Vol. 28, no. 1, Fall 2025

Marjory Stoneman Douglas's *Everglades: River of Grass*, the *Rivers of America* Book Series, and the Origins of an Environmental Rhetoric

Paige V. Banaji

Abstract: Published in 1947, Marjory Stoneman Douglas's *Everglades: River of Grass* revised public perceptions of the Everglades, transforming it in the eyes of readers from a swampy wasteland into a unique ecological gem. Today, Douglas is a well-known and lauded figure in Florida environmental history. However, when she first took up the Everglades book project, she was not an environmental activist. She was a writer responding to an invitation to write for the *Rivers of America* book series. Founded by Constance Lindsay Skinner, the *Rivers of America* series sought to kindle national pride through histories focused on major American rivers. Douglas participated in this project, but she departed from the series' nationalistic impulses by offering a critical history of Florida and making environmental appeals. Positioning *River of Grass* within the *Rivers of America* series and environmental rhetoric scholarship, this article analyzes Douglas's navigation of discourses of history, science, literature, and gender to produce a successful piece of environmental rhetoric decades before the advent of contemporary American environmentalism.

Keywords: environmental rhetoric, science writing, nature writing, conservation writing, environmental history, Florida Everglades, women in science

Doi: 10.37514/PEI-J.2025.28.1.05

> There are no other Everglades in the world.
>
> They are, they have always been, one of the unique regions of the earth, remote, never wholly known. Nothing anywhere else is like them: their vast glittering openness, wider than the enormous visible round of the horizon, the racing free saltness and sweetness of their massive winds, under the dazzling blue heights of space. They are unique also in the simplicity, the diversity, the related harmony of the forms of life they enclose. The miracle of light pours over the green and brown expanse of saw grass and of water, shining and slow-moving below, the grass and water that is the meaning and the central fact of the Everglades of Florida. It is a river of grass. (Douglas, 5-6)

With the words above, Marjory Stoneman Douglas (1890-1998) opened her now famous *The Everglades: River of Grass,* a book that revised public perceptions of the Everglades and inspired readers to advocate for the preservation of Florida's natural environment. Using a lyrical style to translate the ecological science of the Everglades into poetic understanding, Douglas transformed Florida's wilderness in the eyes of readers from a swampy wasteland into a unique ecological gem. *River of Grass*[1] was an incredible success during its own time and remains a legacy in environmental rhetoric today. Released on November 6, 1947—a date timed to coincide with the dedication of Everglades National Park—the book's first printing of 7500 copies sold out before the end of December (Davis, *An Everglades* 395). The book has remained in print, with two reissues since its initial publication.[2] Today, it is considered the "green bible of Everglades environmentalism" (Davis, "Conservation" 54).

1 Throughout this article, I refer to *Everglades: River of Grass* by its subtitle.

2 After Rinehart and Company's seventh and final printing of *River of Grass* in 1965, Douglas cleverly bought the plates and reissued the book under Hurricane House Publishing, an imprint she founded and ran for about a decade (Davis, *An Everglades* 434). The reissue allowed Douglas to keep the book in print at a time when the environmental movement was just getting off the ground, which has no doubt contributed to the book's longevity. Today, *River of Grass* is in its fourth edition with the Florida publisher Pineapple Press.

Douglas is a venerated figure in twentieth-century Florida history, most well-known for writing *River of Grass* and for her environmental activism. Born in Minneapolis, she grew up in Massachusetts, where she was raised by her mother and her mother's relatives. Later, she attended Wellesley College, majoring in English. In 1915, Douglas moved to Miami. The move was an escape from a failed marriage and became an opportunity to launch a writing career. Her father, Frank Stoneman, from whom she had been estranged for most of her childhood, was owner and founder of the *Miami Herald,* and he offered Douglas a job at his newspaper. Her writing eventually led her to environmentalism. She founded the Friends of the Everglades organization in 1969, and for the next three decades, she advocated for Everglades preservation and restoration. She received numerous awards and accolades for her work during her lifetime and posthumously, most notably the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1993. By the time she stepped down as president of Friends of the Everglades at 100 years of age, she had acquired an almost mythical status as the "grande dame" of the Everglades (Davis, *An Everglades* 530-1).

Given Douglas's now established place in Florida's environmental history, it seems natural that she penned the book that brought Everglades preservation into the national conversation. However, her publication of *River of Grass* preceded her environmental activism by several decades. It was her first book, published when she was 57 years old, after a long and successful writing career, first as a journalist and assistant editor for the *Miami Herald,* and then as a freelance writer of short stories, authoring over 100 pieces for publications like the *Saturday Evening Post.* She may not have written *River of Grass* had it not been for an invitation to write a book for the *Rivers of America* book series. In 1943, Douglas had been working on a novel for about six months, when the series editor, Hervey Allen, asked her to write a book on the Miami River. Douglas thought that the five-mile Miami River was not worthy of a book project, but she considered the offer. In her autobiography, she recalled, "When a publisher visits your house and asks you to write something, you don't let him go casually" (Douglas and Rothchild 190).[3] She believed that the Miami River might be connected to the Everglades. As Douglas later narrated, "Anyway, I asked Hervey if I could somehow use the Everglades to back up the Miami River and maybe I could get a book out of that. 'All right,' Hervey said, 'write about the Everglades.' There, on a writer's whim and an editor's decision, I was hooked with the idea that would consume me for the rest of my life" (Douglas and Rothchild 190).

In this article, I explore how Douglas's practical response to a prospective book contract led her to an inspired environmental rhetoric. Specifically, I examine Douglas's *River of Grass* in relation to the *Rivers of America* book series. The *Rivers of America* series is a unique historiographic site, part of a broader project to popularize the study of history at a time when academic historians were trying to professionalize their field. *River of Grass* engaged in this vision to reach popular readers. However, Douglas's book departed from the series' ostensibly nationalistic ideology through its focus on environmental advocacy and critical history. Douglas successfully negotiated the expectations of the book series with the exigence of an Everglades in peril. In doing so, she composed a successful piece of environmental rhetoric decades before the rise of contemporary American environmentalism. Exemplifying rhetorical moves that both echo a long tradition

3 Douglas experienced blindness in her later years and composed her autobiography with the assistance of John Rothchild.

of nature writing and characterize contemporary environmental rhetoric today, Douglas first weaves together scientific, literary, and historical discourses to evoke a sense of wonder for the natural world. She then offers a damning critique of the colonialism and capitalistic development that spurred environmental devastation, and she finally ends with an urgent call to action. Together, these moves prompt readers to appreciate the Everglades and advocate for their preservation.

In the discussion that follows, I contextualize *River of Grass,* first as a *Rivers of America* book and second, as a piece of environmental rhetoric. Then, I analyze *River of Grass* focusing on two ways Douglas departed from the *Rivers of America* series: her choice of the Everglades as a subject and her critical history of Florida. As I argue, these departures both distinguish *River of Grass* from the series and help establish it as a significant piece of early environmental rhetoric.

