

██████████, Professional Narrative  
Submitted in Application for Promotion to Associate Professor (Non-Tenure Stream)  
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**Overview:** As a scholar, teacher, and humanist, I aspire to affect the ways people see themselves, others, and the world. Considering that the writing of history provides, among other things, a means for societies to evaluate, affirm, commemorate, and sometimes change their identities and relationships, I hope to make the world a just and equitable place. These goals are very much in line with those outlined by ██████████ critical diversity initiatives for the College of Arts and Letters. My teaching philosophy connects with the broader scope of my research to construct a more inclusive art history. With an interdisciplinary, international, socially engaged, and inclusive approach to teaching and research, I work in collaboration with diverse communities to address chronic social issues such as human trafficking and the marginalization of women and minority populations in the U.S. and in Canada.

My principal areas of specialization are 19th and 20th century American art, Native American art, and the history of photography. ██████████

██████████ engages issues of American Indian identity, modernity, and sovereignty in the first half of the twentieth century, a period when a significant number of Indigenous people were profoundly aware of the power of mechanical representation, both in photography and film. The broader scope of this research promotes the construction of a more expansive art history and brings attention to the ways the conventional boundaries of the field have privileged certain visual media and white, male artists. I challenge singular and progressive notions of “the modern” upheld in many Western and American or settler art histories and in museum exhibitions. This line of investigation contributes to current American art historical scholarship focused on intercultural encounters and dialogues.

More recently, my research and teaching have addressed digital technologies both in method and content. Beyond simply enhancing the accessibility and preservation of information or imagery, I am increasingly interested in the ways digital technologies can invigorate art historical pedagogy, facilitate research collaboration, foster interdisciplinary scholarly networks, and promote equity and diversity in the creation and critique of knowledge. In this way, many of my new art historical and curatorial initiatives are informed by innovative Digital Humanities and Indigenous Studies theories and practices. Moreover, it is closely related to my research on Indigenous artists and subjects who have used/use technological inventions (such as photography, video, and digital media) to control representation, affirm and explore identities, and to challenge their disenfranchisement under American settler colonialism.

**Appointment:** From Fall 2009 to Spring 2015, I was appointed (100% teaching, 3/3 course load, annual contract) as Assistant Professor (Fixed Term) in the Department of Art, Art History and Design (AAHD) in the College of Art and Letters at Michigan State University. In 2015, in recognition for excellence in teaching, the department and the College of Arts and Letters (CAL) awarded me Designation B status, which extended my annual appointments to rolling three year contracts. Beginning Fall 2016, in light of my research accomplishments, the department negotiated a 17% research and 83% teaching appointment, reducing my annual course load by one (2/3). Additionally, I serve as Affiliated Faculty in American Indian and Indigenous Studies and as an Adjunct Curator for the MSU Museum. These appointments have allowed me to collaborate with various units and colleagues across campus, to mentor students in varied stages of their college career, and to work with community partners in local, national, and international contexts. Above and beyond the requirements of my teaching and research appointment, I have regularly contributed service work to the department and the college. See my CV for details on the various committees, outreach, and programming activities in which I have either directed or participated.

**Teaching:** My course assignments have included art history surveys, special topics in art history, photography, and film, and professional development classes. These courses have provided the

opportunity to teach subject matter that I am passionate about, sharing my expert knowledge through perspectives that encourage students to engage in critical thinking, interdisciplinary problem solving, and sensitivity to cross-cultural perspectives. A central goal in all of my teaching is to promote active learning through research projects. Since fall 2009, I have developed and taught 12 original courses, including two Integrative Arts and Humanities courses. In response to my colleagues' requests, I am creating a new Latin American Arts course (for Fall 2017) and an online History of Photography course to be launched in the summer of 2018.

A primary goal for my classes is to foster an understanding of the inter-connectedness of art, culture, power, identity, and history. By examining art in its various contexts, rather than as the product of the canonical mainstream, I feel the creative efforts of many people can be more equitably evaluated and celebrated. I structure lectures around themes or issues that accommodate the study of the multiple points of view and experiences. In some cases, I choose readings that further illuminate the cultural or historical contexts for the objects presented in lectures. At other times, the articles are more argumentative and meant to challenge exclusive assumptions about the meaning and value of the artworks, as well as provoke class discussions. Lastly, I set up my lectures, assignments, and exams to build students' skills in visual analysis, evaluative reading, and critical thinking. My teaching style, which combines lecture, discussion, and guided activities, provides students with general background information and allows them class time to do some of their own thinking or problem-solving. Short writing assignments that I give throughout the semester both guide comprehension of the material and stimulate deeper assessment of the author's conclusions.

