



# **Student Anthropologist**

The Journal of the Anthropology Students Association  
of UBC



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*Editors: Tomas Christen, Nicole Keong, Megan McGeough, Alexandra Tucker, and Samara Mayes.*

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## Introduction

Welcome to *Student Anthropologist*, the undergraduate journal of the University of British Columbia's Anthropology Students Association (ASA).

Building on last year's successful launch of the journal, we wanted to continue the tradition of giving students in Anthropology, and, indeed, any students interested in anthropology, the chance to make their voices heard on issues they find pertinent. The journal gives students an opportunity to see their work in print, providing them a chance to see what the world of anthropology is all about once they leave the confines of university.

This year we had the invaluable help of some veteran ASA members, whose advice helped make this journal possible. However, for some of us, myself included, it was a new, and interesting experience. Using various techniques, including classroom visits, emails, and TV slides in the ANSO building, we spread the word the presses would be rolling once more. This year we hoped to expand the range of materials included in the journal, such as magazine-style opinion articles, as well as visuals such as photos and drawings. We were pleasantly surprised to see a doubling of the number of submissions this year, across a broad range of topics. We even received a submission from an exchange student in the UK. We did not see the hoped-for alternative submissions we introduced this year, but it is understandable. Our dilemma is much like that of real anthropologists, how to make our message resonate with a wide audience. We will continue to publish, and in doing so, provide the opportunity for engaged students to take the chance and show what they know.

We selected eight submissions this year, based on the input of five editors. The topics are diverse, covering issues such as consumerism, cultural appropriation, land ownership, and indigenous rights. As with last year, the papers are of cultural anthropology, again due to greater interest in topics in that field. We are eager to see the scope of the journal broaden in the coming years, and hope that each volume will build upon the last.

We hope you enjoy reading these collected works from the Department of Anthropology at UBC. Thank you for your interest and for encouraging our continuing effort to promote student voices.

Sincerely,

Thomas Gustafson

## *Cultural Appropriation, Commodification, and the Agency of the Hip-Hop Artist*

Emily Allan

Hip-hop finds its earliest roots in the early 1970s in the South Bronx of New York, when DJs started spinning songs together at block parties, drawing in influences from funk, soul, reggae, and other similar genres and mixing beats. Shortly after this came the addition of call and response and rapping, or "MC'ing," (the roots of which can be traced back to traditional African music) over these tracks. The central supporters at the beginning of the movement were mostly youth within Caribbean-American, African-American, and Latin-American communities (George 1996). The music style, and culture, became both more popular and more political in the 1980s with breakout acts like the Sugarhill Gang, Run D.M.C., and Public Enemy releasing popular hits (Abe 2009:264, George 1996). Since the 1990s, hip-hop has gone in a few different directions, but its origins, when it came into its own as a popular genre, lie in marginalized communities speaking out against oppression. This paper will explore the creation and use of agency in hip-hop, meaning the power the individual hip-hop artist has and can use to invite community action within, or against, the greater power structure. I seek to discover the effects that cultural appropriation, the taking of cultural components from one culture by another, and commodification, the consumption of something into a market mentality, have had on this agency. In this paper, I will argue that in some ways these phenomena dilute hip-hop, both in quality and social connectiveness, taking away opportunities for agency; however, they also provide hip-hop artists with new (and perhaps more nuanced) kinds of agency.

It is important to recognize here that hip-hop culture is not homogeneous; there is great diversity within its music, styles, attitudes, politics, and goals. The racial discourse often operates in a "black versus white" framework, contrasting the socially outside white person and the disenfranchised Black person. Obviously, this is not always an accurate representation of reality (and there is more a spectrum of ethnicity included, particularly with Latin American participation in hip-hop culture), however the past and present oppression of Black culture specifically by a white-dominated power structure has been the main focus of most hip-hop for much of its history. Further, it is important to distinguish the differences

within hip-hop culture that have emerged since its rise in popularity, hitting the mainstream in the late 1980s. I make one central distinction in this essay between mainstream hip-hop and underground hip-hop, the former being the more popular, commercialized (and commodified) form, and the latter being one that sticks closer to hip-hop's origins, focusing less on commercial success and more on political and social change. Michael Dwyer describes underground hip-hop artist as having "different social and political values as well as a different niche in the consumer market than contemporary multi-platinum, mainstream hip-hop" (2007:76).

Hip-hop culture, whether mainstream or underground, can be said to rest in the "street culture" of the neighborhoods it originated in, of poverty and marginalization, and the subsequent ways individuals rely on themselves and their families and communities. Many claim that hip-hop's ability to empower individuals to challenge these oppressive forces has remained strong, partially due to its inclusive, community-oriented nature (Abe 2009:287, Malone & Martinez 2010:542). Though it is only about four decades old, hip-hop operates in many ways, as a form of "cultural expression and commercial industry," as "a network of social organizations working toward issues of social and economic justice," and as "an avenue for political activism and participation" (Malone & Martinez 2010:542).

Not all are convinced that hip-hop possesses this kind of power, however. In his book *AF About the Beat: Why Hip-Hop Can't Save Black America*, John McWhorter claims that hip-hop has merely been a reaction to the injustice of oppression, but has not moved beyond that into cultural or political solutions: "if the message of this supposedly revolutionary music is just 'Fuck!' the message is weak. [...] I am concerned with what the 'politics' of hip-hop tells us about where to go after we crawl with the tide, reactive eruption of *Fuck!*" (McWhorter 2008:6). The article McWhorter speaks of is epitomized by rap group N.W.A.'s influential 1988 hit *Fuck the Police*. However, hip-hop, particularly in its underground form, does seem to have moved past a phase of reaction into a constructive one: rappers often provide intelligent social commentaries and suggestions for creating positive social change. Canadian rapper Shaf's song *Keep Drive!* and Seattle rapper Macklemore's song *Some Love advances women's and gay rights*, respectively; 2Pac's hit *Keep Ya Head Up* encourages marginalized women, while his song *Dear*

*Mama* expresses his deep appreciation and respect for his mother. Additionally, the presence of well-respected female voices in hip-hop such as Lauryn Hill and Missy Elliott have allowed for more discussion of gender issues, as well as female identity, sexualization, and body image. These are only a few examples of how the agency of the hip-hop artist includes this power to influence the social dialogue.

This agency operates within the context of oppressive power structures and recognizes the ability of the individual to create change in marginalized circumstances. Bourdieu famously discusses the relationship between structure and agency so prominent within anthropological thought, claiming that individuals often reproduce a structure, or "habitus," as he calls the dominant systems of entrenched attitudes in a society (1977). In hip-hop, the artist has the power to challenge these sets of attitudes, the "habitus" of racism and socioeconomic marginalization of black communities. Dwyer notes that, "in [hip-hop] shows, performers and audience jointly produce a space of interactive engagement in which they can contest dominant cultural values," noting that this "empowers people who are often left out of public spheres due to age, race, education, and socioeconomic status" (2007:78).

So, how is the agency of the hip-hop artist created? Artists base their legitimacy on a series of factors, from authenticity, to skill, to wealth, to street-worthiness, to a "black identity." Often, this "black identity" is based in some form of street culture: the use of crime, violence, and the drug trade come into play here, as many rappers base their legitimacy in being able to navigate this world, and rise above it to success (while holding on to some of its elements). The basis of authenticity in this "black identity" can certainly be limiting for artists, however it can also provide them with legitimacy and power. It is important to make another distinction here, between hip-hop that glorifies violence, crime, and drugs, to that which calls attention to it and points to the need for change (Rayne et al. 2009:362). The latter is not necessarily considered "better" within hip-hop culture, many of today's artists participate in the former, and even more artists do both. The latter is, however, much more socially constructive.

Legitimacy is also often based in the quality of the artist's music, of its beat and lyrical wordplay, its use of metaphors, internal rhyme, double entendres, and other literary devices; and the artist's ability to reference respected hip-hop songs and artists. Intelligence, therefore, has always been a central facet to

authenticity in hip-hop (Jenkins 2011: 1234). How this created agency is used in hip-hop is another consideration: the two main goals tend to be inciting social change (underground), and becoming successful (mainstream), though these are not mutually exclusive. Where normatively, many argue that hip-hop should be aimed at the former (Dewey 2007; Reynolds et al. 2009), it must be recognized that the latter creates a sphere of influence that enables different kinds of agency: hip-hop artists who reach the mainstream have the potential to reach a wider audience if they push for social change, though their message might be affected by other messages (such as the glorification of money, crime, and drugs, and often the objectification of women) which enabled their success. This also begs the question of how commodification and cultural appropriation, which occur mostly with mainstream hip-hop, affect the agency of the artist.

First, I will discuss cultural appropriation. Due to hip-hop's obsession with authenticity, the taking of elements of hip-hop culture by dominant white culture has been criticized by many as illegitimate, taking a desired aspect of power away from black communities. This is particularly illegitimate because of the history of white oppression of the very culture it then uses for its own purposes, for financial gain, as a false sense of social progressivism in pretending to identify with the 'black experience' (the resolution of so-called 'white guilt'), or the social prestige associated with elements of hip-hop culture (Abe 2009; Rodriguez 2006; Smith 2003). Whether this is inessential on an individual scale, such as at the hands of a white teenager involved in hip-hop culture, it remains the net effect, and this can deteriorate one of the most central sources of power that black communities have built (Rodriguez 2006). One of the ways that hip-hop culture has held on to this power is by marking distinctions between white and black participants within itself, and denying white people certain labels of authenticity. This can be seen in the discourse around the N-word, the main belief within hip-hop being that it should only be used by black individuals (Harkness 2008: 40). Opinions on the N-word certainly vary: many, including those within black communities and hip-hop culture itself, believe it should be outlawed entirely. Some however, such as rapper Childish Gambino, suggest that normalizing it is the only way to rid it of its racist connotations, and it should thus be used by everyone: in his song *Tva for All*, he implies, "can we hear the N-word

one day and not get upset?" The most dominant view within hip-hop culture is that the word is an important part of the culture, a marker of authenticity, a statement of camaraderie, and a mode for taking back power, that can only be used by black individuals (and, Harkness notes, those of other marginalized ethnic groups, particularly Puerto Ricans, who have always been a part of hip-hop culture) (2008). The N-word thus remains one way that black hip-hop artists can strengthen their individual agency.

Following this line of thought, some argue that hip-hop should be preserved as a strictly black cultural expression (Rodriguez 2006) as many of its formational goals were to work against oppressive power structures dominated by white culture, it should remain a tool for this, as well as a celebration of success in this struggle. However, we must be skeptical of this notion of cultural preservation. The fluidity of social boundaries and the spread of cultural traits are not new, neither are they necessarily preventable (Harkness 2008; Smith 2003; Minton & Martinec 2010). The question of whether a culture can ever be preserved is one discussed in William Roschbery's work: culture, he recognizes, is a dynamic process, not a finished product (1982). However, the fact that culture is constantly changing does not mean that it cannot be distinct, and perhaps stay that way. Roschbery also focuses on how important the recognition of a culture's historical processes is, and hip-hop is incredible in this respect: both mainstream and underground hip-hop artists constantly reference other artists' work in their lyrics. This self-referencing is something that people do not tend to pick up on until they have listened to a substantial amount of hip-hop and understood these often cleverly worded references: this is another way that hip-hop keeps itself exclusive. However, it is important to note, as aforementioned artist Shad points out, that "Western music - jazz, hip-hop, rock, blues, etc. - has always developed through cross-pollination across genres and between cultural communities and even countries," and that "it's difficult to talk about 'original culture' [...] because not much happens in isolation in the world of popular music" (letter to author, December 2, 2012). Indeed, hip-hop is particularly exemplary of this, as it relies heavily on sampling hooks and beats from songs belonging to other genres. However, Roschbery also discusses the importance of how stories are shaped according to their context and who is telling them (1982:1025-1026).

This is directly related to how American history was, and is, often told from a white perspective: hip-hop is a way for African Americans to become the tellers of their own experience and historical context.

The question arises, then: does cultural appropriation of hip-hop by white cultures take away this power, the agency of the artist? In some ways it can, if the artist is concerned with telling this story of the 'black experience' and staying true to its formative origins. Rodriguez argues that a "value-blind ideology," one that sees race as irrelevant (even with the best intentions of 'equality'), can perpetuate the issues associated with racial marginalization by implying that they do not exist: "it provides those with more racial power the discursive resources to decontextualize cultural objects from the histories and expectations from whence they came" (2006:663). Hip-hop's focus on aspects of the 'black experience', whether glamorizing poverty and crime, pointing to them as problems, or celebrating the ability to be rid of them, is something that belongs to people who actually experience it. The culture has always remained a "shared experience of marginalization through various forms of discrimination, violence, poverty and hardship" (Malone & Martinec 2010:542): it is not justified for people who do not identify with this to pretend that they do, or try to take this sense of hardship, and accomplishment of overcoming it, as their own. Obviously, black communities are not the only groups that face these hardships, so whether this means hip-hop should remain strictly within black culture is contestable. That proposes that hip-hop "was definitely born out of specific communities and circumstances that should always be privileged and respected by others that engage in it," and that, "the key to creative participation without appropriation is respecting the people and stories at the heart of a culture while remaining creatively open to new ideas and a range of influences" (letter to author, December 2, 2012). Perhaps the answer to this question, then, is that a listener must simply understand what his or her relationship to the music is. For me, a white person from an upper middle class background, I can legitimately appreciate hip-hop for its artistry, and through it try to gain a better understanding of the racial issues of oppression it discusses. I cannot, however, legitimately identify with the artist's specific struggles and accomplishments like many can. I cannot take elements of hip-hop in this way and claim them as my own, but I can appreciate and respect them for what they are and who they belong to.

In, in some ways, cultural appropriation can decrease the agency of hip-hop artists to fulfill the purposes widely considered important and foundational; however, it also creates a different kind of agency. It opens the genre up to discourse about different issues, those that do not apply exclusively to black communities, or other marginalized ethnic groups. White rappers like Eminem and Macklemore use hip-hop to speak against disenfranchisement as well. Macklemore's song *Same Love*, mentioned previously, strongly advocates the legalization of gay marriage: "no freedom 'til we're equal, damn right I support it." He does this while placing homosexuality specifically in the context of hip-hop culture: "If I was gay, I'd think hip-hop hates me." He points to homophobia in wider American society, and then opens the conversation within in hip-hop culture, allowing hip-hop to fight an injustice that it has often perpetuated. Macklemore also expresses, in his song *A Wake*, his struggles with feeling inauthentic speaking against black oppression as a white rapper: "don't get involved if the cause isn't mine, white privilege, white guilt it has come down time. So we just party like it's 1999, celebrate the ignorance while these kids keep flyin'." In addition to these new opportunities to discussion of issues, the cultural appropriation of hip-hop also allows it to reach a wider audience it would not otherwise reach.

