COMMONING ETHNOGRAPHY

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Welcome to Commoning Ethnography

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The two words, commoning and ethnography, are funny words. Neither is particularly straightforward on its own, in combination they must seem maddeningly obtuse. This is ironic given that when combined they aspire, or at least, raise the question of what it means to be included in ethnographic research, writing, teaching, and thinking.

What does it mean to suggest that ethnography might be a site, source, or scene of commoning? What does combining the idea of commoning with the practice of ethnography allow us to think about or to do that we might not otherwise? Why create a journal dedicated to such an obviously paradoxical thought experiment?

These open questions are at the heart of this project. To be completely transparent: We do not yet know what it means to place the figure of the commons

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at the heart of ethnographic practice. We are not yet sure of how thinking the commons alongside our ethnographic work will transform the kinds of questions we ask, research we undertake, teaching we devise, or writing we produce. We are unsure of the boundaries or parameters of this project of commoning. We do not yet know what kinds of inclusions or exclusions we will create in the process of thinking the commons and ethnography together. We do not yet have a theory of commoning ethnography. Perhaps this is the point.

Despite this uncertainty now seems precisely the right time to try to experiment with new forms of knowledge production and to devise new infrastructures to think through those forms of praxis (e.g. Fortun and Fortun 2015). Here, we find the figure of the commons to be provocative even if it is unsettling. Rather than understanding the commons as a finished or known project, we undertake this effort to begin from a new premise altogether.

Starting with the idea of the commons has pushed us to ask hard questions about the sorts of knowledge we make, the kinds of poetics we prefer, the sorts of publics we generate (and alienate), and about our roles, rights, and capacities with respect to the forms of labour and property emerging from existing scholarly infrastructures. Thinking ethnography through the commons has pushed us to consider the sorts of boundaries, inclusions and exclusions, that structure our research. We have considered how notions of property, possessive individualism, and ownership shape the kinds of communities we enrol in our work and how we ask them to be enrolled. It has prompted us to reflect upon our own practices to consider where we have gotten such tasks right and where we might have missed the mark.

Within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand, where this project is currently based, the idea of the commons has prompted us to examine how ongoing practices of settler colonialism shape not only our understandings of property and its discontents, but also the limitations of the notion of the commons itself. It has prompted long, often intense conversations about the relationship between Te Ao Māori, and ethnographic praxis and the production of anthropological knowledge. These conversations are still very much in motion.

By raising the idea of the commons and the practice of commoning, we have not endeavoured to provide either a revolutionary new theory for anthropological or ethnographic research, but rather to suggest a different set of premises from which to begin asking questions. Along the way, we have not positioned ourselves as knowers or owners of this knowledge, but rather as actors trying hard to think about the boundaries, practices, and forms of knowledge production as we make them. This first issue of *Commoning Ethnography* is a first, tentative step on this path. We are not seeking to mark out our own scholarly territory or hail a bold new intellectual turn, and instead offer this journal as an invitation to think together. We are a collective of ethnographers working towards something emergent, creating a hand-made space ripe for co-production and continued re-interpretation by and with a wide variety of collaborators.

In the process of making this issue, we have enrolled friends, colleagues, and associates, mainly because these are the people we've been in conversation with over the last two years. At the same time, we've been pushed, trying to find

space in our own professional and personal lives to make sense of the possibilities of new scholarly infrastructures, which make it easier to produce a journal than ever before, but also reconfigure the infrastructural labour pushing more work downwards into our already busy lives. Concretely this has meant trying to work out how we build a set of practices that can deal with the complexities of life, such as providing care for parents and partners, having babies, and caring for children with special needs. Rather than backgrounding these realities as external 'pressures', we seek to build and maintain a journal that accounts for and even renders visible the non-academic labours essential to our wider relational lives. In other words, how might we create open access infrastructures in ways that are liveable for our bodies, our families, and our lifeworlds?

We also hope to engage with debates about the political economy and ethics of publishing that have been growing in recent years. For example, in producing this first issue, and in line with recent critiques of the oft-invisible and precarious work practices that produce anthropology journals, we have avoided the use of unpaid graduate labour in the production process.[1] Beyond this, we are considering ways to engage with recent debates about the politics of citational practice, the inequities of peer review, and the geopolitics of who gets included in the networks of prestige that journals generate and reinforce (e.g. Bal 2018, Weiss 2018). In this vein, over the following year we aim to extend the editorial advisory board to include more scholars and practitioners located outside of Australasian and Euro-American academic institutions, and are reflecting on how to do this meaningfully, in ways that facilitate generative connections and exchanges across geographic borders.[2]

This journal is thus what we see as a modest step towards initiating a new conversation among ethnographers that might both interrogate the boundaries that form our work while also challenging us to draw and redraw them as we go. The pieces in this first issue reflect our early thinking along these lines. Our contributions by Fiona McCormack, Alex Golub, Nomi Stone, and Luca Sebastiani and Ariana Sánchez Cota reflect on ideas of commoning and the boundaries of ethnographic work in different ways, opening pathways and raising problems as they go. McCormack's article considers how Aotearoa New Zealand's fishing quotas reveal the complex anti-politics of commoning, in which notions of common pool resources are used to dispossess and restrict indigenous peoples' access to the sea, deepening settler exclusions. Golub's piece asks us to consider how the emergence of 'professional anthropology' in the inter-war period of the 20th century was a critical time of boundary drawing. In wresting control from a diverse array of thinkers, which he calls 'amateurs', whose alternative socio-political commitments inspired different forms of writing and thinking, the new professional anthropology opened possibilities for the legitimization of anthropological research in the academy but closed other possible futures and silenced many alternative voices in the process. Stone asks us to think about how the uses of poetry might transform both ethnography's audiences and also the kinds of knowledge such research produces. Finally, Sabastiani and Cota reflect upon the way in which ethnographic praxis might enable or truncate activist solidarities within their work within the M15 movements in Spain

The issue also contains a special section, *Debating the Ethnography Commons in Aotearoa*, which contains a set of shorter provocations first delivered at Victoria University of Wellington in May of 2017 to mark the 50th anniversary of the founding of the anthropology programme. These pieces mark the tentative origins of this conversation and our efforts to rethink ethnography through the figure of the commons. Across the set of papers we not only ask what the ethnography commons is and what we might do with it, but also engage in a set of conversations around the value of property and its discontents, the role of capitalism in structuring scholarship, and the ways in which unsettled questions of sovereignty have underpinned the relationship between Māori and Anthropology. Situated as they may be within that specific conversation, these papers offer early reflections, answers, and punchy provocations for thinking the commons and ethnography together in the aim of producing new futures for both.

We hope this journal will become a space that challenges the boundaries of knowledge-making, and facilitates robust debate about the institutions and practices that guard those boundaries. We are particularly interested in critically considering the lines we draw between academic and non-academic spheres, between the subjects and objects of research, and the creative knowledge practices that flow across and between these boundaries. In our call for contributions on our website we provide guidelines for a variety of submission types, but we also welcome other, alternative forms of work that we have not considered or conceived of yet, which challenge us to reconsider *what* counts as knowledge and *who* gets to count in producing it.

We are inspired here by Lauren Berlant's sense of the commons as a kind of broken infrastructure that demands constant renewal through collective engagement (2016). In launching this journal, we aim to begin a conversation that includes diverse actors, allows for new forms of knowledge production, and helps us rethink how we might remake our scholarly infrastructure in more inclusive ways for the 21st century. This is an open-ended conversation that we will renew each year with a new issue. We are very pleased to invite you to participate in that conversation. Please see our open call for papers for further information on how to contribute to the next issue of *Commoning Ethnography* or our emerging blog hosted on the Victoria University Ethnography Commons Website – www.ethnographycommons.org

Notes

1. In the production process of this issue, we have relied upon the labour of salaried academic, administrative and library staff, and graduate students who we have paid a living wage for the work they do for the journal. We are also considering ways to conduct peer review processes that avoid reliance on the unremunerated labour of precariously-positioned academics.

2. We are particularly interested in working against what Sara Ahmed describes as the largely symbolic 'non-performance' of diversity that is so common in academic institutions (2012).

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Call for Papers

Commoning Ethnography is an off-centre, annual, international, peer-engaged, open access, online journal dedicated to examining, criticizing, and redrawing the boundaries of ethnographic research, teaching, knowledge, and praxis.

Open Call for Papers

We are pleased to open submissions for Issue 2, to be published December 2019. We welcome submissions that explore the boundaries of ethnographic knowledge, experiment with forms of ethnographic writing, disturb the authority of single authorship, consider how property norms shape ethnographic research, and rethink communities of ethnographic research in a variety of yet unanticipated ways. We also welcome ethnographic and theoretical accounts of the commoning projects that exist within contemporary life, be they within academia, social movements, political spaces, emergent economies, environmental debates, creative practices or in intimate and quotidian arenas of social life.

We accept standard research articles (6,000-8,000 words), as well as a range of other collaborative, creative and exploratory works (see our website for details: https://ojs.victoria.ac.nz/ce/about). We are interested in reflective, engaged, and impassioned writing. We are also interested in work that challenges norms of ethnographic writing by expanding the rules of authorship and finding novel ways to enhance collaborations with research partners, incorporating their voices, thoughts, and discontents into our own practices of research. We are particularly interested in work that reflects an off-kilter, handmade approach to knowledge production and dissemination; this includes, but is not limited to, new graphic forms like cartoons or photo essays. We also encourage work that extends the limits of established academic networks, breaches boundaries between the

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centres and peripheries of academia, and considers critically who and what can be included in our conversations.

Deadline for Open Submissions is April 1, 2019*
To submit please use the OJS submission system. If you have questions or brief pitches for potential articles or special sections, please contact our editorial team at editorsCE@vuw.ac.nz.

*Work submitted after this date will still be considered, but for the 2020 issue.

Call for Papers, Special Section: The Labours of Collaboration

Issue 2 (2019) *Commoning Ethnography*

An explicitly collaborative ethnography has gained significant purchase within the field over the past few decades (i.e. Lassiter 2005). For different sorts of scholars this project has taken different forms and has had different kinds of politics. It foregrounds relationships in the field and also new kinds of ethnographic production in the form of films, artworks, exhibitions, and, often, traditional written texts. Although, ethnography has long been a collaborative research method (e.g. Rappaport 2008: 2), the kinds of inherent collaborations within ethnographic work were not always acknowledged as such nor were they given the kinds of central billing that new collaborative projects often emphasize. In this way, such projects often aim to undo (or at least unpack) the kinds of uneven knowledge hierarchies that have been foundational to ethnographic research since its outset. They also appear to offer new grounds for activist research (Hale 2008).

At the same time, a second form of collaboration has emerged in relation to the demands placed on researchers to manage large, multi-researcher grants. Sometimes these teams are necessitated as part of the process of anthropologists working in collaboration with scholars in the hard sciences. In other instances, these are teams of local and non-local scholars working together. Essentially, in this other form of ethnographic collaboration, two or more ethnographers work in the same space, co-creating (on multiple levels) ethnographic data and ethnographies.

Although different in character, ethics, and political aims, these forms of ethnographic collaboration raise important question about processes of knowledge production. For this Special Section of Issue 2 of *Commoning Ethnography*, we seek papers that engage with the changing nature of ethnographic collaboration on multiple levels. We ask for scholarship that critically unpacks what contemporary ethnographic collaborations look like and how they alter the inherent power dynamics of ethnographic research. We seek papers that reflect on innovative collaborations, both as research teams and with communities. In particular, we wish to engage with the relationship between collaboration and commoning as processes that shape the future of ethnographic labour – both within and beyond the academy.

Potential papers might address the questions raised by collaborative projects, including (but not limited to): questions of gender, racial, or class hierarchies within ethnographic research; divisions of epistemological labour; polemics for or against ethnographic collaboration/collaborative ethnography; collaborative poetics; the uneven distributions of risk and reward in ethnographic collaboration; the politics of collaboration; or methodological approaches to collaboration.

Please submit abstracts (no more than 200 words) along with a short author bio to nayantara.s.appleton@vuw.ac.nz and lorena.gibson@vuw.ac.nz by March 1, 2019. Once selected, full papers (6000 words) will be requested for review by July 1, 2019.

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Māori Saltwater Commons

Property, wealth, and inequality

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ABSTRACT | This article draws on Māori claims to fisheries in Aotearoa New Zealand as well as their opposition to the establishment of a large scale marine protected area, to question whether commoning, as a conceptual frame, can account for indigenous resistances in ocean environments. It argues that the theorisation of horizontal collective activism, an emphasis on a politics of relationality encompassing humans and non-humans and the potential for transformative practice in commonings, is congruent with the indigenous sociality mobilised by Māori in relation to their seascapes. As an analytical tool, however, commoning pays inadequate attention to inegalitarianism. Inequality may amplify, for instance, in the process of claiming indigenous rights, or it may otherwise be reconfigured as it articulates with the imperative of neoliberal environmental capitalism. Property – alienated, usurped or reappropriated – while considered a reductive representation of the commons is, at least for indigenous peoples, a crucial feature of struggles, a phenomenon clearly articulated in Māori claims to fisheries and marine spaces.

Keywords: Commoning; Māori; Indigeneity; Fisheries; Ocean Sanctuaries; Saltwater; Property

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At a High Court hearing in June 2018, Māori lawyer Annette Sykes evoked New Zealand's Human Rights Act to argue for a parity of resourcing for 202 tribal applications claiming customary rights and title in coastal spaces. My companion, a spokesperson for one of the four Māori claimant groups present, nodded her assent. Stressing a 'principle of equity' and the need for judicial oversight of funding, Sykes's argument was implicitly grounded in some of the major complexities that confront contemporary indigeneity in New Zealand. These include the potential for large, well-resourced tribes to subsume the claims of their less-resourced counterparts and the incompatibility of legal stipulations in which claims must conform to rigid, exclusive boundaries – a private property right writ large – creating a plethora of over-lapping and contested claims and evoking passionate disputes over rights. Yet, her appeal to Human Rights must also be placed in the context of a broader and coherent Māori collectivism which has long insisted on genealogical connectedness with the sea, the ocean in us, in opposition to colonial and capitalist imposed nature-culture divides. Annette Sykes's intervention in this instance can, perhaps, be read as a moment of commoning.

Commoning has emerged as a theme in anthropological understandings of progressive social movements and activisms countering capitalist domination in all its class, gendered, racial, eco-destructive and colonial mutations. It is a descriptor of Occupy (Stavridis 2013), eco-feminist movements (Giacomini 2014), on-line sharing technologies (Pedersen 2010), as well as, in anthropological practice, the opening up of a 'flow of knowledge between researchers, research participants/contributors, and decision makers' (Bryers-Brown 2017: 2). It argues for a working together across race, class and ethnic divides (Fournier 2013) and, in New Zealand, for Te Whānau ā Apanui's ultimately successful alliance with Greenpeace to protest against Seabed mining in their tribal area (Salmond 2015, Thomas 2018). The term is future oriented, providing a vision of what might be and an ethics through which this can be best achieved (Amin and Howell 2016, Gibson Graham 2016). It also references, conversely, a darker side, hinting at incipient inequalities such as the immoral communalism of anti-immigration groups across Europe or the protectionist policies of financiers and bankers following the global fiscal crisis (Kalb 2017, Koch 2018, Thorleifsson 2017). A key tenet of the concept centres on a distinction between the commons as property, bounded and confined to legalistic realms, and commoning as relationality, which, being freed from attachment to 'things', has a transformative capacity (Linebaugh 2014, Ryan 2013).

This essay considers whether commoning, as a conceptual tool, can be extended to an analysis of Māori resistances in marine environments. There are three main pillars to my argument. First, different understandings of the commons exist: those rooted in Hardin's (1968) tragedy thesis which cast the commons as a market failure, a proposition especially prominent in fisheries economics and management; and those propounded by common property theorists who argue, conversely, that under certain conditions local people implement rules for the successful management of common pool resources. Commons are also perceived to arise as an outcome of statecraft, as illustrated in the extension of territorial seas to two hundred nautical miles and the creation of marine protected areas, as well as in the reconfiguration of indigenous marine tenures to better align with the interests of colonial states. Additionally, commons may be ethnographically

described as an interweaving of people and the sea, wherein a different nature-culture binding is theorised to occur. Second, while commoning scholarship is progressive in its critique of the overemphasis of the legal category of property in commons literature, for indigenous people, property (alienated, claimed and reappropriated) is an essential feature of struggles. It may signify, for instance, inalienable, invaluable wealth, or a living ancestor. And third, as currently conceptualised, commoning is limited in its capacity to address inequalities. There is, for example, a lack of attention paid to how particular commonings articulate with dominant ideologies and political economies (such as neoliberalism, market environmentalism, colonialism and so on) and how, in this process, historical divisions become reconstituted within collectivities. This essay is grounded in long-term field research on Māori fisheries and indigenous treaty claims pertaining to coastal spaces, as well as more recent research on iwi (tribal) fishing quota (from July 2017).[1]

In the last three decades, in particular, Māori indigenous claims through courts and the Waitangi Tribunal[2] have resulted in legislation and policies which variously return a semblance of ancestral ownership rights and relationships in commercial and customary fisheries as well as aquaculture (McCormack 2011, 2012: 2016). Struggles are, however, ongoing, existing as internal frictions and collectively in opposition to the Crown. They arise as a response to the contradictions inhering in indigenous claims and settlements as well as the capitalist imperative to accumulate and find new frontiers. While the dynamics of opposition have changed from the charged anti-colonial movements of the 1980s (see Walker 1990), there is, I suggest, an observable continuity even as these now emerge from inside a neoliberal fisheries regime or the confines of legal structures pertaining to customary rights and title in ocean spaces. An important aspect of this continuity is contingent on the mobilisation of property.

The essay is divided into three parts. The first section provides a context by situating fisheries within the contradictory construction of the commons as both open access and communally enclosed property and links this to ocean privatisations. It traces Māori claims to fisheries, considers the critique of the 'commons as property' model, and argues that a property bias was instrumental in determining the shape of Māori fisheries following the 1992 settlement of claims. The second section considers the advancement of Marine Protected Areas. It ethnographically describes the 2018 Māori Fisheries Conference wherein the ultimately successful opposition of Māori to the establishment of the Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary,[3] conceived as an event, was correlated with an exercise of resource guardianship (kaitiakitanga). Here I draw on understandings of the commons which emphasise process, social relations and the commons as 'a dynamic domain of collective existence' (Amin and Howell, 2016: 1). I position commoning in a tension between the demands of the market and the possibility for social creativity but also complicate this understanding by introducing the issue of inequality and the crucial role of property in indigenous commons. The third section suggests how commoning might be expanded to better reflect indigenous struggles.

The commons and property making in fisheries

In comparison to terrestrial spaces, saltwater environments seem particularly antithetical to boundary-making. The fluidity of water, unpredictability of waves,

storms and rising oceans as well as the existence of non-human inhabitants whose migrations span across oceans, into rivers, and onto land suggests the complexity of enclosing this four-dimensional space; the sea has length, breadth, depth and mobility. This fluidity may also extend to human worlds creating a saltwater sociality, as happens, for instance, among the people of Pororan Island of Papua New Guinea (Schneider 2012). Nevertheless, a concern with property-making is a longstanding, and perhaps peculiar, feature of fisheries; property struggles and transformations have historically dominated the work of fisheries economists, managers and fisheries-interested scholars across academic disciplines, though differently conceptualised in each. In fisheries economics, for instance, the sea is a zone to be brought under containment, leading to what Pálsson (1998) terms 'the birth of the aquarium', that is, the rise of management regimes that imagine the sea as an enormous aquarium to be brought within enclosure. This aqua-enclosure is predicated on a separation of nature and culture, with the sea conceived as a hypernature existing, until this point, outside culture (Helmreich: 2011). In anthropological conceptions of seascapes, conversely, the sea is intrinsically part of culture, a space of fishing, fish, and biographically meaningful stories of seafaring (Walley 2004).

Garrett Hardin's 1968 work on the 'tragedy of commons' is a key theme in fisheries policy and literature. Hardin's infamous essay, concerning the perils of overpopulation and the need to control production, is founded on an analogy: 'Picture a pasture open to all' (1968: 1244). This commons is utilised by herdsmen, primarily to increase their individual wealth. Each herdsman adds one more cow to the pasture in the knowledge that he does not have to share the animal's revenue, meat or milk. The cost of the declining conditions of the pasture as a result of the increasing population of cattle, is, however, shared by all. Tragically, the degradation continues as it is in each herder's interest to become more prosperous in the knowledge that none has to pay the full costs of their decisions. 'Ruin is the destination toward which all men rush, each pursuing his own best interest in a society that believes in the freedom of the commons. Freedom in the commons brings ruin to all' (Hardin 1968: 1244).

While much has been written on the fallacy of this thesis, particularly the misrecognition of the commons as open access and the universalisation of homo economicus, it has, nonetheless, continued to influence the management of marine ecosystems (Longo, Clausen and Clark 2015), is implicated in spurring new enclosures as well as in directing the science of fish stock sustainability towards management goals (McCormack 2017).

Hardin's parable, while initially modelled on the maximising behaviours of commons herdsmen which, he asserts, inevitably leads to tragedy as each adds 'one more animal' to his herd, found its most axiomatic expression in fishermen chasing too few fish. A 'race for fish' is assumed to occur in the absence of individual rights, implying that in a common property resource fishermen will increase their effort, invest in larger boats and new technologies in order to harvest today what will not be available tomorrow. Indeed, Hardin's 'tragedy' was predated by the work of fisheries economists Jens Warming (1911), Howard Gordon (1954) and Anthony Scott (1955) who cast the commons as a market failure. In this synopsis, the overexploitation of fisheries, which, on a global scale was obvious by the 1980s, could simply be resolved by privatising and enclosing ocean fisheries.

New Zealand began to formalise its claims to the seascape in the mid-1960s, establishing a 12 nautical mile (nm) territorial zone in 1965, expanding it in 1977 to the present 200 nm Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Notwithstanding this scene setting, and the pervasiveness of privatization theories propounded by fisheries economists, further propertisation was a haphazard process involving an amalgamation of privatisation measures (such as limited licences) and state efforts to grow the business of fishing (through tax incentives, export friendly policies, an easing of criteria for loans and the encouragement of joint venture agreements with foreign vessels). The 1970s witnessed a rapid growth in fishing operations, an expansion that exponentially threatened the fishing practices of the small-scale sector. This was particularly the case for Māori fishers whose marginalisation from fishing livelihoods had already been highlighted in 1869 by two kaumātua (elders), who, in an emotional petition to parliament, argued for the protection of their inshore fisheries in the face of marine pollution resulting from European gold prospecting (Bargh 2016). Indeed, beginning with the Oyster Fisheries Act 1866, which prohibited Māori from selling oysters from beds reserved for them, there was a concerted effort to redefine Māori interests in fisheries as limited to non-commercial activities at best.

By the early 1980s, inshore stocks were under severe pressure and the industry was overcapitalised. The effort to expand domestic fisheries in New Zealand following the declaration of the EEZ is not unique, and indeed at a global level, many state management efforts followed a similar trajectory. The emergent problems occasioned by this policy triggered a new round of critical economic commentary and abstract theorising. However, the new issue, as identified by fisheries economists, was not the specific type of regulations, programmes or government incentives that were in place; rather, the problem was that state property now functioned as a type of Hardin-esque commons. Thus, the extended jurisdiction heralded by the introduction of EEZs was used as an illustration of the abject failure of common property to curtail economic inefficiency and resource degradation (Mansfield 2004). The 1980s also punctuates environmental history as the point at which many fisheries economists adopted a fully neoliberal approach. In 1982 the New Zealand government removed incentives from the fishing industry and in 1983 rolled out its national privatisation scheme, the quota management system, initially for offshore fisheries, extended in 1986 to inshore fisheries. As with fishing quota systems globally, quota was initially gifted to existent operators of a certain scale and capital investment, criteria which compounded the long marginalisation of Māori commercial fishers[4] and spurred a nation-wide claim to the Waitangi Tribunal; article two of the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi guarantees to Māori the full exclusive and undisturbed possession of their fisheries.[5]

The collective nature of the response, still today unusual in Māori Treaty claims forums, was at once a reflection of the reach of the new fisheries management regime, an underlying cognatic kinship system which weaves together hapū and iwi, and the power of an ocean commons merging people and sea. This reciprocal ethos finds expression in Atuatanga (spiritual connectedness), in the give-and-take of Tangaroa, the god of the sea, and in the activities of taniwha, spiritual guardians whose wrath is evoked when the health of the ocean is threatened (see Rikirangi Gage in McCormack 2011, Mead and Grove 2001). It is present too in the interweaving of the seascape with the artistic labours of

carvers and weavers, in the embedding of saltwater in burial practices, the generational care of kōiwi tangata (human remains) in sea cliffs and rock crevices, in the sea perceived as a 'medicine cabinet' and in numerous waiata o te moana singing the union of people and sea.

The confusion evoked by Hardin's conflation of the commons with open access as well as the presumption that common property is everywhere doomed to failure has, as noted, been heavily critiqued (Feeny et al. 1990). While Elinor Ostrom's institutional approach, which describes how individuals in very different historical and cultural contexts collectively devise and implement rules that successfully manage common pool resources such as forests, land and fisheries (see Ostrom 2015), is perhaps the most celebrated analysis, anthropologists writing on fisheries have provided ethnographic examples of many vibrant commons operating across time and space (Foale and McIntyre 2000, Petersen and Rigsby 2014, Ruddle, Hviding and Johannes 1992). The evidence provided by Māori in the 1988 Muriwhenua Fishing Claims Report (Wai 22) and the 1992 Ngai Tahu Sea Fisheries Report (Wai 27) — both reports were fundamental in achieving the pan-Māori fisheries settlement — can also be read in this vein. According to the Waitangi Tribunal:

> To the whānau [extended family] group usually 'belonged' the dwelling house, stored food, the small eel weirs on branch streams, small fishing canoes…[and] fishing grounds and shellfish beds in the immediate vicinity. Though they did not formally 'own' the fishing grounds and bed, at least their prior rights of use were respected. The hapū [sub tribe] exercised control over…the large eel weirs on main rivers…larger fishing or seafaring vessels, and some specific fishing grounds. The tribal property was made up of the lands of the various hapū, the lakes, rivers, swamps and streams within them and the adjacent mudflats, rocks, reefs and open sea… (1988: 36).

Māori ocean commons identified a particular social group with a specific seascape, however, property boundaries, being inherently fluid, were regularly transgressed by kin claims and the value placed on manaakitanga (hosting visitors, sharing). They were sustained by kaitiaki (guardianship) practices, such as the establishment of rāhui (a form of taboo) for conservational or political purposes or following a death by drowning (McCormack 2011b, Metge 1989) and a gift economy wherein kaimoana (seafood) was variously shared or traded depending on kinship connections as well as the desire to create alliances with other tribes (Ropiha 1992).

Given the propertised history of fisheries, and, arguably, the property bias of Treaty of Waitangi claims and settlements, it is perhaps unsurprising that Māori claims against fishery privatisations flowing from the quota management system were settled by the Crown in the form of property rights: Individual Transferable Quota, a privatised catch right geared towards wealth generation in commercial fisheries, and a neo-common property system modelled on an eco-indigenous morality in customary fisheries regulations. Formal recognition of indigenous rights to commons is fraught. The specific cultural form that the expression of ownership takes is translated into rules, concepts of boundedness and exclusivity, tending to alienate indigenous people from their own experiences and practices at

the same time as making these recognisable by the state (McCormack 2016, Peterson and Rigsby 2014). Of significance here, is not just the construction of two seemingly oppositional property models in Māori fisheries (private Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ) rights and customary fishing areas, rohe moana), but that a holistic social seascape was split into entirely dichotomised economic models: commercial fishing, which is oriented towards the accumulation of capital, and cultural fishing, which depicts selling or exchanging fish as a criminal offence.

The tension between distinctive marine property and economic models also plays out in Māori social organisation: in the association of hapū (sub-tribes) with local, non-commercial fishing for ceremonial occasions and in largely unfunded guardianship responsibilities, compounding the already heavy load of ahi kā (keeping the home fires burning), while responding to regional and national government imperatives and the fall-out of a retracting welfare system. Iwi (tribes), engaged with commercial fisheries, are required to generate wealth from quota. This, for a variety of structural reasons,[6] translates most often into leasing rather than fishing quota, the funds from which trickle down to tribal marae (meeting house complexes associated with hapū and iwi). The disappearance of the productive aspect of fisheries for many coastal Māori is an ongoing concern. Commenting on emergent frictions, a kaumātua (elder) from a large and relatively powerful iwi suggested to me that it was now time to 'enculturate the commercial':

> It is a vexing problem, when we can't help our people. I went to a hui (tribal meeting) on the west coast with our coastal hapū (sub-tribe). They were asking for a boat and for quota. They wanted the iwi to purchase the boat and give them quota. I did the maths with them to explain that it was not feasible. The maths don't stack up to go fishing.

And a former expert fisherman lamented, 'the commercial settlement would have been better placed at the level of hapū', implying that the work to which quota is now put would have been differently employed by coastal hapū.

Blaser and de la Cadena critique the tendency in the 'commons as property' literature to assert an argument through a series of 'cascading binaries, such as individual and collective, private and public, basic subsistence and profit' (2017: 186) such that the end result is an analytical convergence. Both models (private and common), they argue, are based on an ontological continuity amongst humans and an ontological discontinuity between humans and non-humans. Meanwhile, Mansfield shows how this reduction is implicated in the interchangeability of commons literature with the 'tragedy of the commons' paradigm: 'Once common property theorists replaced the "tragedy of the commons" with the "tragedy of open access" the difference between what seemed like quite opposed positions are no longer so great' (2004: 319). An ideological synthesis of property, conceived at a categorical level, also translates into legal and policy realms. At the very moment when a material distinction was created between Māori commercial and non-commercial fishing activities, a homogenised pairing emerged: commercial and customary fisheries have in common the institutional linkage of forms of property, economic rationality, and environmental outcomes. Constructed thus, both fisheries models at once flatten Māori social worlds and introduce the possibility of a class distinction. Arguably,

a feature of Māori commoning in ocean spaces emerges as an attempt to repair this commercial/customary divide.

Commoning and the Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) have long been used by states to conserve watery ecosystems and biodiversity in their territorial seas. New Zealand, which established its first in 1977, claims to have pioneered this conservation methodology (Ballantine 2014). There is, however, a notable global acceleration in MPA coverage, particularly in areas outside 12nm zones and successively bigger models have been introduced enclosing huge swathes of ocean (Caron and Minas 2016). The Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary (the Sanctuary) covering 620,000 square kilometres of sea in the deep south Pacific, is one of the world's largest marine protected area coverages imagined, overtaking the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument established in the northwestern Hawaiian Islands in 2006, the Mariana Trench in 2009, and the Chagos Archipelago in 2010. This intensification occurs in the context of significant maritime territorial disputes, a concurrence which has led observers to critique the political dimension of protection as serving elite interests of control and territory building (Guyot 2015), or to depict it as a 'creeping green jurisdiction if not downright appropriation' (Sand 2007: 529-530). Conversely, large-scale MPAs are also perceived as an environmentally 'good' response to anthropogenic change in ocean environments.

As the term Anthropocene and its more critical derivative Capitalocene suggest, we live in an era in which humans in their attempt to conquer, quantify and capitalise nature have simultaneously contributed to its destruction (Crutzen and Stoermer 2000, Haraway et al. 2016). In the oceans these anthropogenic effects include overfishing, acidification, warming and pollution (Jackson et al. 2001). The synergistic effects of these are predicted to set the stage for a 'great Anthropocene mass extinction with unknown ecological and evolutionary consequences' (Jackson 2008: 11458). In this approaching apocalypse, capture fisheries are oft-cited as an especially villainous protagonist. The establishment of ocean sanctuaries prohibiting fishing can, thus, be interpreted as an altruistic move to translate 'the common heritage of mankind' principle initiated by the United Nations Law of the Sea Treaty in 1982 for the High Seas, into national 200nm EEZs.

The Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary Bill, announced in 2015 at the United Nations General Assembly in New York,[7] signified an eight year coming together of left and right political parties, artists, the Royal New Zealand Navy, national and international environmental Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), hedge fund billionaires, film directors and the then US secretary of State, as well as two iwi whose kaitiaki links with Rangitahua (the Kermadecs) were recognised in Treaty settlements in 2014. It denotes an eco-commoning which indigenous peoples, long having been positioned as the anachronistic foil to western civilisation (Lempert 2018), were expected, inherently, to embrace. While not underestimating the enormity of anthropogenic changes in oceans already set in motion, critical attention needs to be directed towards the particular way humans, livelihoods and ecosystems are depicted in centres of power, the authority with which this imbues institutional responses and the real life consequences of this for marginalised groups (see Moore 2016). From the stance of capture fisheries, MPAs, like marine aquaculture, are experienced as an enclosure (Campbell, Gray

et al. 2016). In the case of the mooted Kermadec Sanctuary this occasioned an alliance between Māori and the Pākehā (European) fishing industry in opposition to the removal of fishing activities,[8] which in the context of New Zealand's quota management system, was rendered as an erasure without compensation of Individual Transferable Quota (ITQs).

In the quota management system the Kermadecs are, acronymically, FMA10 (Fisheries Management Area 10), that is, an ocean boundary established to administer total allowable fish stock extraction and the operation of ITQs in one of ten areas within New Zealand's EEZ. Within these territories quota owners can fish, sell, lease, or simply hold rights. Importantly, quota becomes activated in trading markets, having the potential to create an enormous amount of wealth for owners (Einarsson 2011). Since 2004, Māori settlement quota has been redistributed by the central Māori Fisheries Trust, Te Ohu Kai Moana (Te Ohu), a capital and property holding fisheries development entity, to corporate tribal structures, named Mandated Iwi Organisations (MIOs). The establishment of the latter is a pre-condition for tribes to receive fisheries settlement assets. Fifty-five MIOs hold quota rights in FMA10, together amounting to about 15 percent of the total shares, with the other 85 percent being held by the Crown (Wigley 2016: 9). All of the Māori quota shares in FMA10 currently sit with Te Ohu, that is, these rights are not actively fished or leased, a dormancy that became a critical factor in the discourse of environmental NGOs which interpreted Māori rights as remaining undisturbed by the establishment of the Sanctuary.[9]

The crucial thing about wealth, however, is that it makes claims on the future (Foster 2018). Hence, ITQs can be conceptualised as a store of wealth, a prescient mediator of future value anticipating 'magical increment' (Rakopoulos and Rio 2018: 281). As property, ITQs align with private ownership in that they are designed to exist exclusively and in perpetuity, referencing the eternal right of the few to harvest or trade in capitalist markets.[10] ITQ ownership, thus, may signify a capture of fisheries property and wealth, and opposition to the Sanctuary can be perceived as an elite, reactionary response to the pull of the state, the commons and nature itself. This framing, though, reduces Māori fishing quota to the confines of (imposed) private property structures, ignores the fluidity of boundaries and economic types, the experimental potential of social relations and the criss-crossing of genealogical links encompassing both non-humans and the sea. Wealth can also be experienced as inalienable and invaluable (Weiner 1992). Māori fishing quota, in its enactment of a taonga (treasure) guaranteed in the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi, may emerge as a living ancestor in its own right. No Māori quota has been sold since its allocation in 2004, its value extending beyond the reach of capitalist markets. It is this relational, intergenerational, aspect of commoning that was iterated by hapū and iwi members in my research, irrespective of their hierarchical positioning in customary or commercial fisheries or aspirations for fishing futures. As argued by Jamie Tuuta, chair of Te Ohu 'in this respect, Māori and iwi are both pro-conservation and anti-theft' (Te Ohu Kai Moana 2016).

The complexity of this response can be unpacked through an account of the Māori Fisheries Conference 2018 wherein the Sanctuary became conceptualised as an event, a site for innovative practice. As Kapferer suggests, exploring events allows for an understanding of the social as an emergent and diversifying multiplicity, one that is open rather than fixed into interrelated,

constituted parts (2010: 2), such as hierarchically positioned hapū and iwi. Held at the Novotel in the grounds of Auckland's international airport, the conference attracted some 300 people, the largest gathering to date. The setting is significant. The hotel, themed to blend New Zealand's endemic nature with Māori tradition, was a strategic investment acquired by Tainui Group Holdings (the asset holding company of Tainui Iwi) in a joint venture with two other businesses, Auckland Airport and Accor, an international hotel owning chain. Opened in 2011 by Tuheitia Paki, the Māori King, references to Māori heritage are embedded throughout. They feature in the triangular architectural features reflecting the bows of waka (canoes) and in the tukutuku panels mirroring the latticework decorating marae throughout the country. The significance of fish is captured too in the diamond patiki design decorating the panels, symbolising flounder and an abundance of ocean wealth. There is a distinctive whānau (extended family) feel amongst conference attendees. People, cultivating kinship, hongi (greet) each other marae style, business suits mingle with casual attire, children are caught up in the occasion and a celebratory atmosphere pervades the foyer on the eve of the main day. Much conversation anticipates the annual cocktail function the following evening, which, I am told, is a fantastically extravagant seafood feast.

Jamie Tuuta, chairman of Te Ohu, the conference host, follows the opening witticisms of two Masters of Ceremonies with a powerful speech employing the Rangitahua Kermadec Sanctuary as a 'case study'. Positioning the 1992 fisheries settlement as 'the beginning of a Māori economic reawakening and revitalisation … [enabling] a reassertion of rangatiratanga (sovereignty)', he equates Māori fishing quota with an 'expression of identity' as well as a Treaty of Waitangi right. The security of these rights, however, is conceived as threatened. Identifying a post-treaty settlement shift in the Crown/Māori relationship, Tuuta states: 'the struggle over recognition of fisheries rights has become a struggle over protection of those rights to prevent them being usurped and removed by the Crown, Crown entities and many others'. Here the Sanctuary represents an instance of re-colonisation requiring vigilance and collective opposition. It illustrates, Tuuta proposes, the 'inherent problems within a pluralistic society where we have opposing worldviews, such that one, usually the Māori worldview, is subordinated to the other'. The Sanctuary becomes an event in a long history of resource alienations wherein, 'everything that has ever gone wrong between Māori and the Crown since 1840 is a result of a clash of ideology'. It demonstrates the tendency, Tuuta claims, to subject the 'spiritual linkage of iwi with indigenous resources…to paternalistic control. And most of us have experienced that'. Yet, he reminds the audience, 'Māori have two things in our favour, immortality and memory… governments need to think about that'.

Now destabilised, the Sanctuary symbolises the success of 'Māori value systems' and the synergism of nature/culture in the Māori 'worldview'. It is an expression of kaitiakitanga (resource guardianship), one in which conservation, 'framed as a human versus nature contest [is] a western ideology'. The Sanctuary, thus envisioned, provides a promise for further recognitions of indigenous ontologies, for a future 'that adopts a Māori worldview':

> One where conservation and marine management solutions meet social and ecological goals… Māori have always maintained that the division between Māori and nature, which translates into barriers and demarcations

> between economy and environment is an artefact of western thinking. Rather, there is an underlying unity between human and non-human…I see a future of kaitiakitanga in practice, flourishing relationships between people, place and natural resources. People and culture cannot be separated. The human dimension is not an obstacle to overcome on the way to conservation, marine management solutions, but is key to that particular solution. Collectively we have the opportunity to create a legacy for this and future generations.[11]

Tuuta ended his speech with a waiata, the audience joining in. 'He is singing a song from home', my companion explained, thus effectively rooting himself in the local, grassroots, culture of his natal Urenui marae. 'Māori rights will never get trampled over again', the general manager of a seafood company and research collaborator predicted.

Tuuta's identification of the Sanctuary impasse with the power of collective resistance pervaded the remainder of the day. His evocation of kaitiaki, the poetic appeal of a nature/culture blending and the thesis on kaitiakitanga in practice, situated the Sanctuary as an important event, one through which hapū and iwi imagine connections and share cultural/environmental values with each other. Māori with whom I spoke endorsed this interpretation of kaitiakitanga, both during the conference and in interviews conducted outside of this space. In this sense Rangitahua, rendered a Māori environment, serves as a mediating sphere to express social values. It is appropriate at this point to reconsider existing ideas about the concept of kaitiaki, albeit briefly as space demands.

'A kaitiaki is a guardian, keeper, preserver, conservator, foster-parent, protector' (Marsden and Henare 1992: 67) of places and things for the gods (Marsden 1977). They may be the spirit of a deceased ancestor manifested in the shape of a shark, eel, stingray or other animal (Barlow 1991) and, embodied thus, are often known as taniwha. As spiritual guardians and assistants to the gods, kaitiaki mediate the dense network of relationships that exist in the natural world, of which humans are a part, and wherein everything is connected (Roberts et al. 1995). Particular to each hapū or iwi, kaitiaki are a marker of identity such that 'Māori become one and the same as kaitiaki (who are, after all, their relations) becoming the minders for their relations, that is, the other physical elements of the world' (Matiu and Mutu 2003). For Tainui iwi in Whaingaroa, their taniwha, Te Atai-o-rongo - a former chief, murdered by his jealous brother-in-law who lodged a fish hook in his forehead[12] – takes the form of a stingray protecting the entrance to the harbour.

> When he's around, people know what the sign is. If you're in the tide and it's low tide and you see a big wave come up and suddenly the lagoon's full, the taniwha's in town. Ani (pseudonym) is probably the last one to have that experience, she didn't know what it was, she went home and told my mother and my mother goes 'oh, he's back!' He usually brings a lot of food, that time they managed to get a lot of white bait out of season, but they brought all the food back (research collaborator, 2018).

As protectors, kaitiaki work to ensure that the mauri (life force) of their taonga is healthy and strong (Matiu and Mutu 2003, Roberts et al. 1995). Conversely, they

are empowered to effect punishment if this is threatened. In Whaingaroa, for instance, the conversion of a taniwha's lair into an effluent pond is deemed responsible for twelve subsequent ocean drownings. People, as autochthons, are kaitiaki of their tribal lands and seas, obliged to care for resources and held accountable if these are threatened, physically or spiritually (Matiu and Mutu 2003)

Kaitiakitanga is a relatively recent linguistic development (Kawharu 2000), the suffix 'tanga' transforming the concept to mean 'guardianship, preservation, conservation, fostering, protecting, sheltering' (Marsden and Henare 1992: 67). It refers particularly to the role of people as kaitiaki, and while being rooted in customary values, intergenerational, reciprocal relations between people, nature and gods (Waitangi Tribunal 1999, 2001), it emerges politically as a means through which to claim rights under the Treaty of Waitangi (Kawharu 2000). Kaitiakitanga is especially associated with environmental management and, in the case of fisheries, is recognised in both commercial and customary legislation. In the former, it is linked with a local 'ethic of stewardship exercised by the appropriate tangata whenua [people of the land] in accordance with tikanga Māori [customs]', though also with Māori on the scale of a collective who require consultation when the Minister alters quota levels (Fisheries Act 1996). In the customary sphere, kaitiaki are appointed to authorise fishing for non-commercial permits.

Ngati Kuri and Te Aupouri, two iwi from the northern Tai Tokerau Māori electorate whose migration histories incorporate Rangitahua, supported the establishment of the Sanctuary as an expression of kaitiakitanga and, in turn, were to receive seats on the management board. However, Te Ohu's opposition to the Sanctuary, which included the Crown's failure to consult, is also consistent with wider Pacific understandings of customary marine tenure and environmental management as being inclusive of sustainable livelihoods (Ruddle, Hviding and Johannes 1992). Hence, marine protected areas, which dichotomise people and nature, are at odds with Māori conceptualizations of humans 'as part of a personified, spiritually imbued "environmental family"…and serve[s] to alienate Māori from their stewardship' (Roberts et al. 1995). What is of most interest here, however, is how private property rights, that is ITQs, emerged as a form of ancestral wealth requiring protection and, in the process, dismantled the bifurcation of commercial and customary Māori social worlds enacted through the 1992 fisheries settlement. It is important, though, to recognize the existence of inequality, power and authority in commonings. In this instance, quota property, as ancestral wealth, played a crucial commoning role while contestations over the distribution of quota as catch rights to coastal hapū, remained occluded.

Māori commoning and marine spaces

Conceptually, commoning appears to run counter to the forces of the market (Blaser and de la Cadena 2017), perhaps even emerging from a different historical trajectory (De Angelis and Harvie 2014), one neither entirely subject to the contingencies of capitalism nor aligned with a particular form of property (Gibson-Graham, Cameron and Healy 2016). Rakopoulos and Rio conceive of the 'pull' of the commons as arising out of the demand that certain things, persons and resources 'should be left unmarked by ownership or unfair domination' (2018: 283). Commoning, thus, becomes an inspirational, postcapitalist politics (Gibson-

Graham, Cameron and Healy 2016), a transformative, horizontal happening (Thompson 2015) where social relations engaging diverse people as well as non-humans becomes the critical component of analyses (Bresnihan 2016).

This emphasis on the social relations of the commons rather than the commons as property, aligns with the scholarship of E.P. Thompson (1993) whose work on English commoners and resistance was taken up by his student Peter Linebaugh, a leading author on commoning. Arguing against the notion of the commons as a natural resource, Linebaugh writes, 'the commons is an activity and, if anything, it expresses relationships in society that are inseparable from relations to nature. It might be better to keep the word as a verb, rather than as a noun, a substantive' (Linebaugh 2009: 279). The commons-as-not-property may also be a critical response to the reduction inherent in the work of Elinor Ostrom who centred the commons debate on the need for defined property rights, though these were based, ironically, on an individual, rational choice thesis. Legal definitions do not define the commons and people cooperate for many reasons, not just when it is considered rational to do so (Nightingale 2011, 2013). Emotion, for instance, is an undertheorised raison d'être for commoning, one that played a part in unifying Māori opposition to the removal of their Treaty rights in the event of the Kermadec Sanctuary. The powerful pull of obligation is also incommensurable with a commons delineated in terms of property criteria.

Property is a wicked problem. The existing hegemonic form of private property invests control over a clearly delineated space into an individual owner, promotes the (contested) separation of owners from non-owners, makes bounded territories (or abstracted fishing rights) transferable and thereby alienable from their social context. In this process speculation, financialisation and profit-making appear naturalised, inherent to the land (catch right or seascape) itself (Thompson 2015: 1027). Private property is antagonistic to other forms of ownership, particularly the commons (Singer 2000), which is designated as either open access or legally reconstructed to fit a propertised form. Articulating the commons as legal rights seems to displace, or render codified, ossified and diminished into passive and alienated forms, the dense web of relations between humans, non-humans, nature and the supernatural. Indeed, this reduction is apparent, I have argued, in the post-settlement reconstitution of Māori fisheries as private or neo-common property, wherein, for instance, kaitiakitanga is fulfilled, or not, through the requirement of the Crown to consult over quota alterations. Herein, kaitiatitanga is also identified with a local ethic of stewardship, or in the case of customary fisheries, is personified as a non-commercial, fishing permit-giver. Yet property, conceived as a Treaty of Waitangi right, suggests a more expansive understanding of the concept. Hann's formulation is of interest here. Property, he writes, is 'best seen as directing attention to a vast field of cultural as well as social relations, to the symbolic as well as the material context within which things are recognized and personal as well as collective identities made' (1998: 5). Property relations can be expressed as an intergenerational desire to hold onto commonwealth, such as Māori fishing quota conceived as an embodiment of an ancestral taonga. For indigenous peoples, at least, property — alienated, usurped or reappropriated — is a crucial feature of struggles, a phenomenon clearly articulated in Māori claims to fisheries and seascapes.

I am also uncomfortable with the notion that when something is brought into collective practice, issues of inequality, dispossession, coercion and

accumulation are disappeared (see also Nightingale 2014). Iwi quota, framed as a Treaty of Waitangi right and Māori taonga, signifies deeply held cultural values of nature/culture unison, kaitiaki protection and has spurred a modern anti-colonial resistance. Yet iwi quota, being embedded in a neoliberal fisheries management regime, necessarily entails hierarchical divisions. These emerge, for instance, between hapū, whose fishing labour is rendered obsolete, and iwi whose quota leasing infers a different understanding of ocean wealth. In the case of the claims under the Marine and Coastal Area Act 2011 discussed at the beginning of this essay, tribal conflicts are likely to arise over the requirement to define rohe moana (tribal seascapes) as exclusionary and customary practices as continuous, irrespective of a traditional emphasis on manaakitanga or sharing and the contingencies of colonisation.

The scale at which commons are conceived, where boundaries are erected, remains an unresolved issue (Blaser and de la Cadena 2017). Does, for instance, the commons operate at the level of local communities and inshore waters or in relation to vast tracts of oceans on the outer reach of the state's territorial seas? Rakopoulos and Rio (2018) note that the ideal of public enjoyment of the commons, such as the foreshore in New Zealand or large-scale MPAs, is often an aspect of the power of the state. Alternatively, commoning may be an expected response of social groups when their sovereignty over essential reproductive means, sacred objects, persons and offspring, resources and space of belonging (Rakopoulos and Rio 2018: 283), are threatened. The rhetorical power of governmental appeals to the common good, particularly when framed in environmentalist terms of conserving natures or wildernesses, speaks to this slippage between scales. It also references the power of the state to create slippage between property types: Māori marine tenure becomes a propertyless sea, then state territory in EEZs, privatised fisheries rights in ITQ fisheries and common property in marine protected areas. Each slippage opening up the possibility for counter claims, for differently mobilised commonings.

In the context of state-indigenous relations, the emancipatory promise of the commons needs rethinking.[13] In New Zealand, the state's use of the language of the commons to establish the Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary was perceived by Māori as an attempt to disavow treaty rights, ancestral wealth, kaitiaki relations and obligations, subjugate indigenous epistemologies and ontologies and was described as an act of re-colonisation. Indeed, the commons as statecraft is particularly pronounced in efforts to enclose saltwater. It is apparent, for instance, in the progression of Māori claims to the foreshore and seabed (prompted by the intensification of marine aquaculture enclosures) which spurred the enactment of new legislation in 2004 providing for Crown ownership on behalf of all New Zealanders, effectively blocking the progression of Māori aboriginal title claims through the legislature (Charters and Erueti 2007, McCormack 2012). The Marine and Coastal Area Act 2011 is a continuation of this process, the provisions for Māori bearing little resemblance to internationally recognised aboriginal title and rights. Freshwater too has been framed as a common good. It is imbricated in current debates in New Zealand around bottled water (Simmonds, Kukutai, Ryks 2016), irrigation and the extractive practices of power companies (Muru-Lanning 2016), highlighting the insidious ways in which the commons rhetoric may invisibilise privatisations while simultaneously locking out indigenous ways of being and owning.

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Notes

1. The latter includes field research at hui, on marae, in courts, at the 2018 Māori Fisheries Conference and thirteen interviews with Māori organisations and individuals variously involved in fisheries from eight different hapū and iwi.

2. Established in 1975, the Waitangi Tribunal is a commission of inquiry charged with investigating Māori individual or group claims concerning alleged Crown breaches of the promises stipulated in the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi. The Treaty is an integral aspect of modern Indigenous-Crown statecraft in New Zealand.

3. The Bill received a unanimous first parliamentary reading in March 2016 but has now stalled at the select committee stage. The current Labour-New Zealand First coalition government has pledged not to progress the existing legislation establishing the Sanctuary.

4. Bargh (2016), for instance, links the promulgation of Māori fisheries as non-commercial in nature, the alienation of Māori land and the subsequent impoverishment of hapū and iwi, with the demise of Māori commercial fishers in the decades leading up to the introduction of the Quota Management System.

5. Article two of the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi, in the Māori language version, confirmed and guaranteed the chiefs 'te tino rangatiratanga' (sovereignty) over their lands, villages and 'taonga katoa' (all treasured things). The English language version of Article two confirmed and guaranteed to the chiefs 'exclusive and undisturbed possession of their lands and estates, forests, fisheries, and other properties.'

6. These include: 1) the bias in ITQ systems such that wealth is generated from leasing catch rights rather than catching fish in the sea; 2) the quota packages distributed to individual iwi are often too small to make 'getting into the business of fishing' viable; 3) the capital required for boats and infrastructure to undertake fishing is too large; 4) the 1992 fisheries settlement may be the only indigenous Treaty of Waitangi settlement a tribe has received, therefore leasing quota, the option which offers the least financial risk, may appear the most rational; 5) a lack of young people able/willing to crew on boats; and 6) preference. Note, there are important exceptions to this, for instance Ngāi Tahu fisheries in the South Island of New Zealand, the Iwi Collective Partnership and East Coast iwi, Ngati Porou. There are also some whanau (extended family) based fishing ventures.

7. By John Key, New Zealand's Prime Minister at the time.

8. See Seafood New Zealand's submission to the Local Government and Environment Committee on the Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary Bill

https://www.parliament.nz/resource/en-nz/51SCLGE_EVI_00DBHOH_BILL68514_1_A508026/b5fea47214fef324aa8d5e8cc43ec88c05559b0c

9. See Joint submission on the Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary Bill – Forest and Bird, The Pew Charitable Trusts and WWF New Zealand. https://www.parliament.nz/resource/en-nz/51SCLGE_EVI_00DBHOH_BILL68514_1_A507818/90aed1c9f2b8cfec19939da6be544e0236cbd1f6

10. Five companies supply eighty percent of the catch in New Zealand.

11. Jamie Tuuta's presentation, and that of other presenters at the Tangaroa-ā-mua: Future Māori Fisheries Conference 2018, is available here: https://teohu.conference.maori.nz/presenters/jamie-tuuta/

12. See Pei Te Hurinui Jones, 1995. Nga iwi o Tainui: The traditional history of the Tainui people, edited by Bruce Biggs. Auckland University Press, pg 86 -87

13. I am grateful for the anonymous comments of a reviewer for this insight.

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Welcoming the New Amateurs

A future (and past) for non-academic anthropologists

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ABSTRACT | How can we create a more inclusive Pacific anthropology? This article argues that contemporary anthropology's disciplinary norms are based in the Cold War period. These norms are inappropriate given anthropology's current situation. This article argues that interwar anthropology (the anthropology practiced between World War I and World War II) provides us a better set of imaginative resources to create a more common ethnography. Interwar anthropology was more welcoming of amateur scholars and less concerned with rigid norms of professionalism. Reframing a common ethnography in terms of 'amateurs' and 'professionals' may give us new ways of imagining a discipline that is increasingly moving outside the academy.

Keywords: History of anthropology; Amateurs; United States, Aotearoa New Zealand

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Hope is in the undergrowth. - Anne Salmond (1986)

How can we create a more inclusive Pacific anthropology? Anthropologists now live in a world in which, as Paige West has put it, 'many people who conduct research in the Pacific Region, including most of the Pacific Islanders who work there, are not anthropologists.' How then, she asks, can we 'open our world to our colleagues' and 'include these new scholars… while retaining our commitment to the study of sociological questions' (West 2013: 4-5)? One solution comes from Oceanian anthropologists themselves, who have argued that 'articulating visions of anthropology's future, at least from an Indigenous Oceanic perspective, can be done only through genealogical work — the search for, production, and transformation of connections across time and space' (Tengan et. al. 2010: 14). I am not sure that settler academics have genealogies in the same way that Oceanic anthropologists do, but I do think this call for genealogy should direct settler academics to their own intellectual tradition, searching anthropology's past for resources with which to imagine a more inclusive future.

Much has been written about how our scholarly norms call out for a more diverse, inclusive, representative, and just anthropology, and I agree with all that has been written on this topic. I would also point out that a more diverse anthropology is not only in accordance with our values, but our interests: in a world of contracting funding, fewer jobs, and institutions whose values and integrity are under threat, anthropologists in even the most hegemonic of positions need new allies and new avenues to pursue their projects. Since conservative academics must recognize a less-funded anthropology is inevitable, they should recognise a more-just anthropology is in their interest.

Our ability to imagine such a future is limited by our immediate past. The Cold War (1945-1990) shaped our disciplinary imagination in powerful ways: we think of anthropology as being done by white male professors with university appointments, government grants, and articles published in peer-reviewed journals. But there is no reason that anthropology must be this way — and in fact for most of its history it was not this way. If we think of anthropology as beginning in 1892 (the year the Polynesian Society was formed in New Zealand and the year after the first PhD in anthropology was awarded in the U.S), the discipline is around one hundred and twenty six years old. The forty five years of the cold were just one period in the history of our discipline, and a highly unusual one at that. Why should we continue to emulate a Cold War anthropology when we no longer have Cold War values or Cold War funding? If a common anthropology seeks to push 'back against our seemingly reduced capacity to both imagine and enact novel forms of collective life and new solidarities' (Kelly and Trundle 2018: 2), then a better source for imagining a common anthropology, I argue, is the interwar period, between 1918 and 1939. This period was similar to our own: it featured restricted funding, few jobs, genre experimentation, and inclusion and diversity, and the incorporation of anthropology into a wide variety of biographical projects.

Today, anthropology has a 'two column' imagination: in one column are the anthropologists, in the other are their objects. Our imagination is also highly racialized: white people in the anthropology column, and black and brown people in the 'objects' column. Much of our writing about decolonizing anthropology has

involved experiments shuffling racial groups between columns while keeping the basic equipment of this exercise—the columns and the colours—intact. We need to continue to critically interrogate the role of racism in anthropology. At the same time, however, I think we should pursue other, less-trod avenues in order to reimagine anthropology. Doing so, I believe, would provide us with additional imaginative resources.

In particular, I want to see what happens if we rethink the history of anthropology not in terms of a 'two-column' divide but three separate dichotomies: amateur/professional, academically employed/non-academic and settler/indigenous. None of these dichotomies necessarily maps on to the others, and each anthropologist exists at an intersection of all three of them. In this article I use the word 'amateur' to refer to someone who is less interested in meeting established professional norms and standards than they are in deforming, innovating, or pushing the boundaries of what anthropology could be. This is different from being academically employed. Once we view anthropology in this way, I hope to show that we should not worry that something terrible will happen to anthropology if it is done by amateurs — indeed, the amateur impulse has a long history in anthropology. We need to move past the stigma attached to the word 'amateur', a word whose Latin root emphasises love and commitment to a task, not a low quality of performance. As I hope to show, non-academic anthropologists have done very professional work during the interwar period, even as academic anthropologists engaged in 'amateurism', experimenting with new forms of writing and novel anthropological genres. The monopoly of academic anthropologists on anthropology is recent, unsustainable, and not obviously ethical, and the line between innovation and conformity was not always the same as the line between academic and non-academic employment.

Increasingly today, as in the interwar period, anthropology is being done by people who might be called ‘new amateurs’: people who come to the discipline because it allows them to pursue biographical projects that are important to them. Some of these new anthropologists are Indigenous people seeking to recover their past, understand their present, or imagine their future. Others are PhD holders who want to keep doing anthropology even as the job market forces them to work elsewhere. Still others can be found in the hundreds of millions of people in developing countries who have access to the Internet but not to affordable high-quality tertiary education, who seek to learn more about humanity.

In this paper, I focus on the concept of ‘projects’: The biographically-specific concerns that drive people to undertake scholarly work. I imagine a common anthropology as a capacious space in which people from diverse backgrounds can undertake many different kinds of projects. Anthropology has always been a place which welcomes ‘professional professionals’ (i.e. academically employed conventional scholars) and has always had a soft spot in its heart for ‘professional amateurs’, the people who deform, challenge, and innovate existing paradigms of research. So too should a common anthropology welcome ‘amateur (i.e. non-academic) professionals’ – people who want to undertake conventional scholarly and scientific work, regardless of whether they have an academic position or not. And it should also be a place that can be home to ‘amateur amateurs’: people who are not academically employed but whose insights challenge and innovate our discipline. Decoupling professionalism from

academic employment, I argue, might open up new ways to imagine a common anthropology.

Anthropology Has Never Been Just Academic

Anthropology has never been only an academic discipline. For most of its history, the Western — that is to say, Christian — academy taught a medieval curriculum based on the classical Mediterranean world in which the church began. This curriculum had almost no space for anthropology or most subjects which are taught today at University. As late as the nineteenth century, for instance, professors resisted teaching what we today would consider 'classical' works of English literature. In 1868, Harvard offered only a single course in English literature, which ended with Chaucer. In 1865 one professor wondered 'can the study of English, the study of Chaucer, Shakespeare, & Milton, say, be made a serious discipline, like the study of Plautus, Lucretius, & Horace?' (Levine 1996: 78-79). The new forms of knowledge that we now call the natural and social sciences often grew outside of the academy, not in it. Darwin and Einstein, for instance, did not make their greatest discoveries as professors, and disciplines like biology, psychology, and sociology only entered the academy in the late nineteenth century, just slightly earlier than anthropology.

The professoriate has never held a monopoly on expertise and truth, but it began to try to corner the market in the century from 1840-1940. This was when professors and scientists began distinguishing between 'amateurs' and 'professionals' — mostly in order to ensure the legitimacy and status of the professionals (Rheingold 1991: 24-53). Andrew Abbott has analysed the changing demographics of scholarly societies, including the American Anthropological Association, and documented the way that amateurs slowly yielded to academics. In the United States in 1925 there were 12,272 members of scholarly societies, but only 3,965 PhD holders. In other words, there were roughly three times more amateur scholars participating in scholarly life than there were PhD holders. By 1950, scholarly societies had 31,306 members, of which 22,108 held PhDs: only a third of members of scholarly societies were non-PhD holders. Abbott concludes that 'the non-professionals were not immediately squeezed out of the 'professional' societies but rather persisted in them almost up to World War II. Only around 1940 did the number of PhD holders in the system at a given time approach the number of society members' (Abbott 2011: 48).

Anthropology was no exception to this rule. While we remember how 'anthropology… was an activist project which fetishised and commodified Indigenous objects, cultures, and bodies, while positioning Euro-American scientific thought and practice as neutral and normative' (Bruchac 2018: 178), we tend to forget that Indigenous people were not academic anthropologists' only target. Boas, Radcliffe-Brown, and Malinowski waged war on amateurs as well, claiming that the professionalisation, specialisation, and objectivity of anthropologists set them apart from the judges, postal clerks, museum curators, and missionaries who were once coequal participants in our discipline. A good example of this can be seen in the politics surrounding the creation of the American Anthropological Association (AAA) in 1902. When W.J. McGee, a non-academic anthropologist, first organised a committee to explore the possibility of creating the AAA, he hoped the new association would be open to

everyone, regardless of their expertise. Boas strongly opposed this move, writing to McGee:

> A difficult problem often arises among those societies which are most successful in popularizing the subject matter of their science, because the lay members largely outnumber the scientific contributors. Whenever this is the case there is a tendency towards lowering the scientific value of discussion.... The greater the public interest in a science, and the less technical knowledge it appears to require, the greater is the danger that meetings may assume the character of popular lectures. Anthropology is one of the sciences in which this danger is ever imminent, and in which for this reason great care must be taken to protect the purely scientific interests (Boas, in Stocking 1960: 11).

In the face of this opposition, McGee and others simply incorporated the AAA – without telling Boas! Boas was outraged but Boasians would eventually get their revenge. In 1946 the AAA was reorganized because it was not attending to the 'professional interests' of academic anthropologists. Reorganizers such as Julian Steward worried that new federal funding agencies like the National Science Foundation would not take anthropology as seriously as sociology or psychology if amateurs were included in its association. There were also concerns about standards. One person involved in the reorganization complained of 'jerkwater colleges' where 'something called anthropology' was taught (Stocking 1960: 170). The newly-reorganised association had two tiers of members: 'fellows' who were certified academic anthropologists, and 'members' who were not (Darnell and Gleach 2002: xvii). By the time the Cold War was well underway, then, amateurs had been largely excluded from American anthropology.

