

Cynthia Barnett

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Education

2004-2005: Knight-Wallace Fellow, University of Michigan, mid-career journalism fellowship in freshwater resources.

2003: Master of Arts, American History, University of Florida, specialization in environmental history.

1989: Bachelor of Science, Journalism, University of Florida, with honors.

Academic

2017-present: Environmental Journalist in Residence, UF College of Journalism and Communications.

2018-2020: Environmental Fellow, The Bob Graham Center for Public Service.

2015-2016: Hearst Visiting Professional, UF College of Journalism and Communications.

Courses developed and taught: Environmental Journalism (grad & undergrad); Nature & Adventure Journalism (grad & undergrad); Civic Engagement/Environmental Justice; Environmental & Sustainability Leadership; and Viral Rhetoric, a skills course in op-ed writing, viral video and developing a TED talk.

Affiliate Faculty Member: Florida Climate Institute; Graham Center for Public Service; UF Water Institute.

Special PhD Advisor: {Current} Michael Munroe, Mass Communications, Translating the story of arctic change to distant audiences. {Past} Jennifer Adler, Interdisciplinary Ecology, 2018, *Visual Ecology: Communicating springs science through conservation photography and environmental education*.

Professional practice

2005-present: Independent environmental journalist and author specializing in water and climate: Publishing popular books, and articles in *National Geographic*, the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Atlantic*, *Discover*, *Salon*, *Politico*, *The Huffington Post*, *Orion*, *Ensis*, and others.

Previous positions

1998-2012: Senior writer, *Florida Trend* magazine, St. Petersburg, Florida.

1996-1998: Senior reporter, *The News & Observer*, Raleigh, North Carolina

1988-1996: Reporter, columnist, metro editor, *The Gainesville Sun*, Gainesville, Florida

Books

Forthcoming 2021: *Oracles of the Sea: Beauty, Madness, and a Search for Truth in Seashells* (W.W. Norton, New York) Nature's most-beloved object tells the story of our imperiled oceans in this natural/cultural history of seashells.

2015: *Rain: A Natural & Cultural History* (Crown-Random House, New York) The first history of rain. Longlisted, 2015 National Book Award. Finalist, 2016 PEN/E.O. Wilson Literary Science Writing Award. Named a best science book of 2015 by NPR's *Science Friday*; a best book of 2015 by the *Boston Globe* and *Kirkus Reviews*; and a favorite book of 2015 by the *Miami Herald* and *Tampa Bay Times*.

2011: *Blue Revolution: Unmaking America's Water Crisis* (Beacon Press, Boston) Articulates a water ethic for America. A *Boston Globe* best science book of the year.

2007: *Mirage: Florida and the Vanishing Water of the Eastern U.S.* (University of Michigan Press) An environmental history of freshwater in Florida. Gold medal for best nonfiction, Florida Book Awards. Named by the *Tampa Bay Times* one of the top 10 books every Floridian should read.