This ties closely with my next question: does the commodification of hip-hop, making it all about and of for money, decrease the agency of the artist? As Bourgeois famously discusses in his ethnography of Los Angeles in the 1980s and 90s, the way that the mainstream "incorporates and commercializes" street culture (2003:8), celebrates most in hip-hop culture. In some ways, mainstream hip-hop packages and sells poverty to the wealthy. Farther than this, it has become an effective strategy for the attainment of wealth, not just by artists, but by record labels, producers, and the like. Brijaji Morali argues that, "artists are commodified, [...] and ultimately sold to audiences" (2009:22), which can be limiting, particularly in the construction of identity for black males (2009). This identity is disseminated by successful hip-hop artists, sometimes referred to as "moguls." Smith describes the hip-hop mogul as one who rises to the top of the hip-hop industry, reveling in the success he has created despite the odds being stacked against him (2003:82-83). Smith explains that this is expressed in the hip-hop mogul's pride in the money he makes through success: moguls "flaunt their rise from among the ranks of the disenfranchised by

making public displays of their newly begotten wealth. For the mogul, jealous, envy, and hatred from the crowd are merely sites of passage; to be the object of such "hated" merely serves to crystallize his essential characterism [...] (Smith 82). This also speaks to the competitive spirit between rappers; each is striving to become the most successful, or most authentic, or most accomplished. This sentiment is present in countless rap songs, such as Jay-Z's *Don't Stop Me Now* (Shoulder): "all the rappers be hatin', off the track that I'm makin', but all the hoes they love it just to see one of us make it."

So, does this commodification weaken hip-hop's potential? Dowdy argues that underground hip-hop is "a necessary corrective to a largely inept, corporate-controlled mainstream hip hop obsessed with wealth and individualism. It is also a return to principles that nurtured the culture in its early years—community-building, direct participation, and live performance" (2007:89). The agency of the artist decreases particularly when those in control of the industry are not from within the hip-hop community: artists must play to the mainstream and often are not free to express what they want, how they want to. Certainly, mainstream hip-hop tends to place less value on things like the intelligence of the artist (Jenkins 2011:1240). Jenkins argues that, "the failure to acknowledge truly talented hip-hop artists as intelligent devalues both the art production and the artist" (Jenkins 1240). While this is true, the commodification of hip-hop, like cultural appropriation, also allows for another kind of agency for artists. It can create a space in which popular artists have the power to contest dominant views and have their opinions received by a wider audience. For instance, Mos Def notes that rap music values (associated more with mainstream hip-hop than underground) allow artists to contest stereotypes by presenting "alternate constructions of Black male identity" (2009:22). Further, the kind of success that the hip-hop mogul creates is, in a crucial way, the ultimate use of individual agency in the face of an oppressive power structure: successful hip-hop artists have essentially made millions off of the culture that oppresses them. It is paradoxically both muted and in-your-face: the ultimate middle finger to oppression. Whether this is particularly socially constructive is questionable, but an undeniable sense of agency and deserved liberation is certainly there. Furthermore, as Sted notes, "these days the Jay-Zs, Dr. Drs's, Russell Simmonds, etc. are becoming more

prevalent [or executive in the industry] which means that both the art and business of hip hop are increasingly falling within the control of the community itself" (letter to author, December 2, 2012).

So, the processes through which agency in hip-hop is created and used within the greater structure of the mainstream are intricate and complex. Cultural appropriation and commodification of hip-hop certainly can have negative effects on the agency of the hip-hop artist, particularly when one believes (or may also feel) hip-hop should stay true to its foundational goals of inciting positive social change. And while there is much debate over the legitimacy of hip-hop's incorporation into white culture, as it can, in the context of a 'colour blind ideology,' be detrimental to the discourse around racism, it does allow for an opening up of new and important social discourses. Most importantly, both forces provide different kinds of agency for artists. The forces of appropriation and commodification in the mainstream allow the hip-hop artist's message to be heard by a wider audience, and this facilitates their celebration of the fact that they have taken success out of the pockets of their oppressors.

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### *West Papuan Self-Determination and Indonesian Sovereignty: The Conflicting Rights of United Nations Declarations*

Jessie Tingan

Indonesia has signed two United Nations Declarations—the first on decolonization and the second on indigenous rights—that claim to give significant power to colonized and indigenous peoples. However, West Papuans have seen little in the way of the ability to exercise these rights, including the right to self-determination, without punishment or disregard. Yet somehow, the Indonesian state's authority over West Papua continues to be viewed by the international community as legitimate. Moreover, Indonesia has managed to strengthen its sovereignty by both signing the declarations and failing to recognize West Papuan self-determination. This situation highlights an inherent contradiction in the UN Declarations: a contradiction between indigenous self-determination and the sovereignty of the nation-state.

In this essay, I will examine how the UN Declarations of 1960 and 2007 restrict the rights of the nation-state at the expense of the rights of colonized and indigenous peoples through covert, unguaranteed negotiation, a Westphalian style process, and the assumption of authority. Furthermore, I reveal how these competing rights have an inverse relationship, that is, when one is strengthened, the other is weakened. Finally, I outline what this means for Indonesian sovereignty and West Papuan self-determination.

#### **The Favoring of Nation-State Sovereignty**

On December 14, 1960, the United Nations General Assembly issued the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. It proclaimed the "necessity of bringing to a speedy and unconditional end colonialism in all its forms and manifestations," and was built on the premise that "colonized peoples should be liberated from the racism and exploitation of European imperialism" (United Nations 1960). This was a weighty event for global politics; decolonization is what gives meaning to indigenous self-determination in international law, and this declaration has yet to be fully observed. Nonetheless, its scope fell short of all the indigenous peoples who continued to be marginalized situations that did not fall under the "Non-Self-Governing" label that the

1960 Declaration addressed (Kearl 2007). After 25 years of drafting, the UN adopted another standard, this time a Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, on September 13, 2007. But as I will show, neither of these declarations helped to decolonize or empower the indigenous peoples of West Papua despite the fact that Indonesia signed on to both of them; in fact, they only reinforced the sovereignty of the Indonesian nation-state.

#### *Explicit Covenants*

The first point I will argue is that both the 1960 Declaration and the 2007 Declaration favored the rights of the nation-state over the rights of colonized and indigenous peoples. For one, neither declaration is legally binding, stating that the declared rights were never meant to be enforced (United Nations 1960). Thus, it would be norms, not laws, which would protect subjects from exploitation. The closest the United Nations came to enforcing one of the declarations was when it established The Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence of Colonial Countries and Peoples (i.e. the Special Committee on Decolonization or the Committee of 24), which "annually reviews the list of Territories to which the [1960] Declaration is applicable and makes recommendations as to its implementation" (United Nations 2012). Interestingly, Indonesia is one of the members of the Committee but it clearly does not consider West Papua as one of the applicable territories. In any case, the Committee merely establishes norms, not laws, and these norms often worked to the benefit of the Committee members.

Moreover, the declarations explicitly state that the rights of colonized and indigenous peoples are inferior to those of the nation-state. The granting of rights to these people was a radical move, so the member states of the General Assembly took significant measures to "limit its impact" (Wesley-Smith 2007). The final articles of the 1960 Declaration include a useful caveat for existing colonial powers:

6. Any attempt aimed at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and the territorial integrity of a country is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

7. All States shall observe faithfully and strictly the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the present Declaration on the basis of equality, non-interference in the internal affairs of all States, and respect for the sovereign rights of all peoples and their territorial integrity (United Nations 1960).

Likewise, Article 46 of the 2007 Declaration offers a similar caveat for nation-states:

1. Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, people, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act contrary to the Charter of the United Nations or construed as authorizing or encouraging any action which would disrupt or impair, totally or in part, the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent States (United Nations 2007). These articles make it clear that sovereignty of existing states supersedes the new rights expressed in the declarations.

#### *Colonial Implementation*

The second argument I put forward is that the implementation of the 1960 Declaration was unequal and centered on the interests of existing nation-states. The second article of this declaration states that "all peoples have the right to self-determination, by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development" (United Nations 1960). However, different colonial powers honored this right to differing degrees. For example, international pressure caused New Zealand to remove its colonial presence from Western Samoa, Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau (Wesley-Smith 2007). Meanwhile, Pacific islands like Hawaii and New Caledonia were exempt from pressures on the basis that the United States and France, respectively, had already offered them sufficient self-determination to choose their political status (Wesley-Smith 2007). Another route was followed by East Timor, directly under Indonesian control.

When it achieved independence in 2002, it did so by claiming that it had never been able to exercise its right to political self-determination since the 1960 Declaration, implying a 42-year gap of Indonesian sovereignty over the area (Wesley-Smith 2007).

The fact that the declaration was implemented unilaterally raises questions about the causes behind that inequality, and it is clear that those causes were wrapped up in the various interests, norms, and powers of existing nation-states. Wesley-Smith goes so far as to argue that even the outcomes of political self-determination—the choice between continued dependence, “free association”, or full sovereignty—was primarily determined by the colonial power’s interests (Wesley-Smith 2007). Nowhere is this clearer than in West Papua. Just a year after the first declaration, West Papuans declared sovereignty, but this went unrecognized by the United Nations and the Netherlands, which transferred administrative powers over West Papua to Indonesia in 1963 because of international pressures, specifically by the United States (Sater 2001). Further pressures led to the Act of Free Choice (i.e. the *Pemilihan Penduduk Rakyat di IRIEBERA*) in 1969, which was meant to allow West Papuans to exercise their right to self-determination (Sater 2001). But they had been ill-represented in the vote, and some have come out to admit that they had been coerced to vote a certain way, that is, to remain a province of Indonesia (Sater 2001). However, the Act of Free Choice—which some Papuans now call the “Act of No Choice”—was used by the United Nations to legitimize and finalize Indonesian sovereignty over the area and the people living there (Sater 2001). As a result, any “additional” claim for West Papuan self-determination is seen as illegitimate by the UN (Sater 2001). In other words, they had their chance.

#### *Wesphalian Decolonization*

My third argument lies in the fact that the whole decolonization process by the United Nations was wrapped up in a Wesphalian-style political system and left no room for indigenous Papuan notions of governance. Modern nation-states are founded on a tradition of sovereignty based on the Peace of

Westphalia treaties in 1648 and the United Nations is deeply entrenched in this tradition as it is composed of Wesphalian nation-states that recognize one another’s sovereignty. The Wesphalian notion of sovereignty was based on a need “to clarify lines of power by separating one people from another” and this need continues today in global politics (Brown 2007). But in most colonies—the island of New Guinea is no exception—the boundary lines were drawn arbitrarily and paid no consideration to the native population (Ryniker 2001; Wesley-Smith 2007). So, if Papuans have a difficult time forming a cohesive community with a shared national identity, it should not be of any real surprise. For the Dutch, however, the true obstacle behind the Papuans’ inability to create a sovereign nation-state was their “strong disinclination to accept authority” (Van den Broek and Sealey 2001). From the perspective of Western politics, West Papua would need an authoritative class of “Papuans elite” to form a successful nation-state; as it had none, it was doomed to fail (Van den Broek and Sealey 2001).

As West Papuans quickly found out, they would need to conform to modern, Western political norms to attain the freedom from Indonesian rule they wished for. Papuan nationalists adopted a national flag, the Morning Star flag, which flew for the first time in 1962 (Roetherford 2012). They chose a skilled subversive Filip Karoro, to lead the flag raising ceremony in 1998, which was accompanied by song (Roetherford 2012). They welcomed international attention in vocalizing the West Papuan Proclamation of Independence on July 1, 1971 (Roetherford 2012). Furthermore, they took pains to meticulously document human rights violations, which they knew was one of their only chances of convincing the United Nations to interfere in the internal affairs of the Indonesian nation-state (Roetherford 2012).

#### *Assumption of Authority*

As a final argument for the aforementioned position, I argue that the very idea of the United Nations acting as a grantor of rights to colonized and indigenous peoples only helps to reaffirm the

sovereignty of nation-states. Each declaration assumes an authority that is greater than the Papuan's own declarations and proclamations. As a collection of various sovereign member states, the United Nations is placing the authority of nation-states over the authority of colonized and indigenous groups. In effect, they are saying: "With, and only with, our voices is your cause made legitimate." Of course, nation-states reserve the power to render any cause illegitimate as well.

This imperialist discourse comes from the notion that European colonization was not an act of invasion, but of discovery and development, which happened through a natural and legitimate process (Kassing 1992). From this discourse emerges the concept of a bestowal of territories back to indigenous peoples; while in the guise of a generous act, this "bestowal" only reinforces the idea that the land legitimately belonged to the state and that it is now in the power of the state to give it back.

Similarly, rights are not something that colonized and indigenous peoples always had or can now claim themselves, but must be granted to them by the superior nation-states who make up the United Nations. Meanwhile, West Papuans are still waiting for their rights to be "granted" them and their lands to be "bestowed" upon them.

#### **The Inverse Relationship of Indigenous Peoples and Nation-States**

Thus far I have shown how the UN Declarations have aggrandized the sovereignty of the nation-state at the expense of colonized and indigenous peoples. In the next section, I take this one step further and contend that it is impossible to maintain increases of power on one without diminishing the other. In my argument, indigenous self-determination and state sovereignty exist on a binary system in which the elevation of one results in the debasing of the other. In other words, each is antithetical to the other.

This theory can help to explain the behaviour of the United Nations and the Indonesian nation-state. Several scholars have already noted that both UN Declarations promise "rights" that necessarily contradict the rights of member states of the United Nations (Keal 2007). One even argues that the very

promise of indigenous self-determination pits "the legitimacy of hundreds of ancient nations of indigenous peoples against the asserted legitimacy of Westphalian states" (Morris 2003). Why, then, would the United Nations and the Indonesian state adopt these declarations? Are they acting in an altruistic, self-sacrificing way? No. In fact, they are acting out of self-interest. As Paul Keal has asserted, granting indigenous peoples the right to self-determination as expressed in the 2007

Declaration would work against the interests of the state (Keal 2007). This is so because the indigenous population would question and then challenge the legitimacy of the nation-state; this in turn would present a crisis for both the individual state and state collectives like the United Nations as it led to the questioning and challenging of the entire "institution of sovereignty on which the state system is founded" (Keal 2007). In a way, then, by paying lip-service to indigenous rights in the form of the UN Declarations, the Indonesian state seeks to placate West Papuans into recognizing its own sovereignty. Furthermore, its contract with other nation-states in placating the world's colonized and indigenous peoples and preventing a global crisis for state sovereignty.