New Zealand also saw a transition from amateurs to professionals. In the late nineteenth century, 'enthusiastic amateurs' were the main practitioners of a nascent discipline of anthropology (Beaglehole 1938: 154). A central institution of New Zealand anthropology, the Polynesian Society, was founded by amateurs, not professors. As Biggs notes, 'The enthusiasm of the amateur pervades the early volumes of the Society's journal…. it was left to amateur ethnologists, missionaries, surveyors, administrators, to record the passing [sic] ways of native life and language. No professional anthropologist attended the first meeting of the Polynesian Society in 1892' (Biggs 1992:7). While the first appointment of an anthropologist in New Zealand (or Australia) to an academic post was H.D. Skinner in 1918, he oversaw Otago's ethnological museum and lectured at its university with no other permanent faculty. 'Forty odd years would pass before the Beagleholes, Buck, Firth and Skinner introduced the caveats and discipline of the scientist to the journal. Then, inevitably, but to the disappointment of some, its content became more technical and specialist. In a word, more professional' (Biggs 1992: 7). Of course, there were serious differences between New Zealand and the United States as well: After World War II, America was building an empire while Britain was dissolving one, and New Zealand anthropology did not have the same massive inflow of federal money that American anthropology did. Nonetheless, the pattern is clear: In both New Zealand and the United States, amateurs had a role founding the discipline, only to be displaced by academics.

The history of the institutionalisation of anthropology departments confirms this: Many now-influential American departments were not founded until the 1940s, such as Stanford, Cornell, New York University, and the University of California Los Angeles. Other departments may technically have a longer genealogy but languished for lack of support. For instance, anthropology has had a place at The University of Pennsylvania since the nineteenth century because of its museum. Its department was technically founded in 1913 but, like Otago, it consisted of a single professor (Frank Speck) who taught there until 1950. It was only in 1947 that the university decided to create a department with multiple faculty positions (Kopytoff 2005: 33). In New Zealand, Ralph Piddington was appointed to a foundation chair at Auckland in 1949 (Grey and Munro 2011), Otago anthropology 'really got off the ground' in 1963 (Blackman 2014) with the appointment of John Harré and Les Groube, while Jan Pouwer was foundation chair at Victoria in 1966 (Barrowman 1999: 252), and Hugh Kawharu was appointed inaugural chair in anthropology at Massey in 1971 (Walker 2006: 214). Overall, anthropology in the US institutionalised in the 1940s and 1950s at a time when global reach, basic science, application for empire, and massive amounts of funding were all on the menu. In New Zealand, institutionalisation occurred in the 1960s and into the 1970s, in a context where economic recession and the Māori protest movement were salient: The Association of Social Anthropologists of Aotearoa/New Zealand was founded the same year as the Māori Land March. But I think in broad strokes we can see similarities between the two countries.

Cold War anthropology often saw the ascendance of people from hegemonic subject positions. In the United States, this meant less people named Ruth and Esther and more people named Ralph and George — a trend epitomised by the fact that Boas was replaced not with Ruth Benedict (Boas's intended heir), but Ralph Linton. In New Zealand, where the academy was already thoroughly Anglo-Protestant, this hegemony took a slightly different form: its home grown anthropologists had to contend with imported talent. The foundation professor at Auckland was Ralph Piddington, an Australian. Its second was Ralph Bulmer, from England. Victoria University of Wellington's department was founded by Jan Pouwer, from the Netherlands. The tension between imports and local-grown scholars is an enduring feature of New Zealand anthropology.

Academization also meant professionalisation: a narrowed focus on what and who anthropology was for. By definition, it was inward looking. Full professionalisation, Rosenberg says, is 'the moment when… investigators began to care more for the approval and esteem of their disciplinary colleagues than they did for the general standards of success in the society which surrounded them' (in Hinsley 1981: 7-8). This meant a lack of interest in anthropology of artistic, activist, or applied purposes. Jan Pouwer, for instance, argued that 'we should honour our departmental and personal commitments to New Zealand… but not at the expense of depth, connectedness and academic integrity.' He went on to say, 'I do not believe in a 'People's Anthropology', a social engineering cut loose from its epistemological and theoretical bearings.' (In Rimoldi and Rimoldi 1999: 9-10). The Māori linguist Bruce Biggs was even more blunt: 'I regard the expression 'ivory tower' positively rather than pejoratively… the true academic distances himself in the emotional sense from his research object… between activism in the broadest sense and academia… I see an inevitable contradiction which makes it impossible to combine the roles or at least to remain true to both… what saddens

me is when I see… a competent academic go activist.' (In Rimoldi and Rimoldi 1999: 9-10). Professionalisation also meant epistemic privilege over amateurs. We can see this, for instance, in Piddington's dictum that 'the untrained observer is all too ready to assume that his observations of human behaviour can yield information comparable with those of the trained social scientist. Whether in industry, in administration or in far-flung outposts of what used to be Empire, the 'practical man' is always ready to assert dogmatic conclusions, even when these are in opposition to the results of patient and thorough research in such sciences as psychology, economics and anthropology' (Piddington 1957: 525).

Hallmarks of Interwar Anthropology

In contrast to Cold War anthropology's excesses, interwar anthropology existed at a sweet spot in the discipline's history: method and theory really had improved, but the discipline's genre standards were still very much in flux, and people from all walks of life took part in its work. Anthropologists like to think that the training of authors such as Margaret Mead and Zora Neale Hurston occurred because of anthropology's commitment to social justice, but this is only partially true. Anthropology's commitment to diversity was a result of how drastically underfunded it was — interwar anthropology would take who it would get. Women, for instance, were often encouraged to take anthropology in order to keep class sizes up during the depression, not necessarily because of an inherently egalitarian disciplinary habitus (Kerns 2003: 119-121).

Authors in this period wrote in a variety of genres. Some of their work was what we now call 'public anthropology': attempts to explain the discipline's outlook and findings to non-experts. Public lectures were still popular, as were popular books such as Benedict's *Patterns of Culture* (1934) and Peter Buck's *Vikings of the Sunrise* (1938). Ethnographers experimented with a wide variety of forms, ranging from sensitive first-person accounts like Gladys Reichard's 1934 *Spider Woman* to fictionalised accounts of indigenous life like *American Indian Life* in 1922 to genre-bending works of folklore/autobiography like Hurston's *Tell My Horse* (published the same year as Buck's *Vikings of the Sunrise*). In 1930 Oliver La Farge won the Pulitzer Prize for his novel *Laughing Boy*, focused on Navajo lives. Jaime De Angulo wrote multilingual poetry based on his experience of California, and Benedict and Sapir are well known for their poetry. Other early anthropologists experimented with biography in works like *The Ojibwa Woman* and *Crashing Thunder*. As Faye Harrison recognized decades ago,

> artistry, creative experimentation, and disciplinary boundary blurring, which are so very prominent in postmodernist anthropology, are not peculiarly 'postmodern.' Zora Neale Hurston and Katherine Dunham are just two examples of intellectuals who, through the use of literary art and dance theatre, took anthropological insights and knowledge to wider audiences beginning more than five decades ago-long before postmodern-ism, postcolonialism, postindustralism, or post-anything was in vogue. (Harrison 2010:4).

Amateurism – the willingness to deform and innovate – was a hallmark of interwar American anthropology, both in and out of the academy.

American anthropology was much more unbuttoned and bohemian than New Zealand anthropology, whose hallmark at this time was its 'professional amateurism' – work done in accordance with academic genre standards by non-academics. Especially worthy of note was that New Zealand anthropology has been, 'unique in the extent to which the tangata whenua have participated in its activities' (Biggs 1992: 7), whereas most of the American genre experiments I mentioned above, whatever their virtues, still involved non-indigenous anthropologists describing Native Americans. And, as Biggs points out, New Zealand ethnography has always looked outward to the rest of the Pacific as well. After all, the first royal patron of the Polynesian Society was not Queen Victoria of England, but Queen Lili'uokalani of Hawai'i! Exemplary here are, of course, Te Rangi Hīroa (Sir Peter Buck) and Āpirana Ngata. For these two great Māori anthropologists, 'anthropology was not merely an academic exercise: it had to be applied to the acculturation process and to the government of native peoples' — a governance by and for Māori so that they could modernise in a traditional way (Sorensen 1987: x). And note that Both Buck and Ngata 'preferred the guidance of the amateur ethnologists of the Polynesian Society to the academic speculations of the professors' (Sorensen 1987: xviii). They valued the insights of scrupulously executed anthropology, but their work was never purely academic. In fact, Ngata's greatest ethnographic contribution was a piece of 'applied anthropology', his 1931 Native Land Development Report, which was in such wide demand that he had to make 1000 extra copies for distribution (Sorensen 1982: 21).

Ngata also experimented with the political economy of publication, creating the Board of Māori Ethnological Research, which subsidised the publication of much early ethnography of Māori. The board subvened the Journal of the Polynesian Society and created a second journal, Te Wananga, 'a periodical wherein could be published material less scientific in character than is usually associated with the Journal of the Polynesian Society's researches,' including 'important Maori texts, the publication of which should provide interesting reading for Maori scholars and the Maori people' (anonymous 1929: 1). And indeed, this journal often published lengthy Māori texts and represents a groundbreaking attempt to democratise scholarly knowledge about Māori people. Remarkably, as late as 1971 Condliffe could write 'the Pakeha, privately or through Government departments, have done little to subsidise research. What has been done in New Zealand ethnology has been almost entirely paid for by Maori people' (Condlife 1971: 149).

As this example shows, interwar anthropology did not always sort anthropologists into two columns on the basis of their race. Neither did they believe that non-academic research would inevitably be of lower quality than that of professors. Indeed, for Boas the best anthropologist was an indigenous anthropologist. (Berman 1996: 223-226). He recognized that white anthropologists visiting Native American communities lacked facility with the language and culture, had few personal connections in the community, and could rarely make extended stays. This was why Boas encouraged indigenous collaborators, such as George Hunt and Henry Tate. For Boas, an enemy of amateurism, the ideal anthropologist was the professionally-trained insider. In fact, the second PhD he awarded at Columbia was to William Jones, a Native American of the Fox nation. This was also the reason he was interested in working with Zora Neale Hurston: She was an insider willing – at least at first – to receive rigorous scientific training.

Buck and Ngata were even more sceptical than Boas of the possibility of Pākehā ethnography, and saw no contradiction between being Māori and an anthropologist. Indeed, they scoffed at Pākehā anthropologists who lacked the cultural aptitude and racial attunement necessary to understand Pacific Islanders (Sorenson 1982). At the same time, they did not feel that cultural or racial otherness made Pākehā anthropology fundamentally impossible or unethical. For instance, Ngata encouraged the young anthropologist Felix Keesing. 'He does good work,' wrote Ngata to Buck, 'is keen and has the "ngakau" - interest that will carry him far' (Ngata in Sorenson 1987: 69) even as Buck quipped to Ngata that Keesing had the 'pakeha way of putting things into a pakeha series of bottles with appropriate pakeha labels. They go well with the pakeha but there is a feeling of strangeness to the person whose mores have been thus bottled' (Buck in Sorenson 1987: 149). After getting his start publishing in the pages of Te Wananga, Keesing moved to Hawai'i and founded the department of anthropology at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. After World War II, he helped found the Stanford anthropology department. Few think of Stanford anthropology as shaped by Māori patronage, but in fact it was.

Conclusion

Like all dichotomies, the distinction between Cold War anthropology and interwar anthropology is too simple. Interwar anthropology was hardly a multicultural paradise. Ella Deloria's novel of American Indian life, *Waterlily*, was originally 215,000 words long, but she was forced to cut the manuscript in half by editors (Gardner 2003), mutilating her vision for the novel. Matilda Coxe Stevenson was forced to publish her work under her husband's name (Bruchac 2018:177). Anthropologists' relationship with Native collaborators were often exploitative, including Boas's relationship with Hunt – which itself largely involved appropriating the cultural knowledge and authority of his spouse (Bruchac 2018). Amateur work was often, well, amateurish. At the same time, Cold War anthropology was not uniformly a fascistic exercise in imperial control. The AAA may have shut out amateurs in 1946, but it also published Decolonizing Anthropology in 1991. Ralph Piddington preached scientific anthropology, but he spoke out against racial injustice in Australia (Grey 1994) and thought Sol Tax's action anthropology should be a model for the Pacific because 'it emphasises the right of Fox self-determination' (Piddington 1960: 205).

Still, it's useful to treat 'Cold War anthropology' and 'interwar anthropology' as ideal types. Doing so, I've argued, helps us see just how capacious anthropology can be as a discipline. It gives the legitimacy of tradition to anthropologists who are too often told their ideas or subject positions are novel or illegitimate, and it helps us revise how people once considered 'informants' or 'amateurs' were a central part of our discipline. It also helps us see that anthropology's past is not one of unremitting objectification and oppression of indigenous people — although to be sure there are many anthropologists who have a lot to answer for. All traditions are internally heterogenous, change over time, and face the challenge of being 'modern' even as they stay 'traditional' — that is to say, true to their historical experience in a new and contingent present. Anthropology included. In this article I've argued that interwar anthropology offers us examples of how to do that.

There will come a time, possibly even in the near future, when most anthropology will not be done by academic anthropologists, for the simple reason that there will be so few of us. It will be done by cultural practitioners, Wikipedia enthusiasts, and anthropology PhDs employed in the private sector. We already live in a time when the Internet and social media help us — as they say in the tech world — 'surface expertise', or realize just how knowledgeable and skilled non-academics are. Once we recognize the 'amateurs' and 'informants' of the past as anthropologists, then we can imagine new ways to ensure that our discipline is open to people with non-academic projects such as political engagement, cultural heritage, survivance, resurgence, antiquarian interest, a documentary impulse, obsessively footnoted Tumblr posts, and other goals we can't yet predict. Embracing these new anthropologists 'should open up the possibility of as yet unanticipated ways of being a 'we' who are matters of concern for one another on the basis of equally unanticipated terms of relevance' (Keane 2018: 37). As our discipline prepares to boot itself up, outside of the academy, these 'new amateurs' are our future. It is a daunting time, but also a time with a lot of promise. And as I hope to have shown in this article, there is nothing more true to our discipline's history than welcoming this new era and the practitioners it brings with it.

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COMMONING ETHNOGRAPHY

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Poetics in the Ethnographic

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ARTIST'S BIO | Nomi Stone is a Postdoctoral Research Associate at Princeton University. She has recently published articles in *Cultural Anthropology* and *American Ethnologist*, and her poetry appears in *The New Republic*, *The Best American Poetry*, *POETRY Magazine*, *American Poetry Review*, *Tin House*, and widely elsewhere. Nomi Stone has won a Pushcart Prize and was a Fulbright scholar in creative writing in Tunisia. She has recently served as a judge for the Society of Humanistic Anthropology's Ethnographic Poetry Competition. Her first poetry collection, entitled *Stranger's Notebook* (TriQuarterly Books), was published in 2008, and her forthcoming collection, *Kill Class*, will be published in 2019 by Tupelo Press.

Keywords: Poetry; Ethnography; Anthropology; Militarism; United States.

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Introduction

"At this hour, the fictional country is still, and twelve men glide through the dark into a cotton field."

"the fictional country stills
in the hour's resin. Men glide
through the pinedark
into fields of cotton."

As both a poet and an anthropologist, I mostly think about what it is like to be inside a body and to be inside time. To write field-notes as a poet is to store the sensory and the musical alongside the analytic, to think in particular about the rhythms of that which is lived. These two modes of seeing spark and extend each other. For example, the first sentence (see above) of my ethnographic monograph in progress, "Pineland: Human Technology and American Empire" (now a finalist for the University of California Press's Atelier series) came from a poem I had already written in my collection of poetry based on the same fieldwork, *Kill Class* (Tupelo Press 2019). I began the ethnography with an image of 12 training soldiers covertly entering a war game at night, by parachute. But it's not enough to just say the thing. I wanted my readers to feel the eerie, almost-sweet vertigo in the soldier's descent, the late hour a sort of dark honey around us—an enclosure, the men are told to make no sound— as they tumble into the cotton field (there, such softness, the cotton bolls under their boots). The prose sentence in the ethnography borrows the affect, rhythm and imagistic arc of the poem: we begin our entry with time ("this hour"), then startle into the strangeness of place ("the fictional country"), and its state ("still"), and each of these clauses slows the reader, before we arrive at the key action in the sentence: "twelve men glide through the dark." Their bodies fall through the dark like the l's in the words, and the sentence itself brings us through their descent all the way down to the field where they land. That moment of secrecy and almost terrible softness: this calm before the war begins. In this way, an ethnography contains the ghosts, the trace-structures of the poem.

First, a link to a recent ethnographic article: https://culanth.org/articles/887-living-the-laughscream-human-technology-and. And below, a selection from *Kill Class*.

Soldiers Parachuting into the War Game

The fictional country stills
in the hour's resin. Men glide
through pinedark
into fields of cotton. Eyeless
seeds above: Is it, lord,
        snowing? They cross
into the mock village:
dome goat road row
Iraqi role-players whispering
in collapsible houses
made for daily wreckage.
Lights pulse, pixels
within them. In one room:
        a tiny fake coffin no
isn't here a body no, nowhere
here my body. Input: say
a kind word to the villager / output
villager soaked clean of prior forms
of place. It is (subtract
this footprint) snowing. Now
        fade.

(Originally appeared in *Poetry Northwest*)

War Catalogues

Soldiers collect & number:
pigment, hair, jade,
roasted meat, timber,
cum. The enemy's
flute; the face

of an enemy
as he holds his young;
the enemy's face the moment
it's harmed. The woods

are a class in what
they can take. The country
is fat. We eat
from its side.

(Originally appeared in Academy of American Poets Poem-a-Day)

The Anthropologist

I bring my waterproof notebook, Arabic phrasebook, bug spray,
a terror of snakes. I drive the wrong way and the car is spat onto
Sanitary Field Road, or onto the road for Normandy or littler
massacres. Or for the meat you eat after. Do I take it with vinegar
or sweet? Separate the shoulder from the rib. Spit me onto Pork
Chop Hill, Ham Road, Chicken Lane, Devil Way, and into the hold
of these woods. So, what do you study? Is this part of a class for you?
Jeeps grow and grow under the pines. It's true, they take me for
BBQ after, ask me am I comfortable, do I want dessert and what
do I think I know about them and do I know any Americans who
went to war or don't I and if I don't who do I think I am, and do I
agree that through my

stomach, they will get
my heart?

(Originally appeared in *Puerto del Sol*)

War Game: Plug and Play

Wait. Begin Again.
Reverse loop. Enter the stage.
The war scenario has: [vegetable stalls], [roaming animals],
and [people] in it. The people speak

the language of a country we are trying
to make into a kinder country. Some
of the people over there are good /
others evil / others circumstantially

bad / some only want
cash / some just want
their family to not die.
The game says figure

out which
are which.

(Originally appeared in *Painted Bride Quarterly*)

Driving out of the Woods to the Motel

It's true, for your second job, you're a parking attendant or
a poultry process worker: stun and kill them, trim them and cut
into portions, bone and weigh and grade them. You're a hotel maid.
If an American soldier stays in the room you clean, you will fold
his uniform as crisply as love, a message that you too call it
a liberation. Your brother calls it an occupation, tells you: Do not
become American. Brother, the sanctions: 2 kilos sugar / 3 rice /
1 oil / 9 flour parsed into sections? Buy lipstick at the drug store.
Watch Ramadan soaps. Number your hungers. Braise the bird
until it is gold with lemon. Unstring your wish:

one bone liberation,
one bone occupation.

(Originally appeared in *The Arkansas International*)

Human Technology

Sunlit and dangerous, this country road.
We are follicle and meat and terror and

the machines leave their shells naked on the ground.
One soldier makes a museum in his basement.

Each mannequin in brass, incombustible coats:
I am walking between their blank faces,

their bullets traveling at the speed of sound. One soldier
who roasted a pig on his porch barbecuing until sinews were tender

tells me he waited above the Euphrates and if they tried to pass
even after we told them not to, they deserved it: pop (deserve it); pop

(deserve it). Euphrates, your dark tunnel out is rippling around us.
In the war, a child approaches a tank as one soldier counts the child's

steps. In the town, I drink a bottle of wine with that soldier
among barber shops, boot repair shops. Is she my friend? I weep to her. I've lost

who I thought I loved and she says I did
this thing and to whom was that child beloved?

Find common ground, the soldiers say. Humanize
yourselves. Classify the norm of who you're talking to, try

to echo it. Do this for your country, says one soldier; we
are sharks wearing suits of skin. Zip up.

This spring, in the chilly, barely blooming city
Solmaz says enough of this emptied word "empathy."

Ask for more: for rage. For love. On the porch,
as the sun goes, the dark pools around us and one

soldier says it is nightfall. I am tired. I did not mean for it to go on
this long. That soldier across the table, we lock eyes.

He tells me: in the occupied land we are the arm, they
are the weapon. The weapon

in this case is a person. Choose a person
who knows who is bad. Make them

slice open the skin of their country: only they can
identify the enemy. Say yes or no: if a man squints while

under the date palm; if a woman does not swing her arms
while walking. Sir, my child was not with the enemy.

He was with me in this kitchen, making lebna at home.
The yogurt still is fresh on his wrist.

(originally appeared in *Plume*)

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Don't they really represent us?

Being both activists and researchers at the time of the 'Spanish Revolution'

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ABSTRACT | In this article we position ourselves as socially and politically committed anthropologists, thinking about the possible ways research and activism come together in contemporary anthropology. We emphasize how critical social sciences have contributed to this debate mainly around two key ideas: the democratization of knowledge production and the politicization of that knowledge. We examine our experiences in the Spanish 15M movement and share four examples – two 'failed' and two 'successful' experiences – in which we discuss two key aspects of being activist academics. First, the difficulties and advantages of doing activism and research as a combined anthropological engagement; and, secondly, the usefulness of combining a long-term commitment to social justice as an effort to democratize mechanisms of knowledge production.

Keywords: Social activism; Spanish 15M movement; committed anthropology; collaborative research.

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Reconsidering the link between research and activism 'here' and 'now'

In May 2011, the contemporary 'Spanish Revolution' stirred in Spanish streets and paved the way for the 'Indignados' (Outraged) or '15M' movement (named as such due to its birth date: May 15th). For the title of this article, we use a slogan made popular during the 'Spanish Revolution': 'They don't represent us.' The slogan was used by protesters to keep their distance from the Spanish political elite, considered indifferent to the living conditions of common people and increasingly buried in corruption scandals. We paraphrase this slogan and present it under the guise of a question in order to reflect on the supposed distinction between 'spheres' of research and activism and in the aim of overcoming it. Our own positionality as anthropologists who are also heavily involved as social and political activists in various social struggles particularly around the 15M movement has been the impetus for this article. Using an autoethnographic lens to unpack the complexities of collaborative ethnographic research during the 'Spanish revolution' 15M, we highlight the possibilities and perils of being both an anthropologist and an activist simultaneously during times of social struggles.

Tzvetan Todorov stated that scientific and political activity, despite being chronologically separated (one is usually a scientist from 9 am to 5 pm and an activist from 5 pm to 9 pm), appear united in the figure of the intellectual (1986: 6). As activist academics actively involved in both academia and social struggles, we believe that if the aforementioned dichotomy between scientist/activist is rejected, the very practice of research will be improved. Overcoming this dilemma could propel some tiny, but significant changes in intellectual University work and perhaps help the Social Sciences reposition themselves at the heart of contemporary social transformation. Although we are not saying social movements are the only location from which to address the current situation of injustice, inequality, and deprivation of individual and collective freedoms, we see the relevance of social movements as vital sites of transformation. When talking about the radical possibilities offered in/by social movements Michel Foucault wrote:

> What happened in the sixties and early seventies is something to be preserved [...] These social movements have really changed our whole lives, our mentality, our attitudes, and the attitudes and mentality of other people (1997: 172-173).

This article is underpinned by the ethos of researchers understanding and appreciating the radical possibilities offered in and through contemporary social movements.

Assuming these previous considerations, in the following pages first we discuss two intrinsic dimensions to research from the perspective of activism – the democratization of knowledge production and the politicization of its contents, resorting to various theoretical contributions proceeding from Social Sciences and especially from Anthropology. We then contextualize the emergence of the 15M movement in Spain and outline its main features. Then, we put an emphasis on our lived experience in the Granada[1] 15M movement and provide four examples of empirical encounters and disagreements between activism and research, each of them traversed by the (supposed) academic/activist dichotomy and marked by a different combination of the axes 'knowledge production democratization' and

'prioritization of political objectives'. We ask: Is it possible to undertake an activist research practice while reconciling these apparently opposed poles and bringing together both axes? How? Although we have no general or universalistic answers to these questions, we try to show possible ways to approach these questions 'in practice', based on our experience. In particular, we will argue that this objective can be more effectively achieved through the deployment of collaborative methodologies, under condition that one is part of the social movements he/she/they wish to research. In this vein – paraphrasing the title of a seminal work of Charles Hale (2008) – we formulate this article as an invitation to engage with the tensions emerging from committed fieldwork.

Between the democratization of knowledge production and the politicization of its contents: two axes that articulate militant research

The most important theoretical and methodological contributions related to the link between academia and activism in recent decades have driven in two directions.

The first aims to democratize knowledge production (Greenwood 2000; Lassiter 2005; Holmes and Marcus 2008; Rappaport 2007 and 2008). This approach usually aims to reconfigure the relationship between social movements and researchers who are trying to unsettle the inherent authority of the canon and to propose other ways of researching which are more horizontal, symmetrical, and participatory. Affecting both choice of the topic and techniques employed (including forms of shared analysis and polyphonic writing), this proposal is characterized by strong methodological aspects. Its main goal is not one more person joining a social struggle in order to achieve a specific goal, but rather to create common pathways between researchers and studied groups, walking and working together for both research and action. This is particularly the case for the 'doubly reflexive ethnography' proposed by Dietz (2011) or 'collaborative ethnography' (Arribas 2014, Dietz and Álvarez 2014, Holmes and Marcus 2008, Lassiter 2005, Rappaport 2007 and 2008). A central concern, common to all these approaches, is to reduce the 'epistemologically authoritative' role of the ethnographer and to encourage 'dialogue between knowledge(s)' where the knowledge production process itself becomes more democratic and horizontal.

The second approach, emphasizes the production of knowledge that encourages social change (Baer 1997; Huizer 1979; Scheper-Hughes 1995). This approach tends to underline links between emancipatory and transformative proposals and social movements, aiming to support them by making them theoretically, organizationally, and politically visible. This form of knowledge production entails a commitment to achieving objectives raised by social movements by putting research practice, knowledge dissemination, and teaching at their service. This is the case for scholars like Baer, who defends a notion of 'partisan observation' (1997: 133-141), which pursues forms of knowledge production whose value and usefulness are determined by the people affected as first person 'owners of the problem,' as Greenwood calls them (2000: 32). In a similar vein, Huizer emphasizes the importance of social struggles, pointing out that 'not seeing, ignoring, these conflicts, is generally the same as taking the side of those in power' (1979: 396). In his proposal of 'Action Research' or 'Participatory Action Research' (PAR), the researcher turns into a 'helper' of marginalized or subaltern groups and the research goals are aimed to empower

them. However, throughout its historic deployment PAR has been target of a number of criticisms including: the persistence of a separation between 'expert' researchers and 'oppressed' groups, with the former acting as a self-appointed spokesperson for the latter in order to 'emancipate' them (Dadusc 2014: 52-53); a lack of cooperation between various participants; increasing institutionalization of social movements; and 'the constant temptation to resort to traditional academic outputs and elite-level ways of influencing policy when change does not happen organically from below' (The Autonomous Geographies Collective 2010: 248).

Finally, it is important to mention the feminist project in anthropology (Gregorio 2006), that recognized the possibility of 'situated knowledge' and 'embodied objectivity' (Haraway 1988: 581) as a form of political-epistemological commitment. In this vein, Scheper-Hughes stated: 'I am tempted to call anthropology's bluff, to expose its artificial moral relativism and to try to imagine what forms a politically committed and morally engaged anthropology might take' (1995: 410). Feminist anthropology has been a turning point in the deployment of committed anthropology, one of its strongest features being the fact that feminist anthropologists themselves were part of the women's political movement. Accordingly, their theoretical production was closely linked to their political mobilization, something that has characterized our experiences too. In Okely's words: 'In the 1970s, the Women's Liberation Movement argued that "the personal is political"; I contend also that in an academic context "the personal is theoretical"' (1992: 9).

The Spanish Revolution and 15M movement. A brief contextualization

These theoretical debates about the roles and possibilities for activist academics and their value were helpful for us, as we experienced and participated in the 15M movement, which occurred in Spain in 2011. The economic crisis of 2008 had, in comparison with other European countries, been the most detrimental to Spain. The economic growth of the previous decade had been achieved mainly through financial speculation and an extensive mortgage vending, all of which generated a real estate bubble that finally broke and caused an associated lending market implosion (Charnock and Purcell 2011, Perugorría and Tejerina 2013: 427). Thus, the recession, a rapidly growing unemployment rate, and the increasing impoverishment of large sectors of the population encouraged a rise of movements such as 'V de Vivienda' ('H for Housing', whose name pays homage to 'V for Vendetta') or 'Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca' - PAH ('People Affected by Mortgages Platform'), which preceded the 15M social uprising. These movements were in the defence of the right to housing and to support people who, having lost their jobs, could not pay their mortgages and would be subject to evictions (Antentas 2015a: 139). At a political level, ruling political parties like the socialist government of the Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE) was replaced by the Popular Party (PP) government on November 20, 2011. Both addressed the growing debt with austerity measures, social spending cuts, and bank bailouts with public funds (Castañeda 2012: 313-314, Hughes 2011: 408-409). The collusion and interpenetration between political power and major economic interests generated an increasing distrust of politicians and the two-party political system (Hughes 2011: 408-409), which were marked by corruption scandals that were representative of 'a neoliberalized left and a neoliberal and conservative right' (Castañeda 2012: 310). It is in this context that on May 15th,

2011, some non-traditional and newly established organizations such as '¡Democracia Real Ya!' ('Real Democracy Now!'), 'Juventud Sin Futuro' ('Youth Without Future') or 'No Les Votes' ('Don't vote for them') organized a demonstration in the main cities of Spain, characterized by slogans like: 'We are not commodities in the hands of politicians and bankers' or the aforementioned 'They don't represent us' (Antentas 2015b: 12).

Inspired by the Arab Spring and the Saucepan Revolution in Iceland (Flesher-Fominaya 2015: 158), protesters decided to stay and camp in the main squares like the 'Puerta del Sol' in Madrid and the 'Plaza Catalunya' in Barcelona. This 'Spanish Revolution' spread out throughout the Spanish state (Castañeda 2012: 310) and with it the taking of squares and the beginning of protest camps in hundreds of cities. Even after the camps were dismantled, the constituted assemblies in neighbourhoods and in smaller towns surrounding cities continued their work (Hughes 2011: 413). For example, in Granada's case—where we were working—after the camp in the central 'Plaza del Carmen' (called 'Plaza del Pueblo', The People's Square, by protesters) broke up, we constituted a 'General Assembly of Towns and Neighbourhoods' that continued to meet periodically.

It is impossible to summarise in a few lines all the characteristics and events that marked this movement's developments. Nevertheless, in a contemporary context marked by the return of institutional politics, the emergence of political parties, and of electoral coalitions claiming 15M experience as a part of their political DNA, it is worth mentioning that there are still groups born out of this experience doing radical work. There are groups such as the 'Stop Evictions' ('Stop Desahucios') movement, which continues to fight for the right to housing. There are other movements that continue to mobilize against state and political repression generated by a growing number of fines, arbitrary arrests of social activists, and promulgation of new draconian and authoritarian legislative reforms that harshly violate basic freedoms and rights. These groups include some of the key actors in the contemporary moment. We have been participating for a long time in both types of movements in the city of Granada.

