

2014 VOLUME 1



CONTINGENT HORIZONS

The York University Student Journal of Anthropology

For the face itself is a contingency,
at the magical crossroads of mask and window to the soul,
one of the better-kept public secrets essential to everyday life.

Michael Taussig, *Defacement: Public Secrecy and the Labor of the Negative* (1999)

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ABOUT CONTINGENT HORIZONS

Contingent Horizons is an annual open-access student journal whose editorial board is a collective composed of students. It aims to provide a platform for students of anthropology seeking to publish their outstanding scholarly work in a peer-reviewed academic forum.

Contingent Horizons is guided by an ethos of social justice, which informs its functioning, structure, and policies. It seeks to expand anthropological discussions by publishing students' work and remaining open to a variety of alternative formats.

Contingent Horizons' website is the keystone of the journal. Not only does it host published articles, but it also offers a safe space for respectful discussions that extend the life of scholarly materials and debates beyond publication.

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VOLUME 1 2014

- v **Acknowledgements**
- vi **Editors' note or, An open-ended collective discussion (or digression)**
- 1 **An islander's notes** | BY JEREMY COOPER
The man, the lover, the expat musician on the streets of Athens
- 9 **Loves me, loves me not** | BY SARA BENČEKOVIC
The Museum of Broken Relationships scene analysis
- 19 **Lines that divide** | BY LINDSAY MOORE
Aboriginality, Canadian applied anthropology, and transgressing the 'national anthropological tradition'
- 31 **Silences on Hindu lesbian subjectivity** | BY LUCILE CRÉMIER
- 47 **My Peruvian museum** | BY PRIYA CHENDKE
- 63 **Star parties** | BY RAYNA SLOBODIAN
An ethnographic exploration of amateur and professional astronomers
- 83 **William Curtis Farabee** | BY JAMES ANDREW WHITAKER
Ethnographic explorer and museum anthropologist
- 103 **Performing gender** | BY NAYO SASAKI-PICOU
The construction of black males in the hip-hop industry
- 109 **Eating politically** | BY JAYNE MALENFANT
Food Not Bombs and growing resistance
- BOOK REVIEWS**
- 123 ***Travesti: Sex, Gender, and Culture Among Brazilian Transgendered Prostitutes* by Don Kulick and *Flaming Souls: Homosexuality, Homophobia, and Social Change in Barbados* by David A.B. Murray** | REVIEWED BY CURTIS DIXON
- 130 ***Abject Relations: Everyday Worlds of Anorexia* by Megan Warin**
REVIEWED BY JENNIFER NEWTON

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We returned from York University's first anthropological methods field school in Athens, Greece, full of ambitions. This sense of naive excitement permeated our discussions in the following weeks as the idea of *Contingent Horizons* was blossoming. In the midst of overwhelming support, the warnings of the challenges to come had not yet sunk in. But they did months later during moments of sheer panic, in front of our computers at 3 AM, or arguing over single and double quotations at a coffee shop. Countless people, known or unknown, named or unnamed, have joined us in this process of crafting the journal without whom none of this would have been possible.

We owe the tangible beauty of the design of the journal to Kathe Gray, who also inundated us with encouragement, and generously shared her knowledge and experience of the publication world. Her hard work spanned beyond any title we could think of, and we are extremely grateful for her patience, perseverance, and reliability. We are indebted to Professors Othon Alexandrakis (our faculty advisor) and Albert Schrauwers for their guidance, patience, and never-ending support. They pushed us to reach beyond what we thought was imaginable. Janita Van Dyk helped us spread the word about *Contingent Horizons* whether it be through her enthusiasm or her beautifully designed posters. Yana Pasternak contributed to the building of momentum during the early imaginings of the journal. Both of their presences were invaluable. The contributors and peer reviewers have made this journal possible by believing in its horizons (which are absolutely contingent). It was a gift to receive so many amazing submissions and we are thankful for their generosity and willingness to share their thoughts, dreams, and ideas with us. Finally, the anthropology department has believed in this project beyond words and ideas. They, as well as the Anthropology Student Association, have helped us create something that we could also physically share with the world through their more than generous funding.

What will come next, we do not know. But as we close this first volume, and already start thinking about the next one, we invite all of you to join us in the contingency of this moment, to become something different, for the better or the worse of anthropology.

CONTINGENT HORIZONS 2015

If you are interested in being part of next year's edition of *Contingent Horizons* please stay tuned for our next call for papers in October 2014.

We hope to receive yet another handful of submissions that will push the limits of the discipline towards new and ever-expanding horizons.

Please visit www.contingenthorizons.com for more information.



PHOTO COURTESY: JULIEN COSSETTE

Editors' note, or An open-ended collective discussion (or digression)

The writing tries not only to accept the risk of sprouting deviant, but also to invite it. Take joy in your digressions. Because that is where the unexpected arises. That is the experimental aspect. If you know where you will end up when you begin, nothing has happened in the meantime.

— Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual* (2002)

JULIEN When I reflect back on the past year, Michael Hardt's (2011) treatment of a political concept of love comes to mind. Love, he says, must be transformative. If you are actively in love, you are in the process of becoming something else with someone, with something. It is, no doubt, an act of risk. You drop some of your attachments and points of references, and you enter an experiment in difference. No one knows where it will lead you. Things drag you in one direction or another. Somehow, this notion of an impromptu love resonates with me. So much has happened since last summer. Through unexpected turns and twists, and without a concrete plan or finalized idea, a thought materialized into something tangible, for a moment.

ANDREA To disaggregate—to deconstruct multiple layers of what has characterized a year of weaving between thoughts, desires, daydreams (some might even say delusions) of what we experienced and envisioned for this journal is something I cannot do. I can, however, speak in instances, in (as you say) sometimes tangible moments, fleeting glimmers of something that both eluded and illuminated the hours spent behind computer screens, in a small conference room, or thinking to myself “what will come of this?” Throughout this process I have felt spurts of love, the comforts of trust, and belly-aching, boot-shaking moments of fear, all of which have harmonized, collided, and colluded with one another to shape what we imagined was attainable. However, I believe that underlying this (mis)adventure is a commitment to unearthing new possibilities within anthropology, to encourage students and devout academics alike to see beyond the boundaries that we seek to subvert but so often end up reinforcing.

PARINAZ In every step taken towards growth, whether it is brought by time, by coincidence, by will and effort, or the sheer necessity of livelihood, we are engaged in constant moments of fear and panic—if we are blessed. We have spoken of love, and trust and of dreamlike thoughts ... A child perhaps feels the tingling sensation of power and will within its growing and meek muscles to push and try to stand even if the ground promises a painful fall. The grasping fingers, the tottering core, the trying feet reach for an assurance, for an arm mirroring the same hope. It is in trust, belief, and encouragement that we, as ever-growing children, might begin to think of ourselves as gifted with the unimaginable potential and capacity. While we seek to be the host of those moments of fear and growth for students through this collective process, my own experience of involvement with this journal began, and was shaped by the same nature: fear, trust, and growth.

JULIEN I like that you mention trust, it speaks to me. Not as a hard concept, but as this potentializing thing that resonates with intensity in your stomach. Sometimes, even the best ideas cannot flourish without the ‘right’ ingredients. Long ago, the seeds of a dream were planted in the messy field of my imagination. These things do not grow in a vacuum, though. Through the warm and worldly exposures to experiences and encounters (the heat of Athens, as much as a love for anthropology and sense of hope in its creative potential), they slowly germinated. But the sprouts were not yet ready to crack the surface and contend with the vagaries of this open world. So years passed, until this feeling arose, when it finally felt like they had found something, someone they could become with, love with, growing into and onto the unknown with the moderate confidence of a thing suddenly made possible. Perhaps what I am trying to say is that I had this indescribable sensation, this long-awaited, long dreamt about, smooth yet uncanny feeling that you would be interested by this project, that we could make it work, and more importantly that we could all dive, blindfolded, into the unknown with this actualizing sensation, loaded yet still so open and undefined, we can maybe call, trust. But just for a moment, because it is so much more than that.

ANDREA As I flow back and forth between these moments, between love, trust, and fear, I remember the moment you dared to invite us to dream with you. At first, I felt an unruly

rush of excitement as a new opportunity exposed itself to me, naked and unashamed of guiding my thoughts towards potentialities. Then came apprehension, a sister, a brother of fear that slowly seeps into uncontrolled moments of excitement. I could imagine myself trying to create, to build something but did not want that something to be expected or familiar. However, looking into the face of the unknown I noticed it was fractured, flawed, and dependent upon how I decided to perceive of the possible. "Alright," I thought, "let's speak and live in hypotheticals. Let's take each other's hands and drift towards something unique or something that is perfectly ordinary. At least we're deciding to drift at all."

JULIEN Uncertainty can be frightening, can't it? But also empowering. Letting yourself drift, as you say. Drifting towards the unknown, staying in the present and the potentialities as you transition to the next step. That's where you can find hope, Massumi (2003) says. Not in the optimism or pessimism that derive from a foreseen future, sometimes so discouraging and nerve-wrecking as we experienced it, but in the "margin of manoeuvrability" (2003:211) that opens up an immanent space for experimentation and potentialities.

We had no referents, only a naive idea: "let's make a student journal." We did not know any better than the next step. What it would be like, what would be required to get there, we had no idea. Or maybe, on the contrary, we were paddling (or struggling not to drown) into an overwhelming sea of possibilities reflecting our desires and hopes for the future(s) of anthropology in this world, and also what we thought as pressing challenges. The corporatization of universities. Wild rumors, seeping in through the cracks of everyday talk at the university, that some academic programs are facing precarious and contingent futures. Disciplinary rites of passages, pre-determined textual forms of representation, and the revealing running gag that "one must secure tenure first" (a real joke, isn't it?).

PARINAZ Uncertainty, the unknown, sat next to us in every meeting. Occupying a seat, its murmurs both excited and terrified us at times. But it was the disposed, the 'given' which, with its tired mask, stared at us and demanded us to challenge it: that, was what had brought us together.

The persisting hierarchy in academia, the commodification of not only knowledge but also students, faculty and university members, the absence of green thoughts and papers created by students, the disengaged routines of academic practices are perhaps in some ways, as Taussig suggests, a public secret: "that which is generally known, but cannot be articulated" (1999:5). However, this journal, us, and all included in the process of its creation still persist behind that mask, and use its secrets to exist, and pursue our dreams. The secret then, must remain in order to facilitate our beliefs and anthropological aspirations, as well as the destructive, yet creative opportunities. I would like to think that this creation, *Contingent Horizons*, is a single match lit towards the burning "funeral pyre" (Taussig 1999:2), in unmasking and deconstructing part of what exists, to unveil the beauty. The beauty—the intellect of students, as well as the eagerness of all for an engaged education—that is being nurtured behind the very mask that hides it.

Students, professors, experiences, and places have been inspirations for the creation of this journal. For me, the inspiration was characterized by the momentary eye glimmers in excited supports, in feeling the joys and discomforts of anthropological fieldwork, and

finally in glimpses into my peer's imaginations. Minds that were informed by guidances, as well as subjective and contingent points of view, that created wondrous landscapes and horizons in its aspirational distance. I wanted that landscape to have visitors, and I hoped for that beauty to shed its format of a saved file, or a graded and forgotten paper. Every scape—whether sea, land, or else—is living and in need of breath. Even if it is still gardened with budded branches.

ANDREA Grappling with the desire to embrace deviations within anthropology and the politics of enacting these transformations has, at times, morphed me into a severe and cynical critic. However, over the course of this long and often exacting journey with *Contingent Horizons* I have realized that being critical also means being open and willing to see things differently no matter how intoxicated we are with our own ideals, beliefs, and passions. I see the contributors to this journal as composed of those who, each to their own extent, remind us of where we are situated in anthropology today and simultaneously, invite us to disentangle ourselves from the rigidities of the discipline. Most importantly, I see this volume as a dialogue, an ebb and flow between the ideas of our colleagues and the complexities of the design of academia. As we move back and forth between the often overwhelming pull of the tide and the comforts of the loyal and sturdy shores, the feeling of uncertainty permeates every movement, every thought, and every sigh. The risk of losing control of this precarious synchronicity, these sanctioned checks and balances that compose the everyday negotiations of thought in the classroom and on paper can be terrifying. However, what I have found is that there is also value in willing yourself to bite back the fear and push yourself to move beyond what is comfortable and assured.

I welcome the deluge and I hope you do too.

*Andrea Vitopoulos
Julien Cossette
Parinaz Adib*

TORONTO, APRIL 19, 2014

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An islander's notes

The man, the lover, the expat musician on the streets of Athens

JEREMY COOPER

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT, YORK UNIVERSITY

Lazarus is a Cuban street musician living in Athens, Greece. This article tracks both his life history and his encounter with the author who was researching busking in the city. It is a study at the confluence of art and anthropology, an exploration of ethno-biography as a mode of representation, and a reflection on ethnographic fieldwork.

KEY WORDS ethno-biography, street music (busking), fieldwork

Much of what follows comes from several conversations Lazarus, a Cuban saxophone player, and I had. I was in Athens, a bustling and cramped metropolis, for a total of one month. Lazarus and I became fast friends and played together on several occasions in the area of Athens around the Acropolis called the Plaka, a known tourist area, and the ideal place to find entertainers. We had little in the way of formal interviews and instead spoke as friends, although he was aware of my project and my plans as an Anthropology student conducting research in Athens. For this reason, as much as I would like to, I cannot quote him directly.

This being a study at the confluence of art and anthropology, it was very much influenced by an attention to affect. It follows both my encounter with Lazarus and his life-story, as he narrated it. I will not be making a concrete argument, except to say that music is a skill that many people (Lazarus in particular) have used to survive in the midst of a massive economic downturn in the Greek economy. Lazarus was saved by his saxophone.

Biography of Lazarus

He barely eats, He hardly sleeps
He stands all day and plays
Notes float along the street
He's a lover in every kind of way

A handsome man, without a plan
From an island far away
With melody he does what he can
Always at work, always at play

Born in Cuba in 1968, he was the youngest of three children. He began walking at six months old, a child who just had to move. After a few months he was hospitalized because walking on soft bones had caused them to warp and he was unable to walk. For the next four years he saw only one room in a religious hospital, cared for by nuns and priests, he waited for his legs to work again. Upon leaving the facility, he found he was different than his peers. He had been around older people for most of his childhood and found it difficult to fit in with children his own age. Soon afterward, he didn't specify how long, presumably a couple of years, he began playing with girls, sparking a lifelong passion for ... well, passion and girls. He had male friends, but spent a great deal of time with girls his own age, and once he had grown more, girls who were sometimes much older. Growing up he loved Bob Marley, funk, and jazz, most of which was not to be found on the radio or in music stores anywhere in Cuba, where the only music played and on the radio was traditional and maybe some rock. He had many Bob Marley records and spent hours listening to them.

He went to "polytechnic" school and was the only one of his siblings to graduate, his sister had children and stopped going and his brother dropped out to work. According to him, he was the "prodigal son" and his mother was very proud. Early on it was clear he would go far, and so he has. A driven man, he then enrolled in military school at about 15 and spent a few months there before being shipped off to Angola. Cuba had supported the MPLA (*Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola*, or People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola) in Angola since its struggle for independence in 1974–75 and sent troops and other personnel to their aid, so he told me. At the age of sixteen, Lazarus convinced his superiors to let him go and fight. He spent 11 months in Angola, a touchy subject and one not easily or happily relived. After that time he was pulled out by the Cuban authorities and made a lieutenant at the military academy, after only a year or so of actual schooling and a year of brutal war. He was offered a career in the military, but refused and left. It was not his calling. Ever a lover, never a fighter.

Lazarus married a Cuban woman and had two children with her, to whom he continues to send money when he can from Athens. The marriage fell apart when he went to school for a few months to become a barber and opened his own barber shop. Through the barber shop he supported himself while attending music school in 1995, studying saxophone. Out of his class of 30 musicians, he was the only one to graduate. His life was busy and exciting through these years, running a small business, going to parties, studying, seeing friends, and traveling. He found that he had no time to play saxophone, though he studied the books and had a theoretical knowledge of music in general. When it came time for exams, he practiced feverishly, often until very late at night. He told me he used to hide in his closet, putting clothes under the door and in his sax to muffle the sound, and he played all through the night. When it came time to award the diplomas for the class of 1999, Lazarus explained that many of his classmates had dropped out, largely because they could not handle the pressure of the school although they still played beautifully. Lazarus was brought before the judges and when asked if he thought he deserved a diploma, he took a leap and told them he did because he knew the material and worked really hard and so on. Whether or not his speech was actually persuasive the judges awarded him—and only him—a diploma. The accreditation allowed him to teach music. In spite of this, after graduation he literally hung up his sax and instead concentrated on running his barber



Lazarus in Athens, Greece.

PHOTO COURTESY: JEREMY COOPER

shop, that is until the future founder of Manana Reggae came in for a shave. Manana Reggae was, according to Lazarus, the first reggae band to be formed in Cuba.

This man, I never found out his name, asked Lazarus if the saxophone on the wall belonged to him. When Lazarus said yes, but that he didn't play much, Bob told him he was starting the first reggae band to play in Cuba. To this point the music scene had been dominated by traditional and rock music. Lazarus, who grew up listening to reggae records, was intrigued. Yet, because he did not think he could spare the time and the offer didn't seem very serious, he refused. After a time, Bob came back, saying he had a few members and they were jamming regularly, he again invited Lazarus to come and join; again he refused. He was nonetheless becoming more and more interested. After another couple of weeks, Bob came back and, finally, Lazarus decided to join them for a jam. From that point on, they were known as Manana Reggae, touring all over Cuba, becoming wildly popular as a local act. About the same time, another band approached Lazarus to play bass, this band was Frijoles Negro, a funk/hip hop band, also a novelty in Cuba at the time, and he accepted. The latter became quite famous in Cuba and, according to him, toured with the North American group, The Roots.

He was with these two bands for five years, touring all over Cuba. During which time he met a Greek woman who was vacationing there. Lazarus wooed her and they began to date. Over the next couple of years she returned to Cuba several times to visit him. Then, in 2004 with the Olympics coming to Athens, Lazarus decided to go and visit her in Athens, where she was staying for work. Once there, he had planned to stay for only a few weeks, but his girlfriend suggested they get married, largely as a way to get him papers



Lazarus in Cuba, performing with Toronto poet and singer D'bi Young.

PHOTO COURTESY: JEREMY COOPER

so that he could visit her there and not have trouble. Trouble being problems with racist police, difficulty with visas etc. They married, and Lazarus stayed in Athens for longer than expected, however, after about four months (yes, months) they split and he was left on the streets in Greece for about a month. Meanwhile, his life in Cuba had dissolved, the bands were moving on, and the barber shop was in decline. Lazarus was stuck. Eventually he got himself back on his feet, but by that point had very little in Cuba to go back to. He has visited on occasion but essentially he has stayed in Greece, living mostly in Athens ever since 2004.

After he had begun to establish himself in Athens, using his saxophone as a way to make money to survive, Lazarus met a guitar player in his late 20s. He and Lazarus began jamming. However the young man had some substance abuse issues, and Lazarus said he would not be in his band until he cleaned himself up. Lazarus has never liked drugs and alcohol and, more importantly, did not have time to waste. Eventually though, the two of them started the funk rock band Fundracar. Lazarus, being an eternal fan of reggae, suggested they play a couple of reggae songs, so they added them to the “repetory”—to explain, Lazarus’ English was conversational but lacking in grammar, he would say he when talking of women or men and he said “repetory” instead of repertoire, something I found rather charming). Soon after, Sony took notice of them and offered them a large contract ... as a reggae band. This was a huge opportunity, but unfortunately most of the band had to be replaced because they were rockers as opposed to Rastas. They got a drummer and bass player who were cousins from Kenya and began cutting an EP album. They released the EP and began touring, however, it soon became apparent that there were rifts in the band. Lazarus wanted to be writing good music and, again, did not want to waste time.

The others were much younger and comfortable writing cliché songs, as in simple, lowest common denominator stuff; not in it for the music so much as the money ... and spending most of their time in bottles and clouds. They were also not making any money because Sony had sunk so much into them that everything they made touring was going back to the company. Lazarus was not happy about this. Though he was close with the band, he was forced to leave because he simply could not support himself with the little wages he earned from the band, who to him, seemed to be drowning in indulgence and laziness. Lazarus returned to being a solo act, busking most of every day and playing in bars, restaurants, and clubs most nights. It is hard to earn a living as a musician anywhere in the world, and my friend is unsupported by family in a crumbling economy trying desperately to make ends meet. In years past, making money as a musician in the tourist areas of Athens was not impossible, but in the last years especially people have been working less (often laid-off), there is little money flowing, and the trouble with riots and unrest makes tourists nervous so there are fewer of them as well.

Over time he had five children with four different women and was expecting a sixth child with a fifth woman; in fact, as I write this sentence his new daughter has been born. He tries his damndest to send them money when he can and to visit his far-flung family (as two live in Cuba, one in London, one in Latvia, and the rest in Athens). However with the ongoing economic crisis in Greece, it has been very hard for him to maintain these connections and fulfill these obligations with any sort of regularity. Luckily he has created support networks based around his various girlfriends and his many friends, but he lives hand to mouth. He plays all day long, sometimes forgetting to eat, and generally makes between 80 and 150 euro in a day ... but that is pretty optimistic. In clubs he averages about 40 euro for a few hours of entertainment. He is doing better than some, and only he knows just how much he is struggling.

Our Time Together

When I met him, Lazarus was standing in his favorite spot in Plaka, just below the Acropolis under a large tree. I heard a saxophone floating on the breeze and went to investigate. At first I was planning simply to give him some money and take his picture, as I had been doing with most of the buskers I had seen. I had just come back from the music store, where I had purchased an acoustic guitar (I needed something to play for the time I was there) and upon seeing it, he immediately struck up a conversation, asking me to jam with him. I was thrilled, as earlier an interview had fallen through, and I was in the midst of wondering where my project was going. I sat down and began playing along as best I could. He was playing jazz (not my strong suit musically) so I was trying to contribute nice sounds, but he seemed to be really enjoying it, and I immediately noticed his energy. He is a musician who plays with heart, which is harder to find than one might think. We began talking and after a time went to get dinner. He took me to his favorite restaurant, in the “black town” as he called it, the dangerous and unruly area around Omonia Square where immigrants from much of the world conglomerate. As we went he told me that he much preferred playing on the street to playing in clubs and such because in establishments the managers will often try to jerk around the musicians and not pay them what they are owed (a practice not uncommon in Canada as well), but on the street he is his own master and



Lazarus and the author after a day of swimming and spearfishing.

PHOTO COURTESY: JEREMY COOPER

decides when to play, when to stop, where and what to play, et cetera. He was a gentleman as well because, although I could see he didn't have much, he paid for my dinner (which was tasty and cheap). As we were parting ways, he told me he was playing at Cafe Plaka in the Plaka neighborhood in a few days and that I should come and see him; we exchanged what contact information we could (I did not have a phone, so it was email) and went our separate ways.

That Friday, I went with a number of my classmates to see his show. I had told them about it and they were quite intrigued. Lazarus was happily surprised to see me. I had not emailed him so he thought I wouldn't come. He told me that he played in this place once a week and that he would lend me his electric guitar so that the next week we might play together. I was very excited about this, I had been wondering how far I could connect with the music scene while I was in Greece, partly for fun and partly for research. His show was excellent; he and another Cuban man played Latin jazz and gave a dance lesson, making a point of dancing with every woman in the place. Lazarus and his friend were excellent dancers, and they made quite a spectacle whirling around the floor. A day or so later, I met him and he gave me his only electric guitar, showing me how trusting he could be. For all he knew I could have just left the country with it the next day, so I was rather surprised he chose to leave me with it. In any case, this only served to cement our friendship. Via Facebook, he sent me the songs that we would play that night, and I spent the next days practicing. When Friday rolled around again, we met at Cafe Plaka and practiced some more, before the show. My classmates all came to encourage me. It was interesting to see people's reactions. In the Cafe was the only time and place I saw Greeks dancing with any gusto. In the club district of Gazi, no one dances to the music, they stand around and drink,

and nowhere else did I see anyone dancing with abandon ... apparently Latin jazz makes everyone's hips move. Lazarus was paid 45 euro for the night.

The next night, we played at a bar that was near the Acropoli metro, I felt a lot more comfortable with our "repetory" and so the show went a lot better. Again my friends came to watch, and again we all danced halfway through. It was the first time Lazarus had ever played at this bar, so I was honored to be there for it. The way it worked was that he would play a set (about an hour and a half) and then I would join him for the second half, after which we would jam. If he needed to fill more time, I would let him finish on his own. He was paid 40 euro then. After that night, he lent me his amplifier so that I could practice better. There was another gig the next Friday. He was always very generous, I knew he was struggling financially (he was quick to say so) but he never let on to it in his actions or in his generosity and always insisted that he pay for my food and drink, though sometimes I simply wouldn't let him. He talked always about the pressures of 'Babylon' making his life very difficult, he was referring to the crisis taking place, but more broadly to the financial systems that brought it about as such things are not present in Cuba. He often didn't pay for transit because such things are free in Cuba, and he felt he shouldn't have to pay. The use of Rasta terminology was simply part of his vocabulary, likely due to his upbringing in reggae in the Caribbean.

That week, he and I went to his favorite place to swim, about an hour out of Athens, and we spent the afternoon there, spearfishing and talking about life. It was a very nice afternoon and I learned a great deal about his life that day. The day after, I went to his *garrida's* house (he used the word a lot referring to his pregnant girlfriend) and we spent the day jamming with bass and guitar, playing several of the songs I have written in order to play them at the gig that weekend. When it came time to play the last show, I met him near where we had played the previous Saturday, at a sports bar below a traveller's hostel near the Acropolis Museum. It was a decent show, again the first time he had played there. He was constantly searching for new places to play, so it was a first for both of us. The environment was not as conducive to jazz music as the other places had been, it was loud and boisterous. Again my 'cheering section' came to support Lazarus and I which was nice, but the audience aside from them was scattered and fluctuating. We played the songs I wrote, which went over better than I was expecting and involved singing in English. When I had played on the streets for fun and research, people seemed to enjoy it, but generally the only ones who made and comment or acknowledgment were English speakers, evoking a kinship related to language. Other buskers were not moved. Once, an American went well out of his way to come and give me some money because he liked the song I was playing, more importantly he could understand it, which I think was a comforting thing for him. In any case, I found language to be a unifier, which was good at the gig because there were primarily Americans and Australians in the audience so they understood my songs (though they had obviously never heard them before). This facilitated a better connection with the audience. This was a clear indication that tourism in Athens was not dead, many still come from all over the world, often young people, to explore the ancient city. I never found out how much Lazarus was paid that night, but I would guess around 50 euro.

