



RACHEL HAVRELOCK

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Rachel Havrelock is a professor of English at the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC) where she also directs the Freshwater Lab, an environmental humanities initiative focused on the North American Great Lakes and environmental justice. Through the Freshwater Lab, Rachel offers interdisciplinary courses that draw students from English, urban planning, public policy, urban studies, and history as well as an annual internship program which directly places UIC students in organizations working on water and environment. The Freshwater Lab convenes elected officials, researchers, activists, students, and artists for summits and events aimed at fostering new alliances and realizing future possibilities for the Great Lakes watershed which holds more than 20% of the world's fresh water. Along with urgent public facing work, Rachel researches questions of sovereignty, public trust, water delivery, and privatization in the Great Lakes basin. She is currently working on a book about the Great Lakes and their communities and what needs to happen for the Rust Belt to become the sustaining Water Belt. Rachel studied techniques and policies around the recycling of water during decades of research in Israel. Along with colleagues in engineering, urban planning, and Earth and environmental science, she is laying the research groundwork for water recycling in Cook County and the State of Illinois. Whereas water recycling tends to be seen as a solution for drought conditions, she envisions water reuse as a solution to flooding at the same time that it can anchor a clean industrial revolution in the Midwest. From 2017-2020, Rachel was a Great Cities Fellow. She spent several years as a visiting professor with the Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership (Chicago) as well as a year as a visiting associate professor at the University of Chicago and a visiting assistant professor at Swarthmore College. Rachel received a B.A. in literature from the University of California, Santa Cruz, and an M.A. in Jewish studies and a PhD in Near Eastern studies from the University of California, Berkeley.