiple hosts. If the genome sequences suggest that a particular bacteriophage may infect multiple species of bacteria, we can test this hypothesis by trying to infect the alternative bacterial hosts with the bacteriophage. Another experiment that can be done is to use the

genome sequence to develop hypotheses about the evolutionary relationships between the bacteriophages.

3) Once the above experiments are completed, we will prepare a manuscript that presents the genome analysis, including the supporting experiments and our analysis of the bacteriophages evolutionary relationship. As described above this project has involved a number of student collaborators and Loni Walker. I will be the primary author of the manuscript, but I will work with all of the collaborators to develop a manuscript describing the results for submission to a journal such as the Journal of Virology.

Significance

The research described in this proposal will lead to a better understanding of the viruses that infect *Rhodobacter capsulatus*. By studying these viruses, we can gain insight into the evolutionary processes that lead to increased diversity in viruses as well as fundamental processes in the bacterium. Since so little is known about the viruses that infect this bacterium, the research will be a significant addition to scientific knowledge.

The time needed to complete the experiments and write a manuscript are difficult to find during the regular semester. The sabbatical period will provide the time necessary to bring this project to fruition in the form of a published paper with student coauthors.

Summary of Previous ASD grants:

“Genetic Analysis of Chlorophyll Biosynthesis”. 1997. Student poster at John Wesley Powell conference

“Cloning of the *y-6* locus from *Chlamydomonas reinhardtii*. 1998. Student presentation at John Wesley Powell conference

“Mutagenesis of *Chloroflexus aurantiacus*” 1998-1999 \$3000, Student poster at John Wesley Powell conference.

“Porphobilinogen Synthase in Invertebrate Animals” 2006-2007 \$3000.

Chlorophyll biosynthesis: Cyclase enzyme analysis. 2008-2009. \$3500. Paper published with Müller et al.

Chlorophyll biosynthesis: Identification of Rice Cyclase Enzyme components. 2011-2012. \$3500.00. Manuscript submitted.

During the summer of 2011, ASD funds were used to travel to Copenhagen and work at the Carlsberg Laboratory studying the enzyme Mg-protoporphyrin IX monomethyl ester cyclase (cyclase for short). I have traveled to Copenhagen to work at the Carlsberg laboratory with the generous support of my collaborator and ASD funds for the past several years. We have published one paper together so far though not directly related to the project funded by Illinois

Wesleyan University (Müller *et al.* 2011). We have submitted a manuscript to the FEBS Journal and are awaiting a response.

Genomic analysis of viruses that infect *Rhodobacter capsulatus*. Joint with Loni Walker 2012-2013. \$5500.00

The isolation of genomic DNA proved challenging, but we were able to send the DNA for sequencing on October 12, 2013. The company sequencing the DNA delivered the sequence on October 30, 2013. We are beginning the process of “finishing”.

Literature Cited

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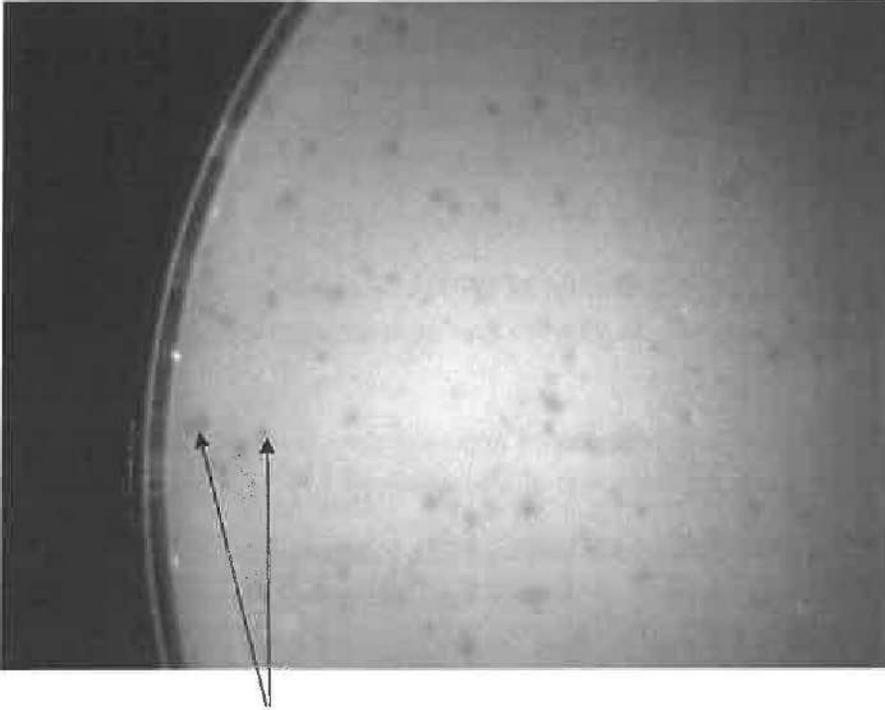
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IRB