The next day, I met Lazarus for the last time, and we spent a few hours busking at his favorite place, where we met, then I returned his guitar to him, and we said our goodbyes and parted ways. I left him some money in his guitar case, because I knew if I gave it to

him he would not accept it: he has too much pride. It was bittersweet to say goodbye, it was very nice to have spent the time with him, and he gave me much knowledge and many stories, but it is a shame that I won't see him again, at least in the foreseeable future.

Conclusions

Just like me, Lazarus is a moving, feeling being, as Brian Massumi (2002) would say. Nailing my concepts too neatly would have taken away some of the affective intensities and potentialities—the singularities—of our encounters I intended to transmit through this biography.

Lazarus has had a long and exciting life, and it has taken him to a rather difficult spot in Athens. He would love “a stable job” in a factory or a farm or anything, and to only play music for fun. This is close to impossible though, because of the current economic conditions and skyrocketing unemployment in Greece, so he is forced to exhaust himself with his melodies trying to earn enough to feed himself and send support to his various children. He would like to leave the country; however he does not have enough money to do so. He remains cheerful and optimistic nonetheless and really is luckier than many. He is far from descending into addiction, and he has a skill that is really more of a passion with which he can make an acceptable living. He has an amazing spirit and a solid drive, but very little traction. The crisis is affecting everyone in Greece differently, but it is on everyone's lips, and when his are not around his horn, or on a lady's, they are lamenting his difficult situation, but always doing so with a smile on his face.

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Loves me, loves me not

The Museum of Broken Relationships scene analysis

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The Balkan region is known for its historical climate of turbulent social relations; thus, public spaces that consecrate shared experiences of grief and loss come as no surprise. One such space, however, has experienced astonishing growth in its fame and popularity, not just as a renowned cultural landmark, but as a significant Croatian cultural export. The Museum of Broken Relationships is filled with unremarkable everyday objects donated by lovers who associate them with their past relationships. The value of these objects is not necessarily utilitarian, or aesthetic, but symbolic: they represent the emotions of remorse and pain elicited by breakups. This paper is an account of the objects, stories, and narratives found in the Museum of Broken Relationships. It considers the Museum a lens through which people can scrutinize the meaning of love in their everyday lives and consequently re-shape their identities. It looks into the Museum's transformative potency as a spiritual and sacred space that offers hope in times of despair, fosters disorientation and chaos, and offers visitors an opportunity to confirm or reject their previous perspectives on love.

KEY WORDS museums, love, material culture

I have always wondered whether caterpillars know they are going to become butterflies, or whether they just lie in their cocoons thinking, “What on Earth am I doing?” What a fate, to wake up one day in the body of an utterly different insect, with inherently divergent instincts, drives, needs, pleasures, and pains. As surreal and magnificent as it sounds, metamorphosis can also be an absurd, terrifying, and disturbing process. It is, perhaps, its agonizing nature that makes it an experience that an organism would not want to be aware of as it unfolds. Even in the human world, any change, big or small, positive or negative, afflicts the organism with distressing tension and dread.

There is, perhaps, no better emblem of such critical and pivotal points in the lives of individuals than breakups of love relationships which often leave past lovers with shattered identities. In fact, breaking up is a rather misleading term. More often than not, the bonds between former partners remain strong and persist long after the relationship has come to an end; and, what is more, it takes time and effort for one to recover and solidify one's own individual self. My intuitive assumption was that coping with such an intimate crisis would be a rather personal and private act, exposed exclusively to the circle of closest



Inside the Museum of Broken Relationships.

PHOTO COURTESY: MUSEUM OF BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS

family members, friends, and, at times, professional counsellors. One institution, however, led me to reconsider my initial postulation. It is the Museum of Broken Relationships, a space consecrated to the shared experience of grief and despair in relation to lost love and an authentic model of public space made “liminal” (Turner 1969:95). It is the space where bonds with former partners and relationships are aimed to be loosened, and even broken, through former lovers discarding, donating, and exhibiting objects which they associate with their ended relationships. Originating in a small European country, Croatia, the Museum of Broken Relationships is now winning hearts and minds of people from across the world.

Indeed, the things that change with breakups are many, as one is not merely leaving their partner, but the part of their life that was defined by that relationship. A breakup period calls for many new considerations and decisions; it is a period of disruption of what our lives used to be, but also a period when personal growth and the Self become a priority. I would suggest that it is precisely such life crises which serve as stepping stones to new possibilities and identities. As the Chinese word for crisis suggests, chaos gives rise to opportunity. Contrary to the traditional conception of museum exhibitions as thoroughly, even meticulously planned, curated, and displayed, the Museum of Broken Relationships, allows the unstructured voluntary donations of random everyday objects, as well as the accompanying narratives written by the owners of the objects to be displayed. As such, the exhibited objects and narratives become the means of recuperating the broken hearts. This institutionalization of coping and muddling through breakups of intimate relationships, as well as the subjectivities formed in such a way, will be the central focus of this paper.

The existence of such institutions and establishments is, in fact, not new. For example, in the well-known art installation *My Bed*, Tracey Emin showcases her bed in the state in which she claims it had been during her breakup. The bed is covered in bodily secretions, bloody stains from self-injurious acts, as well as everyday objects, such as empty food boxes, slippers and tissues (Galenson 2008:25). In that way, Emin publicly displays the intimate emotional states related to her love's life and death, and invites her audience to reflect on their own experiences of love. What is new, however, is the unprecedented popularity of conducting such a candidly personal and private experience as coping with love loss in public, which is exemplified by the astonishing scope of the aforementioned Museum's growth and spread all around the globe. The Museum of Broken Relationships is well on its way to reach the goal of exhibiting in every country in the world within a seven year period. I would suggest that the exponentially growing demand for publicizing personal love narratives is indicative not just of personal crossroads, but of the large-scale collective crisis concerning the issue of love and relationships in the changing contemporary world, as well as of the shared effort to establish modern meanings of this human condition.

The Museum's collection is straightforward as it consists of unremarkable everyday objects donated to the Museum by former lovers for whom they are meaningful because of their association with past relationships. Thus, the Museum comes to existence only through such contingent, unstructured, unsystematic, offhand personal donations. Many curators across the world disapprove of such acquisition and display of the exhibits by naming it "crowd-sourcing," on account of its perceived contempt for carefully conceptualized and displayed exhibition. What these curators fail to recognize, however, is that it is not the objects themselves, but people's stories and experiences behind them, which is the essential idea behind the exhibition. The Museum of Broken Relationships blurs the boundary between production and reception, creating and viewing. Past lovers are not just the exhibitors; they are also the exhibits, as well as the viewers, thus claiming a threefold authority over the Museum space. Indeed, as Gramsci suggested, people are "organic intellectuals" with a capacity to modify a current conception of the world (1992:199–203). By assuming absolute control over the Museum's content, past lovers generate an extra-structural space that is by the people, for the people, and about the people.

The objects displayed are various, but also ordinary and commonplace. At first, it might seem that there is nothing remarkable about nasal spray or a plush toy; however, it is not the objects' utilitarian or aesthetic value that makes them significant, but their history and personal associations. Undeterred by their unexceptional nature, our dearest treasures have become powerful signifiers of personally meaningful and esteemed associations, memories, and recollections. As such, material culture becomes a crucial component of human relations (Edwards, Gosden, and Phillips 2006:4). Objects have the power to provoke emotions and thoughts, and this "evocative" quality makes them inseparable from our life events, or, as Turkle states, "We think with the objects we love; we love objects we think with" (2007:16). The evocative nature of objects is captured in Lévi-Strauss's concept of "bricolage" which explains the phenomenon of people acquiring existing objects from various aspects of social life, and ascribing them new meanings (1966:19). Indeed, objects become an integral part of our romantic relationships. Rings

exchanged during the wedding ceremony, shared wardrobe and bed sheets, even the favourite foods of a past lover become the embodiment and expression of the abstract, yet real emotions of love and attachment.

For these reasons, once the relationship is over, these objects might become poisonous reminder of loss that must be purged, as keeping the object in one's possession might feel as holding onto the perished past. For other people, however, these objects might be held as a dear memory of cherished past and people. Indeed, the Museum's space is filled with both humour and tragedy. An example of a humorous object is the candy G-string given to the owner by "a guy who was as cheap and shabby as his presents" (Vištica and Grubišić 2010). A tragic one is the letter written by a Bosnian refugee to a girl whom he met on the transportation convoys in 1992. As he puts it, "The letter was never delivered, but she has never been forgotten" (Vištica and Grubišić 2010). Some objects are explicitly tied to past relationships, as the "flawless engagement ring given by the flawed fiancé" (Vištica and Grubišić 2010); while the meaning of other objects is rather symbolic, as the magnifying glass that represents how "small I felt around him" (Vištica and Grubišić 2010). Among all the trivial and everyday things, one can also find some bizarre objects, such as a bottle filled with tears cried out after a breakup.

Such a variety of objects and their accompanying narratives stands for a wide range of different emotions people go through during breakups, as well as other relationship experiences. This phenomenon is best seen through a cross-cultural perspective. The Museum of Broken Relationships has travelled to many countries; however, the collection in each locale consists of the items donated by the local population. Narratives that accompany objects are fairly similar across the world, as they are commonly tied to the themes of disappointment, pain, regret and disillusion. However, many of the objects and narratives are context specific. For instance, whereas tales in Bosnia were largely related to the war in the 1990's, one in five exhibited Philippine love stories ended when one of the partners left to work abroad. By the same token, while a single cell-phone is the only electronic object stored in a Zagreb museum, items from Singapore were mostly computerized items. Such context-specific quality of the Museum of Broken Relationships affirms Eriksen's "glocalization" hypothesis which suggest that globalizing processes induce the vitalization of local cultural expressions (2007:58).

Equally important is the space of the Museum which constitutes a configurative framework for displayed exhibits. Placing the exhibition within the space of a museum conveys a significant meaning in itself, by virtue of museums being not just physical, but also conceptual spaces. As McLuhan suggested, "the medium is the message" (1964:7), as it both shapes our perception of the message, and is itself a message. The museum spaces influence the way the exhibition is organized and perceived, what is more, they describe and portray people who authored it (Edwards, Gosden, and Philipps 2006:254). Following that logic, the way objects are displayed in the Museum of Broken Relationships reflects the collective memories and beliefs about love held by the donators and visitors. The value ascribed to the objects is indicated through the display of items as focal points in the space of the Museum. To illustrate, objects are placed on contrasting, colourless surfaces and illuminated; and, as Putnam suggests, any item appears special when placed in a museum's vitrine or a wall (2009:37). Furthermore, exhibits are organized in aisles



The mad dwarf.

PHOTO COURTESY: MUSEUM OF BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS

that represent different emotions. The Aisle of Rage and Fury, for example, holds objects like the Mad Dwarf sculpture that was thrown by an angry wife onto the windshield of her husband's new car on the day of their divorce. Perhaps the most tragic part of the Museum is the Resonance of Grief room with a single object that belonged to a young girl who ended her life on the night of her break-up. The space of the Museum itself is intimate and comfortable, and, as such, it is designed to elicit specific kinds of emotions in visitors in relation to the exhibited objects. Most notably, the physical barrier between the visitor and the untouchable objects might be central to creating distance and disconnection between people and the objects that signify love loss and disappointment. In this way, hope in future relationships is preserved. In addition to glass vitrines and "do not touch" warnings also found in other museums, the Museum of Broken Relationships intensifies the detachment between viewers and exhibits people that "when you hear this noise, it is time to move on" (Vištica and Grubišić 2010) chimes that periodically remind people to move on.

Another important feature of museums is in the purpose of storing and preserving the remains of the past. A prevalent belief is that love is worthwhile only if it endures, otherwise, as its mere semantics suggests, it is 'broken.' In the space of the Museum, however, even the unsuccessful love is able to live on in the objects that symbolize it. Past relationships are something we need to let go of, something that can no longer exist within us; thus, discarding the symbols of the broken relationships is a form of release and liberation. However, allowing past relationships to live apart from us is therapeutic and cathartic, as



Fragments of a love letter.

PHOTO COURTESY: MUSEUM OF BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS

people are able to preserve the bits and parts of their shattered identities represented by those objects, and protect their personas. The love letter written on the fragmented glass is, perhaps, the best testimony to this claim. As her relationship crumbled, the author of the love letter safeguarded her reality from crumbling along by shattering the words of love inscribed onto the mirror instead. Fragments of the love letter, the mirror, and the author's lost love now remain removed and distant in the Museum, so her persona could continue to flourish.

Furthermore, just as visitors are central to the success of the exhibition, they are also crucial for the success of the Museum as a liminal space. According to Habermas (1989), the public is constituted as relations among strangers by means of having access to the same cultural texts. It is, however, perplexing to think that these mundane everyday objects can resonate so highly with complete strangers. Warner (2002) provides us with the valuable idea of reflexivity which explains how complete strangers come to understand and make sense of each other through the process of focusing their attention on the same, continuously circulated cultural texts which establish the basis for their interaction. The public, for Warner, is the "ongoing space of encounter" (2002:62), characterized by its tangible and concrete nature conducted through regular daily performativity. Along with the definition of public, Warner has introduced notion of "counterpublics" (2002:86), the self-organized subordinate publics who act as agents that openly challenge the structure. Both of these publics, I would argue, operate in the space of the Museum of Broken Relationships, either confirming and reproducing, or challenging and transforming dominant values attached to the ideas of love and relationships.

A big part of the breakup aftermath is the search for a feeling that one is not alone, yet that there are others with whom one shares the same emotional agony. The Museum of Broken Relationships is the space which institutionalizes the compassionate relationships between the once secure and loved, and the now rejected, broken-hearted souls. While gazing at and self-identifying with the exhibits and their narratives, visitors form mental images of the objects' former owners, thus, founding a basis of their ensuing connectedness. As Grotowski suggests, "artists' goals are not to teach others but to learn with them about their existence" (1975:212). This self-analysis and self-search of all the Museum's partakers "reliminalizes" a modern human beings by placing them within existential *comunitas* that challenge the normative (Turner 1982:118). Indeed, audiences complete the artwork by ascribing it particular meaning.

Transformation of the normative becomes possible as the Museum's partakers do not merely reproduce the social memory. On the contrary, imagined shared identities, collective memories and beliefs about love, as represented by the exhibits, serve as a foundation upon which exhibitors and visitors may challenge the very nature of love as a fundamental human condition. Indeed, the ideal love is a rather elusive and delusional concept, and, as such, beyond anyone's reach. However, to build upon Wornow's (2007) idea, each subsequent failure to obtain the ideal love furthers the former lovers' drive to attain it. As Turner (1969) suggests, people rise above and surmount the shared disoriented states, in this instance the breakup aftermath, and work together to construct new meanings. Thus, the performative reiterations, such as acquiring, preserving, exhibiting and viewing the objects from our past relationships, continue to modify the ways love is understood, experienced, and generated in people's everyday lives. The Museum of Broken Relationships is, thus, a "frame" (Goffman 1974:1) within which symbols of love are "scrutinized, assessed, remodelled, and rearranged" (Turner 1969:35). Thereafter, the symbols of love, with their renewed character, are applied to the world outside the frame. Under these circumstances, novel ideas challenge the continuation of preliminary structures and beliefs in people's everyday lives (Turner 1969:33).

There are, indeed, many spaces in which dominant structures are challenged. However, not all those spaces have such a powerful transformative potency as the Museum of Broken Relationships. By minimizing the influence of the Museum's curator, and permitting the display of normally taboo objects and narratives, the Museum's space allows for the experimentation with spontaneous, undirected, and unrestricted ideas. For instance, the "ex-axe" (Vištica and Grubišić 2010) owner who chopped her partner's furniture after their breakup would likely be penalized by the judicial system, yet she is celebrated within the Museum's space as a source of satire and humiliation of those who hurt us. Such suspension of established social structures and the unconstrained expression are crucial for the empowerment of subjects who are free to employ their agency (Turner 1969:94).

People deconstruct their personas in relation to the exhibits, and enter the disorganized state of disintegrated identities, with the ultimate looked-for aspiration of reviving and recovering their coherent self. They acquire the modern identity which is a reflection of the current state of social and cultural life, thus it either reinforces or rejects dominant social structures. What is more, even the liminal phase itself is provoked by the current social conditions. As Geertz suggests, performances are texts through which

communities “tell themselves about themselves” (Geertz 1973:448), thus reflecting on their everyday norms in the microspace. Exhibits and the accompanying narratives are the expression of many social anxieties and a modern emotional need for renewal of a sense of selfhood, as well as the relationships we have with others. For instance, the fear of being cheated on and betrayed is portrayed through a teddy bear holding a heart that says “I Love You,” and the owners furious outcry “Lies! Damn Lies!” (Vištica and Grubišić 2010) A pair of oversized plastic breasts speaks to the modern unrealistic standards of beauty, or as their owner reflected, “Maybe the relationship would have lasted longer if I had put these on” (Vištica and Grubišić 2010).

Likewise, Lears suggests a number of modern changes that are detrimental to human identities. Urbanization and industrial development brought the anonymity of cities and the increasing distancing between people which can be corrosive of both people’s subjectivities and interactions. Technological development brought convenience and comfort that eased people’s lives, but are too insubstantial to make people happy. The market economy alienated people from creative production processes, and estranged them from their coworkers. Secularization of religion caused the loss of familiar framework of meaning and morals, thus placing one in the state of “anomie” or “normlessness.” The resultant human beings are fragmented between desires and expectations; they experience inner emptiness and paralyzing depression, blurred morals and no autonomous selfhood (Lears 1983:83–85). It is under these pressing conditions that people are transforming the meanings of being in love and in a relationship, thus showing us the urgency and integral importance of this quest for creating new meanings.

I would suggest that the Museum of Broken Relationships’ transformative potency relates directly to this core human attribute of a social being. Indeed, compassion is the emotion which is continuously overlooked and dismissed in today’s society, yet it constitutes the very heart of the Museum’s exhibition. The evidence for such ingrained and intuitive fellow feelings among humans comes from the field of social neuroscience which has recently discovered so-called “mirror neurons” that allow us to automatically empathize by activating the exact same brain areas that are active in the person with whom we interact (Lukianoff 2012:1). Thus, these neurons are active embodied reflections of the movements, sensations, and emotions of someone with whom we are interacting. They are a proof of us being programmed to feel for one another. But why don’t we? How did it become so that people are able to pass next to the sick, fainted man without even paying attention? Lears suggests that we have become too self-absorbed and preoccupied with ourselves to notice others (Lears 1983:82). On the contrary, the Museum of Broken Relationships is a space where people become deeply immersed in and absorbed by other people’s stories. People actively question and challenge the decadence of modern human relationships, and seek to find that true substance of humanity—rich and meaningful affectionate relationships with others. This is not just a personal quest, it is a collectively authored reflection on reality, as well as a co-production of new social norms that extend beyond the Museum’s space and impact the ways people relate to each other.

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Lines that divide

Aboriginality, Canadian applied anthropology, and transgressing the 'national anthropological tradition'

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Is there a distinctly 'Canadian' anthropological tradition? This paper reviews recent literature that addresses this question, tracing two major threads in the history of anthropological research in Canada: the prominence of themes of aboriginality in the Canadian anthropological context dating back to early Americanist projects associated with Franz Boas; and the development of applied anthropological practice in Canada as a kind of subfield specializing in the documentation and mediation of Aboriginal-state relations. These facets provide context for the works of Regna Darnell, Michael Asch, David Howes, and others who specifically address the 'Canadian anthropology' question. Common to their arguments is attention to the relationship between public and scholarly attitudes indicative of an unassuming 'Canadianness,' and state codifications of a "bicentric" (Howes 2006) national identity in initiatives such as the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. Whether and how these state-sanctioned productions speak to widely held public attitudes becomes central in conceptualizations of a reflexive Canadian anthropology both distinct and valuable for theoretical insights it offers the wider discipline. Paradoxically, in these works we find Canadian anthropology's strength is in its inherent tendency to evade any such hard and fast classification.

KEY WORDS Canadian anthropology, aboriginality, applied anthropology

How have local research contexts and the adoption of 'applied' research models shaped studies of Aboriginal-state relations in Canadian anthropology? How can attention to internal divisiveness or cultural "disunity" (Darnell 2000a:172) in Canada help to situate Canadian anthropology within the wider discipline? Following the notion that a shared collective consciousness constitutes the modern experience of nation (Anderson 1983), and further framed by scholarly debates around the prospect of a Canadian 'national imaginary' influencing a distinct Canadian anthropological 'tradition,' this paper's aim is to address these questions. A seemingly central feature of Canadian anthropology and constructive point of access for these issues is found in the sizeable body of ethnographic work focused on Indigenous peoples and public policy, commonly called 'applied anthropology' in the Canadian context. The particularities of applied practice are also, it would seem, contributing factors in Canadian anthropology's lack of visibility, or lack of a unified and coherent theoretical tradition identifiable as distinctive within

the wider discipline. Also notable from the outset is the vantage point from which this lack seems most strongly perceived: namely, the American anthropological tradition and scholars educated in the United States. Indeed, this paper is essentially a response to charges of 'disunity' from what some would call the discipline's largest 'imperial centre,' established as it is with a strong institutional structure (i.e. American Universities, the American Anthropological Association) and long and well-documented history of practice. The proceeding discussion of Canadian anthropology is, admittedly, partly an exercise in contrasting the differences between theory and practice as they have developed in these two nation-states.

That being said, the question of what makes Canadian anthropology 'Canadian' remains an interesting and worthwhile one. Focusing especially on policy-making and Aboriginal rights to self-government, this paper draws together attempts to theorize a relationship between applied anthropological approaches and Canadian national and cultural identities. Paradoxically, as we will see, the closest there may be to a unified tradition takes shape within a general resistance to notions of identity as either fixed or homogenous. Moreover, many authors cited here encounter a tendency within both Canadian scholarship and public life to juxtapose rather than synthesize encountered cultural, ethnic, political and religious differences. A series of examples discussed here culminate with Michael Asch's (2001) advancement of a "Self and Relational Other" model of political relations and his argument for its applicability in anthropological conceptualizations of Aboriginal-state relations in Canada. Asch's Self and Relational Other approach is also a proposed outlet by which applied anthropology can speak to the concerns of the wider discipline, while perhaps also carving out a constructive niche for a Canadian anthropology in its own right.

EFFORTS TO LOCATE AND TRACE the history of Canadian anthropology have been ongoing since the 1970s, following an academic boom that expanded Canadian anthropology departments with an influx of foreign faculty, especially from the United States (Darnell 2000b; Dunk 2000; Harries-Jones 1997; Harrison and Darnell 2006; Howes 2006). In these discussions the study of Indigenous peoples and communities, widely recognized to be the earliest anthropological focus in Canada, are often declared central to Canadian anthropological themes (Dyck 2006; Howes 2006). While some expressed concern that a Canadian specialization in 'aboriginality' began to dissipate during the boom era as researchers increasingly turned to international ethnographic pursuits, many scholars including Regna Darnell have argued such a focus continues to define Canadian anthropology (Darnell 1997, Harries-Jones 1997). Darnell has dedicated much attention to the history of Canadian anthropology and understanding the role played by the Americanist tradition (1997, 2000b, 2001). Her insistence on referring to studies of Aboriginal people and communities in Canada as 'Americanist' gives the impression she would deny the existence of a distinctly Canadian anthropology per se, although a series of her writings taken together suggest quite the opposite (Darnell 1997, 2000a, 2000b, 2001; Howes 2006). A quantitative institutional study of faculty specializations in Canada and evidence of a burgeoning field of applied anthropological research of Aboriginal-state relations and policy are support for a Canadian anthropology of aboriginality in its own right (Asch

1984; Darnell 1997; Dyck 2006; Dyck and Waldram 1993; Hedican 2008; Salisbury 1986; Weaver 1981).

Darnell (1997) does attribute the beginnings of professional anthropology in Canada to Boas and his students, and especially Edward Sapir. But she has also argued that Canada's Northwest Coast, as a research site, has critically shaped the Americanist tradition we find in practice today (2000b; 2001). While historians of anthropology in British Columbia have assumed that "Boasian incursions diluted some intrinsic Canadianness of the local discipline," she presents a contrasting view that local cultural particularities of the Northwest Coast fostered a series of developments in Boas's work that would become foundational in the discipline (Darnell 2001:14, 2000b). Three major developments she notes in Boas's work are the dissolution of presumed connections between both culture and environment, and culture and biology; the refutation of classic evolutionary schemes in favour of gathering "detailed histories of particular groups"; and the practice of gathering texts that reveal "native speakers' versions of their own culture(s)" (2001:14). Each of these shifts represented a substantial change in anthropological practice and theory, Darnell argues, which Boas adopted while working within Northwest Coast societies (2000b, 2001). She goes on to state that Boas's Northwest Coast specialization became a driving influence for research with Indigenous peoples all over North America, although most important here is her contention that local contexts, in addition to wider trends in theory and practice, critically shape anthropological approaches and analysis: "Our interpretations, then, respond simultaneously to the local conditions of our fieldwork and the theoretical issues within our disciplines" (Darnell in Darnell 2000b:34-35). This final point resonates with connections Darnell (2000a) would later draw between particularized and shifting community and cultural identities in Canada and theoretical advancements in Canadian anthropological practice and beyond.

Darnell's (1997) discussion of the continued primacy of Aboriginal-focused anthropology in Canada against those who believed it had been eclipsed by the popularity of international research interests is also important in what it has contributed to debates around the "visibility" of Canadian anthropology in the wider discipline. Cause for doubt that there is a distinct anthropological tradition in Canada, Darnell has noted, may lie in its characteristic "low-key" commitments to local research that tend to proceed "without fanfare"—this she declares may simply be the "Canadian way." Since the earliest days anthropologists in Canada have found themselves at the intersection of relations between Indigenous people and colonial, imperial, or state powers (Dyck 2006; Hedican 2008). The circumstances of these relationships have consistently produced spaces for anthropological research to participate in, or at least proceed alongside, various developments between Aboriginal communities or First Nations and the Canadian state. Perhaps without explicitly calling it so, Darnell has been referencing a set of practices commonly termed 'applied anthropology' by Canadian anthropologists. Darnell (1997) writes of researcher-community "partnerships" that form around everyday Aboriginal issues such as language "revitalization" and "cultural persistence," calling upon Canadian practitioners to develop new methods and approaches. Here and in her later writings, Darnell would demonstrate that despite a lack of visibility in the wider discipline, anthropological research with Aboriginal groups or First Nations in Canada has proceeded quietly but forcefully, ultimately becoming highly influential in the development of distinct Canadian approaches.