The *Rivers of America* Series and the Discipline of History

Douglas's subtitle, *River of Grass*, would eventually become a central and influential argument; it famously changed the way people thought about the Everglades. However, it was also a way for Douglas to tailor her book to the *Rivers of America* series. *River of Grass* was the 33rd book in the series, which produced 65 books between 1937 and 1974, each focused on the history of a specific U.S. river.[4] The series was founded and first edited by the writer and historian Constance Lindsay Skinner, whose goal was to produce history accessible to popular audiences that would instill national pride in its American readers. Skinner's experiences as a writer, historian, and woman shaped the *Rivers of America* series. A poet and fiction writer, Skinner first took up history writing in 1918 when she was invited to write for the *Chronicles of America* series, which sought to tell the stories of American history "in living form, through a continuity of short narratives . . . so to make the traditions of the nation more real and vivid to those of our citizens who are not in the habit of reading history" (qtd. in Barman 105). Skinner's two books for the series, *Pioneers of the Old Southwest: A Chronicle of the Dark and Bloody Ground* and *Adventures in Oregon: A Chronicle of the Fur Trade Period*, were both popular successes, and they pleased her editors (Mink 755).

However, the series ran counter to academic historians' efforts to professionalize their field. Early twentieth-century academia was experiencing a "burgeoning culture of professionalization"; academics sought to distinguish themselves from amateurs and elevate their disciplinary discourses (Applegarth, *Rhetoric* 2). As Jean Barman writes, "Academics [in the early twentieth century] had been doing their best to gain control over the writing of history," favoring a "scientific history" that emphasized "aspects of the past which could be measured and quantified. . . . They eschewed the messiness that came from including the human factor, preferring to write about impersonal forces and the growth of institutions" (107). The *Chronicles of America* series clearly defied these efforts, and the series' editors and authors were aware of this tension. In a letter to Skinner, Allen Johnson, the editor of the *Chronicles* series, writes, "You must know that my professional brethren feel that I have fallen from grace in attempting to 'popularize' history" (qtd. in Barman 107). Johnson, a Yale University historian, believed in the project, but he also knew he was at odds with his colleagues. Not surprisingly, Skinner's two books for the *Chronicles of America* series received harsh reviews from profes-

4 Carol Fitzgerald identifies at least 350 printings of *Rivers of America* books.

sional historians, who complimented Skinner's literary skill but also expressed concerns about her "historical perspective" (qtd. in Mink 756).

The professionalization of academic disciplines was an exclusionary enterprise, a conscious effort to define the boundaries of disciplinary membership, which consequently "marginaliz[ed] . . . specific groups and interests" (Levine 6). Training and academic credentials distinguished the professional from the amateur; those excluded from the academy because of gender, class, or race were also excluded from the discipline. Even when granted access to academic training, women and minorities were marginalized within the discipline. In the late nineteenth century, doctoral programs in history began to open to women, but they were denied employment opportunities commensurate with their credentials, excluded from professional and departmental meetings, and discouraged in a variety of ways from conducting research and publishing (J. Goggin 770-8). Skinner, a white woman from a non-elite background who did not have formal academic training, worked from the margins of the discipline. As Nicolaas Mink notes, the harsh reviews Skinner's work received from professional historians were "almost preordained": "Skinner simply lacked the qualifications (education, gender, and social class) to garner intellectual legitimacy in the profession" (756-7).

However, Skinner's dramatic and literary history writing was part of a broader impulse by "Progressive-era intellectuals who sought to mobilize American memory as a resource for a more democratic future" (Blake 423). Historians such as Van Wyck Brooks, Lewis Mumford, and Waldo Frank criticized the emergent "scientific" historical academic discourse as dry and inaccessible to most lay readers (Mink 756). As Van Wyck Brooks would write in his 1918 essay, "On Creating a Usable Past," historians should approach their subject, "from the point of view not of the successful fact but of the creative impulse" (qtd. in Blake 423). Skinner shared these views. In an essay entitled "History as Literature: And the Individual Definition," she critiqued contemporary history writing as "dead stuff" produced by "writers [who] have not perceived that the drama of human feelings, motives, and inspirations is essential to true historical narrative" (qtd. in Mink 758). Skinner sought to breathe life into historical events and inspire readers about their shared past. For her next project, the *Rivers of America* series, Skinner reaffirmed this commitment, establishing a series written in a literary style to tell the stories of America. "This is to be a literary and not an historical series," she writes (Skinner 840). Her project further eschewed the exclusivity of academia through her author assignments. Of the 26 titles Skinner originally planned for the series, nearly half were assigned to women authors; none were assigned to professional historians (Mink 761).

Rivers of Grass as Environmental Rhetoric

As a *Rivers of America* book, Douglas's *River of Grass* participated in Skinner's project to bring histories told in literary fashion to popular audiences. However, Douglas's book is not known today for its participation in the *Rivers of America* series, nor is it necessarily remembered as a history of Florida. As the back cover of the 2021 edition advertises, *River of Grass* "brought the world's attention to the need to preserve the Everglades as the unique and magnificent place that it is." The book's legacy is thus its enduring role as a piece of environmental rhetoric.

Over the past several decades, rhetoric and communication scholars have amassed a large body of scholarship focused on environmental rhetoric, from early works by Christine Oravec, M. Jimmie Killingsworth and Jacqueline S. Palmer, and Carl G. Herndl and Stuart C. Brown to more recent contributions, such as edited collections by Craig Waddell, Peter N. Goggin, Derek G. Ross, and Richard D. Bessel and Bernard K. Duffy. Through the examination of case studies of environmental rhetoric—from the debate over Hetch Hetchy and the writings of Aldo Leopold to *An Inconvenient Truth* and *Our Common Future*—this research has extended understandings of the ways in which various writers and rhetors have sought to address environmental exigencies.[5] Acknowledging a range of genres and texts, these scholars have defined the term *environmental rhetoric* broadly. Herndl and Brown define environmental rhetoric as language that shapes understandings about nature. They find examples in "scientific disciplines such as biology and ecology, in government agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency and its regulations, and in nonfiction essays and books such as Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* or Paul Ehrlich's *The Population Bomb*" (1). Likewise, Ross's definition is straightforward yet capacious: "environment-related communication intended to motivate action and shape attitudes" (3). Nathaniel A. Rivers emphasizes that traditional environmental rhetoric focuses on the ways in which human activity has contributed to environmental crises and conversely persuades audiences that humans have the power to resolve such crises (426).[6] Building on these understandings, I employ *environmental rhetoric* to refer to the broad range of genres that respond to an environmental exigence. If, according to Lloyd Bitzer's famous conceptualization, rhetoric is "a mode of altering reality . . . by the creation of discourse which changes reality through the mediation of thought and action," then environmental rhetoric, is the creation of discourse that seeks to address the specific reality of an environmental exigence by shaping audience's perceptions of the environment and urging action to address that exigence (4).