Selected popular articles on water and climate change

- “The Nasty Political Fight Over the First Weather Forecasts,” *Politico*, Sept 2019.
- “What Dorian Could Do: Hurricanes Galvanize Us to Action. Climate Change Can Too,” *The Atlantic*, Aug 2019.
- “The Environmental Issue Republicans Can’t Ignore,” *The Atlantic*, Jan 2019.
- “Candidates short-sighted on climate change’s long-term impacts,” *Columbia Journalism Review*, Oct 2018.
- “Mysterious Glowing Clams Could Help Save the Planet,” *The Atlantic*, feature on materials science research into the giant clams of Palau, Sept 2018.
- “Can the Caring Middle Save the Environment?” *The Los Angeles Times* Sunday Op-Ed, Aug 2018.
- “Can we engineer a way to stop a hurricane?” *National Geographic*, Oct 2017.
- “Nature isn’t on a rampage. That would be us,” *The Los Angeles Times* Sunday Op-Ed, Sept 2017.
- “Saving Our Seas,” Feb 2017 cover story, *National Geographic*.
- “We may live in a post-truth era, but nature does not,” *The Los Angeles Times* Sunday Op-Ed, Feb 2017.
- “Obama Creates Connecticut-Sized Ocean Park, Largest in the Atlantic,” *National Geographic*, Sept 2016.
- “Hawaii is Now Home to an Ocean Reserve the Size of Texas,” *National Geographic*, Aug 2016.
- “The Magic of Squeezing Water Out of the Sky, Zocalo Public Square, Feb 2016.
- “The Toil and Trouble of Climate Denial,” *The Los Angeles Times* Sunday Op-Ed, Jan 2016.
- *The Weather Experiment* by Peter Moore, cover review, *The New York Times Sunday Book Review*, July 2015.
- “It’s Not Just a ‘California Drought,” *The Los Angeles Times* Sunday Op-Ed, May 2015.
- “To Fight the Drought, L.A. Needs a Rain Revolution,” *The Wall Street Journal*, April 2015.
- “Making Perfume from the Rain,” *The Atlantic*, April 2015.
- Congress’s Hare-Brained Scheme to Shoot Rain from the Skies, *Politico*, April 2015.
- “Clarity for Florida’s Springs,” *Discover* magazine, Feb 2015.
- “Hey, America: It’s time to talk about the price of water,” *Ensisia* magazine, Fall 2014.
- “Groundwater Wake-Up: A new view of global groundwater reveals urgent need to reverse depletion,” *Ensisia*, Fall 2013.
- “Water Works: Communities Reimagine Ways of Making Every Drop Count,” Summer 2013 cover story, *Orion*.
- America’s Illusion of Water Abundance, *The Los Angeles Times* Sunday Op-Ed, Nov 2012.
- “Toward A Water Ethic,” cover story, *Tampa Bay Times* Sunday Perspective section, June 2011.
- “A Water Ethic for Florida,” white paper, first printing (10,000 copies) in 2010 by the Collins Center for Public Policy, second printing (16,000 copies) in 2014 by Barry University Center for Earth’s Jurisprudence.

Selected service

- Co-founder and organizer, UF’s annual [Climate Communications Summit](#), 2015-present.
- Environmental Civics advisor, [UF Water Institute Graduate Fellows](#) cohort focused on global change in Greenland.
- Member, UF’s Science Journalist in Residence Committee, 2015-present.
- Member, UF Water Institute Symposium Program Committee, 2018.
- Jurist, 2017 Society of Environmental Journalists’ Rachel Carson Book Award.
- Jurist, 2016 National Book Awards, nonfiction category.
- Alumni advisory board member, UF Department of History.
- National Board Member of the Earth Ethics Institute devoted to environmental literacy in higher education.
- Longtime member, the Society of Environmental Journalists.
- Environmental storytelling instructor for numerous youth, college and teacher programs including: 2020 National Endowment for the Humanities program for southwest Florida professors, teachers & museum directors on teaching water via the humanities; 2018 and 2017 Humanities and the Sunshine State Teaching Florida’s Climate program (teachers); 2017 UF CJC Cuba study-abroad program (undergraduates); 2017 Humanities and the Sunshine State Florida Water Stories program (high schoolers); 2017 National Geographic Walking on Water project (elementary schoolers); 2016 Springs Ambassadors Camp (middle schoolers).

Selected fellowships, grants, and residencies

- Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Coasts, Climates, the Humanities, and the Environment Consortium, 2019-present: Member of the UF team exploring the coasts and climate change via the environmental humanities.
- MTSU Free Speech Center 1 For All First Amendment grant, 2019: Won grant to develop [Science: Unsilenced](#), a campus-wide series of events highlighting free speech and censorship issues in climate and other sciences.

- McCormick Specialized Reporting grant, 2016: Won grant to train 30 professional journalists in freshwater and climate change reporting at the University of Florida.
- 2015-2016: Online News Association Challenge Grant: Member of UF team developing new engagement models for reporting on freshwater.
- Escape to Create Artist-in-Residence, 2014: One of ten U.S. artists and writers chosen for this mid-career residency in Seaside, Florida, to complete *Rain* manuscript.
- Florida Earth Foundation Holland Connection, 2010: Chosen as the journalist member to accompany a team of Southeastern U.S. scientists studying climate change and water issues in the Netherlands.
- Collins Center for Public Policy journalist's travel grant, 2010: Awarded a travel grant to Australia and Singapore to report for *Blue Revolution* and write the white paper "A Water Ethic for Florida."
- Knight-Wallace Fellow, University of Michigan, 2004-2005: One of 12 journalists selected for a year of intensive study, travel and research at U of M in Ann Arbor. Concentration in freshwater resources.

