

A satellite-style map of the Mississippi River basin, showing the river winding through a vast, arid, yellowish-brown landscape. The river is a prominent greenish-brown line. The Gulf of Mexico is visible in the top right corner, and the Atlantic Ocean is visible in the bottom right corner.

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OPEN RIVERS :
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PARADOXES OF WATER

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from multiple perspectives within and beyond the academy.

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The cover image is of The Nile River, July 19 2004. To the right of the Nile is the Red Sea, with the finger of the Gulf of Suez on the left, and the Gulf of Aqaba on the right. In the upper right corner of the image are Israel and Palestine, left, and Jordan, right. Below Jordan is the northwestern corner of Saudi Arabia. Jacques Descloitres, MODIS Rapid Response Team, NASA/GSFC.

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION TO ISSUE ELEVEN

By Patrick Nunnally, Editor

When I heard about the Nobel Peace Prize Forum's 2018 focus on "The Paradox of Water," I hoped for a connection between our journal and the perspectives that speakers would bring to the gathering. Here, thanks to a great deal of hard work by many people, not least Augsburg political scientist Joseph B. Underhill,

is the result: a collection of features and columns that explores some of the many paradoxes of water.

Underhill is the director of the Peace Prize Forum and guest editor of this issue (his guest editor's introduction follows my brief comments). His



The Nile River, July 19 2004. To the right of the Nile is the Red Sea, with the finger of the Gulf of Suez on the left, and the Gulf of Aqaba on the right. In the upper right corner of the image are Israel and Palestine, left, and Jordan, right. Below Jordan is the northwestern corner of Saudi Arabia. Jacques Descloitres, MODIS Rapid Response Team, NASA/GSFC.

international network of scholars, and persistence in engaging them, has brought voices to our virtual pages that we would not otherwise have been able to reach: Terje Oestigaard on the importance of the Nile in global religious traditions; Peter Gleick on the associations of water and conflict; and Giulia Giordano in how discourses over water might be a strong hope for peace in the Middle East. Underhill discusses others more fully in his guest editor's introduction. Note that articles contributed by Peace Prize Forum participants have a "Forum" designation in this issue.

The Open Rivers team thinks of this issue as a resource for people attending the Forum, as well as a starting point for considerations that will go far beyond the actual gathering in September. A contribution to the dialogue is the feature by Mona Smith, which offers a number of powerful video pieces that explore some of the meanings of water to Dakota people, the people indigenous to this place. We also include reflections from more recent newcomers to this land, captured eloquently by Leslie Thomas' discussion of how a local advocacy group is using words and images

to deepen relationships with the Mississippi River.

Some of our usual columns maintain the international flavor of the issue as a whole, such as Shira Lanyi's reflections on the Pongola River in South Africa. Others have a more local focus: Olivia Dorothy's reminder that the Mississippi River Gorge is subject to important discussions on its future and Kristi Pursell's discussion of the nearby Cannon River Watershed Partners. We also have a review of the local National Park Service visitor center in St. Paul, which reminds us, as if we need it, that eight-year-old boys and their mothers look at things very differently!

For those who want more on the various and broad-ranging subjects here, the Primary Sources column offers a bibliography for further reading, compiled by the *Open Rivers* team.

Happy reading, everyone!

PS: If you are new to the journal, and would like to be put on the list to get notices of upcoming issues, send us a note at openrvrs@umn.edu.

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About the Author

Patrick Nunnally coordinates the River Life Program in the Institute for Advanced Study at the University of Minnesota. He serves as editor for *Open Rivers* and was one of the lead scholars for the University's John E. Sawyer Seminar, "Making the Mississippi: Formulating New Water Narratives for the 21st Century and Beyond," funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.