Here I have shown how Indonesia can manage to sign both UN Declarations and continue to refuse to recognize West Papuan independence. The signing of the declarations speaks more to Indonesia's desire to impress its domestic audience than to its actual political intention. According to Thelma Rutherford, it is the relationship between sovereignty and audience that "has shaped the history of colonialism and resistance in West Papua" (Rutherford 2012). Like the colonial officer in the story "Shooting an Elephant", Indonesian officials, even high-ranking ones, are "almost puppe(s) pushed to and fro" by the will of others (Orwell 1916). However, these "others" include not only local indigenous populations, but also present international audiences as well (Rutherford 2012). By signing on to an international declaration, even without the intention of upholding it, Indonesia impresses both its "natives" and the other members of the General Assembly. This act contributes to the recognition of its legitimate sovereignty at an international level.

This provides some insight into why Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United States eventually converted their votes on the 2007 Declaration from “no” to “yes” to render it a consensus document (Richardson 2010). Each originally expressed serious concerns with its implications, some stating that it contradicted their established constitutions (Hibson 2010). This might include indigenous peoples claiming land that now belongs to other people, or indigenous peoples seeking to disregard national laws or sever it completely (Keat 2007). Others argued that it was merely an “aspirational document” full of “empty promises and rhetoric”, “political correctness”, or “a kind of muddy, feel-good multilateralist gesture” (Canada Votes “No” on UN Native Rights Declaration Process 2007). Ultimately, however, each state responded to domestic and international pressures and signed the nonbinding agreement, convinced that it could not be used to bring about their demise (Hibson 2010, Richardson 2010).

#### The Questioned Legitimacy of the Indonesian Nation-State

Nevertheless, the situation in West Papua did not quite amount to what some hoped. The Indonesian state’s efforts to express its domestic and international willpower have somewhat failed. Although it strategically followed many political norms, it forgot or ignored other important norms to ensure its survival. For instance, substantial human rights abuses have given reason for both West Papuans and other members of the United Nations to question the legitimacy of Indonesia’s sovereignty over the area (Rutherford 2012). A similar situation occurred in East Timor, when the United Nations held a referendum in 1999 to give the East Timorese population a choice to secede from Indonesia (Sater 2001). However, unlike the case with West Papua, several countries criticized Indonesia’s original occupation of East Timor, so its claim over the area was already significantly weaker (Sater 2001). For the international community to support West Papuan independence “would mean reversing [its] original position” (Sater 2001). Moreover, internationally recognized sovereignty gives Indonesia “a monopoly over the legitimate use of force”, rendering human rights abuses a little more palatable, or

at least more easily ignored, in the eyes of the United Nations (Rutherford 2012).

On the other hand, I contend that the Indonesian occupation (and Dutch occupation, for that matter) of West Papua was never legitimate. This argument is nothing new, especially for West Papuans and other colonized people. The words of Fokkela, a late Kwero separatist, have been repeated over and over by irreconcilable separatists: “What are you, the government, to come here and tell me that I can’t follow the customs of my ancestors, live on the land of my ancestors, follow the laws of my ancestors? Who gives England [or the Netherlands or Indonesia] the right to come here and rule us according to their laws and against ours?” (Kevring 1992). Even according to Europe’s own political theory and constitutions—such as using time (i.e. history, tradition, libraries, the “past”) to justify the occupation and colonization of a particular space—colonial occupation is flawed and proven to be an embarrassment (Rutherford 2011).

If this is truly the case, then there are serious implications for Indonesia and the United Nations. I will not go into all of these issues in this essay, but I will address what this means for the 1960 and 2007 Declarations. These documents, while claiming to extend power to colonized and indigenous peoples, were derived from an illegitimate source. The imperialist nation states at the forefront of the United Nations were never legitimate occupiers of colonies to begin with, so they do not have the authority to “give” them back. Moreover, contrary to what the UN Declarations insist, these states cannot be trusted to act in the interests of colonized and indigenous peoples. Thus, as long as the United Nations is solely composed of nation-states, it cannot realistically champion their proposed “rights” of colonized and indigenous peoples beyond paying lip-service as it has already done. Consequently, West Papuan nationalists should not seek authority from Indonesia or the United Nations to obtain independence.

#### Conclusion

This essay has clearly shown how the United Nations Declarations of 1960 and 2007, despite

their claims, fail to help West Papuans. I have explored how the declarations were state-centric and only served to reinforce state sovereignty over indigenous rights with four distinct methods. Moreover, I have also shown that the elevation of Indonesian sovereignty necessarily results in the devaluation of West Papuan rights, and vice versa. Finally, I argued that Indonesia's asserted authority over West Papua and the United Nations' state-centric are illegitimate and thus, West Papuans should not seek their authority for independence.

However, many questions are left unanswered. Where should West Papuans look for authority? Why do indigenous populations seek authority from the United Nations in the first place? What would international politics look like if the legitimacy of nation-state sovereignty was rejected? Would the lives of colonized and indigenous peoples improve? Clearly, a substantial amount of additional research on these topics is needed—an amount that would overwhelm this short essay.

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*Discourses of Agency in the Debate on Consumption: Towards an Agency of Strategy*

Michele Marucci

**Introduction**

A recent academic worry in the field of consumption anthropology regards the effects of consumption patterns in our lives. With a kind of post-modern anxiety many scholars have sought to link consumerism and our seemingly insatiable desire for consumer commodities with various "evils" like obesity, income and environmental degradation (Goodman 2009:613; Trueman 2009:210). The rise of this destructive and degraded consumerist lifestyle has been attributed to, among other things, the growing influence of corporations that exercise agency by "producing desire" through deceptive advertisement campaigns (Sklar 2010: 149; Trueman 2009:129).

As a result, much debate in academia centers on the influence of corporations in 'constructing demand' and, thus, the ethnographic field of inquiry has become the 'advertising space'. Discourses of 'agency' have identified the influence of corporations in influencing consumption patterns. They attribute agency to corporations but downplay the agency of individuals in the advertisement to consumption process. Other discourses, instead, have suggested that influence of corporations is not hegemonic and give account to individual consumer agency in interpreting and negotiating the meanings of advertisements and in the process of selecting competing products. I contend that his academic debate, in its effort of finding the power relation between agentic forces of 'influencer' and 'responder', misidentified where agency actually plays a role in the practices of individuals. By applying Bourdieu's practice theory I will examine the fundamental role of agency within the consumption practice of individuals. I examine the implications of this approach on the scholarly debate and on the issues that consumption is said to have created.

First I provide the theoretical foundation of my argument by defining my Bourdieusian approach of a practice theory. Next, I introduce the existing debate in consumption anthropology specifically where I identify one tradition that locates hegemonic power in corporations and another that attributes to consumers an agentic approach. Finally I will problematize the present debate on agency from a Bourdieusian practice approach and suggest that once we look at individual practices of consumption, and not at each individual's agency in relation to corporations, we come to different conclusions than the post-modern version of consumption as something produced from above as well as the evils that it is associated with.

**In the Theoretical Bush**

The relevance of Bourdieu's theory of practice lies in the insight of the actual "lived experience(s)" of individuals (Bourdieu 1977:5). Through this theory we can position individuals as living in an antihuman situation that predisposes them "to fulfill political functions of [strategy and] domination in and through performance" (emphasis added, *ibid*:14). To position more precisely my view of agency through practice theory, I view Bourdieu's practice theory in opposition to Clifford Geertz's notion of the cultural "text" and differentiate it from Omer's view of practice theory.

In his classical ethnography, *Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight*, Geertz writes about the interpretation of culture that comes with the enactment and re-enactment of cockfights by Balinese cockfight participants (1973:450). What is important here is Geertz's view of culture as a "text" that, as it is "read and reread", realigns an individual's sensibility with the cultural other (Geertz 1973:450). Though this view of the "external collective text" may well represent the interaction between individuals and the broader culture, we must recognize that this view makes individual action more somewhat constrained by the internal and external forces (Geertz 1973:449). Bourdieu challenges this textual view for living individuals and "problematised discourses and actions" as well as for viewing individual practices as "myo-poies"

(1977:2). Instead, Bourdieu favors less strictly regulated structures that offer "utilitarian scope for strategies" (1977:2). Goss's notion of 'text' is particularly useful when aligned with discourses of 'legitimacy' in the consumption scenario since they argue that advertisements act as 'texts' that influence inactive individuals without any interpretive process.

Ottner's practice theory seeks to answer the question of the relationship between the "structure of society and the culture on one side and the nature of human action on the other" through the action of individual agency (Alvesson 2001:35). In this approach to practice theory, individuals are attributed agency not only in order to resist but also to stand in "complexity with, accommodation to, or reinforcement of the status quo" (Ibid:35). Thus, differently from Bourdieu's practice theory, which looks at the individual's strategic practices, Ottner's practice theory is centered on the question of agency in relation to the broader structure. Ottner's approach is then useful for representing non-hegemonic discourses where individual consumer practices work in opposition to or in accordance with corporate practices.

In my analysis of agency I also examine how certain narratives are employed in speech and how these are related to power. Here Foucault's theory of discourse is useful. Discourse can be defined as "a sublanguage, a manner of speaking linked to a particular social group or set of practices" (Swadlow 2002:604). This concept will also be used to discuss how agency is talked about and defined by different scholars, which I refer to as 'discourse of agency'.

## II. Consumption Debate: The Discourses of Agency

In the current debate between consumer and corporate agency the two main discourses employed are the hegemonic and the non-hegemonic. While the hegemonic discourse employs a 'textual' approach that does not recognize individual agency, in order to emphasize 'corporate aggression' (Swadlow 2002:623).

the non-hegemonic discourse employs Ottner's approach that sees mutual negotiations and resistance between individuals and corporations. Here I address them and later evaluate both approaches.

The hegemonic discourse of advertisements rests on the textual power of advertisements that "serve the transnational capitalist class" (Stabile 2010:152). More specifically, the hegemonic power of corporations is in the "creation of consumption space" through the transformation of all public architecture into advertising (Ibid:179). More than that, however, it is about creating a narrative that can "maximize consumption opportunities" (Ibid:142). Similarly to Goss's view of culture as a 'text', this hegemonic discourse sees advertisements as "scripted spaces" where the reiteration of the message works as a "special effect that makes gentle repression [appear] as free will" (Ibid:149). Moreover, what is evident in both texts and the hegemonic discourse is the passive view of individuals, as holding an active or discursive role and as 'actors' of the written script.

This 'hegemonic' view of impotent consumers has been challenged by McCabe and Malczyn. For them both consumers and corporations exert agentic power in what they call an "interactive" agentic knowledge (McCabe and Malczyn 2010:252). Consumers have agency in "interpreting the meaning of the product, assessing whether the narratives expressed make sense in the context of their lives, in testing out brands and in making purchasing decisions" (Ibid:253). Hence, they claim that advertising is too simplistic in view advertising as a one-way media of persuasion telling consumers what to buy. Rather, from this view advertising is a dialogic process where consumers also act with agentic force in negotiating the meanings of the product in their interpretive process or meaning in advertisements. Individual consumers look at advertisements in the search for meaning that "could be used for the construction and performance of identity" (Ibid:254). In other words, consumers live within particular life narratives that construct their identities. It is by finding a material and symbolic "correspondence" that the individual can signal his identity to others (Ibid:255).



Other authors have expressed similar ideas on the negotiation over the meanings of advertisements. Mazzarella sees "conflict and compromise" as everyday practices both within agencies and between agencies and clients (2003:27). Truillet suggests similar ideas. Though he acknowledges that transnational corporations exert tremendous power in determining the "global production of desire" and "global consumption patterns", Truillet also recognizes that individuals will nonetheless express resistance and contention to the establishment of these unified meanings. Just as Elio Abu-Lughod asserts that resistance should not be seen as "a reactive force somehow independent of or outside the system of power", these acts of resistance against global consumption patterns are manifestations of power infused with individual agency (Abu-Lughod 1990:47). In all these approaches, individuals are given "agency" to resist the shifting meaning of commodities and the influence of dictated "vertical" consumption patterns. The debate over the discourse of agency addressed the post-modern concerns about the problems that have caused consumerism and the evils that it carried with it. What remains problematic with this practice approach is that it fails to see the agency of individuals in the practice of consumption, which is, basically, the element that carries more agency for the individual in the overall realm of consumption.

Corporate agency is undoubtedly large and their influence powerful. Advertisements come out of weeks of work, which include ethnographic research on targeted consumers to determine their preferences and life narratives (McCabe and Malefy 2009:230). However, although corporations may likely gain the desired interest from the targeted consumer, through well thought-out strategies and developed discourses, their success is not a "pre-determined" (Bourdieu 1977: 7), rather it is always subjected to risk and the possibility of a "failed campaign" (McCabe and Malefy 2009:257).

### III. Discussion: Towards a Bourdieusian Practice of Consumption

Here I wish to make a break from the current debate and enter the lived experiences of the individuals through a Bourdieusian theory of practice. This is not done in order to underline the importance of power-relations between corporate and consumer agencies. Rather, it is to view corporate and consumer agencies as somewhat constitutive of each other: one lies in the production of meaning while consumer is in the evaluation and rethinking of that meaning. It is through this approach of consumer practice that a more open view of individual consumer agency will be produced and a more thorough study of consumption and markets will be possible.

#### *Bourdieuian Practice Approach*

Individual agency should not be seen merely in relation to consumption but rather in relation to the self. In other words, an individual has agency over his own representation of himself through his consumption choices. What follows is that the careful and strategic advertisement discourses employed by corporations, of embedding meanings in commodities, are employed by individuals in their daily lives for their strategic purposes, and don't simply "assist" or "accommodate" corporate advertising practices. As Malefy says, "branding becomes a valuable social currency" (2009:207). Moreover, in within and through this social currency, generated from corporate agency, that consumer agency is allowed to function freely through the multitude ways of expressing the self through the meanings inscribed in brands and commodities. Thus, on the one side, advertisements allow corporations to "infuse their brand with ideological associations of progress, innovation, and change" in order to align the brand's identity with the "lifestyle, values and identity of the corresponding target consumer they aspire to attract" (Malefy 2009:207). On the other, through consumption of particular goods, individual agents are able to employ concrete boundaries makers in an "ongoing and ubiquitous struggle to establish definitive worlds of reference, belonging and power" (Mazzarella 2003:26).

In a world always more embedded in webs of significant and symbolic brands and commodities, individual agency lies in the appropriate consumption choices for proper or desired identification. Thus, through a practice approach of individuals engaged in consumption we see how branded products are employed to fashion their identity. This works for their social advancement, whether through belonging to a group, signifying wealth or the like.