No human subjects will be involved in this research.

Appendix A.

Image of plate with clearings due to virus infection



Clearings caused by phage infection

SUMMARY

During my one-year sabbatical, I will divide my time between two projects. I will conduct extensive research for my new scholarly book project titled *Fresh Repair: Archival Poetics and Contemporary American Poetry*. In this project, I develop a theory of how contemporary poets use archival materials in their poems. I will also complete my work on *The Electric Dress*, a new collection of poems. In this book, I explore my parents' relationship to the history of electricity. Both of these projects require that I make several research trips to archives and museums, including the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts. By the time I return to Illinois Wesleyan in Fall 2015, I will be ready to submit excerpts of my scholarly work to journals and submit my completed poetry manuscript to book publishers.

1) SCHOLARSHIP: *Fresh Repair: Archival Poetics and Contemporary American Poetry*

For centuries, archives have functioned as repositories of essential cultural knowledge. However, archives are not only valuable to scholars and librarians; they also provide poets with a way to capture the past and retool it for their own uses. Over the past twenty years in particular, a significant number of poets have turned to archives in order to exhume not just the past, but some of its most difficult stories, focusing on race, gender, and violence as they have been central to the American experience. In the process, they create something entirely new: not just a new voice or a new mode, but a new way of perceiving and engaging the challenges they see at the center of contemporary American culture.

In my new book project, *Fresh Repair: Archival Poetics and Contemporary American Poetry*, I offer the first scholarly investigation of this poetic practice that is rapidly gaining followers and influence. This project includes case studies of five poets—Martha Collins, C.S. Giscombe, Jill McDonough, Nicole Cooley, and Susan Howe—whose attention to archival materials has contributed to and helped to define a distinct poetic phenomenon. In this project, I carefully trace the relationship between archival materials and the poems themselves to understand how and why these poets have an urgent need to engage with history. Ultimately, I argue that this body of archivally-based poetry underscores the power of poetry as a tool of investigation and documentation. At the same time, these poets and their works offer a critique of the very archives that ought to give us with a sense of a “real” past, and they provide a corrective to the notion that American poetry is self-involved and inconsequential.¹ Taken as a whole, the work of these poets functions as a creative investigation into—and critique of—the nature of our cultural knowledge. In my project, I bridge the gap between archival studies and literary analysis in order to provide a sustained examination of these poets' usages of archives.

The presumed authority of archival materials—and their relationship to public memory—lend a certain credibility, legitimacy and seriousness to the projects of these poets. In *Blue Front* (2006), Martha Collins draws archival materials from the U.S. Custom House Museum in Cairo, Illinois, the Cairo Public Library, and the Illinois State Historical Library to explore the events surrounding a lynching of an African American man that occurred there in 1909. In *The Afflicted Girls* (1999), Nicole Cooley uses research she conducted at the American Antiquarian Society to write poems that implicate the judges and residents of Salem during the Witch Trials of 1692. In *Habeas Corpus* (2008), Jill McDonough uses found materials from legal documents found in the Boston Athenaeum and

¹ For an example of this kind of critique, see Mark Edmundson, “Poetry Slam: Or, The Decline of American Verse.” *Harper's Magazine* July 2013. <http://harpers.org/archive/2013/07/poetry-slam/> accessed September 13, 2013.

the New York Public Library to write a sonnet sequence about Americans who have been executed over the past four hundred years. Certainly, many American poets have drawn their inspiration from archival materials, especially in the twentieth century. From Ezra Pound's *Cantos* to Muriel Rukeyser's *Book of the Dead* to Charles Olson's *Maximus*, poets have explored "real" events and historical phenomena in their work. What sets these contemporary poets apart from their predecessors is their recasting of the importance of archives for contemporary audiences, and how they provide a critique of that importance. My project will investigate the methods by which poets use archival materials to develop a theory of poetic creation and an understanding of the nature of the "real" in archives.

