Name-Giving among the Delaware Indians[1]

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HISTORIANS WORKING in the colonial records are frequently mystified, and often confused, by the entries of Delaware Indian personal names found in contemporary deeds, letters, and journals. For example, in the first Indian deed to William Penn, by which lands in Bucks County, Pennsylvania were conveyed to him on July 15, 1682, the following Indians made their marks: Idquahon, Janottowe, Iduqueywon, Sahoppe, Okonickon, Merkekowen, Oreckton, Nannacussey, Shaurwaughon, Swanpisse, Nahoosey, Tomackhickon, Westkekitt, and Tohawsiz.[2] In another citation, under date of July 5, 1697, one finds a reference to "Taminy, Sachimak and Weheeland my Brother and Weheequeckhon alias Andrew, who is to be King after my death, Yaqueekhon alias Nicholas, and Quenameckquid alias Charles my Sonns, etc."[3] Subsequent legal instruments list numerous other Delaware Indian names, many unpronounceable, and the frequent aliases add further to the confusion, e.g., Tepakoaset alias Joe; Teshakomen alias Tishekunk; Sassoonan alias Olumapies – just to cite a few from among numerous examples found in seventeenth century Pennsylvania documents. New Jersey was also occupied by Delaware Indians at the time of the arrival of the first Europeans, and in the deed records one finds references during the same period to Peanto alias Enequeto; Oshemahamon alias John Monoockomen alias Mr. Tom Nunimi, and many, many others.[4]

Among the documentary references to the Delaware Indians in the colonial records of the state of Delaware, the following dated June 7, 1659,

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[1] My frequent references to Mrs. Nora Thompson Dean should make it clear that without her assistance and cooperation, which is gratefully acknowledged, this paper could never have been written. I also want to acknowledge the assistance of James A. Rementer, a student of Delaware Indian language and culture, who has been under Mrs. Dean's close tutelage since 1961. Mr. Rementer converted the Indian words into phonetic characters, and was also of invaluable assistance in providing information and advice.

[2] Albert Cook Myers, *William Penn and his own Account of the Lenni Lenape or Delaware Indians* (Moylan, Pa., 1937), p. 76.

[3] *Pennsylvania Archives*, 1st series (Phila., 1852–1856), 1:124–125.

[4] Frank H. Stewart, *Indians of Southern New Jersey* (Woodbury, 1932), pp. 60,68; William Nelson, *Personal Names of Indians of New Jersey*, (Paterson, 1904), lists 650 personal names of Indians, principally Delawares, found in the colonial records of Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

a contemporary English translation of the Dutch original, is also cryptical in its personal name references:

> Wee Unther Written Owners of the Landes Lyinge between Boempies Hook and Cape Hinlopen doe acknolidge this: Neckosmus or Teotacken Great Upperhed, Meoppitas & Meas Brothers Unto ye sd Upperhed Kocketoteka Lyckewys Great Upperhed and Owner of the Hoerekil (Called in the Indian Lingo Siconece) & the Land thar aboud, Mocktowekon, Sawappone and Mettomemeckas his Neare Relations and also Upperhed Katenacku Esippens & Sappeton Sachemakers (the Land is Called Quistin) Pochocton Queogkamen and Hohatagkon also Upperheds (ther Land Lys Next Unto Boempies Hook – Mameckus & Honkarkus Upperheds of Tarackus ther Land is Called Peskamohot, Hemmagmomeck also Upperhed His Land is Called [K ?] wickenesse – Matapagisckan his Land is Cald Seckatackomeck, etc.[5]

Such entries raise many questions. Did these Indian personal names have meanings which can be translated into English? Were there family names by which genealogies of blood kin could be reconstructed? How did the individuals get these names in the first place? What was the explanation for what the white scribes called aliases? Why, for example, was the Delaware Indian chief Gelelemend also called Killbuck, and why was he known as William Henry during the Revolution? Why was the Delaware war captain named Hopocan known to the whites as Captain Pipe, and to his people as Konieschquanohill? One seeks in vain in the anthropological literature for answers to these questions, and references to Indian name-giving are practically non-existent in onomatological publications.[6] Neither of the two outstanding ethnographers of the Delaware Indians, M. R. Harrington, and the late Prof. Frank G. Speck, de-

[5] The complete document is cited in C. A. Weslager, *Dutch Explorers, Traders and Settlers in the Delaware Valley* (Phila., 1961), pp. 288–289. The English translation was probably made by a Dutchman who equated the Dutch word "Opperhoofd," used to refer to an Indian chief, with the word "Upperhead," which he consistently misspelled.

