

Michelle Rogers-Pritzl's Statement of Purpose:

“Since I began graduate school in Boston in 2012 I have been on a journey of deconstruction of faith and reclamation of my life for myself which catapulted me into a divorce in 2014. I knew then that I would eventually tell the story of this final step in leaving behind the faith I was raised in and an abusive situation. *Not Waving But Drowning* tells the story of my marriage and my escape. It is my own stand against oppression of any people by religion or other factors.

Although my work has been about my own journey I believe in the power of photography to change and empower people. I feel that it is more important than ever to stand up and tell my story openly. When I left my husband, many people believed I should run away and hide in shame. Instead, living the life that is right for me, free from the stifles of religion has brought me joy I never imagined.

I want to share my photography with a larger audience, and to continue developing my career as an emerging photographer. The grant money would allow me to finish printing and framing this series, which would enable me to exhibit the series in its' entirety.” - MRP