In the introduction to their volume *Historicizing Canadian Anthropology*, Harrison and Darnell (2006) note references to ‘applied anthropology’ as a defining characteristic of Canadian anthropological practice dating back to CSAA and CESCE meetings in the 1970s. Noel Dyck (1993; 2006) has discussed at length the rise of applied and advocacy anthropology in the second half of the twentieth century, especially in relation to projects that engage Aboriginal-state relations in Canada. Tracing its history of development, Dyck and Waldram (1993) identify a growing interest on the part of Canadian anthropologists to investigate and even intervene in “various relations and dealings between Native peoples and the agencies and institutions of the Canadian state” (1993:5). They write that this is a “departure from the discipline’s traditional preoccupation with ethnological research” that has without doubt affected the “scope, purposes, and practice of anthropology” (1993:5). Later, Dyck again notes a break from the “ethnological” (2006:80) leanings of Boas, Barbeau, and others in favour of more politically situated and social justice-oriented ethnographic work with Indigenous groups around the mid-twentieth century, and identifies this as a critical turn in the development of Canadian anthropology. Some examples of this turn can be found in Sally Weaver’s work on Indian policy (1981), Richard Salisbury’s (1986) work with the James Bay Cree, and Harvey Feit (1980) and Michael Asch’s (1984) works on Aboriginal rights and self-government in Canada. Major contributions to applied anthropology in Canada have also come from the Hawthorn Report, properly titled *A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada* (Hawthorn 1966), and subsequent analyses of its impact by other anthropologists, for example Weaver’s discussion of its relationship to the 1969 White Paper on Indian Policy (Weaver 1993). Dyck and Waldram’s (1993) *Anthropology, Public Policy and Native Peoples in Canada* and Hedican’s (2008) *Applied Anthropology in Canada: Understanding Aboriginal Issues* (first edition 1995) are both important volumes that discuss key themes and methodological and theoretical issues facing applied anthropology in Canada.

A clear theme that emerges in a number of these discussions is the idea that Canadian applied anthropology exists on a separate tier from mainstream or more ‘theoretical’ anthropological research (Darnell 1997; Dyck 2006; Harries-Jones 1997; Harrison and Darnell 2006). Harries-Jones (1997) has suggested within the wider discipline, and especially within the British and American traditions, applied anthropology and its ‘activist’ orientations are often conceived as separate from the concerns of ‘theoretical’ anthropology. Others have argued however that such a separation runs counter to the “Canadian experience,” wherein Aboriginal activist anthropology in practice clearly employs its own mix of theory and “comparative ethnographic” methods (Harries-Jones 1997). Regardless, whether perceived or actual, this division would increasingly come to be seen as problematic. Dyck and Waldram (1993) once indicated theoretical contributions to the discipline should not be a primary concern of applied anthropology in Canada, a stance that may have perpetuated a conceptual separation that would not serve the subfield well. Some years on, Dyck (2006:84) has noted a decline in the number of published ethnographies of Aboriginal-state relations in the late twentieth century, due in part he surmises to growing disapproval exercised by state research funding bodies and others. He now expresses concern over what appears to be a widening gap between applied engagements with Aboriginal issues and the rest of the discipline, calling for the former to be better articulated with “broader concerns within anthropology” (2006:87–88). Toward this end,

he notes that studies of “aboriginality” in the Canadian context may offer insight in other kinds of anthropological studies of “political processes and institutional arrangements” that also speak to “state tutelage, nationalism and neo-colonialism” (2006:88). In his call for the reinvigoration of anthropology of Aboriginal-state relations and increased dialogue across a perceived disciplinary divide, Dyck (2006) supports the stance that anthropology in Canada has something of a distinct tradition, capable furthermore of contributing to anthropological theory and practice in a wider sense.

TO THIS POINT, THIS PAPER HAS drawn attention to a common set of practices that emerged in Canadian anthropology in the mid- to late-twentieth century, arguably as a distinct subfield that took shape in response to local research circumstances and contexts. The perennial question in discussions of the history of Canadian anthropology has been the extent to which a distinct tradition exists. Difficulty in locating a unified theoretical tradition and the perception in some circles that applied anthropology somehow stands apart from theoretical concerns have been cited as leading reasons for Canadian anthropology’s failure to distinguish itself within the discipline as a whole (Darnell 1997, 2000a; Dunk 2000; Howes 2006). This paper will now turn to the task of illustrating a relationship between discussions of Aboriginal-focused and applied anthropology on the one hand, and efforts to theorize the existence of a ‘Canadian tradition’ on the other. The overlap in these themes becomes most clear in discussions of Aboriginal-state relations.

ATTEMPTS TO UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT that shapes Canadian anthropology often look to state legislation or other institutional codifications that relate to public policy. The notion of certain qualities inherent in a nation’s constitutional framework that shape national imaginaries, consciousnesses, or identities, and in turn anthropological traditions, has been variously taken up in response to the Canadian anthropology question. With interested peers looking on, David Howes (1990, 2006) and Thomas Dunk (2000) have assumed opposing sides in one debate of this nature. It began with Howes’s (1990) assertion that the Canada and United States Constitutions correspond with Canadian and American conceptualizations of social worlds. Harking back to concepts popularized by Durkheim and Mauss (1970), he argues that a state constitution shapes and is shaped by the minds and bodies of those it governs. Drawing upon examples he finds in literary, artistic and academic productions, Howes asserts that “the mode of organization of the state is constitutive of the creative activity of the imaginary” (2006:201). Comparing the Canadian and American Constitutions and noting clear divergences, he uses the dyadic principles of “concentrism” and “bicentrism” to describe the alternate viewpoints they represent (2006:202). A concentric view of the world is identifiable in founding ideologies of the United States expressed in rhetoric such as “We the people.” Howes claims a “unity of we” is reflected in American artistic and academic works that produce generalizing theories or ideas that subsume populations within all-encompassing or homogenizing frameworks. Characteristics of the Canadian Constitution, by contrast, reflect the reality of two founding national cultures—the English and the French. However, the principle of ‘bicentricity’ is more complex than simply envisioning a nation composed of ‘two solitudes’ as opposed to one unified body. Drawing from details of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982) to support his case, Howes (2006) finds what he calls an

“illiberal” version of rights and equality. ‘Equality’ in this formulation is not about providing identical treatment to the masses, but rather about seeking to recognize and ascribe collective rights to particular groups—for instance, Canada’s Aboriginal peoples. How this connects to a shared national attitude, and by extension to Canadian anthropological research, becomes more clear when Howes connects bicentrism as a concept to what he calls a “diathetical imaginary” in Canada. A diathetical imaginary, he explains, is “a way of thinking that juxtaposes but does not synthesize” (2006:204). Canadian artists and academics alike have demonstrated tendencies to be observant of distinct positions and viewpoints, and often strive in their works to look “both ways from some borderline position” (Howes 2006:204). The lack of a clear Canadian anthropological tradition seems to reflect this general refusal of definitive or homogenous assertions of identity. Against the American or British anthropological traditions, Howes writes, “one looks in vain for any comparatively unified theory of culture and personality in the annals of Canadian anthropology” (2006:206).

Whether or not one agrees with Howes’s use of the Constitution here, his recognition of distinct and autonomous collective identities within Canada’s wider national and institutional structure critically connects to other characterizations of a Canadian consciousness considered in this paper. In his 2006 reiteration of an earlier stated position (1990), he has also made more concrete connections between the ‘bicentric’ or ‘diathetical’ principles and anthropological practice in Canada. Especially relevant in this regard is his call for the scholarly investigation of a “First Nations constitutionalism,” which he claims may offer a constructive means of envisioning “the whole” (or the conglomeration of parts, as it were) that seem to make up Canada today (2006:210–211). Although brief, his description of First Nations constitutionalism makes use of the “rule of transformation,” another expression for a “rule of law” (2006:211). Here, boundaries or dividing lines are conceived as shifting or transformative (Howes 2006:211). Howes’s suggestion that the adoption of a broadly construed Indigenous political philosophy (by his particular characterization) is a constructive avenue for Canadian anthropology is part of a wider current of thought expressed by Darnell (2000a), Asch (2001), and others to be discussed below.

In opposition to Howes’s ‘constitutional’ focus, Dunk’s (2000) thesis on the matter draws upon economic historian and communication theorist Harold Innis, and in particular his theory of staple development in Canada. Insofar at least as it serves Dunk’s purposes, Innis’s staple theory suggests that Canada’s position within the global economy and its regional diversity of commodity production and export are key influences in the formation of attitudes and social life in English Canada. Sociocultural anthropology in English Canada, Dunk argues, has come to reflect this inherent regionalism in its focus on local particularity and consistent effort to contextualize cultural phenomena as such. While both Howes and Dunk have argued the search for a unified Canadian tradition precludes the Canadian vision itself, they have clearly arrived at this from different places. Dunk has expressed concerns about the tenuous link Howes constructs between the Canadian Constitution and the “Canadian imaginary” (2000:135). In his 2006 piece Howes in turn deflects Dunk’s criticisms of the Canadian Constitution as an ineffective measure of the Canadian imaginary and reduces his staple theory proposition to economic and environmental determinism. Whether or not this is a sound critique, Dunk’s position is interesting in its suggestion that Canadian attention to regional economic and cultural

differences “foreshadows” present anthropological concerns with globalization and “dislocation” (2000:136). His argument also shares interesting connections with those advanced by Darnell (1997; 2000a), to be discussed in more detail below. But while both Darnell and Dunk are attendant to the ways local particularity shapes anthropological practice in Canada, and both furthermore suggest these qualities uniquely position Canadian practitioners as insightful contributors in current global concerns and dilemmas faced by the wider discipline, there are key differences. In what follows we consider how Darnell takes up a thread more closely aligned with Howes (1990, 2006) in her examination of phenomena at the intersections of culture and governmental policy.

Darnell has published one paper in which she applies an “anthropological and ethnographic approach to Canadian national identity” (2000a:166) itself. Many years working at the University of Alberta and in “northern Alberta Cree communities” gave her opportunity to observe a series of complex and shifting relationships between diverse cultural communities (2000a:169). With these experiences in mind Darnell problematizes the very existence of a singular national consciousness or identity. She writes that “succeeding waves of settlement,” including the “three founding nations” of Canada’s Indigenous population, the English and the French, followed by more recent immigrants, “have retained the character of their particularized experiences” (2000a:166–167). In ethnographically placing these groups within a series of structural relationships to each other, Darnell finds that “Canadian social cohesion resides precisely in the intersecting binaries which divide Canada along multiple axes” (2000a:165). Importantly, these relationships are constantly subject to change as groups negotiate their “standpoints” and face new “situationally specified contrasts” (2000a:165). In other words, Darnell’s understanding of social ‘cohesion’ in Canada basically refers to an acceptance of perpetual relationships of difference among diverse populations, and their willingness to operate on that basis. Having arrived at this fleeting conception of ‘Canadianness,’ Darnell notes its striking similarity to prevailing understandings of ‘culture’ in anthropology in general—namely, understanding culture “in terms of a multiplicity of standpoints” (2000a:170). She argues furthermore that an ongoing state of “uncertainty”—or the sense that one’s own ‘community’ is not central but merely one among a shifting conglomeration of standpoints—is a “national attitude” particularly amenable to postmodern anthropological approaches to the present global climate (2000a:167). For this reason the Canadian national attitude she has identified “cries out for anthropological analysis,” presumably due to insights or theoretical advancements it may bring to the discipline (2000a:167). Although perhaps not the specific type of theoretical contribution that Dyck (2006) has called for, both Darnell and Dunk have drawn attention to potentially constructive points of dialogue between Canadian practice and the wider discipline.

But in this discussion Darnell (2000a) has done something even more important. Staying true to her focus on studies of aboriginality as a central feature of Canadian anthropology, she has made a case study of the 1996 Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) and the ways it “exemplifies the political process whereby Canadians both envision and re-envision their nation” (2000a:166). She describes the Royal Commission as a kind of “institution of Canadian introspection” representing diverse standpoints and with “potential impact on the society’s reflexive capabilities” (2000a:170). In this way the Royal Commission provides a link, she suggests, between ethnographic

research or relationships on the ground and “the symbolic discourse mediating diversity of standpoints” (2000a:170). Of central importance in the RCAP report is its strong incorporation of what Darnell calls “First Nations values,” which she argues are thoroughly reflected in a “Canadian penchant for social cohesion based on small-scale, local, and intermeshed patterns of identity” (2000a:166–170). Composed of four Aboriginal Commissioners and three non-Aboriginal, the RCAP was mandated in 1991 to make policy recommendations regarding the relationship between Canada and First Nations, ultimately producing a massive report in five volumes (Darnell 2000a; Hedican 2008). Aboriginal rights and issues of self-government and self-determination were central themes of the Report, and Darnell (2000a) quotes directly from strategic sections calling for the reestablishment of a just and equal relationship between Indigenous peoples and forms of government with those of settler nations. It is proposed that First Nations be “reconstituted” as autonomous governing bodies in a process “likened to provinces joining Confederation” (Darnell 2000a:171). But perhaps even more significant are the ways the Report worked to revolutionize the very definition of First Nations as recognized in policy. The Commissioners argued that First Nations membership no longer be defined “on racial grounds,” but instead Nations should be more broadly regarded as “organic cultural and political entities” (Erasmus et al. in Darnell 2000a:171). The report reminded that “all descendants of the First Peoples had rights, whether or not they were currently constituted within ‘nations’” (2000a:171). As the Commissioners fought here to clarify, there is no singular model of a ‘First Nation’ to call upon: their structures are varied and their memberships internally diverse, as are the concerns and interests of their members (Darnell 2000a:172). Furthermore, membership itself, as presently institutionally defined, is called into question. All of this is to recognize unique Indigenous rights to a distinctive identity, self-determination, and self-government within the context of the Canadian nation-state and Canadian citizenship. The Report’s emphasis on the recognition of internal diversity and “variable standpoints,” argues Darnell (2000a), is key within broader reflexive envisionings of Canadian identities. Connecting all of this with anthropological practice, she emphasizes how these proposed approaches to Aboriginal policy can be constructively applied elsewhere.

As a number of the authors cited here suggest, “disunity” (Darnell 1997) and resistance to homogenization are features of the Canadian context that may be used to trouble essentialisms that prevail in discussions of national and scholarly identities and traditions.

In a published version of the speech he delivered upon receiving the Weaver–Tremblay Award in Canadian Applied Anthropology, Michael Asch (2001) draws upon a similar set of concepts to re-model or re-envision the Aboriginal-state relationship. He is interested moreover in describing how applied researchers might foster and constructively apply this model in their work. This involves understanding the role of the applied anthropologist in Canada as an active facilitator of the political relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the state. Asch’s efforts to connect his own applied work to a philosophy of social justice were the original basis for this discussion. To this end he offers Noam Chomsky’s proposition, once advanced in a 1971 debate with Foucault entitled *Human Nature: Justice Versus Power*, that the worthy goal of social struggle is “to further the ends of justice” (Asch 2001:203). He goes on to draw connections between the primary notion of furthering justice and principles that often are (or indeed could or should be) applied in anthropological studies of Aboriginal-state relations.

LIKE DARNELL (2000A), ASCH ALSO DRAWS upon the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, but focuses on its recommendation that “the concept of treaty advanced in Indigenous thought” become central in Canada’s political relationship with First Nations (2001:206). The concept of treaty sets up a dialogue between autonomous entities engaged in ongoing negotiations. This is both a political theory and a guide for applied researchers that involves constructing an engaged position for the researcher informed by elements of both Western and Indigenous political thought. Drawing from his experience working with the Dene Nation and others, as well as Leroy Little Bear’s (1986) description of treaty-making in “the Indian concept of land ownership,” Asch argues the pursuit of justice in Aboriginal-state relations can be facilitated with the notion of treaty-making and its fundamental connection with the basic concept of “sharing” (2001:203). The principle of sharing within treaty-making, Asch argues, references the need for a sustained and flexible relationship between First Nations and the Canadian state as autonomous political entities. This can be contrasted against political models that tend to subsume non-dominant or subjugated groups and/or belief systems within a prevailing or hegemonic ‘whole.’ Emmanuel Levinas’s ethical philosophy, which models a relationship of ‘I and Thou’ (referencing Martin Buber’s 1970 book *I and Thou*), provides further philosophical support for what Asch prefers to call a “Self and Relational Other” model. He explains,

to Levinas, a philosophy based on ethics necessitates that there are always two parties, a Self and an Other than cannot be reduced to one or the other. It respects that the difference between them must remain irreducible; and places them immediately in relationship. Both parties remain autonomous, yet joined. In that sense, both are responsible for themselves and for the other. (Asch 2001:205)

Such a political relationship, as Asch, Little Bear, and others have envisioned it, presents constructive possibilities for unfolding of Aboriginal-state relations. Self and Relational Other is also a constructive model that applied anthropologists can strive to embody in anthropological practice and writing in Canada and beyond. Noting anthropology’s “long history of appropriating voice,” of speaking for and about Indigenous people “as though they were not there” (2001:204), Asch suggests that a ‘Self and Relational Other’ model of social justice exercised in anthropological writing can afford agency and autonomy, or a place from which to speak, for both the researcher and Aboriginal ‘research subjects.’ Asch optimistically concludes that “the historical encounter with First Nations is changing Canada” (2001:206), despite a number of setbacks in the long struggle for Aboriginal rights and legal and political recognition for First Nations. Like many others cited here, Asch encourages his readers to consider connections between policy makers and legislators, the Canadian ‘imaginary’ and attitudes toward difference, and the insights garnered in applied anthropological practice.

IN DRAWING TOGETHER A SERIES OF interlinked practices and ideas, this paper has identified key themes in Canadian anthropology and worked to situate them within the wider disciplinary context. Official forums for policy making are frequently central to analyses of the Canadian anthropological imagination. While the report from RCAF has neither been widely applied nor without critique (Darnell 2000a; Hedican 1998), this

focus on Canadian policy making and process, as a lens through which to understand both Aboriginal-state relations in Canada *and* national imaginaries that feed scholarly practice, is salient here. This is not to claim that revelations of the RCAP have revolutionized relationships between Aboriginal peoples or First Nations and the state—“Reports are theoretical and idealistic,” Darnell (2000a:170) plainly admits. Nor is Asch’s (2001) Self and Relational Other model a fix-all solution to a complex array of issues that persist even as successful treaty negotiations continue in the second decade of the twenty-first century. This paper has raised the issue of Aboriginal self-government as central both to applied anthropological pursuits and in discussions of the negotiation of Canadian identities.

But how does a focus on treaty-making and self-governance, or ‘First Nations constitutionalism,’ eclipse other dimensions of Indigenous experience? Marcia Crosby (1997:24) has argued that inherent rights to self-government and land sovereignty are defining and authenticating “signposts” of aboriginality that, despite their failure to represent the whole, are often haphazardly applied in scholarly analyses. Crosby notes for instance the difficulty immediately encountered if we attempt to place urban Indigenous experience somewhere within or alongside such widely accepted defining and authenticating constructs. Casting doubt on the practicality of policy recommendations that rely upon First Nations membership and belonging to a land base, Hedican (2008:142) has also noted the RCAP report’s “regrettable neglect” of “issues pertaining to urban Aboriginal people” and those living off-reserve. This calls into question the applicability of Asch’s (2001) treaty-making based model, although its insights should be recognized for their extension beyond land sovereignty negotiations.

Scholars cited here have demonstrated how local and particularized cultural contexts, and contingent and shifting identities and relationships, have shaped Canadian approaches to anthropological research. Whether and to what an extent this provides an answer to the debate around national anthropological traditions (and by extension, a prevailing national consciousness that can act to produce or influence it) is still, as always, up for debate. Be that as it may, anthropology in Canada, and the common methodologies and theoretical debates taken up therein, are demonstrably responsive to the sociopolitical issues and institutional structures that have shaped life in Canada throughout the twentieth century. Actively locating and negotiating cultural dividing lines, and engaging in relationships that respect these differences, are ethical attitudes and approaches that Canadian practitioners should continue to promote within and across anthropological ‘traditions.’

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Silences on Hindu lesbian subjectivity

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This paper attempts to identify the roots of the perception and status of female same-sex relationships in contemporary Hindu India. After analyzing the development of Vedic and yogic mythologies, I compare the contingent valuation of sexual identity that exists within the ancient Hindu framework with the imported political and moral normativity of imperial Britain. This paper analyses the contribution of British colonialism to shaping the understanding of 'India' as a meaningful entity, of the concept of the 'Indian woman,' and thereby of 'Hindu lesbian.' Section 377 of the Indian Penal code, which established the criminal nature of sodomy in 1861 and is still in effect today, illustrates the colonial framing of public language, law and politics in India. The brief revocation of this Section between July 2009 and December 2013 reveals some strategies of 20th century Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) movements, but also the inadequacies of these LGB movements' re-conceptualization of Hindu pre-colonial narratives. I contend that if heterosexuality dominates in Hindu Indian society today as the norm, there seems to be no such thing as 'traditional Hindu heteronormativity.' I apply the general argument of this paper through a critique of Deepa Mehta's film *Fire* (1995). While the film attempts to tackle the issue of female same-sex love in Hindu India, it also reveals how diasporic discourses on homosexual subjectivity actually narrow the possibilities for investigation into the plurality of histories of Hindu Indian women who love women, and consistently restrict political and linguistic options for re-thinking homosexuality in India beyond neo-colonial or nationalist constraints.

KEY WORDS Indian politics, Hinduism, same-sex relationships

Extensive research has been undertaken on women's rights and movements, their perspectives for empowerment, and the forms of leadership they can access in modern Indian society (for instance, Agnihotri and Mazumdar 1995; Spary 2007). This means that there has often been a focus on women's conditions on political, symbolic, and structural levels in the family and the public realm, often within the framework of identity politics, and in an India often conceived of as a univocal and heteronormative society. Therefore, the emotional and affective dimensions of this topic have sometimes been excluded from political and socio-cultural analysis. Indeed, fewer researchers have turned to issues of desire and love. This has undermined the debate around same-sex relationships. This paper looks into the foundations of the silence surrounding female

homosexuality in Hindu Indian society even as scholars, the press, and governmental action show that the issue of homosexuality is somehow being addressed. As the aim is to find alternative methodologies of analysis to understand where and why this silence reigns, the notion of subjectivity should be problematized from the outset. Subjectivity as a phenomenon is essentially constructed and in construction because it is a negotiation of positionalities through structural and agentic processes (Butler 2006:197). The subject-object dichotomy established in early modern Western philosophy prevents an analysis of that interpenetration in the articulation of the subject because it posits the pre-existence of the 'I' (Butler 2006:196), which facilitates an "epistemology" of identity rather than an investigation into the "signifying practices" of subjectivity (Butler 2006:197). This paper adopts the latter conception of the gendered self, in order to investigate the genealogy of the normalization of female homosexuality in India and to understand how and for which reasons certain forms of female desire and sexuality are being silenced.

Although the term 'lesbian' may seem inappropriate in a Hindu context because it is an English word characterizing an identity, this paper will use that term insofar as it is written in English. The aim of the general argument is to resist the use of Western signs and try to avoid a language of identity politics adopted by a number of researchers studying India. However, Ruth Vanita makes a sensible point when she writes that if we were to be perfectly clear with significations, "the only honest strategy would be to write about historical texts entirely in their own language" (Vanita 2002:5), which few people would be able to do in the cases of Sanskrit and Urdu. 'Sexuality' will be used in the sense of the sexualized intentions and attitudes that subjects can have or adopt, in which the biological sex or genitalia (regardless of its category) is a central locus of pleasure, but which also refer to emotional and erotic attraction to another or one's own body. However, the term will be used in a Foucauldian sense, that is, as a discursive strategy (Foucault 1990), in the analysis of the formation of colonial discourses. Throughout the paper, references to sexuality and economies of desire will have descriptive value, and thus no claim to truth.

In this paper I argue that in spite of existing investigations into the genealogy of the articulation of sexuality and its relationship to love, it is still crucial to develop the idea that Hindu lesbian subjectivity cannot be advocated as an identity in the Western, Euro-American liberal sense, inasmuch as Hinduism can rather be said to engender contingent subjectivities. Indeed, this can reveal an alternative framing of the term 'lesbian', as will be discussed in the next section. Politicians, legislators, and scholars often search for a monolithic norm of either acceptance, tolerance, or rejection of female homosexuality in order to dispel all doubts about its place in Hindu Indian society. The multidimensional nature of Hinduism is not acknowledged and the militant arguments made in support of it, in spite of their otherwise pertinent and efficient dimensions, somehow fail to take root as a result.

First of all, an analogy between women and lesbians can be made in the Hindu Indian context, because of the extent to which the experiences of women in both the private and public realms can be lesbian women's experiences. This paper will therefore focus on cisgender women and lesbians. I look into how femininity and female homosexuality were articulated, first in ancient and pre-colonial Hindu symbolism and mythological narratives, and then in colonial and anti-colonial discourses. The case of the revocation of Section 377

of the Indian Penal Code is used as a synthesizing illustration. Based on that background, the strategies of contemporary LGB and specifically lesbian movements in India are analysed and some of their ambiguities are addressed. Finally, I integrate this reflexion in a critique of Deepa Mehta's film *Fire* (1995). The importance of this film lays not only in its choice of subject matter, that is, love between two sister-in-laws, but also in the radical reactions to its theatrical release in India (Bachmann 2002:234; Patel 2002:226). This work is in this sense useful in order to contextualize and evaluate a diasporic Indian's rendition of the theme of female same-sex relationships in Hindu India, and to understand the power and limitations of such an account for the recognition of female same-sex love in India on its own terms.

Lesbians = Women?