Bourdieu's practice theory can thus bring us away from a view of agency as acting against commodities and corporations and into an agency that sees commodities as a "social currency" for self-fashioning (Maloley 2009:207), and self-advancement and therefore in competition with other individual agents (Sundgren 2002:620). Once we come to examine individual consumption practices we can better understand how, in their daily lives, act and relate to brands and goods. This can be equated to how individuals live their lives thinking about how, what they buy, will change the representation of the self (Maloley 2009:207), and not with how individuals think about their agency in relation to corporations. This should have several implications on how we see commodities, corporations and social issues attached to consumption. I now discuss these themes.

#### Deeper Implications

What this view of agency reveals about consumption patterns is that the function of the commodity is more significant in our social world and in our lives than some scholars recognize (Rudd 1997:58; Treiman 2009:214). This may be a result not only of the creative and strategic uses it can be made of but also of the "physical attachment to things" that we feel (Rudd 1997:58; Treiman 2009:211). Therefore, if consumption holds such a primary function in our lives and since it does allow for a great degree of potential agentic force through its various strategic uses, then consumption should not be so simply discarded as an 'evil' practice as many critics suggest (Shih 2010:152; Treiman 2009:210). Nor can we

assert that corporations impose, textually, meanings on individuals and thus that the hegemonic power of corporations should be queried.

Therefore, if we are to question consumption for its negative effects it has on society and the environment, then we should look more into the practices that consumers hold in consumption and not return to the question of agency between corporations and consumers.

#### Conclusion

The purpose of this paper has been to evaluate recent post-modern critiques on consumption for its allegedly 'evil' effects as well as for its imposed desire by corporations. An initial approach that looked at the discourse of hegemony was made dubious, by applying Ormer's practice theory, because of the individual agency present in the act of negotiation and buying. In order to understand the deeper meaning of consumption for consumers, however, I revisited Bourdieu's practice theory approach, which revealed an extensive mixing of consumption patterns in the strategies of our daily lives. This problematizes even before the simple claim that consumption should be "diminished" (Treiman 2009:210). Moreover, in order to get at the root of the actual issues that consumption is said to exacerbate, we should look further into the practices of consumption we are embedded in within a regime where consumption is the social currency.

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### *Sustainable Development and the Canadian Mining Industry*

Craig Tarvey

In the past decades there has been a widespread upsurge in criticism and activism against the mineral firms of the Canadian extractive industry. In response to the efficacy of its opponents "the discourse of sustainability has become an industry standard" (International Council on Mining and Metals 2015, 8). Critics have maintained that the mining industry's adoption of sustainability is an appropriation of positive criticism in order to maintain positive public relations while avoiding any meaningful changes. Some of the industry's more trenchant critics have labeled sustainable development an oxymoron and "corporate greenwashing" (Craib 2010).

It is the goal of this paper to provide an analysis of the discourse around sustainable development in mining, which serves as a focal point in understanding the broader context of Canadian mining abroad. I aim to acknowledge the complexity of the issue, which is increasingly polarized into a pro-developmentist-development opposition (Seymour 2011). I have split my analysis into three sections: first, I address how the globalization of opposition to mining has created a reputational, political and economic imperative for mining corporations to respect, at the least, the basic tenets of sustainability. Secondly, I examine the Canadian government's trend toward deregulation and neoliberal policies, which has had the intended effect of encouraging mineral exploration and exploitation while simultaneously decreasing the ability of foreign states to effectively regulate Canadian corporations' actions. Thirdly, I look at how the industry has addressed the goal of "sustainable development" through voluntary principles such as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), greater links between mining firms and NGOs, and the founding of industry bodies such as Mining, Minerals and Sustainable Development (MMSD) to study the impact of mining on communities and the environment. I conclude that these industry sponsored initiatives toward

self-regulation are insufficient to build a sustainable model of development which respects the needs of not just the investors, but the local community, the host state, and the environment.

#### What is Sustainable Development?

The topic of sustainability has become a major talking point in discussions of responsible mining among policy makers and activist alike. However, despite its near ubiquitous presence, there remains little consensus around its meaning (Kirsch 2010). One of the earliest formalizations which linked sustainability to development was published by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature which found that "for development to be sustainable, it must take account of social and ecological factors, as well as economic ones; of the living and nonliving resource base; and of the long term as well as short term advantages and disadvantages of alternative actions" (IUCN 1980). (1) This approach, which favoured environmental restrictions, was criticised on the grounds that it would impede Southern countries' ability to compete with their Northern neighbours' to whom these developmental hurdles are not as significant.

In response to these criticisms, a new "equity centered" definition arose out of a United Nations initiative to replace the IUCN's definition: the 1987 Brundtland Commission (Rood 2002). The commission defined sustainable development as "a system of development that meets the basic needs of all people without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own life-sustaining needs" (United Nations 1987 in Lawrence 2010). The revised definition of sustainable development which arose out of the Brundtland Commission is significant in its removal of any reference to ecology, effectively re-framing the issue of sustainability as primarily an economic concern (Nigel 1999). The definition has subsequently been adopted as the standard by government and industry. Mining companies are now able to frame development and business projects, particularly after mine closure, as sustainable development initiatives (Kirsch 2010).

#### Oxymoron?

Some critics have argued that minerals and metals are a non-renewable economy and that the term "sustainable development" in the mining industry is used to obscure the social, environmental and economic harm that the industry inflicts on communities where it operates. In a wholesale condemnation the industry has been labeled a "toxic industry" (Benson and Kirsch 2010); sustainable development in mining has been called greenwashing (Ober 2007) and more definitively, a corporate oxymoron (Kirsch 2010). Unlike production or forestry, mining corporations cannot replace the resources that they extract from the earth. In fact, the industry faces the additional challenge of a long-term decline in ore grades; the easily-developed higher grade deposits are mined first, leaving behind lower grade deposits (Madd 2009). As the grade lowers more ore must be processed which results in more tailings, the use of more energy, water, and chemicals. The energy and resource expenditure is significant: based off of 2008 figures the production of one kilogram of gold requires about 141 kg of cyanide, 691,000 L of water, releases 11.5 tons of greenhouse gases and creates 2000 tonnes of tailings and waste rock (Madd 2009).

Despite the apparent incompatibility of the two terms, it is important to recognize both regional and global dependencies on mining. An effective and robust model of sustainable development should avoid the simplifying binary of development versus conservation. As Ballard and Banks (2003, 200) argue, "disparaging or stigmatizing ecological from other community interests is a curiously archaic argument, given current anthropological thought on the essential entanglement and integration of the different facets of social life previously conceived of as distinct institutions." To view sustainability solely as an environmental imperative would be to make the same mistake the Brundtland Commission's narrow economic framing of the issue makes. I contend that in the extractive industry sustainability and development are not necessarily antithetical (Ballard and Banks 2003, Horowitz 2006, Lawrence 2010).

#### Environmental and Indigenous Opposition

Indigenous opposition has played a central role in pressuring mining companies to accept more sustainable development. In 1989 the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 169 was adopted, which mandated that indigenous communities be consulted prior to development. It is worth noting, however, that the Canadian government has not ratified ILO 169, and lacks any mechanism to enforce the consultation process abroad. The 1990s was the UN "Decade of Indigenous Peoples" and the advent of new media such as the internet has enabled activists to spread awareness of bad mining practices. All these factors have contributed to the ability of indigenous campaigns to pressure international mining companies, and in some cases even shut down mines. Taseco Vietnam Incorporated's (TVI) Cassiam Gold Project on the Filipino island of Mindanao is a prime example of indigenous activism which shut down a major mine. A controversy arose after TVI hosted an information session for the community and had everyone who attended sign an attendance sheet. This signed sheet was later used as a document by TVI to show that they had community support for their project. This sparked community outrage, and in the face of growing opposition the mine was guarded by a private paramilitary security force (Hobden, Nelson, and Jacobsen 2011). The International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, an independent Canadian institution, ran a Human Rights Impact Assessment and concluded that the mine failed to provide the community of Subanon the right to self-determination, human security, and an adequate standard of living. Various NGOs enabled community representatives to fly to Geneva to participate in the UN's Working Group on Indigenous Populations, and shortly after to a Canadian Parliamentary hearing on the TVI mine in Ottawa. These sustained efforts of indigenous opposition and international NGO support resulted in the withdrawal of the mine's major investor, the Commonwealth Development Corporation (Hobden, Nelson, and Jacobsen 2011). The case of the Cassiam Gold Project is just one example of effective indigenous activism in collaboration with NGOs, the globalization of opposition to mining and the recognition of

indigenous rights has made consultation with indigenous groups an imperative for mining companies (Hobden 2004).

It would be a mistake, however, to equate indigenism with the counter-globalization or environmentalist movements. The complexity of indigenous agendas is often overlooked by international NGOs which advocate a simple resolution in line with their agency's own objectives. The use of indigenous movements as actors in NGO agendas has tended to reduce indigenous movements to the binary opposition of either development or the environment (Whitmore 2004, Kirsch 2007). For the local community at the site of mine development the situation is more complex. On the one hand, there is the community desire for development in the form of medical, postal and educational services, infrastructure such as roads and power lines, and the creation of local jobs. On the other hand, there is the need to preserve the environment and ensure that the development brought by the mine offset the short life span of the extractive process.

Indigenous groups have advocated a range of alternatives to outright opposition ranging from the promotion of smaller scale projects, more stringent environmental practices, economic compensations, and greater employment opportunities for members of the local community, to simply having more control over the development process. The trend for NGOs to highlight local struggles as part of global international campaigns has been characterized as "globalization from below" (Falk 1993) for its appropriation of indigenous advocacy into a global framework of environmentalism and counter-globalization. Too often the NGO agenda is unrepresentative of the very groups it claims to speak on behalf of.

#### Economic Necessity

Proponents of "sustainable development" have pointed to growing economic pressures which promote sustainable practice, namely the rapid growth of Socially Responsible Investing (SRI) and increasingly conscious financial standards such as the Equator Principles and the Dow Jones Sustainability

World leaders. These structures have contributed to making the corporate image paramount, but do they have the power to affect the deeper policies of mining companies, beyond corporate image?

SRI is a large and rapidly growing industry, the worth of the 2008 Canadian SRI market was estimated at \$699.2 billion (Coatsworth 2011). SRI companies are similar in structure to traditional investment fund companies, the key difference being that SRI corporations seek to include social and environmental good with financial return. But what is socially and environmentally good, and who has the power to decide? The language of these principles is replete with the language of sustainable discourse. The Equator Principle requires that projects "are developed in a manner that is socially responsible and reflect sound environmental management practices" yet does not define what constitutes sound environmental management practices or social responsibility (Laurence 2010, 9). It is worthwhile to note that the Equator Principles are voluntary and non-binding and that "many investors, particularly in developing countries, are not required to adhere to them." (Laurence 2010, 240).

Beyond using the language of sustainable development, SRI companies must be seen by their shareholders to be using their economic leverage to affect change in the more environmentally or socially harmful companies that they hold. The Canadian mining companies Placer, Alamos, Barrick and Goldcorp have all had shareholder resolutions filed by Canadian SRI companies after facing international scrutiny from interest local opposition (Coatsworth 2011). These resolutions open up space for dialogue between shareholders and corporation but leave the affected communities notably absent from the consultation process. The exclusion of local communities in the shareholder resolution process results in resolutions which do not reflect the objectives of the community, and often "place additional burdens on a community in struggle and even compromise its own efforts to achieve environmental, economic, and social goals." (Coatsworth 2011, 38). Aside from the lack of adequate consultation in SRI operations, there is a fundamental limit to what systems of economic incentives and pressures can achieve in the regulation of industry. SRI

companies are imbedded in a capitalist framework which commits them first to their shareholders, and involves them of any direct responsibility for the affected communities they claim to represent. It is not inevitable for an SRI company to intentionally pass a shareholder resolution which would result in an economic loss for their shareholders.

Aside from the formalization of SRI, mining companies have another financial incentive to engage local communities. A determined community in opposition to a mine can stall or even shut down a project, costing the company millions of dollars. Companies now speak of the requirement for a "social license to operate" (Rajaram et al. 2005, Laurence 2010). If a mining company can incorporate practices which engage the community and generate support for their operations then costly and problematic confrontations can be avoided. The issue with this method of regulation is that, as we have seen, the efficacy of indigenous and local opposition is directly contingent on the ability of NGOs and global movements to generate enough international attention to pressure an SRI company into filing a stakeholder resolution. Financial incentives and shareholder led initiatives are plausible methods to address the worst instances of corporate social and environmental behaviour but are limited by the ability of cash strapped NGOs to elevate local struggles to an international level (Holland and Banks 2003, 29).

#### Regulatory Environment

In order to understand the nature of sustainable development in the mining industry, it is essential to understand the broader regulatory context in which Canadian corporations operate. The Canadian mining industry is the largest in the world and a major component of the country's economy; in 2003 the Canadian mining and mineral processing industry was worth \$40.8 billion. Canadian-based mining companies comprised 60% of all mining companies in the world that spent more than \$100,000 on exploration in 2004. Over half of the world's public mining companies are listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange and Canadian listed firms manage around 4200 projects abroad (Mining Works facts and figures). Canada is not only a

global leader in mining in terms of scale of operation, Canadian mining companies are frequently involved in, and instigate community conflict and practice under notoriously poor environmental standards. A report from the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada was found that Canadian mining companies were responsible for a third of 171 high-profile Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) violations between 1999 and 2009 (Eagler 2012). Despite the glaring issues with extractive companies operating abroad, the Canadian government holds considerable interest in maintaining the profitability of the mining sector and has taken substantial initiatives in the recent decades to promote mining interests. As a whole, particularly in the recent decade, the policies adopted by the Canadian government have tended toward the protection of foreign investments rather than addressing the social and environmental harms of the mining companies.

Latin America contains some of the richest deposits in the world and is a prime case study of Canada's mining policies; over a third of expenditures on mineral exploration in the region are conducted by Canadian mining companies (Gordon and Webber 2008). The introduction of Canadian capital to the region is paralleled by the neoliberal structural adjustments instigated by the World Bank and IMF in the 1980s and 90s (Gordon and Webber 2008, 112). The Canadian government has played an active role in the neoliberal restructuring through free trade agreements such as the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and has signed Foreign Investment Protection Agreements (FIPAs) with nearly two dozen countries in order to protect the rights of Canadian companies abroad. A majority of the FIPA agreements have been signed with Latin America countries and give Canadian corporations the right to sue signatory governments for perceived failures to meet their investment agreements. To date Canadian mining companies have pursued four arbitrations under FIPA, the most notable being *Vamoso Yantoro's* claims against the Costa Rican government's 2002 law banning open pit mining.

