

Dean Chahim

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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- 2022 - **University of Texas at El Paso**
Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology and Anthropology
- 2021 - 2022 **Princeton University**
Postdoctoral Research Associate, Princeton-Mellon Initiative in Architecture, Urbanism, and the Humanities

EDUCATION

- 2021 **Stanford University**
Ph.D. in Anthropology, 2021
M.A. in Anthropology, 2016
Dissertation: "Flood Control Politics: Engineering, Urban Growth, and Disaster in Mexico City"
Committee: James Ferguson (chair), Gabrielle Hecht, Miyako Inoue, Paulla Ebron, Mikael Wolfe
- 2012 **University of Washington**
B.S.C.E., Civil & Environmental Engineering, 2012
B.A. with Honors, International Development & Social Change (self-designed major), 2012

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2013 -2014 **GeoEngineers, Inc.**, Seattle
Staff Environmental Engineer, Environmental Site Assessment and Remediation Group

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

Monograph

In Prep. *Draining the Infinite Metropolis: Engineering and the Banality of Disaster in Mexico City*

Peer-Reviewed

In Press "Governing Beyond Capacity: Engineering, Banality, and the Calibration of Disaster in Mexico City." *American Ethnologist*.

Submitted "Self-Devouring Urbanism: Engineering and the Logistics of Waste in Mexico City." *Antipode*

2014 "NGOization, Foreign Funding, and the Nicaraguan Civil Society," (co-authored with Aseem Prakash). *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 25, no. 2: 487-513. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11266-012-9348-z>

Book Reviews

2020 "Hydropolitics: the Itaipú Dam, Sovereignty, and the Engineering of Modern South America by Christine Folch," *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies / Revue canadienne des études latino-américaines et caraïbes*, DOI: [10.1080/08263663.2020.1799677](https://doi.org/10.1080/08263663.2020.1799677)

Multimedia

2016 "La Exportación de La Contaminación [The Exportation of Pollution]." *Ruta Antropológica* 3 (5): 110-16. http://www.posgrado.unam.mx/antropologia/revista/revista_05.pdf

AWARDS, HONORS, AND FELLOWSHIPS (Selected)

External Agencies

2020 Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship (\$43,000)
2017 Social Science Research Council International Dissertation Research Fellowship (\$17,400)
2017 Wenner-Gren Foundation Dissertation Fieldwork Grant (\$17,385)
2016 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program - Honorable Mention
2016 Social Science Research Council Dissertation Proposal Development Fellowship (\$5,000)
2011 National Security Education Program Boren Scholarship (\$20,000; declined)
2011 Foreign Languages and Area Studies Award (\$7,500 for Dari study in Tajikistan)
2007 National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Space Grant Scholarship (\$20,000)

Stanford University

2020 Graduate Summer Fellowship for Community Engaged Research (\$3,000)
2020 Humanities Center Mellon Foundation Dissertation Fellowship, (\$34,344; declined)
2019 Vice Provost for Graduate Education GradEd Champion Award
2019 Anthropology Prize for Academic Performance (\$500)
2019 School of Humanities and Sciences Graduate Research Opportunity Grant (\$5,000)
2019 Institute for Research in the Social Sciences Dissertation Fellowship (\$5,000)
2019 School of Humanities and Sciences Community Engagement Grant (\$3,000)
2018 Diversifying Academia, Recruiting Excellence Doctoral Fellowship (\$116,000)
2018 School of Humanities and Sciences Community Engagement Grant (\$3,500)
2016 Bernard J. Siegel Award for Outstanding Achievement in Written Expression by a Ph.D. Student in Anthropology (\$500)
2015 Haas Center Graduate Public Service Fellowship (\$3,000)

University of Washington

2011 Bonderman Travel Fellowship (\$20,000, for eight months of independent travel)
2010 Department of Civil Engineering Scholarship (\$5,000)
2008, 2011 Mary Gates Leadership Scholarship (\$8,500)
2007, 2008 Mary Gates Research Scholarship (\$2,600)

PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY-ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP

In progress **Las Huellas del Agua / Watermarks (Digital Geohumanities Project)**
Founder and coordinator of a team developing a digital geohumanities platform. Working with communities across the metropolitan region, the project stitches together the products of participatory mapping, spatial analysis, and multimedia oral histories in an interactive platform for the public to understand the unnatural, unequal, and devastating effects of flooding, while creating a tool for collective action. *Planned launch: July 2021. More information online at <http://deanchahim.com/las-huellas-del-agua-watermarks>*

Writing for Wider Audiences

- 2021 "La tragedia de la inundación en Tula fue una decisión política." *The Washington Post*, September 20. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/es/post-opinion/2021/09/20/tula-inundaciones-rio-causas-hidalgo-mexico/>
- 2020 "Self-Devouring Urbanism: Displacements of Capital and Water in Mexico City." *SSRC Items*, July 7. <https://items.ssrc.org/layered-metropolis/self-devouring-urbanism-displacements-of-capital-and-water-in-mexico-city/>
- 2018 "Engineers Don't Solve Problems." *Logic Magazine*, Fall. Issue 5. <https://logicmag.io/failure/engineers-dont-solve-problems/>
- 2017 "Pueblos de Xochimilco, hundidos y jodidos no solamente por el sismo, sino por la sed de la ciudad [Towns of Xochimilco, Sunk and Broken not only because of the Earthquake, but the Thirst of the City]." *Tercera Vía*, October 17. <https://terceravia.mx/2017/10/pueblos-xochimilco-hundidos-jodidos-solamente-sismo-sino-la-sed-la-ciudad/>. *Note: article published under pen name.*
- 2013 "Syria won't be another Iraq, but it's already another Afghanistan." *Seattle Globalist*, September 11. <http://www.seattleglobalist.com/2013/09/11/syria-isnt-iraq-its-another-afghanistan/16327>
- 2012 "Grass without roots: the dilemma of funding for social change." *Real Change*. February 16th. <http://www.realchangenews.org/index.php/site/archives/5302/>

Media Appearances (Selected)

- 2021 "Inundar la CDMX o Tula es una 'decisión política'," interviewed by Armando Yeferson for *Diario 24 Horas*, October 4. <https://www.24-horas.mx/2021/10/04/inundar-la-cdmx-o-tula-es-una-decision-politica/>
- 2021 "Tula: la inundación fue una decisión política," radio interview by Maurizio Montes de Oca for *Tribu Política*, Radio Centro, September 28. https://open.spotify.com/episode/5tRI0qtBl6GpJtRNVBEyHS?si=wy4qMW4hTtucNv_jgDbqbQ&dl_branch=1&nd=1
- 2021 "Agua limpia a cambio de aguas negras: un mal negocio para Hidalgo," interviewed by Diego Badillo for *El Economista*, September 26.

<https://www.eleconomista.com.mx/politica/Agua-limpia-a-cambio-de-aguas-negras-un-mal-negocio-para-Hidalgo-20210924-0086.html>

- 2021 “Se inundó a Tula por ‘manejo político’ en el Valle de México,” interviewed by Yuvenil Torres for *Criterio Hidalgo*, September 22. <https://criteriohidalgo.com/regiones/se-inundo-tula-manejo-politico-valle-de-mexico>
- 2021 Live radio interview by Berenice Camacho and Miguel Ángel Quemain about Tula flood on *Primer Movimiento*, Radio UNAM, September 20.
- 2021 “Las razones por las que se inundó Tula y no la CDMX,” live TV interview by Jesús Escobar on *La Octava Noticias*, Mexico City, September 12. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BDy0sbw1vV4>
- 2019 “Ejidal San Isidro, una colonia que parece condenada a inundarse [Ejidal San Isidro, a neighborhood that seems condemned to flood],” interviewed by María Fernanda Ruíz for *Pie de Página*, August 7. <https://piedepagina.mx/ejidal-san-isidro-una-colonia-que-parece-condenada-a-inundarse/>
- 2018 “Ciudad de México inicia corte de agua por cuatro días [Mexico City begins four day water cutoff],” interviewed by Lucile Gimberg for *Noticias de América*, Radio France Internationale, November 1. <http://es.rfi.fr/americas/20181101-ciudad-de-mexico-inicia-corte-de-agua-por-cuatro-dias>
- 2018 “Mexico City Keeps Sinking As Its Water Supply Wastes Away,” interviewed by Carrie Kahn for *All Things Considered*, National Public Radio (NPR), September 14. <https://www.npr.org/2018/09/14/647601623/mexico-city-keeps-sinking-as-its-water-supply-wastes-away>
- 2018 “5 motivos por los que Ciudad de México puede quedarse sin agua para sus más de 20 millones de habitantes [Five reasons why Mexico City could be left without water for its more than 20 million inhabitants],” interviewed by Ana Gabriela Rojas for *BBC Mundo*, April 9. <https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-43539138>

