



Roosevelt  
Institute for  
American  
Studies

## **A Water's History of the United States**

**21-23 May 2025**

**Abdij 9  
4331 BK Middelburg  
The Netherlands**

**Conference Program**

**Wednesday, 21 May 2025**

<b>9:00-9:30</b>	<b>Registration &amp; Coffee/Tea</b>	
<b>9:30-10:00</b>	<b>Welcome and Introduction</b>	<b>[AUDITORIUM]</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dario Fazzi (Leiden University/RIAS)</li><li>• Gaetano Di Tommaso (RIAS)</li><li>• Michael Patrick Cullinane (Theodore Roosevelt Center/Dickinson State University)</li><li>• Frank Mehring (Radboud University Nijmegen/Netherlands American Studies Association)</li></ul>	
<b>10:00-11:00</b>	<b>Opening Lecture</b>	<b>[AUDITORIUM]</b>
	<p>Martin Melosi (University of Houston) <i>The Many Faces of Water</i></p>	
<b>11:00-11:30</b>	<b>Coffee/Tea</b>	<b>[FOYER]</b>
<b>11:30-13:00</b>	<b>Panel 1: Water and Race</b>	<b>[AUDITORIUM]</b>
	Chair: Marcella Schute (Erasmus University Rotterdam)	
	<p>Thanayi Jackson (Cal Poly San Luis Obispo) <i>Allensworth, California: Race Colonies, Segregation and Water Policy in Early 20th Century</i></p>	
	<p>Sam Hege (Max Planck Institute) <i>Mining for Water: Reckoning with the Legacies of Aquifer's in US Histories of Race and Capital</i></p>	
	<p>Sara Fingal (California State University) &amp; Camille Wise (Brown University) <i>Wade-Ins on the Chicago Shoreline: An Environmental History of the Civil Rights Movement</i></p>	
	<b>Panel 2: Water Narratives and National Imaginaries</b>	<b>[PRIORIJ]</b>
	Chair: Frank Mehring (Radboud University Nijmegen)	
	<p>Sabine Sielke (University of Bonn) <i>Waves of Knowing: Shapes of Water in US-American Literary and Cultural Practice</i></p>	
	<p>Steffen Wöll (Leipzig University) <i>Waves of Conquest, Currents of Dissent: Liquifying America's Transoceanic Empire</i></p>	
	<p>Jutta Zimmermann (Christian Albrecht University of Kiel) <i>The Literary Oeuvre of Lidia Yuknavitch in "Water's History of the United States"</i></p>	

<b>13:00-14:30</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	[FOYER]
<b>14:30-16:00</b>	<b>Panel 3: Water Colonialism and Dispossession</b>	[AUDITORIUM]
	Chair: Mike Patrick Cullinane (TR Center/Dickinson State University)	
	Anthony Carlson (School for Advanced Military Studies) <i>Conservation and Indigenous Dispossession: The Weaponization of Drainage during the Progressive Era</i>	
	Lubna Alzaroo (University of Washington) <i>US Water Infrastructure as a Settler Colonial Infrastructure: A Comparative Study between the “Tennessee Valley Authority” and “Jordan Valley Authority Plan”</i>	
	Cristina Puntaru (University of Edinburgh) ONLINE <i>In Defense of Water and Land: Demilitarization Movements in Hawaii</i>	
	<b>Panel 4: Flowing (of) Waters, Writing (of) Identities</b>	[PRIORIJ]
	Chair: Heleen Blommers (Radboud University Nijmegen)	
	Elisabeth Winkler (Christian Albrecht University of Kiel) “One Limitless River”: <i>The Flood of 1927 of the Mississippi River in William Faulkner’s “Old Man”</i>	
	Anna-Lena Oldehus (Albert Ludwigs University of Freiburg) <i>Narrating Nation and Resistance through Water: The Great Lakes in the Writings of Margaret Fuller and E. Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake)</i>	
	Maarten Zwiers (University of Groningen) <i>Toxic South: Liquids, Land, Insects, and Plants in Jim Crow Agriculture</i>	
<b>16:00-16:30</b>	<b>Coffee/Tea</b>	[FOYER]
<b>16:30-18:15</b>	<b>Panel 5: Water, War, and Empire Building</b>	[AUDITORIUM]
	Chair: James J. Kimble (Seton Hall University)	
	Brooks D. Simpson (Arizona State University) <i>Ulysses S. Grant’s Use of Waterways, 1861-1865</i>	
	Daniel Roberts (Maritime Administration, US DOT) ONLINE <i>The Rise and Fall of the United States Government Freight Services</i>	
	David Stradling (University of Cincinnati) <i>Empire, Dredges, and the Control of Water</i>	
	Adrienne Renee Brown (Rachel Carson Center) <i>Water and War Industry: A Water History of the Kaiser Shipyards in Portland, Oregon</i>	