Selected student projects and awards

- [Barometer Florida](#), 2020 Bob Graham Center Civic Scholars project: Conceived and led the pilot year of this Knight Foundation-funded i-civics tool to benchmark key Florida issues. Oversaw 67 undergraduates' qualitative and quantitative research on the community impacts of climate change in Florida's 67 counties and its publication as an interactive public portal.
- [The Human Hazard](#), 2020 Environmental Journalism class project: Published a semester-long student series investigating public health and climate change in Florida.
- [Peak Florida](#), 2018 Environmental Journalism class project: (National) 3rd Place, Society of Environmental Journalists Ray Reece Excellence in Environmental Journalism Student Awards; (Regional) 1st Place, in-depth reporting, Society of Professional Journalists Region 3 Mark of Excellence Awards; (State) Finalist, best video, student division, SPJ Sunshine State Awards.
- [Energy Burden](#), 2017 Environmental Journalism class project: (Regional) Finalist, Society of Professional Journalists Mark of Excellence Award for Online Depth Reporting; (State) 3rd Place, SPJ Sunshine State Award for digital package in the professional division.
- [Blue Ether](#), 2016 Environmental Journalism class project: (State, professional category) Winner, James Batten Award for Public Service, Society of Professional Journalists Sunshine State Awards.

Selected professional awards and honors

- Spring 2016: *Rain* named a finalist for the 2016 PEN/E.O. Wilson Literary Science Writing Award.
- Winter 2015-2016: *Rain* named a best science book of 2015 by NPR's *Science Friday*; a best book of 2015 by the *Boston Globe* and *Kirkus Reviews*; and a favorite book of 2015 by the *Miami Herald* and *Tampa Bay Times*.
- Fall 2015: *Rain* longlisted for the 2015 National Book Award.
- Fall 2015: *Rain* awarded the Gold medal in the Florida Book Awards for best general nonfiction.
- Spring 2015: Named Alumna of Distinction, UF College of Journalism and Communications.
- 2013: George M. Barley Award for reporting on Florida's environment.
- 2012: Marjory Stoneman Douglas Award for reporting on water issues.
- 2012: Awarded an honorary doctorate in Sustainability Studies, Unity College, Maine.
- 2011: *Blue Revolution* named a "Top 10 Science Book of 2011" by *The Boston Globe*.
- 2011: Sierra Club Indigo Award for reporting on Florida's environment.
- 2010: *Mirage* named one of the "Top 10 Books every Floridian should read" by *The St. Pete Times*.
- 2009: National Sigma Delta Chi Award: Investigative Magazine Reporting, for expose' on inspectors general fired by the subjects of their scrutiny.
- 2008: Green Eyeshade: (Society of Professional Journalists' awards for outstanding reporting in the southeast): Second Place, Public Affairs Reporting.
- 2007: *Mirage* awarded the Gold medal in the Florida Book Awards for best Florida nonfiction.
- 2007: Green Eyeshade: First Place and Second Place, Business Enterprise Reporting.
- 2006: Green Eyeshade: Third Place, Feature Writing.
- 2004: Green Eyeshade: First Place, Investigative Reporting, and Third Place, Business Reporting.
- 2003: Sunshine State Award: Second Place, Magazine Writing.
- 2001: Green Eyeshade: Third Place, Investigative Reporting.
- 2001: Sunshine State Award: First Place, Magazine Writing.

- 2000: Sunshine State Award: First Place, Investigative Reporting.
- 2000: Green Eyeshade: First Place, Investigative Reporting.
- Recognized for one of the UF Brechner Center for Freedom of Information's "Top 30 Freedom of Information stories of the past 30 years," for 2000 highway contracting investigation, *Road Racket*.

