

Oceans and Deserts:

Charting Transdisciplinary Currents in Environment and
Culture within the Arts and Sciences



A Symposium hosted by the Transcultural German Studies Ph.D. Program

The University of Arizona

Tucson, Arizona

February 28th - March 1st, 2014

Program Schedule



Dr. Conevery Bolton Valencius



Dr. Everett Shock



Dr. Nina Berman

I Department of German Studies

confluentcenter
for creative inquiry

Photo of Dr. Valencius
by Andrew Kilgore



GRADUATE &
PROFESSIONAL
STUDENT COUNCIL

Friday, February 28th • Flandrau Planetarium

Welcoming starting at 12:00

12:30-2:30

Panel 1: “Where Desert and Ocean Meet”	
Dr. Kevin Fitzsimmons (Soil, Water and Environmental Sciences, University of Arizona)	“Farming on Desert Seacoasts: A Transformational Technology Reducing Global Hunger, Improving Nutrition and Providing Jobs in Developing Nations”
Dr. Ellen McMahon (School of Art, University of Arizona)	“Parallel Play: Multi-Disciplinary Ways of Knowing a Dry River”
Samuel T. McNeil (School of Journalism, University of Arizona)	“A Siege of Salt and Sand”
Dr. Raphael Sagarin (Program Manager, Biosphere 2 Ocean, University of Arizona)	“Reflections on the Recreation of a Voyage to the Sea of Cortez”

2:30-2:45

Break

2:45-3:45

Dr. Everett Shock Chemistry and Biochemistry, Arizona State University “Mainly Microbe: Environments Dominated by Microbes and the Habitability of Planets”
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3:45-4:00

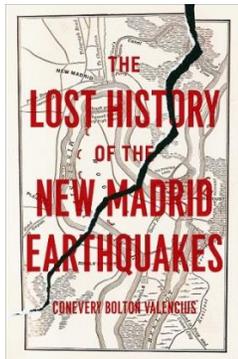
Break

4:00-6:00

Panel 2: “Communities of Contact”	
Dr. Nina Berman (Comparative Studies, The Ohio State University)	“Paradise for Sale: The Rush for Beachfront Property in Kenya”
Dr. Stephanie Buechler (School of Geography and Development, University of Arizona)	“Women, Water, and Environmental Change”
Dr. Benedict J. Colombi (American Indian Studies, University of Arizona)	“Mapping Indigenous Populations on the Kamchatka Peninsula”
Barbara R. Greene (East Asian Studies, University of Arizona)	“Mapmaking, Early Mass Culture, and Proto-Nationalism”

7:00-9:00

Reception hosted by the German Studies Department Gentle Ben’s Brewing Company, University Blvd.



For a closer look at the New Madrid earthquakes, see Dr. Valencius’ *The Lost History of the Madrid Earthquakes*, published in 2013 with the University of Chicago Press

Saturday, March 1st • Kiva Room, Student Union

Coffee and Welcoming starting at 8:30

9:00-11:00

Panel 3: “Charting Connections between the Human and the Natural”	
Eric Magrane (School of Geography and Development, University of Arizona)	“Creative Encounters with Species: The Poetic Inventory of Saguaro National Park”
Steve Przymus (Second Language Acquisition and Teaching, University of Arizona)	“‘Passive’ Interactions between Language and Culture”
Erika Colombi (School of Dance, University of Arizona)	“Artistic Investigations into Melting Ice”
Katherine A. Adler (German Studies, University of Oregon)	“Once Upon an Ecocritical Analysis: Considering Grimms’ Nature-Culture and Its Implications”

11:00-11:15 *Break*

11:15-1:15

Panel 4: “Implications of Long-Term Change”		
Dr. Albrecht Classen (German Studies, University of Arizona)		“From the Silk Road to the Baltic Sea to the Atlantic: The Replacement of Trade Routes and the Consequences for Cultural History”
Erana Loveless (Anthropology, University of Arizona)		“Shifting Baselines Demand a Fusion of Ethnography, History, and Archaeology for Environmental Conservation”
Dr. Steven Kuhn (Anthropology, University of Arizona)	Dr. Charlotte Pearson (Laboratory of Tree- Ring Research, University of Arizona)	“An Integrated Interdisciplinary Approach to Understanding Human and Environmental Interactions in the Mediterranean”

1:15-2:15 *Lunch Break*

2:15-3:15

Dr. Conevery Bolton Valencius Department of History and School for the Environment, University of Massachusetts Boston “The Lost History of the New Madrid Earthquakes”
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3:15-3:30 *Break*

3:30-5:30

Panel 5: “Challenges of Pollution and Stewardship”		
Jessie Gurd (Literary Studies, University of Wisconsin Madison)		“Watery Landscapes and Finding a Kind of ‘Blue’ Ecocriticism in Milton’s <i>Comus</i> ”
Kira Karns & Dr. Leif Abrell (Soil, Water and Environmental Science, University of Arizona)		“Pelagic Plastic Pollution: The Predominant Plastic Particle of Lake Superior”
Dr. Jeffrey M. Banister (School of Geography and Development, University of Arizona)	Dr. Stacie G. Widdifield (Art History, University of Arizona)	“The Visual Culture of Water in Early Twentieth-Century Mexico City: Clean Water in/Dirty Water Out”

5:30-5:45 *Closing Remarks:* Dr. David Gramling, German Studies Department, University of Arizona

Taking as its object of study the effects culture has on the environment and vice versa, *Oceans and Deserts* spans disciplines by bringing scholars from the sciences and humanities together to interrogate how these mutual influences unfold in specific contexts. Its approach promotes transdisciplinary inclusivity, destabilizing the institutional boundaries which often keep respective fields from consulting the fruitful work beyond their own means of description. *Oceans and Deserts* seeks to make the uniqueness of a given disciplinary approach transparent to other fields, encouraging a more robust dialogue and consequently a more nuanced portrait of the world around us.

Special Thanks:

- The University of Arizona Department of German Studies
- The University of Arizona Confluentcenter for Creative Inquiry
- The University of Arizona Graduate & Professional Student Council
- The University of Arizona Bookstore
- The Flandrau Planetarium
- Dr. Barbara Kosta, University of Arizona German Studies
- Dr. David Gramling, University of Arizona German Studies
- Bill Plant, Director of Flandrau Planetarium
- Natalie Olson, SILLC Administration
- Gennady Sare, SILLC Administration
- Amanda Pitts, SILLC Administration
- The College of Humanities External Relations Team

Symposium Organizers:

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Charly Mostert

Diane Richardson