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## Research and Creative Activities

### Introduction

At its best, documentary storytelling promotes the human cause by revealing to maker, participant, and viewer something essential (big or small) about who we are. The documentary films I author and collaborate on span a diverse set of subjects and characters, but most portray champions of unpopular ideas whose unwavering dedication to their cause is virtuous.

The documentary and non-fiction media I produce in collaboration with governmental organizations, NGOs, and non-profits focuses on environmental conservation initiatives, advocacy for underserved communities, and educational content for those who seek to serve those communities. These issue-oriented pieces connect my work with my politics, sharpen my filmmaking skills, keep me connected with the technical tools of the trade, and grow my network contacts locally and regionally.

My friend and mentor Michael Rabiger is fond of the Emile Zola quote, “A work of art is a corner of nature seen through a temperament.” I find this to be especially true of documentary and non-fiction media because these forms take reality as their subject and require the filmmaker to interpret that reality to communicate a story to a viewer. For the filmmaker, then, it is important to examine the unique point of view out of which the themes that inform that interpretation emerge. I routinely ask my students to adopt this ethic in the pursuit of their own, authentic “voice,” which I believe is most effective when it lives at the very center of their work, as it does in mine.

### Publications

In January 2019, I was invited by Michael Rabiger to join him in co-authoring the 7th edition of his popular textbook *Directing the Documentary*. The title, published by Routledge, was released in May 2020. This edition includes new and updated content on the rise of the documentary series, the impact of video on demand and content aggregators, updated information on prosumer and professional video, coverage of new audio and lighting solutions, trends in post-production, coverage of the immersive documentary, and offers practical sets of solutions for low, medium, and high budget documentary film productions throughout. Over 50 new films are cited to further discussions of form and content and the companion website is fully updated to include a wide variety of new and revised projects. The cover art features School of Film alumni on production outside of Lincoln Hall.

### Documentaries

I wrote, directed, shot, and story edited *There's Heart Here* (2019), a short documentary about three indigenous members of the Two Spirit and LGBTQ community: a roller derby champion, a cyclist, and an activist. The project was awarded through a proposal sponsored by the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board (NPAIHB) and made to Indian Health Services (IHS). It premiered at the 2019 United States Conference on AIDS (USCA), screened at a community gathering on the PSU campus at the Native American Student and Community Center, and is used by public health workers to

advocate for appropriate medical treatment of Two Spirit and LGBTQ people in Indian Country. It is available online through the NPAIHB website.

As a part of a professional development opportunity at NW Documentary Arts and Media in their workshop DIY 360 Documentary, I made *People of the Way* (2019), a virtual reality (VR) short documentary about a tiny Lutheran congregation led by a gay pastor that screened publicly at NW Doc in a class showcase. My goal is to use this knowledge to make a VR project about the role of public education in the United States in securing our democracy and to develop a special topics course in VR documentary production for PSU FILM.

I directed *Burton Before and After* (2017), a short documentary that revisits the gender-affirming transition of a transgender man through home video shot 15 years prior. Streaming and DVD sales were offered through Dark Hollow Films from 2018 - 2019. The film was selected for 24 film festivals in the US and in Europe and picked up eight awards during the run. It played in a one-hour program of locally produced shorts on a constant loop at the Hollywood Theatre's PDX airport microcinema from Summer 2019 - Winter 2020 and was also featured on the Hollywood Theatre's website during that time. It was programmed in college and university classrooms and at summits and symposiums including at The Evergreen State College (Media Works program), Portland State University (WGSS program), Queering Social Justice Symposium (hosted by Portland State University), Trans Summit (hosted by Outfest LA), University Film and Video Association Annual Conference 2019, and Trans Pictures: An Evening of Films Exploring Trans Lives at the Gene Siskel Film Center (hosted by the School of the Art Institute of Chicago).

In response to the year of protests that followed the inauguration of the 45th President of the United States, I co-directed *45: A Love Letter to the Resistance* (2017) a short film featuring words of encouragement from Donald Trump to Portland's street protestors. It screened at Boathouse Microcinema and was featured on the website [makeamericagreatagain.art](http://makeamericagreatagain.art).

