

Multilayered Loyalties

Oregon Indian Women as Citizens of the Land, Their Tribal Nations, and the United States

by Kay Reid

THIS ESSAY SEEKS to elucidate how Oregon Native women have lived and expressed their intertwined loyalties as citizens of the land, their tribal nations, and the United States. The women quoted here hold citizenship in two sovereign nations: one of Oregon's nine federally recognized Indian tribes and the United States of America.¹ Each tribe has a distinctive history, land, and governance structure, and each has experienced interactions with the U.S. government in a singular way. Still, there are common experiences. Some of the women interviewed for this essay experience their citizenship of the land as more profound than their legal status as citizens of two nations, believing the land has its own rights and laws. For them, protecting the land's spirit, gifts, and friendship is an obligation and sacred responsibility. Women tribal leaders consulted for this story speak of their actions to make the federal

government accountable, their protection of treaty rights, and their struggle for the health and well-being of both their own people and non-Indians.² Together, these voices illuminate the braided varieties of citizenship lived by Oregon tribal women. Women have often been leaders in the resurgence of Oregon Indian tribal nations during the past sixty years, and their accomplishments are profound.

The government-to-government status of tribal nations with the United States is based on the U.S. Constitution, implicitly in Article VI — “all Treaties made, or which shall be made . . . shall be the supreme Law of the Land” — and specifically in Article I, section 8 — “Congress shall have Power . . . to regulate Commerce . . . with the Indian Tribes.”³ The United States deals with the tribes as sovereign governments, meaning, in part, that tribes form their own governments, make many of their own laws, maintain their own



Dee Pigsley, chair of the Siletz (second from right), Clare Nomee, chair of the Crow Tribe (right), Julia Davis-Wheeler, chair of the Nez Perce (left), and another tribal leader meet at a Washington, D.C., gathering with Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton (center).

court systems, determine uses of their properties, establish eligibility for citizenship in the tribe, and levy taxes.

Federal recognition — that is, a legal relationship between Indian nations and the U.S. government — is established in several ways: through binding treaties, congressional legislation, executive order, or other federal administrative actions or federal court decisions. The federally recognized tribes of Oregon all have complicated histories of relationships with the federal government, with some having recognition formally terminated and then restored. Some treaties signed by Indian leaders and representatives of the federal government were never ratified by Congress, further complicating relationships. In addition to maintaining their mosaic of interactions with the federal and local gov-

ernments, most Oregon tribes work in cooperative alliances with other tribes, such as through the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians. In Oregon, the Legislative Commission on Indian Services is the contact point between tribes and the state.

Before passage of the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924, native-born Indians did not have a guarantee of U.S. citizenship. The act states, in part:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That all noncitizen Indians born within the territorial limits of the United States be, and they are hereby, declared to be citizens of the United States: Provided, That the granting of such citizenship shall not in any manner impair or otherwise affect the right of any Indian to tribal or other property.⁴

Members of the “Five Civilized Tribes”

(Cherokee, Choctaw, Seminole, Chickasaw, and Creek) had become citizens in 1901, and some 12,000 Native Americans who served in World War I were granted citizenship after the war. Fourteen Native American women served as members of the Army Nurse Corps during World War I, according to the Women in Military Service for America Memorial.⁵ Other special provisions had provided citizenship for individuals, including that Indian women who married American citizens would also become citizens. At the time of the Indian Citizenship Act, two-thirds of Indians in the United States were already citizens.⁶ It was not until 1924, however, that all Indian women in Oregon gained the benefits of the suffrage victory of 1912.

As Oregon suffragists began advancing their cause during the late nineteenth century, the state's tribal women had to adjust to the shattering changes visited on them through the influx of Euro-American settlers and the accompanying federal government's treaty- and war-making actions. Indian peoples of Oregon ceded millions of acres to the United States — the Klamath 20 million acres, and the Umatilla 6.4 million, for example.⁷ Nearly half of the Willamette Valley, all of the lower Columbia River, and the southeast coast of Oregon were taken from the Indians by treaty, acts of Congress, and presidential order. The work of Indian women — to feed the children, care for the sick, and harvest the fruits of the earth — was severely impacted by the loss of land to outsiders and the

process of removal to reservations. How would women continue seasonal rounds of gathering on lands their tribes reserved in treaties, or in ceded areas where they still retained certain rights? How would they work with grounds to which they were accustomed that were now variously altered by ploughs, roads, machinery, and in some regions, mining debris in vital streams? Oregon women also had to find alternate food sources, as farmers' hogs ate acorns and cattle trampled nutritious bulbs. How would women fashion cooking implements and use plants for weaving that had been damaged by chemicals the settlers and U.S. government used in farms and forests? Indians sent to reservations often had to make do with unfamiliar foods provided by the U.S. government, as they were separated from their traditional food gathering sites.⁸