Selected invited lectures and keynotes

- Feb 2020: "Water as a Bond, in the Humanities and Beyond," NEH program on teaching water through the humanities, South Florida State College, Sebring.
- Nov 2019, "Rain: A History for Stormy Times," keynote address, AWWA Water Quality Technology Conference, Ross Perot Museum of Nature and Science, Dallas.
- April 2019, "Blue Revolution: A Water Ethic for Florida and America," Florida Humanities Council speakers series, WSRE Public Square, Pensacola State College.
- March 2019, "Can We Handle the Truth?" Journalists Panel, 10-X Water Summit, Arizona State University.
- March 2019, "Practicing the Craft: Covering Water and Public Awareness About Land and Water Connections," Lincoln Land Institute 2019 Journalists Forum, "The Future of Water: Lessons from the Colorado River Basin," Phoenix.
- March 2018, "Telling Earth's Story: How can the visual arts, journalism and scientific practice intersect to tackle environmental issues?" Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas.
- Feb 2018: "Rain: A History for Stormy Times," Seattle University Search for Meaning Festival, Seattle.
- Nov 2017, Community and Campus One-Book Program: "Blue Revolution: A water ethic for America and Kansas," Hesston College and Hesston Mennonite Church, Hesston, Kansas.
- Oct 2017, [TED talk](#), TEDx Jacksonville, "Rain: A history for stormy times."
- June 2017, "Understanding the Environmental Stakes," National Press Foundation, Washington, D.C.
- April 2017, "Nature as Truth in a Post-Truth World," Earth Day keynote, Cal State Northridge, Los Angeles.
- Feb 2017, "Rain: A Natural & Cultural History," NASA Earth Sciences Division speaker series, Washington D.C.
- Nov 2016, Featured speaker, Baruch College Climate Change Seminar Series, New York, NY.
- Oct 2016, Keynote speaker, Kent State University, 4th Annual Kent State Water and Land Symposium, Ohio.
- Jan 2016, Keynote speaker, California Irrigation Association, Sacramento.
- Oct 2015, organizer and moderator, "Climate Literature and Lessons from the Great Plains," Society of Environmental Journalists' 25th annual conference, National Weather Center, Norman, OK.
- Sept 2015, Featured speaker, "Escape to the Clouds," The Royal Geographical Society, London.
- Sept 2015, Keynote speaker, the International RiverSymposium, Brisbane, Australia.
- April 2015, Keynote speaker, Water Ethics: An Interdisciplinary Conference, Viterbo University, La Crosse, Wisconsin.
- Oct 2014, Keynote speaker, Xavier University Campus Sustainability Day, Cincinnati, Ohio.
- May 2014, Featured presentation, "Freshwater Literacy for Florida K-12 STEM teachers," FSU Florida Center for Research in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics annual STEM Conference.
- Feb 2014, Keynote, "Drought as Opportunity for Change," Xeriscape Council of New Mexico.
- Feb 2014, closing plenary, "The Role of Political Leadership in Fostering a FL Water Ethic," UF Water Institute Symposium.
- Feb 2014, speaker, "Putting Faith in a Water Ethic," UF frank gathering for public-interest communications.
- Jan 2014, Wallace Stegner Lecture, S.J. Quinney College of Law, University of Utah.
- Nov 2013, Tour leader, "Diving into North Florida's Springs and U.S. Water Issues," National Association of Science Writers annual meeting, University of Florida.
- Oct 2013, Water book authors panel, NAWC Water Summit, San Diego, California.
- Sept 2013, Panelist, "Disrupt Florida: Water," Sayfie Review Florida Leaders Summit, Orlando.
- May 2013, Keynote speaker, SRCAP "Water is Life Conference 2013," Roanoke, Virginia.
- March 2013, Author keynote, "Summit County Reads!" Community-wide read of *Blue Revolution*, Summit County, Colorado.
- March 2013, Keynote, "Water and Florida's Future," Lou Frey Institute Spring Symposium, UCF, Orlando.
- Feb 2013, Featured speaker, Horizons 2013 Spring Lecture Series, Tallahassee Scientific Society.
- Jan 2013, Featured speaker, Florida Lecture Series, Lawton M. Chiles Jr. Center for FL History, Florida Southern.
- Dec 2012, Featured speaker, Environmental Science Lecture Series, University of Michigan-Dearborn.
- Nov 2012, Visiting lecturer at the University of Oklahoma in Norman and Oklahoma State University in Stillwater.

- Nov 2012, Keynote speaker, Oklahoma Governor's Water Conference, Tulsa, Oklahoma.
- Sept 2012, Keynote speaker, Palouse Basin Water Summit, Moscow, Idaho.
- June 2012, Featured speaker, Unitarian Universalist General Assembly 2012, Phoenix, Arizona.
- May 2012, [Commencement address on the Caring Middle](#), Unity College, Unity, Maine.
- March 2012, Featured speaker, Charlottesville World Water Day 2012, Charlottesville, Virginia.
- March 2012, Unitarian Universalist Get Together, launching national faith-based read of *Blue Revolution*, Boston.
- Feb 2012: [William J. Clinton Distinguished Lecture](#), Clinton School of Public Service, University of Arkansas.
- Feb 2012, Keynote speech, "The Secret Watershed: Restoring History and Nature in a Lost Landscape," Sarasota Bay Watershed Symposium, New College, Sarasota.
- Feb 2012, TED Talk, "The Hypertext of Water," TEDxUF 2012, University of Florida.