PRESENTATIONS

Invited Talks

- 2021 “La sangría permanente: Notas sobre el origen del Drenaje Profundo [The permanent bleeding: Notes on the origin of the Deep Drainage],” part of the *Cultura visual y cultura material: Aproximaciones multidisciplinares al espacio urbano* [Visual and material culture:

Multidisciplinary approaches to urban space] series hosted remotely via Zoom by the Institute for Historical Research at the National Autonomous University of Mexico, Mexico City, February 11.

- 2019 "Nos estamos hundiendo: Crecimiento urbano, inundaciones, y la crisis que nos enfrenta [Sinking ourselves: urban growth, floods, and the crisis we face]," Part of the *Conjuros de Agua* [Spell of Water] series at the Laboratorio de Tecnologías el Rule, Mexico City, June 7.
- 2019 "Engineering, Social Justice, and the Environment: An Anthropological Perspective," quarterly lecture of the Department of Anthropology, Santa Clara University (co-sponsored by Civil, Environmental and Sustainable Engineering), Santa Clara, CA, April 24.
- 2018 "Ingeniería y la transferencia de riesgos [Engineering and Risk Transfer]," Casa de Cultura of the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México, Mexico City, September 24.
- 2018 "El desagüe de la ciudad infinita [Draining the Infinite City]," Center for Economic Research and Teaching (Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas), Mexico City, April 26.
- 2012 "From 'Saving Africa' to Looking in the Mirror: Reflections on the Critical Development Forum's Student-Driven Popular Education Initiative to Re-Politicize 'Development' at the University of Washington," University of KwaZulu-Natal's Centre for Civil Society in Durban, South Africa, July 25.

Selected Presentations and Workshops

- 2021 "A Lake Divided: Between Utopia and Dystopia in Mexico City," Mellon Forum, Princeton-Mellon Initiative in Architecture, Urbanism, and the Humanities, Princeton University, September 22.
- 2021 "Rationalizing Emergency: Protocols and the Problem of Flooding in Mexico City," American Association of Geographers meeting (held virtually), April 11.
- 2020 "Self-Devouring Urbanism: Displacements of Water, People, and Capital in Mexico City," American Association of Geographers meeting (held virtually), April 7.
- 2019 "Forensic Hydrology: Engineering, Uncertainty, and Urbanization in Mexico City," American Anthropological Association meeting, Vancouver, Canada, November 21.
- 2019 "Displacement Work: Flooding and the Mundanity of Disaster in Mexico City," Fluid Ecologies workshop hosted by the Center for Global Studies at Stanford University, Stanford, California, February 22.
- 2018 "The Ambiance of the Undrained City: Flooding and the Differentiation of Urban Space through Drainage Infrastructures," American Anthropological Association meeting, San Jose, California, November 16.
- 2018 "La mundanidad del desastre [The Mundanity of Disaster]," Congreso Mexicano de Antropología Social y Etnología, Mexico City, October 24th.