Nevertheless, history demonstrates that tribal women did not simply accept the lives dictated to them by the government. As her name indicates, Molalla Kate was a member of the Molalla group of people, one of many sent to the Grand Ronde Reservation in 1856. Kate declined to stay on the reservation and returned to Oregon City. A craftswoman, she worked as a housekeeper in the home of Dr. John McLoughlin, former Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company. Kathryn Harrison, who was the first woman to chair the Grand Ronde's tribal council, recounts that her father and mother always assured her: "We don't worry about you; you're named for Aunt Kate." Kate lived to be almost one hun-

dred years old, and when she became blind, Harrison says, Kate would ask to run her hands over the children's faces so she could "see" them.⁹

Of the same generation was Annie Miner Peterson. Born in a village on the southern Oregon coast in 1860, Peterson was a strong-spirited community activist. She dictated her biography in Miluk Coos to anthropologist Melville Jacobs in the 1930s, and he identified her as the last speaker of that language.¹⁰ Lionel Youst tells the story that, beginning in 1892, some of the Coos people living along the Siuslaw River started meetings to drum up financial support from Indians in the area so they could file a lawsuit against the federal government, claiming compensation for lands taken from them by Euro-American settlers. Coos leaders had signed the Empire Treaty in 1855, which confederated them with the Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw, but Congress never ratified the treaty.¹¹ Youst recorded: "Over the years Annie became a fixture at these meetings, strongly supporting the effort."¹² In 1931, the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians won permission to file a land claims case in court, but the claim was denied. "Today," notes Howard P. Roy, the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians "are the only federally recognized tribe in Oregon never to have secured a financial settlement or land restoration from the United States for the taking of ancestral territory."¹³

Such informal, but ultimately powerful, meetings were not unique to the



Sue Crispin Shaffer (left) meets with U.S. Congresswoman Maxine Waters (California 35th congressional district, 1990 to present). Shaffer served as Chair of the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Indians for over thirty years.

Coos. Sue Crispin Shaffer's Cow Creek female ancestors hosted get-togethers in her grandmother's home in the late nineteenth century and her mother's home in the 1910s, 1920s, and 1930s. They also met at the major huckleberry patch on what Shaffer calls the Rogue-Umpqua divide.¹⁴ When Shaffer was a little girl, her grandmother's house was also often used for the Catholic parish services. There was a four-foot-tall wicker basket in the hallway that held the priests' garments and liturgical supplies. Shaffer became Chair of the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Indians, serving in that capacity for almost



Minerva Soucie, a Burns Paiute educator and master basket maker, studied and taught basket-making all her life.

thirty-five years. She presided over phenomenal economic growth of the Cow Creek, but she considers her great achievement to be energizing tribal members to commit to seeking federal recognition and to follow through with the process. Her grandmother, Mary Thomason Furlong, was a civic leader whose home was “almost a community house.”¹⁵ Shaffer describes the homes of her grandmother and her mother, “Nellie” Crispen, as hubs of organizing:

We all [seven Cow Creek families] lived right up the South Umpqua River, right in the heart of our homeland, and we continued to conduct our own tribal affairs, and tribal business. In the teens and ’20s, my mother was instrumental in bringing forth five bills to Congress, for restitution — or recognition of some sort. However, the last bill in

1932 passed both houses, but was vetoed by President Hoover because of the Great Depression, he said. So again, the tribe was crushed and felt very dead, but we continued to meet, and took care of business, took care of needy families, took care of things that needed to be done to try to protect the tribe. So we had those records that my mother kept all those years, minutes of meetings. . . . And it was representative of all the families. . . . I can’t remember *when* I didn’t go to meetings, at our house, at my grandmother’s house. Oh, our house was *always* Grand Central Station.¹⁶

It is significant that Shaffer emphasizes not only the political work done by her grandmother and others but also that much of the work was done at home, “right in the heart of our homeland.”

The importance of protecting land and accompanying ecosystems continues to guide many women tribal leaders. The Umatilla Indian Reservation has been repeatedly divided by statute, development, and greed, but in their 1855 treaty with the United States, the Walla Walla, Cayuse, and Umatilla peoples reserved the right to fish, hunt, and gather not just on the reservation but also at “usual and accustomed” places in the ceded lands. Several other treaties included the same reserved right.¹⁷ Tribal leaders, with an acumen that combines tradition, science, and politics, have fought to protect those treaty rights and work with federal and state agencies to maintain and, in some cases, revive natural resources. In one example, a highway construction project in Ontario, Oregon, impacted two Umatilla archaeological sites, prompting the tribe and state agencies to work together to ask how first foods

and burial sites might be protected in the future and how to make sure tribal members are consulted before construction plans are made. The late Kathleen Gordon, tribal elder, spoke about the sacred law that underpinned her approach to natural resource protection:

Indian law is the sacred law that was handed down to us by word of mouth to respect all living things. Every living thing. They say even the rock has a life. And you respect everything that the creator has put on this land for us. And to take care of those things, take only your share, not everyone else's share, only your share. And you share what you have with others who don't have enough. You share that, whether it's your last piece of bread . . . or your last huckleberry, you share that with others. And that's how we have survived, I think to this day, by learning to not waste anything that the creator has given us, and to share with others if it's our very last bite. And I think that those teachings and those laws by our elders, and of course the spirituality part of thanking the creator as soon as you open your eyes in the morning, you thank the creator for a new day, and for all of the wonderful gifts that he has placed here for us to survive. And that thanksgiving never ends.¹⁸

As Gordon articulates, indigenous leaders work under not only laws created by tribes and regional governments in recent years, but also the Indian law that has been handed down over generations.

The law of sharing also was practiced by Shaffer's mother and grandmother and by Harrison's parents when they were impoverished early in the Great Depression.¹⁹ More than simple acts of generosity, sharing is an ethic rooted in the land's gifts. Sharing

is part of indebtedness to forbearers. In her oral history, Minerva Soucie, a Burns Paiute elder and master basket weaver, associated sharing with contemporary land management:

[Our people] paid with their bloodshed, so you appreciate where you're coming from; you appreciate the land, because those people were hardworking people. Don't use up the resources: take care of them. . . . That's what we've always been taught, don't take any more than you need, and you save the rest for other people. I think that's a good way to look at managing the land, because we [Burns Paiute] had to learn in a very quick time of how to pull our reservation together.²⁰

Soucie refers to a long history of fighting to maintain homes and control on traditional lands. Paiute leaders had signed a treaty in 1868, but Congress never ratified it. The Malheur Reservation was created by presidential order, but after years of deprivation, conflict, war, and removal, in 1882–1883 it was made into public domain and offered to non-Indians. The tribe regained land in the 1930s, created governing bodies and documents, and in 1972, was recognized as an independent Indian tribe.²¹

Indian management of land and resources continued to be impacted by federal decisions well into the twentieth century. Orthelia Patt spoke of the change that came with the inundation of Celilo Falls by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' completion of The Dalles Dam in 1957:

[Celilo Falls] was our meeting place, and a big celebration every year. We got to see our relatives; it was a reunion, and there were no borders or boundaries. Our language

spread to the Nez Perce, and the Colville [in Washington State] What happened was heartbreaking. The women in our home wailed and cried.²²

Patt went on to say that over fifty years later, tribal women and men continue to mourn the destruction of Celilo Falls.

Despite such losses, tribes continue to have significant control over regional fisheries. The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) draws on both the Native commitment to the land and the formal relationship among tribal, federal, and local governments. N. Kathryn “Kat” Brigham (Umatilla) was a founding member of CRITFC and has continued on the commission for thirty-one years, heading it from July 2008 to June 2009 and again in 2012, as the second of three women to serve in that position. CRITFC includes the four treaty tribes of the Columbia River — Umatilla, Warm Springs, Yakama Indian Nation, and Nez Perce Tribe — and was structured in 1977 according to the multi-tribal collaboration of the old “Celilo Fish Committee,” which regulated fishing practices to ensure continuation of salmon.²³ In addition to Brigham’s service with CRITFC, she is a member of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation Board of Trustees. She was first appointed to the Tribe’s Fish and Wildlife Committee in August 1976, and served for thirty years. Brigham was on the team that accomplished the formidable task of bringing salmon back to the Umatilla River after a seventy-year hiatus.²⁴

She has brought a spirit of determination and careful cooperation that has aided the resurgence of Oregon Indian tribes to her work with other tribal members, neighboring tribes, the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), irrigators, advisors, and elected officials. She has been a key figure in implementing agreements with BPA and with other tribes, including fish-management plans required by major court decisions in the Pacific Northwest, where the federal courts have recognized tribal authority in fish management.²⁵

Brigham did not set out to be a protector of rivers and treaties. “I got drafted,” she said. “Growing up, our options were to take care of the kids in the family or be a nurse.”²⁶ She wanted to be a timber cruiser, but her dad would not allow it. Married to a Umatilla commercial fisherman, Brigham learned to understand a fisherman’s point of view. Through her work with numerous and sometimes conflicting fisheries stakeholders, she has participated in acrimonious meetings. She jokes that if she goes to a meeting where she is not too pleased, it brings out her warring Cayuse. Brigham feels a profound duty to protect salmon in the Pacific Northwest for future generations. She spent years traveling around the region, employing Native knowledge, science, negotiating skills, and Cayuse determination to assure fish for generations to come. Taught by her grandfather Sam Kash Kash and other elders, she learned as a child about protecting the land and the treaty, and she continues to fish on the

Columbia River main stem with her daughters and granddaughters.