Monique Wittig argues that the deployments of sexuality inform and constitute “our concepts, our laws, our institutions, our history, our cultures” and impregnate the self (1992:XII). If sex and gender determine social positionality, then it is important to ask the question: is ‘lesbian’ more readily identifiable with ‘woman’ or does ‘lesbian’ form a distinct “category of sex” (Wittig 1992:25)? Being a lesbian means to refuse the “role” and the discourse determining this role, that is, in Butlerian terms, refusing to signify and embody the “practices of signification” ascribed by the ideology that articulates sexuality (Butler 2006:196). In other words, lesbian subjectivity is attained beyond the label of ‘woman’ through an escape from the heteronormative system (Wittig 1992:19).

In spite of this (Western feminist) theoretical agenda, in practical terms, Hindu women who come to realize that they desire same-sex relationships are first and foremost subject to the same pressures and contained by the same restrictions to their agency as heterosexual women are, as India, like other modern nation-states, relies on a dichotomic notion of gender based on sex. So, it is crucial to understand how the idea of womanhood is articulated in order to identify the conditions under which female individuals who desire other female individuals negotiate their sexual identity. Situating Hindu lesbians' experiences within the context of women's subordination and gender roles in the India of the era of the *Hindutva*, the Hindu political Right, allows some insight into how sexuality has been normalized and is deployed.

As Mahdu Kishwar and Ruth Vanita (1987) show, traditional Hindu marriage rules still apply to many women, without regard for their sexual ‘orientation’ and desires in general; caste and class violence targets first and foremost women, especially *dalit* (Untouchable) and lower-class women, and family violence is still significant. While women's movements have succeeded in overcoming “ideological differences” to achieve strategic aims in a spirit of “unity in action” (Agnihotri and Mazumdar 1995:1876), they have gained power and slowly changed women's conditions. Yet, overall, women's movements have rejected lesbians and the idea of homosexuality for “‘strategic’ purposes” (Butler 2006:6). First, their anti-colonial stance led them to reject what they saw as ‘white feminism’ in emerging lesbian groups (Dave 2010:599). Adding to this ideological scission, women's movements also fought for legitimacy in Indian society and political institutions through a discourse of national and local interests (Dave 2010:598), which dismissed female homosexuality as a second-order or even inexistent concern. So, the

biological connection between 'woman' and 'lesbian' must be acknowledged at the practical level, even if 'lesbians' as a militant category seem to bear independent significance, as will be studied below, and confirm Wittig's conception of sex/sexuality as inherently political.

The Vedic woman, the yoga, and sexual multiplicity

Hindu mythology is not to be regarded only as the domain of legends and fictional narratives, because that myriad of texts constitutes a primary basis on which collective life is conceptualized in pre-modern Hindu societies. A parallel can be made between the role of narratives about and representations of Greek mythological figures in Ancient Greece and foundational Sanskrit myths in the Indian sub-continent. The *Illiad* and the *Odyssey* on the one hand, and the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* on the other hand, provide not only aesthetic and poetic norms, but also some frameworks for justifying social and political structures through half historical, half mythical stories of warfare between competing kingdoms, or a hero's destiny. By analogy with the foundational role of Homeric texts, such Sanskrit narratives may be considered to provide essential discursive tools in Hindu thought, and so some key concepts should be understood in order to think about the articulation of sexuality in Hinduism.

The mythology of Vishnu, one of the gods most central to Hindu mythology, introduces the idea of "the wheel of reincarnation" (Zimmer 1951:18). All beings are caught in a perpetual circle of birth and rebirth, and their condition is always-already transitional. This notion is supported by the concept of 'universe' itself: the word *jagat* is formed from the root *gam-* that means 'to go' or 'to move'; so *jagat* signifies "what is moving, the transitional, the ever-changing." (Zimmer 1951:30). The symbol of the wheel and the idea of *jagat* are mirrored in the way mythological/historical narratives evolve, as their orality or enigmatic nature blurs the definition of authenticity and truth, thereby implying the production of multiple significations.

Another central concept is that of *mâyâ*. While it literally means 'art' in the sense of 'what is made,' *mâyâ* is a creative force, but it also means the artificial, and thereby, it is an equally deceptive power (Zimmer 1951:32). Gods are associated with *mâyâ* because they have the capacity to adopt different shapes; but it is crucially associated with woman. In the Vedic myth, Indra (the king of gods) convinces the earth and women to share the guilt of a crime he committed, and as lovers, women accept; their punishment is to bleed each month as a reminder of their impurity. So women represent *mâyâ* as symbols of ambiguity, that is, of both love and corruption (Angot 2003:10). Besides, in the dichotomy between 'what is real' –fixed and reliable– and 'what is unreal' –deceptive and illusory– the latter is *mâyâ*, that is, feminine, while the former is masculine (Zimmer 1951:31). A mingling of the two is necessary for creation; if only the deceptive is in movement, and the constant is sterile, then only the uncertain is fertile (Angot 2003:25). Therefore, there is an imperative of love and more specifically erotic intercourse for creation to happen. After the times of the Veda, Hinduism became more influenced by the ideas of the yoga, which gradually gained more influence until the Mughal invasion (that is, the arrival of Islam) of the sub-continent (Angot 2003:18). This is important because the yoga adopted a monist discourse of renunciation, solitary meditation, and drying out of the source of carnal desire (Angot

2003:13), rather than one of duality, ambiguity, and complementarity that implies creation. It was thus associated with a rather misogynistic stance.

It should not be negated that heterosexuality is a norm of Hindu tradition, as Hindu social structure is inherently patriarchal. For instance, various stories circulate that teach the key moral features women should relate to. These are described as sacrifice, modesty and maternity in Parikh and Garg's analysis (1987). This image coincides with the myth of Sita's trial. When Rama comes back to her after a long period of absence, Sita promises that she remained faithful, but he wants to test the truth of her words and asks that she stand amidst a fire. The flames will not hurt her if she is pure. Sita accepts and walks courageously through the fire, without being harmed. Rama nevertheless sends her to exile. This conception of woman as the unreliable facilitates their "bio-social exploitation" as objects in the household, and contributes to their (pre)social status (Parikh and Garg 1987:23). While these selected Hindu narratives seldom show women performing agency (Parikh and Garg 1987:62), it appears that Hinduism is inherently misogynistic, and that consequently there could not possibly be active intercourse without the presence of at least one penis. It is important to note that male homosexuality is traditionally more present in Hindu narratives and practices, for instance through the hijra community of biological males and eunuchs who abandon their male gender to perform in religious ceremonies and, especially in present-day India, who are associated with homosexual prostitution (Nanda 1986:49).

Nevertheless, as mentioned above, the form of Hindu narration implies that "myths and symbols of India resist intellectualization and reduction to fixed significations" (Zimmer 1951:46). Although Parikh and Garg focus on mythological texts which converge towards the idea of woman as the subordinate and the invisible, the polymorphy of Hindu signifying practices reveals that one could also find alternative signs. A variety of words have been found in Sanskrit texts to designate female same-sex love, such as *swayamvara sakhi*, which literally means "self-chosen female friend" (Vanita 2002:2). Sculpture, which is a central mode of representation in Hindu temples (Angot 2003:24), is used to symbolize homosexuality, with solitary and collective masturbation scenes, for example in the temples of Khajuraho and Konarek (Ratti 1993:13). Yet, particular instances do not suffice to establish a rule (Vanita 2002:3) and it seems more pertinent to acknowledge the contingency of interpretations within the broad framework of Hinduism. Ruth Vanita points to the fact that it is difficult to access historical and straightforward reference to female homosexuality, which, it is worth mentioning, forces a researcher to look into mythological material, but also emphasizes the role of interpretation, as opposed to explanation. She analyses how three versions of the same myth lead to different visions of female same-sex love and intercourse. In that myth, after the king dies, the god *Kama* (Love) intervenes in the queen and another royal woman's relation for the purpose of engendering a legitimate descendance. Two versions highlight the sense of necessity determining the intercourse (Vanita 2011:121). Also, they stress the malformity of the child engendered, which echoes the idea developed in medieval medical texts that the alliance of feminine fluids lacks the essential 'bony' part given by the male (Vanita 2011:125). Importantly, *mâyâ* is often expressed as water, the fluid and contradictory element (Zimmer 1951:41), so the alliance of two sexes whose secretions are similar to water seems to reinforce the idea of female impurity. However, the myth shows the existence of female desire through the use of the same symbolism of water, which

echoes notions of orgasm and “female ejaculation” that are addressed in the same medical texts (Vanita 2011:126). In the third version of the myth, the presence of *Kama* and the idea of water as a purifying force reinforce the sacrality of the act; the two women’s sexes are described as lotuses, watery plants, which links femininity to purity (Vanita 2011:128). Several narratives in Hindu mythology mention the honour associated with having two mothers (Vanita 2011:127), which confirms the profound duality of femininity.

In Hindu mythology, perpetual creation creates an imperative of love that is, even though it ‘only’ regards gods and upper-caste humans (*brahmins*), realized through variable encounters, which are often but not always heterosexual. Besides, gods change sex, bear different names, evolve through time (within narratives), and change their meaning; in Vedic texts, they are nomadic, which adds to the fungibility of their being (Angot 2003:24). Thus, the omnipresence of desire and of the sexualized body defines gods’ subjectivity. More importantly, desire is the central component of sexuality, which contrasts with the articulation of sexuality as a necessary subject of scrutiny and regulation and ‘the sex’ as taboo yet omnipresent in post-seventeenth century Christian discourses (Foucault 1990:58, 83). When putting aside the trend commenced by the yoga, the clitoris is recognized as a locus of desire and it is less regulated than worshipped as a potential creative force. There is not so much a possibility for the hysterization of female bodies from ‘sex’, but rather from what is then ascribed to the female sex in the social realm. As highlighted by Parikh and Garg, the notion of duty makes up a criterion for normality, and it can be argued that it is from this notion of duty rather than from the discourse of sex that Hindu women are denied desire and sexual affirmation.

The crucial point is that, while Hindu heteronormativity exists, it cannot be conflated with Western/Victorian heteronormativity, as Hindu femininity and homosexuality adopt a plurality of ambivalent and contradicting significations. If “homosexuality is as native to the Indian subcontinent as heterosexuality and cannot be dismissed as a Western import” (Ratti 1993:13), it seems that the emergence of the belief that Hinduism is essentially and univocally heteronormative and has historical roots that can be traced while looking into the era of colonization. Most importantly, while the *Hindutva* now holds that particular belief, this historical analysis undermines its claim to ‘true Indian-ness.’

Hindu praxis, Victorian penetration, and the development of political rule

India is an inherently problematic idea as a name for a political entity. Its unity is controversial because it is essentially a hybrid space and a diverse whole (Manor 1990:21–22), as seen through the lens of Hindu mythology. The colonial creation of the ‘Indian’ political unit makes its reality “recent” (Angot 2003:2). Indeed, from the middle of the 19th century (although economic colonization had already begun in the 1750s) to 1947, the British authority administered the subcontinent as a monolithic whole, establishing a centralized bureaucracy (Corbridge 2000:5), which the Mughal authority had not tried to establish. The patterns of social belonging were mobile in the subcontinent’s pre-colonial state. The internal dynamics and hierarchization of castes, families (*jati*), and cults evolved, as there was constant warfare between rival states, tribes, or dynasties, and as the nature of *bakhti* and *sufist* sects blurred the dichotomy between Islam and Hinduism proper (Corbridge 2000:7). Political processes and juridical verdicts also took different shapes that the British colonizer did not take into account.

For instance, in North India, political debate and trials in the village councils (*panchayats*) were circular deliberations aiming at a “compromise” that would respect the opponents’ caste status and the history of disputes between the two *jatis* (Cohn 1959:90).

The form of such process is inherently in contradiction with the British form of rule. A premise of British justice is that all individuals are equal before the law. But the organization of societies in North India generally accepted the caste hierarchies and thereby acknowledged the fundamental inequality between individuals. Moreover, “the law” was not a single text or univocal list of morals, which rendered deliberations slow and contingent upon the content of conversation (Cohn 1959:83). Such system thus appears to resist liberal and (representative) democratic mechanisms that rely on clear conceptual categorization of subjects. The Victorian administration however used the “blunt categories of caste and religion” (Corbridge 2000:8) without taking into account the more complex pre-colonial fragmentation of society.

While two centuries of progressively indirect control triggered an accommodation of British forms of rule, one can also notice the liberal heritage in the nationalist resistance movement. For instance, the text of the India Constitution written in 1950 is very close to Western constitutions in that it emphasizes “Fundamental Rights” (Part III), and especially citizens’ equality before the law (Part III, art. 14). The nature of Hindu parliamentary democracy thus testifies of actual and discursive British power. This is significant for an analysis of the legal and linguistic framing of sexual law, as conceptions of ‘woman’ and thus in a sense, of ‘lesbian’, would be permeated by the conceptual categories deployed under British rule.

‘Indian woman’ and ‘Indian lesbians’

Not only is ‘India’ a historical and strategic construction, but ‘woman’ is also a concept whose use has evolved, especially during the 19th century. The identity of women in India is a part of this general framework of politics and culture. One can argue that the category of ‘Indian woman’ was primarily articulated as a discourse ‘from above’ as it echoes this pattern of compromise and adaptation of British concepts. The internalization (Narain 2004:149) as well as strategic use of norms by individuals and groups facilitated the penetration of Victorian values. Similarly, the term ‘Indian’ or ‘Hindu lesbianism’ appears to be fundamentally ambiguous because of its constituting units of meaning. Not only is ‘lesbian’ a Western term and one that may erase Hindu multiplicity, but the idea of the ‘Indian woman’ or ‘Hindu woman’ is equally problematic. The articulation of a valid and functional concept of ‘Indian woman’ is inherently historical, and so it renders the search for a notion of lesbian subjectivity dependent on such methodology and on the meaning of ‘woman’ in language, law, religion, and the public sphere.

First of all, the colonial authority shaped the understanding of gender and the proper realization of sexuality through legislation. The most relevant example of that is Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code. The motion indicated: “penetration is sufficient to constitute the carnal intercourse necessary to the offense described in this section” (Indian Penal Code 1860:XVI, 377). The idea of “the order of nature” (Indian Penal Code 1860:XVI, 377) not only justified the normalization of appropriate intercourse but also echoes Michel Foucault’s analysis of the practice of regulation of sexuality and of the disciplining role of legislature in the “era of biopower” (1990:140). Discursive negotiation is apparent here through the fact

that only penetration is mentioned as an offense in Section 377; it is told that the Queen was so outraged by the very possibility of there being female-to-female desire and relationships that she refused the explicit reference to female homosexuality in the law. Such colonial deployments thus imply the erasure of female desire even in the domain of perversion. It is worth noticing that the work done at the level of concepts and language is mirrored by the policy of actual *destruction* of statues representing sexual intercourse in temples that facilitated the *production* of an alternative discourse on homosexuality (Shah 1993:120).

Besides, English and Anglo-Indian feminists wrote about the state of the colonized territory and the conditions of women there in the 19th and first half of the 20th century. In *Mother India* (1927), Katherine Mayo blames Hindu culture for the troubles of Indian society and the banality of violence against women and discards the Indian nationalist project (Sinha 2008:453). Martineau's *British Rule in India* (1857) critically analyzes aspects of governance in India under colonial authority through a feminist lens (Ray 2000:52). Both texts shape a particular identity of woman in an ambiguous way. *British Rule in India* is essentially a "textual production" of India (Ray 2000:54), because it constitutes a source of knowledge about India for the *British public in Great Britain*. Importantly, such narrative creates the third world woman as a victim of violent traditions. The hyperbolic emphasis on sati, the rule that says that a widow should burn on the pyre with her husband, makes the Hindu woman subordinate to a certain Western feminist emancipatory force (Ray 2000:54). This reveals that even though the author adopts an apparently anti-imperialist discourse through a feminist critique, imperialism and Western feminism are complicitous in disseminating Western hegemony (Ray 2000:50), which implies the inconsistency of Western feminism as deployed in colonial narratives. The denunciation of sati alienates Hindu men and may in a sense attract Hindu women, but imperialism and feminism merged in creating racial and national hierarchies in gender practices that alienated Hindu women. What is important to my argument is that "the problem of locating 'Indian womanhood'" in the colonial context essentially resides in that the experience of gender is inseparable from class, national, racial, and caste "positionalities" (Sinha 2008:453).

It can be viewed as either paradoxical or perfectly logical that Hindu nationalist women reproduced that rhetoric for their own purposes. Nationalist women mobilized the idea of 'woman' as an embodiment of the nation's value, in continuum with Western feminists, in order to justify the homogeneity and political validity of the Hindu community (Ray 2000:126). The category of 'lesbian' appears on the one hand to depend on this recuperation and intertwining of colonial and anti-imperialist strategies, all whilst being essentially alien to the construction of the 'nation-as-woman.' In addition, the self-determination of 'woman' by *women* illustrates that feminine subjectivity is not only imposed on female subjects but also formulated by them (Sinha 2008:454), which reinforces the exclusion of lesbian individuals.

Illustration: Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code

In July 2009, Section 377 in the Indian Penal Code, which criminalized homosexual intercourse, was revoked. It was subsequently reintroduced in December 2013 by the Supreme Court of India, which prompted visible protest especially from the part of human rights

activists (Sathyanarayana Rao and Jacob 2014:1). However, one may focus on the active effort of activist groups and NGOs in India to revoke the Section in 2009.

Section 377 illustrates the discourse of ‘the sex’ and the saturation of society with sexual normalization in the context of colonial legal deployments, which Michel Foucault identifies in their European forms but does not extend to colonial phenomena in the *History of Sexuality* (1990). Indeed, Foucault rather relies on the dimension of *ars erotica* of mythological India/Asia. Although this constitutes a subject for a whole different discussion, it is worth mentioning that the case of Section 377 allows an investigation into the specific colonial ramifications of the Victorian politics of sexuality that Foucault criticizes.

One should therefore look at Section 377 as a synthesizing revelator of the interplay of Hindu and British legislation. In the extract cited above from the section, sexual intercourse is normalized within the virtuous framework of procreation, as opposed to “carnal intercourse” which can be defined as sexual activity for pleasure or another non-functional purpose. However, as penetration is central in the explanation of the criminality of homosexuality, female same-sex intercourse is dismissed as an object of legislation, therefore implying the secondary status of female sexuality and subjectivity as a reality as well as a political issue. This clause thus dismissed both sexual pleasure as motivation for intercourse and a woman’s capacity for pleasure and agency in general, which justifies in a sense the perverse “hysterization of women’s bodies” as the unknown and thus the uncontrollable (Foucault 1990:104). Section 377 suppressed the possibility for female same-sex love and intercourse through that semiotic framing.

In the struggle that preceded and triggered its revocation, which had started in the 1990s, a convergence of feminist organizations, LGB associations, and other (often transnational) NGOs was observed, as a rallying discourse of rights and human dignity was adopted (Misra 2009:20). Even if they also appealed to a sense of traditional “inclusiveness” (Misra 2009:24) inherent to Indian society, this change also exemplifies the trend of modernization à la Western that dominates Indian politics. Of course, the revocation is significant as a sign of progress for lesbian as well as gay individuals, especially with regards to access to institutions such as health and social services. It succeeded in making sexuality a political issue and constitutional matter. Indeed, the term “sexual citizenship” was coined so as to represent the idea that sexual orientation was now a politicized concept (Misra 2009:27).

Besides, the revocation also represented a victory for identity politics. While it has been shown in what sense ‘identity’ can be said to be problematic within a Hindu framework of thought, the case of Section 377 confirms that contemporary public policy, all whilst progressive, may also hinder genuine reflexion on female same-sex subjectivity in Hindu terms. Indeed, policies undermine a discussion of it that acknowledges the mobility and fungibility of concepts within that religious, mythological, and cultural framework. In that sense, such legal change might only scratch the surface of the problem insofar as the general notion Hindu lesbian subjectivity is left untouched. Indeed, a certain social malaise persists with regards to lesbian sexuality, as the dominance of patriarchy continues to hinder a feminist struggle in general, and also, because such de-penalization fails to problematize the place of female homosexuality in Indian society (Bhaskaran 2002:26). More importantly, it showed that a liberal discourse of minority rights and identity politics was ‘the only way’ to legally advance the cause of ‘gay’ and ‘lesbian’ people.

Lesbian movements: for which 'lesbians'?

Yet, in modern India, it would be erroneous to say that 'lesbians', or female individuals who love other female individuals, do not find ways to express themselves and get support in their own terms. LGB press has been developing since the 1970s, opening the debate around the existence of a specific Indian or South Asian lesbian subjectivity (Dave 2010:597). However, the discourses deployed by the majority of the main movements undermine the possibility for a subtle answer all whilst attempting to recover a heritage denied during colonization.

First, these journals and publications rarely use a language other than English, which is problematic, even though it seems a historical inevitability and a necessity for pan-Indian communication. The semiotic order implied by the English language conditions what can be thought about sexuality; that is, those journals, while using either the word 'lesbian' or paraphrasing its meaning, depend on a "Structural Unconscious" (Wittig 1992:22) that is impregnated with the discursive frameworks that are proper to that language. Although Indian individuals have appropriated the English language, which became part of contemporary Indian cultures, the use of English conditions the production of knowledge about South Asian phenomena in semantic and conceptual ways. This is not to assert linguistic relativism, but rather to highlight and problematize the use of language in attempts to post-colonial self-determination.

Moreover, the majority of movements and support networks are based in New Delhi or Bombay, when they are not international networks: historically, the major specifically lesbian journal for Indian women was the London-based *Shakti*. Other important journals are *Khush* ("happy", or "extatic pleasure" in Urdu and Hindi) and *Trikone* (referring to the triangle used to identify gays and lesbians), based in Toronto and San Jose respectively. More important is the fact that many queer theorists and scholars who study the politics of sex in South Asia or India are diasporic queer individuals. For instance, Rakesh Ratti purports to enhance the power of self-determination of South Asian gays and lesbians while increasing their visibility, in *A Lotus of Another Color: An Unfolding of the South Asian Gay and Lesbian Experience* which he edited in 1993. Yet this book's contribution depends on the fact that the author was brought up in California and now lives and works in Atlanta. This does not mean that he fails to present the reflection of individuals and scholars who speak from the perspective of grassroots movements or autobiographically. Rather, his being in touch with a global notion of homosexuality shows that it is his standpoint that enables him to conceive of the generalization "gays and lesbians in South Asia". While he criticizes the relative absence of concern for South Asian LGB community in the US as a group which has "a different life experience, different societal and familial influences, and different needs" and deplores that South Asian gays and lesbians "stand with one foot in the South Asian society, the other in the GL world" (Ratti 1993:14), he limits homosexualities in South Asia to a singular, univocal concept reducible to Hindu homosexuality, but also, as Jasbir Puar points out in her critique of *Lotus*, he ignores the odd combination of a discourse of grassroots recovery of history and a collection of 'coming out' stories—that is an essentially European and North American feature of gay and lesbian experience (Puar 1998:414).

Furthermore, lesbian networks within India fail in a sense to represent Indian lesbians beyond class/caste divisions. Naisargi Dave points to the exigency of politicization

(2010:606) that the redactors of LGB magazines formulate or imply implicitly in their selection of letters from individuals before publication. The search for individual pleasure is not considered a legitimate form of lesbian expression, neither is it a legitimate ground for participation in lesbian movements, as letters in which lesbians express the desire to meet other lesbians in their state or region are considered inappropriate (Dave 2010:608). Moreover, Indian LGB movements' founders and theorists have chosen to tackle issues of assertion within a human rights and liberal discourse to achieve representation in what is now 'modernizing' India all whilst intending to address the genealogy of the normalization of homosexuality. The rural–urban imbalance that exists between levels of education and globalization reveals a certain inadequacy of these movements in effectively representing the voices of Hindu Indians, as a form of South Asian “homonormativity” (Puar 2007:2) seems to emerge in response to hegemonic North American norms, at the expense of the plurality of South Asian ‘identities.’ The importance of the rural population of India highlights that progresses made in the urban, cosmopolitan sphere do not make up homogeneous change at the national level. Rural populations are most of the time unaware or rather kept ignorant of movements (Kishwar and Vanita 1985:70). Therefore, not only do law amendments, like abolishing the criminalization of homosexuality, not make up for social change, but also conceptual agendas may not directly trigger univocal and unanimous awakening of consciousness either.

What seems to emerge is a sense of vacuity, as the two forms of politicization of sexuality analyzed here both fall short of addressing the strategic silence on certain assemblages of desire, especially female same-sex relationships, primarily due to a lack of political(ly articulated) commitment to a critical re-evaluation of the premises of LGB discourses. In other words, female same-sex love as it is signified in practice within the framework of a global LGB rhetoric may actually narrow the possibilities for investigation into the plurality of histories of South Asian/Indian women who love women, but also consistently restrict political and linguistic options while imagining homosexuality in India beyond neo-colonial and nationalist semiotic frameworks.

The Politics of Fire

Deepa Mehta's film *Fire* (1995) can be considered as an exemplary illustration of these discursive and political issues with the framing of female same-sex relationships in the Hindu Indian context. While it attempts to tackle the issue of female same-sex love in Hindu India through the love story between Sita and Radha, the two main female characters, the film also sparked fierce social and cultural debate at the time of its release. In this sense, both the content and context of *Fire* highlight the argument made above.

The scene takes place in the house of Ashok, a middle-class Hindu who owns a video rental store as well as a food business. He is pious and spends an important part of his time at the temple where he listens to the advice of his yogic master Swamji. Ashok's brother Jatin works in the video rental store, and has established an underground trade of porn videos. He is in love with Julie, an Indo-Chinese hairdresser who is reluctant to marry and become a “baby-making machine,” as Jatin says. Mundu, the lower caste servant, helps with the housekeeping and sometimes take care of Biji, Jatin's grandmother. She cannot speak nor walk but she agitates a bell to express her discontent or needs. Radha is

Ashok's wife; she helps Ashok in the shop and cares after Biji. When the film begins, Jatin has agreed to marry Sita, a young Hindu woman. Sita is welcomed in Ashok's house but she quickly realizes that her marriage makes her unhappy. The relation between Sita and Radha gains in intimacy, as Jatin is cheating on Sita and as we learn that Radha is infertile, which motivated Ashok in his quest for the ideal state of the yoga, that is, to deny her sexual desire and resist emotional and physical contact. The two women question their condition and status in the home, under Biji's often disgusted looks. Once they stage a parody of a pop music hit and Sita wears Jatin's clothes to play a male part. One night, Ashok surprises the two sisters-in-law lying together, pleasuring themselves. Sita wants to leave with Radha, who, although hesitant, goes to Ashok and explains her true desires. While Ashok and Radha fight, her sari catches fire. In the last scene, Sita and Radha meet under a pouring rain in front of a temple, ready to start a new life together.