In recent years, a range of scholars have investigated the nature of major research libraries as repositories of cultural knowledge, and how the organization and construction of this knowledge alternately reveals and suppresses our cultural history. In particular, critics and historians have drawn attention to what archives leave out, erase, and obscure, and how that informs our narratives of cultural power. Libraries, as we now see them in light of such examinations, present a veneer of order and the promise of an authoritative story about the past, and certainly, archives function as official record-keeping institutions. But more often than not, the poets that I focus on in my project are looking for what is missing in archives—the secrets, the obfuscations, the missing documents that offer gaps that they can fill in as makers of new work. These poets, then, are questioning the very power structures that maintain and organize the information.

Each chapter in my book focuses on one poet's use of a particular archive. I closely examine how each poet's assiduous attention to public records, legal proceedings, corporate archives, family histories, and geographical data provides a model for how poets can work toward creating a more historically and politically engaged poetics. Some poets use archival texts as the source material for collage work; others erase the original text until they find the words for their own poems; and still others craft compelling dramatic monologues from documents in various library collections. To analyze the variety and complexity of these methods, my research will draw upon the recent work of literary critics and historians who have theorized the cultural value of archives and their relationship to social memory, including Jacques Derrida, Carolyn Steedman, Thomas Osborne, and Michael Lynch. In my treatment of the poems themselves, I draw from the methods of Marjorie Perloff, whose recent book *Unoriginal Genius: Poetry by Other Means in the New Century* focuses on the procedural constraints that postmodern poets use to create new work. My interdisciplinary approach does more than merely identify and define this "archival poetics" as a postmodern procedure. My analysis provides a reading and interpretation of the actual processes by which poets conduct archival research and synthesize archival data into creative work.

Methods and work plan

During my sabbatical I plan to write two book chapters for this project: one on Martha Collins' *Blue Front and White Papers*, and one on C.S. Giscombe's *Giscombe Road and Prairie Style*. Thus far, I have researched Martha Collins's use of archives in her recent poetry. An excerpt of my work appeared as an essay on the *Voltage Poetry* website earlier this year, and I am currently developing that research into a full-length chapter. If I am granted a year-long sabbatical, I will have the time that I need to complete my research for this chapter on Martha Collins. Much of her research was conducted at public institutions in Illinois. I can envision a research program in which I visit these archives, engage with the same primary texts that Martha Collins used, and then articulate a theory for how she works with archival materials.

I am currently compiling information for my Giscombe chapter as well. Throughout his career, Giscombe has focused his attention on borders, edges, gaps and boundaries in the landscape and how they transform the lives of ordinary people, and he frequently uses archival research to

explore these commitments. In *Giscome Road*, Giscombe includes actual maps of British Columbia. Some look like simple hand-drawn sketches of rivers and watersheds; others feature a sketch of the world as it was perceived by Thompson Indians of British Columbia; others are authoritative maps from the British Columbia archives; and still others are city maps of Prince George from the Tourism office of British Columbia. In one passage, Giscombe observes that a map must be more than “‘a document of voice’ but a way/bending north (out of range, peripheral & sourceless).”² This compelling intersection between the visual and the auditory guides the shape and sound of Giscombe’s lines as he searches for the stories that provide him with a sense of landscape, echoes, and ghosts. Giscombe continues this fascination with archives in *Prairie Style*. In his preparatory work for this book, Giscombe accessed data from railroad records to understand how railroad companies participated in the segregation of neighborhoods throughout the United States. For Giscombe, then, archival research challenges the reader to consider the racism that is deeply embedded in the most ubiquitous of infrastructures.

