

DISPLACEMENT & REPARATION:

CLIMATE, LABOR & MIGRATION JUSTICE SYMPOSIUM

Presented by:

Nature Space & Politics Research Group, Human Rights & Migration Program, Communication Department, Democracy Lab, Muir College, The LOFT and UC San Diego Library

Friday, February 7th, 2025
University of California, San Diego

Land Acknowledgment

UCSD is built on Mat kulaaxuuy land in the unceded territory of the Kumeyaay Nation. We acknowledge the eighteen American Indian tribes of this territory - including the Kumeyaay, Payómkawichum, Cupeño and Cahuilla - as well as the many Indigenous communities from the Americas and the Pacific who call San Diego home, and whose relations exist beyond colonization. We acknowledge that the Kumeyaay lands stretch beyond the present-day US Mexico border, including Kumiai village communities in Baja California, Mexico. We commit to building good relationships with the Native peoples of these lands.

Scheduling Note

Unexpected changes of plans sometimes arise between the time of printing and the day of the conference. Please use the printed program as a general guide and consult the online program PDF for the most up-to-date information. Visit the [Nature, Space, and Politics](#) website or use the QR code for the latest version.



Symposium organizers would like to thank: UC San Diego's International Institute, School of Social Science, Muir College, UC San Diego Library, Communication Department, Democracy Lab, Center for Comparative Immigration Studies, Suraj Israni Center for Cinematic Arts, Center for Marine Biology and Conservation, Changemaker Institute, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, Cross-Cultural Center, Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health and Human Longevity Science, Ethnic Studies Department, Economics Department, Seventh College, Eighth College, Eleanor Roosevelt College, Critical Gender Studies Program, Sociology Department, Visual Arts Department, Political Science Department, Urban Studies and Planning Department, Latin American Studies, Global Health Program, Green New Deal @ UCSD

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FEBRUARY 7, 2025 – UC SAN DIEGO

MORNING PROGRAM

The Seuss Room, Geisel Library (9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.)

9:00 a.m. **Breakfast Mingle**

9:30 a.m. **Morning Panel:**

Extractivism and Extra-activism: Resistance, Reparations, and Relationality

WELCOME

Elana Zilberg, Associate Professor, Communication Department, Co-Director, Human Rights and Migration Program and Co-Director, Nature, Space and Politics, UC San Diego

MODERATOR

Johnathon Vargas, Ph.D. Student, Department of Communication
Graduate Student Organizer, NSP, UC San Diego

PRESENTATION

José Artiga, Director, SHARE Foundation:

Too Much & Not Enough: The Case of the Central American Dry Corridor

PRESENTATION

Luis Martín-Cabrera, Associate Professor of Spanish and Latin American Cultural Studies,
Literature Department, UC San Diego:

Against Eco-Colonialism: The Making of a Digital Archive on the Impact of Lithium Extraction in the Andes

MODERATOR

Magdalena Donea, Ph.D. Candidate, Communication and Science Studies Program,
Graduate Student Organizer, NSP, UC San Diego

PRESENTATION

Tiara Na'puti, Associate Professor of Global & International Studies, UC Irvine:

Refuge & Resistance from Global Archipelagos

PRESENTATION

Dina Gilio-Whitaker, Colville Confederated Tribes, American Indian Studies, CSU San Marcos:
Community Engaged Indigenous Scholarship in Climate and Environmental Resilience

DISCUSSANT

Wayne Yang, Professor, Ethnic Studies and Provost, Muir College, UC San Diego

12:00 p.m. **Lunch** (Seuss Room Lobby)

Apologies to those we were unable to accommodate for lunch. Please see the list of nearby options for lunch in the Price Center.

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1:30 p.m. Geisel Library Lab Workshops & Tours (Seuss Room Lobby)

WORKSHOP

Cristela Garcia-Spitz, Digital Initiatives Librarian and Curator, Tuzin Archive for Melanesian Anthropology, UC San Diego Library

WORKSHOP

Amy Work, GIS Librarian at UC San Diego

3:00 p.m. Keynote Presentation

Towards Climate Justice: Displacement and Resilience in the Colonial-Capitalist Present

PRESENTATION

Hossein Ayazi, Ph.D., Senior Policy Analyst, Institute for Belonging and Othering. Global Justice Program, UC Berkeley

DISCUSSANT

Fonna Forman, Professor of Political Science and Founding Director, Center on Global Justice, UC San Diego

EVENING PROGRAM

The LOFT, Price Center East (5:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.)

5:30 p.m. Reception

Apologies to those we were unable to accommodate. We look forward to seeing you at the film screening. In the meantime, many food and beverage options are available in the Price Center.