Fire came out in 1996 in India, before the decriminalization of homosexuality in India. It was screened in major Indian cities without necessitating preliminary censorship. It was the first film of the trilogy *Elements* realized by Toronto-based Indian director Deepa Mehta. Each movie in the trilogy is filmed in English and focuses on an Indian dilemma; *Fire* addresses the issue of gender. As a "node of incitement" (Patel 2002:227), *Fire* was put to trial for both its apparent perversion of "morality" and its problematic "cultural validity," even though the name 'Sita' was changed to 'Neeta' before the release of the film in India, in order to anticipate protest (Kapur 2000:54–55). Protests were organized against as well as in support of the film, by groups with rival or divergent interests (Bachmann 2002:234), but importantly, right-wing opposition to screening of the film was most violent, with, for instance in 1998 in Calcutta, members of the Shiv Sena (a Hindu political party adhering to an ideology of extremist nationalism) attempting to prevent the film from being shown (Patel 2002:226). The *Hindutva* indeed perceived the depiction of the relation between the two sisters-in-law as unnatural and "alien" to Hindu culture (Narain 2004:158), which clearly echoes the discourse on homosexuality deployed by the Victorian administration in Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code and illustrates the paradoxical continuum observed above. Moreover, the fact that the director is a diasporic Indian reinforced their argument that what is lesbian is Western.

However, that the debates incited by *Fire* did not only develop in India but were also "transnational" (Patel 2002:229) is also significant, as it reminds one of the fact that female homosexuality is problematically linked to the phenomenon of queer diaspora. Voices in Indian diasporic public expressed their indignation with the 'improper' representation of Hindu masculinity in the film (Patel 2002:223); Jatin is indeed pictured as weak and subordinate, as he remains silent while a Chinese director insults him and the entirety of the Indian people in the restaurant scene (John and Niranjana 1999:581). This emphasizes Mehta's attempt to show how caste/class, nationality, and sexuality intertwine. For instance, when Radha is absent, the servant, Mundu, replaces Biji's VHS of the Ramayana with porn videos in front of which he masturbates; when he is discovered he complains that he is denied desires and intimacy, and that nobody seems to care about what he feels. Crucially, Julie represents liberated sexuality outside the Hindu household. She is independent and she is able to create her own persona for her acting career.

The director thus presents highly sexualized characters all whilst depicting the Hindu family as a rigid and empty structure that erases sexuality as desire to replace it with

sexuality as procreation. This can be reframed with the yogic interpretation of morality, and Askok's pursuit of purity as abstinence also supports a reading of the character as a yogin. In that sense, it is crucial to situate Mehta's work not only within the framework of the lesbian taboo, but also to conceive it as a feminist enterprise (Bachmann 2002:237; Kapur 2000:61). Feminist scholars such as Mahdu Kishwar, who have refused labelling the film as such, are interestingly those who have attempted to reaffirm 'Indian womanhood' as inherently opposed to homosexuality (Bachmann 2002:239).

Indeed, *Fire* rather criticizes Hindu 'tradition'. Sita mentions it as a "button", which if pressed, makes her respond "like a trained monkey." The subtext of transgression is omnipresent in the characters' behaviour. Sita transvestites herself twice, first alone in Jati's room, then with Radha in their musical parody, which breaks from the mythical Sita is sacrificing and devoted. Radha is infertile, which automatically deprives her of her claim to traditional femininity as motherhood. In a sense, Radha and Sita would illustrate Wittig's point explained above; as they debunk the requirements of femininity, they distinguish themselves from the label of 'women.' When Radha comes back, after being discovered with Sita, to tell Ashok what she feels, he shouts to her half angry, half panicked: "what kind of wife have you become? What kind of woman are you?" Ashok seems to validate this interpretation.

However, the film conveys in a more explicit way the impass Radha and Sita are in (John and Niranjana 1999). While Sita tells Radha: "There's no word in our language for what we are, what we feel for each other," Mehta grants the Hindu nationalists' point that lesbians need Western referents in order to exist as such. While it has been shown that this is not the case, for names for 'lesbian' exist, and that female homosexuality did exist as a possibility in Hindu myths that did not contradict the majority of heterosexuality, the director appears to suppress historical material that would actually support a post-colonial self-determination argument (Vanita 2002:6). She thereby seems unquestioning of the Victorian roots of the present-day mainstream discourse on (female) homosexuality. Her treatment of the Ramayana also reveals that her commitment to changing discourses is deceptive. She makes an explicit parallel between a certain view of Hinduism and Christianity while she puts a line from the Bible in the mouth of the yogin (Ashok): "What I saw in the bedroom is a *sin in the eyes of god and men*" (Vanita 2002:3, emphasis added). On the one hand, this conflation forgets about Vedic Hinduism, which indirectly annihilates the possibility for the idea of desiring femininity and thus for the existence of female homosexual desire within Hinduism. On the other hand, Hinduism is pictured as a univocally dogmatic religion, which it can be, as shown above, yet not necessarily. Mehta inserts the *Ramayana* four times in *Fire*; twice through Biji's VHS which is watched by Biji and Mundu, then by the whole family as a repentance from Mundu's 'sin', and once in live theatre at Ashok's temple. Mehta decided to show only the episode of Sita's sacrifice, which gives a sense of insistence on the only idea that the female subject is oppressed in that text, but such use of the epic also makes it *the* scripture of Hinduism. In that sense, Mehta actually "mirrors" (John and Niranjana 1999:581) the mainstream use of Hinduism as a "fossil culture" (Shah 1993:119), unquestioning the operations of colonial discourses and apparently failing to acknowledge the plurality of Hinduism.

Nevertheless, this critique does not completely address Mehta's treatment of 'the West.' Sita expresses the rejection of the strategy of coming out; Radha says: "Seeing is better."

As a possible reference to the diasporic literature on homosexuality, this line still allows arguing that Mehta is conscious of the downsides of globalization. Her uncompromising criticism of pornography as a corrupting force (John and Niranjana 1999:583) is done through the persona of Jatin, who stands out visually as an ambassador of the West through his clothing and ambitions.

All in all, the controversy *around* the film clearly exposes the need for going back in history, and re-reading the scriptures as a plural discourse of “imbrica[ted]” significations (Bachmann 2002:242). The interpretations of the film’s message and of its depiction of ‘Hinduness’ diverge, as analysts’ and protestors’ aims and vision of Hindu culture are inherently or strategically different. One might also argue that Mehta expresses that need *within* her film; that she offers to re-interpret the classical myths, as it is not Sita but Radha’s sari that catches fire, and as on the day of the fast, Radha sacrifices her glass of water for Sita, who should be the sacrificing figure. Mehta destabilizes the notion of culture as univocal and unchanging (Kapur 2000:62), which has generated reflection around Hindu female homosexuality already, as revealed by the amount of literature produced on the subject in the last decade. I argue that it is still essential, in order to trigger a deeper rethinking of Hindu possibilities.

Conclusion

While re-examining the discourses deployed by colonial and post-colonial agents I have attempted to shed light on the particular nature of Hindu narratives and rhetoric. Liberal discourses on rights and the inclusion of minorities create, in spite of their positive aspects, “an artificial set of questions about the knowability and recoverability of (the) Other” (Butler 2006:197). Understanding the ‘subject’ as a construction in evolution through changing “signifying practices” (Butler 2006:197) seems to coincide better with a Hindu notion of the individual as part and whole of a movement-universe (*jagat*). If heterosexuality dominates in Hindu Indian society as a norm today, an alternative reading of some foundational religious and mythical texts reveals the misleading character of ‘traditional Hindu heteronormativity.’ In such a reading, there is no way to infer that Hinduism or Hindu Indian society is traditionally heteronormative. The impact of colonization explains the roots of norms upheld by the Hindu political right and the rigidity of kinship structures, yet there is no dichotomic opposition between Hindu narratives and Victorian discourses, which would be to over simplify the multiple conflicts and overlaps between race, nationality, class, caste, and sex that reappear in contemporary lesbian movements.

I argue that thinking about female homosexuality in Hindu terms might require academic rhetorical, and conceptual tools to go beyond the problem of identity, but also a critical reading of language as well as the ways in which we are willing to think about queerness and subjectivity within our own academic spheres. On a more practical level, it is difficult to convincingly show that efforts made by South Asian females who love females and scholars to live their lesbian subjectivity in Hindu terms cannot be rewarding, as such provocative elements as *Fire* trigger a new invocation of history as well as a potentially post-colonial re-thinking of concepts and practices.

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My Peruvian museum

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So much has constituted Peru's history in the past and continues to "make history" (and headlines) today; however, not all of these events/people/thing/moments-in-time are necessarily given a sufficient amount (if any) attention and credit in 'official' Peruvian museums, in school curriculums, in major national advertisement campaigns attracting both foreign and domestic tourists, or in itineraries of popular tours offered by Peruvian tour operators. Even though many of the exhibits in *My Peruvian Museum* follow feature quintessential and iconic Peruvian commodities (from llamas to Paddington Bear to poverty), they are represented in unusual and refreshing ways which points to how paying attention to these affects can be both productive and enriching. These exhibits attempt to pay attention to gaps in the well-known Peruvian narrative and therefore challenge what other museums usually portray as a seamless history of the Peruvian nation.

KEY WORDS Peru, affect, history

My *Peruvian Museum* places on display various 'exhibits' that are examples of human and non-human experiences, movements, flashes, surges, and intensities that we can (and should) become more attuned to in the somewhat recent turn to affect. This fictional museum attempts to pay more attention to "ordinary affects" (Stewart 2007) relating to and happening in the country this museum focuses on—Peru—and the things or people—or both—that often slip through the cracks or can get overlooked in the process of trying to name things and theorize using grand paradigms. Affective states, writes Roland Barthes, "outplay the paradigm of dialectics by referring to something unprecedented, something that slips through the net of dialectical analysis" (Cronan 2012:51). Further, affects constitute a "level of experience [that] cannot be translated into words without doing violence" explains Gibbs (2010:200), arguing that affects "open unsuspected possibilities for new ways of thinking, being, and acting" (2010:187). She also notes that paying attention to the affective turn means paying attention to, "envisionings beyond the already known" (Gibbs 2010:203). Similarly, for Patricia Clough, author of *Autoaffection*, affects are, "unexpected, new," and contribute to the "forging of a new body" (Cronan 2012:53). The following exhibits on display in *My Peruvian Museum* attempt to do just this and they are refreshing, haunting, and eye-opening, sometimes all at the same time.

So much has constituted Peru's history in the past and continues to "make history" (and headlines) today; however, similar to the case of slaves used to mine gold and the violence imbued in cocaine production in Colombia (Taussig 2004), not all of these events / people / thing / moments-in-time are necessarily given a sufficient amount (if any) attention and credit in 'official' Peruvian museums, in school curriculums, in major national advertisement campaigns attracting both foreign and domestic tourists, or in itineraries of popular tours offered by Peruvian tour operators. Even though many of the exhibits that follow feature quintessential and iconic Peruvian commodities (from llamas to Paddington Bear to poverty), they are represented in unusual and refreshing ways which points to how paying attention to these affects can be both productive and enriching. These exhibits attempt to pay attention to gaps in the well-known Peruvian narrative and therefore challenge what other museums usually portray as a seamless history of the Peruvian nation. A museum such as this one, just like the history of Peru, can never be complete; therefore it can, and should, always be augmented and updated with new affects.

Llamas

The Llama is a woolly sort of fleecy hairy goat. With an indolent expression and an undulating throat.

— Hilaire Belloc, *More Beasts for Worse Children* (1897)

The llama, in its interactions with humans in the past (during the Inca Empire) as well as today, has successfully become constructed as the national animal and symbol of Peru, as well as a species tourists constantly desire to encounter while traveling throughout Peru. The llama has therefore been effectively imagined as a symbol of Peruvian identity and history and acts as a living, in the (nonhuman) flesh ambassador of the nation's sacred Inca and Andean culture. The historical ties of these animals with the Inca Empire and their continuous importance in everyday Peruvian society have situated them as agents that bridge the past with the present and it would be unfair to merely call them pets. It can be argued that the Inca Empire and today's tourism industry would not be as successful or enduring without the major player and non-human actor that is the llama. Llamas are essential to the lives of residents of the Central Andes to this day as a companion species, as a source of income from their wool, as participants in sacred rituals where they are so respected that they are sometimes sacrificed, at times are a source of food, their droppings used as a fertiliser, and are perhaps most recognized as pack animals for their ability to transport materials down the rockiest and harshest of mountain terrains that no horse could do. Llamas have even been deemed 'environmentally-conscious' animals due to the shape of their hooves which cause little damage to the ground unlike other pack animals. Therefore, more attention is increasingly being paid to the collaboration of non-human and human beings in everyday life in Peru which has been going on for centuries. The interactions of humans and llamas in the Andes region of Peru are very important and take place on a daily basis, and it can be argued that the Inca Empire would have not been able to sustain itself and expand in the manner that it did without the vibrant presence



Llamas at the Chinchero market on the way to Machu Picchu.

PHOTO COURTESY: PRIYA CHENDKE

and capabilities of the llama. More than just serving humans, however, llamas and humans partake in co-agential relationships that are constantly co-evolving.

The contributions of the llama to the Inca Empire are thus multiple, and it is very significant that the species has survived thousands of years and is still a vital actor in Peru today, giving them an important status as agents of Peruvian memory and identity due to their long history with the nation. According to the scientist Jared Diamond from the PBS series *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, the domestication of the llama was extremely important for the development of Andean civilizations in several ways but the most important seems to be that it is a very reliable transport animal or “beast of burden,” large enough to carry packs and metals and so it permitted the horizontal integration of human societies in the Andes (Diamond 2005) and the domestication of these camelids is therefore a process that has forever transformed Andean societies. The llama can therefore be considered to be the most important animal in the Andes, most likely because they have been successfully domesticated (Goepfert 2010:28). In many of these highland Peruvian communities llamas were the main source of raw material, meat, wool, and leather for sandals; they also participated in the social and economic life of the communities as pack animals and were used in rituals as offerings (their foetuses and intestinal calculi, for example) (Goepfert 2010:28). Diamond stresses that it is a remarkable feat that Andean civilizations were able to develop both in the highlands and in the lowlands, and thus were able to become connected into a stronger, more unified empire (Anning 2011).

It has been argued that llamas played a major role here, and they made it possible to transport fish caught from the ocean and carry them up to emperors in the highlands, as well as to transport products produced in the highlands and transport them down to the lowlands (Anning 2011). The llama was also an animal big enough to feed members of entire communities and its manure was used as an exceptional fertilizer on the fields and would yield a higher amount of vital crops, such as potatoes and maize corn, than without it. According to Diamond,

for all these reasons then state governments and empires, big political units, rose surprisingly early in the Andes, already before the time of Christ and the Andes ended up with the largest empire in the Americas, the largest native American state of the Americas. Namely, the Inca Empire which ran all the way from Ecuador into northern Chile. You can thank the llama its contributions in to making that possible (Diamond 2005).

Llamas were thus undoubtedly an integral part of the Incan 'workforce' which makes them sound like actual co-actors, not merely pets of humans. As reliable pack animals they contributed vastly to the building of the Incas' irrigation systems, roads, and temples, and they were also used to carry loads in the Incan mines (Westreicher 2007:90). It should also be noted that even now "llamas are still used today by the indigenous peoples of South America for packing and transporting goods, for clothing and for meat. Mostly the males are used as pack animals and they usually carry up to fifty pounds" (Westreicher 2007:90). Llamas even display agency such as when, "an overloaded llama will simply refuse to move, which can be seen when these animals throw a fit and lie down on the ground and they may spit, hiss, or even kick at their owners until their burden is lessened to a more acceptable weight for them" (National Geographic). Even today they still, "provide meat, wool, hides for sandals, and fat for candles. Their dung can be dried and used for fuel. South American herders use most parts of a llama's carcass" (Westreicher 2007:90). According to Alex Chepstow-Lusty of the French Institute of Andean Studies in Lima who conducted a study on the extraordinary properties of llama dung, llama herds defecated communally which provided fertilizer for the maize crops which was easily collected (Anning 2011). For Patricia Clough, one challenge of affect theory is to show how "bodily matter" (i.e. even llama waste by-product) bears its own, "information" as this bodily information overruns the information contained in any linguistic system (Cronan 2012:51). Therefore, it was an "assemblage" (Bennett 2010) of different co-agents, the llamas, their dung and even maize crops that nourished the Incas and the expansion of their Empire. "Today, the Incas are long gone," writes Chepstow-Lusty, "largely wiped out by the Spanish conquistadors in the 1500s. But their descendants, the Quechua, still use llama droppings for fertiliser and cooking fuel" (Anning 2011).

Interestingly, there is an increasing fascination with both llamas and alpacas in Europe and North America, two continents which have spawned a new generation of farmers and breeders of these camelids, and Cathi McMullen, author of *Romancing the Alpaca: Passionate Consumption, Collection and Companionship* points out that, "What often started out as simply being overwhelmed by the beautiful alpaca eyelashes has become a life-changing experience for many" (McMullen 2008:504). Alpacas have been described

capable of drawing humans to them with their inquisitive nature, intelligence, and attractive appearance. Breeders are also attracted to alpacas because they do not have to kill the animal for profit, a necessity with other livestock (McMullen 2008:504). Numerous alpaca owners in North America describe their involvement with alpacas as a “glorious obsession,” a “wonderful addiction,” or even a “love affair,” very similar to how Donna Haraway describes humans’ intimate relationships with their dogs (McMullen 504). Llamas are even becoming commonplace in strange new situations, such as acting as a golf caddy on American golf courses, replacing some humans as caddies during leisurely rounds of golf.

Paddington Bear

Paddington Bear is a fictional stuffed bear who, beginning in the late 1950s, was featured in countless children’s books by British children’s author Michael Bond. What many people do not know is that Paddington’s native homeland is Peru and that,

Although Paddington now lives in London, England, he originally came from Darkest Peru where he was brought up by his Aunt Lucy after he was orphaned following an earthquake when he was just a few weeks old. When Aunt Lucy went to live in the Home for Retired Bears in Lima, she decided to send him to England to live. After teaching him to speak English she arranged for him to stowaway in a ship’s lifeboat. Eventually, Paddington arrived on Paddington Station in London which is where the very first story begins with the words:

Mr. and Mrs. Brown first met Paddington on a railway platform. In fact, that was how he came to have such an unusual name for a bear for Paddington was the name of the station. The Browns decided to name their new member of the family Paddington, after the place where he was found, although we later learn that in Peru his name was Pastuso [his Quechua name]. [Paddington Bear Official Website]

Paddington is a beloved storybook character in England and around the world—Bond’s books having been translated in over 30 languages over the last 50 years—and Paddington Bear is actually often named one of England’s most famous ‘immigrants’. In the last few years, however,

Britain’s preoccupation with immigrants, asylum-seekers and visa-overstayers is so great that even English literature’s most famous illegal alien, Paddington Bear is now being portrayed in the midst of his most terrifying adventure ever—a UK police interrogation over his immigration status. Nearly 30 years after the last Paddington Bear novel was published, its author Michael Bond finally said he would write another, but this time it will be about the young visa-dodger’s experience of an immigration inquiry. [Lall 2007]

In the end, Paddington gets out of the sticky situation, which Bond felt necessary to write about and prove his “innocence,” but, nonetheless the entire situation still worried many people.

Many loyal Paddington Bear fans that grew up reading Bond's books reacted negatively to Paddington's fictional interrogation in the story book and were very protective of this fictional bear. Even the Peruvian Embassy reacted as if the incident was in fact real and made an official statement: "Paddington Bear is very important to British people, so the name Peru has a positive association for them from childhood. And I think 'Darkest Peru' is a great phrase. It has come to represent exoticism, so it's very cool. People have been moving around for centuries," said the embassy spokesman (MacDonald 2008:1). In fact, the Peruvian attitude towards Peru's most famous bear is so warm and affectionate that when HarperCollins, the publisher of the Paddington Bear books, held a reception at the Embassy recently, officials decided to help Paddington out with the accusation of his refugee status. "In the book, there is a problem with Paddington's papers, so the Peruvian ambassador gave Michael Bond a passport for him," explains the Peruvian embassy spokesman, promising that, "he will not have those difficulties again" (McDonald 2008:1). Even though the Peruvian spokesman also felt it necessary to add that, "It's not a real passport. He is a fictional bear," it may as well have been a real passport since it seems that making sure that this fictional bear is considered a legal immigrant amongst the British population and not a refugee is very important for Peru's image as a peaceful place. Therefore, even if Paddington Bear is 'just' a character in children's books, he is clearly affecting people and this ordeal caused strong reactions—from British people who grew up with Paddington and associate Peru with a friendly place as well as the many British tourists who travel to Peru today and take photos with their own Paddington Bear at different attractions, to the Peruvian embassy vehemently refuting the claims that he was an illegal refugee in England. Bond has even penned *Paddington's Guide to London: A Bear's Eye View* which looks like any other *Frommer's* or *Lonely Planet* guide to London and thus makes Paddington a cherished fictional character, but is now also considered a tourism authority, possibly influencing the places where a tourist visits (or avoids) based on his suggestions.

Today, Paddington Bear, even if he is a 'legal' immigrant to Britain, has now become an activist for illegal immigrants, and especially children. Apparently, "Now the stray bear, who came to Britain accompanied with a note from his ailing aunt asking that he be looked after, is spearheading a campaign—along with more than 60 children's authors and illustrators—to highlight the [British] Government's continued arrest and detention of hundreds of child asylum-seekers in prison-like conditions" (Verkaik 2009:1). The petition proclaims, "As writers and illustrators of books for children, we urge you to stop detaining children whose families have sought asylum in the UK" (Verkaik 2009:1). And, the moving letter is even accompanied by a special message written in Paddington's own words. It reads: "Whenever I hear about children from foreign countries being put into detention centres, I think how lucky I am to be living at number 32 Windsor Gardens with such nice people as Mr. and Mrs. Brown" (Verkaik 2009:1). Paddington Bear may simply be a fictional bear in children's stories but he is now, apparently, getting involved in activism in order to create real change in people's lives, calling the British government out on the detaining of children asylum-seekers in Britain. This well-loved fictional bear is clearly affecting the lives of children—and not just when parents read author Bond's books to their children at night—but the fact that Paddington's voice is being employed in the petition to the Government, demonstrates this fictional bear's capacity to enact real change in people's lives.



A huge variety of colourful corn is grown in Peru.

PHOTO COURTESY: JENNY MEALING

Colourful Maize (Corn)

In Peru, maize comes in an astounding number of shapes, sizes, available in a rainbow of colours from blue to yellow, and was regarded as sacred by Peru's pre-Hispanic peoples, but it also affected the flourishing of Inca society itself, the civilization which erected the ancient citadel of Machu Picchu. As such, more light needs to be shed on the sheer impact that the unlikely actor, corn, has had in Peru then and now. In fact,

up until now, the prevailing theory was that marine resources, not agriculture and corn, provided the economic engine behind the development of civilization in the Andean region of Peru. Now, breakthrough research led by Field Museum curator Dr. Jonathan Haas is providing new resolution to the issue concluding that during the Late Archaic period, maize was a primary component in the diet of people living in the *Norte Chico* region of Peru, an area of remarkable cultural florescence in the 3rd millennium B.C. [Field Museum 2013:1]

According to Lidio M. Valdez, "During Inka times, production and consumption of maize beer was critical to the organization of labour for construction of monumental architecture, agricultural terraces, and the extensive infrastructure of roads and bridges that stretched from present-day Ecuador to Chile and northwest Argentina. Such utilization of maize beer is still important in many parts of the Andes" (Valdez 2006:53). Valdez argues that we cannot underestimate the relationship between the organization of labour in Peru and maize beer. In fact, a new study by a team of archaeologists that includes

Northern Illinois University anthropologist Winifred Creamer has uncovered that corn was *the* crop that powered rise of Peruvian civilization 5,000 years ago (NIU 2013):

The new evidence shows that the start of civilization in South America was actually powered by agriculture, just as in the other great early civilizations, such as in Mesopotamia and Egypt ... The common element among all these ancient world powers was grain, which produced a reliable yield and was easy to store. In ancient Peru, we found that corn was everywhere. It was a staple of their diets and a key part of this civilization's economy.[NIU 2013].

Therefore, this exhibit on Peruvian corn attempts to show that we are not only dealing with things in the past that are long gone in museums, but that corn has an enduring presence and relevance in Peruvian diets in both food and drink form. Understanding that corn is an affordable nutritional staple, nourishing the many Peruvians who still perform intensive manual labour and agriculture in the highlands of Peru is very important, as is tracing its significance throughout Peru's history and seeing how the type of food that people nourish themselves with plays a major role in their productive output, the structures they build, and technologies they develop.

Fog over Lima, Peru

The strangest, saddest city thou can'st see.

— Ishmael on Lima in Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* (1851)

Michael Taussig, following Walter Benjamin, discusses how surprising it is that many people consider the weather to be such a mundane thing and something sufficiently described using numerical measurements, whereas Benjamin is extremely fascinated by the phenomenon of weather, considering it one of the highest and most amazing manifestations of cosmic forces (Taussig 2004:48). It is often said that a lot of fog hugs the coastal region of the country, especially the capital city Lima (Gritzner 2005:23) and it does seem that a dark ominous fog clouds over coast of Lima almost daily. Lima is a desert city where it rarely rains, in fact, they do not sell umbrellas or rain boots anywhere in Lima, yet a thick fog over the city is still the quintessential forecast in Lima and is the norm. On foggy days there is very low visibility and many buildings and places become completely invisible and seem to get 'erased' from the skyline of the city, even though they are obviously still there. Yet, it makes for a difficult time when trying to drive through this thick fog, and disappoints tourists when their photos do not turn quite out as planned. Thus, fog seems to 'have its own way' and a life of its own since it can interfere with many Lima citizens and tourists' plans for the day.

In some ways, however, the fog can also be an extremely beautiful sight and people do get used to it after a while. In fact, this dense fog is even being considered a valuable resource as of recently, proving that something as "mundane" and gloomy as fog can be something productive depending on the way you look at it, and clearly scientists and researchers have been analyzing Lima's unique fog and its many potentialities for



Fog over Lima's coast is almost a daily sight.