Among the genres often included in environmental rhetoric are nature writing, conservation writing, and environmental history—all of which are terms that could possibly be applied to *River of Grass.* Don Scheese identifies nature writing as "a first-person, nonfiction account of an exploration, both physical (outward) and mental (inward), of a predominantly nonhuman environment, as the protagonist follows the spatial movement of pastoralism from civilization to nature" (6). According to Scheese, nature writing draws from the scientific tradition of natural history as well as the personal narrative forms of spiritual autobiography and travel writing. Within this field, Risa Applegarth identifies the "literary nature essay" as a specific "high-status" genre that "demonstrate[s] literary, philosophical, or other aesthetic qualities that elevate natural history observations to the status of art, while retaining strict adherence to observational accuracy" ("Genre" 52). This tradition, according to Applegarth, is exemplified in the work of John Burroughs and Mary Austin. Building on conceptions of nature writing, Richard Johnson-Sheehan and Lawrence Morgan identify conservation writing as "an umbrella term for a range of writing about ecology, biology, the outdoors, and environmental policies and ethics" that "places the natural world at the center of readers' attention, often viewing sustainability as a core value" (10). Like nature writing, conservation writing draws from science writing and

5 In addition to this research focused on rhetorical case studies, there is much recent research devoted to theory-building at the intersection of new materialism and environmental rhetorics. For example, see Clary-Lemon, Gries, Rivers, and Stormer and McGreavy.

6 Rivers goes on to argue that such conceptions of environmental rhetoric put too much emphasis on human agency; instead, he advances an environmental rhetoric informed by new materialism and object-oriented ontology.

empirical observations of the natural world; however, unlike nature writing, conservation writing "does not foreground the author's personal reflections" but instead focuses pragmatically on conservation advocacy (10). Johnson-Sheehan and Morgan identify the "nature-centered works" of William Bartram, John James Audubon, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Henry David Thoreau as precursors to conservation writing. While Bartram and Audubon present scientific observations, they do not make direct arguments for conservation, and Emerson and Thoreau "lack the scientific grounding" of contemporary conservation writing (Johnson-Sheehan and Morgan 11-12). Instead, Johnson-Sheehan and Morgan point to George Perkins Marsh and John Muir for authoring some of the first examples of conservation writing; in both, the writing has significant scientific grounding as well as clear arguments for conservation (12-13).

Douglas's *River of Grass* certainly draws from the traditions of nature writing and conservation writing. The first chapter, in particular, is a literary account of scientific observation that, like a literary nature essay, "elevate[s] natural history observations to the status of art," while maintaining scientific accuracy (Applegarth, "Genre" 52). Like conservation writing, Douglas does not use the first person point of view or engage in personal reflection but rather focuses on advocacy. However, unlike typical examples of nature writing or conservation writing, *River of Grass* foregrounds history and storytelling, key aspects of the *Rivers of America* series. For this reason, *River of Grass* might fit under the description of *environmental history,* which J.R. McNeill describes as "the history of mutual relations between humankind and the rest of nature" (6). As ecocriticism scholar Michael Branch argues, the historical anthropology Douglas presents in *River of Grass,* "anticipates the work of current environmental historians in its recognition that stories about landscapes are ultimately inextricable from stories about human dwellers in the land" (130). Indeed, as Mink argues, the *Rivers of America* series could be considered a "prototypical form of environmental history" for the ways in which the series "prob[es] the dynamics of culturally diverse people who transformed and were transformed by the landscapes of different regions" (753). However, Skinner herself betrayed no interest in conservation when proposing and advertising her series. As I discuss in more detail later, Skinner's goals were to offer relatable folk histories that might inspire patriotic feeling, and in choosing to respond instead to an environmental exigence, Douglas departed from Skinner's original vision.

Douglas's *River of Grass,* because it draws from many genres, is difficult to categorize. As Branch describes:

> While it is written in nonfiction prose, the book's narrative dramatization of historical and natural historical information gives it the feel of a novel . . . While it is replete with precise scientific data, *River of Grass* filters those details through a poetic sensibility, rendering the landscape with a lyrical intensity characteristic of . . . classics of American nature writing. . . . Just as the book defies the constraints of a particular genre, so too does it resist any single disciplinary discourse, instead invoking insights from history, geology, hydrology, anthropology, zoology, botany, politics, economics, journalism, and literature to offer a rich, multidimensional view of South Florida's cultural and natural history. (127)

This multidimensionality is what helps make *River of Grass* a notable example of environmental rhetoric, which often employs different discourses and disciplines. The term *environmental rhetoric* is broad enough to encompass the book's various influences; moreover, the term emphasizes the book's rhetorical nature.

Regardless of any generic categorization, *River of Grass* responds to an environmental exigence by reshaping readers' perceptions and motivating them to save the Everglades.

Environmental Rhetoric and the Popularization of Science

Within the practice of environmental rhetoric, there is a tension between the need to communicate science while also moving audiences to action. Environmental activists and writers often must engage in a form of public intellectualism, in which they inform popular readers about scientific details of nature and ecology while appealing to readers' emotions through literary techniques. This balance of scientific detail with literary aesthetics is a central feature of environmental rhetorics like nature writing and conservation writing. On the one hand is traditional science "with its fabled detachment from all natural objects" (Killingsworth and Palmer 12), which "locate[s] the human researcher as outside and epistemologically above nature" (Herndl and Brown 11). On the other hand is a poetic rendering of nature that emphasizes its beauty and emotional power. This balance between scientific and aesthetic representations of nature characterizes much environmental rhetoric. As a form of science writing for public audiences, environmental rhetoric must engage and relate to readers (Molek-Kozakowska), appealing to readers' sense of wonder, or demonstrating the applications of the science described (Fahnestock 334). At the same time, for readers to accept their arguments, writers must demonstrate scientific credibility (Applegarth, "Genre" 53).

This tension in environmental rhetoric is similar to the tension between the professionalization and popularization of history that affected Skinner's *Rivers of America* series. Scientists, like historians, were similarly motivated toward professionalization at the turn of the twentieth century. As science journalism scholar Sharon Dunwoody argues, "[late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century] scientists embraced professionalization with great energy, creating scientific societies, specialized educational requirements, and internal systems of rewards and punishments" (102). These efforts to professionalize uprooted a rich tradition of amateur scientific research and established a firm boundary between expert and layperson (Applegarth, *Rhetoric* 3; Broks 27-32; Myers 268; Paul 34-7; Bensaude-Vincent). As Greg Myers explains, "One by one, disciplines were institutionalized and amateurs excluded" (268). By the mid-twentieth century, this division was so great that "scientific culture not only failed to provide rewards for interacting with publics but also actively punished scientists for doing so" (Dunwoody 102). Indeed, as scientist and environmentalist Paul Ehrlich describes, the twentieth-century scientist was trained to believe that "if what he [sic] does is comprehensible to the general public, it means he's not a good scientist" (qtd. in Goodell 6). To do good science was to do it outside of the public eye.[7]

However, in responding to environmental crises, there is an urgency in bringing science to the public. Early scientists in the environmental movement risked their standing in the scientific community to do so (Goodell 6). The most notable example of this is Rachel Carson, whose *Silent Spring* prompted backlash amongst some in the scientific community who attacked the book as lacking scientific credibility (Lear

7 Dunwoody argues that the environmental movement has helped to loosen the boundaries between expert and layperson; today's scientific community is more accepting, and even encouraging, of scientists that bring their research to the public (103). However, tensions do remain. One of the major concerns today is the real or perceived political or financial interests of public-facing scientists; this has been especially pertinent in the highly politicized debates over climate change (Cloud).

396-456; Graham 48-81). Carson was dismissed as "amateur" or "scientific journalism"; critics argue that her writing was "emotional" (Smith 737). An object of particular concern was Carson's opening "Fable for Tomorrow," which was "held up as evidence that Carson was a storyteller and nothing more" (Smith 746). However, like so many environmental writers before and after her, Carson's goals were to bring scientific environmental research to the public in a way that would motivate action, and in that regard, her book was a great success.