I co-produced, directed, shot, and story edited *Confluence of Purpose* (2016), a short documentary about the largest conservation and flood mitigation project in Oregon history. The project was awarded through a Request for Proposals administered by Tillamook Estuaries Partnership and funded by the U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife. It was included in the Stories of Our Watersheds Film Festival (Portland and Seattle), at Reno-vating Habitat for Fish and Wildlife: A Film Festival Highlighting Collaborative Habitat Conservation and Its Benefits, and was featured at several meetings of state and national fisheries societies and habitat partnerships. It is available through the Tillamook Estuaries Partnership website.

### **Non-fiction media**

I developed and produced over 20 educational, fundraising, and promotional pieces for non-profit organizations and NGOs including Portland's Q Center, the SMART Reading Program, Basic Rights Oregon, the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board (NPAIHB), the Center for Women's Leadership (CWL), and Explore Nature. These pieces were featured on partners' websites, on social media channels, at organizational meetings, and at fundraising events.

### **Digital Humanities Project**

I am in-progress on *Outliers and Outlaws: The Eugene Lesbian History Project*, a community-based, digital humanities project that preserves and shares the unique history of the lesbian community in

Eugene, Oregon. A collection of 83 oral histories, housed in the University of Oregon library, are at the center of this initiative.

My participation as originally envisioned was to produce a 24-minute documentary about several of the women who helped build the community and who continue to contribute to the culture. When COVID-19 hit, the production was put on hold and I was asked to turn my attention to the development and design of the project website and the upcoming digital exhibit. I learned the Wordpress theme and page builder plugin Divi, and completed the website. The digital exhibit is currently in-progress.

### **New Opportunities for Older Creative Work**

In collaboration with The Burlesque Hall of Fame in Las Vegas, I story edited a looping 15-minute excerpt from *Exotic World and the Burlesque Revival* (2012), a feature-length documentary I produced, for use in their "Exotic World Museum" exhibit, which opened in 2018 and continued through 2019.

*Crying Earth Rise Up* (2015), a broadcast-length documentary I co-produced that examines the human cost of uranium mining and its impact on sacred water, and which was funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's minority consortia member Vision Maker Media and distributed to PBS by the National Educational Telecommunications Association (NETA), has been broadcast over 3,300 times since 2015 and continues to show periodically on PBS stations across the country. I negotiated an additional distribution deal for DVD and streaming sales with Documentary Education Resources in 2018.

A short documentary about Japanese-Americans who elected to work in farm labor camps rather than stay in concentration camps during World War II, *Uprooted: Japanese Farm Labor Camps during World War II* (2016), which I produced in collaboration with the Oregon Cultural Heritage Commission (OCHC) and which was funded by the National Parks Service (NPS), was featured during the review period at the Japanese American National Museum, Lane County Historical Museum, Friends Center, Moses Lake Museum and Art Center, and Oregon State University Library.

*Standing Silent Nation* (2007), a broadcast-length documentary I produced about a Lakota family's attempts to grow industrial hemp and the federal government's refusal to allow it, and which was funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's minority consortia member Vision Maker Media and aired nationally on PBS's POV/American Documentary, received the honor of being chosen for the Vision Maker Media commemorative collection, "40 Years – 40 Films" in 2017.

### **Consulting Work**

I am a credited Consulting Producer on *North Pole, NY* (2018), a feature-length documentary about Santa's Workshop, one of the very first theme parks in the US, and the struggle of those who love it to keep it alive. The film was invited to the prestigious documentary market Doc NYC, screened at several film festivals where it garnered awards, and played in theaters in the Northeastern US and Southeastern Canada as part of a 4-wall campaign.

I am an uncredited consultant on *Unaccompanied: Alone in America* (2018), a short advocacy video about the plight of immigrant children who must represent themselves in federal immigration court.

The video went “viral” and has been screened millions of times in the aggregate on social media platforms and websites.