Though Giscombe’s work has been widely reviewed and praised, no one has provided a sustained critical assessment of his ambitious poetic project and how he engages with archival materials. Editors and reviewers have categorized it as experimental, avant-garde, and postmodern, in part because he resists cohesive metaphors and self-contained narratives in his work. However, no scholar has considered his poetry as part of a larger phenomenon in which poets explore and critique archival materials. In doing this work, my project will help to identify and define not only the significance of Giscombe’s poetic process, but the relevance of archival poetics in contemporary American poetry.

Competencies, skills, and access

I have been trained in the study of Renaissance literature written in England between roughly 1500-1700. In my study of printed materials from that time period, I have spent a great deal of time in archives, including the National Archive and British Library in London; the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, DC; the Huntington Library in San Marino, CA; and the Newberry Library in Chicago. As I have worked in these archives, I have developed an interest in how the transmission of printed materials changes across time periods. For example, in my study of Renaissance poetry, I have found it valuable to read a number of versions of one poem as it is reproduced in print materials over four centuries in order to understand how writers, readers, and editors shape literary taste. Additionally, I have studied non-literary materials, including legal documents from Queen Elizabeth’s equity courts, in order to understand how juridical rhetoric informed the poetry of the sixteenth century. As early as the Renaissance, poets were drawing from real events for their inspiration—one needs look no further than the ballads and broadsides written in the wake of public executions for an interesting example of this phenomenon.

This interest in material culture permeates every facet of my career. As a poet, I have published two books of my own poetry, and many of my own poems draw their inspiration from archival materials. As a scholar of English Renaissance literature, I have extensive experience in archives throughout the United States and Britain, and I have held short-term fellowships at the Huntington and Folger Shakespeare Libraries. I am also the beneficiary of two ASD grants: one for a research trip to the National Archives in London (2010) and one for a research trip to the Edison Laboratories in East Orange, New Jersey (2012). I am, in short, ideally positioned to write the first scholarly book about this phenomenon in American poetry.

Final product and dissemination

² *Giscome Road* (Champaign, IL: Dalkey Archive Press, 2008), pp. 14-15.

My intended audience for this book is broad: it includes students and scholars of print culture and archival studies, literary critics, poets, and readers of poetry. Because I want to reach such a wide audience, I will aim for a clear, accessible tone throughout the book project.

Once I have finished my book-length chapters on Collins' and Giscombe's work, I will reshape some of my material into an article-length essay and submit it to *The American Poetry Review*. Since 1972, *APR* has featured the best in contemporary poetry, reviews, and criticism. I believe that *APR* is the ideal home for an article on archival poetics. The critical essays that they have published consider the kinds of questions that I address, and the critics they have published usually write in a clear prose style; they pose provocative research questions; and they are committed to the most urgent questions surrounding contemporary American poetry. Thus far, *APR* has not featured a critical essay on Giscombe's work, or on archival poetics as such. The publication of an article on Giscombe's archival poetics will enable me to generate an interest in the subject among a wide variety of readers. I hope, too, that I can use these book-length chapters as a writing sample for potential book publishers.

3) CREATIVE WORK: The Electric Dress

Background

In my poetry, I grapple with how a poem can point beyond itself and engage with multiple voices, ideas, and landscapes. I am deeply interested in chance occurrences, in the proximity between two seemingly unlike things, and in how I can use poetry to engage personal history with political and cultural history. My poems feature long, discursive lines which connect popular culture with political concerns, cross many geographies and time periods, and use a variety of rhetorical strategies to explore charged emotional material.

In my recent work, I have started to rely on archival materials to create surprises on the page. For example, I wrote "What My Father Eats" and "The anatomy of my melancholy" during my stay at the Folger Shakespeare Archive in Washington, DC. I was awarded a month-long Mellon fellowship to study paleography at the Folger, and my primary objective was to read and write on Renaissance complaint poetry that appears in a number of commonplace books in the Folger collection. During my off-hours, though, my mind was still humming with all of the new information that I was learning about early modern theories of mind, the relationship between the body and its passions, and the handwriting practices that were such a preoccupation of the early modern period. Some of my reflections on Robert Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy* provided me with a springboard for my poem "The anatomy of my melancholy," and my immersion into the world of early modern paleography found its way into "What My Father Eats."

