

**Michelle Charest**  
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## ***EDUCATION***

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**Ph.D. Anthropology, Brown University**, Providence, RI 2012  
Exam Fields: Historical Archaeology; The Atlantic World; Consumption & the Anthropology of Food and Drink

**M.A. Historical Archaeology, Illinois State University**, Normal, IL 2005

**B.A. *cum laude* Archaeology, Boston University**, Boston, MA 2003

## ***CURRENT POSITION***

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### **Senior Lecturer**

RISD (RISD), Department of Theory & History of Art & Design, Providence, RI, 2021 – Present

### **Lecturer**

RISD, Department of Theory & History of Art & Design, Providence, RI, 2010 – 2021

## ***TEACHING EXPERIENCE***

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### **Senior Lecturer (2021 – Present), Lecturer (2010 – 2021)**

RISD, Department of Theory & History of Art & Design, Providence, RI, 2010-Present

- *The Artist's Field Journal: Indigenous American Spinning, Dyeing, and Weaving*, Fall 2016, Wintersession 2019 – Present
- *Indigenous Architecture of the Americas* – Fall Semesters, 2010 - Present, Wintersession 2020
- *Theory & History of Art & Design: Global Modernisms?: Contemporary Art & The Decolonizing of Modernism* – team taught – Fall Semesters, 2017 – Present
- *Premodern Worlds: Theory and History of Art and Design* – team taught – Spring 2019 - Present
- *Native American Art & Architecture* – Spring Semesters, 2014 – 2018
- *Ancient Aliens & Fantastic Fakes: An Archaeology of Pseudoscience* – Spring Semester 2016

RISD, Theory & History of Art and Design, Continuing Education, Providence, RI

- *Imagine a World: An Art History of Science Fiction and Fantasy Art* – Full-Credit CE course – Summer 2025

### **Lecturer**

RISD, Department of Architecture, Providence, RI

- *World Architecture: From Pre-History to Pre-Modern* – team taught – Fall Semesters, 2013, 2014

Brown University, Department of Anthropology, Providence, RI

- *The Human Body: A Cultural Creation* – Summer Semesters 2009, 2011 – 2014

University of Rhode Island, Department of Sociology & Anthropology, Kingston, RI

- *New World Prehistory* – Fall Semester 2010

### **Independent & Collaborative Studies Supervised**

RISD, Department of Theory & History of Art & Design, Providence, RI

- *Exploring the Natural and the Human* (Noah Chalfant) – Spring 2024
- *History of the Artist Collective for Resistance* (Maria Gerdyman & Zoe Scruggs) – Spring 2019
- *The Difference between Lost and Loss* (Delilah Davis) – Wintersession 2018
- *Artist's Field Journal of Chilean Crafts and Textile Arts* (Julia Jankilevitch) – Wintersession 2017

- *The Role of Iconographic Art in Religious Structures* (Rose Keeffe) – Wintersession 2016

### Guest Critic & Lecturer

RISD, Department of Interior Architecture

- *Advanced Design Studio II: Tomaquag New Museum Campus* (Instructors Silvermoon LaRose and Francesca Liuni), Fall 2023

### Instructor

Trad Arts Studio, Slater Mill National Historic Landmark Site, Pawtucket, RI

- *Color Theory for Knitters*, 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Slater Mill Knitting Weekend – January 2018. Studio Workshop. Featured artist/designer for Knitting Weekend.
- *Natural Dyeing* – September-October 2017. Six-week studio course.

### Graduate Teaching Assistant

Brown University, Department of Anthropology, Fall 2006 – Spring 2011

- *International Health: Anthropological Perspectives* – Spring 2011
- *Foragers, Farmers, Feasts and Famines: An Anthropology of Food and Nutrition* – Fall 2010
- *The Archaeology of Death* – Spring 2008
- *Cultural Anthropology: Understanding Human Societies* – Summer 2007
- *Culture and Health: An Introduction to Medical Anthropology* – Fall 2006

## FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

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2024, 2018	Part-Time Faculty Education in New Technologies Grant, RISD
2023	Humanities Fund Grant, RISD
2016, 2018	Faculty Professional Development Fund Grant, RISD
2016	Global Engagement and Curricular Development Fund Grant, RISD
2008 - 2012	Spatial Structures in the Social Sciences (S4) Fellow, Brown University
2011 - 2012	Advanced Student Tuition and Health Insurance Scholarship, Brown University
2005 - 2011	Full Graduate Fellowship, Brown University
2009, 2010	Charles Redd Center for Western Studies (BYU) Summer Award for Upper Division and Graduate Students
2009, 2010	Research Travel Grant, Brown University
2006, 2007, 2008	Conference Travel Grant, Brown University
2008	Society for American Archaeology Ethics Bowl - Brown University Team – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Place!
2006, 2007, 2008	Summer Research Support Fellowship, Brown University
2004	Grants-In-Aid Research Grant, Illinois State University Graduate Student Association
2003 - 2005	Full Graduate Fellowship, Illinois State University

## PRESENTATIONS & INVITED LECTURES

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TEDx Talks. *TEDx RISD - Finding Epic Color in the Everyday*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ar0n34sFTE>. Providence, RI. March 8, 2025.

