

Dr Jonathan GALKA

<https://jonathangalka.com/>

Education

- PhD (History of Science) Harvard University, 2025
- MA (History of Science) Harvard University, 2022
- BA (History of Science) Medicine, and Public Health) Yale University, 2018
- BS (Ecology & Evolutionary Biology) Yale University, 2018

Professional Experience

2025-2027

Postdoctoral Fellow, NUS

- Completing a monograph on the history of aspirations to mine the deepest seabeds for mineral ores in the mid-20th century and beginning research on a second book project examining the history of attempts to use deep seawater to create energy and edible protein on land.

2023-2024

Visiting Scholar, Yale-NUS College

- Completed archival research and writing relevant to my dissertation and first book project, as well as research on Singaporean histories of deep-sea mining, as deep ocean minerals take on renewed exigencies in forecasted energy transitions.

2020-2022

Visiting PhD Candidate, Czech Academy of Sciences

- Completed ethnographic and archival work on deep seabed exploitation from East-Central Europe, in particular with the Szczecin, Poland-based Interoceanmetal Joint Organization.

Research Area/Topic/Discipline

- History of Modern Earth & Environmental Science
- Environmental History
- Ocean Law, Science, and Politics
- Deep Seas
- Mid-20th Century

Short Biography

Jonathan completed his PhD in the Department of History of Science at Harvard University in 2025. In 2024-2025, he is a visiting scholar at NUS ARI and with the NTU CCA on its Climate Change and Cultural Loss project. His dissertation examining the 20th century identification of deep-sea manganese nodules as scientific, political, and economic resources, queries how the construction of nodules as a mineral resource frontier imbricated the biological and geological sciences with Cold War and postcolonial ocean law and politics. At ARI, he will begin a project on the histories and futures of deep seawater technologies, especially ocean thermal energy conversion.

Publications

Selected Refereed Articles

“‘The Nodules are Alive and Well on the Sea Floor’: Deep Ocean Minerals, Invertebrate Traces, and Multispecies Histories of Abyssal Environments.” *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences* (forthcoming in Collection, Values at Sea: Science Studies Meets Marine Science).

“Bohemia at the Pacific Seabed: Archiving the Future of Deep-Sea Mining with the InterOceanmetal Joint Organization.” *Social Studies of Science* 54 (5), 678-705.

“Oceans of Ooze: Deep-sea Sedimentary Data, Mineral Resource Frontiers, and Imperial Continuities in Ocean History.” *Historical Studies in the Natural Sciences* 53 (5), 481-517.

“Liguus Landscapes: Professional Malacology, Amateur Lligging, and the Social Life of Snail Sciences.” *Journal of the History of Biology*, 55 (4), 689-723.

with Laurence Bashford. “Terraforming Beautiful China: Island-Building and Chang’E Lunar Exploration in the Making of the Chinese State.” *International Quarterly of Asian Studies* 53(3), 385-411.

“Mollusk Loves: Becoming with Native and Introduced Land Snails in the Hawaiian Islands.” *Island Studies Journal* 17(1), 102-122.

Edited Journal Special Issue

with Hervé Raimana Lallemand-Moe, Nabil Ahmed, and Ute Meta Bauer. Special Issue, *Comparative Law Journal of the Pacific*, “Thinking the World from the Deep Ocean: Seabed Mining Between National Waters and High Seas.” (Forthcoming, July 2025).

Book Chapter

“Deep Uncertainty: Law, Models, and Negotiating the Future Ocean in the 1970s.” In *The Mediated Ocean: A History of Deep-sea Data*. Eds. Susanna Lidström and Adam Wickberg. (in review).

Book Reviews

Review of Bashford, Alison, Kern, Emily M., Adam Bobbette, eds, *New Earth Histories: Geo-Cosmologies and the Making of the Modern World*. International Journal of Maritime History (Forthcoming, February 2025).

Review of Yin Han, Lisa. *Deepwater Alchemy: Extractive Mediation and the Taming of the Seafloor*. H-Oceans, September 2024.

Review of Helmreich, Stefan. *A Book of Waves*. H-Environment. H-Net Reviews. February 2024.

Review of Swanson, Heather Anne. *Spawning Modern Fish: Transnational Comparison in the Making of Japanese Salmon*. H-Environment. H-Net Reviews. June 2023.

Review of Anderson, Katharine; Rozwadowski, Helen M., eds. *Soundings and Crossings: Doing Science at Sea, 1800-1970*. H-Sci-Med-Tech. H-Net Reviews. September 2022.

Op-Eds

with Godfrey Jordan Abage. “Deep seabed mining is back in Papua New Guinea’s Bismarck Sea. What’s new this time?” *Extracting the Oceans: Scales and Eddies*.

Awards/Grants and Distinctions

- Harvard Griffin GSAS Dissertation Completion Fellowship (2024-2025)
- Dissertation Research Fellowship, Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History (2023)
- Graduate Research Fellowship, International Commission of the History of Oceanography (2022-2023)
- Canada Program Fellowship, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs (2022)
- Pre-dissertation Research Fellowship, David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies (2021)
- Harvard University Presidential Graduate Prize Fellowship (2019-2025)
- Fulbright Research Award, Malaysia (2018-2019)