THE RELATIONSHIP between tribal nations and the U.S. government has been guided by various policies over the past two centuries. The 1934 Indian Reorganization Act (IRA), for example, allowed for decreased federal control and increased tribal self-governance.²⁷ The act also reversed the policy of breaking up tribal governments and landholding through allotments. Law professor Robert Miller describes its impact:

The IRA . . . took a first step towards allowing Indian people to regain control of their lives and to take back the power over their lives and cultures from the federal government. The IRA also tried to help strengthen tribal governments and help them to begin functioning as real governments controlling life on the reservations.²⁸

Many tribes took advantage of its provisions by establishing independent governments.

During the 1950s, however, a move was gaining ground to further assimilate Indians into the dominant culture and to eliminate the federal trust relationship with tribes.²⁹ Through the Klamath Termination Act (1954) and Western Oregon Termination Act (1954), the Coos, Coquille, Cow Creek, Grand Ronde, Klamath, and Siletz tribes lost their federal status as Indian nations. They lost their reservation lands and were cast into poverty. Health benefits were abolished, and children in terminated tribes could not attend Indian schools. *Disastrous* is the most common adjective used to

describe termination. Kathleen Shaye Hill writes:

The failed policy of “termination” was, as a 1981 *The Oregonian* editorial described it, an “experiment, a seed sown in adversity and watered by tears.” The termination policy as a whole was an outgrowth of a backlash movement; born of a period of economic concern and conservatism . . . In 1947, the country was pulling itself together after World War II; anti-communism was at its peak, and individualism (as compared to tribalism) was the key word.³⁰

The wealth of the Klamath and the possibility of termination were being noted in public discussions as early as 1947.³¹ The Klamath, incidentally, held the greatest stand of Ponderosa pine in the West. Hill quoted Klamath Tribal Chairman Seldon Kirk: “I think the Secretary wants the white man to get our land. That kicks my heart.”³²

Tribes terminated by Congress could be restored to federal recognition only by petitioning Congress, and they needed to have at least one strong congressional ally. Tribes and their partners had to conduct arduous research: track down members, provide evidence that the tribe had held meetings and cohered even through the years of termination, and provide names of tribal members.³³

All the tribes terminated in Oregon were eventually restored, and Hill did much of the research necessary for the successful appeal for Klamath tribal restoration. Klamath records were housed in the National Archives and Records Administration office in Seattle, where Hill lived. She drove metro buses in the morning so she could then plumb the archives in the afternoon,

doing all this while she was a single mom of two teenagers. Hill became an attorney just so she could work on the restoration of her tribe and make a difference in Indian Country. Most of her work today entails educating the public as well as Indian people. Hill has a distinct worry about Klamath youth not knowing their real history, and she is addressing that concern.³⁴

Many Oregon women did work crucial to restoration, including Harrison (now of Grand Ronde, but also a leader in Siletz restoration), Pigsley (Siletz), Kennedy (Grand Ronde), Brainard (Coos), and Sharon Parrish (Coquille). They were not alone — other indefatigable women and men also assumed the task.³⁵ Pigsley speaks to the rigor of her schedule, the laborious details entailed in eligibility for restoration, and the struggle to educate the Siletz tribe's neighbors:

I used to catch the red eye, sleep on the plane, have six appointments starting at 9 o'clock and then I'd catch the 5 o'clock back and I'd be at work the next day. So it was kind of rugged. I had no inside knowledge of anything about restoration in any way, shape or form; my only skill was typing, actually. And they said well, you could be our secretary. So I was the secretary-treasurer for those four years that I served on the council prior to restoration. But everybody that was elected [to the tribal council] had a piece of what was going to be presented in our restoration act, and eventually we got a bill introduced and the first one didn't go anywhere and then the second one was introduced and we were told that we had to settle hunting and fishing rights before anything was going to happen, because at that time the Boldt decision was on the front page every single day. Everyone thought we were going to catch all the fish and set nets on the Siletz River

and do a lot of things that were unpleasant to them. So we put a group together that ended up negotiating an agreement with the State of Oregon, and defining what our hunting and fishing rights would be and it was actually called a friendly law suit and once that issue was settled, Congressman Les AuCoin was willing to go ahead with the bill [to reverse termination] in the House of Representatives. Senator Hatfield had never had a problem with any of it.³⁶

Harrison explained why she fought for restoration:

We were asking for what we were granted in those treaties that were signed by our people. And having made that awful walk . . . up through the Willamette Valley in a massive military roundup, we had a duty to come through with what their vision was so that walk would not have been made in vain. And I think of having our little office by the cemetery, with those tombstones, sometimes you felt pretty guilty and wanted to just kind of sneak by them, because there they were, and had given their all, and think that here we were, still a tribe.³⁷

