

ASHLEE HOPE BIRD

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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Moreau Postdoctoral Fellow in American Studies, University of Notre Dame. August, 2021-Present

EDUCATION

PhD, Native American Studies, University of California, Davis (2021)

- **Dissertation:** “Representation and Reclamation: The History and Future of Natives in Gaming”

Middlebury College Language School (2020 and 2022)

- Summer Immersion Program (2022)
- Pilot Program in Abenaki Language (2020)

Ndakinna School of Abenaki (2020)

- Completed Ndakinna IG A200: Intermediate Guide to Abenaki
- Certified instructor of BG A100: Beginner Guide to Abenaki

MA, Native American Studies, University of California, Davis (2017)

MA, American Studies (Literature), University of Nottingham (2014)

- **Master’s Thesis:** “The Colors of Power: A Comparative History of the Black Power Movement and the American Indian Movement”

BA, American Studies with a focus in Indigenous Studies Middlebury College (2013)

BA, English and American Literatures, Middlebury College (2013)

- **Senior Thesis:** “What Makes the Red Man Red: The Figure of the Native American in Modern Literature and Popular Culture”

PUBLICATIONS

Peer Reviewed Articles:

- Bird, Ashlee. “Narrative” in “Reparations and Visual Culture” a special issue of the *Journal of Visual Culture*. Edited by Adrienne Huard and Gabrielle Moser. SAGE Journals. (20 April 2022).
- Bird, Ashlee, Chang, Edmond Y., and Kishonna L. Gray. “Playing Difference: Toward a Games of Color Pedagogy” in *Critical Pedagogy: Teaching for Racial Inclusion in the Digital Age* (1st Edition). Eds. Susan Flynn and Melanie Marotta. Routledge. (31 December 2021)
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003222835>

- “Synthetic Spaces and Indigenous Identity: Decolonizing Video Games and Reclaiming Representation” in *Return to the Interactive Past: The Interplay of Video Games and Histories*. Edited by Csilla E. Ariese-Vandemeulebroucke, Krijn H.J. Boom, Bram van den Hout, Angus A.A. Mol & Aris Politopoulos. Sidestone Press. (December 2021).
- “Playing Wrong: The Horse Girl Takeover of *Red Dead Online*” in the Historical Games Network blog for the theme of (Post) Colonialism. (November 24, 2021). <https://www.historicalgames.net/playing-wrong-horse-girl-takeover-of-red-dead-online/>
- “Digital Dispossessions: The Importance of Regional Specificity and Sovereign Spaces in Video Game Representations of Native American Cultural Heritage.” *Studia Neophilologica*. Edited by N. Katherine Hayles and Sofia Ahlberg. Taylor & Francis. (May 30, 2021).
- “Not Playing Around: How Indigenous Designers are Changing the Landscape of Video Games”. In *Night of the Indigenous Devs*. Edited by Meagan Byrne and Elizabeth LaPensée

Forthcoming Work Peer Reviewed Articles:

- “The Mechanical Machinations of Manifest Destiny: *Red Dead Redemption II*’s Revisionist Western Ruse” in a collection of works on *Red Dead Redemption* in the University of Oklahoma Press’ Popular West series. Edited by John Wills and Esther Wright. University of Oklahoma Press. (Forthcoming March 2023).
- Bird, Ashlee. “Interrupting the Indian Princess: Re-centering Native Women in Video Games”. In *Anti-Racist Futures: Games, Play, and the Speculative Imagination* edited by TreaAndrea Russworm and Soraya Murray in the *Power Play* book series edited by TreaAndrea Russworm and Jen Malkowski. Duke University Press. (Forthcoming 2023).
- Bird, Ashlee. “Synthetic Indigeneity: Creating Community and Culture in Digital Worlds”. In the “New Formations of Game Genre” edited anthology in the Approaches to Digital Game Studies series. Edited by Gerald Voorhees, Josh Call, Betsy Brey, and Matthew Wysocki. (In Progress)
- “On “Being an Idiot”: Embracing Relationality and Letting Go of Narcissism in Indigenous Epistemologies”. Chapter in Forthcoming Anthology in response to Tyson Yunkaporta’s *Sand Talk*. (Forthcoming 2024).