Carson has not been the only environmental scientist to experience backlash from the scientific community; as a woman scientist, though, she was an easier target. Historically, women's positions within the sciences have been marginalized, and their acceptance as science writers has been tenuous (Baym). Women's access to science writing has often been contingent upon the audience and context of their writing. While women have written a range of science genres, they have had the most acceptance and success in genres tailored to popular audiences. Since the eighteenth century, women have written advice books, textbooks, and bulletins that have helped to disseminate scientific knowledge to the public (Jack 10; Gates and Shteir 4; Bonta). Likewise, in genres of nature writing, nineteenth-century American women naturalists first wrote in popular genres such as field guides before gaining acceptance as authors in the literary nature essay tradition (Applegarth, "Genre" 54). In short, women, who often worked on the margins of the scientific community, had the greatest success when writing science for a public audience, a practice that was for a long time eschewed by the scientific community.

Douglas was researching the Everglades when the scientific study of ecology was in its infancy, and she made no claims to being a scientist. Indeed, while critics tried to discredit Carson as merely a storyteller and not a scientist, Douglas strongly identified as a storyteller. Still, Douglas's *River of Grass* serves as a successful example of a woman writer bringing scientific knowledge about nature and ecology to popular readers. Douglas was able to navigate this difficult terrain in part because her book was in the *Rivers of America* series. This series, which was founded by a woman who elevated other women writers, and which was ostensibly focused on folk histories of U.S. river settlements, served as a point of access for Douglas. Under the guise of popular history, the *Rivers of America* series gave Douglas an opportunity to teach readers about the ecology of the Everglades. To do so, Douglas combines the expectations of the series with a blend of literature and science characteristic of environmental rhetoric to engage her readers and to advocate for the Everglades' survival.

The Everglades as a River

Douglas was a rhetorically savvy writer who understood conventions and editorial and audience expectations. For example, when she began her freelance career, she conscientiously studied the form and content of the magazines for which she wished to write stories. In her autobiography, she relates, "I sat down and deliberately studied the kind of story I thought Mr. Lorimer [George Horace Lorimer, the editor of the *Saturday Evening Post*] liked.'" (Douglas and Rothchild 169). While Douglas does not describe her preparation writing for the *Rivers of America* series, it is fair to assume that she familiarized herself with the series and its previous publications. She would have understood the typical patterns and expectations of *Rivers of America*

books, and as an experienced writer, she would have worked to make sure that her book "fit" the series. At the same time, Douglas had her own interests and motives. As composition and genre studies scholars have observed, writers work in negotiation with the external structures of a genre and its rhetorical situation on the one hand and the internal structure of their own ideas on the other (Brooks and Jacobs qtd. in Bawarshi 79). Anis Bawarshi argues that this negotiation includes "the relationship between a writer's material, local conditions, and the genre's material, local conditions, and the genre's ideological and discursive demands" (79). Likewise, in *River of Grass,* one can trace the ways in which Douglas adopted the style and some of the typical features of the *Rivers of America* series—a dramatic and literary rendering of historical stories, for example. At the same time, Douglas adapted the form for her own purposes, given her own local conditions and ideological position. More specifically, she adapted and departed from the typical *Rivers of America* book so that she could respond rhetorically to the environmental crisis facing the Everglades.

The most obvious way *River of Grass* departs from the *Rivers of America* series is in its subject: The Everglades is not a river. The water of the Everglades does flow slowly from north to south, but defining it as a river stretches the geographic definition. Scientists today describe it as a connected freshwater system "of marl prairies, sawgrass marshes, tropical hammocks, cypress swamps, pinelands, sloughs, and lakes" (Davis, *An Everglades* 27). Further, the Everglades has not served the same social function as a river; it has not mediated trade, transportation, and settlement in the same ways major rivers such as the Mississippi or Hudson have. The history of human relationships to the Everglades is starkly different from the history of human relationships to rivers.[8] Therefore, in choosing the Everglades as her subject, Douglas naturally had to depart from the series' advertised goal to examine the history of rivers as "the original places of settlement and communication and later the means of movement" in the U.S. (McCague back cover).

The metaphor, "river of grass" was a clever way to suit the *Rivers of America* series, and it became Douglas's most lasting and influential argument in defense of the Everglades. Ironically, even though the river of grass metaphor helped align her book with the series, to make this argument, Douglas had to depart from the series formula by paying extended attention to the nature and ecology of the Everglades. As environmental historian Jack E. Davis explains,

> Volumes in the [*Rivers of America*] series typically open with the most elemental geographic description of the river in question before expeditiously shifting to the books' principal subject, people. . . . In a slight departure, Carl Carmer devoted the first chapter of *The Hudson* solely to natural history. This chapter is a mere five pages, however, whereas the opener of Douglas's volume runs *fifty-one pages*, all of them about nature, wild and freewheeling and lacking in a single human footprint. (*An Everglades* 360, emphasis added)

These 51 pages focused on nature make Douglas's book quite different from the *Rivers of America* books before it, yet this first chapter is necessary to establish the argument that the Everglades is a unique kind of river—an argument that aligns Douglas's book with the series and revises readers' negative perceptions of the Everglades as merely a swamp.

8 For a history of how Native Americans used the waterways of the Everglades from the pre-colonial era through the early twentieth century, see Tebeau. For a history of pioneer-era trading between Native Americans and white settlers in South Florida, see Kersey.

Arguably, this first chapter, entitled "The Nature of the Everglades," is the most influential, and compared to the other chapters, it draws the most from the conservation and nature writing traditions described above. Douglas's first chapter applies literary style to scientific observations of nature; it "places the natural world at the center of readers' attention" (Johnson-Sheehan and Morgan 10). With the opening lines quoted at the beginning of this article, Douglas establishes the uniqueness and beauty of the Florida Everglades. Using a lyrical style, she poses her principal argument, that the Everglades is not a swamp, a wasteland, or a deluge of muck and water, but a river of grass, a balance of nature unlike anywhere else on earth. In the discussion that follows, Douglas offers a detailed description of each of the elements contributing to the Everglades' unique ecology: the sawgrass, the water, and the rock. Then, in a section headed "The River of Time," Douglas traces the prehistory of Florida from the Pliocene to the Miocene, when the peninsula of Florida was first formed, before moving into a section describing the flora and fauna or "Life on the Rock" (33, 39).

Absent from Douglas's first chapter is human life. She presents nature on its own and in doing so, brings the environment from background to foreground, giving rhetorical presence to the Everglades (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 115-20). By electing to focus on the natural elements of the Everglades and omitting any reference to humanity in her first chapter, Douglas imbues nature with "importance and pertinency" (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 116). Moreover, she suggests the posthumanist importance of the Everglades. As Branch argues, Douglas "compels readers to engage in the salutary exercise of envisioning a natural world devoid of human species . . . . Her approach asks us to consider the importance and beauty of a river of grass that exists outside the flow of human history, a place so essentially inhuman in its purpose that we can begin to comprehend it only if we meet it on its own terms" (128). Douglas writes that the Everglades "were complete before man came to them, and for centuries afterward, when he [sic] was one of those forms which shared, in a finely balanced harmony, the forces and the ancient nature of the place" (9). Here Douglas subtly hints at a less "finely balanced harmony" between humans and nature to come, foreshadowing her critique of human's destruction of the Everglades later in the book.