In my third book project, I want the serendipity of archival discoveries to be central to my creative process. In the past year, I have become increasingly interested in the history of electricity. Both of my parents—my father was an electronic technician and my mother was a telephone operator—were members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers union (IBEW). As I wrote the elegiac poems that fueled the middle section of my second book, I started to consider the networks, connections, and energy sources that have sustained our family for decades. In my new book project, *The Electric Dress*, I forge connections between the public history of technological innovation in America and the effects of those innovations on my family. In the process, I hope to resurrect voices from the archive that are often forgotten, or even erased, with the passage of time. My engagement with the archive will allow me to consider how our private selves are really electric selves, constantly shaped by the larger forces of technology.

Description of my research thus far

Because of its nature, mine is a project that starts with focused attention on electricity and then necessarily expands like a vast network into other areas, including telephones, telegraphs, and power sources of all kinds. At the beginning of this project, I read Jill Jonnes' *Empires of Light: Edison, Tesla, Westinghouse, and the Race to Electrify the World* (Random House, 2004) and Tom McNichols' *AC/DC: The Savage Tale of the First Standards War* (Jossey-Bass, 2006). These books helped me to understand the cultural and scientific significance of electricity in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As I thought about my mother and the history of telephones and networks, my attention has necessarily shifted to other areas as well. I read Richard Winfield's *Never the Twain Shall Meet: Bell, Gallaudet, and the Communications Debate* (Gallaudet University Press, 1987) and Harlan Lane's *When the Mind Hears: A History of the Deaf* (Vintage, 1989). From these readings, I developed an interest in communication, broadly figured, and how Alexander Graham Bell's personal history as the child of a hearing-impaired mother affected his own thinking on communication and networks.

I have also conducted research at two important sites in the history of electricity. Last year, I traveled to the Edison and Ford Winter Estates in Fort Myers, Florida, and I received an Artistic and Scholarly Grant from Illinois Wesleyan University to travel to the Thomas Edison National Historical Park in West Orange, New Jersey. I spent a week in those archives, poring over old photos, films, advertisements, pamphlets, patents, and reports. As a result of both research trips, I gained a deeper understanding of Edison's cultural importance and his connections to other innovators, including Harvey Firestone and Henry Ford, which then led me to consider the natural resources such as copper, rubber, and steel that fueled the most important inventions of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth centuries. From these trips, I was able to generate drafts of a number of new poems for *The Electric Dress*.

During my sabbatical, I would like to spend one month at the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts. I am eager to enhance my understanding of electricity by poring through the rare materials in that collection. In particular, I would like to look at the material properties of histories of electricity from the nineteenth century, including George B. Prescott's *The speaking telephone, electric light, and other recent electrical inventions* (NY: Appleton, 1878), Thomas Gray's *The inventors of the telegraph and telephone* (Washington: GPO, 1893), and A.E. Dolbear's *The telephone: an account of the phenomena of electricity, magnetism, and sound, as involved in its action* (Boston: Lee & Shepard, 1877). Of equal or greater interest to me, however, is the vast collection of ephemeral materials in the AAS collection, including the repository of pamphlets, advertisements, ballads, postcards, illustrations, and photographs that have to do with telegraphs, telephones, electricity, and incandescent light in the collection. I am especially interested in those materials that focus on the medicinal uses of electricity as a curative for neurological disorders (for example, W.H. Burnap's *Davis & Kidder's magneto-electric machine, for nervous diseases* [Lowell, MA, 1858]), as a force that contributes to an understanding of "electro-psychology" (as it is described in *Electro biology! Or science of the mind* [Peoria, IL: Daily Democratic Union Office, 1859]), and as a means to restore animation to lifeless bodies (as in Thomas Brown's *The Ethereal Physician* [Newbern, NC, 1825]). As a literature scholar, I have spent a great deal of time in archives in the United States and Britain. Each time, I have marveled at the experience of holding centuries-old documents in my hands. There is nothing that replicates the visceral sensation of engaging these materials and the people who created them. It is this experience that I look forward to above all.

It is impossible to know exactly how I will use the archival materials available at the American Antiquarian Society; indeed, the chance encounters that can occur in the archive, and in the writing process itself, forbid such predictions. However, based on my fellowship and residency experiences, I know that these visits will give me the time I need to read deeply and broadly for this next collection of poems.