'Failures' and 'successes' in bringing together research and activism: our experience in Granada's 15M movement

Given that both of us were heavily involved in 15M, we were constantly negotiating our presence as researchers and activists in the field. As happened to Graeber (2013), who found out how people were re-politicizing themselves through participation in the 'Occupy Wall Street' movement, first we lived the aforementioned processes, then we thought about them in the light of our knowledge as political anthropologists, and finally we presented them as theoretical and methodological reflections. According to the elaborated framework, we will discuss both 'failed' and 'successful' experiences in bringing together social research and activism, paying particular attention to the relationship established in each case between the two axes 'prioritization of political goals' and 'democratization of knowledge production'.

'Unsuccessful' experiences: 'top-down' research on 'Stop Evictions-15M' and the migration working group case

As 'activists not affected' (by eviction) within the group 'Stop Evictions-15M' ('Stop Desahucios 15-M': https://afectadosporlahipotecagranada.com), we would like to start off by sharing research conducted by a team from the Faculty of Psychology at Granada University, the Andalusian School of Public Health, and the group 'Stop Evictions' itself. This group was born within the 15M and somewhat linked to the state-level 'People Affected by Mortgages Platform' (although not directly part of it). The goal of the research was identifying psychological impact of evictions on concerned people. The study methodology consisted of 205 interviews, based on a questionnaire with typical public health studies scales, whose results were subsequently compared with a sample of 6507 people belonging to the Andalusian adult population (Granada Stop Desahucios 2014a). The study accuracy is based, according to Stop Evictions' discourse, on the participation of catedráticos from Granada University in its development (Granada Stop Deshaucios, 2014b), that is, full-time professors occupying a higher hierarchical level in the academic status. The study makes abundant use of terms like 'mental disorder' or 'mental health' to classify some of the worst consequences of evictions (Cano 2014, Granada Stop Desahucios 2014a and 2014b, Huertas 2014, Ramírez 2014). In the same vein, it is emphasized 'how depression, alcoholism and suicide rates are growing unstoppably within people affected by evictions' (Granada Stop Desahucios 2014b, authors' translation). Obviously, this is done with the respectable aims of making the dramatic consequences of evictions public and of reinforcing the legitimacy of the groups' struggle for an effective right to housing. Nevertheless, it seems to us that this framing leads to the production of somewhat 'victimizing' and 'disempowering' narratives. Although it is a kind of 'tactical victimization,' it is still victimization nevertheless. This way of presenting the research is based on the groups' need of having its struggles legitimised by public opinion. We call this a 'logic of validation.' Although this logic aims to produce counter-hegemonic narratives by questioning existing policies on housing, it does so by appealing to knowledge understood and established by that very same hegemonic order. It uses research instrumentally, to generate insights into the experiences of people being evicted, but in the process supports power relations existing within academy and it ends up naturalizing them and reinforcing a scientistic patterns of knowledge production. Thus, although this research is characterized by a strong commitment to social transformation, it unfortunately has a limited concern for the democratization of knowledge production. Here, the 'division of tasks' between activism and research is deepened, where neither the first nor the second are reciprocally transformed. Furthermore, a 'logic of externality' is replicated, in which there can be mutual support between the two spheres of research and activism, without challenging or blurring the borders of either. In the process, they both remain unchanged. We are not claiming that is necessarily bad, but as committed activist anthropologists, we expect better.

Another 'unsuccessful example' comes from the Granada 15M working group on migration. Its promoters were mostly Spanish and European activists who were trying to get migrants involved in the movements.[2] This does not mean that there were no migrants within the working group, but rather, that inclusiveness was a concern for many people within the movement. The first public meeting of this group took place in May of 2012. It was attended by about 40 people with diverse profiles and opinions regarding tasks and aims of the

group. There were students and activists from Social Sciences on one side, and people mainly from NGOs with an educational and social interventionist background, on the other. One of our first discussions was outlining the main goals of the group: although the group did not carry out a specific research on the following issues, some members (one of us amongst them) wanted to produce theory about the migrants' role within the current capitalist re-organization. In doing so, they wanted to denounce specific cases of migrants' rights violations to inform on institutional racism episodes happening in the city. Other members of the group were more interested in focusing on values such as diversity, plurality and respect, mostly understood in moral terms. They wanted to use knowledge in a more applied direction, among other things, by accompanying migrants and carrying out educational activities.

The group lasted until approximately the beginning of 2013. We attempted to bring in more people with migrant backgrounds in order to ensure more direct participation in the group's activities. We tried to investigate illegal police raids and denounce cases of institutional racism in the city. Although the group was horizontal in both its principles and objectives, what we missed was a clearer 'politicization of knowledge'. Even though everyone had knowledge and experience about migration, not all were heading toward a transformative political objective, which would have required questioning certain moral, paternalistic and Eurocentric attitudes addressed towards migrants' victimization. In the end, the group was not able to generate appropriate tools for more radical thinking, nor did it achieve the participation of the migrant community itself.

The collaborative shift: Stop Repression's research on 'blacklists' and our collaborative ethnography with 'Stop Evictions-15M'

'Stop Repression' (https://stoprepresiongranada.wordpress.com) was also born during 15M. It is a plural and horizontal collective, autonomous from political parties and trade unions. Its assembly takes decisions by consensus and pursues a double political aim: to denounce repressive actions undertaken by institutions in the city and to produce substantive changes in the exercise of the right to protest and freedom of expression. Stop Repression was born from a felt necessity: that of helping activists who were increasingly harassed by arbitrary fines imposed by public authorities (one of us was fined six times in approximately a year!). These fines are based on visual identifications of protesters by police and made without requesting the protestors to show their identity card. Blacklists play a central role in administrative repression, since they are systematically used by police to visually identify activists participating in demonstrations and fine them; they are a way to criminalize, marginalize and control social movements.[3] Although visual identifications are as legal as 'in situ' requests for identity cards, what we denounced was that such identifications were not based on clearly legal procedures. In fact, the documents that the police officers used to certify their visual identification of activists' participation were usually signed by the very same police officers (identified by their badge number): since they could not personally know all the fined protesters, they had probably used the aforementioned blacklists.

In order to accomplish our political goal, we had to co-research on administrative repression (Oliver and Urda, 2015) as one of the government's strategies to criminalize and discourage social protest. At the same time, we had

to instruct ourselves on concepts such as 'Criminal Law of the Enemy' (Zaffaroni, 2013), bills and legislation, especially focusing on the new law of public security and the criminal code reform both of which were approved in 2015.[4] We systematized the information produced and finally we passed to action. We appealed against 73 fines, winning 59 administrative trials (81%) and losing 14 (19%). The cost of court fees was covered by self-financing activities. In most of the cases, police officers could not prove they previously knew the accused activists nor that they had caused any public disorder during the demonstrations. Later on, we stopped just defending ourselves and took to the offensive. We processed twenty-one complaints based on the same number of favourable verdicts, requiring an investigation into the existence of blacklists and demanded police accountability. Three complaints were admitted. As the judicial inquiry started, four police officers were charged as accused parties while two had to declare as witnesses. The police had to explain exactly how they visually identified two different people with no criminal record. The case ran very slowly, and in the end it was dismissed. The battle was lost but still we think it was worth the struggle.

The other 'successful' experience refers, once again, to Granada 'Stop Evictions-15M' group, but this time it is research undertaken by ourselves together with other committed academics, within a larger research project officially funded by academic institutions. It is still ongoing.[5] At the end of 2015, making the most of our previous activist experience and our contacts in the movement, we were allowed to start a collaborative ethnography with Stop Evictions. This project had two main aims: First, to produce useful knowledge for housing movements, relevant for their own practices. Second, to produce knowledge as collectively and horizontally as possible, attempting to question the dichotomy between research 'subjects' and 'objects.' During this time, not only did we attend the movement assemblies and participate in its collective actions (such as weekly rallies in front of bank branches), but we also activated various research strategies. In particular, we conducted fifteen 'interviews/conversations' in one assembly and three 'debate groups' (each one made up of four sessions) in the other. The issues debated had to do with the pros and cons of the organizational forms and action strategies of the group, and with the political subjectivation process of the activists as well. Even though the methodologies deployed may appear traditional, the difference is that their main aim has not been the production of discourses to be unilaterally analysed by us as academics, but rather the production of materials on which the group itself could use to reflect upon during a second stage.

Thus, the questions formulated for our research protocol were not aimed to address pre-established subjects – the 'research group' key issues – but rather were meant to facilitate the emergence of subjects that were relevant for the activists themselves that would be the basis for a subsequent process of collective co-analysis. During our conversations, a wide set of 'questions' were raised for debate. The aim was that the materials coming out from the research process would help to improve the organizational/political effectiveness of the group and could also provide a 'counter-history' of the movement itself, based on the words of its protagonists. Therefore, our idea was diametrically opposed to the extractivist approach which characterized the psychology-based research discussed above. In fact, our aim was to combine the democratization of

knowledge production (entailed by the potential of collaborative ethnography) and the production of useful knowledge(s) for the activists.

Both within 'Stop Repression' and 'Stop Evictions-15M', our role is that of being activists, such as any other member of the group. We think these cases show quite clearly that the kind of militant research we are interested in combines horizontal processes of knowledge production with a commitment to transformative political objectives. Although they are good examples, we don't want to mythologize them. In the first case, all together we accomplished information and documentation tasks, we elaborated on theoretical contents and disseminated them; we analysed data and undertook protest actions. However, horizontality must be constantly cared and sought for, among other things, because we are a very diverse group, characterized by different stories, knowledge and ideological positions. Furthermore, it is not easy to undertake any research practice within this specific context, given that 'one of the aims of state repression is that of having social movements taking care of themselves rather than addressing political issues' (Holm 2009: 10, authors' translation). This aspect certainly affects the way we work and it permanently conditions it, often determining our agenda from the outside. In the second case, also 'Stop Evictions-15M' is affected by an 'emergency logic' that has it constantly focusing on the achievement of immediate practical objectives rather than creating spaces for reflection and mutual listening in the long term.

Our most important learning has been not to overvalue our academic knowledge. Paradoxically, our excessive concern not to 'silence' activists had entailed our renunciation to intervene in internal debates. However, along the way we realized that the activists were experts of their own worlds, they were not dependent at all on our academic knowledge. We learned from them as they were constantly generating a set of useful knowledge(s) regarding mortgage procedures, legal appeals, administrative deadlines, how to deal with bank officers. All issues on which we 'as academics' had almost nothing to say. Furthermore, on occasion we had to insist and remind our comrades that we were not only activists but also researchers. Thus, our recognition as academics was not a given. In conclusion, both experiences have their limits. However, they surely point to an attempt to value the 'process' over the 'product', and to carry out non-extractivist, collaborative and committed ethnographies, aimed at addressing the relationship between academia and social struggle in ways different from most hegemonic approaches.

Concluding remarks

Throughout this article we have emphasized the existence of two tensions: the (virtual) opposition between 'academia' and 'activism' and the relationship between the prioritization of political goals and the democratization of knowledge production. Let us draw some conclusions, which will inevitably be incomplete. First, the relation between academia and social movements entails two symmetrical risks. On the one hand, social movements may not recognize the academy and reject it as a whole, or they may 'use' it as a mere validation instrument for their own struggles. Without a critical engagement with the research establishment, social movement actors may not see its internal contradictions and may not support processes leading to its transformation. After all, the University may belong to a social reality that movements intend to

transform. Secondly, supposedly committed academics may 'use' social movements, for example, by 'grabbing movements' knowledge' (Dadusc 2014: 49) with an aim to validate their own theories, to achieve or enhance their academic prestige, or to elaborate policy proposals to governmental actors (Dadusc 2014: 48). Such work has the effect of fostering professionalization and institutionalization and creating 'experts on movements' figures in the process (The Autonomous Geographies Collective 2010: 266). In this process, academics often neither give in to a long-term commitment to these movements, nor do they enhance the possibility of 'learn[ing] from these perspectives how to know differently' (Dadusc 2014: 49).

Within the twofold dis-acknowledgement dynamics, there is a risk that might make us lose sight of the internal diversity of both of the academic world and of social movements. This could lead to essentialist, romantic and exotic narratives of the nature of the two—in the case of the former mainly negative, and in the case of the latter mainly positive ones. For example, by converting horizontality of movements into a myth, regardless of unequal power relations that also exist within social movements, academics may misunderstand the way movements might lose critical capacity as they change or they might not be able to make sense of internal sectarianisms within movements, and so on (Calle 2012: 230-232).[6] Similarly the academy, despite often disempowering, normalizing, distorting, colonizing or silencing critical knowledge produced by social movements (Calle 2012, Santucho 2012), does not stop being a 'structure of legitimation,' a site to access resources, and 'a place where it is possible to work on ways of knowledge', so that 'social movements can permeate and reach agreements with specific persons and under particular conditions' (Calle 2012: 226, authors' translation). Ultimately, the supposed dichotomy between Academia and Activism (both in capital letters), so often assumed on both sides, is simply false.

If anything, we should speak about a 'hegemonic academy' and a 'hegemonic political activism', or even better, 'committed academic practices' and 'flexible and open practices of political activism' (Leyva 2010: 17, authors' translation), both 'in lower case letters and plural' (Leyva 2010: 14, authors' translation). Thus, the goal should be not to dissolve borders between academia and social movements, but rather to create opportunities for mutual recognition between people committed to social change proceeding from the research world and activist groups interested in sharing a path towards a mutual transformation.
Being activists and researchers at the same time, we would like to think about transforming both knowledge production and activist practices so that we do not have to choose between a membership to one or the other, where we do not feel obliged to clarify in each case whether we are speaking 'as anthropologists' or 'as militants.' As Santucho puts it: 'We are not researchers with a political standpoint as well, but rather our role as researchers is influenced and reorganized by this political wish' (2012: 119, authors' translation). Of course, not every researcher has to be a social activist and vice versa, but maybe we have something interesting to say for those people who, like us, are already both things and have decided to investigate issues closely related to their everyday political practices. For us, searching for a better adjective to define the type of 'observation' to be undertaken in the field does not remain a terminological debate, it is animated by a deeper transformative intention to lay the foundation and give meaning to new forms of

both. From this point of view, to be 'epistemic partners' (Holmes and Marcus 2008: 84) is necessary but not sufficient: there must also be a political partnership.

Second, in accounting for the tensions between the 'horizontalizing' and 'democratizing' axes, that is, between a focus on research practices or on social transformation dynamics, there is no reason why these axes should enter into conflict. Nevertheless, as we have shown empirically, they do sometimes. Imagined visually, we see research strategies discussed in this essay as characterized by different levels of 'knowledge production democratization'. We see them as part of a continuous line in which the minimum degree of collaboration requires 'returning the results' and the maximum degree is where the research belongs to those who carry out the collaborative and horizontal practices throughout all stages of the research process. Similarly, at least in abstract terms, the researcher's level of involvement with 'studied' groups and social changes achievement may vary from a more committed attitude to a less committed one. The two unsuccessful examples were marked by a positive value on one scale, but practically lacked the other component. Instead, the two 'successful' examples were marked by a positive combination on both scales; although at different levels, they combined a participatory knowledge production process with a political aim and a will to generate useful knowledge. Following these examples, we posit that any of the infinite combinations marked by a 'positive' value in both directions is a good start.

Finally, we emphasize the usefulness of combining collaborative research methodologies with the participation in social movements as activists. Maybe it is the combination of both conditions that really gave strength and consistence to our research practice, providing insights that would have been otherwise difficult to find out. This does not mean that we discredit those research practices that, even while being committed to social change, end up validating themselves by reproducing dominant patterns of knowledge (production). On the contrary, from our specific places of enunciation and our conditions as both militants and researchers we state that this is not the kind of committed research we wish to practice. Similarly, we think that a merely 'experimental' collaboration is not enough, unless it is oriented to questioning the hegemonic power relations. We are fully aware of the limits, difficulties, contradictions as well as disciplinary and institutional constraints existing in the neoliberal university. That is why we do not formulate this proposal as a prescription, but rather as an ideal scenario we still yet hope to reach.

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Notes

1. Granada is a medium-sized city; it hosts a major university and is located in the eastern part of Andalusia, the most southern region of Spain.

2. Alexandrakis shows how people affected by a problem do not always feel motivated by social movements and their overall resistance strategies (such as the struggle against austerity). However, if they 'enter into intimate, critical relation, a shared topography of political sense may emerge along with new critical agency', paving the way to 'actions that evoke the coming political, within the crisis ordinary' (2016: 43).

3. We speak about these as administrative repression as these fines are based on administrative rather than criminal law. That means, for example, that by any means a person unable to pay a fine will be sent to prison. Nevertheless, according to Spanish administrative law, this also entails much less guarantees a long litigation process. Although the accused may appeal to different courts, it will be much more difficult for him/her to fully exercise the right to defence.

4. Commonly called a 'gag law' ('Ley Mordaza'), the new law on public security and reform of the criminal code has been heavily criticized by United Nations experts due to violating basic rights and freedoms, taking Spain back to an obscure past allegedly left behind (New York Times 2015).

5. The other researchers being Aurora Álvarez Veinguer, Antonia Olmos Alcaraz, Rocío García Soto, and many other comrades from the Stop Evictions movement. As for the project, its title is: 'Emergent Processes and Agencies of the Commons: Collaborative Social Research Praxis and New Forms of Political Subjectivation' (reference: CSO2014-56960-P, 2014 call of the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Innovation).

6. Accordingly, we recognize the utility of 'critically engaged activist research', a notion used by Speed (2006: 71) to define the ability to carry out a critical analysis of power relations and to debate them within the social movements one is part of.

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COMMONING ETHNOGRAPHY

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Towards an Ethnography Commons

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ABSTRACT | How might the notion of an ethnography commons transform ethnographic research practice and pedagogy? In this paper, I consider how the concept of the commons, in all of its messiness, might provide a way of not only addressing questions surrounding the boundaries of ethnographic research and knowledge that have been fundamental to anthropology since *Writing Culture* (Clifford and Marcus 1986), but also for crafting more transformative research and social interventions into the world itself. I do so first by considering how contemporary structures of capitalism are shaping the university, our research, and our relationships with our students. Then, I trace the ways in which the debates about the boundaries of ethnography have transformed research and pedagogy over the last 20 years. Finally, I conclude by suggesting a number of potential trajectories for acting on the promise of the commons through ethnographic teaching and research.

Keywords: commons; late-capitalism; property; pedagogy; ethnographic methods; neoliberal university

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Introduction

For many of us, these feel like scary times. We live in a moment between frameworks, an interregnum, in Gramscian terms—the old has not yet died and the new has not yet been born (Gramsci 1972: 276). Our physical, political, environmental, and epistemic infrastructures are under stress. Theorizations of everything from late capitalism (Jameson 1991) to late liberalism (Povanelli 2016) to late industrialism (Fortun 2012) to post-democracy (Crouch 2004) locate us temporally on, or even beyond, the precipice. The corporate university and its constant demands to innovate and disrupt amidst a larger prime directive to measure and audit does little to inspire hope that the institutions of intellectual life might contribute a meaningful platform from which to build future-oriented alternative ways of living. And yet, much contemporary anthropology is rooted in 'a method of hope' (Miyazaki 2004). It is insistent that the world is unfinished, that avenues for transformation always exist. This scholarly impulse demands that we see possibilities for remaking our situation and ourselves as beyond foreclosure. If this is the case, why does contemporary intellectual life often feel so hopeless? How might we create new scholarly practices for attending to this moment, for intervening in it more forcefully, and for making good on the ethnographic impulse to keeps things open? Can ethnography—both as a mode of study and as a site of pedagogy—play a role in this project? Perhaps. But first we must attend to the question of property.

Tania Li's recent ethnography, *Land's End* (2014), describes the fallout of capitalist transition among subsistence highland agriculturalists on the Indonesian island of Sulawesi. Instead of focusing on monumental dispossession via infrastructure projects or corporate land grabs, Li's study describes in close detail the ways the end of the commons – taking place through a shift from dispersed forms of subsistence farming to cacao mono-cropping and ultimately private property – led to a slow and steady erosion of preexisting forms of reciprocal sociality. In their place is a new system of what she calls 'capitalist relations,' which is rooted in both the rearrangement of space around notions of private property and work around waged labour. The results of this shift are profound, fragmenting social relations, increasing competition producing new forms of poverty, expanding debt obligations, and widening inequality. Through ethnographic description, Li's book shows us how capitalist relations produce individualized trajectories of wealth and impoverishment that not only transform intimate social relations but also neutralize possibilities for collective politics. Although the study is very much concerned with the shifting terms of life on Sulawesi, the book is particularly powerful for the way it unpacks the micro-transformations in sociality that occur alongside the expansion of capitalist norms. This makes the book both a tremendous study of the destructive effects of capitalism and an exemplary piece of anthropology as it presses its reader to reconsider how capitalist relations shape the conditions of their own life. This is precisely why Li's ethnography is instructive to think with: we too find ourselves within these structural conditions, making lives and scholarship amidst the expansion of capitalist relations (albeit from a different vantage point).

The unfolding devastation experienced by the highlanders in *Land's End* is not the same as that experienced by educated scholars situated in the center of the global academy. Yet, the divergent trajectories of the world's permanent academic faculty and the precarious, contingent, underclass of academic labour

bear a structural (if not material) resemblance to the situation on Sulawesi. The political economy of higher education – marked by constrictions in hiring, increasing adjunctification of academic staff, emerging emphasis on individualized performance metrics, expanding programmes of professionalization, and the threat and closure of academic programmes of study – structures our relationship with our writing, our relationships in the field, our relationships with our students, and our relations with each other. It shapes the way we write and where we publish. It also narrows our will to struggle collectively for a different structural situation altogether.

This transformation becomes legible in our work as we are pushed in divergent and opposing ways. On the one hand, we find ourselves driven to make singular scholarly contributions that demonstrate a unique and surpassing brilliance, that disrupt common-sense understandings, and that remake fields of knowledge. On the other, many of us worry about how ramped up demands for publication encourage a kind of mono-cropped scholarship that is vast, but not particularly deep or attuned to the worlds from which it emerges, if it is even available to wider readerships at all. I say these things not as condemnations of the work of others, but as reflections on the dual pressures I myself feel as a young scholar trying to craft my own research agenda and forge an academic career. The pursuit of metrics, of course, exacerbates this problem. Most high prestige publications are enclaved within privatized landscapes of fortified pay-walls. Twenty-four hours of access to the most radical, transformative thoughts will cost you 42 USD. No Trespassing.

Beyond the Lab, Beyond the Studio

Perhaps starting with ethnography – research, writing, pedagogy, and praxis – could lead us in another direction. Although a good deal of the history of the debates around *Writing Culture* (Clifford and Marcus 1986) focused on the question of representation (see Starn 2012), it seems to me (albeit in a sort of revisionist way) that we might also read that book, and the history of methodological questioning and experimentation that followed, as, at their heart, about the discovery of the epistemological boundaries that composed the discipline of anthropology altogether.[1] Although the question of writing was central to these discussions (perhaps to a fault), the deeper and perhaps more lasting challenge the volume launched was for ethnographers from within and beyond anthropology to rethink or at least to become deeply aware of the epistemological and socio-political boundaries that constitute ethnographic writing and research. Indeed, much critical writing and research that followed *Writing Culture* attempted in various way to deconstruct those boundaries by rethinking the roles of researcher, deconstructing bounded topographies of 'the field,' expanding scenes of collaboration, and opening up space for direct activist politics. In the post-*Writing Culture* moment, whole new trajectories of thinking and practice emerged in the name of these multi-sited (Marcus 1995), collaborative (Lassiter 2005, Rappaport 2008, Sangtin Writers Collective and Nagar 2006), activist (Hale 2006), and experimental open systems approaches (Fortun 2009, Fortun et al. 2014) to ethnographic research. The current turn towards experimental methods pedagogy in the form of collective projects (Rabinow et al. 2008) – studios and collaboratories – built on these approaches, offering new directions that are not aimed to rethink ethnography for the twenty-

first century, but also the university more generally.[2] Here, I suggest that the figure of the commons might move beyond these collective projects to set our work on a different path altogether.

Ethnographic laboratories and studios offer a kind of imperfect template for how we might think our way forwards. For Rabinow et al. (2008), the language of the studio and co-laboratory (respectively) gets us closer to the experimental, emergent qualities of ethnographic research. Unpredictable to the core, the ethnographic practice eludes the 'techniques and tips' model of pedagogy. Consequently, most ethnographers actually have surprisingly little formal methodological training. What is appealing about these collective pedagogical projects is that they offer grounds to continue developing a critical language around our methods, a necessary political maneuver (i.e. Fortun 2012), and a means to break down the barriers that compose individual scholarly practice by offering a new collective space to attempt to rethink our work by reimagining our approach to the field and the boundaries that compose it.[3]

Co-laboratory and studio approaches to ethnography not only seek to create new approaches to ethnographic knowledge, but also to redraw the boundaries that compose ethnographic projects by actively encouraging research collaborators to enter into the scene of theorization. Given the brief political economy I sketched out above, it is worth noting that both the studio and the laboratory find their grounding in spaces that are central to contemporary modes of economic production – studios and labs are paradigmatic spaces in the new economy with links to techno-design utopias and cutting-edge science capitalism respectively. Moreover, both studios and labs are structured by intensely hierarchical relations reflected in their daily practices, the ways in which they resolve questions of intellectual ownership of ideas, distribute the fruits of their earnings, and in their work with clients. Nevertheless, both lab and studio offer one key concession that marks them as very much unlike the classroom: Labs and studios are premised on collective collaboration, thus they are spaces in which learning and research take place by being together. This 'being together' reflects the most compelling part of 'the commons' and, indeed, ethnographic praxis itself.

Rather than give way to the concessions of these times for further technique-based instruction premised on a smaller rendering of employability, I see a future of ethnography as directed towards the creation of new commons – spaces of gathering, sharing, exchange, and collaboration – spaces for learning to make a better, different ethnography together. The commons approach offers potential for doing better scholarship by troubling the primary boundary between field and home, breaking down barriers that cloister our research, and opening up our own strange processes of knowledge production to better incorporate the people at the heart of our research, while training our students to do the same. This space might enable us to think beyond anthropology and ethnography altogether, turning towards the much bigger question of learning how to-be-in-common.

For the Commons

At its most utopic, this is what I envision for the ethnography commons: a space of collective learning that gives fuller support to the project of reconfiguring the world by transforming our writing, re-crafting relationships within the communities of praxis that shape our research, and, ultimately, challenging the university itself.

This commoning might take place along three lines:

1. *Enhancing and building upon the forms of commoning we already practice*. As J.K. Gibson-Graham (2006) argue, in order to rethink capitalism it is necessary to shift our understandings towards the multiple forms of monetary and non-monetary exchange that already compose the economy. To do so, it is necessary to be attentive to the sorts of relations and practices of exchange that we already engage in, valorizing work that goes unnoticed and under-valued within the broader capitalist economy and using this as the foundation of a new ordering of economic relations. In the case of an ethnography commons, this means acknowledging the value of the seemingly mundane things we already do together as a matter of course – methodological discussions with students, collective writing workshops, group research critiques, and in-project trouble shooting. As ethnography is hardly a stable method, this sort of context-rich, deeply engaged pedagogy is already fundamental to most actually-existing methods training. Yet, these practices are often subterranean, existing in an invisible space of interpersonal labour that is unevenly distributed across the academy and is, yet, fundamental to driving our scholarship forward. Indeed, if we are to reframe our work around a commons, then labour and its distribution must always be central. Attentive reading, supportive encouragement, real-time problem-solving, and collective thinking are precisely the sorts of practices that are necessary to the production of knowledge, but obscured by single-authored by-lines and publication lists on CVs.

Of course, there are scholarly benefits to building a shared pedagogical approach to methods. The rigors of ethnography are in its unpredictability, which calls on scholars to respond to the unexpected contingencies that emerge from the dynamism of the field. Indeed, often, the first thing that gets destabilized in the field is one's neatly crafted research design. I would hazard to guess that the thing that allows most scholars to continue after their project appears to fall apart is not guts or intellectual will of the individual fieldworker, but is, instead, long and anguished conversations with close friends, intellectual companions, and advisors. By highlighting and supporting collective pedagogy as fundamental to ethnography, the commons emphasizes the importance of these existing pedagogical practices and offers a ground to embark on bolder experiments in collaborative research and being.

2. *The figure of the commons encourages us to rethink who is included in our research and how.* Collaborative ethnographies have pushed the limits for how ethnographies might be composed. One recent example is the Sangtin Writers Collective and Richa Nagar's book *Playing with Fire* (2006), which documents the struggles of a collective of women who, through their ethnographic work, deconstruct the intersecting struggles that shape their lives as activists from various class, caste, and religious backgrounds working together on projects of

'women's empowerment' in India. As the ethnography shows, this process enabled them to not only discover the differences that have shaped their life trajectories, but also the silent power structures that shape their activism itself. The ethnography is both a remarkable artifact of a collective process and a powerful account of what it is to work within the power structures of development. By commoning the ethnographic form, the text exposes the uneven terms upon which both development and ethnographic knowledge are produced. The book (like many of the authors in this collection) testifies to the power and the limits, the variegation and the unevenness inherent in the commons concept itself. Here, working in common helps us to understand what is at stake in complex engagements with others. It also shows the powerful potential outcomes of such a risky, insistently collective approach to scholarship. While *Writing Culture* identified the artificial wall between observer and observed, its more powerful legacy (the one that nearly destroyed the field) was the way that discussion ultimately inspired greater challenges to the boundaries around the ownership of ethnographic knowledge more generally. The commons offers a site in which to imagine ethnographic praxis anew, taking up the challenges of decolonization more fully. Here, the figure of the commons feels at its most urgent, necessary, and also most risky. Taking on the political challenges laid down by feminist, indigenous, queer, post-colonial, and anti-colonial challenges to the ethnographic requires a new intellectual infrastructure capable of not only incorporating new voices, but radically altering the boundaries, spaces, and practices of knowledge production itself.

3. *Imagining an ethnography commons as a space of collective encounter might help us to rethink social praxis altogether.* The commons is, of course, a place to learn the difficult practice of "commoning." In a recent piece in *Society and Space*, the literary critic Lauren Berlant (2016) argues, rather soberly, that the adoption of the figure of the commons across the US and Europe obscures the knotty, irreducible, political nature of such a project. The blanket valorization of the concept not only elides the fact that no such ontology of commoning exists (yet), it also ignores the genuine complexities of working across difference, as though the mere idea of the commons would smooth out the variegation, diversity, and disagreement that inherent in being together. Nevertheless, she points, out that it is these thornier qualities that make the commons an essential project for these 'troubled times':

> For the very scenes in which the concept attains power mark the desire for living with some loss of assurance as to one's or one's community's place in the world, at least while better forms of life are invented and tried out. The better power of the commons is to point to a way to view what's broken in sociality, the difficulty of convening a world conjointly, although it is inconvenient and hard, and to offer incitements to imagining a livable provisional life (Berlant 2016: 395).

I am moved by Berlant's conception of the commons because it is a fraught one from its outset. In working together, in attempting to share, we understand and encounter the limitations of ourselves and each other. We learn about the way in which what we take to be commonly held is, in fact, rather uncommonly divided

(see also Kelly and Trundle, this collection). It echoes Jacques Rancière's foundational insight that, 'There is politics because the commons is divided' (2011: 1). In short, if we are to live in common, then we also must learn to engage with each other in the spirit of disagreement. Yet, it is these difficulties that reveal the most utopian dimension of the commoning project. Might ethnography offer an occasion to return to collective engagement by cultivating practices of being-in-common of this richly political sort? Might such a project begin the process of reconfiguring the university to support intellectual life beyond the easily monetizable forms of value central to contemporary academic life? Can the figure of the always-divided commons push us to sort through the brokenness of this moment and begin cultivating new practices, new affects, or new politics together? Might it transform the university from being a scholarly space directed by the entrepreneurial ethics of individual scholar-geniuses (who occasionally engage with their student-clients) into a space of collective praxis where scholarship becomes a means of creating works and lives together?