PHOTO COURTESY: BECKE GRAY

enacting real change like fighting poverty. Collyns writes that, “sandwiched between the cool ocean currents of the Pacific Ocean and the Andean foothills, Peru’s coastal capital is a meteorological anomaly. Lima is the second-largest desert city after Cairo and rainfall is extremely low—less than 4cm annually—but humidity can reach 98%” (Collyns 2012:1). Interestingly,

some newcomers are now turning to the climatic phenomenon known locally as the ‘donkey’s belly’—the thick, white sea fog that blankets coastal parts of the city (Lima) for up to nine months of the year—as a source of water. On hills in Villa María del Triunfo, a sprawling shantytown in the city’s south, strange rectangular structures loom out of the fog like ghostly sentinels. Closer inspection reveals they are four-by-six-metre bamboo and metal frames draped with a thick mesh. Slung underneath them run plastic gutters—water drains down pipes, through a biofilter, and into 1,100-litre tanks. [Collyns 2012:1]

Over the past five years, the organization Peruvians Without Water, with the help of foreign investment, has built 32 fog nets in the district. Beginning with 10 nets in the Bellavista settlement in 2009, Cruz secured a \$20,000 grant from the US development agency USAID to build 22 more nets in the nearby Los Tunales de Asall community, supplying around 75 families with water. Each net, complete with a tank, costs less than \$800 to construct (Collyns 2012:1). According to a USAID–Peru representative, “We were able to fund a project that takes Lima’s 98% humidity and helps turn it into an opportunity

to obtain clean water, often a challenge to some excluded populations living in the city outskirts” (Collyns 2012:1). This does not mean, however, that such an innovative project was not met with skepticism. For example, Noe Neira Tocto, the mayor of the slum that lies just inland from the Pacific initially said, “Really, it just seemed like it would be impossible to catch fog with plastic netting, and that it would turn into drops of water” (Collyns 2012:1). Nevertheless, the positive effects of this relatively recent initiative (which began around 2009) on grateful residents is already being seen, as for example, “Being able to count on a daily supply of 50–150 litres of water has been a lifeline for 66-year-old Artemio Alfaro and his family. He uses it to irrigate aloe vera (*sábila*) plantations. He sells the plants, at six Peruvian soles (\$2.30 USD) each, to three Peruvian health-product firms. He aims to get organic certification, which would double the price for the plants” (Collyns 2012:1). To top it all off and to make a connection to another period in Peru’s history, according to Alain Gioda, a French hydrologist, the fog-catching has even been described as reminiscent of an ancient Inca technique in which not nets, but plants and trees, were used to gather water, collected at the base of the tree or plant (Collyns 2012:1). Therefore, there appears to be a lot more to Lima’s fog than meets the (squinting, mist-covered) eye.

‘Invasions’

Villa El Salvador is a shanty town that appeared in Lima, Peru, in 1971 as a result of the relocation of a massive population often called “invaders”, or rather, communities moving from the highlands areas of Peru in droves, to Lima in search of “the good life.” Through the years, this town became a symbol of the huge population boom in Lima, and many shanty towns such as this one line the outskirts of Lima since there is literally no more room in Lima for people to build dwellings. Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto, in his book *The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else*, points his attention to the mass migrations of the poor from the countryside to cities like Lima over the last approximately 30 years. Robert Skidelsky, who reviewed de Soto’s book, argues that these migrations are:

transforming sleepy colonial ports and market towns, dominated by mercantile and administrative elites, into megacities. By 2015, more than 50 cities in developing countries will have populations of over five million, most of them living and working extralegally. The old elites live in ‘bell jars’ of heavily protected property, residential and commercial; outside flock millions of rural migrants in shanty towns, virtually invisible to the law. [Skidelsky 2000]

This is because they have not bought property and paid taxes on that property, but erected their home themselves, and shantytowns can literally be built overnight and ‘take over’ plots of land.

While it may be easy to write off those who flock to Lima and build shanty towns as simply ruthless “illegal invaders”, de Soto and his researchers also discovered, in these sprawling “illegal cities,” a vibrant entrepreneurial culture that needs to be equally acknowledged. “You need only,” de Soto writes, “take a taxi from the airport to your hotel



One of the many 'shanty towns' in Peru.

PHOTO COURTESY: PRIYA CHENDKE

to see city perimeters crowded with homes, armies of vendors hawking wares in the streets, glimpses of bustling workshops behind garage doors and battered buses crisscrossing the grimy streets” (de Soto 2003:29). These ‘invaders’ may seem lawless but they actually regulate themselves by their own informal social contracts. However, since they are not legally acknowledged and are considered “squatters,” de Soto explains, it is very hard for them to find work and “make it” in the city: “What the poor lack is easy access to the property mechanisms that could legally fix the economic potential of their assets so that they could be used to produce, secure or guarantee greater value in the expanded market” (de Soto 2003:48). Not only are Lima’s shanty towns hauntingly beautiful, with their rainbow-hued homes set against a backdrop of a monstrous mountain, a patriotic Peruvian flag etched on its surface, and a clear blue sky, but these fragile yet innovative houses are a visible sign of determination and resilience, and an attempt at approaching “the good life.” There is, however, still a long way to go in tackling poverty in Lima, where thousands of ‘outsiders’ are desperately moving each year and literally setting up camp, even if it is on the city’s outskirts where they are called squatters of areas ‘official’ Lima residents make sure to avoid. While there is optimism about the economic growth that Peru has undoubtedly experienced in the last decade, many influential Peruvians, such as Nobel-prize author and former Presidential candidate Mario Vargas Llosa has said the following about his love/hate relationship with his complicated homeland: “Peru is for me a kind of incurable disease and my feeling for her is intense, bitter, and full of the violence that characterizes passion” (Falconer 2006:105).

Ayahuasca and 'drug experimentation tourism'

According to Michael Taussig, in his book, *Shamanism, Colonialism and the Wild Man: A Study in Terror and Healing* (1987), ingesting ayahuasca, a concoction made using the bark of a vine in the Amazon, is something that: "belongs with the sacred, taking place as a communal ritual". However, Taussig also considers the unpredictable and mind-altering ayahuasca as something that lacks the 'unity,' which is something Victor Turner deems as characteristic of the *communitas* of ritual (Taussig 1987:441). Taking ayahuasca is a "sensory pandemonium", a dance of leaping shadows, a "chaotic mingling of danger and humor" (Taussig 1987:442). Sociologist Carl Cassegard agrees: "You don't know how they will turn out. You will laugh, but you will also vomit and feel sick. Everything is hallucinatory and intense, but also full of unexpected, dreamlike reversals, connections, and juxtapositions. So much laughter" (Cassegard 2010).

Therefore, what is being described when people, including tourists travelling in Peru, take ayahuasca is that they go on a (hallucinogenic) 'trip' without knowing for how long or how intense it will be. Many tourists visit the Amazon jungle in Peru and are attracted by the possibility of 'finding themselves' with the guidance of a shaman who can help people wishing to take a spiritual journey and learn more about themselves or to cure an illness. Therefore, ayahuasca constitutes a touristic practice in itself as people seek out shamans to pay a visit to in the Amazon solely for the purpose of trying the now very well-known ayahuasca concoction. Thus, affect is involved in Amazonian spirituality as well as this recent 'drug tourism' in Peru, since after having taken ayahuasca one's mental and bodily state is altered it through experiencing hallucinations and vivid, sometimes nightmarish visions. According to Florence E. Babb, "The recent campaign to promote spiritual tourism uses images to convey a New Age mystical appeal" (Babb 2011:74).

The people of the Amazon region have best maintained the shamanistic culture and spiritual traditions. Shamanism uses herb and hands-on therapy to cure people not just from physical sickness but from fear, jealousy, tension, and anger. The treatment attempts to treat one's overall wellness rather than just the symptoms of illness. [Falconer 2006:89]

Under the hallucinogens' influence the individual can experience a revelation and shamans also consume the drug themselves to try and see into the future (Falconer 2006:89). After drinking this concoction that they themselves prepare, Peruvian shamans "believe they can travel in space or time and transform themselves into animals such as jaguars and anacondas" (Kalman 2003:18).

Mario Testino

Mario Testino, a Peruvian, is one of the world's leading fashion photographers. He photographed Princess Diana in her last official portrait before her death and is still the Royal Family's photographer, having snapped the royal engagement photo of Prince William and Kate Middleton. His high-fashion photography has graced the covers and pages of the world's most important fashion magazines such as *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair* for decades. In an interview with *Vogue* magazine, Testino was quoted as saying, "My pictures are my eyes. I

photograph what I see—and what I want to see” (Vogue n.d.). Through these eyes, according to *Vogue*, “the world is a place of vitality; gazing into them, his subjects are drawn to give up something of the essence of themselves. Over the past two decades, Testino’s view has slowly become a dominant way of seeing fashion” (Vogue n.d.). Other photographers have responded by “either aping it or rejecting it,” as author Patrick Kinmonth wrote, as well as adding that, “[Everything that] Testino turns his lens upon is by definition fashion” (Vogue n.d.).

Despite his worldwide notoriety as one of the highest earning and most successful fashion photographers ever, in 2012, Testino returned to his native Peru and opened a not-for-profit cultural organization and museum in Lima, called MATE (standing for the first two letters of each of his first and last name, Mario Testino) that promotes and celebrates the work of emerging Peruvian artists who get plenty of exposure by being on display in his museum. Also featured is the largest collection of his own photos on display anywhere in the world, the majority of which are portrait photographs of high profile celebrity subjects. However, for its second exhibition since the photography museum opened, MATE presented an exhibition called *Alta Moda*—which, when translated from Spanish means “high fashion,” a play on words since it featured a series of photographic portraits of Peruvians wearing traditional clothing from high up in the mountainous region of Cusco, a bold departure from Testino’s haute couture photography. To create *Alta Moda*, Testino “made several trips to Cusco city over a five-year period after discovering an archive of costumes from the region. Equally inspired by the history of Peruvian photography, Testino worked closely with the late famed Peruvian photographer Martin Chambi’s grandchildren and used recreated backdrops (of highland Peruvian sceneries) from the archive of the late iconic Peruvian photographer. While *Alta Moda* appears to reference the tradition of ‘ethnographic photography’; Testino has, in fact, captured several stories within each photograph” (Vogue n.d.). Says Testino, “I wanted to pay homage to Peru and to the sumptuousness of traditional Peruvian clothing, clothing to which Peruvians remain attached today” (Vogue n.d.). He also states that, “I think, at the moment, the Peruvian art scene is very exciting and diverse ... Because it’s not as well-known as some of the other centres, there is a freshness to it; like a new discovery” (Vogue n.d.).

It is extremely important to point out that Vogue Paris even dedicated their entire issue to Peru using Mario Testino’s photography in the April 2013 in Peruvian-themed photo editorials and articles. His high-fashion and celebrity portfolio is praised internationally and now, the world was getting to look into the world of traditional Peruvian textiles, made from extremely bright colours dyed from various vegetables, unique fabrics and cuts that seem to rival the designs of many contemporary designers today. This issue of a high-fashion magazine that influences so many consumers being dedicated to Peru shows just how inspiring South American prints and bright colours will become, if not already are, for many designers today, who obviously translate the often highly elaborate costumes for more ready to wear ones. Editor-in-chief of French *Vogue*, Emmanuelle Alt, praised Testino’s work throughout the issue stating:

Peru gives you vertigo. Between the heights of Huascarán and the beaches of Lima, there is a difference of 7000m. For this issue, we made the jump with Mario Testino. [Mallard 2013:1]

Elaborating on the contents of the April 2013 issue,

Testino took this issue as an opportunity to showcase the marvelous types of sceneries of the many to see in Peru: The photographer introduced us to the enchanting contrasts of his homeland through a high-color fashion triptyque, featuring three stories and three magnificent panoramas, with three fabulous girls: the mountains of Cuzco with Isabeli Fontana—our April cover girl—and Aymeline Valade, the Peruvian coast with Kate Moss and the Nazca desert with Erin Wasson. [Vogue n.d.]

The cover of the issue features top-model Isabeli Fontana wearing a Dolce&Gabbana Spring Summer 2013 Sicilian Folk multi-colour raffia mini skirt and *bralette* top shot by Testino in the highlands of Cusco. This colourful and fashion forward interpretation of Peruvian fashion is finished off with tasselled earrings by Dolce&Gabbana and the classic bowler hat that many women in the Andes wear with coloured pompons.

Finally, the issue also reveals interesting insights into the world of Peruvian dress that many Peruvians themselves do not even know, for example, that the reason why Peruvian and Bolivian women wear bowler hats is an interesting one. In 1920s a shipment of bowler hats was sent over to Bolivia via Peru for the Europeans working on the railways. The order was wrong, with the hats being too small and were hence distributed amongst the native population, and adopted by the women (Vogue n.d.).

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Star parties

An ethnographic exploration of amateur and professional astronomers

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The subculture of star party attendees has rarely been addressed within anthropology. Through an ethnographic approach, this paper explores the customs and motivations of those who sky-watch at star party gatherings. Some factors that motivate people to attend these gatherings include the sharing of technology, camaraderie, scientific learning, environmental advocacy, and emotional connections with the universe itself. Additionally, digital versus physical spaces are explored and contrasted. More broadly, this paper looks at possible reasons for the popularity of astronomy within our culture today.

KEY WORDS astronomy, star parties, pop culture

It has been said that astronomy is a humbling and character-building experience. There is perhaps no better demonstration of the folly of human conceits than this distant image of our tiny world. To me, it underscores our responsibility to deal more kindly with one another, and to preserve and cherish the pale blue dot, the only home we've ever known.

— Carl Sagan, *Pale Blue Dot: A Vision of the Human Future in Space* (1994)

Darkness fell upon Algonquin Park, and I knew that was my cue to gather my research essentials and head to the star party. As I walked towards the beach on that chilled September night, flashlight in hand to light the darkened pathway, I felt a buzz in the air. When I arrived, I turned my flashlight off, looked around, and saw several shadowy figures cast all across the area before me with telescopes set up for viewing. The buzz continued, and my excitement grew. Even though I was in an unfamiliar environment, a sense of familiarity warmed over me knowing that I was surrounded by others who were passionate about the cosmos. I headed over to one of my friends who had a telescope set up and she told me of the many sights that we might glimpse that evening. The anticipation heightened as I put my eye on the telescope...

Amateur astronomers love experiencing and learning about astronomical events. Yet, this particular sub-culture offers information, not only for themselves, but for society as a whole (Howe 2009). One of the ways amateur astronomers accomplish this is by holding

public events known as “Star Parties.” Typically located in public areas, as in a park at night, star parties allow people to gather together with their equipment and observe various objects within the night sky (Kopnina 2012). Using specialized gear, sometimes these gatherings happen during the day, depending on the event or object being witnessed, (i.e. a solar eclipse or most recently, the transit of Venus). Such events allow amateur astronomers to get involved and share their passions with others of like mind, and to engage people who may not normally be exposed to the discipline. Star parties occur year round, with frequent events in the summertime, but fewer in the winter. Some winter star parties are held in the southern United States, which brings people from all over to participate (especially those living in colder climates), and tends to lend to better viewing conditions. Before conducting research on amateur astronomers, my knowledge of astronomy and physics was limited. From this limitation, I wanted to explore more about what happens at these events.

I begin this article by giving a brief overview and background of astronomy. I then outline both the methods and methodology of my research and a literature review in order to provide a foundation for my findings. I was also interested in the motivations of star party attendees and their positionality within an educational perspective. The value of public education that amateur astronomers provide is great, to the point where much astronomy outreach would not even happen without them (Yucco et al. 2012). My expectations of attending a star party for the first time are also explored. Two other aspects of star parties that are addressed involve the feelings of camaraderie and the hunt for celestial bodies. Attending a star party is a social event in which friends and strangers interact to look for different objects in the sky. Therefore, these themes are also explored.

An important aspect regarding star parties that this paper addresses involves environmental concerns of light pollution. Dark-sky reserves are dedicated spaces that are kept free of as much artificial light as possible (Ministry of Natural Resources 2006). Light pollution becomes a problem for those stargazing, as it can interfere with the clarity of celestial objects being observed. Since the early twentieth century, astronomers have had to move to different places in order to avoid the effects of light pollution (Evans and Newman 2003:1375). The more I learned from my participants, the more I realized how much light pollution interfered with stargazing and learned more about the environmental concerns as well. Even during my attendance at a secluded place like Algonquin Park, the lighting conditions were not always ideal.

Virtual star parties are also explored, as people can participate wherever they have access to a computer. Several internet groups from around the world gather at different times to participate in what are known as virtual star parties. These virtual communities allow for some people to engage in conversation or to simply observe (Islam 2006). Online, participants discuss astronomical events, telescopes, and other related topics just as they would in person. Virtual star parties also facilitate those who cannot physically get to some of these gatherings in outdoors and remote areas. Therefore, they can experience a star party at home and still receive the benefits of learning and sharing in a virtual setting. This ethnography explores what role virtual parties play in people’s experiences and differentiates it with face-to-face events. Situating astronomy within North American culture today, I also reflect on the various reasons for the apparent popularization of space within Western society.

Method and Methodology

My methodology consisted of interviewing people who had run star parties, those who were frequent attendees and some who were new. Demographically, I interviewed people who were between the ages of 19 to 80 years old. I intentionally asked both male and female participants so that each gender would be represented equally on this topic. Specifically, I asked the female participants about their experiences to learn their points of view, since typically more men attend these events. Participants consisted of members from the Royal Astronomical Society of Toronto, Mississauga and Niagara chapters, virtual star party attendees, and professors and students at York University. The following eight participants include: Jean-Luc, Will, Geordi, Miles, Beverly, Deanna, Tasha, and Keiko, all of which were given pseudonyms.

All participants were interviewed face-to-face and typically in areas of familiarity for them, such as their place of work or school. One participant was interviewed via email due to distance and time constraints. Most of the participants I knew personally or had met in the past, while one person I had not met before. My interviewing method was qualitative and flexible, allowing my informants to express their views more freely (Bryman et al. 2009). The interviews were “semi-structured” such that some questions were prepared ahead of time, as well as spontaneous questions that were to be asked depending on the path of the conversations (O’Reilly 2005). Interviews ranged from approximately half an hour to forty-five minutes in length and they were conducted on an individual basis, in order to lessen distraction. Reflexively, having a background in counseling and psychology, I chose not to take notes while interviewing in order to attend and engage fully with my interviewees. All participants were informed that the interviews would be recorded and were required to sign a form of consent which clearly outlined the purpose of the research, the roles of those involved, and confidentiality statements.

Iwaniszewski (2011) suggests that the aim of studying cultural astronomy is to examine the activities of stargazing. Therefore, in order to examine the culture surrounding astronomy within Southern Ontario, I attended a few star parties throughout the year in order to compare and contrast the differences and similarities between them. The anthropological method known as “multi-locale fieldwork” was executed throughout my research by attending star parties in several different locations (McGarry 2012). I chose to attend multiple star party locations and online events so that my experiences would be varied and I would get a more holistic view of the activities involved. Hugh Gusterson calls this method “polymorphous engagement,” which means engaging in many different areas including virtual ones, in order to get eclectic data from different sources in different ways (1997:116). All of the star parties I attended were located in Southern Ontario, and in particular, River Place Park in Ayton, Algonquin Park, and Georgina with the York University Astronomy Club. Ayton was where StarFest was held last year in the summertime, which also boasts the largest star party in Canada. I decided to attend because of its size, despite the hefty admission’s cost. I was only able to attend for one day, but managed to get a good feel for the atmosphere. For the other two star parties, I engaged fully with the participants, looking through telescopes, asking questions, as well as monitoring reflexively my own emotional and cognitive states. I also participated in some virtual star parties, one through a Google+ group (Virtual Star Party 2012) and also through the York University Observatory’s online public viewing (OPV) website (York University Observatory 2012). Gusterson mentions,

“[i]f virtual space increasingly becomes a real space of social interaction then we will need virtual anthropologists to follow our subjects there” (1997:116). This point is important as virtual worlds can offer anthropologists cultural information on social groups by looking at how they interact and use virtual technology. Online presence and identities become salient and provide a new site for research into human interactions and kinship.

One obstacle I had with my research was taking notes in the dark. Other than being at Starfest during the day, both the Algonquin and Astronomy Club parties were at night. Following James Clifford’s methodology of utilizing “inscription notes” (1990), I was able to jot down bits of information and then rewrite them in the daytime. Another obstacle was trying to attend parties during the school year. I had attempted several times to attend a star party during the winter in Mississauga, but much to my frustration, the weather gave no sympathy for my plight. Alas, one downside to star parties that cannot be predicted is the weather. In the end though, I managed to attend three different events in the allotted time.

There is a need for research on amateur astronomers, especially in regards to who attends star parties. Currently, research on amateur astronomers as a culture is lacking and even more so in regards to star parties. The American Anthropological Association (AAA) mentions in their code of ethics that “researchers should do all they can to preserve opportunities for future fieldworkers to follow them to the field ... and disseminate their findings to the scientific and scholarly community” (Robben and Sluka 2012). Therefore, the aim of my research is twofold: to contribute to the research on amateur astronomers and to inspire others to explore star parties or to simply learn more about the ways in which amateur astronomers observe the night sky.

Background

The person credited for inventing the telescope was a Dutch lens maker by the name of Hans Lippershey, since he was the first to apply for a patent in 1608. In 1609, Galileo Galilei made his own adjustments to the original design and used it to study the stars, for which he was famous for (Cox 2013). The optical telescope allows for people to see far objects close up by collecting and focusing light. Author Christopher Dewdney explains that “the stars have dazzled humans since prehistoric times—they have always conveyed a sense of magnificence and celestial mystery” (2004:209). Many cultural myths arose from watching the night sky including Greek and Indian mythologies, but none more so than the Egyptians and Mayans. Dewdney writes: “Both the Mayans and Egyptians made their observations from their temples, which doubled as observatories and places for the performance of religious rituals” (2004:223). Today, telescopes are used in backyards or in massive observatories around the world. Typically, locations are chosen based on the clarity of atmosphere and some of the larger observatories can be found in Hawaii, Chile, Puerto Rico, California, India, and even in the South Pole.

Literature Review

Star parties have not been explored in depth in academic research thus far. Information about amateur astronomers themselves has been represented more frequently and in several different areas including books and films (Moore 2006, Ferris 2006). Current

academic research has offered much information on the benefits of amateur astronomers through topics such as education outreach and environmental preservation (Gibbs and Berendsen 2007; Storksdieck et al. 2011; Yocco et al. 2012). An article by Bob Berman categorizes ‘types’ of astronomers, labeling them as the following: “the professionals, the telescope makers and gadgeteers, amateur specialists, backyard amateurs, beginners, photographers, sci-fi crowd, space travel advocates, nuts and visionaries, prisoners, cosmology zealots, spouses, navigators, and people who don’t have a clue” (2013:11).

Star parties become venues and mediums through which the knowledge on many facets of science becomes accessible to the public. “Science hobbyists who are engaged in outreach ... strive to share their passion and excitement—with knowledge as a means to that end” (Storksdieck et al. 2011:19). Students can learn about astronomy on different levels ranging from simply looking at beautiful photos, to questioning how the universe works and how celestial bodies are created (Motta 2006). Howe points out that star parties “have been designed to bolster the validity of research conducted by amateur and professional astronomers and provide increased visibility for ... communities in order to attract the general public” (2009:140). In Ontario, elementary school teachers can provide a space curriculum as early as Grade 6 (Canadian Astronomy Education 2009). Jean-Luc told me that many years ago people could not study astronomy as a specialty in post-secondary education and they had to take physics instead. John Lankford mentions, “In England and America the new specialty of astrophysics did not develop in the university context” (Lankford 1981:277). Based on the changes today, science education seems to be more accessible now to younger people than in the past. Ecklund and colleagues mention that within certain fields, the jobs of both women and men have attracted academic inquiry (2012). Yet, research suggests that males are still the dominant gender of amateur astronomers (Berendsen 2005).

A study conducted by Gibbs and Berendsen (2007) showed that amateur astronomers, as public outreach educators, are at least on par with professionals when teamed up with teachers in the classroom and are therefore valued for their knowledge. Different ways that amateur astronomers convey information to the public involves star parties, professional collaboration, informal meeting groups, photography, and virtual settings. Through these avenues, the general public has an easier time accessing resources that may have been more difficult to find on their own (Howe 2009). An interesting way in which star parties contribute to public outreach is through virtual communities. “Current trends in education are calling for alternatives to typical classroom learning ... and virtual programs can offer a connection to others globally” (Fanson 2002:24). Online star parties provide a virtual space for people to interact with each other and learn from not only amateur astronomers, but professionals in the field as well. People can offer help to one another or simply provide information (Blanchard 2004).

An important challenge that amateur astronomers face is the issue of light pollution. In order to observe the night sky in greater detail, stargazers hope for as little light as possible. Dark sky reserves boast a partial answer to this problem. Outlying areas near Muskoka, Ontario, offer a perfect example of the conflict for star party locations trying to stave off the environmental impacts of light pollution. Due to the ongoing battle of development, the “sky is relatively dark. But the area sits amid some of the most desirable cottage country in the province. A steady increase in night lighting throughout the region is blurring

the view close to the horizon” (Jenish 2000). Taking the issue a step further, astronomy writer Terence Dickinson considers the night sky to be akin to an “endangered species” (Mittelstaedt 1999). Stars in the sky become less visible, especially for those living in cities or developing areas. In part, star parties give people a reminder of what the canopy of stars look like from Earth. Psychologists suggest that psychological well-being is potentially tied into our connections with nature and that, “we as a species are losing rich and diverse forms of interaction with nature: the awe, for example, of ... sleeping under the night sky or of even seeing the night sky in our urban settings” (Kahn et al. 2010:327). Amateur astronomers will continue to support the dark sky reserve initiatives for continued inspiration and promote education for the community for generations to come. Understanding the motivations behind star parties, the benefits of educational outreach, and its effects on the environment all become important aspects of the amateur astronomer sub-culture.

