Weaving personal/public narratives of water access in Metro Detroit: A collaborative (auto)ethnography

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Wednesday, September 19, 2018 12:30PM-1:30PM Rm. 2339 Faculty Administration Bldg

Starting in 2014, widespread water shutoffs have been implemented in Detroit, preventing thousands of urban residents from accessing water. Our goal in this post-structural, collaborative project is to gather and (re)construct stories, both public and personal, from “ordinary” people living in Metro Detroit. By playing with their (and our own) unease, this performative piece of collaborative writing hopes to uncover themes and strands of compassion, in place of abjection and territorial stigma. We coin the term “uneasy storytelling,” and present three narrative clusters: water as life and pure; governance failures; and community action for compassion.

Rahul Mitra (PhD, Purdue University) is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication, who leads the Resilient Institutions and Sustainable Environments Lab. His research examines how organizations and communities enact environmental sustainability. His research has been published in several peer-reviewed journals, such as Environmental Communication, and Journal of Applied Communication Research.

Kelsey Husnick (MA, Kent State University) is a 2nd-year Ph.D. student in the Department of Communication studying organizational communication and journalism, with a focus on resilience and organizing for social justice initiatives.

Mostafa Aniss is a 3rd year PhD Student in the Communication Department. Using qualitative methods, he primarily studies the communicative implications associated with technology use, particularly popular non-dating social media platforms, on romantic relationship development.

Samantha Most is a 2nd-year MA student in the Department of Communication, whose research interests include mass communication, transmedia narrative, persuasion, and audience behavior.

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