I am credited as an additional photographer and am an uncredited editing consultant on *The Reluctant Radical* (2018), a feature-length documentary about climate activist Ken Ward, which premiered at the Big Sky Documentary Film Festival and is distributed on PBS stations.

### **Accepted Proposals**

During the review period, I responded to two Requests for Proposals (RFPs) which were both accepted. One opportunity was distributed publicly, and the other was solicited by the requesting organization. The first was made in response to an RFP sent out by Tillamook Estuaries Partnership (TEP) on behalf of Explore Nature, a consortium of environmental conservation non-profits in Tillamook County, for a series of short branded videos for the web and associated social media platforms. The second proposal was submitted upon request by the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board (NPAIHB) and funded by the Indian Health Service (IHS) for a short documentary about queer indigenous people.

## **Teaching, Advising, Mentoring, and Curricular Activities**

### **Teaching**

I model for students an engaged and considered approach to interacting with the world, to authoring and collaborating on creative work, and to setting goals for creative and professional achievement. Through scrupulous curriculum design and deployment, I seek to invigorate the pursuit of learning and to stimulate students’ desire to achieve at a high level. I maintain the expectation that success is not only possible, but is inevitable with the application of constant pressure on the available materials and resources. By demonstrating a keen interest in the discipline, a passion for the film profession, and a commitment to contributing to the culture of the School of Film at Portland State, I endeavor to cultivate student success.

Across the courses I have taught at Portland State during the review period, I employed a variety of approaches—reading, discussion, lecture, demonstration, seminar, writing, hands-on practice, and application of newly acquired concepts—in service to the goal of delivering skill proficiency and experience in the particular area of study while fostering an attitude toward creative work that prepares students for the next level of achievement in the curriculum and for future professional opportunities. I have made my course materials available to production faculty members (adjunct and full-time) who have adopted significant elements in their teaching.

In my efforts to deliver learner-centered instruction, I offer strong leadership, organized planning, and unambiguous communication to create a stable environment where the inevitable differences in students’ preparedness, natural abilities, and ways of learning can be effectively addressed, and I encourage students to interrogate their personal values, points of view, and areas of interest to arrive at subjects for and themes to address in their creative work.

Promoting inclusivity in the classroom means making space for equal access to learning opportunities for all students. To this end, I attempt to learn about and discover each student’s experiences and talents and to be aware of students’ intersectional identities. I seek to recognize my various privileges

and notice how they influence the dynamics of the classroom. I assign readings and choose screenings that address and feature work by and about underrepresented communities. I call attention to content that perpetuates stereotypes and tokenism and I ask students to consider the ways that embedded values hamper ethical storytelling.

I have taught 12 different courses for Portland State FILM, virtually none of which had been taught prior to my taking on or creating the course. Course evaluations demonstrate student appreciation for my approach to teaching and curriculum design, and I consistently earn a majority of “Strongly Agree” assessments regarding the overall quality of instruction across all of my classes as well as positive written comments. My teaching has received favorable reviews from Professors Amy Borden, Mark Berrettini, Jennifer Ruth, Dustin Morrow, and Eliza Greenstadt upon class visitations.

### **Advising**

I provided high quality academic advising to students in-person, via email, and through Zoom throughout the review period and earned a nomination for PSU’s Dan Fortmiller Excellence in Advising award in 2018. When students who are not my assigned advisees contact me about registration overrides, I routinely review their DARS and not only provide guidance about the appropriateness of the course they are attempting to add, but also offer tailored suggestions about what elective courses might benefit them moving forward and which required courses they might undertake next.

### **Mentoring**

During the review period, I mentored several students in their efforts to find and navigate internships and co-ops, prepare for entry-level employment post-graduation, undertake professional development opportunities, make honors thesis projects, undertake the graduate school application process, and produce independent study projects.

I assisted Brandon Pettit's professional development efforts, facilitating a paid internship with BrandLive, and arranging a paid internship followed by a co-op experience at NBC Universal to edit sports media content used in live broadcasts on NSNW (formerly Comcast Sportsnet). Now graduated, Brandon remains employed as an editor at NBC Universal.