Rather than conceive of our ethnographic work as beginning and ending in the field, the commoning idea radically redraws the boundaries between those two spheres, seeking to produce a new sort of space within the university, against the university. In the immediate term, coming together around ethnography will no doubt lead to different sorts of intellectual interventions. Some of those might come in the form of more accessible ethnographic texts, others might not be written at all, but be music, art, or dance. In the longer term, the aim of an ethnography commons is to actually intervene at the level of sociality, producing new sites and ways of being-in-common. This is what we so desperately need right now, both in the academy and beyond, to shift away from the proprietary landscape that values idiosyncratic brilliance, mono-cropped scholarship, and individualized success, towards something richer, more complex, diverse, difficult, unknown, together.

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Notes

1. I'd also like to bracket the potent political critiques of *Writing Culture* (i.e. Scholte 1987, Polier and Roseberry 1989).

2. I was involved in the creation and founding of the Studio for Ethnographic Design (SED), a collaborative, interdisciplinary ethnographic collaboration at University of California, San Diego in 2013. We used the language of the studio

to speak directly to the design world. Along the way, SED and its many collaborators have debated the idea of the 'studio' and questioned design, raising many of these same points.

3. Kim Fortun has made this point to me in a number of conversations (see also 2009).

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Mine, Yours or Ours?

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ABSTRACT | This piece draws upon experiences from our private and professional lives to identify nascent models of the commons in Aotearoa. Through examining practices of shared motherhood and the sharing of cultural knowledge within the university sphere, we reveal the unequal divisions of labour that often occur in practices that seek to contribute to a social good and a common goal. As academia has increasingly embraced the idea of the commons, we propose a more critical engagement with some of the assumptions that affect how commoning projects are currently enacted, including the hidden inequities they contain and the mutual benefits possible. We also examine the tensions between benefiting from and contributing to sharing arrangements, considering the complexities of situations when less sharing is desired or when more sharing is required.

Keywords: the commons; sharing; university workspaces; politics of motherhood; Māori academics

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Introduction

The commons represents a hope-filled, restorative ideal, one that sits in contrast to the limits of private property and the harms of social exclusion. The project of commoning knowledge, spaces, and relations within academia can be found in shifts towards open access publishing and an increasing emphasis on interdisciplinary collaborations, and emancipatory pedagogies. It is visible within our growing focus on 'engagement' and 'impact', or the ways in which we might make our knowledge more accessible to wide audiences, including sharing our knowledge with the communities who might most benefit. More broadly, the commons stand in contrast to capitalist enclosure, colonial dispossession, and the privatization of natural resources, and in contrast to exclusive intellectual property regimes, anti-democratic politics, and the theft of indigenous knowledge (Berlant 2016, Casarino and Negri 2008, Linebaugh 2009, Reid and Taylor 2010, Žižek 2009).

The commons pushes back against our seemingly reduced capacity to both imagine and enact novel forms of collective life and new solidarities. In light of the optimistic and utopian embrace of commoning ideals, it becomes increasingly important to consider what the ideologies and practices of commoning enable and foreclose, what they open for us and demand of us, what they reveal and what they hide from view. In this article we interrogate experiences of sharing, an ideal often seen to rest at the heart of commoning projects. We do so in order to critically explore the limits and potentialities of sharing as the basis for new common projects and spaces.

This piece draws upon experiences from our private and professional lives to identify nascent models of the commons, which in turn reveal the knotty tensions of owning and sharing. Our tone and focus here purposefully seek to contrast with those of conventional scholarly writing, where personal experiences in the academic workplace and private family sphere are so often under-acknowledged in the public work of generating intellectual ideas. We thus contribute to a wider intellectual call to unsettle what counts as the boundaries of legitimate data, labour, field, and method. This, we argue, involves acknowledging that the modes of sharing and care work that occur within the family and workspace often underpin – but are concealed within – the rewards and recognitions that individuals garner in academia. Commoning praxis does not necessarily mean inventing things anew, but recognizing, as Gibson-Graham argue, 'the ways that we are all already in a space of commonality' (2006: 160). At the same time as we seek to expose these too-often hidden realities and relations, we have been careful in deciding what to share. There are private and professional worlds and relationships that we touch upon here which we seek to respect and protect. Our lack of specificity in places thus reflects what Audra Simpson has termed *ethnographic refusal*, or the balance between 'what you need to know' and what we selectively choose to write about (2007: 72). The style with which we have written this piece thus enacts our central argument that commoning relationships often involve navigating the risks of sharing either too much or too little.

Our case studies reflect upon experiences of inhabiting roles in which one is expected, often altruistically and selflessly, to contribute to a wider social

goal, and in which one must negotiate complex questions of ownership, obligation, and recognition. Catherine's case study examines caring relationships that emerge at the intersections of family and the state, revealing how, in a situation of multiple motherhood, kinship combines both possessive and open ties simultaneously. Karena's case study explores experiences and expectations of sharing cultural knowledge within the university. Here she reveals how careful attention to the hidden complexities of sharing helps us to identify and rectify the inequalities and tensions that occur in these exchanges.

Catherine: The art of knowing when (not) to share

The anthropological scholarship on motherhood and kinship has often sought to unsettle the seeming naturalness of the nuclear family. Anthropological studies have demonstrated that, across cultures, there are multiple ways in which the identity of motherhood and the labour of mothering can be shared – by wider family members, through informal fostering arrangements, by queer parents or for surrogate children with multiple mothers, and through communal systems of living (e.g. Benkov 1994, Faircloth, Hoffman and Layne 2013, Ragoné 1994, Segalen 2001, Terrell and Modell 1994). Such examples are often used heuristically to offer a refreshing challenge to the western cult of motherhood that requires a deeply attached, possessive, and labour intensive mothering role, one that has become increasingly difficult to enact alongside the contemporary demands of work and other care commitments. What if we could re-envisage motherhood, we rhetorically ask, to common it and share the load through new arrangements, incorporating more deeply fathers, partners, extended families, and whole communities into care networks? Perhaps then we might find a way out of the current inequities of our childcare arrangements.

Ideas of commoning often assume the inherent value of sharing. But sometimes sharing is not easy, is riven with conflict, and depletes people's energy rather than distributes the load. Studies of family dynamics in the wake of divorce and remarriage, for example, show how the new family dynamics that develop can cut two ways (e.g. Simpson 1994). They can increase the forms of support available to family members, and multiply the number of family ties. But they can also create competition over resources (whose room is this, whose mum is this, whose money is this), a sense of being a central or peripheral member of particular family groups, and conflicts over parental authority. Such dynamics are of course not exclusive to reconstituted families, but can apply to all family forms, including the nuclear family or extended families.

My own experiences of parenting a child who came to us out of the New Zealand foster system showed me that enacting shared motherhood within New Zealand society is a complex endeavor. Adoption is rare in New Zealand, and almost non-existent in relation to the forced removal of children from their biological parents by the state. Adoption is more closely tied to an ownership model, for it cuts the legal links between a child and their birth parents and asserts them in clear, almost unbreakable terms with the adoptive parents. By contrast, fostering maintains a legal recognition of biological family, but utilizes the logic of care to determine the custodianship of the child by others (foster families, the state).

In New Zealand, when the state decides a child can never safely return to the care of their biological parents, or when biological parents willingly give

up their rights and responsibilities to provide ongoing parental care for their child, foster parents may apply for the permanent 'guardianship' of a child in their care. This means that, while the child stays in the custody of a foster family until adulthood, both biological parents and foster parents are legally recognized guardians, and thus must often make joint decisions about a child's life (such as health, education, travel, place of residence, and religion). Biological parents also sometimes pick their birth children's foster family from a selection of profiles, and usually have court-ordered rights to visit their children.

This has been my experience with our son, who, having been voluntarily placed up for permanent fostering by his birth-mother, came to live with us when he was one day old. In the abstract, I had imagined a shared motherhood model between myself and his birth-mother, in which my son would be blessed by having two mothers who cared for him in different ways. But in reality the differences in how each of us assumed our roles and came to be recognized as mothers within a particular social and legal context meant I came to embody a motherhood role more closely aligned to the singular, primary mother figure of the nuclear family.

For the three years before the guardianship and permanency was awarded – a timeframe which is common – I was legally recognized as a 'non kin carer'. This meant I had few legal rights and little say when engaging with the state in determining the nature of our son's ongoing care arrangements, what I saw as best for him, or the intensive time I gave to facilitate biweekly visits with his birth-mother that the social worker had determined was necessary. A lack of legal recognition of me as a mother contrasted with the day-to-day work of mothering a baby, adjusting to life in which another's needs became my primary focus, forming a strong attachment with my infant son, and thinking of him as 'my responsibility'. Recognizing the validity of my mother-through-care role was crucial in giving me the confidence to stand up to unrealistic demands from the state, in allowing me to advocate for my son's needs as the key spokesperson for those needs, and in continuing to have the courage and belief that we could make it through when the labyrinthine state processes wore us down.

Sharing guardianship is premised upon the idea that both parents can collaborate harmoniously in the care of the child, with a shared vision of the care needs of that child. Yet, the specific reasons that lead the state to permanently remove children from their biological parents in New Zealand usually need to be considered severe and concrete (rather than precautionary), and the Family Court is generally wary of permanency, requiring high thresholds of proof regarding the ongoing threat to the safety of the child. These realities, accusations, and concerns often make it difficult for such sharing relations to be harmonious. Biological parents can feel deeply angry and resentful about having their children removed, and thus can work against foster families who they see as threatening their ties to their children. Even if a birth-parent gives up their child voluntarily into the permanent foster system, conflicts can arise. Foster parents can perceive birth-parents' behaviors as potentially damaging and dangerous for their foster children due to the difficult situations that birth-parents face (such as addiction, experiences of abuse, or mental health issues). This often makes foster parents intensely protective, and can make maintaining healthy boundaries and intimacies with biological parents hard to sustain. The sense of pressure around these issues is particularly acute in countries like New Zealand, where foster families are often small, nuclear units that receive limited amounts of care support from others or

the state. The intensive parenting required to sustain a foster family, and the desire to protect the nuclear family ideal, often make parents in these households unreceptive to relations that threaten to deplete their already stretched resources of time, energy, and emotional labour.

Moreover, the parental roles are not evenly shared, which can cause jealousy and resentment. To begin with, the foster parents have few legal rights but huge responsibilities as they seek to build secure homes for new family members, while birth parents can make numerous demands on foster families through state-sponsored legal representation that classifies them as the legal 'parents'. But over time this dynamic can flip, with foster families gradually gaining legal recognition and protections, while birth families witness (and often grieve over) the strengthening bonds that their children develop within permanent foster homes as babies grow up and develop primary attachments to their new families.

Over time, becoming a permanent foster mother – or just 'mother', as I came to see myself and others came to see and call me – required me to care for my son by developing an, at times, possessive and fiercely protective primary mother role, which also empowered me to make decisions about our shared life and my own wellbeing. Asserting possession of our son in this way was thus also about asserting self-possession in the face of relations and legal arrangements that I felt were erasing me from view. Ownership here is not akin to the Lockean liberal and individualist idea of being able to do what one wishes to a thing with impunity. Rather, as Rosalind Petchesky (1995) argues, it involved one's right to 'keep others out' at a safe distance, and to stop others from depleting one's ability to care for and protect dependents and the self simultaneously.

Discussions with social workers and other foster parents revealed that, over time, these arrangements between foster parents and biological parents often end up not functioning because the ideological premise upon which the system is based – the active engagement of the birth-mother/parents, and the open, welcoming engagement of the foster parents – is undermined by the reality of how these relationships unfold. As a social worker said to me, 'Most of the time, the birth-parents fade out, they can't continue to keep that sort of relationship up'. Another social worker told me that, for birth-mothers, it can be deeply painful to stay in touch with a child who, willingly or unwillingly, they have had to give up. Contact with the child becomes a too-difficult reminder of loss or a sense of failure. Moreover, mainstream society offers few positive cultural scripts for how a mother who has birthed a child can form an ongoing relationship that is not intensive, dutiful and sacrificial, and which is not imbued with social shame and stigma for her non-primary role. In the end, the permanent fostering system functions by failing to function as it is ideologically designed to do, and by falling back into the nuclear family model in which foster parents come to closely resemble adoptive parents in everything but name. The model of shared motherhood tends to fail, as the different parties are set up in an adversarial, yet dependent, arrangement that requires them to draw up limits, assert some ties over others, and live with the consequences of how daily care and its absence build certain relationship and reduces others.

Yet this picture is not always simply one of boundary maintenance, but of care in multiple directions. Despite the challenges, I have sought to ensure the continuation of birth ties, and thus the long-term wellbeing of my son, in a culture

that perceives the substance of blood as a constitutive element of personhood, identity, and kinship. In recognizing this, I have had to take on primary responsibility for maintaining the relationship between my son and his birth-mother – organizing regular visits, encouraging them to speak on the phone, sharing photos, even supporting her with the emotional labour of birth-mothering by, for example, helping her to buy his birthday presents. A necessary enactment of both a sense of ownership and sharing can thus coexist in a complex tension, and lies at the heart of what Petchesky refers to as a 'maternal, caretaking concept of ownership' (1995: 397). This bears resemblance to Annette Weiner's idea of inalienable possessions, in which birth and foster mothers must work out ways to collaboratively or adversarially 'keep-while-giving' (1992).

The lesson of my story is not that more radical and shared approaches to parenting and care are unimaginable or impossible in our society. It does however offer a warning about how much responsibility we can ask particular individuals to bear for commoning projects within a wider societal setting that remains structurally untransformed. In other words, unless we re-envisage how we practice kinship, family and personhood more broadly, we will only be able to offer limited social, material, legal or ideological support to those we ask to create families in novel ways. The parallels to academia are clear here. Unless we re-imagine the academy more broadly, from the bottom up and the top down, we risk asking people to enact new forms of sharing and commoning at a personal cost, in a space that is designed to channel and reward them otherwise, and which may not recognize their labour or contributions. Going against the grain can sometimes be heroic and transformative. But it can also feel exhausting and futile.

As I wrote this piece, sharing care for a sick toddler with my husband, and juggling it with my commitments to writing, my son Christian has been playing two of his favorite games with me. He's practicing his independence, like all New Zealand children must, and goes through phases of responding to my requests with a defiant smile, saying, 'No, no, no, Christian says no way!' Children teach you that maternal possessiveness and its authority regularly reaches its limits, as children in our society have multiple ways of charting their own path in contradistinction to the care and its obligations that they receive. This draws to mind Marilyn Strathern's point regarding the links between ownership and possession, or how, 'simply owning what you have does not preclude its alienability' (1988: 162). Christian makes me reflect that all forms of ownership, be they formal or informal, conventional or experimental, have unintended ends, boundaries that are breached, and trajectories that we cannot completely control.

My son is also learning possessive pronouns, and possessiveness more generally. He's taken to grabbing me round the neck and shouting, 'You are MINE, Mummy is *just* mine.' He reminds me how the relational dynamics of possession and ownership can cut both ways. Indeed, such an insight bears reflecting on within a scholarly domain, in thinking about how others come to feel that they have strong claims on us, our skills, time and knowledge, be they our students, interlocutors, collaborators, allies, a community, or our academic friends. And this too has its necessary limits. The demands and expectations others have on us to share our labour, knowledge and spaces is the thorny balance to which Karena now turns.

Karena: Experiences of sharing Māori knowledge in an academic environment.

The concept of sharing undoubtedly underpins an academic environment, and a number of key tensions arise in this complex arrangement of the commoning of both knowledge and space in a university community. One of the assets of a university is its significant platform to increase the visibility of diverse indigenous and minority perspectives which are under-represented in mainstream society. In Mason Durie's discussion of indigenous participation in tertiary education in New Zealand, he stated 'universities have the potential to demonstrate social cohesion, and also to prepare graduates for leadership roles in promoting a society that can model inclusiveness without demanding assimilation' (2009). However, reflecting on some Māori academic experiences of sharing in the university environment raises questions about some of the inequalities and invisibilities in these types of sharing arrangements.

One of the courses I teach at Victoria University of Wellington is centered thematically on the Māori language craft of *karanga* and *whaikōrero,* formal oratorical roles on the marae.[1] The lectures for this course are booked in the meeting house of the university marae, sensible both for the content and lecturer of the course; with the relationship between the marae and many Māori academics described by Adds et al. is 'akin to the chemistry laboratory for chemists, the gymnasium for physical educators, or the art studio for artists' (2011: 545). However, the marae is more than solely a laboratory or teaching, learning, and research space – the overlapping institutional and cultural demands of this inherently communal and multi-purpose space can bring about situations where determining how it may be fairly shared is not straightforward.

Consider, for example, a situation where another department might request the use of the marae's meeting house for a one-off visit for one of their courses during lecture times booked for this Māori oratory course. This situation may well be particular to the marae, as it is difficult to imagine another course coordinator being approached to move their lecture from its usual venue because another course would like to visit that lecture theatre during that same time-slot.

Now, in the interest of upholding the mana of the marae by being hospitable to guests, Māori etiquette may suggest it would be appropriate to find another venue for the Māori language lecture. Doing so could also, arguably, further a broader social aim of increasing visibility and understanding of Māori culture and community through enabling a cultural experience for those who may have had little exposure to things Māori in wider society. However, both of these potential benefits are predicated on a definite and immediate cost which, in this situation at least, would be borne solely by the Māori language students, who would be inconvenienced by being dislocated from their most obvious and pedagogically appropriate learning environment in order to free the space for others. Whether this also implies that the needs of these Māori language students are less important than those of others merits consideration. Temporary imbalances in the distribution of benefits within a sharing relationship are not uncommon, but in order for a sharing arrangement to be equitable, and not exploitative of one party, it needs a foundation of reciprocity, an expectation of eventual quid pro quo. How is this reconciled in sharing situations where the

benefits for one party are immediate and obvious, but the benefits for the other are less so?

These tensions extend beyond the sharing of a physical space and into sharing of knowledge and ideas. At Victoria University of Wellington, enriching course content through the inclusion of diverse perspectives is becoming standard practice across the institution, reflecting the university's aim to recognize the Treaty of Waitangi, cultivate social inclusion, and support cultural wellbeing (Victoria University of Wellington 2014). To achieve this, Māori academics throughout the university are regularly relied upon to provide a range of support outside of our own Schools – including giving guest lectures, devising course content, translating course titles and student submissions, and recommending teaching resources. Individually, these requests are small, and are often so regarded by both those asking and those giving. Cumulatively however, they can add significantly to overall workload, especially given that opportunities to reciprocate are rarely obvious.

Māori academics recognize this service as mutually beneficial to Māori and the wider university community, contributing an important, if not immediate, social good for the various communities we serve, both within and beyond the university (Kidman and Chu 2015). But while this is mutually beneficial, the workload is rarely mutually borne. In these settings, it appears that *the inviting* of Māori academics to do this work is considered an act of generosity, this invitation thus constituting one half of a reciprocal arrangement; the reciprocation of my labour as a Māori academic is being given the opportunity to provide it.

As noted above, a temporary imbalance of effort in a sharing arrangement is common, but when an imbalance in contributions becomes normalized and/or accepted, it renders the arrangement exploitative and, therefore, ultimately both unethical and unsustainable. Given that this academic input is critical in enriching the academic environment and ensuring the achievement of the shared aims of the wider university, the challenge is for the wider university community to devise creative solutions to address the imbalance in workload in this sharing arrangement.

A first challenging step is to identify opportunities for genuine reciprocity. This can be particularly challenging when, given that only one party has expertise in this area, the contributions can rarely be like for like. In order to address this labour imbalance, potential solutions could include compensation through resources to support regular teaching commitments and research opportunities. It may also involve weighting these contributions within an academic's workload model, and recognizing these contributions in any evaluations of performance. It might also include consideration of this unique service to the university shared by Māori faculty members when considering the staffing numbers of those academic cohorts relied upon to provide this service. Other assistance could be created through greater opportunities for non-Māori staff to actively engage in developing their own knowledge of diverse perspectives rather than assuming that Māori themes and content should exclusively be discussed by Māori academics.

An underlying principle of the concept of the commons is the notion of mutual benefit (Casarino and Negri 2008, Gibson-Graham 2006). The examples I have discussed show that the benefits of the commons can be recognized as genuinely mutual, but not equitably shared. This often results in uneven demands on contributors to the sharing arrangement and, consequently, imbalanced

contributions to advancing these shared societal aims (see also Berlant 2016). Sharing, at face value, can seem simple and self-evident. But efforts to build a genuinely co-constructed commons, and especially one intended to rectify social inequities and invisibilities, must first attend to some of the complexities hidden within the sharing arrangement.

Final thoughts

Our case studies show the often hidden and under-acknowledged costs of the labour of sharing that can undermine the autonomy, authority and agency of particular parties. Ownership and practices of sharing offer both challenges and opportunities for commoning relationships within academia. In bolstering or creating shared common spaces we need to be attentive to the ways in which care labour can inform ideas of ownership and how these might be entangled with notions of self-possession. Equally we should consider how sharing and commoning might, in an imbalanced labour arrangement, default to an exploitative relationship.

Our two case studies show the complexities of sharing, both when less sharing is desired and also when more is required. In some circumstances, we need to listen carefully when colleagues, collaborators and research partners assert a desire to own, control, represent and fight for their communities, spaces, and ideas, rather than simply seeing these as acts of exclusion when we are left out. In other circumstances, what is required is a deeper commitment to ensuring that sharing arrangements contain within them the right flows and forms of labour and reciprocity for each party involved. We need to remember that an invitation to share and be part of a conversation, no matter how important, is not the same as negotiating the daily work of sharing a task or project and being a true partner within collective spaces. We also must be mindful of what types of labour, sacrifice and care work are performed to build and maintain any collaborations and common spaces, by academics or by those with whom we work. What counts or does not count, is visible or invisible, in the care of any commons will determine who is excluded, who is included, who benefits, and who does not from these relationships.

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Notes

1. For further reading on this cultural space see Higgins and Moorfield (2004).

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COMMONING ETHNOGRAPHY

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Pedagogical Experiments in an Anthropology for Liberation

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ABSTRACT | This piece began as a series of conversations with colleagues about the joys and frustrations I experienced in my endeavours to practice commoning in a new course, 'Anthropology for Liberation.' In it, I reflect on my efforts to place pedagogical practices of commoning and decolonising anthropology – critically examining and making space for different ways of learning, knowing, and being – at the centre of our classroom agenda. I go on to discuss how working to untangle the knot of colonialism with my students has been simultaneously the most challenging and the most rewarding aspect of teaching this course. I also examine some of the tensions involved in creating an educational common that encourages dialogue and critique yet sits within a university system built on inherently unequal power relations between lecturer and student. Finally, I reflect on some of the reasons why I was not entirely successful in creating an anthropological community that commons.

Keywords: educational commoning; decolonising anthropology; pedagogy; university

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Introduction

This year I designed and taught a new undergraduate course entitled 'Anthropology for Liberation' in the Cultural Anthropology Programme at Victoria University of Wellington. Inspired by the seminal work of Faye Harrison (2010), Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012), and Paulo Freire (1993), and by recent discussions of educational commoning (De Lissovoy 2017, Lotz-Sisitka 2017, Means, Ford and Slater 2017), the course was designed to interrogate what an anthropology for liberation might look like in theory and practice. Over 12 weeks, we discussed how such an anthropology has the twin goals of developing both critical knowledge and praxis for human emancipation from various forms of oppression. This is a carefully hopeful kind of anthropology (see Elinoff, this volume): one that is always grounded in the present as a particular moment in time; simultaneously oriented towards historical processes shaping current inequalities as well as future possibilities for transformation; and cognisant of the limits of anthropological praxis. Throughout the course, I emphasised the political role anthropologists can play by engaging in contemporary debates about oppression and inequality, and the responsibility we have to produce critical knowledge that leads to ethical engagements. In this short piece I discuss my two pedagogical aims, which involved framing the course as an educational common, and asking students to practice commoning as activity through a place-based assignment. I also reflect on what was, for me, simultaneously both the most challenging and most rewarding aspect of teaching toward an anthropology for liberation: working with my students to untangle the knot of colonialism.

Creating an educational common

My first pedagogical aim was to create an educational common, a space for me and my students to think critically about anthropology as a discipline and consider what a decolonised anthropology might look like. Following Freire (1993) and Teaiwa (2005, 2017), I view the classroom as a space where learning takes place collectively and draws on the knowledge and experiences that everyone brings to it. My teaching philosophy is informed by Freire's (1993) dialogic method and Teaiwa's 'critical empowerment rationale,' which requires students 'to be able to critically evaluate all forms and sources of power, including indigenous ones, and indeed, their own and even mine' (2017: 269). In our first class, I explained that, as a new course, this would be a learning journey for all of us. I wanted to encourage students to invest in and share ownership of the course, so invited them to collaborate with me in deciding what kinds of topics we would discuss in lectures. I also drew their attention to the asymmetrical power relations and institutional constraints that framed our commoning efforts. For example, I was responsible for setting the parameters of the course and my tutors and I would assess how well students performed in assignments I designed. In contrast, I had no say about the size or location of the room we met in twice a week. I pointed out that the 180-seat tiered lecture theatre, with its narrow rows of fixed desks and folding seats facing a lectern and two large screens at the front of the room, was not designed for the kind of conversations I wanted us to have.

In the first half of the course, we discussed the history of anthropology and its relationship with colonialism, the politics of canon setting, and what it means to take a decolonising approach to anthropology (which Harrison 2010 argues is

the starting point for an anthropology for liberation). We foregrounded theories, methodologies, and perspectives from Oceania and read work by indigenous anthropologists alongside scholars from/of/in Aotearoa.[1] We discussed white privilege and settler colonialism, undertaking classroom activities designed to recognise how these processes operate not only in our own individual lives, but more importantly as historical, systemic structures that contribute to inequality and oppression within contemporary New Zealand society. This approach aligns with Noah De Lissovoy's framework for a decolonial pedagogy of the common, which involves examining colonisation, decentring whiteness, foregrounding indigenous epistemologies, and fostering solidarity across difference (2017: 49-51). In the second half of the course, I developed lectures that responded to student interests and concerns. We discussed historical trauma, intersectionality, gender and sexuality, and power, with a guest lecture from two members of the class on intersectional decolonisation as it related to takatāpui and those who identify as 'MVPPRTWTFAFFFF+' (Cowley 2017).[2] We also talked about the effects of neoliberalism on New Zealand universities – including how our university views students as economic units – and how neoliberalism shapes our daily engagements with other institutional structures. Throughout, I reiterated the central idea of this course: that an anthropology for liberation goes beyond studying human variation and embraces the challenge of actively struggling for transformation (Harrison 2010).

As the course progressed, I became keenly aware of the tensions involved in educational commoning. Early in the trimester, I sought feedback from the student representatives and, in a meeting after class, they suggested (among other things) that it was problematic to have a white lecturer teaching this course, and that there should instead be more indigenous people talking about indigenous issues. I understood their concerns and, in fact, had sought advice from colleagues who work in a similar intellectual space when I developed the course. After the meeting I had several conversations with friends and colleagues, both in person and online,[3] about how I could respond to this challenge in a way that respected both the sense of critical empowerment my students were developing, and the knowledge and experience I brought to the classroom. In class, we discussed the politics of representation, raising questions about who can speak for/with/about whom, and how our positionalities and standpoints affect our relationships to people, places, and ideas. In future, I plan to co-teach this course with a colleague who also critically engages with these issues, ideally from an indigenous perspective. However, I want to move toward a pedagogical space where all people can talk critically, reflexively, and respectfully about decolonisation and indigenous issues – which are not necessarily the same thing – rather than make my indigenous colleagues responsible for undertaking this labour (see also Kelly and Trundle, this volume) in a neoliberal, white-dominated university.[4] I had hoped to model how I use my white privilege to question white privilege in a settler-colonial nation, and show why I feel it is important for Pākehā anthropologists to share the responsibility of the slow work involved in decolonising anthropology. I was not entirely successful in doing so, as I discuss later.

Encouraging an anthropological community that commons

My second pedagogical aim was to encourage students to develop a sense of themselves as a community of anthropologists who could put the issues we discussed into practice. To that end, I designed an assignment called 'An Indigenous View of Wellington', which asked them to conduct a piece of anthropological research from a decolonising perspective that prioritised Māori values, interests, and identities. I encouraged students to acknowledge the mana whenua iwi of Te Whanganui-a-Tara (the indigenous authority of those whose land we are on), and oriented them towards an indigenous understanding of this place in an effort to have them to practice 'commoning as activity' (Lotz-Sisitka 2017: 65). Students had three options for this assignment: working with existing literature and secondary resources (e.g., films, archives, maps, pūrākau [myths, legends, stories], whakataukī [proverbs], artwork); undertaking a small ethnographic fieldwork project; or designing a decolonised urban space for the Imagining Decolonised Cities Urban Design Competition (http://www.idcities.co.nz/index.php).[5] I knew this would be a challenging assignment. However, I sought to foster a feeling of solidarity among the students who, while coming to the classroom with different backgrounds and experiences, would work towards the common goal of developing a way of doing anthropology that would respect and advance Māori concerns without appropriating them.

The way that some students responded to the Indigenous View of Wellington assignment points to the difficulties involved in creating a 'community that commons' (Gibson-Graham, Cameron, and Healy 2016: 202). The majority of students embraced the challenge of doing anthropology in a way that would respect Māori values while also critically reflecting on what they could offer to such a project, based on their positionalties.[6] I was pleased to see them take inspiration from the assigned readings and think through dilemmas of insider/outsider research, how to build meaningful relationships within the constraints of the assignment, and how to do research in a way that works towards liberation guided by local interests and concerns. Others, however, struggled with the assignment. Some refused to adopt a decolonising perspective, arguing that it was not appropriate for them as settler-colonisers still benefitting from processes of colonisation. Others posited that only indigenous peoples could engage in decolonisation efforts, and for Pākehā to do so was a form of cultural appropriation. These stances opposed ideas I had put forward in class, including Harrison's statement that 'anthropologists with *multiple* consciousnesses and vision have a strategic role to play in the struggle for a decolonized science of humankind' (2010: 90, emphasis in original). They also place the burden of decolonising work on indigenous people rather than viewing it as labour for all.

Some students declined to engage with Māori concerns altogether, saying that as Pākehā they could never possibly know or understand a Māori (or indigenous) view of anything. This line of argument, of course, restricts researchers to working with people like themselves and rests on assumptions about shared interests and experiences that have a long history of anthropological critique (e.g., Caulfield 1979, Harrison 2010). I agree that indigenous anthropologists do have different political and intellectual concerns, and different commitments and expectations to uphold, in conducting research with their own

communities. However, numerous scholars – including those whose work we read in this course – have discussed the complexities involved in negotiating insider-native-anthropological positionalities, which include unsettling assumptions that indigeneity automatically grants unfettered access to indigenous knowledge (Bryers-Brown 2015, Muru-Lanning 2016b, Narayan 1998, Simpson 2007, Teaiwa 2005, Tengan 2005). In recounting her journey as a Māori anthropologist conducting kaupapa Māori research with the people of Awataha Marae on Auckland's North Shore, Lily George (forthcoming) discusses how colonisation resulted in disconnecting many Māori – including herself – from Māori knowledge. Addressing questions put to her by other Māori about her ability to conduct kaupapa Māori research, she argues that:

> [...] while there are aspects of Māori culture that those such as myself cannot understand because we are not fully conversant in te reo Māori, being entrenched in the language and culture does not necessarily guarantee the 'necessary scholarship,' nor that the person will have the heart and mind essential to ensuring effective research with Māori individuals, whānau and other groups. There is such a diversity of Māori experience today that reducing kaupapa Māori research as applicable only to those who are fully culturally fluent, excludes others who have much to offer to our people in a variety of ways (forthcoming: 2).