6:30 p.m. Film Screening & Discussion

Newtok: The Water is Rising (2022)

Presented in collaboration with [Muir College](#) and the [Center for Marine Biology and Conservation](#).

MODERATOR

Joe Riley, Ph.D. Candidate, Art History, Theory and Criticism (Art Practice Concentration), Visual Arts Department and the Program for Interdisciplinary Environmental Research (PIER) at Scripps Institution of Oceanography, UC San Diego

DISCUSSANT

Cindy J Lin, President and Founder of the San Diego Environmental Film Festival (SDEFF) and Lecturer, Environmental Studies, Muir College.

DISCUSSANT

Moriah HǎnJiǎXiù Hayes, Indigenous Filmmaker and UCSD Communication alumn

SYMPOSIUM PARTICIPANTS

Elana Zilberg is an Associate Professor in the Communication Department at UCSD and co-founder of Nature, Space and Politics, an interdisciplinary faculty and graduate working group sponsored by the International Institute. She serves as co-director of the Human Rights and Migration Program in the Eleanor Roosevelt College, and is a member of the UCSD Global Borders Initiative's steering committee. She holds a Ph.D. in Sociocultural Anthropology from the University of Texas at Austin. Her first book, *Space of Detention: The Production of a Transnational Gang Crisis between the U.S. and El Salvador* (Duke University Press 2011) built on her work with Central American refugees in Los Angeles in the 1980s and 90s to explore the far reaching effects of U.S. immigration, criminal, and anti-terrorist law in the reproduction of violence in and refugee flight from post-civil war, neoliberal El Salvador from the wane of the Cold War to the rise of the War on Terror. She is currently working on a book manuscript entitled "Fractal Geographies: Race, Nature and Infrastructure along the Los Angeles River." Fractal Geographies is a sustained ethnographic encounter with the contemporary unsettling of the region's complex racial and ecological borders, and explores the push and pull of connection and division emerging from the re-vitalization, re-engineering, re-imaginings and re-indigenization of the LA River Basin.

Johnathon Vargas is a Ph.D. student at the Department of Communication, UC San Diego. Their research focuses on borders, spatial and social imaginaries, counter-geographies, social movements, and translation practices.

José Artiga is a long-time environmental, human and immigrant rights advocate in the United States and Central America, and the executive director of The SHARE FOUNDATION. As part of their campaign Vamos a la Milpa, the Foundation works with Guapinol people and the Honduras Municipal Committee of Defense of Common and Public Assets of Tocoa, Honduras and with Radio Progreso / ERIC in their fight to defend rivers from mining contamination, and to aid recovery efforts from the Eta and Iota Hurricanes. Jose was one of the first Salvadoran immigrants to seek sanctuary in the US, at the University Lutheran Chapel of the University of California Berkeley, part of a consortium of the first six congregations in the United States to announce public sanctuary in 1982. It was this event that sparked the Sanctuary Movement that lives on today. Artiga also serves on the Board of Directors of the Aquino Foundation which advocates for the rights of the families of the Disappeared in El Salvador. He has a B.A. from Catholic University and a Master's degree in Economics from San Francisco State University.

Luis Martín-Cabrera is an associate professor in the Literature Department and the Latin American Studies Program at UC, San Diego. He is a specialist in Latin American Studies, Environmental Humanities, oral history and anti-colonial thought and has written extensively about human rights and memory, television, film, and hip-hop music in the Southern Cone and the Andean region. More recently, Martín-Cabrera has been studying climate change and the “green transition” from a Latin American perspective. This interest has produced three interrelated projects. A digital archive –the Tranandean Lithium Project-- that revolves around the impact of lithium extraction in the indigenous communities of Argentina, Bolivia and Chile; a book length project tentatively titled, *Ecocolonialism in the Andes: a Posthumanist Critique of the Green Transition from Latin America*, which theorizes the pitfalls of the green turn in the Global North from an Andean perspective, and a memoir/nonfiction book -- *Antes que desaparezca el río/ Before the Rivers Disappears*-- which establish a dialogue between rural Spain and the Andes around the potential death of a river.

Magdalena Donea is a PhD Candidate in Communication and Science Studies, and Associate Instructor in Thurgood Marshall College's Public Service Minor at UC San Diego. Her doctoral work engages critically with the visual culture and mediation of trauma and other emotional and embodied states of being of forcibly displaced people, including those displaced by climate change and economic hardship. She is a former political refugee and technology worker whose ongoing commitments to data justice and human rights inform and determine how she approaches questions about emplacement, power, privilege, and the consequences of technological coercion and control, particularly in trans-border regions. She holds an M.A. in Cultural Studies and Textual and Digital Studies from University of Washington, and M.A. in Communication from UC San Diego.