**Panel 6: Water and Practices of Indigenous Resistance [PRIORIJ]**

..... co-sponsored by the Network for Indigenous Studies at Leiden University  
Chair: Jessie Morgan-Owens (Leiden University)

Anna S. Cohen (Florida State University) & Molly B. Cannon (Utah State University)  
*Water-Community Entanglements on the Colorado Plateau*

James D. Rice (Tufts University)

*Aquacide: Wetlands, Indigenous People, and Colonialism in California's Sacramento Valley*

Jessica D. Conaway (University of Wisconsin-Madison) & Edith S. Leoso  
(Bad River Tribe)

*Ganawendan Ginibiiminaan (Take Care of Our Water!): Mobilizing for Watersheds-at-Risk with the Bad River Ojibwe*

**18:15-19:15**

**Reception**

[FOYER]

**Thursday, 22 May 2025**

**9:30-11:00**

**Panel 7: Rivers of History**

[AUDITORIUM]

Chair: Julia Irwin (Louisiana State University)

Rachel Herrmann (Cardiff University)

*The St. Marys River, Florida, as a US Place*

Vedran Obućina (Centre for Interreligious Dialogue – Croatia)

*Sacred Currents: The Significance of Water and Rivers in Eco-Theology and Native American Traditions*

Ellen Griffith Spears (University of Alabama)

*"Radical Impermanence": Riverine Environs in the Environmental Politics and History of the US South*

**Panel 8: Maritime Spaces, Maritime Narratives**

[PRIORIJ]

Chair: Jeanine Quené (RIAS)

Tarık Tansu Yiğit (Başkent University)

*The Maritime Mythos and Its Environmental Echoes in Nineteenth-Century New England*

Ruth Gehrmann (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz)

*Women Writing on Whaling Vessels in the 19th Century*

Niklas Müller (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz/Obama Institute)

*Water as the Uncanny Other in 20th-Century Comic Books*

**11:00-11:30**

**Coffee/Tea**

[FOYER]