Pop-Culture and Media

Cultural astronomy “offers a perspective from which we may observe, analyze and discuss the various types of relationship between astronomy and culture” (Iwaniszewski 2011). Therefore, there is another story to be told beyond the raw data that delves into the culture surrounding those that observe the night sky. Pop culture and media have offered evidence to support the idea that space is ‘cool’ as mimicked in today’s society by the popularization of astronomy shows with physicists such as Dr. Michiu Kaku and Dr. Neil deGrasse Tyson, the hit television show *The Big Bang Theory* and increased ratings of spectacle events such as the Mars Rover landing. A quote from Tony Riggins at Ustream said, “More people tuned in to watch the NASA Mars landing coverage on Ustream than many of the top cable news networks during Sunday primetime” (Robertson 2012). Another possible reason for the popularity of space today is that certain technologies are no longer in the realm of science fiction. For example, on the television show *Star Trek*, characters used a handheld device called a “tricorder” which performs several different tasks, including medical diagnosis and treatments. The “medical tricorder” is no longer an imaginary of the future. The XPRIZE foundation is currently holding a contest to make this technology for the average citizen to use as a medical assessment tool (2014).

Despite some of the aforementioned physicists’ popularity, space nerds were not always so highly praised for their public education efforts. The infamous physicist Carl Sagan received backlash in the early 1990’s from the academic community because they did not believe that someone could be charismatic and be a serious scientist at the same time (Diamond 1997). He was denied a seat in the National Academy of Sciences, but two years later was given the Public Welfare Medal by the same academy. Times have changed, as Neil deGrasse Tyson is hosting a new rendition of Carl Sagan’s *Cosmos* series, produced by Seth MacFarlane (*Family Guy*) and will be aired on the FOX Network and National Geographic Channel in 2014.

The literature also offers another suggestion, that the reason for the rise of the nerds is due to the reinvention of society’s perception of them. One of the richest men in the world is Bill Gates, a computer geek extraordinaire. *The Big Bang Theory* characters are not as exploited as in the past, contrasting with pocket protectors and taped black rimmed glasses as in *Revenge of the Nerds*, but are also celebrated and looked up to (Hoppenstand 2009).

Popular physicist Jim Al-Khalili is quoted as saying, “It’s not embarrassing anymore to say I’m a theoretical physicist at a party ... the geeks are on the march again” (Ghosh 2011).

Other evidence supporting the popularization of space is seen in the recent emergence of private space companies such as Space X and Virgin Galactic. These companies offer flights to the upper atmosphere for the average citizen who can currently afford a \$200,000 for upper atmosphere trips, or \$500,000 for a future trip to the planet Mars. Therefore, modern times allow for space to be accessible for non-astronauts. The implication for astronomy means that people, other than astronauts, will have first hand accounts of the experience of being in ‘space.’ This new type of space tourism could very well be considered the ultimate Other: move over Antarctica, space is the new isolated and exotic ‘frontier’ to be explored. Lastly, the international year of astronomy was celebrated in 2009 and consequently led to the very first star party that was celebrated on the White House lawn (Pompea and Norman 2009). Governments are now taking time out of their schedules to bring recognition to the field of astronomy.

Social sites and television have been prominent factors showing the ‘geek chic’ factor within media. Sometimes, people look up to characters in television shows and want to become close to that life in some way. Cheryan and colleagues suggest that “role models can also transmit stereotypes ... television and movies, for example, often depict scientists and engineers in a stereotypical manner (e.g., the CBS television show *The Big Bang Theory* and the movies *Revenge of the Nerds* and *Real Genius*)” (Cheryan et.al, 2013:73). *The Big Bang Theory* has four main characters: two physicists, one astrophysicist, and a space engineer. Bentley et al (2007) note that “almost by definition, ‘popular culture’ reflects the effects of most people imitating those around them” (p.151). This may possibly lead to higher enrollments or even greater numbers at astronomy events and clubs. News and social media also becomes a factor in creating a more visible space culture. Tasha reported,

Events make news, like when the first man walked on the moon ... when there is a period where there is not a lot of exploration going on, then interest wanes. But there are so many probes out there now, more and more information keeps coming in, and pictures from Hubble, which has really brought the view of the universe to anyone with a computer and that wasn’t around back then ... you don’t have to wait six or eight months, the information is instantaneous now... we have seen an increase in membership, especially since we’ve been on Facebook and Twitter, social media has helped a lot. [Tasha. Rayna Slobodian, February 19, 2013]

Jean-Luc suggests that space has always been of interest, but only seems more visible today because of the internet. He has not seen an increase in astronomy majors per se, but the general education course at York called Life Beyond Earth, has become increasingly popular among non-majors. These students may be the ones who have become interested in space topics, but may not have the commitment or mathematical drive for enrolling in an astronomy stream. Cultural anthropologist Kevin Anderson suggests, “the supernerd embodies one of the primary obsessions of our current times: the ability to access information” (Sloan 2012). In this modern age of technology, being someone who knows a lot about accessing information may be attributed to becoming popular and acquiring status. Keiko mentions, “There are amazing missions and discoveries happening all

the time. The internet has really helped to let people access information...I've seen the interest in astronomy growing since 12 years ago." The first Canadian Commander of the International Space Station, Chris Hadfield, has won over the public with his Twitter updates and musical performances. Commander Hadfield did a musical duet with Ed Robertson of the popular band The Barenaked Ladies (CBC 2013). He has well over 1 million followers on Twitter and growing. Therefore, various forms of media have made space related missions and events more salient in the minds of the general public. Both the Mars Curiosity mission, and most recently the Planck mission, informs us almost instantaneously about what is happening 'out there' by analyzing the oldest light in the universe that will lead to the knowledge of the origin of the universe. Scientists are trying to understand and answer many of the grand cosmic questions that humanity has been asking for a very long time. Education of these themes permeates culture more easily nowadays and through various news outlets and prime time shows, we see and learn about the work of those in the space field.

Why has Western society's current interest in space become so popular? In a BBC news article by Pallab Ghosh, numbers suggest a 40% increase in British university applications for astronomy since 2011. The article also suggests possible reasons for this increase are due to "students thinking more about their future employment prospects" and "because physics has become 'cool' again" (Ghosh 2011). This data shows a possibility of romanticism becoming a motivator for those taking astronomy classes. The romantic view of astronomy plays a role since, as Deanna pointed out, "it shows the pretty side of science, makes people more comfortable to being open to it, science isn't always numbers, and there is beautiful stuff too." If students are not prepared for the amount of math and physics involved, then astronomy may become disheartening and challenging. The romanticism itself may stem from wanting to know fundamental human questions surrounding who we are and where we come from. Astronomy is one way of knowing about the past as a species. Another way is through material culture of the past, specifically within archeology. A beautiful film, *Nostalgia for the Light* by Patricio Guzman, looks at how humans come to learn about their past and current identities by juxtaposing astronomers and archeologists in Chile (2011). Participant Jean-Luc gave his own ideas as to what motivates people to want to know their origins:

I really do think it's a part of our genes; it's a part of our DNA. It's a throwback to the time where the vast majority of our lives revolved around the importance of understanding daily motions in the sky. All the way from, I got to be home by dark otherwise I'm going to get eaten, uh, to when do I plant my crops, to I want to meet with these people on a regular basis. There was no such thing as wrist watches. I really do think it is part of our coding, uh, so when people go outside and they look up, regardless of whether it's the day or the night, there is literally an in-built fascination that just comes from within. [Jean-Luc. Rayna Slobodian, January 17, 2013]

He offers an evolutionary perspective here as to why we look towards the sky. This idea of being "hardwired" is somewhat deterministic. Mary Orgel et al. suggest "scientific knowledge is always produced in conversation with the social conditions in which it is situated"

(2005:150). People tend to use scientific knowledge to explain our behavior through evolutionary views, but in doing so, tend to leave out environmental contexts. Jean-Luc used the terms “genes” and “DNA” to describe why we look up. Barbara Duden has done some research into this crossover of scientific terms outside of laboratory into the general life. She has dubbed this phenomenon the “pop-gene” and says “genes have become the answer to, who am I?” (2009:257). Therefore, stargazers can use astronomy as a way of answering the large questions of who they are and where they came from.

Expectations

As I put my eye on the eyepiece of the telescope, I felt confused, and experienced conflicting emotions all at once. I had to ask, “Uh, just to be sure ... that cloudy, white, fuzzy spot is a galaxy?” “Yes,” Beverly answered. It took me a minute or two to get my bearings as I tried to sift through all of the thoughts in my head. Firstly, the view of the Andromeda galaxy through the telescope was nothing like the images I was used to looking at on the internet, beautifully enhanced, detailed, and in colour. Therefore, this blurry, white cloud was not what I had expected. I knew intellectually, on some level, that the view would not be the same, but the experience of seeing a fuzzy white blob was somewhat disappointing. As participant Miles pointed out, “people feel that ... you are going to see an amazing display, and it’s not necessarily true, they expect to see amazing sights, and there are, but not necessarily enormous or the way they expected.” That is exactly what happened to me. Yet, at the same time, I also felt a sense of elation and excitement. A part of me went beyond the cognition of the simple visual effect and felt something greater, a feeling of connecting with the universe and being aware of the fact that I was ‘directly’ looking at an entire galaxy. Miles also added, “People want to see something they have never seen before and the telescope presents a structure to see things that you can’t see with the naked eye.” Having been to a few star parties and having interacted with many knowledgeable people in the field, I began to learn more and expand my own general knowledge of the cosmos.

First-year astrophysics major, Deanna said regarding the night sky, “It looks beautiful, and a sense of connection to the universe, it almost gives you a spiritual feeling in a way, it touches people to just look up and go wow.” And succinctly put by William, “There are no words.” In some ways, for many, astronomy becomes a way through which a new found connection to the universe is experienced. So, the juxtaposition of conflicting thoughts of disappointment and excitement, enticed me even more to look through more telescopes and to learn from others as to why they sky-watch. Geordi said, “There’s a sense of awe when you see objects in the night sky with your own eyes. Instead of just reading about the stars, you can see them. It’s about turning something conceptual into something real.” When I looked into the telescope, there was also a feeling of “realness” to the objects that I observed, just as Geordi mentioned. An object, like the planet Jupiter for example, became vibrant when I was able to see actual characteristics, cloud formations and different tones on its surface. Those details brought that object ‘closer’ to me and added to the sense of connection and depth that does not happen when the eyes are unaided. Perhaps this is important for observers on two levels. Firstly, details provide a feeling of being next to the object. A sense of closeness is felt to this far away celestial body. Secondly, there is a sense of rarity, separateness from the average person. In order to view these objects, one either

needs a computer or an expensive telescope if looking at distances outside the capabilities of the naked eye. Therefore, privilege becomes part of the story.

Participant Keiko found that stargazing made her question many aspects about life, “The feeling of not knowing what the universe has, the whole mystery, where we came from, how it all began, you are looking at all of these stars and galaxies, it’s like, we are so small, how do we fit into all of this?” In the book, *The View from the Centre of the Universe*, Primack and Abrams mention questions asked by prescientific people such as, “Has the universe always existed, or did it come into being? If it had a beginning, how did it start? What is it made of? How does it work? How do we humans fit in? People hardly even ask such fundamental questions anymore...” (2006:4). Participants Deanna and Keiko still ask these questions today, and possibly others wonder about these questions if universe becomes salient in their daily lives.

Camaraderie

Star parties offer more than simply viewing the night sky with a telescope. A major component that motivates people to attend is the camaraderie. Doug Scobel suggests, “You instantly have something in common ... you may meet some folks you’re not too likely to meet otherwise” (2008). As with any gathering involving people with common interests, having the ability to share information and hang out with people of like mind adds to the enjoyment. I was aware that I would run into some people that I had met before through various space lectures and had looked forward to seeing them again at the star parties. All of the participants I interviewed mentioned the social aspect as being a reason for attending. Jean-Luc pointed out that

it’s not just looking through the eyepiece, I love that, but I do like talking to people, invariably you end up talking with other visitors ... I’m floating around the place, I obviously become engaged talking to other visitors about the love of astronomy ... the social component of it ... the people who are putting on the star party itself, the amateur astronomer or if it’s my observing team, just chatting with them and being in a social environment is a very positive event. [Jean-Luc. Rayna Slobodian, January 17, 2013]

Beverly mentioned, “Amateur astronomers love to share their joy of the night sky, amateur astronomers are there to guide people through it, not to party necessarily, but get together and talk about the night sky.” The social aspect becomes an important part of these astronomical events as people get a chance to both share and learn about the cosmos with each other.

A connection can also be made with others who are observing together. Dewdney writes while observing the sky, “We all saw a brilliant falling star that was greeted by a few gasps” (2004:223). I also experienced this during the Algonquin star party. Everyone looked up to see an object and for those who did catch it, ‘oohs’ and ‘ahhs’ ensued. I missed it of course, but I caught the sense of emotional contagion that occurred. Research suggests that “an individual’s emotions can have a particular intensity which can undergo transformations when combined with others’ emotions” (Vijayalakshmi and Bhattacharyya

2012). This happens at star parties to a lesser degree. Those who are observing feed off of each other with anticipation, recognizing that despite the huge sky above them, they can use their telescopes to pinpoint an exact place and watch a celestial event in real time. People connect with the same visual spectacles, as well as the “buzz” or excitement that goes along with being there in the first place, anticipating the night.

Technology and Hunting

Besides socializing, star party attendees also enjoy the technology of the telescopes. MacKenzie and Wajcman suggest that “technologies can be designed, consciously or unconsciously, to open certain social options and close others (1999:3). They also suggest that, “[a]rtifacts—things humans have made—are involved in most of the ways human beings relate to each other” (1999:42). Star parties are an example of how the technology of telescopes brings about social connection within the astronomy community. I had the chance to look at the Andromeda galaxy through different scopes and noticed how each one offered a different view. For a newbie, I was a little intimidated. Most of the time, I managed to leave the telescope operations to the experts. At the Astronomy Club star party, one member showed me the basics of manually maneuvering a telescope. I ended up contorting my body in ways I never thought possible just trying to get some celestial objects into view. After some time had passed, I at least managed to get a nice shot of the Pleiades. Jean-Luc said, “I like being able to look through a number of different telescopes, seeing them in different formats; reflecting telescopes, refracting telescopes, short focal length, long focal length, there are subtle differences ... I like doing that type of comparison.” Miles reminisced about how telescopes were in the past: “I had heard about making your own telescope ... I attended some star parties and knew some people that were there who made their own. I made a small reflecting telescope out of a piece of plastic made to put under chair legs, I ground that into a reflective surface.” Geordi also told me how he loves learning everything he can about other people’s gear and their techniques.

Technology, whether through binoculars or telescopes, becomes the vehicle by which amateur astronomers get their information, as the naked eye offers a limited view of the universe. Star parties are not always about the view per se, but the chance to talk to others and try out various telescopes. Interestingly, feminist scholar Donna Haraway suggests that creating technologies to see into the solar system leads to “unregulated gluttony” (1988:581). Whether or not we can attribute observing the solar system as being gendered is open to debate, but an important point nonetheless. Is there ever too much eye feasting? Or not enough?

Author William Burroughs writes in his book *The Survival Imperative* “the average person has not taken Astronomy 101 and knows next to nothing about science in general ... people think that Pluto was named after a dog and meteorologists study meteors” (2006:59). A natural consequence of star parties is that people can become more educated about science and the universe. Generally, amateur astronomers are assured that their information and inspiration gets passed onto others in order to help society become more scientifically literate (Motta 2006). Geordi elaborates, “It’s our hope that we can encourage that desire to learn more for people to become amateur astronomers. There’s also a lot of science going on during star parties, which we’re able to explain as we go.” Participant

Tasha did not come from a science background initially, but that did not hinder her in any way: “I knew nothing. I’m still not great on physics, but if I read it enough, the information comes, there is so much that I have learned that makes sense to me, even with my limited scientific background.” Astronomy outreach can go beyond scientific mechanisms. During my time at Starfest, I attended a few lectures and one was on the US. Antarctic search for meteorites. Keiko also told me about how she enjoys hearing about the latest space related research while attending star party lectures.

Astro Ladies

Issues pertaining to women in the sciences could be the topic of a research paper on its own. I briefly include the experiences of my female participants, as star parties are mostly attended by men. Research suggests that women are underrepresented in physics and science fields (Ecklund, Lincoln and Tansey 2012:696; Lee 2002:349). I decided to leave out research on how racial minorities are also less represented, due to my ethnography being limited to Southern Ontario and because I am white, I did not feel as though I could accurately portray that side of the issue. The lack of racial equality with astronomy within North America needs to be addressed in future research.

Out of the four women that I interviewed, no one reported any major issues with being a woman within the astronomy community. My own experiences of attending star parties and lectures also found no experiences of discrimination or prejudice. However, there were small incidents where the participants were reminded of their gender. Beverly told me a story that happens on occasion: “I’ll be setting up my telescope with my husband and people will come over to ask a question. They turn to my husband and automatically assume it’s his, and he will say, ‘No, no, I’m just the astro-spouse, talk to her.’” Deanna pointed out that she has “had surprised reactions from guys, like, ‘Oh wow you are in astrophysics?’ They are not expecting you to be in the sciences.” As for Tasha, she reported that she never had any problems at all other than noticing that in the past there were not as many females attending star parties as there are now. These are very minor instances of women being treated differently than their male counterparts, despite the high male attendance at star parties in general. Ecklund suggests that “researchers maintain that both formal structures and implicit biases in science create a negative social environment for women and discourage them from entering” (2010:697). Future research may want to look at how star parties may help women to get into the field of astronomy, considering the low levels of prejudice experienced by women at these events. Star parties may offer a safe environment for young women who wish to explore astronomy more before pursuing it as a career.

Cloudy Skies

I mentioned to Beverly, “Hmm, that area over there looks brighter and I can’t see the stars as much as I could before!” It was only 10:00 pm, so I knew that it could not be the sun rising. Someone else overheard and replied, “Yes, looks like the clouds have started to roll in ... the lights from the surrounding towns reflects off the clouds and makes the sky brighter.” Well, that was disappointing. If I looked directly above me, the sky was much darker, but looking near the horizon made for some problematic sky watching. Light pollution is a

growing concern among amateur astronomers. Dark sky reserves are helping minimize light impact within certain areas. “The current lack of development both within and beyond the conservation reserve has made the area attractive for astronomy (stargazing) outings. The absence of light pollution in the night skies over the conservation reserve is remarkable” (Ministry of Natural Resources 2006:13). Tasha explained, “I was down in Chile and it was a completely different sky ... you look at those light maps and it’s frightful ... most people don’t know what the sky looks like ... having more people aware and more dark sky preserves, people will appreciate it more.” William also informed me about a website, www.globeatnight.org, which allows people from around the world to raise awareness about light pollution. Astronomy enthusiasts measure the brightness of the night sky and upload that information to the website and compare data with other people internationally. Beverly told me about the benefits of star parties in regards to light pollution:

Star parties are a way to educate people and let them know about the lighting options available, not to mention the negative health effects of light pollution on humans and birds and other wildlife, so you might refer people to FLAP (Fatal Light Awareness Program) for example or send people to the International Dark Sky associations website ... by promoting less light pollution, people realize that it also saves a lot of money on lighting and not wasting energy ... light pollution is something that we try to educate people about ... we can talk about why is it that we can’t see as many stars in Toronto. I speak to kids that have no idea what the Milky Way looks like. [Beverly. Rayna Slobodian, January 23, 2013]

The literature supports Beverly’s statement: “The Milky Way itself is rarely visible to the naked eye anymore except outside cities in places unpolluted by electric lights” (Primack and Abrams 2006:91). From these testimonies, it becomes clear that people living in highly light polluted areas are having different experiences of the night sky. If star parties do in fact educate people and persuade others to change their lighting habits, then the environmental impact will be greater outside of the events alone. Upgren suggests other problems with light pollution: “Bright lights ... can confuse migratory birds ... the circadian rhythms of some plants can change ... [lights] can misdirect newly hatched sea turtles ... also the waste of energy” (1996:22). Geordi also mentioned part of the benefit of virtual parties: “I think we’re helping to increase the awareness of how we’re losing the night sky. Many people participate in our star parties because they have too much light pollution at their location.” Preserving the night sky becomes a concern for those who enjoy stargazing. Star parties are one avenue that can help to raise awareness of light pollution and contribute to conservation.

Virtual Skies

As Geordi said, virtual communities can offer some perks compared to outdoor star parties, “I hope we can provide some of the camaraderie and knowledge that you might get at a real star party. Our parties let you enjoy the night sky from the comfort of your living room.” The aspect of convenience is crucial here. I attended three different star party nights in the city of Mississauga from November until February. On all three occasions, the sky was

cloudy and so we did not get the chance to take out any scopes. Needless to say, it was frustrating, but at least the lectures were a nice consolation prize. While online, I could always count on the virtual parties to offer clear views of the night sky in other parts of the world. Jean-Luc explained to me in detail about the virtual experience and about being a part of York University's Online Public Viewing (OPV):

any astronomer, amateur or professional, will tell you that being present at the eyepiece of a telescope ... being present ... at a star party is the best way to go ... it's the thrill of the hunt, it's the whole experience, OK, it's sort of like test driving a vehicle on the showroom floor versus being out on the open road, it might be the same vehicle, but the actual experience of doing it ... you have to be a part of the process, but, that said, it's not always convenient ... when we mount our OPV it was never intended to take away from people coming to the actual public viewing experience, but OPV has a greater stretch. For example, people in the southern hemisphere could be tapped into our OPV and be looking at objects in the northern sky which they can never see in the southern sky, so there are all sorts of reasons why OPV would be a really good experience, but it is, in my mind, never designed to take away from the actual physical experience of being there. [Jean-Luc. Rayna Slobodian, January 17, 2013]

While participating in an online star party, I had the opportunity to ask questions just as I would outdoors and having the opportunity to see objects around the world, that you normally would not be able to see, became intriguing. During the online party, people may watch static images or live shots. While participating online, I was able to witness various star formations in the sky that I would not have been able to see by living in Toronto. I became amazed at how people from all over the world could share information and connect instantly by looking at the same objects in the sky together. Suddenly the world became smaller, in that the immediate images create a community reaction in real-time. Virtual parties also give those people who have physical disabilities a way for them to still participate and sky watch. Overall though, Keiko mentioned the difference between the virtual and outdoor parties: "You miss out on the whole experience of being there live, virtually you could possibly see clearer or better quality images, other people experiencing it together, but, if you are at a telescope and operating one, the whole experience of that is something amazing, searching and finding something." In society today, virtual environments (VE) are becoming more popular within education. It is possible that online astronomy communities will be a part of that growing movement. "The Internet is ... flooded with information on astronomical events and many computer games are situated in outer space and involve planetary or cosmic objects ... astronomy teaching can benefit immensely from the powerful attributes of VR" (Yair et.al, 2001:297).

Conclusion

Star parties are a fairly new phenomenon in relation to the world of astronomy. People gather together to sky watch for various reasons such as camaraderie, technology, a sense of connection, entertainment, and education. The experience draws people from many

different backgrounds, but still mainly holds to the white male demographic. The consequences may be an increase in interest for people to pursue science fields or pondering questions about our connection with the universe. Considering the lack of academic research on star parties, this ethnographic study hopes to have contributed information to both the public and academic communities. This paper offers a better understanding of the motivations behind why people participate in star parties, the different views of how the public and participants become educated in science and environmental pursuits, and the pros and cons of virtual settings. I have also explored the effects of the popularization of space in society today. Star parties are multi-layered events and they encompass a diverse range of demographics. Going forward, future research has many options within this sub-culture. Research may want to focus on, in greater detail, the role of women and ethnic minorities within astronomy and physical science fields. Moreover, visual anthropologists may look towards further understanding the idea of astrophotography and its role within the astronomy community. An ethnographic approach is also needed to study the roles of amateur and professional astronomers and their contributions to scientific data, known as 'citizen science' and how those roles interact on different levels. Astronomers of all types enjoy their connection with others. I hope my journey has brought to light some information on how we may view the universe and our place among fellow stargazers. Ad astra: to the stars!

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William Curtis Farabee

Ethnographic explorer and museum anthropologist

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There has been very little written about the anthropological career of William Curtis Farabee (1865–1925). The primary aim of this article is to fill this lacuna in the literature. Farabee was one of the first anthropologists from the United States to undertake extensive ethnographic explorations in South America. He undertook research with many Amazonian societies in Peru, Brazil, and Guyana. This article considers his explorations and writings within the institutional and theoretical context of the “museum period” in the history of anthropology. Farabee was a transitional figure between the anthropology of the museum and that of the academic department of anthropology. His writings articulate an interest in detailed descriptions of material culture with broader interests in ethnographic, linguistic, and physical anthropology. His theoretical writings regarding environmental influence evince an early and inchoate conception of ecological anthropology.

KEY WORDS history of anthropology, William Curtis Farabee, museum period

Museums have played a central role in the history of anthropology. Their significance was greatest during anthropology’s “museum period”¹ (Balée 2009:36; Stocking 1985a; Stocking 1988:20; Sturtevant 1969; Wissler 1942), which began between 1840 and 1860, peaked in the late nineteenth century, and continued to some extent until the rapid growth of academic anthropology departments after World War II. Although he was an important scholar during this period, William Curtis Farabee remains a relatively obscure historical figure in anthropology. Farabee was one of the first scholars from the United States to receive a doctorate in the discipline and to conduct ethnographic fieldwork in South America. He was not a member of the Boasian school and, although his texts are notably referenced in the ethnographic literature on Guyana (Alemán & Whitehead 2009:264; Mentore 2005:74–78; Rivière 1984:116), his overall contribution to anthropology remains poorly known, in contrast to other anthropologists from his generation such as Alfred Kroeber. This paper will consider Farabee’s place in the history of anthropology.

Farabee’s writings, particularly his three books, will be considered in the context of the “museum period.” During this period, there was an identifiable, albeit shifting and equivocal, research paradigm—the “museum paradigm”—whose dominance must be

understood within the nineteenth and early-twentieth century institutional context of museums. This museum paradigm was comprised of the cultural ontology and epistemology of the museum². I argue that Farabee's alignment with this paradigm was considerable.

William Curtis Farabee (1865–1925)

William Curtis Farabee was a four-field anthropologist with specialization in physical anthropology (Hrdlička 1943:64). In 1903, he was one of the first to receive his doctorate from Harvard University, with a dissertation entitled "Hereditary and Sexual Influence in Meristic Variation: A Study of Digital Malformations in Man" (Balée 2009:41; Browman 2002:511; Farabee 1903a:69; Farabee 1905; Putnam 1905). Stern (1965:217) writes that Farabee's dissertation contained "a description of a large Pennsylvania kindred with brachydactyly and demonstrated convincingly that the trait followed the transmission of a dominant gene." Frederic W. Putnam, his supervisor, would remain an influence throughout his professional life.