*Ocularcentrism, Cultural Bias, & Dominant Ideology*. Invited lecture for RISD course titled *Advanced Design Studio II: Tomaquag New Museum Campus* (Instructors Silvermoon LaRose and Francesca Liuni). Providence, RI. November 31, 2023.

*Eastern Woodlands Architecture: An Overview*. Invited lecture for RISD course titled *Advanced Design Studio II: Tomaquag New Museum Campus* (Instructors Silvermoon LaRose and Francesca Liuni). Providence, RI. September 19, 2023.

*Past is Present is Future: Art, Activism, and Identity in Indigenous North America.* Invited lecture for RISD course titled *Global Modernisms?: Decolonizing Contemporary Art*. Providence, RI. November 23, 2021.

*Beadwork Traditions & Identity in Contemporary Indigenous America.* Invited lecture for RISD course titled *Global Modernisms?: Decolonizing Contemporary Art*. Providence, RI. November 11, 2021.

*Beadwork Traditions & Identity in Contemporary Indigenous America.* Invited lecture for RISD course titled *Global Modernisms?: Contemporary Art & The Decolonizing of Modernism*. Providence, RI. November 17, 2020.

*Maize and the Spread of Ideas Among Pre-Contact Cultures of the Americas.* Invited lecture for RISD course titled *Premodern Worlds: Theory and History of Art and Design*. Providence, RI. March 3, 2020.

*Ancient Egypt: A Blue Story.* Invited lecture for RISD course titled *Premodern Worlds: Theory and History of Art and Design*. Providence, RI. February 25, 2020.

*Art & Identity in Indigenous North America.* Invited lecture for RISD course titled *Theory & History of Art & Design: Global Modernisms*. Providence, RI. November 12, 2019.

*Indigenous Materials & Methods for Contemporary Biodesign.* Invited lecture for RISD Nature Lab-based Interior Architecture course titled *Biodesign: Special Topic Design Studio*. Edna Lawrence Nature Lab, Providence, RI. September 17, 2019.

*Beadwork Traditions in Indigenous North American Art.* Invited lecture for RISD course titled *Premodern Worlds: Theory and History of Art and Design*. Providence, RI. April 18, 2019.

*Artist Workshop: Preserving Your Art.* Invited workshop co-taught with Anthony Belz (Tomaquag Museum Collections and Archives Manager) for the Tomaquag Museum, Exeter, RI. September 15, 2018.

*An Indigenous Approach to Biodesign: Natural Material Resources of Southeastern New England.* Invited lecture and hands-on workshop teaching two Indigenous methods of basketweaving for RISD Nature Lab-based Interior Architecture course titled *Designing the BioDesign Makerspace*. Edna Lawrence Nature Lab, Providence, RI. April 24, 2018.

*Shared Governance: Inclusion and Awareness in Academic Curricula.* Invited lecture and roundtable discussion for RISD Wintersession workshop course titled *Un-Silencing the Canon: How race, class, gender, and other forms of identity can radicalize art and design education*. Providence, RI. February 2, 2018.

*Emerald Pub to Silver Saloon: Building an Irish Saloon Community in the American Mining West.* Lecture. New York State Museum, Albany, NY. January 2014.

*A Bottle of Guinness, A Bottle of Home: Building an Irish Saloon Community in the American Mining West.* Session titled "The Heritage of Liminality: Memory and Materiality of the Peripheral." Society for Historical Archaeology, Baltimore, MD. January 2012.

*An Irish Pub Abroad: Negotiating Community and Identity In the 19<sup>th</sup>-Century American Mining West.* Session titled "Archaeology in and of the Modern World." American Anthropological Association, Montreal, QC. November 2011.

*Greening the Silver Saloon: Commensal Community in the Irish Mining West.* Seminar on History of Immigration in the Far West. Charles Redd Center for Western Studies, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT. August 2011.

*Insight Into Archaeology.* Invited Lecture for the Brown University SPARK Summer Program for Middle School students. Brown University, Providence, RI. July 2011.