Characteristic of environmental rhetoric, the descriptions of nature in *River of Grass* are firmly rooted in extant scientific knowledge. Through these descriptions, Douglas posits a new understanding of nature for her readers to consider. Douglas's river of grass argument, which emphasizes the "the simplicity, the diversity, the related harmony of the forms of life [the Everglades] enclose," drew from the emerging science of ecology (5). The study of ecology became a distinct discipline in the U.S. around the turn of the twentieth century but did not gain prominence until the 1960s with the beginning of the contemporary environmental movement.[9] Granted, some ecologically-minded ideas had been in circulation for a while. Prompted by concerns over depleted resources, Progressive Era conservationists like Gifford Pinchot advocated for the "wise use or planned development of resources," while preservationists like John Muir sought to protect unaltered nature, especially through the creation of national parks (Nash 129). However, both preservationists and conservationists were anthropocentric, prioritizing the human use of nature, either as a resource or as commodified scenery (Taylor 329-30). In Florida, efforts to drain the Everglades fit counterintuitively within the

9 See Martin and Jones for accounts of how the discipline of ecology was forged within the context of nuclear experimentation during the Cold War.

progressive conservation paradigm. Governor Napoleon Broward "freely spoke of [wetlands] reclamation as conservation" (Davis, *An Everglades* 151). On the other hand, South Florida naturalists like John Gifford, John Kunkel Small, and Charles Torrey Simpson extolled the virtues of the Everglades and voiced concerns about their demise. Sometimes, however, these naturalists advocated for preservation at the same time they accepted efforts to drain and alter the Everglades (Davis, *An Everglades* 220-2). These contradictions revealed a failure to understand the Everglades as an interconnected system. Douglas's secondary research into the ecology and hydrology of the Everglades worked to correct such misunderstandings.

When Douglas began her research and writing for *River of Grass,* "scientists had only begun to decipher the ecological complexities of the Everglades" (Davis, *An Everglades* 354). In the late 1930s and early 1940s, scientists began performing some of the first hydrological studies of the Everglades, and Douglas's book helped bring this new scientific knowledge to the public (Wilhelm 33). Douglas was not a scientist, but she had access to some of the most cutting-edge research on Florida natural history at the time. As a former journalist and daughter of the former *Miami Herald* editor, Douglas was well connected to South Florida's naturalists and conservationists, including C. Kay Davis and John Stevens of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, R.V. Allison of the University of Florida Everglades Experiment Station, John H. Davis of the Florida Geological Survey, and the botanist David Fairchild. In her acknowledgements, Douglas credits Garald Parker, the state hydrologist and an expert on the Everglades system, with helping her conceive of the idea of the Everglades as a river of grass (Douglas and Rothchild 191; Davis, *An Everglades* 355-8; 386-7).

Equipped with the scientific knowledge she had gained from her research and her contacts, Douglas crafted an effective environmental rhetoric. She distilled what she learned through her research into language that was both beautiful and based on empirical facts balancing the aesthetic with the scientific in the tradition of nature writing. Like the conservation writing described above, Douglas used the third person point of view, "privileg[ing] scientific evidence over personal experience" (Johnson-Sheehan and Morgan 10). Using third person also allowed Douglas to maintain "an objective stance" and sidestep any questions regarding gender and credibility (Applegarth, "Genre" 56).. For example, when Douglas explains the Everglades water cycle, she uses language that is descriptive yet objective:

> On summer mornings over the Glades the sky is only faintly hazed. The moisture is being drawn up from the sheen among the saw grass. By noon, the first ranks of the clouds will lie at the same height across the world, cottony and growing. The moisture lifts the whipped and glistening heights. The bases darken, grow purple, grow brown. The sun is almost gone. The highest clouds loose their moisture, which is condensed into cloud again before it can reach the earth. Then they grow more heavy. The winds slash before them and the rains roar down, making all the saw grass somber. (17)

Here, Douglas navigates her own gendered position, as well as the tricky balance of science and literary nature writing.

However, her diction is anything but the stilted language of science, with her evocative descriptions of "faintly hazed" skies and "cottony and growing" clouds (17). Douglas's language belies a sense of wonder that has held a tenuous position in scientific discourse since the Enlightenment period. On the one hand, a

sense of wonder can lead toward inquiry into the natural world; however, it is a sentiment often regarded as something to be "occluded or overcome '' through the disinterested process of the scientific method (Beudel 267). Despite this, an appeal to wonder can motivate environmental activism. Saskia Beudel argues that "once wonder is triggered and enlivened through attentive hands-on and sensory engagement with the world about us, it has the potential to foreclose or nullify the urge for destruction" (271). Accordingly, in the first chapter of *River of Grass,* Douglas evokes a sense of wonder for the Everglades. With this evocation of wonder and with her metaphor of a river of grass, Douglas offers readers a revised perception of the Everglades in particular and of nature in general. She posits a new human-nature relationship, one in which nature is valuable for its own sake, instead of with respect to the ways in which humans may use it. This perspective becomes a key piece in her environmental rhetoric. By promoting an appreciation for the unusual beauty and unique ecology of the Everglades in her first chapter, Douglas establishes an ideal human-nature relationship that would be in stark contrast to the history of Everglades destruction she goes on to narrate in later chapters.

River of Grass as Critical Florida History

Following the first chapter on "The Nature of Florida," Douglas proceeds to material more in line with the *Rivers of America* series: people. In the next chapters, she tells the long history of the societies that have lived in and around the Everglades, beginning with the very first people believed to have crossed a land bridge from Siberia to North America and migrated south eventually to the Florida peninsula. Her history ends with the present-day 1940s. Although Douglas's first chapter most resembles the traditions of nature writing and conservation writing associated with environmental rhetoric, her later chapters scrutinizing Florida's complicated history are also important to her argument in defense of the Everglades. In her history, Douglas again veers from the *Rivers of America* project through her focus on indigenous societies, her critique of white colonialist attitudes, and her condemnation of the more recent attempts to drain the Everglades. Far from inspiring patriotic feeling, Douglas's history reveals how the desire for profit and progress led to environmental destruction.

Skinner's goals in creating the *Rivers of America* series were nationalistic. Conceiving her project during the Great Depression, Skinner was determined to tell stories that would rekindle national pride at a time when feelings were especially low.[10] In "Rivers and American Folk," an essay describing and promoting the series, Skinner explains that "[w]hen American folk have troubles which do not end swiftly, they begin presently to examine their own sources as a nation and their own story as a people" (839). She believed that rivers were central to this story, writing, "It is as the story of American rivers that the folk sagas will be told" (839). Skinner saw rivers as vital sites of pre-industrial American history, where "foreigners… began their transition from Europeans to Americans as River Folk" (840). The series thus focused on tales of early pioneers and settlers along the river valleys of the United States.

10 Although Skinner passed away in 1939 and only witnessed the publication of the first four books in the series, her nationalistic vision continued and was especially evident during the World War II era publications that immediately preceded Douglas's book. As Fitzgerald observes, World War II era *Rivers* books often featured "patriotic exhortations from their authors, encouraging conservation and promoting the purchase of War Bonds" (xxi).