Overall, the students' arguments raised a number of potentially paralysing themes: that you cannot critique colonialism in its presence; that 'Pākekā' is a reified, homogenous, fixed identity that cannot change; that whiteness trumps the ability to understand and work across difference. After more anguished hallway conversations with my colleagues, I decided to use these themes as a way of generating what I hoped would be a productive discussion with my students about possibilities for a transformative anthropology for liberation that cares for others and is affected by our relationship to place. In our final class together, I distributed the first draft of this piece and invited students to read and respond to it. Three Pākehā students emailed me written responses, which are reproduced with permission at the end of this piece. We also discussed the following questions:

a) Can an anthropology for liberation make a difference in the world? If so, what is it about anthropology that allows us to do this kind of transformative work? And who is transformed?
b) How can we move beyond our inherited positionalities and engage in acts of solidarity with others working for social transformation?

Our discussion encompassed a number of issues, including Pākekā paralysis (Fabish 2014, Tolich 2002) and how difficult it can be to decentre whiteness, what solidarity entails, why it is problematic to assume that being indigenous guarantees the knowledge and skills necessary to teach an anthropology for liberation, and why there are so few Māori and Pasifika faculty members at our university. We also talked about what this course might look like in the future. Those present provided insightful and constructive critique about readings, tutorials, lectures (content, style, and venue), and the central tenets of an anthropology for liberation. Their final projects were due after our last class

together and it was gratifying to see students thoughtfully engaging with the themes we had discussed.

Reflections

I close with some reflections on issues this piece raises about commoning as pedagogy. The first is that framing the course as an educational common was a successful strategy for encouraging critical consciousness and collective learning beyond the classroom. The conversations generated during lectures and tutorials,[7] over email, in assignments, and after classes when they couldn't be contained within the allocated 50 minutes, suggest that students invested in the course and would like to see it, and the issues we discussed, become permanent additions to the curriculum.[8] However, the sense of ownership they developed in relation to the course was also accompanied by some tensions that we did not necessarily resolve. While the dialogic form can create space for some students to discuss and contest ideas – including mine – others (especially Pasifika students) prefer to listen and to defer to my expertise rather than challenge it. This could be a reason why no Māori or Pasifika students took up my invitation to respond to this piece. On more than one occasion my student representatives raised this as an issue and asked me to create an environment where Māori and Pasifika students spoke before Pākehā, rightly pointing out that we had not been successful at decentring whiteness within the classroom (which is perhaps not surprising in a class where the majority of students identify as white, and had not necessarily critiqued whiteness or settler colonialism before). I agree that I could have done more in this regard. In future, I will draw on April Henderson's 'communities of critique' approach to critical pedagogy (2017), which involves intensive group work and asks students to take responsibility for leading class discussions.

I was less successful, I think, in fostering an anthropological community that commons. The commoning activity I designed involved learning from and being affected by place, and using anthropology as a transformative tool. In hindsight, I underestimated how affected Pākehā students would be by their inherited positionalities as settler-colonisers, and had not anticipated the reluctance and/or discomfort some students expressed about being asked to prioritise Māori knowledge. In future I will dwell longer on the 'settler moves to innocence'[9] critiqued by Tuck and Yang so they do not become 'excuses, distractions, and diversions from decolonization' (2012: 10). In our journey toward an anthropology for liberation, we have thought critically about human emancipation from various forms of oppression and what it means to decolonise anthropology, but still have work to do in considering about how to put this into practice in solidarity with others. Nevertheless, I suggest the course did go some way towards unsettling and transforming our relationships to one another, to anthropology, to our university, and Te Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington) itself.

Student reflections

Second year Criminology student

This course gave me the ability to think critically about my place in the world – where I stand, where others stand – and helped me recognise that although I have white privilege it doesn't need to constrain me into inactivity and guilt. The idea that my voice is considered more important than others gave me the confidence to use that, to turn the conversation, and to push for a focus on the voices of those

who are so often silenced. I was able to use what I'd learnt to understand, not only racial inequality, but all forms of inequality that occur in our society, and the societies of others. I was able to look at discourse on social media and not just take everything at face value, but to think critically about what was happening, why it was happening, and how things could change. It inspired me to start conversations I never thought I could.

This course was challenging. A lot of the ideas that were introduced weren't easy to listen to, but that's what made them important. I felt it was good to challenge the norms, to give people different ways of thinking, different ways of seeing.

Third year Cultural Anthropology student

If this course has taught me anything, it's that an anthropology for liberation can change the world. Anthropology not only allows one to look out at the world, but forces one to look in and see how we are perceiving, understanding and acting in the world. I think anthropology provides useful tools, methodologies and concepts for all academia in pursuit of decolonising academia and educating students in a way that they can reflexively and consciously enact sustainable social transformation in post-colonial contexts. One of the biggest problems in the world is unequal power distribution, and one of the fundamental principles of an anthropology for liberation is questioning power distribution, so the role of anthropology can extend beyond academia to create social transformation.

Decolonisation cannot occur without an understanding of the local context – and how you fit into that context. Our various intersecting identities means everyone identifies differently with their surroundings and has different relationships to the fields they are engaging in. From my perspective as privileged White student, I cannot ever shed this identity and associated privileges and power, but I can utilize and adapt this identity to better cooperate with and assist decolonising projects. I hope to be in a position where I can fully understand the power and oppression associated with my identity, and instead of acknowledging to reinscribe this power, acknowledge to deconstruct it in solidarity with others in working for social transformation.

Second year Cultural Anthropology and Development Studies student

An anthropology for liberation sees Māori concerns as inherently Pākehā concerns, and vice versa. It calls us to engage. Engagement empowers unlike disengagement which feeds fear, perpetuating the cycle of Pākehā paralysis. Anthropology for liberation calls us outside of our anxieties. It is not that either Māori or Pākehā ought to ignore their emotions but they need to be prepared to embrace the discomfort that must be experienced if decolonisation is to take place. For myself, this involved asking the questions that terrified me and challenging my own barriers. As a Pākehā in te ao Māori it may be that I will tread heavily, I may not understand much beyond the mere surface of Māoridom, and I may still hold insecurities and some uncertainty about my positionality. But that is okay. It is by engaging and seeking to listen that I allow myself to be transformed which in turn enables others to transform themselves – both Māori and Pākehā. By listening we hear the stories of others, the voices of the past, our own inner voice, and the narratives that drive our society. We will discover that there is a myriad of narratives at work, some which are best to let go and others that ought to be

welcomed for the beautiful truths they share. Given the transformative, reflexive, reflective, holistic and forgiving nature of an anthropology for liberation, I contend that it is the only anthropology worth pursuing.

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I am grateful to Ocean Mercier and the late Teresia Teaiwa, with whom I discussed the initial ideas for this course. I am also grateful to Jess Carter, Ben Laksana, and Symon Palmer, who provided invaluable assistance and advice as they tutored the class and marked student work. Thanks to class representatives Abby Fisher, LukaAmber Bunnin, Ellen Taylor, and Mariah Hori Te Pa for their work in consulting with students and me over the trimester. I would like to thank Tom Ryan, Graeme Whimp, Amanda Thomas, Becky Kiddle, Bianca Elkington, Rachel Fabish, Tarapuhi Bryers-Brown, LukaAmber Bunnin, and Mariah Hori Te Pa for sharing their knowledge with the class as guest lecturers. Thanks to Te Herenga Waka Marae for hosting us in Te Tumu Herenga Waka for one of our lectures, and Rawinia Higgins, Meegan Hall, Marie Cocker for helping make this happen. I am also grateful to Eli Elinoff, Nayantara Sheoran Appleton, Jennifer de Saxe, Maria Bargh, Catherine Trundle, Dylan Taylor, Grant Otsuki, Caroline Bennett, Brigitte Bönisch-Brednich, Jeff Sissons, and the Decolonising Alliance for their guidance and support. Special thanks go to Graeme Whimp for his unflagging encouragement, to Aaron Lloydd for always listening, and to the students who embraced the challenge of ANTH215 with me this year.

Notes

1. Our reading list included Asad (1973), Fabish (2014), Harrison (2008), Ka‘ili (2012); Loperena (2016), Malinowski (1961 (1922)), Mead (1961 (1928)), Mikaere (2011), Muru-Lanning (2016a), Simpson (2007), Sissons (2005), Smith (2012), Teaiwa (1995 and 2014) and Tengan (2005).

2. Cowley (2017) argues for an acronym that embraces a variety of Oceanic identities, including Mahu (Hawai‘i), Vakasalewalewa (Fiji), Pinapinaaine (Tuvalu and Kiribati), Palopa (Papua New Guinea), Rae Rae (Tahiti), Takatāpui (Aotearoa), Whakawahine (Aotearoa), Tangata Ira Tane (Aotearoa), Fiafifine (Niue), ‘Akava’ine (Rarotonga), Fakaleiti (Tonga; also known as leiti), Fa’afafine (Samoa; also known as fafa(s)), Fa’atama (Samoa; (also known as tomboys or fa’afatama), and Fa’aafa (Samoa).

3. My online conversations were with members of the Decolonizing Alliance (DA). The DA is a collective of intellectual activists that emerged from the 10th International Critical Management Studies Conference, held in Liverpool in July 2017. “This group aims to offer support, solidarity, develop and spread knowledge, resources and tools to decolonize management starting with the knowledge we produce and how we behave and conduct ourselves in our work with our students and colleagues, and communities everywhere, every day” (Contu 2017: 7). I joined the DA in August 2017.

4. According to Victoria University of Wellington's 2016 Annual Report (2017), 4.2% of academic staff are Māori, and 1.8% of academic staff are Pasifika. In this class of 112 students, 74.1% identified as European, 13.4% as Māori, and 18.8% as Pasifika (note that students can choose more than one ethnicity).

5. Imagining Decolonised Cities (IDC) is a research collaboration between Ngāti Toa and Victoria University of Wellington, funded by the New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO. Although the official competition ended earlier in 2017, I spoke with members of the IDC research team about opening it up for my students. I thought this would be an ideal opportunity for students to undertake anthropology for liberation-style research and contribute to research that Ngāti Toa Rangatira want. They agreed, and Rebecca Kiddle, Amanda Thomas, and Bianca Elkington gave a guest lecture to the class about the project and some of their preliminary findings. Student research for this assignment was approved by the VUW Human Ethics Committee, approval number 25009.

6. As Tuck and Yang point out, 'Settlers are diverse, not just of white European descent, and include people of color, even from other colonial contexts' (2012: 7). Students often provided thoughtful reflections about their positionalities; for example, Māori students from other parts of Aotearoa acknowledged their relationship to the mana whenua iwi of Te Whanganui-a-Tara.

7. I want to acknowledge the labour my tutors – Jess Carter, Ben Laksana, Symon Palmer – undertook in helping students work through some contentious issues in tutorials. I also want to thank the class representatives for facilitating a private class Facebook page, where I understand students grappled with many of the issues raised in lectures. In addition, I am aware that many students turned to others for help, including Te Pūtahi Atawhai (a culturally safe space for VUW's Māori and Pasifika students to study and seek advice), VUW Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Māori and Pasifika 2nd-year Transition Liaisons Alana O'Brien and Fabiefara Filo, VUW's Student Learning, and their own friends and families.

8. The course is currently a Special Topic and will not be taught again until 2019.

9. Settler moves to innocence are those strategies or positionings that attempt to relieve the settler of feelings of guilt or responsibility without giving up land or power or privilege, without having to change much at all' (Tuck and Yang 2012: 10). Tuck and Yang critique five settler moves to innocence: settler nativism, settler adoption fantasies, using conscientization as a metaphor for decolonisation, constructing indigenous populations as '"at risk" peoples and asterisk peoples' (2012: 22), and re-occupation of the commons.

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COMMONING ETHNOGRAPHY

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Stirring up Silence

What does decolonising anthropology in Aotearoa New Zealand really mean?

Lily George
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ABSTRACT | In 1999, Linda Tuhiwai Smith wrote that 'The word … 'research' is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world's vocabulary. When mentioned in many indigenous contexts, it stirs up silence, it conjures up bad memories, it raises a smile that is knowing and distrustful.' (1). Despite the efforts of many, anthropology in Aotearoa/New Zealand has a history of silence, possibly based on the memories of practitioners who, from the 1980s, lived through times of deep mistrust of anthropologists by Māori. As a student, then practitioner, of anthropology, I received many challenges to my status as an anthropologist *and* an indigenous academic from both indigenous and non-indigenous academics. Perhaps in order for anthropology to continue to have meaning for Māori and other indigenous peoples in Aotearoa, we need to thoroughly stir up that silence to see what lies beneath in order to fully engage in a truly meaningful relationship.[1]

Keywords: indigenous anthropology; decolonisation; historical trauma; indigenous research; kaupapa Māori

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I was teaching a research methods paper recently, and as part of the lecture I played a presentation that Linda Tuhiwai Smith made in New York in 2015.[2] In this she told the story of being interviewed by a Pākehā colleague following the publication of *Decolonising Methodologies* in 1999. This colleague said to her during the interview that she must have been a very angry person to write the book. But for her it wasn't written in anger but with passion and a desire to re-engage research so that it would have meaning for Māori and other indigenous peoples.

And that is my desire here – not to speak in anger, but with passion and a desire to re-engage the relationship between Māori and anthropology in Aotearoa. I've been involved with anthropology in Aotearoa/New Zealand for over 21 years; I am an indigenous anthropologist, I will always be one, and so my desire is also a respectful one.

But because I am a Māori woman, who I am as a cultural being has a fundamental influence on how I perceive the world and analyse it. As an indigenous anthropologist, my intellectual tūrangawaewae draws from two puna (wells) – that of kaupapa Māori, and anthropology. Claiming to be an indigenous anthropologist, however, assumes a certain history of experience, usually that of the negative effects of colonisation on indigenous groups. It is a political as well as a cultural and historical positioning. But it is also about acknowledging the strengths and beauties of our histories, of our ancestors, in order to build, and create, and innovate.

Decolonisation, I believe, is about acknowledging that history, of being willing to deal with it – with the consequences, with the impacts, with the emotions. It is about being able to look beyond the consequences and the impacts also, to see the strength and the beauty. As Dennis Wendt and Joseph Gone (2012) stated, 'The central goal of a decolonizing methodology is to uncover detrimental effects of European American colonialism and to assist historically colonized groups with preserving and reclaiming their distinctive cultural legacies, strengths, and institutions' (164).

If we look at historical trauma, which begins from a past traumatic event or events affecting a group of people, colonisation is the most obvious force contributing to the dispossession and denigration of indigenous peoples, and umbrellas a multiplicity of traumatic events. These events can become embedded in the collective, social memories of the population, and accumulate over generations in the intergenerational transmission of trauma (Brave Heart 2005). But what those such as Choctaw scholar, Karina Walters, say about historical trauma, is the point of it is not to dwell on the 'drama of the trauma'[3] of that history; it is about acknowledging the trauma, dealing with it, healing from it, and transcending that traumatic history to move forward in a much more positive way (Brave Heart 2005). This then can be seen as one kind of decolonisation process.

To go back to Linda Tuhiwai Smith's presentation: she showed a photo she took at the pōwhiri for Jacques Derrida at Waipapa Marae in Auckland. The photo shows Derrida and others waiting in the waharoa to be welcomed onto the marae. In front of Linda are a group of Māori men in traditional dress waiting to perform the challenge. Linda said that what was important about this picture wasn't Derrida, but the space that lay between his group and the group

representing Auckland University. A pōwhiri is about moving people through space, through a series of protocols that acknowledge differences, then join people together. That space, then, is a most dynamic space, where relationships are assessed and negotiated. It can be a space of creation, of innovation, as well as connection.

In the 1970s and 80s, *Te Mauri Pakeaka* were a series of art programmes run in colleges primarily in the upper North Island, developed by Māori artists such as Arnold Manaaki Wilson. The desire was for the development of a 'third space'[4] where mainstream culture could meet with Māori culture in a place of safety, and where assessment and reassessment of relationships was enabled (i.e. Pakeaka) (Greenwood and Wilson 2006). The activities of this third space were 'dialogues, confrontations, accommodations, risk-taking and unplanned discoveries…[that] inescapably …engages with the development of something new'. Mauri refers to the life force inherent in that period of relationship reassessment that is 'the living, irreducible energy that exists in that instant: the promise of growth' (Greenwood and Wilson 2006: 12).

So what is *our* space between? Where is *our* space for negotiation and creation and innovation?

In 2010, I was privileged to be a keynote speaker at the anthropology conference in Rotorua, along with Dame Joan Metge and Jeff Sissons, representing three 'generations' of the anthropological whakapapa in Aotearoa New Zealand. In my presentation I raised the issue of the fraught relationship between Māori and anthropology.[5] At that same conference I also presented as part of an indigenous panel where I raised issues relating to indigenous anthropology that came from my doctoral thesis.

In 2012 I presented in Wellington at the anthropology conference as part of an indigenous panel. I was very unprepared, I must admit. Nevertheless, in two minutes I delivered the heart of my kōrero, which was to ask for an open conversation on the relationship between Māori and anthropology, here, now. Apart from a brief comment from Steven Webster, there was silence.

In 2014 I convened an indigenous panel through the generosity of Ruth Fitzgerald and Otago University, which included indigenous panellists from Canada and Australia as well as Aotearoa. That was a great experience, given our diversity yet commonalities, and we revelled in sharing anthropology with other indigenous anthropologists – I admit we played hooky at one stage too. But at that conference, rather than being a keynote panel as was originally intended so that our message could be heard by all, we were streamed as one panel of several. This relegated us to just another interesting panel (for some), rather than acknowledging the special relationship that *should* exist between Māori and anthropology.

I haven't been to an anthropology conference in Aotearoa since, because the promise that was present at the 2014 conference hasn't been realised. I admit to falling into a kind of despair with anthropology in Aotearoa – I, too, became silent. Nevertheless, there is strong connection in our whakapapa between Māori and anthropology, but what is here at present? And what kind of future are we looking toward?

At the 2010 conference I asked:

> So where do we (as anthropologists in Aotearoa/New Zealand) go from here? How do we create an anthropology in which we are free to work together without uneasiness? How do we trust, and ensure that we no longer 'talk past each other'? (see Metge and Kinloch 1978) … I don't have the answers … but I'm willing to talk and listen and learn, and consciously create.

Here we are in 2017 and it seems we haven't moved forward any further in negotiating that space between us. If we look at the composition of staff in anthropology departments in New Zealand for example, there may be one Māori staff member. What's that about? Let's talk about that! Are we still seeing anthropology as primarily being about studying the 'other' in far off exotic places? Are those of us who study with our own people here at home seen as 'less than', and not 'real anthropologists'? Are indigenous anthropologists being seen as 'going too native'? In 2012, I wrote:

> As an indigenous anthropologist I cannot escape the obligations and responsibilities of fieldwork with my own people, i.e. Māori of Aotearoa (New Zealand). There is no 'other' in indigenous anthropology, although we are the traditional 'other' that many anthropologists from the early days of the discipline sought in new and exotic places. Just as 'Māori' can be translated as 'normal' or 'ordinary', for indigenous anthropologists (in this case a Māori anthropologist) those we research with are 'normal' and 'ordinary'. Yet in the process of our task, we find the extraordinary in the ordinary, and therefore 'being native' can be seen as a positive factor when working with one's own people. 'Going native' (i.e. being personally committed to the goals and aspirations of the community) is often a necessary part of the rules of engagement in the construction of an anthropology that is "a model for critical engagement *with* the world, rather than a distanced and magisterial explanation *of* the world" (Herzfeld, in Knauft 2006: 413, my emphasis) (60-61).

Eve Tuck is an Unangax scholar from Alaska who teaches in the field of critical race and indigenous studies at the University of Toronto. In 2012 she and Wayne Yang wrote:

> […] we want to be sure to clarify that decolonization is not a metaphor. When metaphor invades decolonization, it kills the very possibility of decolonization…. Decolonize (a verb) and decolonization (a noun) cannot easily be grafted onto pre-existing discourses/frameworks, even if they are critical, even if they are anti-racist, even if they are justice frameworks. The easy absorption, adoption, and transposing of decolonization is yet another form of settler appropriation. When we write about decolonization, we are not offering it as a metaphor; it is not an approximation of other experiences of oppression. Decolonization is not a swappable term for other things we want to do to improve our societies and schools. Decolonization doesn't have a synonym (3).

If we wish to decolonise or reclaim anthropology where we hold respect for the place between us as a space for negotiation of relationships, of creation and innovation, then we must have some difficult conversations – or at the least, converse! We must be honest about the history that lies between us. We must stir up the silence that, I believe, has pervaded anthropology in recent years. In order for anthropology to continue to have meaning for Māori and other indigenous peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand, we need to thoroughly stir up that silence to see what lies beneath in order to fully engage in a relationship of true meaning.

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Notes

1. This paper was first presented at the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Anthropology Programme at Victoria University of Wellington in 2017.

2. see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rIZXQC27tvg

3. Address to MAI Doctoral Scholars, Kawhia, November 2014. (See also Walters 2007, Walters and Simoni 2002).

4. The term 'third space' originated through a letter written by Arnold Wilson to one of the communities engaging with Te Mauri Pakeaka, prior to Homi Bhabha's use of the term as 'an evolving and dynamic space' (Greenwood and Wilson 2006: 11).

5. See Macrae and George (2013).

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COMMONING ETHNOGRAPHY

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A Sweaty Praxis

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ABSTRACT | This is a manifesto.[1] Considering the contemporary geopolitical sphere, it offers a provocation based on the concept of commoning ethnography, asking that we, as anthropologists, get sweaty (thank you Sara Ahmed (2014) for this push) – that we let go of our hold on ethnography – the concept and the practice - and by doing so open new imaginations and machinations of praxis and practice. Some of the statements are deliberately provocative. They aim for debate, perhaps dismissal; potentially debacle. It is a start of other thinking, but more importantly, doing. What I aim for is a push for the commons that puts anthropologists, as people whose lives and works are enmeshed in others, in the centre of the uncomfortable world, sweating with the permeability of an ethnography that changes shape in ways yet unknown.

Keywords: ethnography; commons; sweat; action; anthropology

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In 1947, the American Anthropological Association was asked to comment on a newly proposed universal declaration of human rights; a declaration that aimed to try and figure out a world where people were safe no matter their colour or creed. They refused to endorse it (AAA 1947). They distrusted a statement that was written by the West and enacted on the East; they distrusted a statement that, in pushing for acceptance, did not try to understand the differences and conflicts that existed. They distrusted a statement that white-washed the past and ignored the present.

The concerns were valid and important, and many still stand. But they marginalised anthropology (Goodale 2006). Those writing the declaration did not sit back and reconsider their position based on those concerns. They went ahead and wrote it anyway, and it became the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, one of the most influential documents of the twentieth century. By not endorsing the declaration, anthropology was left out of the conversation, which was taken over by law and politics and international relations (ibid.).[2] It was a further 52 years before the AAA made a public, official statement on human rights (AAA 1999): a statement that allowed for some universal applications.

Anthropology is a discipline of people. But while we[3] research deep in the worlds of our communities, many of us sit outside them to think and write and speak and teach. Sometimes as we do this, we step away from the urgency of the world around us: caught up in the minutiae of academic life, our working of theory, our teaching of concept, we, ourselves, may become abstract.

In Sara Ahmed's (2014) work *Willful Subjects,* she asks us to climb into the bodies and the worlds of each other; to embrace the discomfort of lived experience and show the toil of the ideas and the stories we are living; to acknowledge the hegemony that creates a concept, and our role in that reality (2014: 18-19). As Arendt (1970:73) points out, it is the intellectual elite who are often removed from the realities of life: 'they cling with greater tenacity to categories of the past that prevent them understanding the present and their role in it.' We can move away from this, by breaking our bounds. Let's step back inside that world and sweat with the people around us. And let us do this through the commons.

A commons is a shared endeavour, a resource open for all, created of a desire to work outside private regimes. Commoning asks questions of who owns what, or who exercises rights in relation to what? Ethnography is about sharing lives and space and knowledge. A common ethnography is not about widening communication. It is giving up our conceit of a discipline bounded to an academic space. The move to dismantle the boundaries between our participants and ourselves is, of course, not new, and many anthropologists work hard to destabilise their own authority as well as that of others. What I am thinking about here is the opening of territory – a reframing of ethnography that takes us beyond our discipline and into a new space – one as yet undetermined, but communal and intimate. For a long time now we have we been dismantling the boundaries of knowledge, paying attention to the permeability of personhood (Gupta 2002), the intersubjective nature of knowledge (Jackson 1998), experimenting with collaboration, participation, feedback, and more.[4] But while questioning these margins, and experimenting with form, while debating the limits and potentials that new and old techniques engender, it sometimes feels like anthropology still

clings to its ownership of ethnography as a disciplinary practice – that we fetishise ourselves as well as our exercise.

The bodies creating politics right now are pained, fighting, resistant, and wilful. Many political movements are a terrifying marker of potential futures: Brexit; Trump; Duterte; Erdogan. There is growing unrest in Latin America, humanitarian catastrophes in the Middle East, deepening authoritarianism in Southeast Asia, rising fundamentalism in South Asia, and persistent low-level warfare around the globe. Geopolitics at this moment is deeply contested.

In this context, ethnography is critical – it has the potential to join movements and open new spaces. We can study the movements and talk amongst ourselves. We can watch how things pan out, deconstruct the discourse, and reconstruct our stories. We can imagine shared communities and futures within them. Some of us can (and do) work with them, and fight with them, and cry with those whose lives become broken. Or we can reframe our position to do this and more: to shift the bounds of ethnography from us to them, to you, to we.

If we common ethnography, we destabilise our authority. But to challenge the authority of others, we must do it to ourselves first. This call to a commons is not to undermine (or refuse to acknowledge) the hard, intense, and brilliant work by scholars around the world who already work in deeply uncomfortable moments and intimately tie themselves to their participants, their communities – their worlds. It is about loosing control over the practice itself. The idea is sweaty because it is deeply uncomfortable. It gives space to dissident voices, dislocates authorial authority, opens spaces for new knowledge to travel out of our control and into the world at large. If, in ethnographic practice, we create the worlds we communicate within (Maynard & Cahnmann-Taylor 2010: 3), then to address the precarity of contemporary time, it is time to get sweaty. As we share bodies and experiences with each other, we can create a commons – one born out of shared ambitions, but not homogenous desires, or disciplines, or knowledge. It will probably be conflicted; it will certainly be uncomfortable. The toil of the endeavour will make us sweat, because in keeping with Ahmed, the conflicts will require us to confront our own discourse, and fight with it, and for it, and against it and ourselves.

The commons erupts at moments of crisis, or of struggling bodies (de Angelis 2007). This is why it is apt at this moment. It is subversive, often incoherent, but also active and aspirational. It aims to change, by breaking down the boundaries that seem so concrete; it is social and shared, depending on trust and support. The rupturing of boundaries is done with the aim of production (Negri, in Curcio and Özselçuk 2010): production of values, a people, and a paradigm. A paradigm that shifts our normative practice, and by doing so brings into focus ‘what’s broken in sociality’ (Berlant 2016: 395).

The commons has always been rangy. It is ragged, and messy; no fences mark its bounds; it does not distinguish between human and non; it refuses to be determined by a hegemonic order. Its ideology is about sharing, and access, and compromise. Its boundaries are permeable, and moveable, and negotiable. It is not a landscaped garden, or a farmed piece of land. And what a relief. Because in amongst the weeds, the bushes, and the divots, are beetles, and hedgehogs, and badgers, and butterflies. When we enclosed the land and privatised the world, we bounded variety, and life, and wild creativity. Bounding knowledge and practice has the potential to do the same. Restricting our discipline confines what we can

know, what we can say, who can speak, and, more importantly I think, it restricts who can hear us.

Commoning can be a means to build new infrastructures of knowledge creation and distribution – by doing so it can give us routes to explore things we never expected. We can live in the bodies of many, many people. Its messy fluidity is its very strength. By opening walls, and becoming more organic, we allow others to enter the frame. We enable conversation, a commoning practice, because as Casarino (2008: 1) comments, 'the common abhors monologues.' And if we embrace the multi-sited nature of contemporary ethnography (Marcus 2002), where ethnography is created by many and varied disciplines, with many and varied aims and ideals, we can work in a world where we do not hold on, but by letting go, free ourselves to trying to figure out how to live in this unstable and chaotic world, along with others[5]: 'the messed up yet shared infrastructures of experience' as Lauren Berlant (2016: 395) so eloquently puts it.

In the last 50 years there have been many urgent moments of history, and anthropology's tradition has been to step back and consider them and contextualise them and theorise them. But 'the beginning of history must be lived' (de Angelis 2007: 240), 'because only living subjects can participate in the constitution of the mode of their interrelation.' We refused in the 1940s to comment on human rights because we were afraid of losing our stance and supporting regimes that in promising freedom, created barriers, and essentialised discourse. They were valid concerns. But it left us out of the conversation, and our research – our much-needed research – did not help to figure out how to live in a world after conflict and holocaust and starvation and suffering, or to show the realities of the utopian ideal that human rights encompasses. A sweaty commons does not necessarily mean we need to act in haste or concede to the pressure of a world that demands more and more and more. Slow scholarship or distance can exist while we sweat. Think a marathon or an epic, not a sprint or a Vine. But our practices must be urgent and tense and present. We must claw in the mud, and smash it as we go.

Ethnography right now has the potential to do something important for the world. Many are already trying. Commoning ethnography makes a community of producers. We already are, so let's permeate the borders and let others in. It took us 50 years as a community to make a statement on human rights that said 'yes, we all have some.' We should stand outside and sweat or shiver or cry or laugh with the world, and force ourselves outside the comforts of our bounds. We might get it wrong, we could get it right; I imagine it will be something in-between. It will not be perfect, but it will be something. Let's step into the world and make ourselves, the people around us, our very discipline, sweat.

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Thanks, of course, to my colleagues (particularly Nayantara Sheoran Appleton and Catherine Trundle) for their comments and advice on this piece, but mostly, right now, thanks to the staff at Broomfield Hospital, who between submitting and revising this article, made sure my sister and my new niece are still in our family.

Notes

1. This paper was first delivered as part of the Commoning Ethnography panel at the 50th anniversary celebrations of Cultural Anthropology at Victoria University of Wellington in May 2017. It was made as a provocation, designed to elicit further conversation about the place of ethnography, and our position as anthropologists and ethnographers.

2. Although Messer (1993: 222) contends that despite this, anthropologists have been central to broadening the discourse on human rights, whilst the human rights perspective has broadened the ways anthropologists understand social justice and development.

3. I use we to denote the wider academy we belong to, which although composed of individuals, who are many and disparate, are also a community, and therefore a messy whole.

4. There are many anthropologists who for many years have been grappling with these issues; working hard to break the bounds; dismantling the hegemony. I do not mean to ignore their important work and its effects. This piece, however, is a provocation, and thus determines to ask if this is enough?

5. This is not a call for anarchy. When Elinor Ostrom argued against the commons' tragedy (Hardin 1968) and for its success, she concluded that commons 'need care and communing to work' (Wall 2017: 34). Sustainable commons have boundaries: they were used communally, but not free for all. Those using it were active in the making of its rules. They modified its norms to consider the wider system (Wall 2017: 28-29). In doing so they created an alternative norm, one that allowed for difference and change and community.

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Creating an Accessible Commons

Ethnographic knowledge beyond academia

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ABSTRACT | As an anthropologist working outside of academia, I have observed the potential for anthropology to influence and to be influenced is constrained by publishing restrictions. In this article, I discuss how we might address this by opening a flow of knowledge between researchers, research participants/contributors, and decision makers. Through the lens of an indigenous research paradigm, Kaupapa Māori, I consider how this opening up of a knowledge commons can support more ethical explorations of the roles and responsibilities of anthropologists to students, participants, decision makers, business, and communities. In particular, I highlight how anthropologists should create a knowledge commons that expands opportunities to ease structural inequality.