I supported Will Floor's efforts to build a resume and portfolio that reflects his interest in working with environmental and outdoor recreation organizations. To that end, I assisted him in navigating an internship with Johnson Creek Watershed Council, helped him secure an internship with Oregon Wild, and recruited him to participate in the Fall 2018 FILM 360 Branded Media Production class where we made videos for two conservation-focused non-profits. All of this experience and work strengthened his resume, portfolio, and network and ultimately prepared him to secure full-time employment as an editor for the startup MyMedic, which supplies first aid kits for outdoor enthusiasts and athletes.

Tyler St. Pierre called on me for support when he was considering graduate school, researching potential programs, making applications, interviewing with schools, and debating about whether he would enroll upon acceptance. Tyler’s family did not have much personal experience with nor did they have the resources to support his ambitions in higher education. Given these conditions, I did my best to offer him practical advice in the run up to his enrollment in Columbia University’s MFA in Creative Producing program in Fall 2018. Since then, Tyler contacts me periodically to update me on

the highs and lows he is experiencing and to share his accomplishments. In Summer 2020, Tyler received Columbia's Arthur Krim Memorial Award for excellence in producing as voted on by the faculty.

I mentored Paul Newman through the completion and PSU exhibition of his short documentary *Unstated* (2017), made in conjunction with the first annual Andries Deinum Prize. I assisted Paul in completing an independent documentary project made with Gilman Scholarship support. I introduced Paul to Bradley Sellars at Relish Division, a production studio and creative agency creating culinary content for food and lifestyle brands, where he started as a part-time worker and was promoted to a full-time editor and producer position. I helped Paul navigate his transition from part-time to full-time at Relish and from Relish to his current creative director position at USAMM, a full-service destination for military medals, military ribbons, and uniforms.

I worked with Lea Kreck to prepare a joint presentation at PSU's Queering Social Justice Symposium in 2018 where Lea was the only undergraduate presenter. After she graduated, I helped her develop a relationship with the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board (NPAIHB) where she is now the Technical Coordinator of their podcast about the queer indigenous community. I recently connected her with Actual Industries where she is managing social media for Banfield Animal Hospital.

Emily Price approached me for advice and help in seeking out legitimate and appropriate internship opportunities. I advised her on how to identify and approach potential providers and ultimately connected her with Uncage the Soul Productions where she completed an internship and then a paid co-op experience.

I served as the undergraduate honors thesis advisor to Noah Puggarana in the making of his 2019 branded marketing campaign, which uses video and still photos to highlight the value of the PSU Honors College. I also advised Kaitlin Hoback in the making of her thesis project *Student Voice* (2017), a short documentary about the lives of PSU student-activists.

I took Ella Howard and Julie Nhem on a set visit to the Netflix show TRINKETS Season 2 where Cdaivid Cottrill, the Southern Business Agent at IATSE Local 488 Studio Mechanics of the Pacific Northwest toured us around and introduced us to the crew.

I arranged scholarships for Emily Price, Ashley Connell, Paul Newman, Lucero Cortez, and Noah Puggarana to attend Oregon Documentary Camp, an artists' retreat and conference held annually at Silver Falls State Park (and online in 2020) for professionals working in non-fiction media production.

### **Curricular Activities**

In service to the development of the School of Film's new curriculum for Fall 2018, I prepared course descriptions and sample syllabi for FILM 132 Introduction to Digital Filmmaking and FILM 451 Advanced Production Workshop. I also contributed to the installment of other changes, including breaking the "crafts" (editing, cinematography, and sound) out of FILM 360 Topics in Production and into standalone course numbers, and incorporating FILM 450 Portfolio and Professional Development as a standalone number in a new area of the audit, Advanced Studies and Professional Development.

I taught a trial of FILM 132 Introduction to Digital Filmmaking in Winter 2018. Since then, it has been successful as a core course, and seems to be fulfilling its intended purpose of enforcing a basic

understanding of the discipline, creating curricular efficiencies, and helping to establish the culture of the program. It also affords students an opportunity to explore the creative aspects of narrative filmmaking and documentary filmmaking and reduces significant redundancies between FILM 257 Narrative Production I and FILM 258 Documentary Production I. I shared all of the curriculum materials I generated for this course with other faculty who are teaching it in service to standardizing, as much as possible, student exit competencies.

