

Assistant Professor

Specialty: Biology – Ecology and Environmental Science

Office Location: Stern 122F

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Courses Taught:

Ecology, Botany, Research Methodology, General Biology and General Biology Lab

Research and/or Teaching Interests:

My work is cross-disciplinary, melding oceanography, environmental studies, resource management, urban studies, social sciences, sustainability, and urban planning to study the relationship between human culture and the coastal environment. My current work focuses on the ways that environmental change affects coastal cities and social dynamics in those cities, particularly in the context of global climate change. New Orleans is currently the main focus of my studies. I also research the microbial ecology of the Hudson River in collaboration with colleagues from the Lamont Doherty Earth Observatory of Columbia University. My teaching goals are to develop an environmental science program here at Dillard, in an effort to recruit more students from underrepresented groups to study this fascinating field. I studied Marine Resource Science and Management at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and got my Ph.D. in Integrative Biology at U.C. Berkeley studying the San Francisco Bay system.

University Service:

Chair, Lyceum Committee, Dillard Faculty Senate

Publicity and Publication Committee, Division of Natural Sciences and Public Health

Professional Affiliations:

American Society for Environmental History

American Society for Limnology and Oceanography

American Association of University Women

Selected Publications:

Lesen, Amy E. 2007. Scientists versus the local community: A case study in pre- and post-Katrina New Orleans. Conference paper, American Studies Association Annual Meeting Conference Proceedings, ASA Press.

Lesen, A.E. 2006. Sediment organic matter composition and dynamics in San Francisco Bay,

California, U.S.A.: Seasonal variation and interactions between water column chlorophyll and the benthos. *Estuarine, Coastal and Shelf Science*, 66 (3-4): 501-512.

Lesen, A.E. 2005. Relationship between benthic foraminifera and food resources in South San Francisco Bay, USA. *Marine Ecology Progress Series*, 297: 131–145.

Selected Presentations:

“New Orleans Beyond Disciplinary Boundaries: Race, Hurricane Katrina, and the Re-imagining of an American City.” Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA, March 2009.

“New Orleans Post-Katrina: A U.S. Case Study in Coastal Cities as Risk: History, Culture, Vulnerability, Ecology, Architecture.” Coastal Cities Summit, St. Petersburg, FL, Nov. 2008

Invited presentation:

“New Orleans Pre- and Post-Katrina: A U.S. Case Study in Coastal Cities at Risk – Ecology, Culture, History, and Vulnerability: What is the Role of Scientists?” Marine Biological Laboratory, Woods Hole, MA, Nov. 2008.

Panel presenter:

“Architecture and Green Cityscape.” Living with Nature: Sustaining the New York Metropolitan Region's Biodiversity through Local Action Conference, American Museum of Natural History, October, 2006

Selected Grants/Awards:

President's Mini-Grant for the Division of Natural Sciences and Public Health, Dillard University, 2008.

Mellon Foundation Faculty Research Grant, Pratt Institute, 2006.

Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award, U.C. Berkeley, 2002.