Harrison's phrase about the "awful walk" refers to the uprooting of some 4,000 western Oregon Indians in 1856. Some were sent to the Coast Reservation by boat, but most traveled by foot. As scholar Charles Wilkinson describes it: "Two agonizing overland marches encompassed more than 250 miles. All of the removals inflicted incalculable physical and psychological injuries on the people . . . the steep, tangled terrain and strong rivers made the marches especially wearing and treacherous."³⁸ Cheryle Kennedy, born not long before the termination of her tribe, affirms what restoration means to her:

Looking at the United States as the most powerful nation in the world, who made



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Kathryn Harrison (front row, right), her daughter Karen (second from right), her son Frank (second from left), and Elizabeth Furse, Director of Restoration Project of Native American Program of Oregon Legal Services (back row, middle), testified before congressional committees in 1983 in an effort to restore the Grand Ronde to federal recognition. The Grand Ronde Restoration Act passed in November of that year.

us invisible, our job was to overcome that adversity, and once again be the strong nation of people that we knew was given to us by the creator. That is what restoration is about. . . . Restoration for me means revitalization of culture.³⁹

Brenda Brainard, an attorney and tribal educator, was born only days before the termination of her tribe. The Coos resistance to termination was potent. Roy writes: "The tribes' opposition was so unwavering that when the federal government held termination hearings and conducted tribal voting in Siletz, Oregon, in 1947, the forty-six member delegation from the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw tribes were taken from the hearings and placed in a locked room under

guard until voting was completed."⁴⁰ Historian David R.M. Beck writes that Brainard went to law school just so she could join the fight for restoration. She wanted to study with Charles Wilkinson, who she had heard talk about the success of the Menominee, the first tribe to achieve restoration. "Hearing Charles talk about the Menominee and then seeing him work on Siletz, I knew it could be done." She joined with the older generation as efforts toward reversal of termination intensified during the early 1980s.⁴¹

Today, five of the Coquille Tribe's seven council members are women, including Sharon Parrish, who kept tribal records in her sewing room before the tribe moved into tribal

offices after the Coquille Restoration Act of 1989. Coquille women had been involved long before restoration. George Bundy Wasson recalls a story from his father George Bundy Wasson, Sr., who spent much of his life trying to regain lands that had been taken from Indians during the 1850s. The elder Wasson's grandmother took him to a hill above South Slough on Coos Bay and told him: "All this land belongs to your *hiyas papas* (grandfathers). Someday, Chawtch (George), you get it back."⁴²

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S changing policy toward Indian Tribes is illustrated not only in the restoration acts of the 1970s and 1980s, but also in the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (1975), which permits tribes to participate in federal social programs and services relating to Indians and provides funds for public schools on or near reservations.⁴³

As their ancestors had long ago, Oregon women tribal leaders have continued to work in various ways to educate the public and focus attention on tribal history. Pigsley describes the annual Run to the Rogue, which retells the story of the treacherous march to the reservation in 1856:

From the hills, from the desert and from the river and then moving them north where it's a little cooler and definitely not desert where we live today, so it was a traumatic experience and there's lots of family stories about how people were moved and how people died on the walk and it was pretty treacherous and we experience this every year when we do what we call run to the Rogue. We have runners

who actually run from Siletz all the way to the Rogue River to where the treaty was signed and we have dances in the evening. We have a salmon dinner and we just remember what it was like for people who lived there and then had to be moved and actually had to walk and that's our purpose for Run to the Rogue is just to remember.⁴⁴

Minerva Soucie preserved tribal history by passing on traditions to young people. She also worked for the U.S. Forest Service for twenty-four years, passing by the desks of many white males in the course of her work. In the 1990s, she and a friend with a lifetime interest in plants and botanicals got a permit to collect *wada* seeds from the Malheur Wildlife Refuge, a place where the Burns Paiute traditionally lived. Soucie tells this story:

A rancher just flying down the road . . . jumped out of his truck and demanded to know what we were collecting. "This is my land. Get off this land . . . you have no permission to be here." I'm here to do plant collection. I'm collecting data and taking pictures. I'm Minerva Soucie and I'm a member of the Burns Paiute Tribe and my people have been here for well over ten thousand years, and our people have come here to collect the seeds that grow on the refuge. "I never heard of you," he said. He didn't faze me. I knew what you have to do is assert your rights.⁴⁵

Soucie, in this powerful expression of confidence, was asserting herself simultaneously as a woman accustomed to working with white men, and as a citizen of an Indian nation still practicing traditions from ancient times.