The efforts of Canadian mining interests, with the aid of the Canadian government, has been largely successful in restructuring the mining codes to favour Canadian interests over indigenous people, the

environment and labour rights in Latin American countries such as Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Peru, and Colombia (Gordon and Webber 2008, 68). Canadian intervention is not limited to structural adjustment brought about by investment agreements; projects touted as "development" have played a significant role in "weakening foreign states' capacity to control Canadian corporations. Colombia's new mining code, which includes with technical and financial assistance from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), "guarantees private sector control over natural resources, even if this means the forcible removal of its existing population from certain areas of the countryside" (Hinton 2005). In 2002, CIDA made a 9.6 million dollar investment in Peru, essentially to provide technical assistance and improve the administration of the country's Ministry of Energy and Mines. While in effect these neoliberal reforms have "facilitated the movement of foreign capital in these new mining projects while simultaneously dismantling regulatory regimes designed to protect labor, the environment, and the rights of persons displaced or otherwise affected by mining" (Kirsch 2007, 207). Communities affected by mining projects are therefore left without state support, and are dependent on the competence and ethics of unregulated mining companies (Reed 2002, 106).

Beyond facilitating neoliberal structural adjustments, the Canadian government promotes mining through its steadfast refusal to adopt any environmental or human rights standards for corporations outside of Canada; there is no existing legislation which could prosecute mining companies for transgressions abroad. There was an attempt to pass An Act Respecting Corporate Accountability for the Activities of Mining, Oil or Gas Corporations in Developing Countries (Bill C-300), which would have given the government the authority to investigate complaints against Canadian companies operating abroad. If a company were found guilty of human rights or environmental abuse, the mine would lose the support of Canadian Embassy officials and publicly funded agencies. The mining industry responded to this bill with a list of state firms "registered lobbyists representing Barrick Gold, Vale Canada, IAMGOLD and the

Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada" (Engler, 2012). The bill was defeated in 2010 in a vote before the House of Commons. As mentioned before, the government has not ratified ILO 169 which mandates free and informed consent from the indigenous community before a project can proceed.

#### Industrial Policy

The Canadian government, at the behest of the extractive industry, has facilitated the exploitation of resources from the global south at the expense of the foreign state, indigenous groups, and the environment. Yet the globalization of resource has maintained sustainable development as a reputational and economic imperative for Canadian mining companies. In lieu of government policy, the responsibility to address these issues has been passed to the industry which has answered the call through the widespread adoption of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). CSR is a broad set of voluntary principles which seeks to balance the demands of communities and the environment with the corporation's ability to produce a profit (Holtz 2004). The Mining Association of Canada's Towards Sustainable Mining (TSM) initiative is an oft-cited example of "best practice" CSR. The issue with TSM is that it is concerned with developing management strategies rather than setting concrete standards. The tailings management performance indicators are: "management policy and commitment; management system development; assigned accountability and responsibility; annual management review; and an operation, maintenance and surveillance (OMS) manual (TSM Assessment Protocol 2011, 2). The initiative does not set any standards with regards to key issues such as water quality or tailings disposal (Mining Watch 2012).

The other approach the mining industry has taken in response to criticism is the establishment of research bodies, namely Mining, Minerals and Sustainable Development (MMSD) and the International Council of Mining and Metals (ICMM). Based in London and founded by some of the largest companies in the industry MMSD was widely criticized by indigenous groups, NGOs and mine affected communities (Whitmore 2004). It is the stated goal of the organization "to build a platform of analysis and engagement

in ongoing cooperation and networking between all communities of interest" (MMSD 2007). However, the organization's framework, objectives and structure are all determined by the industry; even the members of its nominally independent Assurance Board, whose mandate it is to monitor the process, were hand-picked by industry (2004, 110). The primary objective of the MMSD is to link mining to sustainable development and create a platform from which the industry can effectively engage its critics. Accordingly, the MMSD has failed to generate meaningful dialogue between companies and local communities (Whitmore 2004). In its own reports MMSD found a lack of trust to be an impediment to its process (Morley 2001).

#### Conclusions

In summary, the discourse of sustainable development has entered into the mining industry because it has become an economic and reputational imperative. This imperative is largely the result of indigenous opposition operating in conjunction with NGO awareness and a growing body of international records. The Canadian government has not mirrored the international trend to regulate and set basic standards of operation for industries operating abroad. Instead the government has actively pursued industry interests in the form of free trade agreements, the transcribing of foreign country's mining codes, and deregulation. The government has mandated self-regulation in the mining industry as the sole means of addressing the growing issue of human rights and environmental abuses by Canadian mines operating abroad.

Sustainable development has manifested in a myriad of industry initiatives from the broad tenets of CSR to the funding of environmental and social research bodies such as the MMSD. The issue is that these self-regulated mechanisms lack transparency, and are controlled by mining companies who are positioned at the top of a global hierarchy. As Whitmore identified it, "the key question is, who has the right to make the decision over the future of communities: companies, governments, NGOs or the communities themselves?" (Whitmore 2004, 112). There is a fundamental flaw with a system which claims to be



"sustainable" but requires community and indigenous opposition to be so vehement and embellished as to draw international attention before its mechanisms can operate. This is not to suggest, as some critics have (Kinch 2010, Berman and Kinch 2010), that sustainable development is oxymoronic and incompatible with the extractive industry. Rather, I contend that a system of genuine community consultation, which respects the tenets of informed and prior consent, could resolve some of the long-standing issues in the current, industry-dominated consultation process. The power structures which permeate the industry and perpetuate conflict cannot be challenged through self-regulation. A process of meaningful consultation by the extractive industry with local communities requires a mediating body, a role which the government of Canada would find itself in a position to fill if its trade rhetoric were to be abandoned.

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### *Shifting Approaches to HIV and AIDS Epidemics in the Pacific*

Rachel Zolotor

Since its discovery in the 1980s HIV and AIDS have plagued the globe. In the early 2000s this problem began to extend to Papua New Guinea and other areas of the Pacific Islands at an alarming rate. Global health organizations and governments in and around the Pacific Islands began publishing projections and presenting their solutions to the epidemic. This paper aims to open a dialogue about global and governmental approaches to HIV and AIDS in the Pacific Islands. It also attempts to elucidate some of the shortcomings of the institutional model by juxtaposing it with anthropological literature on the subject. Plans for this type of action must be regionally and culturally specific and consider local epistemologies rather than implementing a dominant discourse. Recent changes seem to be yielding positive results but there must be a continuation of these efforts to ensure complete success.

Karen McMillan and Heather Worth (2011) warn against applying a single model across regions, even in the case of their data, which in itself acts as a crucial point for this discussion. (McMillan and Worth 2011:315). It lays the groundwork for criticisms that can be made about international and governmental organizations regarding their approach to HIV and AIDS. One of the highly contested points involves the nature of awareness and the institutional spread of "awareness" about HIV and AIDS. The World Health Organization (2007) reported that some of the major issues when trying to deal with the HIV epidemic in Papua New Guinea are issues "...related to stigma and discrimination and lack of awareness about HIV" (World Health Organization 2005:2). Similarly Richard Eves' (2012) cites a 2007 report by UNAIDS (2007) that, besides "...collaboration and working with, rather than against, local practices" (Eves 2012:61) and adaptation of materials to local and "...relevant epidemiological, economic, social and cultural contexts..." (2012:61). However, one of the key objectives was, in this case as well, to promote awareness (2012:61). This is a large and very simplified claim to make about such a diverse area and fails to recognize underlying

issues that may be contributing to the spread of HIV and AIDS and/or are inhibiting condom usage. For instance, in areas such as Vanuatu and Tonga where awareness of HIV and AIDS is high they noted the emergence of a disturbing trend. While the youth interviewed felt positively about condom usage they still used them infrequently at best (McMillan and Worth 2011:317). In this region collected data was "...strongly marked by a dichotomy between attitudes towards, and beliefs about, the efficacy and availability of condoms (2011:317). They found that external factors such as "...peer and community attitudes to condom use and condom users..." (2011:317) were contrasted with "...complex of social expectations, gender norms and cultural values..." (2011:317) to create an environment where condom use was not a viable option. While this may not be the nature of the situation in other areas, such as Papua New Guinea, it broadens our understanding of cultural explanations and how stigma and discrimination might be more culpable than awareness per se. In a contrary study conducted by Agathe Simonin, Jennifer Barber and Anacleto Couracou (2012) in the highlands of West Papua they argue that awareness is a key factor for this area. Among a highland group known as the Western Dani they postulate that the extreme remoteness of the area leaves villages with "...very little HIV knowledge and information..." (Simonin, Barber, and Couracou 2011:5186). The caveat and arguably the difference between this finding and the World Health Organization's (2007) claim is that in this case awareness, not stigma or discrimination, are stand alone factors or root causes. They address women's issues as equally central to the issue of HIV and AIDS because in their findings Western Dani women are "...less educated [than their male counterparts] and less visible and, therefore, have little access to information..." (2011:5186). There is a system of women Western Dani who "contracting the infection while travelling to low remote areas to make money. The virus is then brought back to the remote villages to their spouses who know equally little about why they are sick and what is happening (2011:5186). It is a complex issue and if one is going to pinpoint lack of awareness as a cause it must be further investigated within the context of the culture.

Cultural appropriateness of material is another vital issue that crops up in the literature regarding HIV and AIDS in the Pacific Islands. In 2006 the Australian Government published a report projecting the outcomes of HIV and AIDS prevention from 2005 through 2025 in Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and East Timor. The paper draws from several prominent scholars on the subject and seems to be fairly well informed about the scholarly and anthropological stance on the subject. Despite this, the report will fall short in some of its methodologies and conclusions. For instance, a "...generic model was explicitly adopted for Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and East Timor based on available epidemiological and behavioural data..." (UNAIDS 2006:10). An attempt is made to approach the problem in a more culturally applicable way but it could still be argued that beginning with a "generic" model and tweaking it does not reach core issues. McMillan and Worth (2011) critique the available published research which often "...limited and largely confined to surveys focusing on individual knowledge, attitudes and behaviours" (McMillan and Worth 2011:114) and excludes accounts of interpersonal factors that they found to be prevalent in their own research. To explain the generic model and data based approaches Jesse Murro and Leslie Butt draw upon a theoretical model conceived by T. M. Li. The concept, which is applied to Murro and Butt's (2012) theory, is referred to as "rendering technical" (Murro and Butt 2012:335). As explained by Murro and Butt (2012) it refers to the:

"...process by which complex dimensions of human problems are reduced and simplified in order to produce generally applicable, uncontextual approaches that fit the agenda of state governments and international organisations." (2012:335)

They argue that social programs and projects, such as HIV prevention and treatment, are "...characterised in technical terms, carrying with them forms of judgment, vocabularies of implementation, and ideas about human abilities, all simplified in the service of getting the job done." (2012:335). In other words a culturally adapted approach is not as efficient as data, facts and information. Richard Eves (2012) provides a comparable critique in regards to the organization UNAIDS (2005) and the lack of culturally

sensitive solutions in their 2005 mandate. Eves (2012) connects the dismissal of "traditional" and/or Christian viewpoints and epistemologies in Papua New Guinea with the hegemonic position of scientific discourse (CITE). Eves (2012) points out that there is an assumption of "...cultural and universality of the intervention..." (Eves 2012:65). He also highlights the notion that "...beliefs that contradict the authoritative knowledge will simply be displaced by the facts... despite extensive evidence that being given the "correct information" does not necessarily change people's behaviour" (2012:65). This point was alluded to in the earlier discussion of McMillan and Worth's (2011) study of condom usage in Vanuatu and Tonga. Simons et al. (2011) conclude that "Bridging [the] gap requires working towards communication and mutual understanding to build a more adapted - and less patriarchal and paternalistic - politics of development." (Simons et

al. 2011:5196). Therefore, a dialogue must be opened between the involved parties - global institutions, local institutions and the people - with mutual respect and recognition.

In 2009 UNAIDS published a document on global health which outlining its human rights based approach to global issues relating to HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS 2009:6). According to their report:

"Many countries have recently completed a full analysis of where and how the most recent new HIV infections occurred and understood the reasons why they occurred. This data will assist in choosing not just the right strategies but will also make the investments in the AIDS response more effective." (2009:6)

Despite specific criticisms of UNAIDS (2005) mandate by Eves (2012) and more generalised criticisms of responses UNAIDS (2012) has updated its approach. Based on the most recent fact sheet released by UNAIDS (2012) their strategies seem to be working. For instance, from 2001 through 2011 rates of new infections throughout Oceania declined from 1700 people to 2000 people (UNAIDS 2012:1). Deaths in Oceania related to AIDS were also reduced from 2005 to 2011 from 1300 to 1300. Additionally across Oceania "...an estimated 69% (60-80%) of people eligible for antiretroviral therapy were accessing it in 2011, compared to a global average of 34% (30-36%)." (UNAIDS 2012:2). This does not mean that we

should abandon the pursuit of ways to relay information that are specific to cultural areas and are culturally appropriate. As Mann and Butt (2012) conclude "Anthropologists have consistently shown how research employing nuanced ethnographic approaches can enhance behavioural and epidemiological research..."

(Mann and Butt 2012:315)

A number of works have been and continue to be published on the treatment of HIV and AIDS in the Pacific Islands. They are crucial to the process of mutual discourse between all facets involved both inside and outside of society. Through these dialogues large-scale institutions and local people can come to an agreeable and efficient solution. UNAIDS seems to be taking the initial steps to accepting a more regionally based and culturally relativist approach to tackling HIV and AIDS epidemics in the Pacific Islands. However, approaches to epidemics and other large scale national and international issues must continue to interrogate and be interrogated.

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*The Poetics of History: Illness Narratives and the Rhetoric of Contrast*

Giulia Scialò

## Introduction

The following essay will explore how illness narratives can function as means of expressing the historical consciousness of the people to which they belong. The issue is important because it goes against the widespread view that people who do not express historical consciousness in recognized Western ways simply lack it (Russett 1980:51,52; Comaroff and Comaroff 1987:192,193). I will argue, instead, that illness accounts of indigenous groups can express their collective historical consciousness by means of the rhetoric of contrast in time and space.

First, I will illustrate the theoretical framework within which illness narratives can be understood as ways of expressing historical consciousness. I will then provide ethnographic evidence to the argument by presenting Gero's (1990, 1995, 2000) case study of an Anishinabe Aboriginal community in Manitoba, Canada, in which "the old days" before the arrival of the Europeans are opposed to the present and its "new" illness (Gero 1995:18). Finally, I will show another example in which the rhetoric of contrast is found to work in a similar fashion: Godfria's (2002) case study among the Toba indigenous group of the Argentine Chaco, in which the illness and deaths experienced in the plantation where they worked as migrant laborers are opposed to the health experienced in the homeland bush.

