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April, 2020

# I'm Afraid of That Water: A Collaborative Ethnography of a West Virginia Water Crisis

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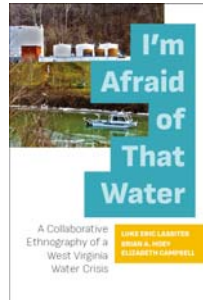
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## I'm Afraid of That Water: A Collaborative Ethnography of a West Virginia Water Crisis



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### Summary

On January 9, 2014, residents across Charleston, West Virginia, awoke to an unusual licorice smell in the air and a similar taste in the public drinking water. That evening residents were informed the tap water in tens of thousands of homes, hundreds of businesses, and dozens of schools and hospitals—the water made available to as many as 300,000 citizens in a nine-county region—had been contaminated with a chemical used for cleaning crushed coal.

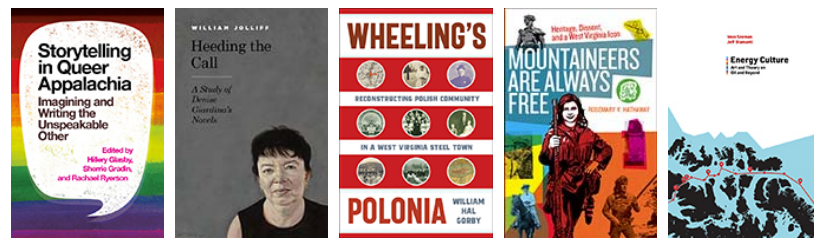
This book tells a particular set of stories about that chemical spill and its aftermath, an unfolding water crisis that would lead to months, even years, of fear and distrust. It is both oral history and collaborative ethnography, jointly conceptualized, researched, and written by people—more than fifty in all—across various positions in academia and local communities. *I'm Afraid of That Water* foregrounds the ongoing concerns of West Virginians (and people in comparable situations in places like Flint, Michigan) confronted by the problem of contamination, where thresholds for official safety may be crossed, but a genuine return to normality is elusive.

Edited by Luke Eric Lassiter, Brian A. Hoey, and Elizabeth Campbell

April 2020  
240pp  
PB 978-1-949199-37-6 ⓘ  
\$29.99  
CL 978-1-949199-36-9 ⓘ  
\$99.99  
eBook 978-1-949199-38-3 ⓘ  
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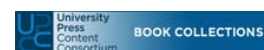
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WVU Press

West Virginia University Press  
P.O. Box 6295  
Morgantown, WV 26506  
Phone: 1-866-WVU-PRESS  
Fax: 1-304-293-6585

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