I have taught FILM 451 Advanced Production Workshop twice now and am pleased by how nicely this course functions as a bookend to FILM 132 Introduction to Digital Filmmaking. Designed for those who have completed at least one of our production tracks, this course clears the way for serious filmmaking students with diverse interests to convene and collaborate on high quality work that can be submitted for consideration to the School of Film's Spring Showcase, used in portfolios, and offered to outside distribution channels.

Annually since Spring 2016, I have run a course in Portfolio and Professional Development, an experience that culminates in a portfolio show held at Portland State. The course asks graduating students to investigate their interests, values, personality, and skills as the basis for discovery and communication of their personal brand as they begin their careers. To identify career goals and set a path to attaining them, students undertake a series of short research projects, in-class writing exercises, and oral presentations. In service to communicating their personal brand, students prepare marketing materials (a portfolio website, a resume, a generic and a tailored cover letter, a business card) and a reel or reels highlighting generalist and/or specialist skill sets in media production.

I developed FILM 360 Branded Media Production as an intensive production course for intermediate and advanced students studying film production. Students work in small production units to produce professional quality, short form branded videos for real clients. During the term, students meet with the clients to determine their needs as they relate to the communication of the organization's brand to a target audience. Students then prepare and deliver formal pitch presentation to the clients—feedback from which is integrated into the final concepts for the projects. Students manage all aspects of production from ideation to delivery. Inviting collaborations with clients raises the stakes for students, copies a process that students might find when making work professionally in the future, and offers a built-in audience and distribution opportunities for their work.

## Governance and Other Professionally Related Service

### **Service to Portland State University - Governance**

As a member of the Student Media Board (2017 - present) I help oversee the hiring, budgeting, and organizational processes necessary for the operation of student media including PSU Vanguard, The Pacific Sentinel, KPSU, Pathos, and PSU-TV.

I served on the President's Academic Advisory Council (AY 2018), a body of around 20 faculty members, who met once per term to provide opinions, information, and feedback to the President of the university about how pending decisions and policy might affect teaching and learning.

### **Service to Portland State University - Other Activities**

I reviewed applications for university-wide scholarships in 2018, which has helped me better instruct our students about the scholarship process.

I participated in OIT's service desk redesign interviews in 2018.

### **Service to the School of Film - Governance**

As an Executive Committee Member At-Large (2017 - 2020), I contributed to the preparation of the School of Film Bylaws, Promotion and Tenure Guidelines, and APR narrative and appendices.

### **Service to the School of Film - Other Activities**

I spent considerable time and effort across the entire review period as an unofficial advisor to COTA's Directors of Digital Facilities and in an official capacity on the COTA Technology Committee. Duties included research of equipment appropriate to our needs and budget and developing strategies to facilitate efficient and effective distribution of resources to faculty and students.

I served on the School of Film Showcase Committee (FA16, SP17 - SP20), chairing the committee from SP18 - SP20, and coordinating the technical part of the program.

I created the Spring Showcase website in 2020 to host video essays, essay contest award winners, the portfolio show, and a group of student films curated by the production faculty.

I performed a classroom visitation, provided a thorough written review, and offered mentoring to Professor JJ Vazquez at the close of his first year of teaching.

I met with School of Film donors Jim and Sandy Wygant and have interacted with them in person and via email on a few occasions since.

I served on three hiring committees: as the chair of the hiring committee for an NTTF Continuous position in production, as a member of the hiring committee for a sabbatical replacement position in production, and as a contributor to the hiring committee for a TT hybrid position.

I represented the School of Film at the College of the Arts Convocation in 2019 where I presented a short talk about my creative work.

I collaborated with Professor Mark Berrettini on technical and design solutions for the updated 6th Avenue public screen, and have generated and posted content on the screen since 2018.