*A theoretical framework*

Let us begin with the relationship between illness, stories, culture and historical consciousness. Disease is surely something that happens in the body, something that involves more or less a physical and often psychological disruption. However, as noted by Good, "Disease occurs not only in the body [...] but in time, in place, in history, and in the context of lived experience and the social world" (Good 1994:11), *emphasis added*. Stories are "ways of thinking through the past", of making sense of current situations and

<sup>1</sup> Was such an conventional historical narratives of events or accounts of one relative (Comaroff and Comaroff 1987:200).

of thinking about future action (Gero and Manningly 2000:17). Illness narratives are thus special text in which people can express the relationship between illness and other events or experiences in their life (Good 1994:11), places where it is possible to explore cultural life in its unfolding as both "personal and social world" (Gero and Manningly 2000:17). This because cultural knowledge always informs stories, at the same time that stories, working as media "between particularities and generalities", link personal experience to cultural meanings (194:26). Where does historical consciousness fit in this relationship between illness, stories and culture? As John and Jean Comaroff argue, consciousness is the active process, more or less chaotic, "in which human actors deploy historically salient cultural categories to construct their self-awareness": forms of representation like illness narratives can thus be understood as the speaking out of historical consciousness (Comaroff and Comaroff 1987:204, *emphasis added*).

*Illness accounts in an Anishinabe community: contrasts in time*

Gero's research site was an Anishinabe reserve community in southern Manitoba, Canada. With the arrival of the Europeans, illnesses were introduced with terrible consequences for the First Peoples such as the Anishinabe: the population was decimated by infectious disease epidemics, whose effects were amplified by the famine and poor nutrition resulting from disruption in subsistence strategies following the newcomers' arrival. Since World War II there has been a substantial decline in the incidence of infectious diseases, but this has been matched by an "epidemiological transition" towards an exponential increase in the so called "diseases of Westernization": classic degenerative diseases such as cancer, heart disease and diabetes (Gero 1995:37, 2000b:269). With respect to diabetes, several studies among the First Peoples of North

American document a rapid increase in cases of maturity-onset diabetes<sup>7</sup>, from virtually none to an 'epidemic' situation. It is thus important to explore how the Anishinaabe account for both their personal cases of diabetes and its general increase in their community (Gatto 1995:37).

Diabetes was generally seen to be related to the presence of too much sugar in the body; in Anishinaabe language it was referred to with expressions which can be translated as "sugar sickness" or "sweet sickness", whereas when speaking in English people often used "sugar" and "diabetes" interchangeably (Gatto 1995:40). When asked about the causes of the illness, people tended to give two general types of explanation. The first one, often accompanied by the statement that they had been told so by doctors or nurses, focused on individual responsibility: it explained diabetes as coming from eating or drinking too much of particular things high in sugar, or simply from overeating: "You get 'sugar' eating too many sweets – sugar, candy bars, sodas – things like that. That's the main thing. You eat too much, and you get sugar sivity [...] (D14, 5, 51)" (ibid. 42). The second general explanation was instead framed in terms of societal responsibility: diabetes was caused by a general change in eating habits from local wild foods to store-bought foods, which are full of additives and chemicals. Consistently with the recent outbreak of diabetes in the community, diabetes was often called "white man's sickness", together with other illnesses seen as being introduced by the Europeans, such as measles, tuberculosis, chicken pox, cancer and high blood pressure (Gatto 1995:41,42, 2000a:76).

Long ago people lived to be 100 years old. They carried the long. They didn't eat junk food. We do do today. They carried the long without these diseases. And nowadays, just look, they are coming in with all these sicknesses all the time (D14, 6, 11) (Gatto 1995:43).

In the old days, Anishinaabing were healthy and happy; nowadays they get sicker. In the old days they would never get sick. That's what my mother told me – these old people didn't get sick. They ate wild fruits and wild vegetables – caribou, moose, porcupine (D14, 7, 41) (ibid.).

<sup>7</sup> It is the non-insulin dependent diabetes, called Type 2 (Gatto 2000:15).

It was when somebody got sugar diabetes in the land we are. Nobody ate canned food before [now]. It's the white man's food. White people put too much chemicals in the food. Anishinaabing never had sugar diabetes. Nobody ate canned meat before. When someone said to eat our salt pork, dried beans, and eggs. Other things were also eaten. People would give their own porcupine for the moose. Game was played, for fun; would use it during the winter with other items [...] (Gatto 2000a:38).

It is evident how talks about diabetes bring up "strongly articulated accounts" between the healthy wild food obtained through subsistence activities of the past and the unhealthy purchased foods of the present (Gatto 2000a:76). These statements are not necessarily tied to an individual's personal history, but are interconnected about the community history: they help individuals to account for the recent emergence of diabetes, while at the same time, following Comerio, "making sense of the past as a kind of collective autobiography" (ibid. 76). Finally, these accounts assert a "collective memory" of a past in which the Anishinaabe were healthy (Gatto 2000a:299); they are thus an articulation of shared identity (ibid. 303). These illness narratives clearly express an historical consciousness endowed with a moral stand, which implicitly condemns the current situation and revises the biomedical view of individual responsibility (Gatto 2000a:79). Moreover, people in the community, whose surrounding area had been settled and cultivated, also commented that those living "up north" were healthier because they had more access to the kind of food eaten in the past, for instance through hunting (Gatto 1995:434, 1995:47). This resonates with the negative association found by a national Canadian study between latitude and disease rates, and with the researchers' suggestion "that latitude indicates the strength of underlying Euro-Canadian influences, essential to lifestyle changes along a north-south gradient" (Gatto 1995:37).

It is important to point out that it was not uncommon for people to coin the two explanations, for instance by referring to what a doctor had said about being overweight and then talking about the harmful effects of canned food (ibid. 44). This was probably so because how individuals understand an illness depends both on personal experience and on information obtained through other sources, such as listening to other people's

status (Gara 2000b:289). Moreover, the 'individual responsibility framework', being ahistorical and excluding the broader social context of the disease, failed to account for the recent emergence of diabetes in the community, which people widely saw as one of the many consequences of the disruption of their way of life brought about by the Europeans (Gara 1993:444). Narratives of this kind thus worked to strengthen the connection between collective history and illness, providing an explanatory framework to be used as a cultural resource for understanding both individual illness experiences and why diabetes had recently become a significant health concern (Gara 2000a:84). It is now clear, in the words of Canales, that "what people say about their social world through the idiom of medicine are statements about political and economic realities, and the meanings of ethnic relations" (Gara 1993:38).

#### *Toba's illness narratives, context in space*

Increasingly, a similar way of expressing historical consciousness is found among the Toba of the Chaco, in Argentina. As Godfils (2002) argues, the social memory of loss, illness and death that the indigenous group experienced while working in the plantation economy was produced by contrasting it to the experience of their homeland, the bush of the Chaco; through this negative dialectic, both the plantation and the bush were constructed as places embedded with historical meaning (Godfils 2002:55). Godfils explains here, in the memory of the Toba, the diseases and deaths experienced in the plantation became "the embodiment of the social stratification embedded in the plantation" (ibid.:58). In a similar fashion, one could say that the white man's sickness experienced by the *Asikinambé* represent the embodiment of the alienation and domination embedded in the socio-political and economic world created by the arrival of the Europeans.

In particular, the bush of the Chaco emerged as a place of health because of its differences from the cane-fields, differences that were enhanced through the cyclical return to it: the bush was a "place of their own",

regulated along social relations which were very different from those dominating the cane-fields, and thus free of all those diseases that were consequences of their appalling living conditions (ibid.:46).

In the region food was all types of diseases. You didn't talk disease, coughing, fever, measles... That's why every side had many graves... The diseases came from the cane-fields... Here [in the bush] there's almost no disease. There's none, but after a while it goes away... In the region, there was lots of diseases. They didn't go away. Here in the bush, the diseases don't show up. It comes and goes here, we don't know when they best ever come. (ibid.)

Furthermore, the bush was constructed not only as a place free from the dominating diseases, but as a place of healing, where they could regenerate their very physical and social body (ibid.). Among other things, such as the absence of the mulehoein device depicted as responsible for the diseases and deaths, what was seen as central for the Toba's health and physical strength was bush food: "Around this time of the year [winter], people were already feeling flabby. They wanted to come back home. They were thinking that they wanted to eat fish and honey" (ibid.:49).

Therefore, like the *Asikinambé*, the Toba see consumption of wild food as essential to their health, in contrast to the packaged food sold in stores. This is not only for its nutritional value, but also for its social qualities: wild food is always available to those in need, because it is always shared within the community through networks of reciprocity; store-bought food is instead commodified food, it is accessible only to those who earn money, and therefore embodies the commodification of the Toba's own life in the cane-fields (ibid.). It is through the tensions connecting the cane-fields and the bush that the contradiction between exploitation and autonomy that dominated their historical experiences comes into play in both their subjectivity and in their social memory: the rhetorical contrast between the terror of the plantation and the resilience of the bush then works as an arena in which people can express and articulate critical awareness of their historical past (ibid.:50).

#### *Conclusion*

Through this essay, I have attempted to show how historical consciousness does not necessarily have to be expressed in what we are used to recognize as conventional history. Instead, it can be articulated, more

as less explicitly, through narratives pertaining to the everyday life, such as illness narratives in the Anishinaabe community of Manitoba, illness narratives of people afflicted by diabetes express historical consciousness of the profoundly negative changes experienced since the arrival of the Europeans, this is accomplished through a rhetoric of contrast between 'the old days' free from diabetes and the present state of diabetes 'epidemics', with food being "its primary trope" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1997:204). In a similar fashion, the Toba people of Argentina articulate the historical consciousness of their pro-exploitation in the plantation economy through the rhetoric of contrast which opposes the cane-fields as a place of disease and death to the bush as place of health and healing; and food plays an important role here as well.

Following LeFebvre, Gurdillo argued that "it is especially in contradictions in space that forms of consciousness come effectively into play in their current everyday practices" (Gurdillo 2002:51), which is perfectly consistent with his case of the Toba of Argentina. However, looking at the Anishinaabe's diabetes accounts, it seems that one should expand LeFebvre's argument to include contradictions in time. Furthermore, even in the case of the Toba time played a central role: people articulated these narratives not only once back in their villages in the bush, but also almost thirty years after their experience in the plantation had ended: their memories were thus produced not only by opposing different places, but also by opposing different historical moments (ibid: 51). In conclusion, one should pay more attention to everyday "points of history" like these when looking for manifestations of historical consciousness; otherwise, one might just miss a great deal of what historical consciousness is all about (Comaroff and Comaroff 1997:204,205).

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## Connecting Aboriginals to their Traditional Lands in Guadalcanal and the Solomon Islands

Conan Graham

### Introduction

Guadalcanal is one of many islands that make up the country of the Solomon Islands. Guadalcanal is the largest island, represents one of the provinces and holds the capital city of Honiara (Hadden 2007:9). Other than large forested lands there are few natural resources throughout the island, and limited government control over human activities has resulted in problems (9). Guadalcanal is dominated largely by two covered volcanic mountains and some grasslands, most of which has had little development (9). The fact that Guadalcanal is largely dominated by forested areas and has few other natural resources has caused the main focus of economic growth to centre on forestry and plantations (9). This leads to issues that are a major problem for the people of Guadalcanal, land ownership. The aboriginal people of Guadalcanal face pressure from outside sources for the exploitation of the forest. The question becomes: how can one link the past with the present to alleviate the questions of land ownership? I propose that with the use of a multidisciplinary team, there could be a way to connect the aboriginals to the lands that are under siege by forestry groups. I believe that through the use of archaeology, cultural anthropology and oral traditions, scholars can come to a consensus on the authenticity of land ownership for the aboriginals of Guadalcanal. In this paper, I will explore ways that these disciplines can work together to better understand the land occupancy of the aboriginals, as well as how these peoples have claims to traditional lands and how these proposed actions could be beneficial for the Solomon Islands and many other nations that are being exploited by their governments and trans-national corporations. It will be important that I look at previous studies in these areas and also consider how this proposal could affect many people who occupy the island today. There are never any answers to issues such as land ownership; however, it is a common issue throughout the world, an issue that must have some resolution as well as a consistent way of arriving at

new resolutions.

The concept of linking the past to the present is not one that I am alone in proposing. Richard B. Lee was one of the first to attempt to advocate the multidisciplinary approach to connect traditional lands to the aboriginal peoples. I will be connecting his studies of the !Kung people (Indians of Botswana) to Guadalcanal in an attempt to show how his work could be beneficial for reclaiming traditional lands and connecting lands to the people. Lee says:

In order to understand the hunting and gathering pattern, we have to do a reconstruction to get a picture of the distribution of landholding groups as they were during the 1920's, before the British settlement. (1972:134)

Lee's statement here expresses the importance of linking the traditional ways that land was used by the !Kung to times before their traditions were affected by outside influences or migrations of other peoples that could affect their culture. I connect this to the people of Guadalcanal because there is a need to connect the past to the present so that land tenure can truly be connected to the traditional areas used by the people. Lee's concepts will be integral to the framework that I am proposing. However, before there can be a true and complete connection between Guadalcanal aboriginal land usage and modern forestry controlled lands, we need to understand the way that the land has been used and controlled since contact with Europeans, and look at the state of the forestry industry on the island today.

### Colonialism and its Effects on Guadalcanal and the Solomon Islands

Colonialism has had a lasting effect on the locations that were controlled by the colonisers and the Solomon Islands were directly influenced by these activities. Colonialism began in Guadalcanal in 1893 when it became a protectorate of the British called the British Solomon Islands Protectorate (BSIIP) (Cusack 2001:11 & Seefeld 2006:176). The actions of colonialism are still felt today because of the European presence that was forced on the island (Seefeld 2006:176). The British caused changes to the island by bringing in four different groups of alien migrants (176); they are represented by colonial

buccanets, missionaries, planters and Chinese workers (1775). This brought about the expansion into traditional lands, and under the "Queen's Regulation no. 4 of 1898" and the "King's Regulation no 2 of 1894," lands that were not being used or occupied by the natives were considered "waste land" (179). The lands that were not being used or occupied by the aboriginals were open to be claimed by the government, its officials or different companies (179). The ability to claim waste land for companies meant that more workers were required to work the lands but the natives of Guadalcanal were not numerous enough to fill all the new positions (Sofield 2006:179). The plantation owners had a solution and it came from the neighbouring island to the north, Malaita. (Sofield 2006:180). Another factor brought about by the British protectorate caused even more of an influx of Malaitan workers. The creation of the head tax in 1920 brought even more migrant workers from Malaita due to the lack of work on the island, which created a need for its inhabitants to make money to avoid jail time (Ryniker 2001:43 & Sofield 2006:180). The influx of workers from neighbouring islands added to the pressure of land ownership for the native people of Guadalcanal, since the migrant workers were often occupying areas of traditional lands and this caused increased levels of tension between the groups (Sofield 2006:180 & Tucker 2010:12). One contributing factor was that Guadalcanal was the island that received the largest numbers of Malaitan's (Sofield 2006:180 & 181). Guadalcanal had become inundated by migrant workers from Malaita and lost many of their traditional lands to plantations, companies and the British protectorate. However, there is still the issue surrounding the question of why so many of these traditional lands were considered not used or occupied when colonisation took control of Guadalcanal and the Solomon Islands.