Professor Tiara Na’puti is a first-generation college student who received a master’s and doctorate in Communication Studies and a certificate in Native American & Indigenous Studies (NAIS) from The University of Texas at Austin. She is a Chamoru scholar (Guåhan/Guam) who focuses on issues of Indigenous movements, colonialism, and militarism in the Mariana Islands archipelago and throughout Oceania. Na’puti works with organizations addressing immigration rights and issues facing Native and Indigenous Pacific Islander populations. Her research has been published in venues such as: *American Quarterly*, *AmerAsia*, *Environmental Communication*, *Security Dialogue*, *The Contemporary Pacific*, *Micronesian Educator*, and the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*. She was the recipient of a 2021-2022 Mellon/ACLS Scholars and Society Fellowship, her project *Sovereignty & Climate Change in Guåhan: Creating Sustainable Futures* focused on the urgent challenges of climate change and democratic governance in relation to Guåhan’s political status. For this project she was in-residence working with Independent Guåhan, a community group committed to educating the public about the benefits of sovereignty for the island.

Dina Gilio-Whitaker (Colville Confederated Tribes descendant) is a lecturer of American Indian Studies at California State University San Marcos, and an independent educator and advisor in American Indian environmental policy and community engagement. Her scholarship and community engaged work focus on environmental justice and traditional knowledge in the context of tribal sovereignty and nationalism, as well as critical sports studies in the realm of surf culture and professional surfing. She also brings these ideas into her work as an award-winning journalist, having written for many high-profile publications including the Los Angeles Times, Sierra Magazine, Indian Country Today Media Network, Time.com, High Country News, and many others. Dina's most recent book is Beacon Press's *As Long As Grass Grows: Indigenous Environmental Justice from Colonization to Standing Rock* she is currently under contract with Beacon Press for two new books; *Indians for Sale: Pretendians, Disenrollment, and Native American Identity in Late Capitalism* is scheduled for release in spring 2025. She is also a co-editor of a new collection from Cambridge University Press's Elements Series on Indigenous Environmental Research.

Dr. Wayne Yang's work transgresses the line between scholarship and community, as evidenced by his involvement in urban education and community organizing. He writes about decolonization and everyday epic organizing, particularly from underneath ghetto colonialism, often with his frequent collaborator, Eve Tuck. He is interested in the complex role of cities in global affairs: cities as sites of settler colonialism, as stages for empire, as places of resettlement and gentrification, and as always-already on Indigenous lands. He is currently serving as Provost of John Muir College at UC San Diego. Before his academic career, he was a public-school teacher in Ohlone territory, now called Oakland, California, where he co-founded the Avenues Project, a youth development non-profit organization, as well as East Oakland Community High School, which were inspired by the Survival Programs of the Black Panther Party. An accomplished educator, Dr. Yang has taught high school in Oakland, California for over 15 years and is a recipient of the Academic Senate Distinguished Teaching Award. He is also a Principal Investigator with the Indigenous Futures Institute. IFI aims to recast the relationship between a legacy of unethical scientific practice and Indigenous peoples. By creating pathways toward participatory science through design-thinking, IFI brings together global Indigenous communities to study, access, and harness science and technology, critically intervene in the production of knowledge, and dream up abundant and plentiful Indigenous futures in an age of climate crisis, global pandemics, and the continued denial of Indigenous sovereignty

Cristela Garcia-Spitz collaborates across areas of the library, campus, and community on projects to ensure the long-term accessibility, use, and preservation of the University's unique collections available at library.ucsd.edu/dc. Cristela has worked on several digital projects, including those within the Oceania collection. She has a background in libraries and archives at Princeton University and Carnegie Mellon University before coming to the UC San Diego Library. She earned her Master in Library and Information Science at the University of Pittsburgh. Cristela is originally

from Mercedes, Texas, which is just along the southern border of Texas and Mexico where the Rio Grande River runs into the Gulf of Mexico.

Amy Work is the GIS Librarian at the UC San Diego Library. She supports students, faculty, researchers and staff with their geospatial needs through consultations, class instruction and workshops. She co-manages the Library's [Data & GIS Lab](#), helps build the Library's geospatial data collection, and is helping to build a geospatial data discovery platform with colleagues from UC Santa Barbara. She holds a MA in Geography from Syracuse University, has worked with K-12, community colleges and universities across the U.S. to integrate geospatial technologies into their curricula, and led a non-profit in Costa Rica engaging community members to use GIS to investigate community issues.