[6] Two interesting papers have been published in the *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* which deal with Indian personal names. The first, by Ralph V. Chamberlin, is entitled "Place and Personal Names of the Gosiute Indians of Utah," (Jan.–April 1913), 52:1–20. The author points out that the Gosiute, a Shoshonean tribe used personal names that referred to a feature of personal appearance, e.g., "he with rabbit ears," "a person whose back appears broken," etc.; others to a peculiarity of manner or conduct; others for place and materials; and still others derived from animals. A Gosiute often received several names in the course of a lifetime, but the author gives no information about the name-giving process. The second paper by Charles A. Cooke, "Iroquois Personal Names – Their Classification," (1952) 96:427–438, is an interpretation of name-giving, based on a study of 6,220 names, which the author breaks down into a number of categories. He refers to the bestowing of names in a ritual, and comments on the esoteric nature of the personal name.

scribed name-giving in depth, and whatever incidental comments they made to personal naming provide no answers to the questions raised above.[7]

Contemporary accounts are also vague, although there are certain indications that the name-giving process among the Delawares differed from European practices. The young Swedish engineer, Peter Lindeström, who visited the Delawares in their native homes in the Delaware valley in 1654, wrote that they did not name their male offspring until they were grown large enough to run around and use weapons, but he said nothing in his journal about how female children were named, nor how name-giving was practiced.[8] William Penn, in a letter of 1683 to the Free Society of Traders, commented briefly about the beauty of the Delaware language, adding that "Tamane[9], Secane, Menanse, Secatereus are the names of Persons."[10] He went on to say about the language that "... one word serveth in place of three," indicating his awareness of the basic difference between English words and the polysynthetic Algonkian dialect spoken by the Delawares, wherein one word embodied elements that required several English words to express.

The Moravian pastor, David Zeisberger, who lived as a missionary among the Delawares in Pennsylvania, and later in the old Northwest Territory, recognized there was something unusual about Delaware name-

[7] Harrington noted that among the Munsie-Delawares the individual's name was disclosed at the annual Big House Ceremony, "Some Customs of the Delaware Indians," *Museum Journal*, University of Pennsylvania (1910), 1:52. He also made incidental reference to name-giving in, "A Preliminary Sketch of Lenape Culture," *American Anthropologist* (1913), 15:213. Speck in *The Celestial Bear Comes Down to Earth* (Reading, 1945) refers briefly to the procedure of bestowing names among the Delawares living at Ohsweken, Ontario, p. xi. He was present in 1938 when Nekatcit ("tame little fellow") bestowed the name Popotakan ("he who blows with puffed cheeks") on his grandson. Incidental reference to naming is made by William W. Newcomb, Jr., *The Culture and Acculturation of the Delaware Indians* (Ann Arbor, 1956), pp. 32–35; *cf.* Vernon Kinietz, *Delaware Culture Chronology* (Indianapolis, 1946), pp. 44–45. Based on interviews with Willie Longbone, an Oklahoma Delaware, Kinietz pointed out that the power to name was derived from dreams, and the names were bestowed by parents, grandparents, or other elderly persons, *loc. cit.* This is a correct statement, because I was informed by Mrs. Elizabeth West that her grandmother Susie Elkhair named her, and Henry Secondine, a member of the Delaware Business Committee, was named by his grandmother. However, Kinietz failed to obtain any information about the special name-givers discussed in the present paper, who were not necessarily relatives of the person named.

[8] Peter Lindeström, *Geographia Americae*, trans. Amandus Johnson (Phila. 1925), p. 202.

[9] Penn refers here to the well-known Delaware sachem, whose name is variously rendered as Tamanend, Taminen, Taminent, Tamany, Tamanen, etc. There is an assumption, often repeated in the literature, that his name meant "affable," which has no linguistic basis. If his name were pronounced Tay-*men*-end, which is by no means a certainty, then the meaning of "the one to whom luck was given," is very clear, according to Mrs. Dean. However, the original pronunciation is uncertain, which makes all translations speculative.

[10] *Narratives of Early Penna., West N. J. and Delaware*, 1630–1707, ed. Albert Cook Myers (New York, 1912), p. 230.

giving customs, but he made no effort to investigate the process. Like his fellow Moravian pastors, Zeisberger's principal concern was to convert the natives to Christianity, and at the time of their immersion in the baptismal waters purging them of non-Christian names in favor of personal names of Biblical origin. Thus, after the Delaware "king" Teedyuskung was baptized he became Gideon; Papunhank was baptized John; Allemewi became Solomon; Tachgokanhelle arose from the baptismal waters as Amos; and Pingtis (Teedyuskung's daughter-in-law) became Justina. The Moravian Church Archives at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania contain many other examples for anyone interested in pursuing this subject.

In the following passage from his journal written in 1779–1780, Zeisberger gives a superficial and somewhat garbled description of how the Delaware Indians named their children, but it is sufficiently revealing to arouse curiosity:

> If it is left to the mother to give the child a name, she uses little ceremony and calls it after some peculiar mark or character in it, for instance the Beautiful, the Good Child, the Great Eye[11] sometimes giving it a name of unsavory meaning. If the father gives the child a name he pretends that it has been suggested to him in a dream. The name is given at a sacrifice, on which occasion the Indian brings to some aged person, who performs the offering, a string of wampum, and tells him that he wishes his child's name to be named thus and so. During the sacrifice some other person sings a song in Indian fashion at a public gathering and makes known the child's name. This is called praying over the child. The same ceremony is performed when an adult person receives a name, even though he may already have been named.[12] It is not common to call an adult by his name for they are ashamed of their own names.[13]

Through the cultural traditions handed down to a Delaware Indian descendant living in Dewey, Oklahoma, Way-en-gee-paH-kee-huh-leX-kway[14] ("Touching Leaves"), whose English name is Mrs. Nora Thompson

[11] There seems little doubt that these were nicknames, not real names.