I furnished assistance and curriculum materials to Professors JJ Vazquez, Pam Minty, Colin O'Neill, and Scott Ballard in support of sections of FILM 132 Introduction to Digital Filmmaking, FILM 258 Documentary Production I, FILM 361 Documentary Production II, FILM 360 Digital Cinematography, and FILM 360 Sound Techniques.

I supported School of Film special events, including visits from Ichiro Kataoka, David Weissman, and Andrew Bujalski, and I created and presented content for the COTA fundraiser, "Flourish."

I hosted guest speakers from the film and television industry in my classes, including Michael Rabiger, Morgen Young, Bruce Carter, Maxine Trump, Ali Cotterill, and Page Stephenson, and brought a cross-

section of local media professionals to the annual Portfolio Show. I invited alumni working in the field and attending graduate school, including Tyler St. Pierre, Julie Lew, Tyler Feague, and Tyler Pickron, back to campus to speak to students.

I worked with Emma Josephson (class of 2020) and Julie Lew (class of 2018) to prepare their graduation speeches for COTA commencement.

I redesigned the Portland State Vimeo page and created showcases to highlight selected student work samples for public and in-house viewing.

I contributed video used in the 2018 and 2020 "One Day at PSU" campaign and at the 2020 COTA commencement and I worked with Suzanne Gray to direct students in the making of shorts for the 2018 COTA commencement.

I identified technology solutions for the classroom lab (LH315), contributed to space-planning for the relocated Equipment Office (LH123), and consulted on the renovation of the studio classroom (LH121).

I reviewed School of Film scholarship applications AY 2018 - AY 2020.

I regularly prepared and submitted social media posts for the PSU FILM Instagram page.

I placed phone calls to prospective students and co-wrote School of Film marketing and fundraising letters.

### **Professionally Related Service**

I served on the Advisory Board of Mt. Hood Community College's Department of Integrated Media and I acted as a consultant for Green Lighting Black Lives Matter, an organization that offers video production training to African-American youth.

I served as a juror for the Filmed by Bike Film Festival, the Portland EcoFilm Festival, and the Portland Film Festival and reviewed grant applications for the 2019 Women in Film-PDX Production Grant.

## **Community Outreach**

### **Discussion and Panel Facilitator for Film Culture and Industry Events**

I led a public discussion with the two-time Academy-Award winning documentary director and producer Barbara Kopple at the Portland Oregon Women's Film Festival, moderated the panel "Documentary Filmmaking in a New Political Climate" at the Portland Oregon Women's Film Festival, and moderated an Oregon Media Production Association (OMPA) "Town Hall" event.

### **Speaker and Lecturer at Colleges and Universities**

I spoke on the topic of "Creative Producing" to undergraduate media students at The Evergreen State College, presented on "Social Justice Filmmaking" to graduate film students at Loyola Marymount University, and gave a talk on working with communities in art and media-making to Portland State University Social Practice graduate students.

### **Presenter at Professional Meetings**

I delivered a talk entitled "Beyond Career Services: Incorporating Professional Development into an Undergraduate Film Curriculum" and one on "Leveraging Intensive Production Experiences in Branded Content Creation to Achieve Valuable Learning Outcomes for Students" at the University Film and Video Association annual conference in 2019 and 2017, respectively, and presented on *Burton Before and After* in collaboration with Film/Honors College student Lea Kreck at Portland State's "Queering Social Justice" Symposium.

### **Panelist Addressing Issues of Representation in Film**

I appeared as a panelist at Outfest LA's Trans Summit in my capacity as the director of *Burton Before and After*, and at Open Signal/Portland Community Media cable access on a panel moderated by disability rights activist Cheryl Green addressing "Media Representation of Disability."

### **Media Appearances**

I was included in POWFest's book of Portland's women and non-binary directors and in a short documentary about the Hollywood Theatre's PDX Airport cinema which is available online, and screens on a loop in the airport microcinema.

I was interviewed for the August 2020 edition of *Student Filmmakers Magazine* about best practices in documentary production and authored an October 2016 post for American University's Center for Media and Social Impact about the unsettling trend of law enforcement's violation of documentary filmmakers' first amendment rights.

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