Dr. Hossein Ayazi is Senior Policy Analyst with the Global Justice Program at the Othering & Belonging Institute (OBI) at UC Berkeley. Across his research, teaching, and policy strategy work, he focuses on the U.S. and global political economy of race, food systems, and the climate crisis, and on social movements across the Global South and Global North. As part of OBI, he has published reports on U.S. and global agri-food and environmental policy, state and corporate power, trade and development, and climate impacts and resilience strategies, and climate reparations. On these topics, he has helped organize convenings among scholars, organizers, communicators, researchers, artists, and policymakers. His current book project, *Verdant Empire: Race and Rural Economies of Containment*, situates anti-hunger and anti-poverty interventions across the Third World within the longue durée of U.S. conceptions and practices of development-as-counterinsurgency while accounting for how differential processes of Black and Indigenous racialization have been a mainstay of such efforts. Previously, he was a Postdoctoral Fellow and Visiting Scholar at Tufts University and a Visiting Professor at Williams College. He holds a Ph.D. in Environmental Science, Policy, and Management from UC Berkeley.

Fonna Forman's research engages the intersection of ethics, public culture, urban policy and the city – with a special focus on climate justice, border ethics and equitable urbanization. In recent years, Forman has also partnered closely with renowned UCSD-Scripps atmospheric scientist Veerabhadran “Ram” Ramanathan on a variety of projects on climate disruption, and the disproportionate impacts on vulnerable populations, including two papers on “climate migration” and ‘climate justice’ for the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and Social Sciences; and several international and California-based task forces on climate change solutions. In 2021, Forman was appointed by the University of California President Michael Drake to co-chair the UC Global Climate Leadership Council, which advises his office on climate and sustainability policy, research and education. From 2014-2018, she was appointed by British PM Gordon Brown to serve on the Global Citizenship Commission, advising UN policy on human rights in the 21st century. At UC San Diego, she is affiliated with the Urban Studies and Planning Department, the Center for Energy Research, the Deep Decarbonization Initiative, and the Border Solutions Alliance.

Joe Riley is an artist and historian. His writing focuses on the hydro-politics of knowledge, inclusion, and documentation in the ocean sciences, the commodification of ocean life forms such as kelp, the design and engineering of seacraft, and histories of maritime social practices. Joe's dissertation, *Fixing the Sea: Case Studies Toward A Critical Environmental History of Ocean Art and Science since 1970*, delves into histories of interaction between artists and oceanographers in late-20th and early 21st-century environmental art. Since 2019, Joe has been a participating artist and co-curator for a [PST ART: Art and Science Collide](#) partnership between UC San Diego Visual Arts and Birch Aquarium. On view in 2024-2025, the PST ART exhibition [Embodied Pacific](#) features projects by thirty artists working with researchers in laboratories, field sites, and archives in Southern California and the Pacific Islands. Alongside marine ecologist [Danielle McHaskell](#) and artist [Audrey Snyder](#), Joe is engaged in a "co-laboratory," [Passengers of Change](#), that references the transportation of seaweed biota in contemporary cargo ship ballast tanks and speculatively re-thinks the laboratory work ethic through the re-design of the research bench. *Ballast Bench* (2024)—a rocking chair ecosystem in which rest and contemplation generate growth—is part of the *Embodied Pacific* exhibition on view at the [Birch Aquarium at Scripps Institution of Oceanography](#) through September 2025.

Dr. Cindy J Lin is an environmental scientist, social enterprise entrepreneur, and founder of the San Diego Environmental Film Festival. Cindy has previously worked at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, where she spent 20 years engaged in international and national water protection projects, water quality standards development, polluted waters regulation, air and water quality policy, and sweeping environmental policy changes. She received her doctorate in Environmental Science and Engineering, MS in Environmental Chemistry, and BS in Biology, all from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Moriah H́anJíXiù Hayes (they/she/he) is a filmmaker who graduated from UC San Diego with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication and a double minor in Ethnic Studies and Native American & Indigenous Studies. Moriah's Tlingit name is Keeýees Tláa, and they are a member of the Wooshkeetaan, Eagle/Wolf clan, Áak'w Kwáan of the Auke Bay region. Their interest in film originated from a video production class they took their freshman year of high school and has blossomed into their career today. They have a strong passion for discovering and amplifying truths that have been historically undermined, underrepresented, and pushed aside through the cinematic medium. Moriah has worked on a variety of narrative, documentary, and educational film projects. Their first documentary feature is *California to Ghana* (2018), and they are currently in post-production for their newest documentary feature: [Dear Alaska](#). They also founded their own production company, Shark House Cinema, named in honor of the Tóos Hít, Shark House. With a wide variety of film projects, it's Moriah's lifelong goal to create a strong enough ripple in the film industry to inspire, encourage, and amplify the many stories that are longing to be told.