[12] Here again, he seems to be confusing nicknames with real names. What he should have said was that the ceremony was performed when a person was given a real name even though he was already known by a nickname. His reference to "praying over the child" was obviously to make the name known to the Creator, as I have indicated elsewhere in the present paper.

[13] *David Zeisberger's History of the Northern American Indians*, edd. Archer B. Hulbert and William N. Schwarze, (Columbus: Ohio Archeological and Historical Publications, 1910), 19:80.

[14] A guttural in the Delaware language, comparable to the German *ch*, does not exist in English, and I have designated the sound with a capital X. To emphasize the aspirant occurring before a consonant I have used a capital H, which has the same sound as in English. The accented element in each name is marked for stress.

Dean, we are permitted an insight into ancient name-giving customs. Mrs. Dean, a member of the Wolf division, is a fluent native speaker, and, as I will subsequently explain, a practitioner in name-giving. In view of the deterioration of the native language, and the assimilation of the Delawares into white society, she is one of the last of the name-givers, if not the only remaining one, to preserve oldtime tribal traditions.[15] Her intelligent awareness that this information locked in the crypt of memory, and passed down orally from one generation to another could be irretrievably lost, has prompted her to reveal to me the mysticism formerly associated with name-giving. In addition, she has disclosed details in the naming process, having strong religious overtones, which hitherto were confined to members of her family, now deceased, and to others of the last traditionalists of the tribe.[16]

To understand the deep significance of a *real* personal name in ancient Delaware society, one must recognize the importance of dreams and visions in the religious experience of the individual, which culminated in the annual *Gúm-uh-wing* or Big House Ceremony.[17] Those individuals in the Delaware community fortunate enough to be blessed with visions bestowed on them by the Creator, known to the Indians as Kee-shaylum-móo-kawng, recited and sang those visions during the 12-day ceremony held annually in the Big House when the leaves began to change color. The ceremony in the old Big House, which stood near Copan, Oklahoma, was last conducted in 1924, the structure having since been removed. The possessor of such revelations (and some individuals had more than one vision) was qualified *per se* as a name-giver or *Way-huh-weéhuh-lahs* ("one who gives names over and over"). The vision which per-

[15] The last traditional male name-giver, Week-peh-*kee*-Xeeng ("he who is like receding water"), Reuben Wilson, died July 27, 1970. Although some of the younger generation of Oklahoma Delawares have Indian names, the majority bear names indistinguishable from white persons.

[16] In view of the Indian attitude toward name-giving, which had aspects of a holy rite, one can understand why Lewis Morgan, during his visit to the Delaware reservation in Kansas in May-June 1859, could not obtain wholly satisfactory answers to questions which the Delawares considered personal and confidential. One informant, Charles Journeycake's 70-year old mother (Sally Williams), led him astray by telling him that the parents asked someone for a list of the names of persons dead, and from this list chose a name that they liked! Another informant told him frankly that he "was prying into family matters rather impertinently" (Lewis Henry Morgan, *The Indian Journals*, 1859—1862, ed. Leslie A. White [Ann Arbor, 1959], pp. 53—54). Morgan had better luck with a Shawnee informant who told him, "It is given to a few only to bestow family names. The father and mother seldom name their own children" (*ibid.*, p. 46). *Cf.* C. F. Voegelin and E. E. Voegelin, "Shawnee Name Groups," *American Anthropologist*, n.s. (1935), 37: 617—635.

[17] The ceremony, as conducted in Oklahoma, was first described in detail by M. R. Harrington, *Religion and Ceremonies of the Lenape*, (New York, 1921), and later by Frank G. Speck, *A Study of the Delaware Big House Ceremony* (Harrisburg, 1931).

mitted an individual to sing in the Big House, as some of the participants interpreted the divine privilege, required that words be spoken to him, or a song sung in his vision by a spiritual visitant. On the other hand, any vision or supernatural visitation, or a meaningful dream, even though it may not have qualified for Big House performance, entitled the recipient to give personal names, perhaps to prescribe cures for illness, and to perform other supernormal feats in a society that believed itself to be under the control of Spirit Forces in a biologically-related animate universe. Not only human beings, but celestial bodies, physical forces, animals, and even forms of vegetation were included in the kinship cycle in this family-oriented world where the earth was "Our Mother," the sun and moon, "Elder Brothers," and the north wind was the "Grandfather of the North."

