

Decolonization

Indigeneity, Education & Society



Title: Indigenous Peoples and The Politics of Water

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Abstracts Due: April 4, 2016

Submissions Due: August 31, 2016

Call for Submissions

Overview

[Feb 3, 2016] *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* invites articles from scholars, artists, activists, policy makers, and community members for a special issue of the journal exploring Indigenous peoples and the politics of water. Water is an ancient and sacred element of Indigenous epistemologies and ways of life. Water sustains, builds and inspires. In the contemporary context climate change, water security, and environmental destruction have captivated popular attention. A proliferation of scholarly and public works, as well as (inter)governmental working groups and summits, have emerged to address these interrelated issues. We acknowledge the importance of these approaches to understanding and analyzing water. However, this issue is more concerned with the social and political properties of water than with identifying and articulating Indigenous “cultural” or “traditional” conceptions of water, or mainstream approaches that address water through frameworks of supply and demand, science, security, crisis, and scarcity.

Instead, we seek contributions that foreground critical historical, theoretical, and empirical approaches to understanding the politics of water. We contend that struggles over water figure centrally in salient concerns about self-determination, sovereignty, nationhood, autonomy, resistance, survival, and futurity that drive Indigenous political and intellectual work. In recent history, we have seen water assume a distinct and prominent role in Indigenous political formations. Recent examples range from the August 2015 Gold King Mine Spill, which dumped over three million gallons of toxic waste into the San Juan River and devastated Navajo farming communities in the northern part of the Navajo Nation to the continuing water struggles in California, and

the water security issues that face First Nations peoples dealing with resource extraction in Canada. Indigenous peoples around the world are forced to formulate innovative and powerful responses to the contamination, exploitation, and theft of water, even as they are silenced or dismissed by genocidal schemes reproduced through legal, corporate, state, and academic means.

We also recognize that the politics of water is deeply intertwined with contemporary water security and policy issues that affect both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples around the world. The responses and efforts to control water in both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities have been consistently designed to serve the imperatives of settler colonialism. Indigenous analyses of these global issues in water politics are key--whether at grassroots, institutional, or governmental levels-- to challenging, refusing, and revising the violence of such imperatives and building a better future.

This special issue stages a timely intervention into this urgent state of affairs, focusing on how water is taken up in fields of power conditioned by settler colonialism, normative Indigenous nationalisms, (neo)liberalism, Indigenous resistance, and capitalism. As an interdisciplinary, open access journal dedicated to material struggles for decolonization, *Decolonization* is uniquely positioned for convening a collection of articles concerned with the invigoration of efforts to decolonize the genocidal politics of water. We seek contributions that address the politics of water in any number of diverse historical, political, tribal, or regional contexts. We also seek a diversity of perspectives and backgrounds, including environmental science, social justice, policy, literary, grassroots, activist, historical, and artistic approaches. However, we seek contributions that are characteristically rich in theory, research, critique, and analysis. Whether articulated through a politics of refusal, a critique of water law, or engagement with Indigenous epistemologies, we also seek contributions that advance a sustained and critical engagement with the idea and practice of decolonization. While you may choose to employ existing decolonial frameworks in your manuscript, we also welcome arguments that challenge the appropriateness of decolonization as a framework for understanding/interpreting water politics. Given the dearth of critical writings about this subject, we envision this issue as a landmark source for critical Indigenous perspectives on water that will generate vibrant discussion well into the future. Join us!

As part of this special issue, we will also be issuing a separate call for submissions (CFS) for a blog and online exhibit to accompany the more conventional article format outlined here. We see both halves of the special issue--the journal and the blog/online exhibit--as holding equal weight in making the special issue a success. We will begin to circulate the blog/online exhibit CFS in the early fall of 2016.

Guiding Themes for This Issue

- Water and (settler) colonialism
- Water and heteropatriarchy/heteronormativity
- The politics of refusal
- The politics of water settlements
- Water as a social, cultural and political force
- Water and comparative racializations
- Water and resistance/social justice/resurgence
- Water and capitalism
- Water and (neo)liberalism/biopolitics
- Water and violence
- Water and power
- Water and resource extraction (uranium, oil, coal, natural gas, copper, gold)
- Water and state formation
- Water and the law
- Water and the ethics of tribal economic development
- The politics of water security
- Water and transnational/comparative configurations
- The privatization of water
- Water and urbanization
- The politics of dams, reservoirs, and other diversion schemes
- Water as a form of colonial dispossession
- Water and the protection of sacred sites
- Water and health/quality of life disparities
- Water and agriculture/farming
- Water and human rights/restorative justice/alternative paths for recourse
- Water and youth
- Water and art/cultural production/cultural politics
- Water and militarization/policing
- Water and fishing/treaty/customary rights

Deadlines & Submissions

- Call for Submissions Published (February 2016)
- Abstracts Due (April 4, 2016)
 - Abstracts should be between 300-500 words and include a title, author name(s), and a 150 word biography of the author(s)
 - Email your abstracts to crislingbaldy@mail.sdsu.edu and myazzi02@unm.edu
- Submissions Due (August 31, 2016)

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For more information on *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, visit the journal's website at decolonization.org.