Skinner considered herself a pupil of Frederick Jackson Turner, and her *Rivers of America* project reflects the spirit of Turnerian frontierism.[11] Skinner's project lauded Eurocentric technological progress and westward expansion. This ideology is evident in Skinner's explanation that her books would present the river settlements of the early U.S. as "a new thing on the earth, evolving a new faith and theory of government out of practical and physical struggle with the earth and under the menace of Indians and other wars" (qtd. in Colon 16). Skinner sought to tell stories of American ingenuity and progress, stories that focused on the "marvelous inventions that have speeded our labor and increased our riches built upon this foundation. Inventions of free-minded men in a free society" (qtd. in Colon 16). Sigma Colon describes the *Rivers of America* project as producing "a narrative form of settler colonialist ideology and race-based nationalism" (15). In such narratives, not only do white settlers conquer the lands; indigenous peoples are also quietly erased. As Davis explains, *Rivers of America* series books typically "dealt with" Native American histories first and "expeditiously . . . before too much space is taken from a rousing narrative on the development of American civilization" (*An Everglades* 360). Mink describes the treatment of Native Americans in *Rivers of America* books as following an "archetypal frontier progression" with "Indians and their cultures represented as a simple, primitive, and natural antipode to the depressed modern condition" (764). In most of the books, these societies "disappear from the landscape," removed by "time." White settlers' active participation in this disappearance is quietly omitted (Mink 764). However, as Colon demonstrates, not all *Rivers of America* authors ascribed to these ideologies.[12]

Douglas's history of the Everglades does not skirt over Native American history or laud the advancement of American civilization; in fact, seven of the fifteen chapters in *River of Grass* are devoted to Florida's Native American history. Citing recent archeological discoveries, Douglas offers an account of Florida's first peoples—the Timucuan, Calusa, the Tequesta, and the Mayaimi, followed by a sharp critique of colonialism and settlers' attempts to conquer Florida, an unvarnished history of the Seminole Wars, and a critical account of the follied attempts to advance civilization through the destruction of the Everglades. There is a clear thesis running through Douglas's historical narrative as she recounts the genocide of native peoples through settler colonialism, wars over land and slavery, and the draining of the Everglades—her history of Florida reveals a damning pattern of greed and destruction.

Douglas had no patience for stories of European colonialists as heroes, brave adventurers, or discoverers of new lands. She saw through the mythos and described them as greedy and genocidal. "[A]fter Columbus had opened up the New World," she writes, "island after island of Indian people, by slavery, torture, hard work, homesickness and diseases, thousands after thousands of men, women, chiefs, children, priests,

11 Skinner and Turner had a long-standing epistolary relationship. In a memorial to Turner in the *New York Herald Tribune*, Skinner writes, "I never met Turner but I can consider myself, in a sense, a pupil of his because of our correspondence" (qtd. in Mink 758).

12 According to Colon, Walter Havighurst, author of *The Upper Mississippi: A Wilderness Saga* (1937), was "among the most blatant proponents of Euroamerican solidarity"; in his narrative, diverse European groups—Swedes, Norwegians, Scots, Germans, and New Englanders—were brought together by their shared racial ties against an "Indian menace" (qtd. in Colon 15). Other authors, such as Maxwell Struthers Burt, author of *Powder River: Let'er Buck*, lauded Native American nations as stewards of the land and described their displacement by Euro-American settlers as "one of the greatest tragedies in history" (qtd. in Colon 17). Likewise, in *Kennebec: Cradle of Americans*, Robert Tristram Coffin critiqued the lumber industry for prioritizing profits over the conservation of natural resources; he also advocated for environmental protections (Colon 16).

fishermen, warriors, had been blotted out" (92). Douglas clearly identifies white colonialists as the agents to remove and destroy. "[N]ever before in history," she writes, "was a whole people so destroyed, and by so few" (92). The motivation behind this destruction is obvious to Douglas: greed. For example, she pointedly debunks the tale of Ponce de Leon and his quest for a fountain of youth: "The story of the Fountain of Youth was written only many years later" (97). On the contrary, she explains, "What he wanted was slaves and gold" (99). Douglas ascribes the same motives to the First Seminole War and the border skirmishes between Spain and America that preceded that war. She describes how Spanish-controlled Florida became a place of refuge for those attempting to escape slavery, a refuge routinely invaded by slave catchers. Again, Douglas is unequivocal about the American motivations behind these disputes. She writes, "The white men wanted land and they wanted slaves with which to work it. The Indians who gave safety and freedom, or a nominal slavehood, to escaping Negroes and loyally refused to give them up to the slave catchers, had both. That was the whole story" (194).

In Douglas's history of Florida, greed led to the conquest of people, and she goes on to show how this same type of greed motivated the conquest of nature.[13] Ever since the declaration of Florida's official statehood, and even before, white men had been eyeing the Everglades with a design to profit from them. It was a settler colonialist ideology that would characterize the white American attitude to the Everglades until the latter half of the twentieth century. Just as white Americans considered the expansion of the United States and the conquest of its lands from native inhabitants part of a "manifest destiny," so did they understand that nature itself should be conquered and possessed, utilized for the perceived progress of American civilization. Douglas reveals how this greedy pursuit of so-called progress led to an environmental crisis.

Douglas recounts efforts to drain and dredge the Everglades in the decades leading up to her book, beginning with Henry Disston's ultimately unsuccessful contract to drain 12 million acres of the Everglades in 1881 (283). Douglas blames Governor Napoleon Bonaparte Broward for the earliest success in Everglades drainage. In his 1904 campaign for Florida governor, he made Everglades drainage a cornerstone of his platform. Douglas describes his persuasive campaigning:

> He unfurled big maps of the Glades area, showing how the canals should run and how they would serve not only drainage, but for transportation by boats, to build up the country . . . It was enough to get anybody excited about, the way Napoleon B. Broward would rear up that great frame of his, and in a voice that spoke intimately to every man roll out the long sentences so that the spines of all the little boys listening on the edge of the crowd would fairly prickle. (312)

Broward's ambitions were to drain all the Everglades, and fortunately, these ambitions were larger than the technology of the time allowed, but he did dig four canals and more distressingly helped popularize the idea that the Everglades can and should be drained. (Grunwald, *The Swamp* 130-50; Davis, *An Everglades* 115-26). In the years following Broward's governorship, parts of the Everglades were drained and dredged, canals were dug, and land was cleared and sold. The interwar years in Florida were a period of real estate booms and busts, as new properties were developed and sold within Everglades land.

13 Douglas's arguments anticipate ecofeminism. See Sierra for a discussion of Douglas's proto-ecofeminism in her early fiction.