**Three general areas of effectiveness best highlight my teaching achievements at MSU. The first is the development of two core curriculum courses** in 2010/11; one was the art history capstone course (HA499) revised by the art history faculty in conjunction with the university's "Shaping the Future Initiative." The other course was HA102 *Renaissance Through Modern Art*. Among the primary goals of this updated curriculum were to enhance the global diversity of foundation survey courses and the professional development of students. I worked with AAHD's Academic Technology Coordinator [REDACTED] and LON-CAPA Project Director [REDACTED] to develop LON-CAPA as its course management system. LON-CAPA makes possible individualized, computer-generated, and graded exams. To invigorate learning in this large class, I enrolled in a Faculty Learning Community course on "Active Learning in Large Classes". As a result, I developed various means to create community among the students, to reinforce lectures or readings, to stimulate critical thinking, and build skills in visual analysis. A few of the strategies I incorporated are partner and small group discussions, short in-class writing response questions, online writing assignments that reinforce lecture topics. Lastly, while the class focused on the visual expressions of Europe and the United States, I created "Global Moments" in most of the lectures to underscore the consistent creative dialogue between the West and the rest of the world. These global moments responded to the art history faculty's desire to enrich our curriculum with culturally diverse artistic practices, as well as introduce prospective majors to the array of the department's course offerings. For the capstone course HA499 *Senior Research and Professional Development Seminar*, I greatly benefited from art history faculty input as well as support from Career Services in outlining the syllabus and in designing mini-workshops on various career-building skills. To introduce the students to a variety of potential employment opportunities for art history majors, I invited MSU art history alumnae and other art related career professionals from the greater Lansing area to talk about their careers. To enhance the writing component, I participated in the CAL Tier II workshop, which submitted a revision of the CAL writing requirements for Tier II classes to the Dean. As a result of the workshop's outcomes, I developed both short and extended writing and research assignments related to self-marketing, job interviews, and public presentations. The course culminated in a fall symposium, which I coordinated each year from 2010-2013. In this public forum, students presented research papers they had conducted under the guidance of an art history faculty member.

**The second area of my teaching effectiveness is related to the extension of learning outside of the classroom.** To encourage student engagement with real art objects and promote active learning, as well as underscore the vibrant historical and contemporary relationship between art and society, I have made frequent use of guest speakers, and the university's and surrounding community's rich material culture resources in my courses. Through a special unit on Nature and Nation in my American Art History course, I created assignments on land/landscapes, ecological values, and contemporary global environmental challenges that met Undergraduate Learning Goal of Effective Citizenship and the College of Arts and Letters Citizen Scholar's requirements. I have also participated in educating others on- and off- campus about the use of local and national artworks in classroom teaching. Please consult my CV for an account of these activities. Whenever possible I have utilized MSU art history alumni as student mentors. As part of the art history faculty's commitment to nurture local and national graduate connections with our current majors, I coordinated the spring 2012 History of Art Alumni symposium. Each year, my courses have incorporated visits to Broad Art Museum and MSU Museum collections. Occasionally, I've also arranged for class visits to the Detroit Institute of Art and the Lansing State Capitol. To enhance student engagement with and connect the local community to art history, I arranged for my History of Photography students to present their creative final projects in one of our department's galleries and at the MSU Museum in conjunction with their exhibition *Adventures in Time and the Third Dimension: Through the Stereoscope* (2012-13). I have also regularly invited artists and scholars to campus to present lectures and engage with students including photographer [REDACTED] (Diné), Toronto-based photographer [REDACTED] (Ojibway), art historians [REDACTED], and [REDACTED], independent curator [REDACTED] and anthropologist [REDACTED].