Poetry

- “She” and “shattering” for independent publication *Disparate Housewives*. Edited by Bethany Williams.

EXHIBITIONS

Group Exhibitions:

- *Full of Birds*. (Video Game). Installed in the Merging Mindsets Conference, March 13-14, 2020
- *Full of Birds*. (Video Game). Installed in the “Indigenous Futurisms: Explorations in Art and Play” exhibition at the C. N. Gorman Museum, featured Oct. 2, 2019-Jan. 31, 2020
- *Full of Birds*. (Video Game). Installed in the InDigital Space at the 2019 ImagineNATIVE Film & Media Festival and Featured at the *Night of the Indigenous Devs*.
- *One Small Step*. (Video Game). featured in the InDigital Space at the 2018 ImagineNATIVE Film & Media Festival.
- *One Small Step*. (Video Game) displayed at the Heritales Film Festival. Evora, Portugal, September 21-23, 2017.
- Bird, Ashlee and Rachael Nez. *The Valedictorian of Carlisle Indian School* (Short Film). VOICE exhibit at the Roseville Maidu Museum, which featured the work of Indigenous women artists. September 2017-January 2018.

- Bird, Ashlee and Rachael Nez. *The Valedictorian of Carlisle Indian School* (Short Film) debuted at ImagineNative Film & Media Festival, 2016. Nominated for Best Experimental Piece, and received the second most votes.

Editorial Projects:

- Editor in Chief, *indigiNES Gaming News* (iNES). Digital Zine highlighting the Indigenous video game design community. Funded by Canada Council for the Art. (Forthcoming 2023)
- Co-Editor with Edmond Chang and Alenda Chang of a special game studies issue of *Configurations*, the SLSA Journal. (Forthcoming 2023).
- Co-Editor of upcoming volume on Indigenous peoples and game-based technologies in the De Gruyter Oldenbourg Series *Video Games and the Humanities*. (Forthcoming 2024).

Curatorial Projects:

- Bird, Ashlee. Gaming Curator of the “Indigenous Futurisms: Explorations in Art and Play” exhibition, featured Oct2. 2019-Jan.31, 2020, at the C. N. Gorman Museum.
<http://gormanmuseum.ucdavis.edu/Exhibitions/exhfmst.htm>

PRESENTATIONS

Invited Speaker:

- Panelist on the panel on Narratives on Identity, Community, and Activism for Native American and Indigenous Heritage Month. New Jersey Institute of Technology. November 29th, 2022.
- “Representation and Reclamation: The History and Future of Native Americans in Video Games”. UNC Chapel Hill. Invited Speaker for the Critical Game Studies Initiative and co-sponsored by the American Indian and Indigenous Studies program and the American Indian Center. September 14, 2022.
- “Representation and Reclamation: Native Americans in Video Games”. California State University, Long Beach. Invited Speaker in the Playing with the Past lecture series. April 19, 2022.
- “From Custer’s Revenge to Red Dead Redemption: Changing the Language of Indigenous Representation in Games.” Ohio University. Invited Speaker for the keyword “Indigenous” in the Keywords for Video Games Studies Speaker Series. February 28, 2022.
- “(Post) Colonialism and Historical Videogames”. Invited panelist for the Historical Games Network. December 15, 2021.
- “Organic Mechanics: Video Game Constructions of the Earth and Indigenous Resistance” Invited Speaker for the Indigenous Perspectives on the Environment speaker series at University of Washington. December 2, 2021.
- “Uncovering a Hidden Crisis: Panel on MMIW”. Invited Speaker for the panel for the Gender Relations Center at Notre Dame. November 30, 2021.
- “Redskins, Reservation Dogs, and Residential Schools: A Conversation on Indigenous Media Coverage” Invited Speaker for the Native American Alumni of Notre Dame. November 17, 2021.
- “From Custer’s Revenge to Red Dead Redemption: Changing the Language of Indigenous Representation in Games.” Duke University. Invited Speaker in Virtual Realities, Fictional Worlds, and Games Focus Cluster. November 15, 2021.
- Moderator for 2021 NAASA (Native American Art Studies Association) Plenary Panel. November 4, 2021.
- “From Custer’s Revenge to Red Dead Redemption: Changing the Language of Indigenous Representation in Games.” University of Tampa. Invited Speaker for the English and Writing Outreach Lecture Series. October 18th, 2019. <https://www.ut.edu/news-and-ut-life/portrayal-of-native-americans-in-video-games-focus-of-ut-lecture>