Guadalcanal native peoples lost much of the land when the British protectorate took control of the Solomon Islands, even though in the past the aboriginals had used a large percentage of the land. One might ask how the British did not notice them using these lands when they began to bring in the different groups of their migrants, the answer comes from long before the implementation of colonial rule. It was in the early

1800s that regular but infrequent traders began to arrive in the Solomon Islands (Ryniker 2001:10). The trade routes favoured some islands over others; Guadalcanal became a favorite, while Malaita was mostly ignored by the traders (16). This was a key factor in the lack of development in Malaita that led to the large number of migrants that were transferred throughout the Solomon Islands (Ryniker 2001:10 & Sofield 2006:180). The concept of trade and the desire for cargo brought people out of the mountainous regions and down to the coastal regions to increase their chances of interacting with passing ships (Ryniker 2001:43). This caused a shift in the way the people of Guadalcanal used many of their traditional lands. The shift allowed the B.S.L.P. to deem many of the lands as "waste land" and claim them for their own use or sell them to companies or plantation owners (Sofield 2006:179). But with the migration of new peoples into Guadalcanal and the restructuring of their lands by the B.S.L.P., there came a period of time when there was a rift and disagreement between the aboriginals, their ancestors and the land.

Guadalcanal and the Solomon Islands were never really considered an important part of British colonial ventures, but they were seen as lands that could be used for economic gain (Sofield 2006:181 & Tucker 2010:3). The lands were primarily used for sugarcane and copra plantations, fisheries and forestry, but forestry was not on the same level as the other economic systems (Tucker 2010:3). Guadalcanal lands were segregated into distinct categories based around the traditional British system of land tenure, and this was problematic for the aboriginals and their traditional land tenure systems (Sofield 2006:183). The land systems implemented were: Crown land, British title, park land, reserve land, waste land, and uncharted areas (185). This continued until after World War II when the British wanted to focus on themselves and allow their colonies to establish their own independence (Sofield 2006:185 & Tucker 2010:6). The position was focused on keeping the former colonies closely connected to the British parliamentary "Wanankuar system" and this led to the first parliament of the Solomon Islands (Tucker 2010:6). However, things changed when colonialism came to an end.

At the end of colonialism the way that the people looked at ownership and land rights changed, becoming more closely aligned with the peoples' outlook on their lands and maybe even leaning towards *faiva*, however, some of the developments incurred during colonialism transferred into this new outlook on land and landownership. It was on July 7, 1978 that the governments of the Solomon Islands took over from the British and ushered in the first independence that these islands had seen in nearly one hundred years (Allen 2012:302 & Tucker 2012:6). There was now a shift from the British system of land categorization to a new system that reflected a more traditional view of the land rights in the region (Seefeld 2006:186). The new Land & Titles act composed shortly after independence in 1978 dropped the number of recognized land categories to just three (Allen 2012:302 & Seefeld 2006:186). The new categories are: government alienated, leased alienated and *faiva* lands (Seefeld 2006:186). All these different forms of land tenures have different rules associated with them.

The different land tenures each have their own stipulations that control the way that land can be used, sold and even transferred between groups. The three systems of land tenure are distinctively different, but the common thread is that the lease on all lands is 75 years and non-renewable, meaning that if the lease changes hands after 10 years the new owner would only have 65 years remaining on the lease (Seefeld 2006:186). Leased alienated lands are limited to a 75 year lease and can be bought and sold (186). The government alienated lands are those that fall into the public sector, and are comprised of the capital, provincial administrative centers, airfields, and other sites associated with national requirements (186). The final portion of the land tenure act has to do with the *faiva* lands or ritual lands. These lands have to be lived on by the aboriginals or have a connection through ancestry that requires an unbroken line of lineage (Seefeld 2006:186). These lands cannot be bought or sold and require a connection to particular ancestral lines based on where the people reside within the Solomon Islands (Allen 2012:309 & Seefeld 2006:186). However, much of the traditionally used lands have been lost due to the movements of workers

and the influx of new peoples during colonialism, as well as the encroachment of plantations and forestry in more recent times (Ryniker 2012:151). Acculturation has also been a contributing factor to the loss of traditional lands because much of the past has been forgotten, making the connection to these lands difficult for the aboriginals (151). Although these changes to land tenure have altered the situation since the end of colonialism, there are still many problems facing the aboriginals of Guadalcanal. They are in a context of resource development and increasing economic demands, and yet the full extent of their traditional land use is far from understood. So what are the problems that are being caused by forestry and why is it a concern for the aboriginals of Guadalcanal, or why should it be a concern for them? To come to a further understanding one must have an understanding of how the forestry industry operates on the island of Guadalcanal.

#### Forestry in Guadalcanal

Guadalcanal has many issues surrounding landownership and how it is being dealt with, however, which lands are true traditional lands of the ancestors and how these lands are being used today are issues that seem to have been neglected. I propose that many of the traditional lands are being used by forestry organizations and that these lands need to be properly surveyed for any cultural remnants. There is also a need for studies that focus on oral histories in Guadalcanal to clarify our understanding of traditional landownership and how it affects the people. However, before we can discuss the ways that these studies can assist in resolving what might be one of the great cultural losses of recent times, we must understand the way the forestry industry operates in Guadalcanal and what type of lands exist in the region.

There are many features about the Solomon Islands and Guadalcanal that have led to an economy based around plantation goods, forestry, fisheries, mining, etc. The fact that the Solomon Islands exist in a tropical region of the Pacific where there is a lot of sunshine, high annual rainfall, and mean daily temperatures of 25 to 32 degree Celsius means that it a prime location for the main forms of economic

production (Paika 2009:4). The tropical region of the Solomon Islands has six different forms of vegetation: grasslands and non-forested areas (comprised of mostly non-tree species of vegetation), saline swamp forests (vegetation that is influenced by tidal waters, generally found in estuaries and floodplains), freshwater swamps and riverine forests (generally found in regions where there is poor drainage and at low altitudes), lowland forests (forests that exist between 5-70m above sea level and are comprised of many different species of vegetation), hill forests (forests that exist between 400-600 m above sea level and in well-drained soils), and montane forest (forests over 600m above sea level on ridge tops and mountain summits) (Paika 2009:7 & 8). It is estimated that within these six different vegetation zones there exists about 5000 different plant species (8). It is also estimated that about 90% of the total land on the Solomon Islands is covered by forests (15). With a basic understanding of the different forms of vegetation we can now move forward and look at how the forested regions are being used.

The government of the Solomon Islands has a policy on how forestry should be managed and sheds some light on the state of the forestry industry in the Solomon Islands. Paika writes:

The Coalition for National Unity and Rural Advancement (CNURA) government's policy goal for the forestry sector is, "The harvesting of forestry resources at a sustainable rate with fair returns to landowners and the government and the replanting and care for the environment including promoting of all protected areas and to ensure Solomon Islands receive fair returns on the export of wood logs that reflect true international market value." This policy goal does not really point out the government's stand on community (smallholder) forestry. (2009:14)

What this shows is that the government is focused on the forestry industry as a contributing force for the strengthening of the economy of the Solomon Islands, however, they are also neglecting the smaller land owners. Furthermore, I believe that they are not focusing on trying to figure out if there are any lands that may have remains that reflect past usage by aboriginals on the islands. It should be noted that there are more important concerns in the government's stand on forestry, including required consultation after setting up all different lands that are being used. There are examples of traditional lands being used for forestry and issues have arisen from these activities. In some cases tribes have neglected to include all members that

have rights to lands, whether they be of the same tribe or neighboring ones (Warus 7). This has resulted in many levels of confusion, since what results from these tribal forestry ventures is that only a few people profit while the others are left with nothing but the loss of their traditional lands (Warus 8). It is obvious that the government requires the forestry industry's continued development to ensure economic growth for the region; however, the ways that the industry affects the people and the land, especially land that may be traditional, are being ignored. However, we must not forget that the people of the Solomon Islands and Guadalcanal know that their lives are dependent on the land. The majority of peoples in the Solomon Islands even as subsistence farmers and live off the land (Truher 2012:15). Paika writes:

Land in the Solomon Islands is a treasure and the people regard land as their "war" identity and like a mother who provides them with the basic necessities of life such as food, water, shelter, raw materials, firewood and a place within which to live. Thus, anyone who has no land or is caused to have no land is regarded as "mother of fact" poor.

This statement really encompasses the entire argument of this paper. The land is their livelihood and the forestry industry is in a sense a tyrant that is removing their lifeline. This brings us to the need for academics to try and find ways to link peoples to their traditional lands, which will alleviate further disputes relating to land tenure. Through archaeological and ethnohistoric research a connection might be made that could benefit the aboriginals as well as the government and the economy of the Solomon Islands and Guadalcanal, if steps are taken in the right direction.

#### Archaeology in Guadalcanal

Although many suggest that little is known about the pre-history in Guadalcanal and suggest that the earliest evidence of the arrival of the aboriginals comes around 1000 B.C.E. (Hadden 2007:7), others in more recent years show that this region has had human occupation beginning more than 40,000 years ago (Chan 1996:13 & Bullard 2008:97). However, much is still unknown about the levels of colonization by the aboriginals of the Melanesian islands (Bullard 2008:97). Currently there has been little archaeological exploration throughout the Solomon Islands and there can also be difficulties that arise for archaeologists in

regions like these.

Because of a lack of direct archaeological evidence from Guadalcanal and most of the Solomon Islands, I will be utilizing evidence from neighbouring regions to discuss what I consider to be the typical evidence that may be found during the excavation process. I will draw my comparisons and theoretical development from studies on areas to the north such as New Guinea (Specht 1967:493) and to the south like Vanuatu (Sheffed 2008:97) that have had somewhat more of an archaeological tradition. These areas reflect very similar climates and terrain and thus can be useful for creating a well-developed theory of what might be found when excavating in Guadalcanal. The difficulties that are associated with tropical archaeology are numerous and can become very problematic when trying to develop some sort of chronology associated to land occupancy.

There are difficulties associated with archaeological remains and the acquisition of the age of many artefacts found because of the tropical climate and limitations associated with carbon dating (Specht 1967:493). The issues that archaeologists face have to do with the way that organic materials decompose in the tropical environments seen in Melanesia (Sheffed 2008:102). High levels of moisture, high heat, and highly acidic soils mean that organic materials are harder to find, which also affects the chances of acquiring carbon dates in these regions (102). Carbon dating requires organic materials found *in situ* (103). The issue is that with the tropical climate most organics do not last a long time and this limits our ability to get longer dates. For example, many recent finds on the island of Vanuatu that have been analysed only reflect dates as far back as 1000 years before present (104). This timeline represents a long enough span of time to qualify land occupancy for the aboriginals residing in this region. If similar dates could be achieved an excavation in Guadalcanal, there could be changes made to the way different regions are viewed by the descendants of the people who originally visited the island. However, there could be other forms of archaeological evidence that could expand the timelines of occupation in Guadalcanal and could also link groups that

currently exist on the island to regions that they have long forgotten to be traditional lands. So with issues around preservation of organic materials being well documented in the neighbouring regions, we must wonder what other forms of archaeological evidence we could expect to find.

It has been said that the most prevalent assemblages in the world are those of lithic remains. This appears to be true in Melanesia as well. Throughout Melanesia there have been numerous finds of lithic remains, reduction flakes being the most frequent (Allen 1996:16 & Clark 2002:197). Along with the lithic assemblages, archaeologists have found ground stone tools, ground shell tools and pottery remains (Allen 1996:16). These are the artefacts that I would expect to be the most common in Guadalcanal. Pottery remains will probably be the most informative forms of archaeological evidence (Clark 2002: 213); however, I personally believe that lithic debris and tools will be found to the highest amounts, and with proper classification systems this could lead to a strong connection between lands, times and aboriginal peoples. These forms of materials are difficult to date on their own but they can be dated based on style, and if they are found with other materials these can help to create a dating chronology (Allen 1996:14 & 15). Another form of evidence that may be found but that are highly unlikely to remain due to regional conditions are wooden carved figurines (Specht 1967:494). Although it is likely that there are many different archaeologically significant finds in Guadalcanal, it is important to attempt to find evidence that will have the highest chance of remaining *in situ*.

What becomes clear from research in areas around Guadalcanal is that the archaeological evidence that will best link groups to former traditional lands is to be found by designating distinct or manufacturing techniques and styles of stone tools and pottery in the different regions. To actually design a proper classification system for Guadalcanal would require extensive excavation in areas that appear to have features that archaeologists consider culturally significant. Along with archaeological evidence, a use of ethnographic materials can bridge the link between what has been a long lasting belief and what is reality.

(Clark 2003:203 & Specht 1967:497).

#### Conclusion

One thing that always becomes apparent when one goes about exploring regions that have had little or no previous archaeological exploration is that it opens the door to a Pandora's box of new and exciting developments. The more we explore regions that we know have a long cultural history, the more we come to realize that we know so little about the past. There are of course many other factors that can be brought up regarding land tenure and how land is being used in Guadalcanal. As we gain understanding through ethnographic research, archaeology and oral traditions, we will gain a broader understanding of how land was used before first contact with European explorers. We can also gain insight into what parts of aboriginal culture have been lost or transformed through migration of groups and assimilation by outside non-offspring groups. Creating a more precise understanding of land tenure issues in Guadalcanal and how its land was used throughout pre-European contact may result in the aboriginals regaining previously lost and/or forgotten lands. Crossing these connections between the anthropological disciplines will widen our understanding of peoples and regions as we move forward and attempt to create links between the past and present.

