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**DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES**



JENNA HUNNEF

University of Saskatchewan

**READING and RESEARCHING
the
LITERATURE of ALLOTMENT
9 November 2021**

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Zoom Meeting ID: 945 7628 2124 Passcode: 913529

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Reading and Researching the Literature of Allotment

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On December 3, 1901, in his first State of the Union Address as President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt extolled the virtues of the General Allotment Act to the members of the US Congress, the same governing body which, fourteen years earlier, had passed the act into federal law. Roosevelt's speech endorsed allotment as "a mighty pulverizing engine to break up the tribal mass." In the face of allotment's blatant attempt to eliminate Indigenous lands, and by extension the connections between Indigenous families and nations, Indigenous peoples nonetheless endured. This talk will consider both how they endured and how allotment did not extinguish, but in fact, inspired the creation of new Indigenous storyworlds. It considers the value of re-reading what I refer to as the "literature of allotment" as an integrated dialogue between archival records and Indigenous literary and cultural texts and how we might go about that research in a way that is decolonizing in its approach. Re-reading the literature of allotment involves bringing archival documents, such as the allotment records themselves, into conversation with literary texts being produced by Indigenous authors during and after the allotment period in the former Indian Territory (now the state of Oklahoma). Borrowing its case studies from the Dawes enrollment and allotment records of two Cherokee writers, John Milton Oskison (1874-1947) and R. Lynn Riggs (1899-1954), this talk will employ a decolonized approach to archival research (informed by the likes of Crystal Fraser and Zoe Todd) that reads between the lines of the colonial archive using the lens of these writers' work.

Biography

Jenna Hunnef is a Canadian settler scholar and Assistant Professor in the Department of English at the University of Saskatchewan on Treaty 6 territory and the homeland of the Métis. She completed her Ph.D. at the University of Toronto in 2016 and was employed as a Visiting Assistant Professor of English and American Studies at the College of William and Mary in Virginia prior to taking up her current position. Her past and current research focuses on late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Indigenous literatures from the former Indian Territory, particularly the Cherokee Nation, Indigenous genre fiction, and outlaw narratives. Her work has appeared in *Studies in American Indian Literatures*, *Western American Literature*, and the *Canadian Review of American Studies*, among other venues.