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Conferences:

- Works-In Progress Roundtable with Ashlee Bird, Edmond Y. Chang, Peter McDonald Doug Stark, Taylore Woodhouse. Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts. Purdue University, Lafayette, IN. October 6-9, 2022.
- Panel on “Yarning with Indigenous Traditions” for the Ansari Institute Nasr Book Prize Symposium. October 2-3, 2022. University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN.
- Bird, Ashlee and Edmond Y. Chang. “Teaching (with) Queer & Indigenous Games”. QGCon 2021.
- “Interrupting the Indian Princess: Re-centering Native Women in Games.” For a panel on “Why Video Games Need Feminism; Why Feminism Needs Video Games” with Shira Chess, Bonnie (Bo) Ruberg, and Emma Westecott. Tampere, Finland, June 2-6, 2020. Cancelled due to COVID.
- “Digital Dispossessions: The Importance of Regional Specificity and Sovereign Spaces to Video Game Representations of Native American Cultural Heritage.” Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts (SLSA). UC Irvine, Irvine, CA. November 7-9, 2019. <https://easychair.org/smart-program/SLSA2019/>
- Panelist at Night of the Indigenous Devs at the ImagineNATIVE Film & Media Festival October 22-27, 2019. Toronto, CA. https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5711573b044262398e3acb85/t/5d9dde3ad66bdf060f16d6a7/1570627201989/2417+iN_catalogue+9.7%28final%29.pdf
- “Disrupting Digital Spaces: Changing the Language of Video Games,” in panel: “Embodied Spaces: Community Based Practices of Indigenous Revitalization and Maintenance.” Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA). University of Waikato, Hamilton, NZ. June 26-29, 2019. <https://www.naisa.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/naisa-booklet-web-version.pdf>
- Bird, Ashlee and Chang, Ed. “Teaching (with) Queer & Indigenous Games”. HASTAC 2019: “Decolonizing Technologies, Reprogramming Education”. University of British Columbia, Vancouver, CA.
- “Synthetic Spaces and Indigenous Identity: Decolonizing Video Games and ROM Hacking *Super Mario Bros.*” SAA (Society of American Archaeology). Albuquerque, NM. April 10-14, 2019. https://documents.saa.org/container/docs/default-source/doc-annualmeeting/final-program/final-program-2019-with-covers44003265c93544a9837d5d71b2746aa6.pdf?sfvrsn=122d522f_4
- “Synthetic Spaces and Indigenous Identity: Decolonizing Video Games and ROM Hacking *Super Mario Bros.*” Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts (SLSA). Toronto, ON, Canada. November 15-18, 2018. <http://litsciarts.org/slsa18/SLSA-schedule-final.pdf>
- “Representation and Reclamation: The History and Future of Natives in Gaming” UC Davis Native American Studies Graduate Student Symposium. University of California, Davis. November 1-2, 2018. <https://diversity.ucdavis.edu/events/7th-annual-native-american-studies-graduate-student-symposium>
- “Synthetic Spaces and Indigenous Identity: Decolonizing Video Games and ROM Hacking *Super Mario Bros.*” Interactive Pasts Conference 2, Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision. October 8-10, 2018. <https://interactivepasts.com/the-interactive-pasts-conference-2/>
- Bird, Ashlee. “Living at the Edge of the Galaxy: Queering *Mass Effect* with the Asari” Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts (SLSA). Tempe, AZ. November 7-12, 2017. <http://litsciarts.org/slsa17/SLSA-2017-Program-11-9.pdf>
- “Synthetic Spaces and Indigenous Identity: Decolonizing Video Games and ROM Hacking *Super Mario Bros.*” Turtle Island Symposium at UC Davis. November 2-3, 2016. <http://gormanmuseum.ucdavis.edu/Exhibitions/Previous/NZ/TurtleIslandExchange.html>

