

Louisiana Legacy Litigation and Wetland Poetics: Towards Alternative Paradigms of Causation

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Introduction

Louisiana lost 2,000 square miles of coastal wetlands between 1932 and 2016, destroying habitats and disproportionately increasing Black and Indigenous residents' risk from storm surges.

Coastal erosion in Louisiana is largely attributable to extensive oil and gas activities, but establishing legal causation in the context of slow, entangled subsidence processes is difficult.

Addressing the need for novel legal methods to protect the coastline, legacy litigation is a state-specific form of civil action whereby a private party seeks damages for historic extractive activities.



Aims and Objectives

Focused specifically on temporalities and legal causation, this project looks across two legacy suits and two literary texts to ask:

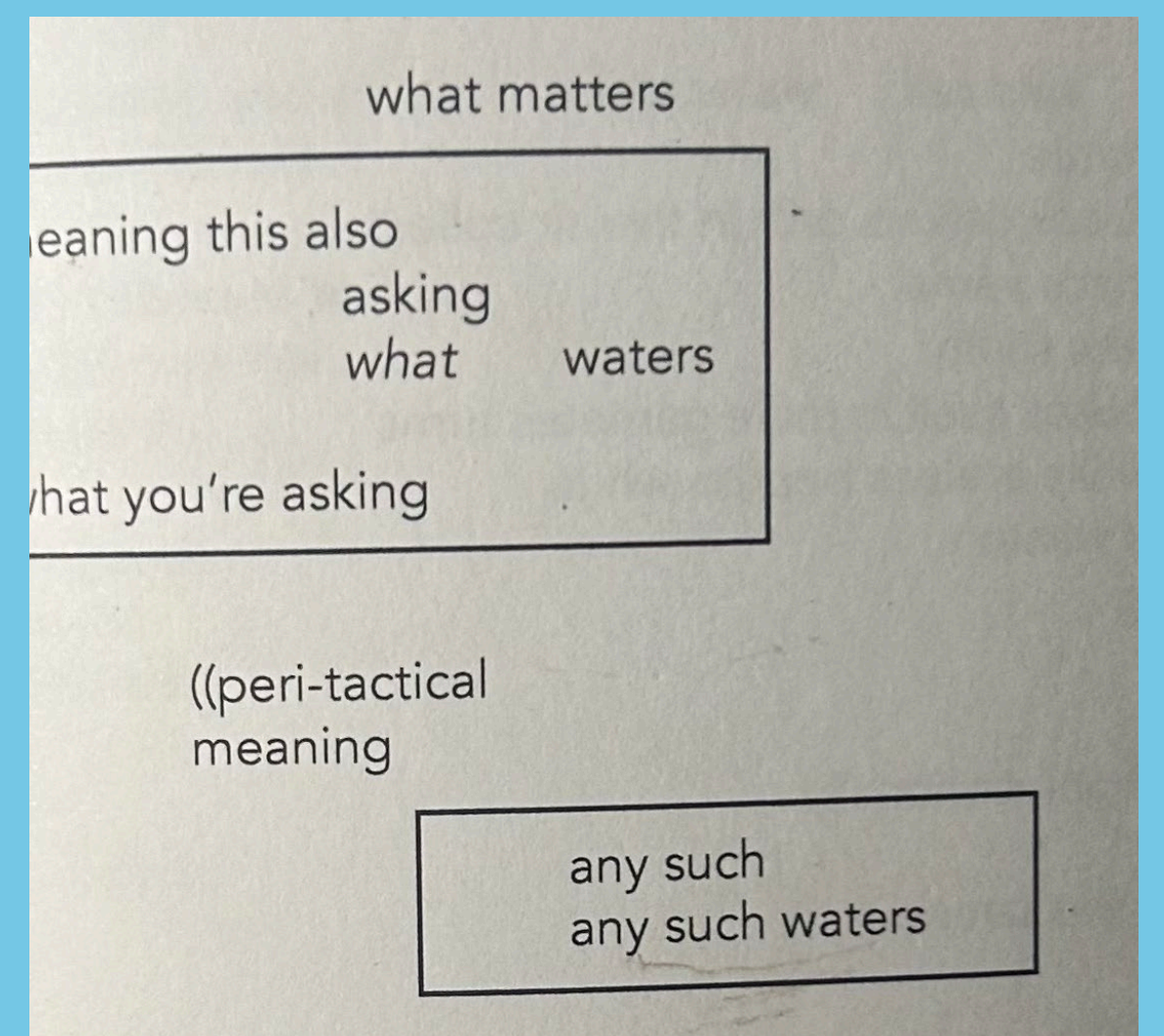
- How can we accommodate accounts of pervasive, entangled harm against the environment through legacy suits?
- How can local poetics model liability for deep histories of extraction in the South?

Methodology

- Deep work with case law: legal work which is fully submerged within case details and is interactive with larger temporalities.
- Experimental poetry as key interpretive methodology: chosen texts re-imagine networks of complicity and petro-plantation legacies.

Case Studies:

- *Board of Commissioners v. Texaco*
- *Cameron et al vs Auster Oil and Gas Inc et al*
- *Ark Hive* (Marthe Reed)
- *Maroon* Choreography (Fahima Ife)



Further reading

Liboiron, M, (2021), *Pollution is Colonialism*, Duke UP.

Vinal, S, (2019), *L'Eau est la Vie (Water is Life): From Standing Rock to the Swamp*.

Acknowledgement

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