

*Loved to Death, Loved to Life: Making and Unmaking Riparian Natures on the Isar*

*Anne Rademacher*

My time in residence at the Rachel Carson Center is in association with the International Doctoral Programme “Rethinking Environment: The Environmental Humanities and the Ecological Transformation of Society” (IDK). I will convene the seminar, Restoration, Repair, Resilience: Forging Environmental Futures.

On one hand, the ecologies of the present and future are riddled with precarity and uncertainty. Nested realities of climate change, urbanization, biodiversity collapse, and the toxic legacies of modern techno-industrial growth return us again and again to experiences of collapse, death, and destruction. At the same time, the environment, and our relationship to it, continue to galvanize collective efforts to rethink mosaics of human and non-human life. From greener cities and agricultural practices to new economic modalities and thriving ecologies, the human experience of the twenty-first century environment is also one marked by efforts to engage, revive, and repair. Our work will address the environmental future through four concepts: restoration, repair, resilience, and accident. We will explore these through contemporary case studies, grounds for exploring the political work that accompanies the making and enactment of alternative environmental visions. While projects of environmental *restoration* often prompt struggles over questions of “restoration to what?” and “for whom?”, projects of *repair* often begin with the assumption of an irreversibly altered ecological present. Here, the present forms the baseline for efforts to plan and make an ecologically vital future. The idea of *resilience* often follows in the wake of experiences of environmental disaster, galvanizing social efforts to recover and, to use an example from New York City in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, “build it back better.” Lastly, we will address *accidental* environmental futures, cases in which the by-products of urban or industrial processes unexpectedly create conditions within which certain ecologies seem to proliferate and thrive. Each concept will serve as a portal toward understanding the emergence of new, and newly legitimated, social exclusions and boundary work; each will prompt us to look for new, and newly legitimated, social and ecological affinities.