TEACHING

Instructor of Record:

- Instructor of AMST 30150: Decolonizing Games: Critical Engagement Through Design and Play at University of Notre Dame, Spring 2022
This course aims to change the way you think not only about the way that we play games, but also about the way that video games teach their players to behave within their digital worlds. This course will encourage students to reflect on and utilize their lived experiences as players, and utilize these experiences to locate themselves within their analysis and writing as well as their design practices. This course will undertake an intensive, interdisciplinary focus on the history of video game development, representation in video games, and the languages that digital games work in as well as decolonial theory and diverse theories of design. This class will engage with a variety of scholarly texts, video games, media posts, videos, and design exercises, in order to illustrate the ways in which video games have shaped the ways we play, think, and behave within their spaces. Students will be required to write and design around these lessons and address and push back against the problematic behaviors and colonial narratives around violence, race, gender, sexuality, and relationship to the land that these gamic languages and lessons have created.
- Associate Instructor of NAS 005: Introduction to Native American Literature at UC Davis
This 25 person small lecture course begins with an intensive survey of a wide variety of Native American literary texts—from poetry, fiction, and non-fiction as well as scholarly articles and theoretical writing—in order to transform not only the way my students think about Native American Studies, but how they write, read, and think in general. The syllabus includes work by Vine Deloria, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Winona LaDuke, Louise Erdrich, Sherman Alexi, Deborah A. Miranda, and Robin Wall Kimmerer Texts which my students analyze in terms of Native American Studies, Decolonial Theory, as well as their lived experiences in both academia and their local communities. Students share work through weekly blogs, quarterly presentations, and long form writing assignments designed to develop critical thinking and composition skills. Beyond the written word, this class also explores music, digital media, film and art, in order to address the way in which these texts expand our understanding of Native American Literature and offer a decolonial methodology that pushes beyond the page.

Co-Instructor (with Stephanie Boluk):

- CDM 40B: Media Histories II: Histories of Computer and Videogames
A survey of the histories of computers and games from 1945 to the Present.

Teaching Assistantships:

- GER 010: Fairy Tales
- HUM 13: Witches
- Four Quarters in CTS/ENL/STS 172: Videogames and Culture: Metagaming
- NAS 012: Native American Cinema
- NAS 001: Introduction to Native American Studies

Class Visits and Guest Lectures:

- Guest Lecture on the history of Native American Representation in video Games in Colton Brandau's NAS 005 class at UC Davis.
- Guest Lecture on the history of Native American Representation in Games and the Decolonization of Media Studies in Deserea Langley's NAS 005 class at UC Davis.
- Two-time guest lecture on the history of Native American Representation in video games and *Never Alone* as the cite of digital ethnohistory in Professor Justin Spence's NAS 10 class at UC Davis.
- Guest Lecture on the history of Native American Representation in Games and the Decolonization of Media Studies in Jessa Rae Growing Thunder's NAS 001 class at UC Davis.
- Two-time guest lecture on spatial utilization and power dynamics in violent fighting games in Professors Patrick LeMieux and Stephanie Boluk's class CTS/ENL/STS/ 172: Videogames and Culture at UC Davis.