Mary Francella Griggs was elected to the Siletz tribal council in 1976 and helped lead tribal restoration the following year. In a 1999 interview, she

recalled how she empowered herself at an early age:

In the fourth grade, I had a desk beside the window and there was a set of Book of Knowledge right there . . . I read through that whole set of books that year. . . . My friends were smart — we always knew what was happening. We didn't have radios or newspapers, but when we'd wax the floors, they gave us newspapers to cover them with. So we'd read those . . . *pass the word to somebody else*.⁴⁶

Griggs had been orphaned as a child younger than ten years of age, but her mother Amanda Griggs had already stirred in her daughters a sense of excitement about learning: "I remember my mother working with us, reading with us, teaching us."⁴⁷ Griggs, a Holy Names Sister, later directed Portland's Urban Indian Center and the Right to Read Program of the Chicano and Indian Study Center of Oregon.

Active citizenship — participation in communities, tribes and towns — can be a challenging practice for citizens who are ill, defeated, or in despair, and Oregon's tribal women have tackled those difficulties as well. Cheryle Kennedy has been a health administrator for more than thirty years. She served her own tribe as Health Director for fifteen years and was Executive Director of the Northwest Indian Health Board before her election to chair the Grand Ronde tribal council.

What sparked my interest is my grandmother, who was full Grand Ronde. Growing up, she took me out with her to a lot of cultural things, to pick huckleberries, staying in the mountains months at a time, primarily in August, learning the importance of sur-

roundings, picking a certain food because it was so healthy. She'd say, "These are important, science has shown this." . . . We used logging roads, went to two areas year after year. It is very physical, sometimes so steep you feel like you have to tie yourself to a tree not to roll down.⁴⁸

Nurturing body and soul with sports has been vital to Kennedy's own well-being, and she promotes sports for others. She coached co-ed softball and girls' and women's basketball in eastern Oregon. When she was director of Paiute Health Services during the early 1980s, she and her team of Paiute girls went to different reservations to compete. "Winning is good, but it's not a requirement that we win all the time. I'd see tempers flaring and I'd pull them out. We won sportsmanship trophies a lot."⁴⁹

After a severe injury playing softball and going through all the western medicine regimes, Kennedy ultimately healed by using the leaves of a plant her grandmother had shown her. She continues to incorporate culture into health and healing. She entered the health field when it was still dominated by men, and before women of color held high positions: "Every position I came into was usually held by a man. I always got less pay. That seems to be ingrained or embedded. I was not less educated or determined."⁵⁰

NEGOTIATING the maze of simultaneous citizenship in several traditions and more than one nation, Oregon tribal women have become dogged magicians in putting their knowledge and skills to work for their tribes and their neighbors. "Reaching out has

been the bottom line to our status as a federally-recognized, treaty tribe,” declared Shaffer in 1989.⁵¹ Kennedy sums up the calling: “The vision is to foster that spirit and energy: we are here to survive, to become leaders of this United States, to come forward with solutions.”⁵²

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN OREGON TRIBAL HISTORY

1850 Donation Land Act offers free land to settlers to start farms in Oregon.

1853 – 1859 Stevens-Palmer treaties are negotiated between the U.S. government and Native Americans in Oregon and Washington territories.

1855 Coast (Siletz) Indian Reservation established by executive order. Dislocated tribal members are removed there in 1856. Umatilla and Warm Springs reservations established.

1857 Grand Ronde Reservation established.

1866 Malheur Reservation established. Much of the original land becomes the Burns Paiute Reservation in 1972, following the restoration of that tribe.

1859 Oregon becomes a state.

1887 – 1934 Allotment and Assimilation Era

1914 – 1918 Approximately 12,000 American Indians serve in World War I. After the war, soldiers are granted citizenship.

1924 Indian Citizenship Act (Snyder Act)

1934 Indian Reorganization Act

1954 Western Termination Act; 62 of 109 Oregon tribes and bands lose federal recognition.

1969 *Sohappy v. Smith/U.S. v. Oregon* (Belloni decision) provides a “fair share” of fish runs to Native fisheries.

1974 *U.S. v. State of Washington* (Boldt decision) provides “the right of taking fish, at all the usual and accustomed grounds and stations.”

1975 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act

1977 Confederated Tribes of Siletz restored.

1982 Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Indians restored.

1983 Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde restored.

1984 Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians restored.

1986 Klamath Indian Tribe restored.

1989 Coquille Indian tribe restored.

SOURCE: *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, “The Isaac I. Stevens and Joel Palmer Treaties, 1855–2005” 106:3 (Fall 2005)

NOTES

1. The nine federally recognized tribes in Oregon are: Burns Paiute Tribe; Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians; Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community; Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians; Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation; Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation; Coquille Indian Tribe; Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians; and The Klamath Tribes. The names of the tribes are shortened in the remainder of the article.