The visionaries were regarded as the elite – gifted people who possessed powers that ordinary people did not have. Since name-giving was closely associated with the Indian religious convictions, one can understand how name-givers were reluctant to allow contemporary observers (or later anthropologists) to intrude in an area which was as private as it was sacred. Those individuals who had not experienced a meaningful dream or vision were referred to as being *ah-lúX*-soo ("he, or she, is empty"), and, consequently, they could not recite when they participated in the Big House Ceremony, nor were they empowered to bestow personal names either on their own children or anyone else. There was no shame or opprobrium to being visionless, because many Delawares were in this category, and it in no way affected their social standing in the tribe. They, too, performed in the Big House even though they had no vision to recite. Mrs. Dean's late father Oh-huh-lum-mee-táhk-see ("the one who can be heard from afar"), whose English name was James H. Thompson, was *ah-lúX-soo*, but her mother, Ay-hell-lee-nówX-kway ("a woman who looks like someone else"), Sarah Wilson Thompson, had been so richly blessed with revelations by the Spirit Forces that she was called *Sáwm-Xkway* ("great lady") as a nickname. She and the other gifted ones were described as having *peél-see*, which means spiritual purity, a prerequisite for receiving a vision, i.e., *peél-seet-én-noo* ("pure clean man") or *peél-seet Xkway* ("pure clean woman").

Possessing what in the Delaware concept can best be described as "personal holiness" by virtue of this spiritual purity, which means that the individual had observed all the religious restrictions and tribal taboos, and having been blessed with visions, Mrs. Dean's mother was able to give names to her own children and to the children of others. If she had not been so qualified, she would not have presumed to give names to her own children, but would have requested the agency of a visionary to render this service at the proper time and place. However, persons who

were not gifted with visions, or meaningful dreams were free to give their children nicknames – but not *real* names. In many cases, nicknames served as appellatives until real names were given, and even after a real name was bestowed, the old nickname continued to be used. Moreover, new nicknames might be adopted by an individual at various stages of his life. Mrs. Dean was four years old before her gifted mother chose to give her a real Delaware name; prior to that time she was known to her family and friends by the nickname *Dón-tees*, an old Delaware word meaning "my little daughter."

Obviously, in Delaware society personal names did not have the practical application of modern usage. The Delawares were a preliterate people, having no written communication, no registration lists, no printed directories, no mail boxes, and no method for recording or displaying one's name, even if one wanted to do so. In contrast to European society, Delaware descent was matrilineal; there were no formal wedding ceremonies in ancient times, and males often had more than one mate. Kinship was preserved through clan organizations, and such terms as nephews, nieces, uncles, etc., were used in a different sense from the relationship these terms denote in modern America.[18] A real name among the Delawares was not a device to facilitate interpersonal communication, which could be achieved by a nickname, but was a mark of identity by which the Creator and his Spirit Forces knew the individual.

Some individual Delawares refused to disclose their real names beyond the immediate family hearth, because they believed that knowledge of a person's real name by those capable of conjuring evil might be used to the detriment of the person who permitted the disclosure. They believed that powers of witchcraft turned against another were reinforced if the victim's real name was known, and the result could be disability, blindness, and even death. This was not true of a nickname. Paradoxically, at one stage of the Big House rituals, real names were called out publicly, especially when individuals were singled out to invoke a prayer. Although this may appear inconsistent to the scientific mind, one must realize that in the holy atmosphere of the Big House, the primitive mind believed that suitable protection against evil conjuring was provided by Kee-shaylum-móo-kawng. It is quite likely that a Delaware in the seventeenth century would not be averse to disclosing his real name to a white scribe for entry on a deed, according to Mrs. Dean's opinion. The whites were

[18] Lewis Henry Morgan, *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family*, Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge (Washington, 1871), 17:289. Among the many differences between the terms used by Delawares and whites, one of the most unusual, as given by Morgan, is the word "aunt," which was unknown among the Delawares. Mrs. Dean informs me that the sister of one's father or mother was referred to as "little mother" (gah-hét-tut).

incapable of the kind of sorcery practiced by an Indian shaman, and the Indian would not have objected to the disclosure knowing that the written name could not be read by another Indian. There is also the good possibility that many of the native Delaware names on record in early documents are actually nicknames, and the white scribes never knew the real names of the signatories.

It was not shame, therefore, as Zeisberger stated in the passage quoted above, that prevented adults from overtly using their real names, but the fear that the name might be misused and harm would befall them. It was not unusual for a Delaware mother to refer to her child as "the first born," or "the last born," instead of pronouncing their real names in public. Even in a large family, a parent could resort to various terms to conceal the real name, such as "my middle son," "the second from the oldest daughter," "the third from the youngest," etc. In a polysynthetic language these terms could be incorporated in a single word, and there was nothing awkward about the usage.

