As accelerating global climate change transforms the dynamics of the hydrosphere, water presents simultaneously ecological and epistemological questions: how do human beings comprehend hydrological crises that seem simultaneously immediate and protracted, simultaneously local and global? How can literature provide an account of water's planetary circulation and its impacts without collapsing cultural distinctions or ignoring systemic political/cultural power imbalances? My project, *Waterlogged: Narrating Hydroecologies in the Anthropocene*, provides an ecological and epistemological methodology for reading water that highlights culturally and environmentally specific relationships with water account for global hydrological systems and their impacts through efforts—and failures—to narrate water in literature. By analyzing a series of texts focusing on “waterlogged” environments, I argue that characters' efforts to “read” their surrounding waters in the late twentieth century remain rooted both in specific bodily experience and in its global, historical flow. Water brings the overlap between these perspectives into focus, revealing the extent to which non-human agency unfolds simultaneously across multiple temporal scales. This suggests the human experience of non-human agency is simultaneously immediate and protracted, environmentally and culturally specific and yet persistently global, ancient, and inhuman.

Each of the project's chapters takes up a prominent critical reading of a text to examine how attending to mediations of flowing waters disrupts (and ultimately enhances) existing scholarship on these novels. In the first chapter, I discuss Graham Swift's novel *Waterland* and its partially-aware narrator Tom Crick. Crick's effort to tell the “natural history” of the Fen swamps and the waters that comprise them enacts imperial conceptions of time and space from which the rest of the novels in *Waterlogged* break, yet juxtaposes them with his self-reflection on the limits of those imperial histories and epistemologies. Existing criticism on *Waterland* focuses almost exclusively on the novel's metafictional presentation of history, but Crick's narrative efforts reveal how the geomorphology of the Fens defies both imperial efforts to manage it and literary representations thereof. None of this is to say that water cannot be written or read. But Waterland shows—through Crick's partial awareness of the ancient trans-corporeal waters all around him—that the notions of order, progress, and structure that undergirding British nation-building and imperialism ignore the degree to which the water flowing through that nation remains outside efforts to control it either in narrative or in practice.

The subsequent three chapters discuss narratives that strategically employ colonial literary forms and structures alongside epistemologies and narrative strategies that have resisted colonial expansion as a means of challenging dominant, homogenizing understandings of water and its flow. The second chapter argues the water throughout Linda Hogan's *Solar Storms* highlights the importance of not only preserving the cultural practices and water management strategies of the James Bay Cree, but more importantly, the way of seeing the world that undergirds such practices and inspires their transmission through story. Figuring land and water as simultaneously foundational and disrupted, the novel replaces a stereotypical harmonious relationship between Indigenous people and surrounding environments with relationships foregrounding uneven, violent mixture and disruption. As this story emerges through Angel's personal experiences, *Solar Storms* offers a vision, through its watery setting, of what a world not premised on stable ground looks like. Doing so also foregrounds the role of storytelling as a way to both learn about and share knowledge about the world. *Solar Storms* shows how both observing and describing water make it possible to understand it...
and carefully respond to both its tendencies and unpredictable changes.

Chapter Three takes up these questions as they appear in the Sundarban estuary of Amitav Ghosh’s *The Hungry Tide*. Where most readings of the novel focus on cultural difference, especially as it relates to environmental attitudes, I argue that characters in *The Hungry Tide* turn to watery language and to practices of “reading” water even as they acknowledge its inadequacy in making sense of the way estuarine waters upset hydrological, cultural, temporal, and corporeal boundaries, and offer a limited avenue for characters to learn about and understand each other in spite of linguistic and cultural barriers. By foregrounding the structural interrelation of linguistic limits—barriers to translation between languages and cultures; the gaps inherent in textual depiction of material phenomena—Ghosh’s novel shows that principles of interpersonal and intercultural translation are key to understanding water, so that “reading” water in translation reveals connections between individuals’ experiences of water, cultural practices, and hydrological cycles. The fourth chapter undermines traditional readings of Hurricane Katrina as an “unnatural disaster” by examining the role of water in shaping the bayou of Jesmyn Ward’s *Salvage the Bones*. (Abstract shortened by ProQuest.)