

Cynthia Barnett
Author & Journalist
Curriculum Vitae

Water and climate journalism.

Environmental journalism, communications, policy, history, ethics and education.

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Education

- **Master of Arts, American History, University of Florida, 2003**, specialized in environmental history.
- **Bachelor of Science, Journalism, University of Florida, 1989**, with honors.

Employment/Journalist & Author

2012-present: Independent environmental journalist specializing in water and climate: Publishing in *National Geographic*, the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Atlantic*, *Discover*, *Salon*, *Politico*, *The Huffington Post*, *Orion*, *Ensisia*, and others.

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

- ***The Call of the Shell*** (W.W. Norton, New York, 2020). In progress. In this global history of humanity and seashells, nature's most-beloved object tells the story of our imperiled oceans.
- ***Rain: A Natural & Cultural History*** (Crown-Random House, New York, 2015). The first history of rain. Longlisted, 2015 National Book Award. Finalist, 2016 PEN/E.O. Wilson Literary Science Writing Award.
- ***Blue Revolution: Unmaking America's Water Crisis*** (Beacon Press, Boston, 2011). A call for a water ethic for the United States.
- ***Mirage: Florida and the Vanishing Water of the Eastern U.S.*** (University of Michigan Press, 2007). This narrative blend of journalism and environmental history foresaw the coming of water wars to the American East.

Employment/Academic

2018: Environmental Journalist in Residence in the College of Journalism and Communications and Environmental Fellow in Residence in the Bob Graham Center for Public Service, University of Florida. I teach Environmental Journalism for CJC and water/climate policy for the Graham Center; help organize UF's now-annual [climate communications summit](#); and advise student environmental programs, events and journalistic projects.

2017: Environmental Journalist in Residence, UF College of Journalism and Communications: Taught courses in Environmental Journalism and Nature & Adventure Journalism; continued to develop UF's campus-wide [climate communications summit](#); and advised student environmental storytelling

projects such as Jennifer Adler's *National Geographic* project [Walking on Water](#); the Cuba multimedia project [Waiting for Water](#); and the investigative series [Energy Burden](#).

2015-2016: Hearst Visiting Professional, UF College of Journalism and Communications: Two-year visiting professional appointment to develop a course in Environmental Journalism and reach across disciplines on water and climate change. Led a McCormick Specialized Reporting grant to train 30 professional journalists in freshwater and climate change reporting. Team member for grants including an Online News Association challenge grant for new models for water reporting. Edited the student-produced, in-depth water series [Blue Ether](#), winner of the James Batten Award for Public Service in the Society of Professional Journalists' Sunshine State Awards.

Graduate committees: Jennifer Adler, PhD student in Interdisciplinary Ecology, dissertation *Visual Ecology: Communicating springs science through conservation photography and environmental education*. Alisson Clark, 2016 master's in mass communication with nonfiction book proposal as final project. Stephenie Livingston, 2016 master's in mass communication with [interactive narrative map of North Florida's Water Story](#) as final project.

Selected Service

- Planning Committee, 2018 University of Florida biennial Water Institute Symposium.
- Jurist, 2017 Society of Environmental Journalists' Rachel Carson Book Award.
- Jurist, 2016 National Book Awards, nonfiction category.
- 2015 to present, UF Science Writer in Residence Committee.
- Alumni advisory board member, UF Department of History.
- National Board Member of the Earth Ethics Institute devoted to environmental literacy in higher education.
- Longtime and active member, the Society of Environmental Journalists.
- Environmental storytelling instructor for numerous youth, college and teacher programs including: 2017 UF College of Journalism and Communications' Cuba study-abroad program (undergraduates); 2017 Humanities and the Sunshine State Teaching Florida's Climate program (teachers); 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 publications