*Kittens Behind the Bar and Ghosts in the Shaft: Coping with Mining Life in Late 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Nevada.* Conference titled "[Pre]Occupations: Working, Seizing, Dwelling." Fifth Annual Graduate Student Conference, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI. April 2011.

*Insight Into Archaeology.* Invited Lecture for the Brown University SPARK Summer Program for Middle School students. Brown University, Providence, RI. July 2010.

*Of Perfect Posture and Piano Limbs: The Victorian Body at Home.* Conference titled "Bodies in Motion." Third Annual Graduate Student Conference, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI. March 2009.

*Toward an Experience Based Archaeology of Experience.* Session titled "Experience, Modes of Engagement, Archaeology." World Archaeological Congress, Dublin, Ireland, July 2008.

*Oh the Craic was Mighty! Social Cohesion, Landscape and Materiality of the Nineteenth-Century Irish Pub.* Brown bag lecture given at the Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World, Brown University, Providence, RI, April 2008.

*Making Process Public: The Digital Engagement of Archaeology and its Audience.* Conference titled "Public Outreach: The Role of Archaeology Beyond the Site." Eight Biennial Graduate Student Conference, Boston University, Boston, MA, February 2008.

*A Comparative Analysis of Spatial Arrangement within 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Rural Irish Towns.* Session titled "Society and Space: Perspectives from the Past." S4 GIS Institute Geographic Analysis Conference, Brown University, Providence, RI, January 2008.

*Archaeology of the Great Irish Famine and Diaspora.* Invited Lecture for course "Cultural Anthropology: Understanding Human Societies." Brown University, Providence, RI, August 2007.

*Drinking Community: The Material Culture of Pub Bonding.* Session titled "The Material Culture of Food, Drink and Disease." Society for Historical Archaeology, Williamsburg, VA, January 2007.

*Faded Receipts and Buried Walls: A Historical Archaeological Investigation of the Material Culture and Identity of the Cooper Family of Riverstown, County Sligo, Ireland.* Session titled "Plantations, Farms, and Homesteads: Archaeological Perspectives on Agrarian Sites." Society for Historical Archaeology, Sacramento, CA, January 2006.

*Resistance, Identity, Negotiation and the Material Culture of the Nineteenth-Century British Dandy.* Illinois State University Graduate Research Symposium, Normal, IL, April 2004.

## ***SELECT PUBLICATIONS & TECHNICAL REPORTS***

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"Greening the Silver Saloon: Building Irish Community in the Mining West" In *Immigrants in the Far West: Historical Identities and Experiences.* Eds. Jessie L. Embry and Brian Q. Cannon. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City, UT. March 31, 2015.

*Emerald Pub to Silver Saloon: Building an Irish Saloon Community in the American Mining West.* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Brown University, Providence, RI. 2012.

"Review of *Historical Archaeology of the Irish Diaspora: A Transnational Approach* by Stephen A. Brighton." *Northeast Anthropology.* 2010.

"Thinking Through Living: Experience and the Production of Archaeological Knowledge." *Archaeologies: Journal of the World Archaeological Congress.* 5(3):415-445. 2009. Peer-Reviewed.

Co-edited with Katherine Marino. *An Archaeology of College Hill: Season Two, 2007, at the First Baptist Church in America, Providence, Rhode Island.* March 2008.

“Human Personal Items and Coins at the First Baptist Church.” In *An Archaeology of College Hill: Season Two, 2007, at the First Baptist Church in America, Providence, Rhode Island*. Eds. Katherine Marino and Michelle Charest. Providence, Rhode Island. March 2008.

*Esek Hopkins Homestead Archaeological Resource Assessment*. Report on file with the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission, Providence, RI, December 2006.

## ***MULTI-MEDIA & WEB PUBLICATIONS***

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*Reflections on The Archaeology of College Hill, 2007*. A compilation of video interviews with students regarding their experiences during the 2007 field season at the First Baptist Church, Providence, RI. Produced by Katherine Marino and Michelle Charest. <http://proteus.brown.edu/joukowskyinstitute/2291>, December 2007.

*The Rhode Island Famine Memorial Dedication*. Short (20 minute) documentary or peripatetic video interpreting the dedication of the Rhode Island Famine Memorial on November 17, 2007. <http://proteus.brown.edu/joukowskyinstitute/2292>, December 2007.

*The Virtual Pub Project*. Website featuring multimedia exploration of the pub experience with focus on material culture, place and space. <http://proteus.brown.edu/charest/2588>, November 2009.