In relating this history, Douglas questions the logic and motivation behind Everglades drainage. She notes the connection between the greed of land speculators seeking to drain and profit from the Everglades and that of European colonialists centuries before, writing "What had been the Florida boom, the hot released passion for easy money from land, which had gripped the country recurrently since the Civil War, was certainly the same kind of hysteria which had helped discover and populate the New World" (341). Douglas also rebukes the logic of progress that saw Everglades drainage as a great human technological innovation:

> . . . in all those years of talk and excitement about drainage, the only argument was a school-boy's logic. The drainage of the Everglades would be a Great Thing. Americans did Great Things. Therefore, Americans would drain the Everglades. Beyond that—to the intricate and subtle relation of soil, of fresh water and evaporation, and of runoff and salt intrusion, and all the consequences of disturbing the fine balance nature had set up in the past four thousand years—no one knew enough to look. They saw the Everglades no longer as a vast expanse of saw grass and water, but as a dream, a mirage of riches that many men would follow to their ruin. (286)

In her history of Disston, Broward, and the others who sought to drain the Everglades, Douglas exposed a developmentalist attitude, in which the value of nature rested upon its potential to be cultivated, manipulated, and profited from (Killingsworth and Palmer 9-14). It was a manifestation of the Turnerian attitude of "winning the wilderness" (Turner). This, to Douglas, was part of a "school boy's logic"; rather than progress, such logic had only led to destruction. Douglas's long history of Florida demonstrates the false premises and devastating consequences of the developmentalist attitude. In contrast, Douglas proposes a more ecologically-minded attitude toward nature, one that recognizes "intricate and subtle relations," the "fine balance" of nature, and the "consequences" of the ill-conceived projects of "school boys" craving profit and progress. Ultimately, through her environmental rhetoric, Douglas shows that the current crisis facing the Everglades was engineered by humans, and in a call to her readers, she argues that humans must step in to address the problem they created. This history helps set up the conclusion of Douglas's book, where she makes an overt case for saving the Everglades.

Conclusion: The Eleventh Hour

In examining the entirety of Douglas's *The Everglades: River of Grass*, it is useful to divide the book into three main parts, each of which contributes an important appeal to a larger overarching environmental rhetoric. In the first chapter of the book, Douglas presents the Everglades on its own and appeals to the reader's imagination and sense of wonder. The second part, the middle chapters, is a history of the Everglades as a sad tale of greed and destruction. Together, these first two parts articulate an argument for a reorientation of humans to their environment and a rebuke of the developmentalist attitude: Nature is intrinsically valuable; visions of conquering nature are part of a greedy, damaging legacy.

The third part of Douglas's book is her last chapter, "The Eleventh Hour," where she warns that the Everglades is in peril and makes a direct call to save it. Reading *River of Grass* today, almost 80 years after its initial publication, it is difficult to grasp the foresight of Douglas's call. For one, given the amount of environmental degradation we have witnessed in the past seven decades and the existential threat of climate change, we are all too familiar with environmental crises. It is also easily forgotten that Douglas's incredible envi-

ronmental rhetoric was born from a project with entirely different aims. Despite this, Douglas's book proves to offer a compelling and useful model of environmental rhetoric: balancing science, history, and literature; evoking wonder for the natural world; unabashedly critiquing dominant narratives and arguments; and making a direct appeal to action.

River of Grass ends with these hopeful words: "Perhaps even in this last hour, in a new relation of usefulness and beauty, the vast, magnificent, subtle, and unique region of the Everglades may not be utterly lost" (385). What Douglas did not realize at the time was that the fight to save the Everglades was just beginning. She would take up this fight again later in her life and continue fighting until her death at the age of 108. *River of Grass* proved to be an important start to a conversation about the Everglades and an awakening to a "new relation" with nature.

Biography

Paige V. Banaji (she/her) is an associate professor of English at Barry University in Miami, Florida, where she teaches in the First-Year Writing and Professional Writing programs. Her research interests include feminist historiography, environmental rhetoric, and composition pedagogy. She has published in Rhetoric Review, Rhetorica, and edited collections.

Works Cited

Applegarth, Risa. "Genre, Location, and Mary Austin's Ethos." *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, vol. 41, no. 1, 2011, pp. 41-63. DOI: 10.1080/02773945.2010.499861.

---. *Rhetoric in American Anthropology: Gender, Genre, and Science.* U of Pittsburgh P, 2014.

Barman, Jean. *Constance Lindsay Skinner: Writing on the Frontier.* U of Toronto P, 2002.

Bawarshi, Anis S. *Genre and the Invention of the Writer: Reconsidering the Place of Invention in Composition.* Utah State UPs, 2003.

Baym, Nina. *American Women of Letters and Nineteenth-Century Sciences,* Rutgers UP, 2001.

Bensaude-Vincent, Bernadette. "A Genealogy of the Increasing Gap Between Science and the Public." *Public Understanding of Science,* vol. 10, no. 1, 2009, pp. 99-113. https://doi.org/10.3109/a036858.

Bessel, Richard D. and Bernard K. Duffy, eds. *Green Voices: Defending Nature and the Environment in American Civic Discourse.* SUNY Press, 2016.

Beudel, Saskia. "Science, Wonder, and New Nature Writing: Rachel Carson." *Routledge Handbook of Ecocriticism and Environmental Communication,* edited by Scot Slovic. Routledge, 2019. pp. 264-75.

Bitzer, Lloyd. "The Rhetorical Situation." *Philosophy and Rhetoric,* vol. 1, no. 1, 1968, pp. 1-14. https://www.jstor.org/stable/40236733.

Blake, Casey Nelson. "The Usable Past, the Comfortable Past, and the Civic Past: Memory in Contemporary America." *Cultural Anthropology*, vol. 14, no. 3, 1999, pp. 423–35. https://www.jstor.org/stable/656660.

Bonta, Marcia Myers. *Women in the Field: America's Pioneering Women Naturalists.* Texas A&M UP, 1991.

Branch, Michael. "Writing the Swamp: Marjory Stoneman Douglas and *The Everglades: River of Grass*." *Such News of the Land: U.S. Women Nature Writers,* 2nd edition, edited by Thomas S. Edwards and Elizabeth A. DeWolfe, UP of New England, 2019, pp. 125-35.

Broks, Peter. *Understanding Popular Science.* Open UP, 2006.

Clary-Lemon, Jennifer. *Nestwork: New Material Rhetorics for Precarious Species.* The Pennsylvania State UP, 2023.

Cloud, Doug. "The Corrupted Scientist Archetype and its Implications for Climate Change Communication and Public Perceptions of Science." *Environmental Communication,* vol. 14, no. 6, 2020, pp. 816-29. https://doi.org/10.1080/17524032.2020.1741420.

Colon, Sigma. "Watershed Colonialism and Popular Geographies of North American Rivers." *Open Rivers: Rethinking Water, Place, & Community*, vol. 8, 2017, https://openrivers.lib.umn.edu/article/watershed-colonialism/.

Davis, Jack E. *An Everglades Providence: Marjory Stoneman Douglas and the American Environmental Century.* U of Georgia P, 2011.

---. "'Conservation is Now a Dead Word": Marjory Stoneman Douglas and the Transformation of American Environmentalism." *Environmental History,* vol. 8, no. 1, 2003, pp. 53-76. https://doi.org/10.2307/3985972.

Douglas, Marjory Stoneman. *Everglades: River of Grass.* 1947. Pineapple Press, 2021.

Douglas, Marjory Stoneman and John Rothchild. *Voice of the River.* Pineapple Press, 2011.

Dunwoody, Sharon, "When Environmental Scientists Go Public." *The Routledge Handbook of Environmental Communication, 2nd ed.* Routledge, 2022, pp. 101-13.