<b>11:30-13:00</b>	<b>Panel 9: Urban Waterscapes</b>	[AUDITORIUM]
	Chair: Martin Melosi (University of Houston)	
	Ella Howard, Thaddeus Guldbrandsen & Kristen Rosero (Wentworth Institute of Technology)	
	<i>Legacies of Water Histories in New Orleans, Boston, and Norfolk</i>	
	Michael Holleran (University of Texas Austin)	
	<i>The Lost Waterscapes of Urban Ditches</i>	
	Samia Cohen (Brown University)	
	<i>Where the Ponds That Used to Be Dumps Used to Be</i>	
<b>Panel 10: Water for People, People for Water</b>	[PRIORIJ]	
	Chair: Ellen Griffith Spears (University of Alabama)	
	Mark Squillace (University of Colorado Boulder)	
	<i>Public Access to Water Resources</i>	
	Maud Rijks (Leiden University)	
	<i>The Beluga Campaign: Environmental Justice and Translocal Activism in the Great Lakes, 1985-1992</i>	
	Matthew Herbst (University of California San Diego)	
	<i>"Bring Us Back": Survival and Resilience in the California Desert</i>	
<b>13:00-14:30</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	[FOYER]
<b>14:30-16:00</b>	<b>Panel 11: Water Infrastructure</b>	[AUDITORIUM]
	Chair: Sarah Hamilton (University of Bergen)	
	Anna Bierbrauer (University of Wisconsin-Madison)	
	<i>Invisible Inequities: The Role of Water Infrastructure in Shaping Social Disparities in 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Denver</i>	
	Ramya Swayamprakash (Grand Valley State University) ONLINE	
	<i>Infrastructures Hidden in Plain Sight: Internal Waters, Improvements, and Their Legacies in the North American Great Lakes</i>	
	Hunter Kennedy (University of Chicago)	
	<i>Setting the River Free? Nature, Infrastructure, and Experiment at the Glen Canyon Dam</i>	
<b>Panel 12: Coastal Science and Coastal Life</b>	[PRIORIJ]	
	Chair: Sarah Elkind (San Diego State University)	
	Joanna L. Dyl (Pomona College)	
	<i>Coastal Waters and Moving Sand: Science, Engineering, and Agency in the Development of California's Beaches</i>	

Matt Sedlar (George Mason University)  
*Life among the Levees: A Historical Analysis of Community Adaptation in Lafourche Parish, Louisiana*

Thomas Blake Earle (Texas A&M)  
*Catching Hell: Social Conflict and the Estuarine Fisheries of the Gulf Coast in the Aftermath of the Vietnam War*

**16:30-17:30 RIAS Environmental History Lecture 2025 [AUDITORIUM]**

Sarah Hamilton (University of Bergen)  
*Towards a Global History of Groundwater*

**18:00 GALE Dinner & Launch Blue History Network**  
at Theater Restaurant De Koepoort (Molenwater 99, Middelburg)

**Friday, 23 May 2025**

**9:00-10:30 Panel 13: Water Techno-Politics at Home and Abroad [AUDITORIUM]**  
Chair: Sarah B. Snyder (American University)

James R. Fleming (Colby College)  
*Rivers in the Sky in American History*

Elizabeth Hameeteman (Technische Universität Berlin)  
*Insatiable Thirst: Solar Desalination and the US Quest for Water and Power in the Postwar World*

Yoram Carboex (Norwegian University of Science and Technology)  
*An Ocean of Possibilities: The U.S., the Law of the Sea, and an Alternative Deep-Sea Mining Regime*

**Panel 14: Water Scarcity and Dystopian Fiction [PRIORIJ]**  
Chair: Nancy Mykoff (University College Roosevelt)

Teresa Botelho (Nova University of Lisbon)  
*The Archive of Water Rights in American Fiction: Writing the Colorado River in Drought Narratives*

Anneke Schewe (Christian Albrecht University of Kiel)  
*Fluid Allegory: US Colonialism, Exploitation, and Water Scarcity in Denis Villeneuve's Dune (2021) and Dune: Part Two (2024)*

**10:30-11:00 Coffee/Tea [FOYER]**

**11:00-12:00** **Roundtable 1: Water and the American State** **[AUDITORIUM]**

- Julia Irwin (Louisiana State University)
- Martin Melosi (University of Houston)
- Mark Squillace (University of Colorado Boulder)
- Gaetano Di Tommaso (RIAS)

**Roundtable 2: Water and American Studies** **[PRIORIJ]**

- Frank Mehring (Radboud University Nijmegen)
- Mariia Kravchenko (Fulbright Program Ukraine/Institute of International Education)
- Dario Fazzi (Leiden University/RIAS)
- Sabine Sielke (University of Bonn)

**12:00-13:00** **Lunch** **[PRIORIJ]**

**13:00-14:00** **Closing Address and Remarks** **[AUDITORIUM]**

Sarah S. Elkind (San Diego State University)  
*Thinking with Water: Negotiating Federalism in Twentieth-Century America*

**14:30** **End of the Conference**

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