- "Can we engineer a way to stop a hurricane?" *National Geographic*, October 2017.
- "Nature isn't on a rampage. That would be us," *The Los Angeles Times* Sunday Op-Ed, September 2017.
- "Saving Our Seas," February 2017 cover story, *National Geographic*.
- "We may live in a post-truth era, but nature does not," *The Los Angeles Times* Sunday Op-Ed, February 2017.
- "The Toil and Trouble of Climate Denial," *The Los Angeles Times* Sunday Op-Ed, January 2016.
- *The Weather Experiment* by Peter Moore, cover review, *The New York Times Sunday Book Review*, July 2015.
- "A Stormy History of Weather Reporting," *Mental Floss*, June 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, February 2015.
- “Hey, America: It’s time to talk about the price of water,” *Ensisia* magazine, Fall 2014, also collected in *The Best of Ensisia*.
- “Groundwater Wake-Up: A new view of global groundwater reveals an urgent need to reverse depletion trends, *Ensisia* magazine, Fall 2013.
- “Water Works: Communities Reimagine Ways of Making Every Drop Count,” Summer 2013 cover story, *Orion* magazine.
- America’s Illusion of Water Abundance, *The Los Angeles Times Sunday Op-Ed*, November 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.
- Book chapter, “Shortage in a land of plenty,” in *Water Matters: Why we need to act now to save our most critical resource*, (San Francisco: AlterNet Press, 2010), editor, Tara Lohan.

“A Water Ethic for Florida,” the stories listed here, additional journalism and speeches are available at: <http://www.cynthiabarnett.net/articles.html>

Selected fellowships, grants and residencies

- **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 awards & 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: (SPJ awards for outstanding reporting in 11 southeastern states): 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 lectures and keynote speeches

- November 2017, Community and Campus One-Book Program: “Blue Revolution: A water ethic for America and Kansas,” Hesston College and Hesston Mennonite Church, Hesston, Kansas.
- October 2017, [TED talk](#), TEDx Jacksonville, “Rain: A history for stormy times.”
- June 2017, “Understanding the Environmental Stakes,” speaker, National Press Foundation fellowship for journalists covering the environment in the Trump Administration, Washington, D.C.
- April 2017, “Nature as Truth in a Post-Truth World,” Earth Day keynote, Cal State Northridge, Los Angeles, California.
- February 2017, “Rain: A Natural and Cultural History,” NASA Earth Sciences Division speaker series, Washington D.C.
- November 2016, Featured speaker, Baruch College Climate Change Seminar Series, New York, NY.
- October 2016, Keynote speaker, Kent State University, 4th Annual Kent State Water and Land Symposium, Ohio.
- January 2016, Keynote speaker, California Irrigation Association, Sacramento.
- October 2015, organizer and moderator, “Climate Literature and Lessons from the Great Plains,” Society of Environmental Journalists’ 25th annual conference, National Weather Center, Norman, OK.
- September 2015, Featured speaker, “Escape to the Clouds,” The Royal Geographical Society, London.
- September 2015, Keynote speaker, the International RiverSymposium, Brisbane, Australia.
- April 2015, Keynote speaker, Water Ethics: An Interdisciplinary Conference, D.B. Reinhart Institute for Ethics in Leadership, Viterbo University, La Crosse, Wisconsin.
- October 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.