## ***CONFERENCE SESSIONS ORGANIZED***

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Colloquium Planning. *Thinking in Public: Community & Cultural Institutions in Post-National Civic Space*. John Nicholas Brown Center for Public Humanities and Cultural Heritage, Brown University, March 15, 2012

Session Co-Organizer. *Experience, Modes of Engagement, Archaeology*. World Archaeological Congress, Dublin, Ireland, July 2008.

## ***MUSEUM EXPERIENCE, LIVING HISTORY, EXHIBITS & OUTREACH***

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### **Cataloging Software and Collections Management Consultant**

Tomaquag Museum, Exeter, RI. February 2020 – Present

### **Museum Exhibits**

*Brayton Grist Mill, Pomfret, CT*. Interpretive technical mill diagrams and label copy, Pomfret Historical Society, Pomfret, CT, August – September 2019

*Reimagining the Americas*. Multi-Media Design & Data Management, Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology, Brown University, Providence, RI, May 2010 – November 2011

“*Making the King’s Words Sweet*.” Exhibit Curator, Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology, Brown University, Providence, RI, February 2009 – February 2010

*Believing Africa*. Student Curator, Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology, Brown University, Providence, RI, September 2005 – January 2010

### **Postdoctoral Fellow in Anthropology**

Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology, Brown University, Bristol, RI, January 2016 – May 2016

Supervised and trained students in designing their own end of the year Student Group Exhibit titled *Brewed for Thought: A Cross-Cultural Exploration of Beer and Brewing*

**Proctor – Digital Collections & Technology Management/ Curatorial Assistant / Cataloging / Collections Research**

Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology, Brown University, Bristol, RI  
January 2007 – May 2007, September 2008 – September 2010

Spearheaded the Herbert J. Spinden Photographic Archive Digitization Program January 2010 – September 2010

Managed early stages of conversion of Haffenreffer Museum catalog to web-accessible catalog  
September 2009 – September 2010

**Cataloging Software Consultant**

Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology, Brown University, Bristol, RI, September 2010 – September 2011

**Substitute Gallery Interpreter**

Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology, Manning Hall, Brown University, Providence, RI, September 2006 – May 2012

**Additional Curatorial Experience**

As an historical archaeologist working for small institutions since 2003 I have typically been the person responsible for the processing, cataloging, and curation of the archaeological collections that I have been involved in excavating.

**Educational Interpreter**

Slater Mill National Historic Landmark Site, Pawtucket, RI, September 2007 – September 2011

Mystic Aquarium, Mystic, CT, Summer 1999

**Archaeological Consultant**

Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, Mashantucket, CT, June 2005 – August 2005, May 2006 – August 2006

As a member of a team of researchers, conducted archaeological evaluations of sites in compliance with tribal and federal regulations

**Living History Experience**

**Educational Interpreter**, Slater Mill National Historic Landmark Site, Pawtucket, RI, September 2007 – September 2011

Living history demonstrations focused on RI home life in the 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries with strong emphasis on fiber processing and domestic textile industry, and water-powered industrial textile mill and machine shop operation.

***ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL RESEARCH EXPERIENCE***

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**Historical Research Consultant**

Edward W. Merron, Jr., Independent Researcher, Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ, July 2012

Conducted archival research on the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century John Russell Bartlett Papers housed at the RI Historical Society

Law Firm of MacFadyen, Gescheidt & O'Brien, Providence, RI, June 2007

Conducted historical research in conjunction with legal case preparation

**Field Director and Chief Historical Archaeologist / Laboratory Manager**

Brown University, Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World

*The Archaeology of College Hill* – Fall 2007

Served as Field Director and Chief Historical Archaeologist for field school excavations of the First Baptist Church in America, Providence, RI. Taught excavation techniques, site evaluation, artifact analysis and report writing in conjunction with overall site management and interpretation.

**Archaeological Consultant**

Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission, Providence, RI, December 2006

Conducted preliminary archaeological testing of Admiral Esek Hopkins Homestead (18<sup>th</sup> c-present, Providence, RI) including test pits and site survey in order to evaluate potential future expansion of the building to create a museum. Report prepared on behalf of Rick Greenwood.

Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, Mashantucket, CT, June 2005 – August 2005, May 2006 – August 2006

As a member of a team of researchers, conducted archaeological evaluations of sites in compliance with tribal and federal regulations

**Laboratory Manager**

Illinois State University Historical Archaeological Field School, Riverstown, Ireland – Summer 2004

Coordinated students for cleaning, identification, labeling and curation of artifacts excavated during the 2003 and 2004 field seasons

**Graduate Research Assistant**

Under Shepard Krech III, Department of Anthropology, Brown University, May 2008 – August 2008

Conducted research on historic ethnographies of Native American groups throughout the United States

Under Charles E. Orser, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Illinois State University, August 2003 – May 2005

Researched, analyzed and mapped archaeological assemblages. Tutored undergraduate students in ceramics identification and computer applications.