**My last area of teaching effectiveness is related to my interest in invigorating my teaching through technology.** Inspired by AAHD colleagues and CAL's commitment to cultivating digital humanities scholars, I launched some new directions for my teaching in the past couple of years. To enhance student understanding of the expressive potential of human-made structures and spaces, I developed two lectures where they virtually explored sites such as Chaco Canyon, and Vatican City, St. Peter's Cathedral, and the Sistine Chapel ceiling through the Abrams planetarium's projections of 360° videos and photographs. The visual experiences are often made richer by a guided dialogue from guest scholars and follow-up writing assignments. This past year I sought out advanced training opportunities to develop my knowledge of best practices and technological skills related to digital humanities pedagogy. In anticipation of developing my first online class, I requested and received funding from the CAL Digital Humanities program to attend a four- day DH workshop at Guelph University. There I enhanced my familiarity and critical assessment of digital tools that would exploit the strengths of the digital humanities for art history: 1) process-oriented teaching and learning that emphasizes the journey over the destination, and 2) community building and collaborative knowledge production. To further my progress along these lines, I applied for and was accepted as a 2017-18 Walter and Pauline Adams Academy Instructional Excellence and Innovation Fellowship, Michigan State University. I will spend this coming year investigating the latest scholarship on university teaching, particularly focusing on innovative online art historical instruction and visual analysis with digital tools.

**Research:** In June 2016, my first book was released. Published by University of Nebraska Press, it represents over a decade of fieldwork and archival research. Drawn from my dissertation, *Horace Poolaw, Photographer of American Indian Modernity* examines this largely unnoticed photographer's work within its historical and cultural contexts. Poolaw (1906-1984) was one of the first Native American professional photographers. I review the first twenty years of Poolaw's career between 1925 and 1945, the height of Indigenous artistic resurgence in Oklahoma and more pro-Indian federal legislation. Rather than through the lens of Native peoples' inevitable extinction or within a discourse of Western modernism, I evaluate the contributions of Poolaw's photography within an expansive vision of American art history and Native American history, simultaneously questioning the category of "fine

artist” in relation to the creative lives of Native peoples. Understanding and visualizing modernity in diffuse and fluid formats, I examine Poolaw's engagement with a shifting American Indian identity. It presents modernism as an ongoing process by which artists construct and transform their works and practices to respond to their contemporary needs and desires. In this way, my book participates in a growing body of scholarship on early Indigenous photography that finds significant creative motivations in the desire for sovereignty and truthfulness in representation. Of this generation, few, if any, photographers' or subjects' intentions were ever documented, but most faced profound ruptures to cultural memory and loss of population. The perceived ability of photography to preserve knowledge of the past for the future sustainability of the community was a powerful reason for Indigenous peoples to take pictures. Numerous ethnographic and historical writings on the Kiowa, family and community interviews, Oklahoma political histories, and publications on early twentieth-century American Indian actors and performers offered insights into the subject matter and aesthetics of Poolaw's photography. This book develops a more comprehensive picture of twentieth-century Kiowa life than had previously existed. Lastly, this work contributes to scholarship that examines the spurious relation of history and identity to photography. Many of Poolaw's pictures move in and out of various contexts in this book and evoke multiple, sometimes contradictory, messages. In this vein, my work considers how a variety of individuals—artists, subjects, and audiences—ascibe meaning to images. I thus read Poolaw's photographs as conduits for animating diverse familial, cultural, or political relations and experiences.

Within the first six months of its release, it was reviewed positively (██████), cited as more thoroughly researched than many contributions to the Smithsonian's Poolaw exhibition catalogue (██████), and mentioned in a variety professional and popular resources. More recently, ██████████, a prominent scholar of Native American photography, found that my book "advances the scholarship of photography about and by Native Americans. It is a joy to read" (██████). This summer, I discussed my book on the twenty-year-old Ann Arbor television series *Riprap: The Academic Book Television Program* (<http://riprap.org/>).

### **The Significance of my Work on Poolaw's Photography and My Cultivation of a National Reputation:**

Over the past 8 years I have received nine invitations to present my research in conjunction with national museum exhibitions and at conferences across the country. I chaired a panel on Poolaw at the Native American Art Studies Association (NAASA) meeting in 2009, and subsequently coordinated publication of this group of papers in a special issue of *Great Plains Quarterly* (Spring 2011). Curators for the 2014 exhibition *For the Love of His People: The Photography of Horace Poolaw* at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) in New York City invited me to submit two chapters for the catalogue. Following the launch of the catalogue and the exhibit's opening, the NMAI staff asked me to participate in a public programming event and book signing (November 2014) ██████████ Please refer to my CV for further information on my conference presentations. I have also been invited to share my research at several notable research institutions including Clemson University, Illinois State University, Oklahoma State University, the University of North Texas, Denton, and the University of North Dakota. Awards towards completing the book manuscript were made by the Association of Historians of American Art and the Humanities and Arts Research Program at Michigan State University.