With the background of the information given, the reader can readily discern in the following passage written in 1817 by another Moravian pastor, John Heckewelder, a confusion of nicknames with real names:

> Indians who have particularly distinguished themselves by their conduct, or by some meritorious act, or who have been the subjects of some remarkable occurrence, have names given to them in allusion to those circumstances. Thus, I have known a man whose name would signify in our language *the beloved lover* and one who was named *Met by love*. Another, a great warrior, who had been impatiently waiting for daylight to engage the enemy was afterwards called *Cause day-light* or *Make day-light appear* [he is referring to Captain Pipe whose Indian name was Konieschquanohill]. So, one who had come in with a heavy load of turkies on his back was called *The Carrier of Turkies* and another whose shoes were generally torn or patched, was called *Bad Shoes*. All those names are generally expressed in one single word, in compounding which the Indians are very ingenious.[19]

Unlike Europeans, Delaware parents in bygone days did not call on a Name-giver to name a newly-born baby, because they were not certain that the child was intended as a permanent addition to the family. They believed the infant did not obtain a firm hold on this world for some time after its birth, and at any time it might be coaxed away by the ever-present spirits of those who had died. Not until the parents felt reasonably sure that the Creator intended the child to remain permanently in

[19] John Heckewelder, *History, Manners and Customs of the Indian Nations, etc.*, new and revised edition (Phila., 1881), p. 141.

their care were they willing to ask a visionary to bestow a real name. When such request was made, the Name-giver was not supposed to refuse to comply, because the talent he possessed, granted him by the Creator, was to be used for the benefit of his fellowmen.

I was privileged to learn from Mrs. Dean the vision that entitled her mother to sing in the Big House, cure ailments, and bestow real names. Although it was permissible for a visionary to discuss her vision with close members of her family, and recite it in the Big House, he or she did not speak of it at other times to outsiders. In this vision, it seems that Mrs. Dean's mother, then a child, and an aunt who had raised her named Way-láy-luh-mah ("the esteemed one"), were riding on horseback together through a dense forest. Suddenly the elderly woman was taken ill, and she fell from the horse, the child falling to the ground with her. The little girl was almost paralyzed with fright as the horse ran away, leaving her in the darkness lying beside her unconscious aunt. As she trembled with fear she looked around at the shadowy trees, and they suddenly took the form of friendly people. They spoke kindly to her in the Delaware language, as the wind rustled in their leaves, telling her not to be frightened, and reassuring her that they would protect her and that no harm would befall her. True to their promise, the tree-people provided aid, and the girl and her aunt were found by members of their tribe, no harm came to them, and the older woman recovered from her illness.

Although it was not obligatory, it was desirable that a real name bestowed by a Name-giver should bear some relationship to the vision or dream which had been revealed by the Spirit Forces. Thus, Mrs. Dean's mother named her daughter Way-en-gee-paH-kee-huh-léX-kway, which is translated freely as "Touching Leaves," but has the literal meaning of "tips of leaves rustling as they touch each other." She named a son by her first marriage, James Buffalo, Nee-kah-nahp-pah-noóX-way, translatable as "he who walks before the dawn." She named a son by her second marriage, Edward Thompson, Sah-sah-kee-paH-keé-kum-mun, meaning "he who causes leaves to turn up with each step." No record was kept of all the names given by Mrs. Dean's mother, but on the roll lists of Delaware Indian names preserved in the History Room of the Bartlesville, Oklahoma Library, there are names containing elements strongly reminiscent of her vision. For example, one of the Delaware women, an informant for M. R. Harrington, bore the name Way-en-dah-náH-kwee-now ("she appears like boughs that touch each other"), a name that seems related to the same vision.[20]

Like her gifted mother, now deceased, Mrs. Dean is also a Name-giver, and she has had several visions, described to me in detail, which qualify

[20] Harrington acknowledges her assistance in his fictional account of the Delawares written for youthful readers, *Dickon among the Indians* (New York, 1938), p. vii.

her to bestow names. One of her visions has to do with a friendly female, who visited her during her childhood when she was sick abed, and smiled on her, although she did not speak to Mrs. Dean nor touch her. Another vision, which also occurred during her girlhood, has to do with an experience during which time she heard the sound of water gurgling in a running stream. Since Oklahoma was then undergoing a long period when there had been no rain, she followed the sound into the woods, where trees and wild flowers were growing, but she found only the dried bed of a creek. As she turned her back and walked away, she again heard the babbling of the running water.

In the personal names listed below, which Mrs. Dean has bestowed in recent years, one can discern the influences of her visions in the name syntheses:

Individual	*Delaware Name*	*Translation*
Michael Jackson	Pem-páy-huh-lock	Running Water
Thomas Doles	Aw-Xay-ahp-pah-noóX-way	He Who Walks Before Daylight
Elaine Joan Falleaf	Lay-huh-law-kwun-ah-tah-éX-kway[21]	The Flower That Blooms In The Evening Woman
Marian Sue Moore	Sah-kah-tah-éX-kway	Flower Which Has Just Come Up Woman
James A. Rementer	Moosh-hah-kweé-nund	He Who Appears Like A Clear Sky
Mrs. August Mahr	Wool-lee-nówX-kway	Woman Who Looks Good
Martie Mahr	Mah-mah-lee-loong-gaw-néX-kway	Striped Wing Woman
Gertrude Mahr	Ah-luh-mah-tah-éX-kway	Flower Beginning To Bloom Woman
Louise Dean	Weh-mah-tah-éX-kway	Woman Who Blooms Everywhere Like A Flower
Mary Smith Witcher	Awp-páh-tah-eh[22]	White Flower (Woman)

The above personal names were not hastily conceived, because a Name-giver cannot create a suitable name without careful thought and deliberation. In addition to reflecting on the vision for inspiration, the Name-giver attempts to compose a name which will not be out of keeping with the personality traits or talents of the recipient, and, in the case of a young person, will not contain elements unbefitting the personality or appearance in adulthood. A frail and timid child would not be given a name connoting strength and aggressiveness, nor would a strong boy be

[21] The suffix Xkway means "woman." D. G. Brinton in his *A Lenape-English Dictionary* (Phila., 1888) gives the word as ochqueu.