Under Elizabeth M. Scott. Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Illinois State University, August 2004 – December 2004

Conducted zooarchaeological research on archaeological collections from Fort Niagara, NY

**Field Archaeologist**

SMELT/Low Birker Archaeological Field School, Cumbria, England - Summer 2002

American Cultural Specialists, Seymour, CT - Summer 2001

**Research Assistant**

American Schools of Oriental Research, Boston University - Spring 2001

American Schools of Oriental Research, Boston University. Under Prof. Julie Hansen - Fall 2000

***GIS EXPERIENCE***

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***Fellow***

Spatial Structures in the Social Sciences (S4) Fellow, Brown University, 2008-2012

***Professional Training***

Spatial Structures in the Social Sciences (S4) GIS Institute, Brown University, Winter 2008

ArcGIS II: Intermediate Map Making for the Social Sciences, Workshop, Brown University, Spring 2007

ArcGIS I: Map Making for the Social Sciences, Workshop, Brown University, Fall 2006

### ***Research Employing Significant GIS Component***

**Current Research (on-hold):** *A GIS-Based Spatial Model Linking Historic Anthropogenic Environmental Stressors and Vegetative Site Succession.*

The goal of this project is to develop a spatial model linking historic anthropogenic environmental stressors with present-day vegetative site succession to facilitate a method of identification for potentially stressed sites through easily conducted visual pedestrian survey. The research site is the Scituate Reservoir property in RI owned by the City of Providence Water Supply. To develop this model, researchers will gather two sets of field data within the survey area: an archaeological survey to identify the precise location of manmade historic and prehistoric sites, including chemical testing; and an ecological survey of vegetative coverage. Researchers will employ a GIS to explore spatial correlations between these sets of data to establish and test a predictive model. Preliminary stage funding is through RISD Faculty Professional Development Fund Grant. Research currently on-hold.

**Dissertation:** *Emerald Pub to Silver Saloon: Building an Irish Saloon Community in the American Mining West*  
A significant portion of my dissertation research involved GIS-based spatial analyses. I digitized and then manually drew polygon features for every building and room featured on the 1890 Sanborn maps of Virginia City, Nevada, including all coding details from the original maps. Features were then linked with an extensive document-based database of over 1,000 distinct saloons in the town, as well as the complete U.S. Census data for 1860-1900. Spatial analyses focused significantly on Hot Spot and density analyses related to ethnic residential neighborhoods, commercial districts, and saloon locations, as well as lower level qualitative spatial and architectural relationships.

**Additional Research:** Creation and analysis of GIS based on French and Indian and Revolutionary War fort placement in New York State, modern U.S. Census data, and 19<sup>th</sup>-century Irish Ordinance Survey Maps.

### ***Papers Presented***

*Oh the Craic was Mighty! Social Cohesion, Landscape and Materiality of the Nineteenth Century Irish Pub.* Brown bag lecture given at the Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World, Brown University, Providence, RI, April 2008.

*A Comparative Analysis of Spatial Arrangement within 19<sup>th</sup> Century Rural Irish Towns.* Session titled "Society and Space: Perspectives from the Past." S4 GIS Institute Geographic Analysis Conference, Brown University, Providence, RI, January 2008.

### ***Related Experience***

#### **Mapping Technician**

Charles Dutch & Associates: Land Surveyors and Engineers, Colchester, CT, Summer 2002

## ***PROFESSIONAL & UNIVERSITY SERVICE***

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### **Collegial Advisor**

Tomaquag Museum, Exeter, RI. Providing collegial advising regarding cultural, historical, and museum exhibition and collections management as requested as the museum plans its new museum campus in South Kingstown, RI. October 2020 – Present.

### **Inauguration Committee, Operations Sub-Committee Member**

Inauguration of President Crystal Williams, RISD. April – October 2022

### **Textiles Lab Working Group Member**

Interdepartmental University Strategic Plan, RISD. Fall 2017 – Winter 2018

### **Graduate Representative to the Faculty**

Department of Anthropology, Brown University. Spring 2007 – Spring 2008

**Website Developer**

Brown University Department of Anthropology Graduate Student Wiki, Brown University. Spring 2007 – Spring 2012

Brown University Graduate Student Association, Brown University. Summer 2007