

Monica Barra
Research Assistant, The Water Institute of the Gulf

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Education

Current, Ph.D. Candidate, Cultural Anthropology

The Graduate Center, City University of New York (expected completion 2018)

M.Phil. in Anthropology, February 2015

The Graduate Center, City University of New York, New York City, NY

M.A. in American Studies, May 2011

Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick, NJ

B.A. in Comparative Literature and Urban Studies, May 2008, Phi Beta Kappa Honors

University of Redlands, Redlands, CA

Research Interests:

Environmental Anthropology, Geography, Science and Technology Studies, Anthropology of the U.S. South, Qualitative Research, Ethnography, Community-based Research and Participatory Methods.

Professional Experience

The Water Institute of the Gulf <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Research Scientist</i>	2015-Present
Tulane University, Program in Environmental Studies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Adjunct Assistant Professor</i>	2017-Present
Louisiana State University, Dept. of Anthropology and Geography <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Visiting Researcher</i>	2015-2016
Coastal Sustainability Studio, Louisiana State University <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Summer intern</i>	2015
Science and Resilience Institute at Jamaica Bay <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Community Researcher</i>	2014-2015
Princeton University Art Museum <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Mellon Graduate Research and Curatorial Fellow</i>	2012-2013
City University of New York <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Chancellor's Teaching Fellow</i>	2011-2015

Recent Projects

Building community and coastal resilience to a changing Louisiana coastline through restoration of key ecosystem functions

The Water Institute of the Gulf

Integrating qualitative methods - focus groups, interviews, and participatory mapping - aimed at integrating coastal community experiences into interdisciplinary research on the scope and value of ecosystem-based restoration opportunities in coastal Louisiana. Project completed in March 2017.

Land Loss: Race, Science, and the Disappearing Geographies of Southeast Louisiana

The Graduate Center, City University of New York

Currently serving as the principal investigator of an anthropological study of the social impacts of land loss and coastal restoration projects in southeastern Louisiana. Participant observation and archival research is carried out in coastal communities experiencing the most rapid land/water changes in the lower Delta region due to land loss and those communities where the most radical structural projects for coastal restoration are being built. This work is supported by the Wenner Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, the City University of New York, and the New Orleans Center for the Gulf South at Tulane University. Research is being conducted for the fulfillment of a doctorate in cultural anthropology.

Evaluating Community Resilience in Jamaica Bay, New York

The Science and Resilience Institute at Jamaica Bay

Worked with researchers based at Hunter College, City University of New York to conduct community outreach and qualitative research aimed at integrating local-level perspectives on social and ecological resiliencies into the design of a new top-tier research institute on urban environmental resilience in Jamaica Bay, New York. The study encompassed qualitative research methods – specifically focus groups, semi-structured interviews, and participatory mapping – to develop a report to the Rockefeller Foundation on community resilience in several neighborhoods surrounding Jamaica Bay, New York impacted by Hurricane Sandy in 2012.

Awards and Honors

- Dissertation Year Writing Grant, The Graduate Center, City University of New York. 2017-2018.
- Monroe Fellowship, for 'Land loss: Race, techno-science, and the disappearing geographies of southeast Louisiana.' New Orleans Center for the Gulf South, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA. 2017-2018.
- Rebirth Grant, for "Dispatches from the end of the world: Fieldnotes and life histories from the lower east bank of Plaquemines Parish.' Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities. 2017.
- Dissertation Fieldwork Award, Wenner Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research. Awarded to support 12 months of full-time fieldwork on the dissertation "Race, Restoration, and the Disappearing Geographies of South Louisiana," 2015.
- Pre-dissertation Research Travel Grant, Department of Anthropology, Graduate Center, City University of New York, 2014.
- Award for Best Graduate Student Panel, Society for Urban and Transnational Anthropology, 2013.
- Doctoral Student Research Grant, Graduate Center, City University of New York, 2013.
- Graduate Student Affinity Group Paper Prize Competition [second place], Association of American Geographers, 2012.
- Enhanced Chancellor's Fellowship (5 year term), Graduate Center, The City University of New York, 2011-2016.
- Institute for Research on Women Fellowship, Department of Women's and Gender Studies, Rutgers University, New Jersey, 2011-2012.
- Daniel Walden Prize for Best Graduate Student Paper, Mid-Atlantic Popular and American Cultures Association, 2010.
- Graduate Research and Teaching Fellowship (5 year term), Rutgers University, New Jersey, 2009-2011.

- National Science Foundation, Research Experience for Undergraduates, Urban Ethnography, University of California, Los Angeles, 2008.
- Phi Beta Kappa Honors, 2008.