- Guest Lecture on the history of Native American Representation in Games and the Decolonization of Media Studies Professor Hulleah Tsinhnahjinnie's NAS 12 Native American Cinema.

SERVICE

- Faculty Advisor for NASAND (Native American Students at Notre Dame). June 2022-Present
- Co-Organizer for Video Game Studies Stream at SLSA. 2021-Present
- Secretary for Video Game Studies Special Interest Group at SCMS. May 2021-Present

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Workshops:

- Co-creator, Co-runner, and presenter of a three-workshop Games and Pedagogy Workshop series from 2017-2018 at the UC Davis ModLab that was geared toward faculty and graduate students. The series featured the following workshops: "Teaching Game Studies" (October 26, 2017) <http://modlab.ucdavis.edu/blog/2017/10/10/teaching-games-studies/>, "Games as Teaching Tools" (November 8, 2017) <http://modlab.ucdavis.edu/blog/2017/11/02/modlab-to-host-games-as-teaching-tools-workshop/>, and "Teaching Game Design" (January 16, 2018) <http://modlab.ucdavis.edu/blog/2018/01/15/teaching-game-design/>.
- Co-led a workshop on ROM Hacking *Super Mario Bros.* with Patrick LeMieux for the 2017 UC Davis Native American Youth Empowerment Conference.

Other Experience:

- Employment from February 2015-September 2016 as one-on-one para-educator in the Special Education department at West Rutland School, VT.

AWARDS

- UC Davis Dean's Summer Graduate Fellowship for summer 2020
- UC Davis Graduate Student selected for funding for attendance of the 2019 Reparative Frames Conference at Ontario College of Art and Design
- Awarded the ImagineNATIVE GDC Scholarship 2019 to attend the annual Game Developer's Conference in San Francisco
- Recipient of a GSR for the UC Davis ModLab under the Mellon Research Initiative in Digital Cultures in 2017
- Native American Studies Graduate Program Fellowship 2016, 2017, and 2020
- Student chosen to be funded to attend the Advanced Media Archeology seminar at Concordia University in 2016
- Eugene Cota-Robles Fellowship 2015
- University of Nottingham USA Master's Scholarship 2013
- Graduated Magna Cum Laude from Middlebury College and received departmental honors in American Studies for Senior Thesis work.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Mellon Research Initiative in Digital Cultures GSR for UC Davis Modlab, Fall 2017

- Helping to clean the lab, hold lab hours when needed, co-organized and presented in a three-part workshop series entitled “Games and Pedagogy” that included a variety of speakers to present on the three topics: Teaching Game Analysis, Games as Teaching Tools, and Teaching Game Design. Additionally, helped revitalize and organize, as well as participated in, the still ongoing Game Studies Graduate Group.

Teaching Assistant/Website Coordinator, Fall 2014

- Assisting in developing class discussion in the class, “Native North America” by providing outside resources, discussion questions, and a blog connecting our course readings to contemporary Native American issues and occurrences both through providing physical secondary/primary sources in class, developing and giving lectures, and by creating a class blog with links, images, and documents. Work done with Professor Marybeth Nevins in the Sociology and Anthropology department at Middlebury College.

Research Assistantship, Summer 2012

- Collection, organization, and summarizing of literature concerning attitudes towards Mexican Immigrants before and after 9/11. Became familiar with periodicals, online journals, various university newspapers and magazines, and letters to the editor for different publications. Work done for Professor Roberto Lint Sagarena in the American Studies department at Middlebury College.

Research Assistantship, Summer 2011

- Editing and Revision of scholarly work regarding American Nationalism and Mexican Immigration and the Reconquista of Aztlan for Professor Roberto Lint Sagarena in the American Studies department at Middlebury College.

REFERENCES

Advisor: Hulleah Tsinhnahjinnie

Professor of Native American Studies, Director of C.N. Gorman Museum

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Committee: Dr. Stephanie Boluk

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Committee: Dr. Patrick LeMieux

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Committee: Dr. Justin Spence

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