Keywords: kaupapa Māori; ethnography; inequality; the commons; knowledge

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Introduction

'Do anthropologists actually have any impact?' This question was posed by a student during a presentation at the 2017 Society of Medical Anthropology in Aotearoa Symposium. The responses explored how social scientists are adding significant and diverse value in many spaces, including in shaping the experiences and knowledge of students. The Society also reflected on the potential to expand the influence of ethnographic frameworks for knowledge production and communication by making connections with the public. As an anthropologist working outside of academia, I have observed how anthropology's pubic potential is constrained. In this article, I discuss how we might address the discipline's limited reach by opening a flow of knowledge between researchers, research participants/contributors, and decision makers. I consider how this opening up of knowledge can support more ethical explorations of the roles and responsibilities of researchers to students, participants, and communities. I highlight how we might use a knowledge commons to expand our opportunities to ease structural inequality, and allow often ignored knowledge to be made more visible to students and decision makers.

This discussion is informed by my experience as a Māori anthropologist working with private business and government as a service design researcher. I ground my research approach in a kaupapa Māori paradigm. This paradigm privileges a Māori worldview and the experiential knowledge of Māori about themselves and the worlds they live in. Linda Tuhiwai Smith's (1999) foundational discussion on the decolonisation of research methods highlights a set of core responsibilities, identified by Ngahuia Te Awekotuku, that are common to kaupapa Māori projects. A responsibility that is of particular significance for this discussion is that research 'must be about challenging injustice, revealing inequalities, and seeking transformation' (Pihama 2001: 111). The projects I contribute to in my role as a service design researcher often have the intent of creating social change. My team is hired to conduct design research with users in an attempt to understand and design for their needs and experiences when creating or changing services, policies and strategies. Although my ability to pursue them through kaupapa Māori practice is constrained in many ways in this corporate context, this lens of responsibility has helped me see the opportunities where ethnographic knowledge could provide useful contributions, but, for many reasons, isn't.

My argument is informed by discussions I presented this year at the Victoria University of Wellington 50 Years of Anthropology Celebrations Symposium and in the Society of Medical Anthropology in Aotearoa Symposium Roundtable: 'Challenging Key Ideas in Medical Anthropology'. During both conversations the responsibility of anthropologists to prioritise de-colonising spaces, knowledge, and interactions surfaced. Drawing upon my previous research on indigenous historical trauma and healing, I argued that the socio-political context of colonization must be considered when designing spaces, places, discourses, tools, and interactions, so as to avoid causing (re)traumatisation and in order to open possibilities for healing. Therefore, an ethical approach to anthropological engagement is one that considers our roles as beneficiaries of colonialism so that we may design our discipline around practices that ease the burden of inequality and address unequal power dynamics.

At the centre of commoning practices is sharing knowledge; a pursuit which is in contrast to current publishing structures. These structures make knowledge inaccessible to those who cannot purchase journal subscriptions, those who do not know about journals, and those who are not proficient in key words and terms that are required to do a search. This limits non-academics to publicly available knowledge often produced by large corporate entities, or knowledge that has not been peer reviewed, and it keeps conversations informed by this research between the few who can access it. This gate-keeping of ethnographic knowledge through subscription-based journal access makes it difficult for the insights, recommendations, and experiences that social scientists and research contributors offer to inform policy, strategy, and service design.

In part, limited public engagement with ethnographic research is shaped by the fast pace at which knowledge is expected to be formed in corporate contexts. This pace constrains the ability of workers to explore the ins and outs of a research topic. Where contracts and a culture of working 'at pace' creates strict time-frames and a focus on uncovering solutions, workers often work to pre-determined hours allocated for tasks, such as writing research questions. This makes it difficult to deeply explore a particular context. This type of fast ethnography can be incredibly fruitful when conducted by skilled practitioners but, at its most basic level, it requires an understanding of the cultured nature of experience, and insights into how structure shapes agency. Ethnographic research is a key source of this knowledge. However, those without pre-existing ethnographic knowledge rely on mainstream cultural frameworks and accessible knowledge to design research and analyse information. I have observed, and experienced myself, the frustration of seeking-out research to inform projects that directly affect change, and being locked out, or not knowing where to start. Without having robust frameworks for thinking about social phenomenon such as inequality, culture, or language, the analysis of information and design of solutions rely on the pre-existing knowledge of the participants of the research and the researchers. As a result, ethnographic knowledge is often left out.

To counter the structural forces that constrain people's agency, the cultural mechanisms through which inequality is naturalised must be made visible to those whose agency is drastically constrained by structural inequality, as well as to those who benefit the most from it. In the examples I have discussed above, those who have the most power to (re)produce social structures are not exposed to knowledge that might provide them with the tools to re-imagine cultural 'truths', limiting innovation and reproducing the status quo.

If the criteria for acceptance of ethnographic products are diversified, we can open opportunities for communities traditionally excluded from mainstream conversations to participate in forming the narrative about themselves as well as affirming their right to learn about their histories and presents. Making this knowledge accessible is an important form of reciprocity within research contexts where participants' agency is often/usually constrained. Especially when engaging with indigenous peoples, researchers and academics should be conscious of a history of exploitative research, as well as 'research for research's sake'. Ideally, we can build a commons that opens the opportunity for participants to access and join in conversations about how their knowledge is being received by others, enabling them to share openly and access the referenced ideas. However, this requires anthropology to communicate in ways that are accessible and

meaningful to these groups and to enable knowledge that is useful to them, actively connecting them to the knowledge they want.

Without intentionally designing the networks, collaborations, categories, and relationships to be transparent and decolonising, commoning is still at risk of furthering these inequalities. The positions of control for the commons must include representation of the diverse realities of indigenous peoples and other marginalised groups to avoid exacerbating structural inequalities. It requires anthropologists to explicitly engage in the knowledge of marginalised groups and to apply it in their field sites and their classrooms. It also requires a serious prioritisation of the type of knowledge that is published, and practices that enact our responsibility to make the link between power and suffering visible. For example, how might anthropology leverage a knowledge commons to support indigenous peoples to resist the effects of colonialism? And, how might anthropology publish knowledge that makes it easier for decision-makers to be informed by ethnographic knowledge?

From my observations, government and private sector decisions about funding, about who gets to sit at the table during important decisions, whose voice or communication is seen as having authority, take place everyday with people who often do not have deep knowledge of the topic being considered. If we posit that ethnographic knowledge should inform important cultural and political decisions, then a wide audience must be able to discover, access, and apply our ethnographic findings. Should we meaningfully employ a critical and genuine pursuit of accessibility, this will open up new pathways for researchers and participants to shape and understand the structures that influence society.

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The initial thinking behind this piece was sparked by the discussions at the Society of Medical Anthropology Aotearoa Symposium 2017. It has also been shaped by the shared challenges and conversations with Hollie Russell and Te Aho Matua Bryers. I am also especially thankful for the careful and encouraging guidance from Catherine Trundle and Lorena Gibson.

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Commoning in Sonic Ethnography (or, the Sound of Ethnography to Come)

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ABSTRACT | When considering an ethnography commons, it seems that there are at least two sorts of boundaries that commoning has the potential to reconfigure: 1) boundaries within the academy between disciplines and 2) boundaries between the academy and 'the rest of the world.' Admittedly, these boundaries are often constructed (or imagined) from within the academy itself, and seeking ways to re-draw them may result in yet another navel-gazing exercise that reaffirms particular modes of knowledge production disproportionally beneficial to those 'in' the academy. In this essay, I focus on ethnography grounded in sound and how it both productively traverses disciplinary boundaries and usefully brings into relief the unevenness of commoning. I examine a number of discourses in ethnomusicology dealing with sonic epistemologies and interaction, music making as ethnographic method, and intellectual property, all the while grappling with my own work as an ethnographer involved in the production of collaborative sonic texts.

Keywords: sound; sonic ethnography; acoustemology; collaboration; value

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Introduction

In the late nineteenth century, European and American folklorists, scholars, and composers began travelling the world recording on their not-so-portable phonographs, producing sonic and written texts as an arm – or perhaps an ear and loudspeaker – of the colonial enterprise. The discipline of 'comparative musicology' grew out of this project, and largely focused – as one might guess from its name – on comparing musical traditions to one another and to European art music. Ethnomusicology emerged as a field in the 1950s, in part as a challenge to the Eurocentrism embedded in comparative musicology at the time, and in part, because of the new and fascinating questions a discipline rooted in both anthropological and musicological concerns could ask about music, culture, and society. Since then, ethnomusicology has become grounded in ethnography attuned to sounds, particularly sounds constructed and labeled by communities as 'music' (for more on these histories and discourses see, e.g., Nettl 2010, Nettl and Bohlman 1991, and Rice 2014: 16–23).

Ethnomusicology, with its interest in musical and other sonic worlds, has long interrogated sonic modes of knowledge production and the fraught nature of ethnographic collaboration in sound, both live and on recordings. In this essay, I bring the idea of the commons into conversation with this work in ethnomusicology, hoping to foster interdisciplinary and multi-directional pathways as scholars from a number of fields pursue the rich, textured meanings that sound offers, not only as it is interpreted, but as it is produced, co-produced, reproduced, and distributed.[1] I suggest that while ethnography grounded in sound can foster the kinds of boundary crossings that the commons promises, it also reveals some troubling aspects of the commons, in particular, some of the unevenness that commoning projects can produce with regard to value. To flesh out this argument and move towards a concept of commoning in sonic ethnography, I will first briefly examine two key discourses in ethnomusicology – one on how knowledge is produced and/or communicated through sound and another on theory and method for musical collaboration by ethnographers – and bridge those discourses to methodological challenges posed by the idea of an ethnography commons. Then, I will touch on how varied conceptions of ownership and intellectual property across music cultures trouble the concept of the commons. Last, I will reflect on the current relationship between recording technology and distribution with regard to disparate regimes of value and layered positionality for ethnographers vis-à-vis ethnographic sonic texts. At various points in the discussion I will reference my own work as an ethnographer in Macedonia, where I have conducted long-term research in several modes of collaboration that have, among other things, involved the co-production of live musical performances, recorded albums, radio broadcasts, and other sounds.

What I hope to avoid is reaffirming the category of 'music' (or even 'sound') as something only certain kinds of trained musicians and scholars in the musicologies can engage with or understand. While the ethnomusicological discourse (and especially the earlier discourse) that I examine focuses on 'music' per se, some of the concepts that emerge from that discourse – interpretive moves, interactionally produced texts, intermusical relationships – do not necessarily have to be bound up in music as a constructed category of sound only 'truly' comprehensible to trained experts. Rather, these kinds of concepts can point towards a sociality in sonic practice broadly speaking (including listening) that is

necessarily and inextricably joined with materiality. Sound, then, can be understood as being involved in the making of all kinds of social-material worlds, as humans produce and co-produce sounds in relation to one another and to the sounds they are encountering.

Sound, Interaction, Interpretation, and Collaboration

One of the early (and ongoing) discourses in ethnomusicology concerns the question of how to communicate in words about knowledge that is sonic, and the nature of knowledge that is communicated in musical sound. In a 1961 essay (a classic in ethnomusicology), Charles Seeger grapples with communicating about music, distinguishing between 'speech-discourse' (i.e., speech about music) and 'music-discourse' (i.e., communication in music itself) (1961: 78). He warns scholars that 'research should be continually on guard against the encroachment of the hidden assumption that speech-knowledge can comprehend all knowledge and can or should control the use of all knowledge' (1961: 80).[2] He situates this 'linguocentric predicament' (1977: 62) as a dichotomy between music making and speech, considering them mutually exclusive modes of discourse, and calling the predicament the 'biggest problem of all' and 'insoluble' (1977: 133).

Beginning in the 1980s, Steven Feld explores this predicament from a more optimistic perspective, positioning metaphor as mediating between speech and music. He departs from Seeger's focus on only referential aspects of speech and considered both speech and music as having figurative capacities, both existing as 'feelingful' activities (see Feld 1984). Listeners use metaphor to engage in what Feld calls 'interpretive moves' wherein they attempt to 'recreate, specify, momentarily fix, or give order to emergent recognitions of the events that take place so rapidly and intuitively when we experience musical sounds' (1984: 15). He also re-thinks Seeger's question 'what does music communicate?' asking instead about the shape of a music communication process and its implications for interpretation, questions that point in the direction of a collaborative-interpretive and processual epistemology.

Ingrid Monson builds on this line of thinking, exploring improvisation and interaction in her ethnography of New York jazz rhythm section musicians, *Saying Something* (1996). As she unwinds the ways musicians talk and play together, she explicitly follows Feld (1981, 1984, 1990) in emphasizing the significance of music as a metaphoric process and the necessity of understanding the linguistic mediation of musical concepts in order to interpret the cultural aesthetics of a given musical practice or society (Monson 1996: 75). Monson highlights the way human relationships form, strengthen, and change among musicians and audiences and thus contribute to the way 'interactionally produced texts' develop, adding that 'these interactionally produced events structure both musical and social space' (Monson 1996: 190). She argues that intermusical relationships layer on top of these texts, and involve references – in the case of jazz musicians – to additional compositions, quotations of classic jazz recordings, and/or timbral, dynamic, rhythmic, or stylistic signals that can signify much about identity, class, race, and politics.

Seeger, Feld, and Monson theorize how musicians and listeners mediate between language, sound, music, and meaning as they interact and collaborate. Their own sonic-ethnographic praxis flows beneath the surface as an undercurrent in these particular instances,[3] but they are, in a sense, laying the groundwork for

grappling with the implications for ethnographers participating in processes of sonic collaboration. If listeners make interpretive moves, certainly ethnographers making music or other sound collaboratively are listening and making such moves as well, adjusting the sounds they are producing in response to, and perhaps in dialogue with, other collaborators. By the same token, the interactionally produced texts and the intermusical relationships layered on top of them that happen in collaborative music making are still being made and formed when an ethnographer is one of the collaborators. When I think about my own sonic collaborations as an ethnographer – especially in playing saxophone with house and techno DJs or with jazz musicians – I become more and more aware that the interpretive moves, interactionally produced texts, and intermusical relationships are constantly being made through complex negotiations of sound, sound that is inextricable from the positionalities and subjectivities of those producing it.

In another discourse, ethnomusicologists have interrogated these kinds of issues with musical collaboration in the ethnographic process itself, examining the roles and implications of ethnographers participating in the production of music and other sound. Ethnomusicological studies where scholars theorize their own role in collaboration stretch back to Mantle Hood's (1960) discussion of the concept of bi-musicality, which advocates for a researcher's musical aptitude in multiple musical traditions, including the native tradition of the researcher and the tradition constituting the basis for research (the slippery nature of concepts of 'native' and 'tradition' notwithstanding). Typical in ethnomusicology since the 1990s have been in-depth analyses by scholars reflexively detailing processes of learning a musical practice in a master-student relationship.[4] Other scholars have explored the position of a 'professional' musician as ethnographer: jazz ethnographer Paul Austerlitz seeks to break down dichotomies by asserting that 'musical thinking is scholarly and academic work is expressive' (Austerlitz 2005:xix); in his study of salsa bands in New York, Christopher Washburne writes that 'participation through performance served as [his] principal means of collecting data' (Washburne 2008: 32); Michael Bakan spends the final two chapters of his 1999 ethnography of *gamelan beleganjur* in Bali detailing his 'intercultural musical encounter' with his *beleganjur* teacher Sukarata, emphasizing 'the reflexive study of musical experience as a significant form of intercultural dialogue in which all who participate, including the researcher, are relevant contributors to meaningful music-making' (Bakan 1999: 332).

More recently, Deborah Wong, while recognizing that ethnomusicologists have been experimenting with alternative and experimental ethnographic products since before the 1980s,[5] brings this discussion back to the problems of ethnography that anthropologists have been working through for more than 30 years:

> The problems with ethnography aren't new and haven't changed: they include the false binary of the insider/outsider, colonial baggage, and the empiricism still lurking behind a solidly humanistic anthropology and ethnomusicology. But ethnomusicology still struggles with its own relevance to anthropology because it hasn't sufficiently theorized the relationship between participatory research and the specific kind of ethnography that we do, which is very similar to anthropology but, in fact, not quite the same (Wong 2008: 77).

She perhaps gestures towards how ethnography in ethnomusicology has already been scrambling the boundaries in ethnography, pointing to an ongoing commoning where any lines between would-be researchers and would-be informants are blurry.[6] Through the lens of her own participation in North American *taiko* ensembles, Wong focuses on the overlap where modalities of experience and interpretation (and maybe others) are engaged simultaneously and in a self-aware manner by the ethnographer. I wonder, though, whether this also extends beyond the ethnographer, and that perhaps all people making music are always also engaging at least the modalities of experience and interpretation in this point of overlap. Perhaps they do so without the same ethnographic self-awareness of an ethnographer, but with different types of self-awareness engendered by local conditions of cultural production or any number of other concerns.

When I'm performing collaboratively with others, when I'm commoning in sonic ethnography, I'm producing a sonic text (among other things) in real time and space. As an ethnographer, I am constantly experiencing, constantly making interpretive moves, and perhaps constantly reflecting and responding to my experience and my interpretations concurrently in an ongoing process of simultaneously knowing, understanding, and being. When I'm playing saxophone with a DJ in a nightclub, our intermusical relationship is positioned towards creating the appropriate sonic environment for that particular moment in a particular locale – the DJs I've worked with rarely consider themselves musicians, but pride themselves in their deep sonic knowledge and skills for deploying that knowledge. The idea that I am also a researcher of some sort is present, and is most likely structuring the sonic moment to some extent, but it slides into the background in a way that makes any line between researcher and informant even fuzzier and suggests that a sonic commoning might be happening. In addition, my collaborative work with DJs, jazz musicians, and other musicians in Macedonia has resulted in formal concerts, live radio performances, informal gigs in bars and cafés, and the recording of an album involving recorded sound, marketing materials, physical design, and liner notes – all interactionally produced texts in one form or another. In the sonic and discursive negotiations involved in processes of production and sonic commoning, those I'm collaborating and commoning with are also experiencing, making interpretive moves, and engaged in processes of simultaneously knowing, understanding, and being as we make sound together in real time or construct a recorded artifact that may resound across future times and geographies.

In moving towards conceiving of commoning in sonic ethnography, then, I suggest that this kind of ethnography is partly about an awareness of the multiple subjectivities involved in the experience of ethnography in combination with the interpretive intersubjectivity of co-produced texts. It is partly about the increased access to particular epistemologies because of collaborative proximity to performers or other people involved in sound production. It is also partly about reflexivity, dialogical editing, and collaborative production of texts (written, musical, visual, and others). And while I agree with Wong that 'the mere act of participating in performance will not necessarily achieve, cause, or produce anything in particular' (Wong 2008: 80), I suggest that this act always achieves, causes, or produces *something*, and that something is always at least some kind of

(perhaps new) sonic way of knowing the world, akin to what Feld would call 'acoustemology' (1996).

Feld's conception of acoustemology as 'local conditions of acoustic sensation, knowledge, and imagination embodied in [a] culturally specific sense of place' (1996: 91) is grounded in a sensory interplay among human actors and the places they inhabit. He demonstrates that through poetics and bodily performative practice, places are 'voiced,' 'made sensual,' and become cultural entities (1996: 134). For Feld, human participation is always present in productive and interpretive aspects of acoustemology as people continually give meaning to and shape places through their poetic and perceptive interactions and conceptions of those places. Although he situates acoustemology around acoustic dimensions of experiencing place, he positions it as a 'relational ontology' (see again 1996, but also 2012: 126) that is relational not only between people, but also among people and the meaningful sounds of their environments, pointing toward the joining of sociality and materiality.[7] In his more recent work, Feld himself engages in multiple modes of collaboration in sound, a process wherein, as he describes it, acoustemology is an 'intimacy-making bridge' (2012: 10) and 'the agency of knowing the world through sound [. . .] the imagination and enactment of a musical intimacy' (2012: 49).

In response to Feld's suggestion that collaborative sonic practice can build intimacies across acoustemological bridges, I wonder whether, when new sounds reverberate from this practice and are themselves emplaced, new acoustemologies can be made, co-produced by those making sounds together. This co-production of acoustemology could emerge from any assemblage of individuals (not only 'musicians' but potentially anyone present in moments of sonic collaboration) as they each exercise the agency of knowing the world through sound and engage in the negotiation of that agency with one another. If commoning in sonic ethnography, then, is about this kind of collective, collaborative, negotiated sonic agency and co-presence, it can also result in the co-production of acoustemology, with the commons as a resonant site for the resounding of new sonic ways of knowing the world that are at once an impetus for and a consequence of building bridges over boundaries both real and imagined.

Intellectual Property and the Sonic Commons

While notions of the sonic in ethnography reveal many of the possibilities for commoning across boundaries, they also bring to the surface some of its hazards and limitations. Discussions surrounding intellectual property related to recorded sounds and related flows of capital demonstrate how even amidst scenes of sharing and co-production – of sounds, of acoustemologies – questions of ownership and hierarchy are always present. Anthony Seeger explores this in his work in Brazil among the Kisêdjê who, like many native Amazonians, have both individual (*akia*) songs and collective (*ngere*) songs, of which Kisêdjê groups are considered the owners. For example, the collective *ngere* 'Big Turtle Song' does not fit easily into the individualist spirit of copyright law, whose roots lie in the Enlightenment concept of the lone creative genius. The song was composed over 75 years ago (which means that it is no longer covered by copyright), and is owned by a community who attributes its authorship to a particular type of honeybee (A. Seeger 1997: 60–63). In this case Seeger produced an album in partnership with the Kisêdjê and was able to serve as a mediator to negotiate flows of capital from

the recording itself, especially because it was released before the age of digital distribution, downloading, and streaming and could be situated more easily as a music commodity (cf. Taylor 2007). But since the copyright ownership of 'Big Turtle Song' cannot be ascribed to an individual human and its date of composition prevents it from being covered by copyright, once the recording is 'out there in the world,' neither he nor the Kisêdjê can do anything about flows of capital from borrowings of the musical ideas by others – anyone may re-record, modify, adapt, or re-contextualize the recording without paying royalties to a copyright owner. The monetary profits of this sonic commons are suddenly widely available to many who may be in distant proximity to the acts of commoning.

Examples and conceptions of ownership are myriad. In a recent example from my work, I released an album titled *On the Face Place* in 2016 recorded with and featuring Macedonian musicians playing a number of compositions and arrangements by the bass player and composer Kiril Tufekčievski and me. I found a label that allowed me to decide how all the income generated by the album would be allocated, as long as I made sure all expenses were covered, which I did through a number of grants. In our own negotiation of the issue of the flow of capital, the musicians and I decided that we would all split any proceeds from the album evenly among us. Though Tufekčievski and I composed or arranged all of the tracks on the album, much of the material involves individual and collective improvisation by us and the other musicians. The copyright ownership is attributed to the group, named the CSPS Ensemble, and any capital generated through licensing or royalty collection is split evenly among the members of the ensemble as well (see Wilson 2017 for more on how the project came together). In this case, open and direct conversations with the musicians about fair payment and profits were at times uncomfortable for some of the musicians, and for me. For example, I was hesitant to take a share of the funds at first, but the others thought it would be only fair if we all took a share since we all contributed to the project. At another point, I went with one of the other musicians to drop some CDs at a bookstore in Skopje, Macedonia's capital, and we spoke with the owner to agree on a price point for the sale of the CD. I wanted to get hold of the rest of the musicians so that we could all agree that the price point was fair, so I called or texted each of them. With a few I talked through the price to make sure it reflected the going rate for such a CD, but others seemed surprised I would even bother to ask them what they thought of the price, since they would be fine with anything that was decided. This expression of disinterest (though perhaps masking actual interest) in consensus on the local cost to purchase the CD has at least something to do with musicians understanding that although CDs still sell in Macedonia to some extent, profits from album sales are relatively miniscule in today's landscape. So, if flows of capital from album sales are miniscule and a significant generation of royalties is not happening, how does this kind of work in sonic ethnography trouble the concept of the commons? This brings me to my last point – the fact that even though, in many ways, music is today operating less and less as a commodity for exchange, it still has value, and musical recordings, performances, and other sonic representations and projects exist within a variety of regimes of value.

Regimes of Value and Unevenness in the Commons

When ethnographers co-produce recordings, live performances, and sounds of other kinds, the regimes of value within which such products are situated can be quite uneven, can shift over time, and can vary greatly, contingent on the fields in which they are operating. Ethnomusicologist Timothy Taylor (2017) recognizes the limitations and complications of a focus on the music commodity, turning to the literature on value and the work of Arjun Appadurai (1986), Michael Lambek (2013), Fred Myers (2001), David Graeber (2005, 2013), and others to parse out some new types of value creation with regard to music. He builds on Graeber's and Lambek's shared view that action in general is productive of value, not only action that is considered labour in Marx's sense. Taylor re-asserts that 'value is determined by people's actions, which both reveal and confer meaning' and suggests the term 'meaningful action,' as a way that value is created (apart from economic value), defining it as 'a source of meaning, a repository for meaning, a currency of meaning' (2017: 191). He focuses on the current juncture where the de-emphasis on exchange value in music has, as the result of technology, engendered a number of new sorts of value, such as those where value is produced by a number of YouTube views or new notions of 'curatorial value' generated by the making and sharing of playlists.

Turning back, then, to my example of commoning with musicians in Macedonia in the production of an album that is an acoustemological sonic product of an ethnographic process, what regimes of value are in play? I can think of at least four with quite uneven characteristics in terms of value-production mechanisms and value-related hierarchies: (1) the regime of value in the sphere of jazz in Macedonia; (2) the regime of value in the American and New York-centric world of jazz and jazz discourse; (3) the regime of value in European jazz networks; and (4) lurking below it all, or perhaps looming above or waiting in the wings, the familiar regimes of value in academic fields where value in contributing to discourses and complicating methodologies can be convertible, not only to titles and prestige, but also to promotions, higher salaries, and other forms of economic value. As an actor embedded in the production of this and other sonic goods, how do I, in my own meaningful action, pay attention to these uneven regimes of value that co-exist and overlap at the site of my ethnographic sonic practice? In what ways can that attention and its accompanying intention and production circle back to help me grapple with the messiness of ethnography and its multifarious and unevenly situated beneficiaries? Can value produced by the meaningful action of any number of actors – especially when that action is not labour in Marx's sense – somehow serve to smooth out this unevenness, and is that desirable? And to what extent do these questions matter to those that are commoning together from any number of subjectivities? Wrestling with the idea of commoning in sound draws these questions to the surface – questions that I don't pretend to have answers to, but that seem to point to some of the thorny issues that arise for the commons more broadly. As I struggle with these and other questions, I am pushed again and again across clear and fuzzy boundaries of all kinds to – hopefully – build even more bridges and engage in forms of commoning not yet heard or envisioned.

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Notes

1. In recent years, sound, in particular, has garnered attention in a number of fields, with 'sound studies' becoming an umbrella term of sorts for interdisciplinary research on sound. Journals and edited collections focusing on sound have typically featured interdisciplinary perspectives and have increased in number over the last ten years or so. For example, the *Journal of Sonic Studies* first appeared in 2011, *Sound Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* first appeared in 2015, and a recent edited collection titled *Theorizing Sound Writing* (Kapchan 2017) brings together scholars from anthropology, ethnomusicology, musicology, and performance studies.

2. Perhaps Seeger was hinting towards alternatives to the written text in music ethnography, though this is not a concern of his argument here.

3. Feld pursues these implications elsewhere (2012).

4. In a special issue of *Collaborative Anthropologies* titled 'Collaborative Ethnographies of Music and Sound', guest editor Amber Clifford-Napoleone suggests that collaborative ethnography, as both theory and method, gives researchers new ways to think through and interpret the master-student relationship so common in ethnomusicological research (Clifford-Napoleone 2013).

5. She cites Steven Slawek's (1994) astute observation of this trend, and its (at the time) lack of recognition as an intellectual endeavor.

6. Wong is also directly building on how Timothy Rice (1997) breaks down the insider-outsider dichotomy in theorizing experience in ethnography. He asks: 'could theory and method, which take for granted a fixed and timeless ontological distinction between insider and outsider, reordered within an ontology that understands both researching and researched selves as potentially interchangeable and as capable of change through time, during the dialogues that typify the fieldwork experience?' (1997: 106).

7. Feld connects acoustemology as a relational ontology to other anthropological literature on relational ontologies beyond the sonic including Bird-David 1999, Poirer 2008, and Viveiros de Castro 2004 (see also Feld 2012: 272n5).

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Multidisciplinary Research Collaborations, Vision Mātauranga Science, and the Potential of Anthropology in Aotearoa-New Zealand

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ABSTRACT | Vision Mātauranga policy has been created to commodify and globalise Māori knowledge that belongs to Māori communities, and is now the expected mechanism for all engagement between university researchers and Māori communities. However, much of the risk associated with forming new collaborations rests with Māori communities, and even more so with the Māori researchers who act as intermediaries and brokers between these communities and the research team. In this new knowledge landscape what opportunities and spaces for action does Vision Mātauranga hold for social anthropology? Furthermore, how does Vision Mātauranga force anthropology to be more inclusive of the descendants of Maori ancestors on whose backs the discipline was built?

Keywords: Vision Mātauranga; Māori knowledge; interdisciplinary research; commodification; science

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Let me 'unlock my Māori potential,' 'share my distinctive contribution,' and 'wonder at the input Māori communities make to New Zealand's knowledge economy.' These are phrases embedded in the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE) Vision Mātauranga policy. Drawing on my participation at gatherings addressing the formation of a University of Auckland Vision Mātauranga Community of Practice, this brief discussion investigates the shifting power relationships and fluid boundaries of natural and physical scientists who make intellectual claims to natural resources, to new technologies and to social issues in which whānau, hapū and iwi (sub-tribal and tribal groupings) have cultural interests and property rights. With a focus on the shifting relationships between identity, knowledge and power, I ask what opportunities and spaces for action does Vision Mātauranga policy hold for social and cultural anthropology.

In 2003, the Ministry of Research, Science, and Technology (MoRST) started a programme to refocus investment in Māori research. As part of the programme, Charles Royal, a scholar educated at Te Wānanga o Raukawa at Otaki who later became the Director of the Ngā Pae ō te Māramatanga (Māori Centre of Research Excellence), was commissioned to develop a programme that would 'unlock the innovation potential of Māori knowledge, resources and people to assist New Zealanders to create a better future' (MoRST 2007). This framework, now known as Vision Mātauranga, is underpinned by the Māori concept of mātauranga, which is often translated as knowledge, wisdom, and ways of knowing. When Māori speak of knowledge, they commonly use the word mātauranga, though words such as māramatanga (to understand), mōhiotanga (to know), and ākona (to learn) also convey much of the same meaning. For anthropologist Hirini Mead,

> mātauranga can be seen as constituting the knowledge base which Māori people must have if they are to be comfortable with their Māoritanga and competent in their dealings with other Māori people. It represents the heritage of the Māori, the knowledge which the elders are said to pass on to their mokopuna, the wahi ngaro which our youth long for, and the tikitiki mō te mahunga (the topknot for your head) which Sir Apirana Ngata talked about (1997: 26).

A similar definition for the term was provided by Whatarangi Winiata, who headed Te Wānanga ō Raukawa. At an address given at Te Herenga Waka Marae at Victoria University in September 2001, Winiata described mātauranga as:

> A body of knowledge that seeks to explain phenomena by drawing on concepts handed down from one generation of Māori to another. … mātauranga Māori has no beginning and is without end. It is constantly being enhanced and refined. Each passing generation of Māori make their own contribution to mātauranga Māori (cited in Mead 2003: 320).

In 2005, Royal's Vision Mātauranga framework was approved and in 2010 the policy was integrated across all New Zealand investment priority areas, including MBIE, the Royal Society, National Science Challenges, Centres of Research Excellence, and the Health Research Council (although it is termed 'Māori Responsiveness' rather than 'Vision Mātauranga' by this last funder). A Vision

Mātauranga Capability Fund was also created at this time. Whilst the policy concerns distinctive issues and opportunities arising within Māori communities, Vision Mātauranga encourages research whose outcomes make contributions to New Zealand as a whole. Its four science research areas are:

1. Indigenous Innovation – contributing to economic growth.
2. Taiao-Environment – achieving environmental sustainability through Māori relationships with land and sea.
3. Hauora-Health – improving health and social wellbeing.
4. Mātauranga – exploring indigenous knowledge and science and innovation.