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*Human Nature and Nature Nature: Anthropological Problematicization and the Difficulty of Applying Anthropological Theory to the Real World*

Sarah Jane Kerr-Lapine

Anthropological discourse has for quite some time problematized environmentalism for ignoring local rights, particularly when it comes to First Nations communities (Braun 2002, Trouwman 1993), and many individuals have criticized humanitarianism for its inefficiencies and for being counterproductively effective (Klein, Brandon, et al. 2008, Orlowski 2009). The binary opposition of humanitarianism and environmentalism problematic is that the furthest oppositions between the two are so extreme. There is radical environmentalism in which a pristine natural environment untouched by human existence is the goal, and on the other end of the spectrum, specific humanitarian issues that conflict with ideals of environmental responsibility. These include issues like the employment of environmentally damaging technologies by famine relief programs, such as the use of artificial fertilizers and the diversion of massive amounts of fresh water for irrigation purposes in order to produce the volume of food required. The tension that exists between environmentalism and humanitarianism is particularly interesting given that these two broad campaigns generally arise from a similar sentiment of the importance and individual responsibility of human beings to take an active role in repairing inequities and inequalities in the world. In this way it can be a useful dichotomy as, despite the very similar roots of these two types of activism, the two are often at odds. As a supporter of both environmental and humanitarian efforts, I have experienced firsthand the moral dilemma that occurs for those who see themselves as supporters of both campaigns but come to wonder if the two can co-exist ideologically. In this paper, I am attempting to target two distinct issues: how problematicizing terms and dichotomies in anthropology has become debilitating, how complicated it is to apply anthropological theory to the real world, and how both of these issues are exemplified in environmental efforts, which contributes to the tension between environmentalism and humanitarianism. Through Bruce Braun's *The Intergrown Rainforest: Nature, Culture and Power on Canada's West Coast* and

Michelle Casperson's *All Animals are Equal but Some are Cows: Conservation and Culture Conflict*, I attempt to show how exceedingly difficult it is to avoid problematicizing terms and dichotomies as we try to critically analyze any account of firsthand experience, be it academic research, history, media or narratives. Research, history, media and narratives are sources from which we gain much, if not all, of our information regarding both humanitarian and environmental issues, and thus, in attempting to understand the tensions between these two efforts, we must first understand how we are interpreting the sources that inform us about them.

The discipline of anthropology is creating an increasing era where wanting the status is no longer revolutionary and calling attention to systemic inequalities and damage/abuse often falls on deaf, less-received ears. We have problematicized nearly every term and dichotomy, while continuing to point fingers and throw red flags without any suggestions for alternative terms or new ways of approaching these issues. We have no answer as to how we rebuild a functional system with our reduced understandings of knowledge, apt and inclusive language. It is in this way that the intensive problematicization of terms and dichotomies in anthropology (Braun 2002, Geertz 1973, Clifford 1986, Holm 1995, Ruffley 1999) has had a debilitating effect on anthropological academic discourse. These terms and dichotomies are undeniably problematic, and therefore the deconstruction of the issues affecting their use is necessary and important for understanding how complex these issues are and how much they affect every facet of research and discussion. However, it often seems as though attention is being paid so exclusively to the problematicization of discourse that discourse itself is neglected. Philippe Bourgois encapsulates this sentiment by contextualizing his research "in perspective of the poly-theoretical enlightening of academic neoliberalism" (Bourgois 2003:14). This may be easier said than done, as it is incredibly difficult to discuss any anthropological issue with any degree of thoroughness without referring to theory, and without using problematicized terms and dichotomies (Ruffley 1999, Braun 2002). Additionally, in an attempt to present a strong, coherent argument, it is often impossible to also unpack every but problematic aspect of each term

and decisions that is being used.

It became clear through my research that it is not advocating for the fair and responsible treatment of the natural, ecological world (Eisenstein 1993:73-84, Brown 2002) that is problematic, but rather the exclusion (Eisenstein 1993:77) of extreme environmentalism that "see[s] people only as intruders who should be removed from pristine natural

settings" (Eisenstein 1993:82). For this reason I will be using the terms "extreme environmentalism" and "radical environmentalism" to refer to the type of environmentalism that is the most incompatible with fulfilling the basic needs of human subsistence and livelihood, and therefore, what provides the underlying friction between extreme environmentalism and humanization. I will also occasionally be using the term "moderate environmentalism" to refer to those who advocate the fair and responsible treatment of nature, as noted above, but not to the extent that human beings are entirely removed from nature.

The primary concerns with radical environmentalism are that it is unsustainably optimistic (Eisenstein 1993:77), and that it reduces the complexity of ecological politics to the "binary logic" of "pristine natural/destructive humanity" (Brown 2002:2). Pristine natural/destructive humanity calls for preserved 'nature' free from all human influence, which ignores the simple reality that human beings require the natural resources of the earth for their most basic subsistence needs: food, shelter, water and clothing. It also ignores the reality of cultures and communities who employ profoundly sustainable environmental practices in their relationship with natural resources.

The argument to consider the human impacts of environmental campaigns is clearly illustrated in situations in which the protection of "wild, pristine nature" supersedes aboriginal land and subsistence rights. This pristine scenario is discussed at length in Bruce Brown's *The Intergovernmental Nexus: Nations, Culture, and Power on Canada's West Coast* (Brown 2002). Through his discussion of the effects of radical

environmentalist groups in Clayoquot Sound, British Columbia in the early 1990's (Brown 2002:1) to bring to light a situation that involved three distinct groups with conflicting goals. One of these groups was a logging company which, through removing trees in order to make lumber, was simultaneously providing jobs through the employment of those cutting trees, those manufacturing the raw product into lumber, those employed at the lumber yard and those whose employment relied on the lumber being available: carpenters, ironworkers, construction workers, home builders, etc. In spite of the jobs it was creating logging was, and is still, threatening the natural beauty of Clayoquot's "shepherd ridges, semi-undisturbed forests, and remote reaches" (Brown 2002:2), not to mention the ecological damage that deforestation causes. The group that was actively targeting the logging company for these precise reasons was the extreme environmentalist, who called for the return of the forest to pristine wilderness, an idea that was problematic for those. While he does not deny the existence of vast landscapes of naturally occurring flora and fauna, water, earth and air, he argues that "nature" and "the forest" as specific spaces are human conceptualizations (Brown 2002:2-3). Additionally, through his detailed discussion of the New-chalk-nuth First Nation, he reminds his audience of the inescapable link between human beings and the natural world. He also highlights the values of ecological sustainability and beliefs that are encouraged by aboriginal attitudes towards the use of natural resources and the earth itself (Brown 2002:81-82). These values are fundamental to First Nations land claims in co-optation, as they align the First Nation communities with the values of moderate environmentalism. It is the New-chalk-nuth First Nation themselves that are the third group, one which has aboriginal, ancestral and subsistence claims to the land. Brown goes on to discuss the effects of co-optation, some of which are exemplified in the "Clayoquot Sound Land Use Plan" map that was released by the BC Government in 1993 (Brown 2002:6-7). This map indicated land use for preservation, logging, wildlife, recreation, etc. but in no way mentioned land available for First Nations "spiritual, environmental, and economic practices"



(Brown 2002:7). Brown illustrates the irony that despite First Nations knowledge of their land and cultural knowledge of the functions of nature and the forest, it is typically a middle class Caucasian person that is ultimately making decisions on land use in areas where First Nations land claims and natural resource industries conflict. This type of reaction, based on the idea of First Nations' intrinsic relationship with the earth, illustrates another aspect of the tension relationship between indigenous peoples and environmentalists. It highlights the extreme romanticization of the closeness of indigenous people to the land (Brown 2002:94, 105-104), which serves to equate saving the environment with saving indigenous people (MacMillan, class discussion, October 25 2011, Brown 2002:81).

Nick Emerson provides an even more complicated example of the effects of radical environmentalism through an anthropological perspective on the effect of the environmental campaign against whaling on Icelandic whalers and fishermen in his article *All Animals are Equal but Some are Cetecean: Conservation and Cultural Conflict* in Roy Milton's 1993 book *Environmentalism: The View from Anthropology*. Like Brown, Emerson refers to an 'indigenous' community, or one that claims indigeneity, however in Emerson's case 'indigenous' does not mean aboriginal or First Nations, as the Icelandic people arrived originally from Northern and Northwestern Europe to the previously uninhabited island of Iceland (Karlsson 2009:9-15), a complication that will be discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs. Overall, Emerson's strongest point is the opposition of anthropocentrism and ecocentrism as the main basic point of contention between extreme environmentalists and the communities that their efforts affect (Emerson 1993:76-77).

Emerson encapsulates the tension in environmentalism when he states that: "It is one thing to posit that [...] animals should have rights, and another thing to condemn the cultural practices of people relating to the use of animals and attempt to force them to give up these practices" (Emerson 1993:80).

This is an important question for several reasons. First of all, it calls attention to the absurdity of entirely excluding human beings from the 'natural world', and acknowledges the necessity of human beings to make use of the world's natural resources in order to sustain themselves and their families. However, there is an obvious difference between taking only as much as is absolutely necessary from nature, and pillaging. Between cutting down logs to build a village, and chain-sawing a rainforest. For this reason, the New-zealand claim to the resources of Clayoquot Sound is more easily defensible than that of the Icelandic whalers, as we will see. The core values of aboriginal tradition with regards to the treatment of nature and its resources make a case that satisfies the values of moderate environmentalists, in the balance that should be maintained between human beings and the environment.

This question is also important because a necessary problematization is required in deciding what constitutes the "cultural practices" of a particular people, for without this problematization, there would be no reference for what "cultural practices" should be condemned for violating the earth, and which are acceptable in the name of subsistence and cultural survival. For example, Emerson makes reference to the conflict between the conservationists and the "indigenous resource users" (Emerson 1993:80). The ideas of "cultural practices" and "indigenous resource users" are both interesting. How long must a people live in a given place to be considered indigenous, in a situation like Iceland where there were no previous inhabitants? How long must they strictly perform the same, or similar, activities and traditions, for these activities to be considered "cultural practices"? If it has been decided that "indigenous" will mean "aboriginal", and "cultural practices" are the ancestral practices of these people. Then consider a scenario in which the ancestral practices of an aboriginal people change over time, as their technologies change and as they experience increased contact and trade with other communities. Consider also that North American companies and governments have been digging oil wells, logging forests, quarrying mountains and trawling

fish for over a hundred years. Does that make it North American "cultural practice" and therefore exempt from environmental efforts to reduce damage to the earth's ecosystems?

With these questions in mind, Eriasson introduces the unique situation involving Icelandic minke whales (Eriasson 1992:73-84). In this case, the Icelandic whalers have been in Iceland for over 2000 years, but these productions were actually Norse and Celtic (Karlsson 2000:8-14). This is further complicated by the fact that Norse and Celtic heritages are both foreign, the first of Norwegian, Scandinavian and Germanic background (Morrison, Weber) and the latter meaning "a modern Gael, Highland Scot, Irishman, Welshman, Cornishman, or Breton" (Morrison, Weber). Additionally, the island was previously uninhabited and so the Norse and Celtic settlers were, in fact, the first people to ever settle on Iceland (Karlsson 2000:9). The situation in Iceland is also unique in that fishing and whaling are not only essential, traditional subsistence practices, but given the limited natural resources on Iceland (Karlsson 2000:9), they are one of very few industries available to Icelandic workers (Karlsson 2000:287-291, 292-294). The situation is additionally complicated by the fact that minke whales are not endangered (Eriasson 1992:75), and that in 1986 when the restrictions on whaling was introduced, there were only nine minke whaling boats in all of Iceland (Eriasson 1992:80). It is not particularly difficult to successfully argue the right of West Coast First Nations to the land they have inhabited for thousands of years, particularly due to the essentially focused values of resource use amongst West Coast First Nations that are perpetuated from both within and outside of those communities (Bass 2002:81-82). The commercial fishing industry in Iceland however, does not fit as cleanly into the ideals of sustainable environmentalism. As I stated earlier, it seems that in nearly all cases it is not advocating for the fair and responsible treatment of the natural, ecological world that is problematic, but rather extreme environmentalism that calls for the eradication of all human influence that is. The voices that oppose extreme environmentalism are further challenged by the fact

that they are not unified (Bass 2002:4). Some argue from the perspective that indigenous, aboriginal ways are exactly environmentally responsible, while others argue that their livelihood and that of their families depends on industries that may be environmentally destructive in their own way, but that require the earth's ecological systems to remain relatively undisturbed in order for that industry to remain viable, such as the effects that the destruction of the forests has on the marine community, and therefore, on the fishing industry.

These two contributions to anthropological discourse exemplify how difficult it is to form a thorough and convincing argument when the discipline itself is fraught with contention. I introduced only a few topics, all of which are deeply interconnected and still there are dozens of terms, arguments and points that a critical reader will find problematic. It seems that anthropology is caught in a catch-22 where the absence of the deconstruction of terms and thorough explanations of choices in terms makes research an easy target for wanting critical analysis, however if you are to completely thoroughly discuss each contentious point in your argument, you are forced to oversimplify your research in some way. As we have seen in anthropological discourse, where the discussion of a single word such as "culture", "human" or "local" (Gore 1973, Bass 2002, Raffan 1999), can result in an entire book or a forty page journal article, the idea of "thorough discussion" poses a serious logical problem. The simplification that results from the shortcomings that the discipline demands is also problematic in that it loses the bigger picture of the research, the interconnections of issues, contention and evidence, the complexity of culture. If we have learned anything from anthropological theory, it is that nothing is simple and everything is complicated. As anthropologists, how do we discuss our research in a way that thoroughly acknowledges its limitations, but also communicates its valid contribution to understanding the world around us?

Bass says something very profound in the introduction to *The Inappropriate Realities*, while discussing the meetings that were arranged with the groups that wanted to oppose the logging company,

which included environmentalists, members of New-chalk cult communities, politicians, fisherpeople and many others (Brown 2002:4). He says that over the course of one particular weekend meeting "tempers rose and fell, participants left and then were convinced to return, and speakers heated each other for their incoherence and inflexible positions" (Brown

2002:4). I found this particularly *deflating*, because for me it showed the lack of ability, even in adult professionals with similar values, of people to reach consensus or come to any common understandings (to me in the best interests of all those involved, both human and environmental). In that way, I think that ultimately it is part of our social responsibility as participants in anthropological discourse in the 21st century to re-examine problematized concepts and provide options or solutions. I argue that the best solution for our instrumentalism is a middle ground, one

in which being environmentally responsible and respectful is combined with an acknowledgement of both indigenous, aboriginal land claims and livelihood, as well as the basic needs of all human subsistence. This being said, this solution is fraught with the problematizations of who is "aboriginal" or "indigenous", what constitutes "environmentally responsible" or "environmentally respectful", what "basic needs" are, and who decides the limitations of all of these. Perhaps it is time then, to collect the enormous variety of theoretical problematizations and reflect on them as a whole, in addition to individually. I think that for our own benefit and the benefit of future generations of anthropologists and critical thinkers, we need to identify, or re-identify, the purposes of critical thinking and begin to offer at least the possibility of discussing where we go from here. As anthropologists, with our philosophies of subjectivity, awareness of the construction of the "Other" and our insight into universalism and cultural relativism, we are arguably in an excellent position to bring different perspectives and more inclusive ways of thinking into the world, and particularly into the realm of humanism and environmental efforts. We may not be able to change how things were

approached in the past, but we can change how they are approached in the future.

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