- February 2014, Keynote speaker, “Drought as Opportunity for Change,” Xeriscape Council of New Mexico Land & Water Summit.
- February 2014, closing plenary speaker, “The Role of Political Leadership in Fostering a Florida Water Ethic,” University of Florida Water Institute Symposium.
- February 2014, speaker, “Putting Faith in a Water Ethic,” University of Florida frank gathering for public-interest communications.
- January 2014, Wallace Stegner Lecture, S.J. Quinney College of Law, University of Utah.
- November 2013, Tour leader, “Diving into North Florida’s Springs and U.S. Water Issues,” National Association of Science Writers annual meeting, University of Florida.
- October 2013, Water book authors panel, NAWC Water Summit, San Diego, California.
- October 2013, Author lecture, University of Florida “Gators Read” of *Blue Revolution*.
- September 2013, Panelist, “Disrupt Florida: Water,” Sayfie Review Florida Leaders Summit, Orlando.
- May 2013, Keynote speaker, SRCAP “Water is Life Conference 2013,” Roanoke, Virginia.
- April 2013, Honoree and speaker, “Of Thirst and Beauty: Writing to Save Our Waters,” Florida’s Eden Earth Day celebration of Florida environmental writing and journalism, Santa Fe College, Gainesville.
- 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, University of Central Florida, Orlando.
- February 2013, Featured speaker, Horizons 2013 Spring Lecture Series, Tallahassee Scientific Society.
- January 2013, Featured speaker, Florida Lecture Series, Lawton M. Chiles Jr. Center for Florida History, Florida Southern College, Lakeland.
- December 2012, Featured speaker, Environmental Science Lecture Series, University of Michigan-Dearborn.
- November 2012, Visiting lecturer at the University of Oklahoma in Norman and Oklahoma State University in Stillwater.
- November 2012, Keynote speaker, Oklahoma Governor’s Water Conference, Tulsa, Oklahoma.
- October 2012, Society of Environmental Journalists annual meeting, moderator, freshwater panel; and panelist, Breakfast with the Authors, Lubbock, Texas.
- September 2012, Keynote speaker, Palouse Basin Water Summit, Moscow, Idaho.
- June 2012, Featured speaker, Unitarian Universalist General Assembly 2012, Phoenix, Arizona.
- May 2012, Commencement speaker, Unity College, Unity, Maine.
- March 2012, Featured speaker, Charlottesville World Water Day 2012, Charlottesville, Virginia.
- March 2012, Visiting lecturer, Miami-Dade College’s Wolfson and Kendall campuses.
- March 2012, Unitarian Universalist Service Committee Get Together, event launching national read of *Blue Revolution*, Boston.
- February 2012: William J. Clinton Distinguished Lecturer, Clinton School of Public Service, University of Arkansas, Little Rock.
- February 2012: Moderator, water author’s panel; and closing plenary speaker, University of Florida Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, Levin College of Law, Gainesville.
- February 2012, Keynote speech, “The Secret Watershed: Restoring History and Nature in a Lost Landscape,” Sarasota Bay Watershed Symposium, New College, Sarasota.
- February 2012, TED Talk, “The Hypertext of Water,” TEDxUF 2012, University of Florida, Gainesville.
- February 2012, Guest lecturer, USF’s Florida Studies Program, USF-St. Petersburg.

- November 2011, Lecturer, University of Florida Water Institute Distinguished Lecture Series.
- November 2011, Lecturer, OSU Institute for Water & Watersheds Seminar Series, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon.
- November 2011, Featured speaker, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, Portland, Oregon.
- November 2011, Keynote speaker, American Water Resources Association annual conference, Albuquerque, New Mexico.
- October 2011, Society of Environmental Journalists annual conference; moderator, freshwater panel; panelist, Breakfast with the Authors; and tour leader, Lake Okeechobee/Everglades tour.
- September 2011, Keynote speaker, Confluence Conference on North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia water issues, Greenville, South Carolina.
- September 2011, Lecturer, UNC Charlotte Ethics Center, UNC-Charlotte, North Carolina.

References

- Dr. David Colburn, professor and director, The Bob Graham Center for Public Service 352-846-1575, colburn@aa.ufl.edu
- Dr. Jack E. Davis, professor, UF Department of History 352-273-3398, davisjac@ufl.edu
- Charles Eisendrath, director emeritus, the Knight-Wallace Fellowship 734-998-7666, drath@mich.edu
- Mark Howard, executive editor, *Florida Trend* magazine 727-892-2644, mhoward@floridatrend.com
- Diane McFarlin, dean, UF College of Journalism and Communications 352-392-3261, dmcfarlin@ufl.edu
- Steve Seibert, executive director, the Florida Humanities Council 850-321-9051, sseibert@flahum.org
- Paul Tash, chairman and CEO, Times Publishing Co 727-893-8887, ptash@tampabay.com