2. Oral interviews consulted for this project include Portland State University's Institute for Tribal Government's recorded histories with citizens of the nine Oregon Tribes from 2001 to 2007 for its Great Tribal Leaders of Modern Times video and curriculum project [hereafter Institute oral histories]. Those histories focus on leadership and encompass substantial biographical material. The interviews were conducted by the author, and this essay includes quotes from those with Sue Shaffer (Cow Creek), Delores "Dee" Pigsley (Siletz), Kathryn Harrison (Grand Ronde), and the late Minerva Soucie (Burns Paiute). Interviews are the property of the Institute of Tribal Government and are available through its website: www.tribalgov.pdx.edu/u/interviews.php. The Legacy of Hope project, an oral history of social justice action by Oregon Catholics, recorded the oral history of the late Sister Mary Francella Griggs (Siletz). Griggs's interview is the property of Legacy of Hope and is available by written request: kreid@spiritone.com. The words of the late Kathleen Gordon (Umatilla) for the DVD program "This Place Has a Name" are used with the permission of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. Access to this program is available only through the tribe's Cultural Resources Protection Program. The author conducted telephone interviews in June 2012 with Cheryle Kennedy (Chairwoman, Grand Ronde), N. Kathryn "Kat" Brigham (Umatilla), Orthelia Patt (Warm Springs), and Kathleen Shaye Hill (Klamath). Secondary sources were reviewed for information about Brenda

Brainard (Coos) and members of the Coquille tribe who played leadership roles in their restoration campaigns.

3. Robert J. Miller, "American Indians and the United States Constitution," Social Science Research Network, March 16, 2000, available online at http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1573144 (accessed August 20, 2012).

4. For a discussion of the Indian Citizenship Act, see Michael T. Smith, "The History of Indian Citizenship," *Great Plains Journal* 10 (Fall 1970): 25–35. See also Robert J. Miller, *Great Tribal Leaders of Modern Times* curriculum, Institute for Tribal Government, 2004.

5. "The Women's Memorial at Arlington, Virginia, is a unique, living memorial honoring all military women — past, present and future — and is the only major national memorial honoring women who have served in our nation's defense." Women in Military Service for America Foundation, www.womensmemorial.org (accessed August 17, 2012).

6. See Joseph Kappler, ed. *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties; Indian Citizenship* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1929), available through the Oklahoma State University Library, www.digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/ (accessed August 14, 2012).

7. See "Information about the Tribes," The Klamath Tribes, available at <http://www.chiloquin.com/tribes.html> (accessed August 14, 2012); and "Treaty with the Walla Walla, Cayuse and Umatilla 1855," Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, available at www.umatilla.nsn.us/treaty.html (accessed August 14, 2012). For more information on the ceding of land by Native peoples in Oregon, see Sandy Thiele-Cirka, "Oregon Indian Tribes," Oregon Legislative Commission on Indian Services, available at http://www.leg.state.or.us/comm/commsrvs/background_briefs2008/briefs/GeneralGovernment/OregonIndianTribes.pdf (accessed August 14, 2012).

8. Kathryn Harrison, conversations with the author, June to August 2012; Stephen Dow

Beckham and Michael Rondeau, "Patience and Persistence, the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Indians," in *The First Oregonians*, ed. Laura Berg (Portland: Oregon Council for the Humanities, 2007), 104–119.

9. Kathryn Harrison, interview by author, 2001, Institute oral histories; Harrison, phone conversations with the author, June and July 2012. See also Kristine Olson, *Standing Tall: The Lifeway of Kathryn Jones Harrison, Chair of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 2005).

10. Lionel Youst, *She's Tricky Like Coyote: Annie Miner Peterson, an Oregon Coast Indian Woman* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1977), 172–73; Melville Jacobs, *Coos Narrative and Ethnologic Texts*, Publications in Anthropology, 8:1 (Seattle: University of Washington, 1939).

11. Ron Brainard, former Chair and present Councilman of the Coos, interview, February 2006, Institute oral histories. "The treaty went to Washington DC and was read on the floor . . . and then was lost — was never ratified. So we're a non-ratified treaty tribe." The treaty was found 30 years later; Brainard's great-great grandmother was present at the signing of the treaty. Brainard, phone conversation with author, August 17, 2012.

12. Youst, *She's Tricky Like Coyote*, 121.

13. Howard P. Roy, "The Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua. Siuslaw," in Berg, ed., *The First Oregonians*, 74, 77.

14. Sue Shaffer, interview by author, 2004, Institute oral histories; Shaffer, phone conversation with author, August 2012.

15. Shaffer, phone conversation, August 2012.

16. Shaffer, interview, November 2004, Institute oral histories.

17. See "Our History and Culture," Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, available at <http://www.umatilla.nsn.us/history.html>. See also Jennifer Karson, ed., *as days go by: Our History, Our Land, and Our People, the Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla* (Pendleton: Tamástslikt Institute; Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 2006).