Fahnestock, Jeanne. "Accommodating Science: The Rhetorical Life of Scientific Facts." *Written Communication,* vol. 15, no. 3, 1998, pp. 330-50. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088398015003006.

Fitzgerald, Carol. *The Rivers of America: A Descriptive Bibliography, Vol. 1-2,* edited by Jean Fitzgerald. Oak Knoll Press, 2001.

Gates, Barbara T and Ann B. Shteir, eds. *Natural Eloquence: Women Reinscribe Science,* U of Wisconsin P, 1997.

Goggin, Jacqueline. "Challenging Sexual Discrimination in the Historical Profession: Women Historians and the American Historical Association, 1890-1940." *American Historical Review,* vol. 97, no. 3, 1992, pp. 770-802. https://doi.org/10.2307/2164780.

Goggin, Peter N., ed. *Environmental Rhetoric and Ecologies of Place.* Routledge, 2013.

Goodell, Rae. "The Visible Scientists." *The Sciences,* vol. 17, no. 1, 1977, pp. 6-9. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2326-1951.1977.tb01494.x.

Graham, Frank. *Since Silent Spring,* Houghton Mifflin, 1970.

Gries, Laurie E. "New Materialist Ontobiography: A Critical-Creative Approach for Coping and Caring in the Chthulucene." *College English,* vol. 82, no. 3, 2020, pp. 302-25. https://doi.org/10.58680/ce202030479.

Grunwald, Michael. *The Swamp: The Everglades, Florida, and the Politics of Paradise.* Simon & Schuster, 2006.

Herndl, Carl G. and Brown, Stuart C. Introduction. *Green Culture: Environmental Rhetoric in Contemporary America.* The U of Wisconsin P, 1996.

Jack, Jordynn. *Science on the Home Front: American Women Scientists in World War II.* U of Illinois P, 2009.

Johnson-Sheehan, Richard and Lawrence Morgan. "Conservation Writing: An Emerging Field in Technical Communication." *Technical Communication Quarterly,* vol. 18, no.1, 2008, pp. 9-27. https://doi.org/10.1080/10572250802437283.

Jones, Madison. "A Counterhistory of Rhetorical Ecologies." *Rhetoric Society Quarterly,* vol. 51, no. 4, 2021, pp. 336-52. DOI: 10.1080/02773945.2021.1947517.

Kersey, Harry A., Jr. *Pelts, Plumes, and Hides: White Traders among the Seminole Indians, 1870-1930.* U of Florida P, 1975.

Killingsworth, M. Jimmie and Jacqueline S. Palmer. *Ecospeak: Rhetoric and Environmental Politics in America.* Southern Illinois UP, 1992.

Lear, Linda. *Rachel Carson: Witness for Nature.* Henry Holt, 1997.

Levine, Philippa. *The Amateur and the Professional: Antiquarians, Historians, and Archaeologists in Victorian English, 1838-1886.* Cambridge UP, 1986.

Martin, Laura J. "Proving Grounds: Ecological Fieldwork in the Pacific and the Materialization of Ecosystems." *Environmental History,* vol. 23, no. 3, 2018, pp. 567-92. DOI: 10.1093/envhis/emy007.

McCague, James. *The Cumberland.* Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1973.

McNeill, J.R. "Observations on the Nature and Culture of Environmental History." *History and Theory,* Theme Issue 42, 2003, pp. 5-43. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3590677.

Mink, Nicolaas. "A Narrative for Nature's Nation: Constance Lindsay Skinner and the Making of *Rivers of America*." *Environmental History* vol. 11, no. 4, 2006, pp. 751-74. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3985801.

Molek-Kozakowska, Katarzyna. "Communicating Environmental Science Beyond Academica: Stylistic Patters of Newsworthiness in Popular Science Journalism." *Discourse & Communication,* vol. 11, no. 1, 2017, pp. 69-88. https://doi.org/10.1177/1750481316683294.

Myers, Greg. "Discourse Studies of Scientific Popularization: Questioning the Boundaries." *Discourse Studies,* vol. 5, no. 2, 2003, pp. 265-79. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461445603005002006.

Nash, Roderick Frazier. *Wilderness and the American Mind,* 5th edition. Yale UP, 2014.

Oravec, Christine. "Conservationism vs. Preservationism: The 'Public Interest' in the Hetch Hetchy Controversy." *Quarterly Journal of Speech,* vol. 70, no. 4, 1984, pp. 444-58. https://doi.org/10.1080/00335638409383709.

---. "John Muir, Yosemite, and the Sublime Response: A Study in the Rhetoric of Preservationism." *Quarterly Journal of Speech,* vol. 67, no. 3, 1981, pp. 245-58. https://doi.org/10.1080/00335638109383570.

Paul, Danette. "Spreading Chaos: The Role of Popularizations in the Diffusion of Scientific Ideas." *Written Communication,* vol. 21, no. 1, 2004, pp. 32-68. DOI: 10.1177/0741088303261035.

Perelman, Chaim and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca. *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation.* U of Notre Dame P, 1969.

Rivers, Nathaniel A. "Deep Ambivalence and Wild Objects: Toward a Strange Environmental Rhetoric." *Rhetoric Society Quarterly,* vol. 45, no. 5, 2015, pp. 420-40. DOI: 10.1080/02773945.2015.1086491.

Ross, Derek G., ed. *Topic-Driven Environmental Rhetoric.* Routledge, 2017.

Scheese, Don. *Nature Writing: The Pastoral Impulse in America.* Routledge, 2002.

Sierra, Horacio. "Fighting the 'Wool-Hat Boys': Ecofeminism in the Short Stories of Marjory Stoneman Douglas. *The Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Journal of Florida Literature,* vol. 15, 2007, pp. 185-201. https://stars.library.ucf.edu/jfl/vol15/iss1/8.

Skinner, Constance Lindsay. "Rivers and American Folk." 1935. *The Rivers of America: A Descriptive Bibliography, Volume 2*, by Jean Fitzgerald, 2001, pp. 839-44.

Smith, Michael B. "'Silence, Miss Carson!': Science, Gender, and the Reception of *Silent Spring*." *Feminist Studies,* vol. 27 no. 3, 2001, pp. 733-52. https://doi.org/10.2307/3178817.

Stormer, Nathan and Birdie McGreavy. "Thinking Ecologically about Rhetoric's Ontology: Capacity, Vulnerability, and Resilience." *Philosophy and Rhetoric,* vol. 50, no. 1, 2017, pp. 1-25. https://doi.org/10.5325/philrhet.50.1.0001.

Taylor, Dorceta E. *The Rise of the American Conservation Movement: Power, Privilege, and Environmental Protection.* Duke UP, 2016.

Tebeau, Charlton W. *Man in the Everglades: 2000 Years of Human History in the Everglades National Park.* U of Miami P, 1968.

Turner, Frederick J. "The Significance of the Frontier in American History." 1835. American Historical Association. Historical Archives. https://www.historians.org/resource/the-significance-of-the-frontier-in-american-history/.

Waddell, Craig. *And No Birds Sing: Rhetorical Analyses of Rachel Carson's* Silent Spring. Southern Illinois UP, 2000.

Wilhelm, Chris. *From Swamp to Wetland: The Creation of Everglades National Park,* The U of Georgia P, 2022.