[22] Although the suffix is here omitted, Mrs. Dean says that it is implied, and that Delaware speakers would immediately recognize it as a female name. She omitted the suffix to facilitate pronunciation by the bearer of the name.

given a name having effeminate overtones. The name must also be a synthesis of significant roots, not mere fractions of words, and it should preferably combine the ideas in a single word.

Among the early Delawares, the Name-giver diligently tried to avoid giving a name already in use, because if, at a later date, the name was claimed by another person, he was obliged to withdraw it and create another one. This very rarely happened. Seldom, if ever, were the names of dead persons bestowed on the living, except for very unusual reasons. The Delawares in olden times believed that it was better not to pronounce the name of a deceased loved one, because they felt it was best not to disturb any of the dead by saying their names. "When I die," an old Delaware once said, "It is better never to call my name, because it may cause me to want to return." Exceptions were made on those rare occasions when white officials were honored by being named after prominent Delaware sachems who were deceased. During the American Revolution, Col. Daniel Brodhead was given the name Maghingua Keeshoch ("Great Moon"), and Col. George Morgan was named Taimenend.

If a relative had difficulty remembering the name of a loved one who had passed on – and many of the names containing a number of elements were difficult to remember – the Delawares believed it was a sign that the dead person did not want the living to think about him. Early scribes noted this reaction; for example, Lindeström wrote "... but when some one was mentioned who was dead, they hung their heads down,"[23] but he was unaware that it was not solely grief that deterred a person from uttering the names of the deceased. In recent years, some of the Delaware families have laid aside this taboo: Bruce Miller Townsend, a member of the Delaware Business Committee, bears the Indian name of his maternal grandfather bestowed on him by his mother.[24]

In bygone days, the Name-giver, after having been requested to bestow a name, visited the home of the person to be named at a specific time, and by prearrangement. He had already pondered for a long time to create a

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[23] Lindeström, *op. cit.*, p. 130. Speaking of the Eastern Algonkian, Denton wrote in 1690 that, "An Indian being dead, his name dies with him, no person daring ever after to mention his Name, it being not only a breach of their Law, but an abuse to his friends and relations present, as if it were done on purpose to renew their grief..." (Daniel Denton, *A Brief Description of New York*, etc.), Gowan's *Bibliotheca Americana* (New York, 1845), p. 9. D. G. Brinton, *Essays of An Americanist* (Phila., 1890), says that among the Mayas and Nahuas the personal name was considered part of the individual, and that it was so sacred it was rarely spoken.

[24] In a personal letter to me dated July 8, 1970, Mr. Townsend says that his Indian name is Wahem-hic-amund (i.e., Wem-hík-kum-mun, which can be freely translated as "he who is in contact with everything"). His brothers and sisters, including Mary Townsend Crow, secretary of the Business Committee, were all given Delaware names, although these names are seldom, if ever, used.

suitable name for the subject – and perhaps he was aided by a dream or sudden inspiration. The name was never spoken aloud beforehand to anyone. It was essential that the name should first be disclosed to Kee-shay-lum-moó-kawng during a name-giving ceremony, because the Creator must be the first to hear it spoken. Members of the immediate family, and perhaps other close relatives gathered for the occasion culminating in a family feast. It was always held during the day, because the Delaware believed that evil spirits roamed at night. On such an important occasion it was important that no wicked influences be permitted to interfere with the rites. The ceremony began with one of the older members of the family explaining that the purpose of the gathering was to bestow a name by one properly qualified. A pure or holy fire, known to the Delawares as *peé-lut tún-die* was then made with a fire drill (at a later date flint and steel were used), implements granted by the Creator. This new and invigorating fire symbolized pure influences for life and health, and, at the proper time, Indian tobacco was sprinkled in the flames as an incense to propitiate any evil spirits that might have found their way to the group. Following this, cedar clippings were then placed in the flames as an agent of purification, the aromatic cedar smoke symbolizing new and pure influences for the life and good health of the person to be named, as well as members of the family. In the consanguineous terms so well known to the Delawares, the fire was affectionately addressed by the Name-giver as Moo-Xoóm-sah, i.e., "Grandpa." During the burning of the cedar, the Name-giver used a fan made of feathers from the American eagle (a pure and noble bird whose wings were believed to sweep away obstacles and disease) in order to rid the path of the person to be named of all malevolent forces. The eagle feather fan was also used to waft the smoke toward the sky, carrying to the Creator in the twelfth heaven the family's supplications for protection, as expressed in the Name-giver's prayers. When the crucial moment arrived, and the name to be given the person was finally pronounced by the Name-giver, it was spoken reverently, and repeated over and over again in audible prayer. The purpose of the repetition was to make certain that the Creator, and all of the Spirit Forces, the Mahnut-toó-wuk, would thereafter recognize the individual by his given name.