### **Promoting Diverse and International Audiences' Engagement with North American Arts:**

To facilitate research collaboration and foster interdisciplinary scholarly networks, I have worked in collaboration with MSU Tribal Extension leader ██████████ to develop programming on Native women's use of visual media in confronting the issue of human trafficking within Canadian and US Indigenous communities. Since September 2016, I have worked with the MSU Museum, the Native American Institute, and MSU faculty in Anthropology to build relationships with Michigan Anishinaabe makers to document knowledge of the MSU Museum's Great Lakes Aboriginal collections. This initiative has been funded by the Canadian-based Great Lakes Research Alliance for the Study of Aboriginal Arts

and Culture. The Alliance received a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) Partnership Development Grant (2016-2018) to develop projects engaging its digital repository of Aboriginal material culture and heritage items. ([zhttps://grasac.org/about-grasac-and-gks](https://grasac.org/about-grasac-and-gks)) Our goal is to connect MSU Museum Anishinaabe artworks, makers, and archival information to this international repository. Lastly, I have presented on American arts to Lansing School District Teachers as part of a 2011 series of NEH *Picturing America* sponsored conferences across the nation encouraging the use of American art in K-12 curriculum. The theme of the conference particularly addressed Michigan's artistic and architectural achievements between 1880 and 1940.

**Interdisciplinary, Collaborative, and International Initiatives Related to Indigenous Photography:**

The major focus of my current and future research will continue to advance the study of Indigenous photography, video, and digital media as critical tools of visual decolonization. In the past year, I have published an article ("On Indigenous *Digit-al* Media and Augmented Realities in Will Wilson's *eyeDazzler: Trans-customary Portal to Another Dimension*") on Indigenous digital art for the Canadian interdisciplinary art journal *PUBLIC* (December 2016). The essay reviews the ways some Indigenous artists' engagement with new media technologies reflects the longstanding Native North American propensity for multi-dimensional, dynamic, and networked aesthetic sensibilities. Subverting the Western ideological divide between Native Americans and modernity, these artists use digital media to enhance Indigenous worldviews, identities, and visual expressions. This past summer, I completed a paper for publication (*Visualities II: Perspectives on Contemporary American Indian Film and Art*, edited by [REDACTED] for Michigan State University Press) and presentation at a conference (NAASA, Fall 2017) on Ottawa-based media artist Ehren 'Bear Witness' Thomas's (Cayuga Six Nations) as yet unexamined video *Make Your Escape* (2010, 7:30 min). Through aspects of Aboriginal hip-hop or "electric pow wow" that inform *Make Your Escape's* audio tracks and construction, I demonstrate how Bear Witnesses's video indigenizes two Canadian settler monuments of submissive Native peoples.

Over the next few years, I will concentrate on two concurrent projects, which will result in publications (an essay and exhibition catalogue), as well as the construction of two digital portals and an exhibition. Each of these initiatives centers on a small group (8) of MSU Museum Keystone Company stereographs created between 1900 and 1930, which feature Navajo weavers. While many digital reproductions of Keystone Company stereographs are widely available, little extended research on the cultural and historical contexts exists. Both initiatives will resituate the Keystone images developed under a colonial gaze for contemporary weavers, scholars, teachers, museum professionals and visitors, and collectors. The first project I'm working on in collaboration with the MSU Museum, CAL Digital Humanities Program, and Navajo weavers is to develop an online portal and physical exhibit that explores through stereoscopy and new media technologies, the capacity of Navajo weaving to reveal webbed networks of cosmological and ecological knowledge. I plan to apply for regional and national grants to fund these productions. The portal will put the stereos in dialogue with other items, institutions, makers, and Indigenous stories/voices to enhance their cultural value and interpretation. The responsibility for interpretation will not be bound to/by one institution, a single voice, or the outdated Keystone captions.

These images will also be the focus for a publication and digital portal being constructed as part of a CAL collaborative initiative on global Indigenous photography. Professor [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] (Romance and Classical Studies) invited me, along with [REDACTED] (AAHD), to participate in a thematic research cluster. We will work on parallel individual projects that explore photography of/by others. At this point, the proposed theme engages Walter Dignolo's theory and ethics of "epistemic disobedience" to bring together scholars with a shared interest in expressions of decolonial thought in the arts, humanities and digital culture. These conversations will reach their peak in 2-day workshop held at MSU in late spring 2018