- 2016 Participant in the "Anthropocene Curriculum: The Technosphere Issue," biennial workshop hosted by Haus der Kulturen der Welt and Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin, April 14-22.
- 2016 "How to Engineer a Water Crisis," invited presentation for Stanford School of Humanities and Sciences Graduate Research Salon, February 11.
- 2015 "Engineering the infinite metropolis: Mexico City's water resource engineers and the crisis of urban growth," Young Environmental Scholars Conference at Stanford, December 2. *Won best presentation award for Water Conservation and Management section.*
- 2014 "The False Hope of Technology," TEDxUofW, University of Washington, May 3. Available online: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=53iihyJ3wK0>
- 2013 "From Good Intentions to Praxis: Learning from the Successes and Failures of the Critical Development Forum," Engineering, Social Justice, and Peace conference in Troy, New York, August 14-16.
- 2011 "Grass without Roots: Foreign Funding and the Underdevelopment of Nicaraguan Civil Society," International Studies Association convention in Montreal, Quebec, March 16-19.
- 2010 "Grass without Roots: Foreign Funding and the Underdevelopment of Nicaraguan Civil Society," Association for Research on Nonprofit and Voluntary Action conference in Arlington, Virginia, November 18-20.

TEACHING

Courses Designed and Taught

- 2022 **Engineering Justice and the City: Technologies, Environments, and Power**
Seminar/Design Studio
Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Princeton University
- 2014 **Engineering for Social Justice: Politics and Possibilities of Engineering**
Seminar (12 students)
College of Engineering, University of Washington
- 2012 **Beyond Good Intentions: Evaluating Global Development Critically**
Seminar (18 students)
Department of Geography, University of Washington

Teaching Assistantships

- 2019 **Doing STS: Introduction to Research**
Writing intensive seminar (16 students)
Science and Technology Studies program, Stanford University

2016 **Medical Ethics in a Global World: Examining Race, Difference and Power in the Research Enterprise**
Seminar (30 students)
Department of Anthropology, Stanford University

ACADEMIC SERVICE

2021 **Reviewer**, *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*

2020-2021 **Graduate Student Placement Committee Representative**, Stanford Department of Anthropology.

2019 **Workshop organizer**, "What's in Your Bag? Fieldwork Nuts and Bolts." Stanford Department of Anthropology, April 22.

2017 **Curriculum Reviewer**, *Read. Inquire. Write*, University of Michigan. Provided expert feedback on middle-school curriculum about Mexico City's water crisis.

2014 **Workshop organizer**, "Anthropology Meets the Public: Op-Ed Writing." Stanford Department of Anthropology, December 4.

2011-2012 **Co-founder and coordinator, Critical Development Forum**. Led series of public forums, workshops, and a conference designed to (re)politicize "development" and global engagement work at the University of Washington.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

2016-2020 **Stanford Solidarity Network**
Co-founder and organizer of organization that advocates for making Stanford more affordable, diverse, and inclusive for graduate students. Collectively won a five year, 12-month funding guarantee for all graduate students, a \$15,000 per year grant for every student parent, and a 50% subsidy for dependent healthcare.

2015 **Fossil Free Stanford**
Led visuals team during major direct action campaign for fossil fuel divestment, with photos appearing in global news outlets including The Guardian US.

2013-2014 **Seattle Solidarity Network**
Organized with low-income and undocumented Latinx workers to win over \$12,000 in back wages through community boycotts.

2008-2011 **Engineers Without Borders** - University of Washington Chapter
Served various roles, including Projects Director, responsible for design and implementation of over \$100,000 in potable water, irrigation, clean cookstove, and rural road projects in Bolivia.

AFFILIATIONS AND LICENSURE

Latin American Studies Association
Society for the History of Technology
American Association of Geographers
American Association of Anthropologists
Engineer in Training (E.I.T.), certified by the State of Washington

LANGUAGES

Spanish: Fluent reading, speaking, listening, and writing.

Persian (Dari): Advanced speaking and listening (Afghan heritage speaker); intermediate writing and reading.

Portuguese: Intermediate reading, basic speaking and listening (dormant).

French: Basic reading, speaking and listening (dormant).

English: Native fluency.