18. "'This Place Has a Name,' Reflections on Land Use and Tenure of the Confederated

Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation," Department of Natural Resources, Cultural Resources Protection Program, Green Fire Productions, 2010, script. Permission to use the script or program must be obtained from Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation's Cultural Resources Protection Program. If permission is granted, a copy of the DVD can be purchased by contacting the Cultural Resources Protection Program.

19. Harrison, interview, 2001, Institute oral histories.

20. Minerva Soucie, interview by the author, February 2006, Institute oral histories.

21. See "History," Burns Paiute Tribe, at http://www.burnspaiute-nsn.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=37&Itemid=57 (accessed August 8, 2012).

22. Patt, phone conversation with author, June 19, 2012.

23. See "What is CRITFC," Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, available at www.critfc.org/text/work.html (accessed August 8, 2012).

24. "Salmon Success in the Umatilla River!" Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, available at www.umatilla.nsn.us/umariver.html (accessed August 20, 2012): "For nearly 70 years, salmon were not present in the Umatilla River. Irrigation diversions and habitat damage extinguished them in the early 1900s. Today, salmon are once again living in the Umatilla River and making a remarkable comeback, thanks to a cooperative effort led by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. Salmon runs were revived in the Umatilla River while also protecting the local irrigated agriculture economy. The Umatilla Basin is one of the few success stories in the Columbia Basin and it's because local people, including Indians and irrigators, worked together to make this miracle possible."

25. In 1969, for example, Judge Belloni decided in *Sohappy v. Smith/U.S. v. Oregon* that the tribes are entitled to a "fair share" of the fish runs and that the state is limited in its power to regulate treaty Indian fisheries (the state may only regulate when "reasonable and necessary for conservation"); furthermore, state conservation regulations were not to discriminate against Indians and must

be the least restrictive means. In 1974, in *U.S. v. Washington*, Judge Boldt mandated that a “fair share” was 50 percent of the harvestable fish destined for the tribes’ usual and accustomed fishing places and reaffirmed tribal management powers. See Fronda Woods, “Who’s In Charge of Fishing?” *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 106:3 (Fall 2005): 412–441; and “The Isaac I. Stevens and Joel Palmer Treaties, 1855–2005,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 106:3 (Fall 2005): 412–41.

26. Kathryn Brigham, interview by author, June 11, 2012.

27. The text of the Indian Reorganization Act is available at www.cskt.org/gov/file/reorganizationact.pdf (accessed August 20, 2012).

28. Robert J. Miller, “The History of Federal Indian Policies,” Social Science Research Network, March 17, 2010, available at http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1573670 (accessed August 20, 2012).

29. Trust responsibility, as defined by the U.S. Supreme Court, is a legal obligation of the United States to charge itself “with moral obligations of the highest responsibility and trust” toward Indian Tribes (*Seminole Nation v. United States*, 1942).

30. Kathleen Shaye Hill, “The Klamath Tribe: an Overview of Its Termination” (1985), unpublished manuscript in author’s possession.

31. See, for example, “Klamath Indians Draw Spotlight as Probe Nears,” *Oregonian*, August 10, 1947.

32. Hill, “The Klamath Tribe,” 14.

33. See Charles Wilkinson, *Blood Struggle: The Rise of Modern Indian Nations* (New York: Norton, 2005).

34. Hill, phone interview with author, June 19, 2012.

35. See Olson, *Standing Tall*; David R.M. Beck, *Seeking Recognition: The Termination and Restoration of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians, 1855–1984* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009); and Charles Wilkinson, *The People Are Dancing Again: The History of the Siletz Tribe of Western Oregon* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010).

36. Delores Pigsley, interview with author,

2004, Institute oral histories.

37. Harrison, interview.

38. Wilkinson, *The People Are Dancing Again*, 150.

39. Cheryle Kennedy, phone interview with author, June 14, 2012.

40. Roy, “The Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians,” 75.

41. David R.M. Beck, “‘Standing Out Here in the Surf’: The Termination and Restoration of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians of Western Oregon in Historical Perspective,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 110:1 (Spring 2009): 24.



42. George B. Wasson, Jr., “Memory of a People: The Coquelles of the Southern Oregon Coast,” in Berg, ed., *The First Oregonians*, 94.

43. Portland State University Great Tribal Leaders of Modern Times Project, curriculum, 2004.

44. Pigsley interview.

45. Soucie interview.

46. Mary Francella Griggs, interview by Sister Arnadene Bean, Legacy of Hope Project, Marylhurst, 1999. Recordings of many Legacy interviews are in the collection of the Oregon Historical Society. Additional access: kreid@spiritone.com.

47. Griggs interview.

48. Kennedy phone interview.

49. Ibid.

50. Ibid.

51. Text of speech by Shaffer, “We Must Reach Out: A Rationale for Tribal Involvement in Civic Affairs,” presented to National Congress of American Indians and other gatherings, copy in author’s possession.

52. Kennedy phone interview.