In 2012, I wrote an article titled 'Māori Research Collaborations, Mātauranga Māori Science, and the Appropriation of Water in New Zealand.' The article attempted to critique Vision Mātauranga policy by examining the relationship between Ngā Pae ō te Māramatanga, Ngāi Tahu iwi (tribe), and scientists with interests in freshwater. I admit now to having barely scratched the surface regarding the multiple ways the policy is used as a mechanism to advance and create relationships between scientists and tāngata whēnua (Māori) (Muru-Lanning 2012). My commentary was somewhat sceptical of the policy's design, which does not deal with the unequal power relationships created between science experts and flax-root communities. Furthermore, I argued that Vision Mātauranga had been created to commodify and globalise Māori knowledge that belongs to Māori communities, and had now become the expected mechanism for all engagement between university researchers and Māori communities. However, much of the risk associated with forming new collaborations rests with Māori communities, and even more so with the Māori researchers who act as intermediaries and brokers between these communities and research teams.

As a researcher at the James Henare Research Centre, I have written and am a named Principal Investigator on research projects spanning the spectrum of funding bodies. Projects I am working on with Māori and non-Māori researchers from other disciplines, faculties and institutions include:

- National Science Challenge Ageing Well Fund - Kaumātuatanga in Te Tai Tokerau Feasibility Study (population health, medicine, social work, and education).
- QuakeCore Fund Whare Māori - Pilot Studies on Earthquakes Resilience of Marae and Māori-Owned Community Buildings (engineering, architecture, and planning.
- Waikato River Authority Fund - Next Generation Membrane Technology (chemistry, engineering and iwi research collaborators).
- MBIE Partnership Fund - Developing a Big Data Platform for New Zealand (electrical engineering, business management, and computing).

While there are challenges in these research collaborations, participation in multidisciplinary collaborations is where I see an opportunity for anthropology. What I have found when working with my new colleagues is that they recognise

the need to work with people who have a disciplinary training in listening to what flax-roots people think. Our understanding of kinship, inequality, hierarchies, power, and other concepts within anthropological theory allows us to bridge cultural gaps for those people that our science colleagues are not used to working with. Anthropologists may open up another world for the scientists and demonstrate that not all people think in the same way that they do. I am finding that the collaborative work our research centre does with the scientists is complementary. Vision Mātauranga, done properly, forces scholars to come together for long periods of planning where we listen to one another, participate in debates, and figure things out. I argue that what we are actually doing in these situations is participant observation. Thus, I suggest that social anthropology goes back to its roots so we may develop alternate ways of thinking and acting. Penelope Harvey offers the comment: 'the powerful are those who have the ability to move things around' (2001: 207). The relationship between location and movement involves the ability to create fixity and draw people into relationships with you, marking your place as central and defining the marginality of others. Instead of talking ourselves out of the game, we must carve out spaces where our disciplinary skills and training are desired and respected by our science colleagues.

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COMMONING ETHNOGRAPHY

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Feminist Commons and Techno-Scientific Futures

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ABSTRACT | There have been sustained conversations within eco-feminism and feminist materialism about the way reproduction, ecologies, and everyday life for women is rendered visible and important within the commons. However, there has been a lack of engaged discussion on how techno-scientific spaces (re)imagined in feminist commons is another way to articulate futures that disassemble hierarchies and exploitative everyday existence. In this short provocation, I posit two ideas vis-à-vis science in feminist commons. First, that feminist attention to embodied medico-scientific inequalities has changed science and scientific knowledge, not just the spaces where science happens. Second, that the feminist scientific futures are spaces full of possibilities that can emerge from feminist 'situated knowledges.' This analysis emerges from the urgency to reclaim techno-science from partisan politics, neoliberal economics, and exploitative everyday practice. It also hopes to serve as a generative discussion about the value of a feminist commons for any commoning project.

Keywords: feminist commons; scientific futures; feminist engagements with science; feminist theory

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> *[…] taking responsibility for the social relations of science and technology means refusing an anti-science metaphysics, a demonology of technology, and so means embracing the skillful task of reconstructing the boundaries of daily life, in partial connection with others, in communication with all of our parts.*
>
> Donna Haraway (1991: 181)

Introduction

The tools provided by science studies scholars since the 1970s that allowed us to trouble the hierarchies of objective science have been co-opted by partisan political interests that now undermine scientific facts and knowledge by offering 'alternative facts.' The original project of science studies was intended to make scientific knowledge more inclusive by critiquing the subtle ways science worked to reinforce inherent biases – including racial, economic, and gendered biases that had implications for debates that shaped our techno-scientific futures. These interventions were a project to imagine techno-scientific futures that did not replicate problematic pasts, but rather created new spaces which dismantled hierarchies. That original project was closer to Haraway's goal of 'refusing an anti-science metaphysics,' which called for a move closer to scientific knowledge and facts to reconstruct the boundaries of possibilities in everyday life. However, the contemporary moment asks us to rethink the role of science studies as a site where we work to safeguard a techno-science and biomedicine that is grounded in feminist, queer, indigenous, and diverse traditions. Collectively, we should then work to reclaim science and facts as starting points for a common knowledge that continually pushes back against political-economic forces that demand enclosure and privitisation. This is an engagement with feminist understandings of the commons – or, as I like to call it, a feminist common(s) – that allows us to unpack the political-economy of the current anti-science moves with the aim to engage science for the collective good.

The particular anti-science, anti-fact, anti-knowledge future imagined by contemporary global exploitative economic interests is not one devoid of all techno-science, but rather rife with science, fact, and technologies that allow maintenance of power hierarchies and concentration of wealth in small quarters. These futures of selective scientific innovations are not where we live in green forests with abundant fish and fowl, but rather a space over-run by actors that work constantly to privatise the little collective resources we have left for our communities. This space of anti and selective techno-science is not a utopia, but rather a dystopia guarded by technological innovations dependent on science to provide currencies for control and domination. However, in order to disrupt that dystopic future, I propose the potential of a feminist commons for techno-science which articulates new spaces that ensure scientific innovations and scientific facts that work against the current stream of anti-science movements. The feminist commons for techno-science as a space is an intellectual engagement with previous works on sustainability and the commons as generative conversations from the 'south' (Mies and Thomsen 1999), and with the feminist politics of the commons (Federici 2011). It is a push-back against the narrative, put forward by Hardin in 'tragedy of the commons', that there are no technological solutions to

societal issues or that individual interests within the commons will overrun good intentions (Hardin 1968).

The feminist commons imagined for techno-science understands that science, technology, and medicine have, indeed, historically depended on an 'intellectual commons' (Jessop 2002). However, in recognising this history of science emerging from shared spaces, the project in the feminist commons would then aim to dismantle these scientific commons if they only serve to be harvested for private gains. Marja Ylönen, in an engagement with issues around techno-science under neoliberalism, describes

> […] the two faces of the relationship between science and capitalism in the neoliberal period: on the one hand, an economy largely characterized by mundane technologies and globalization, and on the other a scientific commons continually appropriated and harvested by capital and caught up in political economies of promise (Ylönen and Pellizzoni 2012: 28).

This pillaging of scientific commons by gendered, racial, and economic interests is something that requires sustained analysis and unpacking. However, to arrive at a complete dismantling of techno-science in its current neoliberal 'collaborations for profit' model, we must start by showing that feminists and feminist scholarship has changed the face of science and for the better. We also should be careful not to hastily arrive at a feminist commoning project that replicates problematic power hierarchies and works towards enclosures (i.e. exclusions). Rather, we need to continue to keep our feminist engagements open and inclusive and allow ourselves to be constantly *troubled.*

Feminist Science

One of the first claims that I make in support of a techno-science in feminist commons is that feminism and feminists have changed science without resorting to anti-fact rhetoric. This claim is made in response to a misguided denigration of feminist STS that arises in conservative quarters (within and outside science) that feminists have only critiqued and thus, perhaps, only changed the methods and spaces where science is done. The critique runs that the feminist and STS critiques are about the gendered politics of scientific spaces and thus we now have more women doing science. An example of this is Gross and Levitt's writing in *Higher Superstition: The Academic Left and Its quarrels with Science* (Gross and Levitt 1997), where they claim that there are no examples of feminists uncovering sexism in the substance of science as opposed to women being excluded from certain spaces of scientific inquiry. However, feminist STS scholars have pushed back against this critique. Londa Schiebinger, amongst many others, has written extensively against this. She writes:

> Feminists have tended to make a distinction between getting women into science and changing knowledge. Getting women in is generally considered the easier of the two tasks. However, both require tools of gender analysis. Both are institutional *and* intellectual problems (2000: 1174).

Drawing on her work, the following are two examples that illustrate where women have changed the substance of science, as opposed to just participating more, dare I say, 'leaning into' a patriarchal science. The first example she uses is from medicine. Even as late at the 1980s, clinical studies were conducted with no women in the trial. A notable example is the 1982 'Physicians Health Study of Aspirin and Cardiovascular Disease' performed on 22,071 male physicians and zero women. The design of this study suggests that the human body is a man's body and that a woman's body is a deviation from the norm (Rosser 1994). Within the US, the National Institute of Health funded Office of Research on Women's Health represents a change, but it is not enough. It is a start to a larger and longer conversation, but it is a move in the right direction. Scientific and medical studies still include women as part of the research, rather than extrapolating research on men's bodies as relevant even for women. The second example is from primatology, where it should be noted that in the 1960s there were no women with PhDs, but by 2000 their number had increased to 78 percent of all graduating PhDs. This change, as Schienbinger notes, is one of the first pillars of a change in science. Further, within the field of primatology, there has also been a sea-change in the *content* of science, as the focus shifts from male aggression and domination to a more holistic analysis that includes the significance of female bonding behaviors for understanding of baboon social structures (Fedigan 1994). This is the second pillar of the required change where, after more women are involved in science and its design, we see different questions being asked and new research focuses that are attuned to the needs of an egalitarian collective.

More recently, even as I write this article, new research is emerging on the selective processes undertaken by the egg to choose the sperm during fertilization. This research pushes back against the historically established Mendel's first law which assumed randomized selection at fertilization, instead positing that eggs are, in fact, active (and have agentive possibilities) in choosing the sperm for fertilization in some cases (Arnold 2017, Nadeau 2017). Not only does this new research dismantle historical projects that assumed a subservient nature of the egg in the fertilization process, but it will also perhaps change the way science reflects gendered 'cultural' values. Emily Martin outlines in her work how science created a romance between the sperm and the egg based on stereotypical gendered roles. She shows how, in scientific literature, language attributes 'charging ahead' to the sperm while the egg meekly awaits fertilization (impregnation) (Martin 1991). These are cultural biases that are reinforced in scientific discourse to explain nature, creating a vicious cycle of gendered, problematic scientific assumptions and outcomes. New research, emerging from a feminist engagement, thus can push back against these historically problematic projects. For techno-scientific and biomedical research to see science and scientific facts as gender neutral may still be in the future, but the constant work that feminist scholars have undertaken thus far is holding science to account – both in the spaces where this knowledge is created and in the nature of the knowledge itself.

In my own work, I have taken seriously the expectation that a feminist STS project is not about just a critique of medico-scientific spaces, but also of the scientific matter and knowledge therein. I have worked in and out of medical spaces and learned new medical and scientific knowledge as part of my social-science research. In my field sites I am constantly learning about allogenic and somatic stem cells, about optic pregnancies and hormonal contraceptives, about

matter and its materiality (Appleton and Bharadwaj 2017a and 2017b). This, for me, points to one of the great contributions anthropology and ethnographic engagement can make to a more just scientific future. Our work allows us to grapple with not only the political-economies of science, but also with scientific knowledge and materials. Anthropologists, by the very nature of our study, are interested in the micro-and-macro simultaneously and situating one within the other.

For a feminist scientific future, anthropology and ethnographic engagements are vital, and my own work which stands on the shoulders of 'feminist giants' has allowed me to see this. In my work on hormonal contraceptives, I show (drawing on a lot of scholarship on the topic) that the contraceptive pill and the ability to control contraceptive/reproductive life is indeed only a first feminist goal. This part is about ensuring women have access to and can participate in a bio-scientific innovation. The second part is then to critique the current contraceptives available to women (Sheoran 2015). While the male contraceptive options have been in a research phase for decades, as there are many concerns for the implications of such pills on men (Oudshoorn 2003), the female pill in its rudimentary form continues to be served up to women. The hormonal contraceptive, since its inception in the 1960s, is still the same biotechnology – producing a modification of hormonal levels in women's bodies. The pharmaceutical companies have changed the ways you can ingest it, insert it, patch it, jab it; however, it is the same biomedical technology being offered with better or different methods of delivery (Watkins 2011 and 2012).

As medical knowledge emerges about the dangers and long term health impacts of the hormonal contraceptive from blood clots to chronic depression (Grigg-Spall 2016, Ross and Kaiser 2017, Skovlund et al. 2016), the biosciences within pharmaceutical worlds will have to address ways to develop better drugs for women – they will not be able to ignore the evidence-supported science. This project of hormonal interventions on women's bodies (via the contraceptive pill) shows us how, historically, bioscience in this field operated within the singular goal of controlling reproductive lives. However, continuous push backs from feminists and feminist science highlight how the burden is disproportionally carried by women vis-à-vis health implications for reproductive freedom. These are 'cultural' assumptions of who bears what burdens in our society. In feminist commons, a techno-scientific future can be imagined where women's health and wellbeing are placed alongside their desire to have flexible reproductive lives, upending the naturalization of a problematic bioscientific intervention. The techno-scientific feminist commons is a site of *new* knowledge production, that dismantles and then reassembles science for everyone.

Situated Knowledges: The future is feminist and not just female. It should always be in the making, not made.

The second claim that I make in support of a techno-scientific feminist commons is that in the dismantling and reassembling within these spaces, feminism and feminist engagements as 'situated knowledges' (Haraway 1988) are essential for grounded engagements. Donna Haraway asked feminist science studies scholars to acknowledge (and perhaps respect) 'situated knowledges' and views from somewhere rather than nowhere. She wrote:

> Situated knowledges are about communities, not about isolated individuals. The only way to find a larger vision is to be somewhere in particular. The science question in feminism is about objectivity as positioned rationality. Its images are not the products of escape and transcendence of the limits (the view from above) but joining of partial views and halting voices into a collective subject position that promises a vision of the means of ongoing finite embodiment, of living within limits and contradictions – of views from somewhere. (1988: 590)

Thus, situated knowledges in techno-science ought to be collectives that highlight the social, political, and material conditions that enable particular knowledge, fact, science to come into being, but that, at the same time, are responsible for ensuring these projects acknowledge their own situatedness.

This second claim for techno-science in feminist commons is an answer to Donna Haraway's call for 'embracing the skillful task of reconstructing the boundaries of daily life' (1991: 181) by moving closer to a science that is for the commons and a commoning science for the everyday. This is a political project and, indeed, a view from somewhere, but this view aims to be an inclusionary one; the feminist commons do not serve exclusionary projects. It is a starting point for a generative engagement with the evolving everyday and its potentialities that become visible through sustained involvements and entanglements. The feminist commons for techno-science is one place to connect with science and scientific knowledges, but it is a space that is a starting point as opposed to an end point. It opens the doors for engagements with queer, indigenous, and marginalized communities as sites for learning and contributing to, rather than spaces to colonize for raw material for knowledge production. In offering to always be situated *and* partial, the knowledge that emerges from such scientific commons is feminist and not attached to femininity or the limited male/female binary opposition. To be situated in the feminist commons *is not to be stuck*, but rather have a grounding that allows from critical engagements with scientific knowledge and its production.

When thinking about commoning and, in particular, an ethnographic commons or an ethnographic engaging with the commons, we have to be cognizant of the work in feminist commons as an inclusionary project, as opposed to an exclusionary one. While I have written above of techno-scientific and biomedical spaces within feminist commons, I also am engaged with the larger project of feminist commons in general and their contribution to the project of commoning ethnography which emerges from an ethnographic commons. In anthropology we often turn to *Writing Culture* as a seminal text in articulating ethnographic engagements for a future generation of scholars (Clifford and Marcus 1986). However, feminist engagements with that scholarship show how it also epitomized the gendered project of knowledge production in anthropology and its inherent exclusionary project – there was one female anthropologist included in the entire edited volume. Subsequently, *Women Writing Culture* was released by feminist scholars in refutation of the exclusionary knowledge production project offered by Clifford and Marcus (Behar and Gordon 1995). It took almost ten years, and a very large number of upset anthropologists, to produce this book. This example of exclusionary politics, so close to our (anthropological) home, should serve as a cautionary tale for any commoning

projects that we undertake. A feminist commons, for techno-science and beyond, is foundational for any ethnographic commons or commoning projects.

While the writing above emerges from the urgency to reclaim techno-science from partisan politics, neoliberal economics, and exploitative everyday practice, it also hopes to serve as a generative discussion about the value of a feminist commons for any commoning project – ethnographic or otherwise. The example above of *Writing Culture* and *Women Writing Culture* serve as constant reminders of the dangers of excluding while moving ahead, but beyond that, they offer us a chance to see the value of non-enclosures. The fact that *Women Writing Culture* could follow *Writing Culture* should also allow us to see how knowledge – scientific and/or anthropological – should never seek to be settled, rather should be open to critique and learn from the everyday. Perhaps, *Women Writing Culture* will be followed by *'Others' Writing Culture!* At offer with the feminist commons, as a grounded starting point for techno-scientific engagements, is an opportunity – not just for scientific commoning practices or feminist commoning projects, but rather for all commoning projects that commit to a non-enclosure. The feminist commons for techno-science is grounded in perpetual change – be it to include more women in science, change the nature of scientific inquiry, or to just stay with the trouble till we can, collectively, dismantle!

In the spirit of situated knowledges, inclusionary projects, and the scientific potentials therein, I end with a short verse to talk speculatively of the feminist commons as an emancipatory space. This verse is an attempt to include another narrative device and a different mode of expression in standard academic writing and engagement. It is experimental, but in that acknowledgment itself lies the humility of a feminist commoning.

FC: Feminist Common(s)
I make the case for
and imagine techno-scientific Feminist Commons that are beyond
male/female binaries.
I make the case for and imagine feminist commons that are not white
They may be black and white
and brown and colorblind, perhaps all at the same time.
The feminist commons will not be riven with violent religio-nationalisms
and will eschew sectarian claims to a 'historical' knowledge.
They will be decolonised and will respect refusal.
Refusal that may bring us closer to truths and scientific knowledge
as opposed to walking away from them.
This future will not talk romantically of a past that was before capitalism
Because the 'past' 'pre-capitalist' space some harken for
was never great for many a marginalized people.
This Feminist Common will be utopia…but, only *always* in the making
not an always-already.
This feminist scientific utopia will be a starting point
…and not the ending.
It will be in the making, in the improving
never claiming with glorious fanfare to have arrived.

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In Praise of Hunches
Towards an intuitive ethnography

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ABSTRACT | Reflecting on my experience in researching academic migrants, in this paper I explore the conflicts that arose between the themes emerging from ethnographic observation and the results of coded interviews. In response, I consider the ways in which we may further the commoning of anthropology by foregrounding the insights obtained through messy intuition and 'hunches' over the seeming certainties of codified recordings. Such a shift will involve narrators rather than informants, stories rather than statements, listening rather than interviewing, and hovering rather than counting. It will also involve new methods of doing ethnography and new styles of writing ethnography as well as new vehicles for the dissemination of ethnography. My plea is for a commoning of ethnography that will allow it to recover its historical role among the humanities and shed the myth of the solitary and heroic researcher.

Keywords: ethnography; writing; narrative; commoning; academic migrants

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How often, when conceptualising and wrestling with writing ethnography, are we overcome with feelings of unease, of hope, of tribulation, and of being lost? Writing about writing ethnography is still a worthwhile and even somewhat-fashionable topic. It remains an important topic to write about, because our methodologies for working within anthropology require high levels of reflexivity. As the ethnographic project is constantly evolving, we are committed to accompanying this process through introspection and retrospection. One such evolving method is the co-creation of texts and, in pursuit of such co-creations, I have been following Kirin Narayan (2009) and organising ethnographic-writing workshops. For this provocation I initially planned to reflect upon commoning data creation with a focus on such writing workshops. But, for some time, I kept feeling uneasy about my proposed topic, and the sense of unease stopped me from writing the intended piece. The question became not so much how to write about this topic but why I enjoyed these writing workshops so much and how I came to do them. Sometimes writer's block is useful; it stops you writing things that you really do not want to put into words – at least not just yet. While still grappling with writer's hesitation in May 2017, somebody said something to me that made me turn round and walk back some distance, away from my proposed topic.

Here is how that walk backwards started. The months of April and May are budget time at Victoria University; school managers and Heads of School have to come up with a calculation of how much money is needed to run their schools in the coming year and the year after. As I was a Head of School, I wrestled with problems such as unknown student-enrolment numbers and, consequently, how much money we would need for tutorials and marking. I ended up requesting advice from a colleague, a sociologist and economist, who works in our finance department forecasting student enrolments. He obliged, and forecast yet another period of significant student growth for us, that is for the whole School of Social and Cultural Studies, with three majors and two minors. After some thought, I ended up ringing him, thanking him for his forecast, and asking: 'Where exactly in the school, in which discipline, will this growth happen? How might it be divided among the majors? Do you have a hunch?' His answer was: 'Brigitte, I don't do hunches'. 'Of course', I said, rather abashed, 'you don't do that'.

But I was incredulous; 'no hunches?' How could he possibly live without hunches? Indeed, how many of his hunches might be disguised as data? Most of my work, I would think, is based on intuition, even though I love numbers and counting things. Counting makes me feel better, it makes me feel as if I am doing the right thing somehow, and it can sometimes give me illuminating insights. Nevertheless, I could not imagine a life without hunches. Planning, doing, and writing ethnography, I realised then, did not make sense without a good dollop of intuition. As I still had to write a piece for our commoning-ethnography project, I engaged in some auto-detective work: I needed to know why I found myself not writing about writing workshops.[1]

And slowly I started walking backwards, retracing my steps in my current research project; thinking how I do and how I teach, indeed how we teach and do ethnography. How we receive stories, and how we then craft our academic narratives. I was now quickly retracing my steps back to the beginning, walking back with increasing pace, passing some crossroads, benches, scenic viewpoints, finally reaching a *cul de sac*. In order to reach the point where the ethnographic-writing workshops on academic mobility fit into this walk, I need to start at the beginning of my current project.

The beginning of that project was the idea of doing an ethnography of academic mobility, especially of academic migrants. I started simply by hanging out with colleagues, following and initiating conversations, listening with intent, journaling impressions, gossiping, and mostly just sniffing around, sampling stories and scenes including my own experiences. By keeping a diary, writing fieldnotes, and recording impressions on the go, a decent number of stories and, yes, hunches, emerged. I applied for and received some money to travel and hang out in other universities, carried out very similar ethnography, and also interviewed colleagues, quite a lot of them. From these impressions, I developed some pretty good notions about how to be and how not to be an academic migrant, what the key narratives are, and what stories universities tell themselves about themselves. And universities do tell a lot of stories about themselves that are quite astounding: how internationally focused they are, how much they embrace foreign faculty, how much they care for international students and academics, and how wonderful life is on their satellite campus locations. Were it not for the insights of ethnographic research and its ability to check out the facts *in situ*, we could easily imagine this as being paradise reforged.

While my many interviews were being transcribed, and while waiting for a period of research and study leave to work with the transcripts, I wrote a raft of papers, presented at conferences, and published a few articles (Bönisch-Brednich 2014). I talked about how academic migrants narrate their lives in the knowledge economy and the neoliberal university; how it is to manage love across distance; how we suppress notions of culture clash on campus; how academic migration is socially and geographically stratified by habitus; how gender structures academic mobility; and how the knowledge economy constitutes a neo-colonising field. I was planning to write a book and thought that by presenting these conference papers I would make tentative progress towards a table of contents. These papers and presentations were all based on my fieldnotes and, well yes, hunches about the broad themes that emerge when academics change campuses and countries and, often, languages. This was exciting because I received wonderful responses and feedback of the kind we all love to receive: 'You are talking about me, this is it, you nailed it for me'. I felt this ethnography growing, developing and, finally, when my research leave came, I went away with this huge pack of transcripts and walked right into the *cul de sac* I have already mentioned. I spent many months coding my transcripts and my notes; let's call this ordering-work counting things. It felt as if I was doing real work, important work. And when I finally looked at the results I was startled. None of my big themes that I had already nailed emerged from the coding process, not one. I had coded myself out of my project and away from my hunches.

It was then that I attended a workshop by Kirin Narayan, and was inspired to organise ethnographic-writing workshops on academic mobility. Spending time with other academic migrants writing stories, crafting scenes, sketching lists, reading aloud, listening, and discussing this shared aspect of our lives has been hugely rewarding. It has also meant relinquishing control, initiating commoning of data, and creating space for unexpected narratives and viewpoints that had not been revealed in the interview process and not even from just hanging out. Doing the workshops and reading and re-reading the stories gifted to me have given me insights into my own research project. It feels right to work with my migrant colleagues in this way (Bönisch-Brednich 2016, 2017).

This is what I would like to take from this story, and I hope that some of you will agree: ethnography has, to a degree, been embraced by other disciplines and is now often used simultaneously with interviewing; we have taken this on board as our research process is then broken up into manageable shifts which can easily be integrated into our working lives. In this way, we produce transcribable data and can still write ourselves cleanly into a methods chapter, claiming a degree of tidy subjectivity. Working with an ethnographic style that relies on interviews, we can assure ourselves that we are giving voice to our participants, thus calming our consciences ruffled by the post-*Writing-Culture* debates. The unease, however, has been growing and, more and more, anthropologists have voiced their concerns about attempts to scientificate qualitative data. James Davies has pointed out that, although 'codification ever more dominates official fieldwork manuals … many anthropologists have remained privately if not always publicly committed to taking seriously the value of fieldwork's intersubjective and experiential dimensions' (2010: 12). In his view, methods, and that includes coding, are limiting what we can discover and increasing what remains hidden from view. The ways we construct our fieldwork and the ordering of material at the desk at home determine how much or how little intuition is allowed to be written into our ethnographic narrative.

During the last two decades, colleagues in the social sciences and humanities have also developed much more introspective ways of writing and analysing. Autoethnography is one of them, but creative ethnography is now much broader and includes poetry, drama, podcasts, and films; in short, creative ethnographers have developed blurred genres. Some of them are now accepted into the canon, others are still considered wacky. Bronwyn Davies and Susanne Gannon argue that methods such as autoethnography open up possibilities 'suppressed by analytic strategies that draw a veil of silence around emotions and bodies' (2006: 3). What such exploration of ethnographic possibilities has brought to the fore is the qualitative, the risky, the intuitive ways of doing research. By embracing vulnerable, contradictory research settings, by designing incomplete and tentative field sites that are not tidily constructed, by allowing for the possibility of participants designing the field for us, in spite of us, we have allowed for the emergence of 'sweaty' ethnography (see Bennett's contribution in this volume).

By allowing ourselves again to be messy, vulnerable, emotional we have made inroads into the reality of working with an intuition that comes from hovering instead of coding, from hanging out with our narratives instead of filing or ordering, and from feeling our way into and out of our fields. This almost certainly means a de-privileging of interview methods and a privileging of listening, working with partners instead of informants, and searching for stories and scenes rather than hasty formulations of methodological opinions and statements. And this extends to how we teach doing and writing ethnography, especially when doing it 'at home'. The narrative turn embraces such intuitively guided storytelling in ethnography, and it also embraces the liberating and simultaneously anxiety-ridden ethnographic styles that come with such new genres. Relinquishing the desire to be seen as doing (social) science means leaving the safety of valorising methodologies of accountability (Bönisch-Brednich forthcoming). 'Many scholars', writes Paul Stoller, 'may favour science over story, determinacy over indeterminacy and thereby refuse to accept the messiness of social relations that is so well expressed in stories' (2007: 188). When we bring

the art(?) of storytelling into writing ethnography, we accept, as Michael Taussig suggests, that the success of our fieldwork relies on listening to narrators of stories rather than on 'informants' (2006: 62).

We might, then, like to encourage our students to craft ethnography from a process of commoning that is messy, collaborative, less-planned, and altogether-less plannable – this is certainly a provocation to most other social sciences. This also involves a shedding of the constraints of writing in a framework of 'scientific' accountability. Writing in this way is guided by deep listening to stories gathered, annotated, crafted, and re-told. It demands or at least allows us to dare to write for reading, for readers who might enjoy ethnography. Ruth Behar, who tackled this subject long before me, stated that 'those who think they know what ethnography is tend to associate it with the social systems, rather than with artful forms of creative writing' (2007: 145). What she is invoking here is not only the narrative turn for anthropology, but also the old kinship and alliance between ethnology and the humanities. In the same issue of *Anthropology and Humanism* as Behar's article, Russell Leigh Sharman explores the notion of style in ethnographic writing, arguing for an ethnography that requires 'intimacy, vulnerability, warmth, and honesty', thereby challenging us as writers and collaborators with our readers. And, by daring to do this, to 'learn new styles of communication, to stretch ourselves, to be uncomfortable' (2007: 119). What this means is the abandonment of our academically trained voices, the decolonisation of our language, and the re-centring of our ambitions towards a new imagination of readership. Consequently, it means abandoning ethnographic writing as a hegemonic project maintained by an academic discourse that operates only on the intellect (Sharman 2007: 119). It also means not only to write for a good reading experience but also to write for accessible publishing outlets. If we take ethnography seriously, then we have to make sure that it is not hidden away in inaccessible academic publications. As a contribution to commoning ethnography, this journal is part of this project which has, at its heart, the desire to open up to a wider variety of readers.

What I am doing here, of course, is gathering allies to support my argument, my plea for intuition in ethnography and for a wider choice of accepted writing styles, writing that may to a degree match our fieldwork experiences, and that gives colour and flavour instead of simply voice.[2] This is, I think, what Marilyn Strathern means when she states 'that the question is not simply how to bring certain scenes to life but how to bring life to ideas' (1987: 257), or what Behar termed 'exquisite being-thereness' (2007: 151).

This project is one that speaks back in a variety of new accents from the periphery to the currently hegemonic and Anglocentric centres of institutional anthropology; it is a project that is suited to a de-colonising of the discipline. Shifting the locations that anthropology inhabits within the social sciences can shift us into a realm of different and shared discoveries about writing ethnography. We would then be crafting ethnography from narratives, pictures, sounds, and impressions – and we may want to park or re-purpose N-Vivo and 'data'. We might also consider ethnography to be a collective project so that, in essence, doing and crafting ethnography will become a process of commoning; we should shed some of the mythical illusion that we go through this all on our own.

Let us make ethnography a commons project and let us do hunches.

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Notes

1. The original abstract reads: Commoning Data Creation. Ethnographic writing workshops are normally held to help colleagues overcome writer's block or to help postgraduate students find their ethnographic voice. This paper considers auto-ethnographic writing workshops as a mode of commoning data production and a means of redistributing ethnographic authority. Ethnographic writing workshops offer alternative modes of self-interrogation that enable participants to co-create data, contributing their voices to a common pool that explores topics of shared interest aligned with the researcher and his or her team of participating experts. Using the example of auto-ethnographic writing workshops on experiences of academic mobility, I will introduce the method as a rich alternative to interviews or free flowing conversations (Bönisch-Brednich, conference abstract May 2017).

2. For another example of thinking about hunchwork, see the recently published piece by Keith M. Murphy, Fiona McDonald and Luke Cantarella on 'Collective Hunchwork' (2017).

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