Delaware Indians did not possess family surnames, and there was nothing to correspond with junior and senior, which meant there were no name ties between child and parent, or between brothers and sisters. One would not know by their names that three famous Delaware leaders during the Revolution were brothers: Tamaque ("beaver"), Shingas ("wet, marshy ground,") and the oldest brother, Pisquetomen ("he that moves in the dark"). In the first paragraph of this paper, the reader has seen that Yaqueenkhon and Quenameckquid were the sons of Taminy (Tamanend), which further indicates the absence of any family name ties. A personal

name was a highly individualized appellative, not merely an identification tag, because, according to Delaware belief, *a person and his name were one*. Once an individual received a real name, it became part of his personality, and he could not change it of his own volition, although he could adopt as many nicknames as he wanted.

At the proper stage in the name-giving ceremony, the Name-giver presented a string of white wampum beads to the person being named, not in its pecuniary aspects, but as a covenant to pledge sincerity of spirit, and purity of purpose. The Name-giver, in turn, was presented with a similar string of beads by a member of the family, and this further sanctified the occasion, and purged the transaction of any latent evil. Failure to convey wampum beads would have been considered a serious omission of a vital token, and might have resulted in harm or adversity. A complete outfit of new clothing, including moccasins, all made by members of the family, was tendered the person named, the presentation usually made by the Name-giver in behalf of the donors. Finally, the parents compensated the Name-giver with presents of animal skins and Indian tobacco, following which everyone joined in the family feast. During the name-giving rites, the Name-giver sometimes made indirect reference to his vision, but it was never wholly revealed.

Sometimes a Name-giver was called on to bestow a name in the course of the Big House Ceremony instead of visiting the family at its home. If so, a special name-giving session was held in the Big House during the day, entirely separate from the religious festivities, which were held at night and were intended to fulfill the Indians' obligations to the pantheon of Spirit Forces. The association of name-giving with the "church house" is indicative of how personal names, and the process of naming, were all part of the broad theosophical system.

I asked Mrs. Dean whether it was not possible for one who was actually ah-lúX-soo to feign a vision, and thus claim a right to recite in the Big House, bestow names, and perform other functions of the spiritual elite. Her answer was that no good would come of such sacrilege, and the Spirit Forces would not only punish the impostor, but he would be exposed and shamed before his friends and neighbors. She recalled a rare instance of an individual who was ah-lúX-soo and who began to recite another person's vision during the course of the Big House Ceremony. He had evidently heard the other reciting on a former occasion. He was suddenly taken ill and had to run outdoors to vomit.

Because of the esoteric nature of real names, a wide variety of nicknames were used among the Delawares. Mrs. Dean's father always referred to her mother by her nickname Sáwm-Xkway when he spoke of her, and he used this name when addressing her. She, in turn, addressed him as Láhkw-see, a modification of the last two elements of his real name, Oh-

huh-lum-mee-táhkw-see. Sometimes syllables of the real name were used as a nickname without disclosing the real name. Mrs. Dean's half brother Nee-kah-nahp-pah-noóX-way was known as Na-pan, which some white persons etymologized to No-pan. Weet-tahp-pah-noóX-way ("he who walks by daylight"), Charles J. Weber, one of Professor Speck's informants, was known in the Delaware community as Ta-pan. There were also examples where syllables of a real name became used as a nickname, and no one seemed to know the real name. Frank Wilson was known as Emmah, and his brother Reed was nicknamed Kwul-pee, the latter definitely an element extracted from a real name that was never disclosed.

In contrast with the naming of individuals, anyone in Delaware society was free to name his own pets, irrespective of whether or not he was a visionary. I noted several interesting examples of names reflecting creative imagination. Mrs. Dean owns two dogs: one is called Ee-láht-tut "little warrior," and the other, part chow, is named Súk-toon, which means "black mouth." A cat belonging to Louise Dean, Mrs. Dean's daughter, is called Cheéng-gway, meaning "wild cat," and formerly the family owned a cat which was called Weé-Xuh-weengw or "hairy face." I have appended a list of 14 other pet names invented by various Delaware families.

Summation

If we can assume that vestiges of early Delaware Indian culture are preserved in the name-giving practices of the traditionalists in Oklahoma, then some of the questions asked in the opening of this paper can be answered. It would appear that all of the Delaware personal names had meanings which could be translated into English. Unfortunately, in the absence of a phonetic system, the sounds were not necessarily recorded by white scribes in such a way that all of the early names are comprehensible to native speakers. If the true sounds were not faithfully recorded, it is impossible to arrive at accurate translations. Some recorded names, particularly those having a minimum of elements, are so obvious that their meanings are self-evident, but these are in the minority.