Teaching Experience

- Anthropology of Black America, Dept. of Anthropology, Hunter College, City University of New York
- Introduction to Cultural Anthropology, Dept. of Anthropology, Hunter College, City University of New York
- Oral History of Newark, New Jersey, Dept. of American Studies, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey
- Multicultural Literature of the U.S., Metropolitan College, Boston University [online course]

Professional Memberships

- Member, American Anthropological Association, since 2011
- Member, Association of American Geographers, since 2011
- Member, Society for the Anthropology of North America, since 2014

PEER REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS (selected)

1. Hemmerling, S. and Barra, M. "Incorporating Local Knowledge into Ecological Restoration Assessments - Case Studies in Coastal Louisiana." Society for Ecological Restoration Newsletter. Volume 31, Issue 3, October 2017.
2. Monica Patrice Barra. Land loss and memory, in *Space: Macmillan Interdisciplinary Handbooks: Gender*. Aimee Meredith Cox, ed. Macmillan, *forthcoming*.
3. Scott A. Hemmerling and Monica Barra. 2017. Incorporating Local Knowledge into Ecological Restoration Assessments – Case Studies in Louisiana. SER News, Volume 31, Number 3.
4. Monica Patrice Barra. 2016. Natural Infrastructures: Sediment, Science, and the Future of Southeast Louisiana. *Engagement: A blog published by the Association of Environmental Anthropology*.
5. Monica Patrice Barra. 2015. [Book review] *Southern Waters: The Limits to Abundance* by Craig E. Colten. *The Journal of Cultural Geography*, 32(3): 1-2.
6. Monica Barra. 2015. [Book review] *Re-Imagining The City: Art, Globalization, and Urban Spaces*, edited by Elizabeth Grierson et al. *The Journal of Cultural Geography* 31(2).
7. Monica Barra. 2014. Reading the Watts Towers, Learning Los Angeles: Story Telling, Public Art, and the Pedagogy of the City, in *Sabato Rodia's Towers in Watts: Art, Migration, Development*, Luisa Del Giudice, ed. Fordham University Press.
8. Monica Barra. 2012. BlackLight: Performance, Space, and the Bittersweet Narratives of Women in Newark, in *Gender, Sexuality, and Urban Space Working Papers Archive*, Graduate Consortium of Women's Studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS AND PRESENTATIONS (selected)

1. Monica Barra. Elevate and divert: Attuning racial geographies to the Anthropocene in the lower Mississippi River Delta, presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers, Boston, MA, 2017.
2. Monica Barra. Harnessing the power of the river: Continuities and controversies of using the Mississippi River to rebuild coastal Louisiana," presented at the Society for Applied Anthropology, Santa Fe, NM, 2017.
3. Monica Barra. Racing the Anthropocene: Critical perspectives on racism and inequality in a new geological epoch. Round-table organizer and participant. Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Denver, CO, 2015.
4. Monica Barra. Anthropology and Environment Dissertation Working Group, Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington, D.C. 2014.

5. Monica Barra. Curating Erasure: Artifact, Art, and Urban Futures, Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Chicago, Illinois, 2013.
6. Monica Barra. The body and/in the City: Performance and the Transformation of Urban Space, Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers, New York, New York, 2012.
7. Monica Barra. The Other Side of Utopia: Re-imagining the Social and Architectural Construction of High Rise Public Housing, Society of American Regional Planning History, Baltimore, Maryland, 2011.
8. Monica Barra. From Homes to Hoodlum City: Reading Public Housing 'Off the Template of Spatial Structures' in Newark, New Jersey, Mid-Atlantic Popular and American Cultures Conference, Alexandria, Virginia, 2010.
9. Aimee Meredith Cox and Monica Barra. Girls of Color and Performance Ethnography: Imagining New Spaces of Empowerment and Inclusion, American Studies Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., 2009.

TECHNICAL REPORTS

1. Hemmerling, Scott A., **Monica Barra**, and Harris C. Bienn. 2017. Restore the Earth Foundation Cypress Reforestation Social Return on Investment Report: Pointe-aux-Chenes Wildlife Management Area. The Water Institute of the Gulf, Baton Rouge, LA.
2. Hemmerling, Scott A., **Monica Barra**, and Harris C. Bienn. 2017. Restore the Earth Foundation Reforestation Social Return on Investment Report: Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge. The Water Institute of the Gulf, Baton Rouge, LA.
3. Carruthers, Tim J., Scott A. Hemmerling., **Monica Barra**, Tracey A. Saxby, and Leland Moss. 2017. "This is your shield...this is your estuary": Building community resilience to a changing Louisiana coastline through restoration of key ecosystem components (WISR-002-2017) (p. 48). Baton Rouge, LA: The Water Institute of the Gulf.
4. Laxmi Ramasubramanian, Mike Menser, **Monica Barra**, Mia Brezin, Leah Feder, and Erin Rieser. 2014. Community Resilience in Jamaica Bay, Report to the Rockefeller Foundation on Sustainable Cities, Science and Resilience Institute at Jamaica Bay.