The Delawares had no family names, and an individual's real name belonged only to him, and had no relationship to the names of other members of his family. Many nicknames, which white scribes called aliases, were widely used, and some individuals used a number of nicknames during various stages of their lives. Some nicknames had meanings – others consisting of elements extracted from a real name did not. Following white contact some Delawares adopted Christian names as nicknames, and in some instances the full name of a white person. An interesting example was the Delaware sachem Coquetakeghton, nicknamed White Eyes and Grey Eyes, but who also adopted the name Sir William Johnson

as a third nickname.[25] The name-giving process was part of Delaware Indian cosmology, and names were given in a ceremony having deep religious connotations because a belief in dreams and visions was the most vital and intimate phase of Delaware religion. The vision was the point of contact, a line of communication, between the supernatural world and the sphere of everyday life. The result was that a person and his real name were indivisible, resulting in a surety for favors in this life from the Creator. When he died, his name died with him, and only under very unusual circumstances was it ever spoken aloud or used again by his people as a personal name.

Appendix

Phonetic Renditions of words cited in text in order of appearance

	English Rendition	Phonetic (IPA) Rendition
1.	Way-en-gee-paH-kee-huh-léX-kway	weɛnǰipahkihəlέxkwe
2.	Gúm-uh-wing	gʌ́məwing
3.	Kee-shay-lum-moó-kawng	kišeləm.úk.ɔng
4.	Way-huh-weé-huh-lahs	wɛhəwíhəlas
5.	ah-lúX-soo	alʌ́xsu
6.	Oh-huh-lum-mee-táhkw-see	ohələm.itákwsi
7.	Ay-hell-lee-nówX-kway	ehɛlinaóxkwe
8.	Sáwm-Xkway	sɔ́mxkwe
9.	peél-see	pílsi
10.	peél-seet lén-noo	pílsit lɛ́n.u
11.	peél-seet Xkway	pílsit xkwe
12.	Dón-tees	dántis
13.	Way-láy-luh-mah	wɛléləma
14.	Nee-kah-nahp-pah-noóX-way	nikanap.anúxwe
15.	Sah-sah-kee-paH-keé-kum-mun	sasakipahkíkʌm.ən
16.	Way-en-dah-naH-kweé-now	weɛndanahkwínao
17.	Pem-páy-huh-lock	pɛmpéhəlak
18.	Aw-Xay-ahp-pah-noóX-way	ɔx.eap.anúxwe
19.	Lay-huh-law-kwun-ah-tah-éX-kway	lehələkwənataέxkwe
20.	Sah-kah-tah-éX-kway	sakataέxkwe
21.	Moosh-hah-kweé-nund	mušhakwínund
22.	Wool-lee-nówX-kway	wəl.inaóxkwe
23.	Mah-mah-lee-loong-gaw-néX-kway	mamalilungɔnέxkwe
24.	Ah-luh-mah-tah-éX-kway	aləmataέxkwe
25.	Weh-mah-tah-éX-kway	wɛmataέxkwe
26.	Awp-páh-tah-eh	ɔp.átaɛ
27.	peé-lut tún-die	pílət tɔ́nday
28.	moo-Xoóm-sah	mux.úmsa.
29.	mah-nut-toó-wuk	manət.úwʌk
30.	Láhkw-see	lákwsi
31.	Weet-tahp-pah-noóX-way	wit.ap.anúxwe
32.	Ee-láht-tut	ilát.ət
33.	Súk-toon	sɔ́ktun
34.	Cheéng-gway	číngwe
35.	Weé-Xuh-weengw	wíxəwingw

[25] *Pennsylvania Colonial Records* (Harrisburg, 1852), 8:618.

Additional Pet Names

English Rendition		Phonetic Rendition
Dog Names		
1. Xkún-neem	"Seed"	xkʌ́n.im
2. Wee-sów-shkeengw	"Yellow Eyes"	wisáwškingw
3. Skín-noo	"Young Man"	skín.u
4. Kúp-teen	"Captain"	kʌ́ptin
5. Túm-may	"Wolf"	tə́m.e
6. Poó-Xush	"Hard of Hearing"	púxəš
7. Weé-choos	"Female Friend"	wíčus
Cat Names		
1. Meét-kawk	"Corn Cob"	mítkɔk
2. Xow-sheé-sus	"Old Woman"	xawšísəs
3. Xkun	"Bone"	xkʌn
Horse Names		
1. Kwén-seet	"Long Foot"	kwénsit
2. Ayé-hum	"Eagle"	áyhʌm
Chicken Names		
1. Páwk-kee short for Páwk-keengw	(a nickname) "One Eye"	pɔ́k.i pɔ́k.ingw
2. Kwul-lúkw-tee	"Crippled Rump"	kwəl.ɔ́kwti

Brandywine College

SECOL VI

Of related interest to onomatologists is the sixth semi-annual meeting of the Southeastern Conference on Linguistics at the University of Georgia, April 20–22, 1972. Papers are now being solicited in all areas of linguistics. The title and an abstract (in quadruplicate) of no more than 300 words must be submitted by February 15, 1972 by all those desiring to participate in the program. Address:

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