At various times, Farabee served as secretary (Farabee 1918b:79, 83), treasurer (AAA 1919a:104), and president of the American Anthropological Association (AAA 1921; AAA 1922a; AAA 1922b; Farabee 1921b:774). He was elected to membership in the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia (AAA 1919b:219) and was a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (AAAS 1914). He received membership in French anthropological societies and was at the Peace Congress in Paris (1918–1919) "as one of the ethnographers to the American Commission to Negotiate Peace" (AAA 1919b:219; GR 1925:675). Farabee worked in military intelligence for the United States during the First World War³ (AAA 1919a:104). He received the Explorers Club Medal (AGS 1925:674) and the Geographical Society of Philadelphia's Elisha Kent Kane Medal in 1917 (AGS 1917:154). He had an interest in ethnohistorical research (Farabee 1921b:773) and was elected to be "a corresponding member of the National Academy of History, Ecuador" (AAA 1921:390). Farabee received an "appointment as an honorary member of the Faculty of the University of San Marcos" and was selected "by President Harding as one of the American Commission to the Peruvian Centennial with the rank of Envoy Extraordinary" (de Milhau 1922:ix). At the time of his death, he was employed as Curator of the American Section by the University Museum in Philadelphia (GR 1925:675; Balée 2009:41). Farabee died in 1925 from what his obituary describes as "pernicious anemia consequent on hardships sustained in his several South American journeys" (GR 1925:675). Farabee's career in anthropology, from 1903 to 1925, overlaps with a period of rapid professionalization in the discipline and the beginning of a transition from the anthropology of the museum to that of the academic department of anthropology.

The minting of Farabee's Ph.D in 1903 situates him within the first wave of professional American anthropologists whilst his museum-oriented ethnographic explorations place him within a context of museum research. At the time, university departments relied on museums⁴. William Balée (2009:36) writes that:

In the 19th century, anthropology in the United States had developed in the context of societies and museums. It became professionalized in the university setting from 1901 to about 1920, and in this period of professionalization, museum research actually grew at a faster rate than it had before.

Although museum research remained vibrant in the early twentieth-century, anthropologists were generally orienting themselves more in relation to academic departments than to museums (Bernstein 2002:552). Balée's (2009:36) demarcation of a professionalization period, from around 1901–1920, is similar to Clark Wissler's (1942:190, 199) demarcation of an “academic period”, which began around 1900, or perhaps 1890. Although Wissler (1942:190) demarcates an “exploratory or survey period” of anthropology from 1492 to 1800, it can be argued that elements of this period continued in some remote geographical regions of ethnographic study. Farabee was both an ethnographer and an explorer⁵; he was a transitional figure between the anthropology of the museum, with its emphasis on collection and classification, and the anthropology of the academic department, with its emphasis on professional academic fieldwork and cultural context.

I refer to Farabee's fieldwork expeditions as “ethnographic explorations.” Although he conducted groundbreaking fieldwork, his research was museum-oriented, object-centred, and exploratory. He did not conduct long-term observational fieldwork of the Malinowskian or Boasian varieties (Balée 2009:41). Farabee briefly visited many societies in the Amazon region and his work possesses a comparative survey quality. He did not generally spend long periods of time studying particular societies in depth. This practice is in keeping with the collection-oriented research of the museum period. At times, he referred to his own fieldwork as exploration. In 1917, for example, Farabee gave speeches entitled “Recent Explorations in Northern Brazil” (AGS 1917:146) and “Explorations in the Amazon Valley and in the Unknown Guianas, 1913–1916” (AGS 1917:154). Furthermore, the *Geographical Review* referred to him as a “wilderness explorer” (AGS 1917:146, 149). On one occasion, Farabee (1917c:70) attempted to differentiate exploration from ethnology and wrote that:

the explorer sets out to make a definite journey and bends all his energies to that one definite task. The ethnologist on the contrary only sets out, the journey develops and its direction is determined by the presence or absence of friendly or unfriendly tribes.

However, his fieldwork in South America was conducted around both of these pursuits.

Farabee went on at least three ethnographic explorations to South America. The first was to Peru with the de Milhau–Harvard Expedition of 1906 to 1908; the results were published in 1922 as *Indian Tribes of Eastern Peru* (GR 1925:675; Farabee 1922). A shorter paper was published, based on data from this exploration, entitled “Some Customs of the Macheyengas”⁶ (Farabee 1909). His second ethnographic exploration, in conjunction with the University Museum, was undertaken between 1913 and 1916⁷. He resigned from Harvard in order to lead this expedition (Hrdlička et al. 1912:699), which included archaeological excavations of mounds on Marajó Island⁸ (AGS 1917:149; Farabee 1921f; The University Museum 1915a:21, 54; The University Museum 1915b:184) and was closely chronicled in the publications of the American Geographical Society (AGS 1913; AGS 1914a; AGS 1914b; AGS 1916; AGS 1917). Farabee (1921:157) notes the accompaniment of his wife on at least part of this exploration. *The Museum Journal* published an account of this exploration, which includes fragments of Farabee's correspondences from the field (The University Museum 1915a). Farabee (1917b) wrote a related travelogue-style article, which contains

ethnographic observations from this exploration, in addition to commentary on rubber gathering and environment/geography. The results of this fieldwork were published in 1918 as *The Central Arawaks* and, in 1924, as *The Central Caribs* (GR 1925:675; Farabee 1918a; Farabee 1924). In 1915, Farabee (1921f:156-157) noticed in the Santarém region—what is now known as Amazonian Dark Earth⁹ (ADE) (Balée 2010:11; Myers et al. 2003:23; Woods & Denevan 2009:6). His third ethnographic exploration, undertaken between 1921 and 1923, was again to Peru; these data had not been published at the time of his death (GR 1925:675; Rowe 1962:403). In addition to these South American travels, Farabee also made explorations in Iceland and in the Southwestern United States (de Milhau 1908:356; de Milhau 1922:v). Towards the end of his life, Farabee published such articles as “Dress Among Plains Indian Women” (1921c), “The Use of Metals in Prehistoric America” (1921d), and “A Golden Hoard from Ecuador” (1921e). All three of these publications involved research on objects of material culture held by The University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania.

The influence of the museum paradigm is reflected in Farabee’s writings. This is particularly evident in the emphasis that he places on material culture and description over theory and explanation. Object collection was a high priority and many references are made to his collecting objects of natural history and material culture (AGS 1913:369; AGS 1914b:530–531; de Milhau 1922:viii; Farabee 1922:88, 181; Farabee 1924:9–10; Mooney & Hodge 1915:219). During his second ethnographic exploration, *The Museum Journal* reported in March 1915 that Farabee had sent five shipments of “collections made by the expedition during its several explorations” in addition to various notebooks and photographs (The University Museum 1915a:1). One of these collections included Conibo (Conebo) ceramics (Farabee 1917b:67; The University Museum 1915a:21). At one point, a house was built in the field to protect the expedition’s object collections in preparation for shipping (Farabee 1921f:154, 157). During this temporary storage, termites ate “the labels and notes” that had been packed with at least one set of these collections (Farabee 1921:157–158). In keeping with the naturalistic exploratory tradition, Farabee (1917b:68) notes that he sent zoological specimens from the Amazon to the Philadelphia Zoological Gardens. This range of interests is indicative of his continuity with the natural science orientation of nineteenth century anthropological practice. He exhibits a certain eccentricity in writing that “one of the jaguars was a great pet and was allowed to run about the launch at will” (Farabee 1917b:69). This jaguar seems to have been a pet of the expedition group in general. Such eccentricity has a long history of exhibition among gentleman explorers of a natural history orientation in South America, for example, Charles Waterton (Waterton in Aldington 1949). Farabee’s emphasis on the collection of material culture and natural specimens is evidence of the influence of the museum paradigm on his ethnographic explorations.

Farabee and the Institutional Context of Museums

Although anthropology began to develop professional organizations, graduate programmes, publication venues, and more rigorous fieldwork methodology during its period of professionalisation (Gleach 2002:499), the institutional context of museums remained significant (Balée 2009:36). The influence of the museum paradigm was maintained through anthropology’s institutional reliance on museums, particularly in the areas of funding,

employment, and publishing¹⁰. Stocking (1985b:113–115) notes the financial, institutional, and intellectual contexts associated with the “object orientation” of anthropology during the “museum period”—this orientation led to an object-centred study of people and their cultures. Material things were used to represent and to understand culture. When the status of museums as financial and institutional centres of anthropology receded, the “object orientation” of the discipline likewise diminished (Stocking 1985b:141). Thus, the hegemony of the cultural ontology and epistemology of the museum existed within an institutional context during the “museum period” in the history of anthropology.

The things in museum collections were important to anthropological research at this time, both as objects of study and as fieldwork desiderata. Farabee’s object collections demonstrate the importance of the museum context to fieldwork activities and goals. His explorations were mostly in conjunction with museum expeditions, which were funded either by museums or by donors and sometimes involved his working under the supervision of others (Farabee 1918a:9; Farabee 1924:9). All three of his ethnographic books were published by museums. Farabee was exposed to the museum paradigm through his training under Putnam at Harvard University and his employment at the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania, both of which held a strong museum tradition¹¹ (Balée 2009:41). Farabee was greatly influenced both by his former mentor and by the institutional context in which he worked.

Cultural Ontology and Epistemology in the Museum

The institutional context of the “museum period” helped to shape both anthropology and its concept of culture. I am using the phrase “cultural ontology” to refer to the ways that anthropology understood the nature and being of culture during this period. The cultural ontology of the “museum period” conflated “culture” with the “things” of material culture¹². This frequently resulted in an object-centred fieldwork practice. The degree of emphasis on and detailed treatment of material culture may have been partially a result of the empirically oriented natural history education of many of the museum anthropologists of the time. Farabee’s training under Putnam, who was educated in natural science at Harvard University (Browman 2002:509), is an example of this. Concerning the relationship between anthropology and natural history museums, Balée (2009:36) writes that “anthropologists of the 19th century were essentially natural historians.” Furthermore, Leslie (1963:486) claims that the anthropological tradition “was shaped in the atmosphere of museums of natural history”¹⁴ (Leslie in Balée 2009:36; Bernstein 2002:552). The natural history background of many anthropologists may have led to “a strong emphasis on descriptive and comparative studies of material culture” (Collier & Tschopik 1954:771). Thus, culture was frequently understood within an object-centred relation to things. However, the emphasis on things also fit within the institutional structure of museums, which rely on visual objects to produce their exhibitions. Material culture was easily exhibited, as well as easily accommodated to an intellectual framework that centred around natural history.

The cultural ontology of the “museum period” is reflected in Farabee’s emphasis on material culture and things in two of his books, *The Central Arawaks* and *The Central Caribs* (Farabee 1918a; Farabee 1924). Although he describes both material and non-material culture, Farabee frequently emphasizes “things.” As noted above, this may reflect his reliance

on the University Museum for funding, employment, and publishing. The University Museum undoubtedly had a strong interest in the things that would eventually be on display as a result of his ethnographic explorations.

I am using the phrase “museum epistemology” to refer to the ways that anthropology approached, analyzed, and understood its knowledge of cultures and societies. There were different epistemological tendencies in anthropology during the “museum period” in the United States. The “museum paradigm” was somewhat heterogeneous in form. Museum exhibitions tended to be oriented around typological or geographical displays (Collier & Tschopik 1954:769). In other words, things were displayed according to either their type or their place of origin. Unilinear cultural evolutionism was also common to “museum period” anthropology (Balée 1999:35). Each of these three tendencies involved a different way of approaching, analyzing, and understanding material culture¹⁵.

The cultural-evolutionist tendency, which modeled a theory of cultural difference and unilinear change on naturalistic (Darwinian) evolution, particularly resonated with the natural history and object-centred orientations of the “museum period.”¹⁶ However, these orientations were attached to each of the epistemological tendencies in different ways. Although anthropological and museum opinion turned against cultural evolutionism in the early twentieth century, there was “a considerable retention of the natural history approach of the nineteenth century” (Bernstein 2002:553; Collier & Tschopik 1954:771). For example, Frederic Ward Putnam, who retained a natural history orientation, emphasized history and geography over theories of cultural evolution (Browman 2002:509–510, 517). Farabee (1917a) argued that environmental conditions shape human beings physically, psychologically, and culturally. He adhered both to a form of cultural evolutionism and to environmental determinism. As a professional anthropologist, Farabee was thinking beyond curatorial concerns and saw the need to orient his work, as was increasingly becoming the case, to a broader theoretical framework. His emphasis on the environment, in relation to the development of culture, resonated with the museum paradigm’s natural history orientation whilst moving beyond general museum concerns.

Reading the Museum Influence in Farabee's Texts

Farabee emphasizes the things of material culture in his writings. His three books reflect the influence of both the ontological and the epistemological aspects of the museum paradigm. In *The Central Arawaks*, Farabee (1918a:12) takes the Wapisiana society of Northeastern Brazil and Guiana to be the representative—“characteristic”—culture of the regional Arawakan societies. Smaller sections are devoted to other regional Arawakan societies. Farabee (1918a:9) claims that this book, which is primarily descriptive and lacking in explanatory content, is the first instance of “any detailed account of this group of tribes.”¹⁷ He argues that public opinion is the main form of their social control (Farabee 1918a:87; cf. Farabee 1918c:432). In the first section, the topics transition from geography and the history of exploration, to material culture, through subsistence, to sociology and ideology. Despite the emphasis that Farabee (1917a) places on the environment elsewhere, he only devotes two pages to geography and environment in *The Central Arawaks* (1918a). Material culture is particularly emphasized, given its own subheading, and treated in detail. The book makes contributions to all four fields of anthropology and contains geographical, sociocultural,

linguistic, physical, and photographic content. There is a small section on regional petroglyphs, in which he refers to his previous scholarship on South American petroglyphs (Farabee 1916; Farabee 1918a:167). He claims that the petroglyphs “are the results of primitive man’s first efforts at artistic presentation”¹⁸ (Farabee 1918a:169). Although an explicit argument for cultural evolution is not presented, *The Central Arawaks* contains rhetoric that suggests such. For example, Farabee (1918a:105) describes indigenous religious beliefs as “very primitive and undeveloped.” He also describes the “wholesome influence” of a colonial administrator in the region named H. P. C. Melville¹⁹, who taught the indigenous peoples “the value of continuous labor and the use of money” (Farabee 1918a:15). However, at times, Farabee (1918a:94, 169) displays sentiments that suggest an ethnographic romanticism, such as his claims that indigenous “social relations are perfect and illegitimacy is unknown among them” and that, in relation to bathing, “all are scrupulously clean in their habits of life.” Overall, *The Central Arawaks* comes across primarily as a differentiated set of collections of discrete ethnographic domains. The immediate presentation of ethnographic data is emphasized and very little comparison or theoretical explanation occurs. There is no overarching theoretical framework in which the text is situated. It reads as an ethnographic text produced in the form of a museum exhibit.

Reception to *The Central Arawaks* was mixed. It began somewhat favorably with Herbert Spinden’s review (1919). However, in 1920, Walter Roth—a British colonial figure who produced a considerable record of scholarship in Australia and British Guiana (Herskovits 1934; Roth 1915, 1924, 1929, 2010)—published an excoriating review in *American Anthropologist*. Roth (1920) makes criticisms that primarily pertain to technical data, such as plant identifications and detailed descriptions of hunting implements. For example, Roth (1920:292) writes that Farabee’s “illustration of the birdtrap lacks the upper portion of the peg supporting the structure, and upon which the whole delicacy of the trap depends.” In criticizing his inclusion in Farabee’s bibliography, Roth (1920:292) claims of himself that he “so far has published nothing concerning the three tribes under review.” Farabee (1921a) defended his work against Roth’s criticism the next year in *American Anthropologist*. He describes the tenor of this criticism as “unexplainable animus” (Farabee 1921a:230). Roth (1922) struck back the following year—again in *American Anthropologist* (Roth 1922)—and ended the interchange. This debate highlights the “museum period” emphasis on material culture and the meticulous description of minutiae and things. The debate also highlights the porous quality of anthropology’s professional boundaries during this period of increasing professionalisation.

In *The Central Caribs*, Farabee (1924) treats the Makushi (Macusis) as the representative Cariban society of the region; smaller sections pertain to other Cariban societies. After the section on the Makushi, the book reads somewhat like a travelogue and stresses the themes of arrival and departure. In places, *The Central Caribs* reads as the textual counterpart to a museum exhibit. Many of the organizational features of *The Central Arawaks* are replicated in *The Central Caribs*. Material culture is emphasized, given its own subheading, and presented towards the beginning in great detail; subsequent sections on sociology, ideology, and language are not as well formulated in content and writing. Farabee (1924:10) explicitly notes that his expedition was making “natural history collections.” A section on physical data, which includes anthropometric graphs, is presented last. Farabee (1924:276–277) attempts to explain anthropometric differences in relation to environment and diet—this

suggests that his emphasis on environmental influence may have partially come from his specialization in physical anthropology. The discussion of kinship terminology consists of less than two pages and is presented in neither a systematic nor well-organized manner, although the indigenous terms for various kinship relations are given (Farabee 1924:80–81). Lowie (1937:6) later criticized Farabee's attempts to write about kinship (cited in Balée, 2009:41). It should be noted that Farabee died in 1925; there is a notice written by G. B. Gordon (Director of the University Museum and Farabee's supervisor) in *The Central Caribs* stating that Farabee was ill during this book's preparation and "had no opportunity of reading the proofs or preparing the plates or supervising the publication" (Farabee 1924:7, 9). Thus, it is unclear to what extent Farabee is responsible for the quality of the text.

At times, Farabee relies on second-hand information from missionaries and various colonial figures (e.g., Farabee 1924:96). Melville is again referenced in *The Central Caribs*, as is a missionary named Christopher Davis (Farabee 1924:10, 96, 279). Regarding their supposed obedience in social relations, Farabee (1924:71) comments on "the moral character of the [Makushi] Indians." Farabee may have been following the lead of the German explorer Robert Schomburgk (1840:173), who travelled throughout British Guiana during the 1830s and 1840s under the direction of the Royal Geographical Society and the British Government, in his praise of the Makushi. He was aware of Schomburgk's explorations and writings (Farabee 1917c). Frank Speck (1926:270) describes Farabee's romanticism, which seems paternalistic at times, as evincing an "avowed sympathy" and a "sincere appreciation" of the virtues of the Cariban societies.

In 1926, three reviews were published of *The Central Caribs*. In *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, Frank Speck (1926:269) notes that "material culture is the most widely treated topic" in Farabee's book. Speck (1926:270) claims the book as "another literary landmark in the field of American exploration." These comments emphasize material culture and Farabee's role as an ethnographic explorer. Both Walter Hough's review in *American Anthropologist* (1926) and H.O.F.'s review in *The Geographical Journal* (1926) were also generally positive.

In *Indian Tribes of Eastern Peru*, Farabee (1922) writes about Arawakan, Panoan, Jivaroan, Witotoan, Miranhan, and Tupian groups in eastern Peru and Ecuador. This is the most four-field and ethnographically wide-ranging of his books. It seems to be his best book overall. There are separate sections on physical and archaeological themes, in addition to those on culture and linguistics. The sections on material culture, whilst thorough and detailed, are less emphasized than in Farabee's other books; sections on social organization tend to be placed prior to those on material culture. As with *The Central Caribs* and *The Central Arawaks* (Farabee 1918:9; Farabee 1924:9), in addition to first-hand ethnographic data collection, Farabee relies on secondary reports from both indigenous and non-indigenous persons. In this book, the orientation is decidedly more pro-indigenous. Farabee (1922:2, 38, 62, 148) comes out strongly against abusive treatment of the Indians. However, this text also evinces problematic tendencies. When writing about Piro "personal habits" and their honesty in trading, Farabee (1922:61) writes that "the Piro were the most manly savages we had encountered, and most worthy of being treated as our equals." This quotation appears to again show Farabee's ethnocentric thinking. This fieldwork appears to have been funded by Louis John de Milhau, who also wrote the introduction to the book. De Milhau, along with his friend John Hastings, was given a diplomatic letter

by President Theodore Roosevelt prior to the expedition²⁰ (de Milhau 1922:v). Whilst a student at Harvard, de Milhau had accompanied Farabee on a research trip to Iceland in 1905 (de Milhau 1922:v). Putnam is also acknowledged for “instruction and hearty cooperation” (Farabee 1922). Farabee’s museum collecting is mentioned in this book and a paragraph in the archaeological section is devoted to “collections” (de Milhau 1922:viii; Farabee 1922:181). Walter Hough’s 1923 review in *American Anthropologist* was decidedly favourable. From an overall analysis of these three books, one is made strongly cognizant of the object-centred orientation of Farabee’s work and the influence of the ontological and epistemological orientations of the “museum paradigm.”

Farabee’s Theory of Environmental Influence

Farabee (1917a) argued that the environment plays a strong role in shaping human beings. He writes in *The Central Caribs* that “many similarities of culture will be observed among the tribes of these two linguistic stocks [Cariban and Arawakan]—similarities which may be due in part to contact and in part to the influence of the environment” (Farabee 1924:9). Farabee (1924:276–277) also suggests that physical differences between the forest and savannah groups “must be traced directly to the influence of the environment with all that such a statement implies” and that “the whole question [of physical difference] then may be one of diet alone.” His assertions of environmental influence and determinism extend to both physical and cultural differences (Farabee 1924:12).

Farabee writes that changes in culture “reveal the effects of a change of environment” (Farabee 1917a:288). Elsewhere, he emphasizes the role of the environment in the development of indigenous art²¹ (Farabee 1918d). Although he notes the importance of “organized ritualistic religion” (art’s “greatest inspiration”) and social life to artistic creation, he claims that “the art of any region more correctly reflects the character of the environment than the character of the people” (Farabee 1918d:61). Farabee (1918e) attempts to show how at least one Amazonian myth—“the marriage of the electric eel”—is linked to environmental factors. In positing material explanations for art and myth, he makes bold claims concerning the influence of the environment. These claims differentiate his work from both the historical-particularist strain of American anthropology and the functionalist strains of British social anthropology. These claims share substance with the intellectual framework of the museum period and, although they are frequently expressed in more ethnocentric terms, prefigure later cultural-materialist and ecological-determinist orientations. However, Farabee blends these orientations with a rhetoric that strongly evinces cultural evolutionism.

With regard to Amazonian art, Farabee (1918d:71) writes that “the art is so simple and in such an early stage of development that all the steps in its evolution may be traced with certainty.” His terminology strongly evinces cultural-evolutionist sentiments (Farabee 1917a). For example, although Farabee (1917a:281, 283) eschews the concept of “primitive culture,” he makes references to low, high, and advanced cultures. Although historical “developments were not necessarily from a lower to a higher plane” (Farabee 1917a:282), he describes some peoples as “backward” and refers to “stages” of “cultural development” (Farabee 1917a:282, 287). He seems to have viewed both culture and social psychology as being developmental. Farabee (1917c:83) describes a certain practice of an indigenous

society as giving “a good idea of their stage of mental development.” Farabee (1909:128) claims that, for the Macheyengas, “wants are few and so easily supplied that the daily routine of life requires very little thought.” He goes on to make the more extreme claim that this group lives with neither custom nor religion (Farabee 1909:131). He (1917b:68) writes of “contact with civilized men” destroying “primitive peoples.” Farabee describes the discoveries on Marajó island as evincing a “high state of culture” and claims that “there is no evidence in the material found of a development from a lower culture” (Farabee 1921f:150). He writes that the past inhabitants of Marajó island “achieved a higher civilization as indicated by the development of their arts than that of any other tribes in South America east of the Andes Mountains” (Farabee 1921f:142). These comments suggest a general adherence to cultural evolutionism.

Although Farabee did not systematically present his views on environmental influence and determinism until 1917, he seems to have developed these views at a relatively early point in his career. Farabee’s strong interest in environmental influence may have been partially a result of his doctoral research in physical anthropology. Only six years after completing his dissertation, Farabee (1909:127) writes that:

Primitive man—not earliest man, but man in a low stage of cultural development—is to so large an extent a creature of his environment that any study of his customs must be preceded by some account of the conditions under which he has lived and developed these particular customs.

Later, in his systematic presentation of his views, Farabee (1917a:281) writes that:

We sometimes speak of primitive men but we mean men in a low stage of culture without any reference whatever to time or age. There are no primitive men, neither is there primitive culture. Both have been so modified by their environment that they give us very little idea of what the first men and their culture were like. From the beginning both have developed in complete agreement with their environment.

The differentiation of “primitive man” from “earliest man” appears to be Farabee’s way of differentiating natural and cultural evolution. However, such statements evince an adherence to cultural evolution—albeit alongside a more forcefully stated adherence to environmental determinism. Although Farabee does not view indigenous peoples as representative of an original state of humanity, he argues that their cultures have been environmentally conditioned. Additionally, it seems that Farabee saw indigenous thought itself as constrained by environmental variables.

Farabee’s theoretical emphasis on environmental influence sometimes leads him to make seemingly degenerationist claims. For example, he writes that in tropical climates the human being “is deprived of energy and ambition and degenerates” (Farabee 1917a:281). These degenerationist comments occur within the context of an adherence to environmental determinism. Rather than positing human societies as progressing through an ineluctable series of developmental stages, he theoretically ties their development to the environment in which they live. He repeatedly uses the terminology of lower and higher stages and argues that environmental conditions allow or prevent movement

between these stages. His degenerationist comments reflect a belief that environmental conditions could lead to retrograde or limited movement on the scale of cultural evolution. Farabee (1918d:61) argues that “where there is a constant struggle for existence or where there is a debilitating climate art cannot develop to a high degree of perfection.” Thus, Farabee conditions the developmental stages of cultural evolutionism with environmental variables.

Farabee’s epistemological framework for understanding cultural difference was categorical and involved the use of developmental stages. He adapted his emphasis on environmental variables to this framework. This adaptation demonstrates the influence of the museum paradigm on Farabee’s theoretical ideas. However, this type of cultural classification had more relevance for museum curation than for the growing anthropology of the academic department. Farabee was a transitional figure between these institutional contexts. His rhetoric of cultural evolutionism appears to have been largely a vestige of the language of nineteenth century anthropologists and explorers who wrote within a natural history framework and were influenced in their ethnographic observations by biological concepts of adaptation, natural selection, and evolution. Farabee can be viewed as an early ecological anthropologist and his positions overlap to some limited degree with later theories of cultural ecology and cultural materialism. In contemporary ecological anthropology, which is now largely influenced by historical ecology, the relationship between culture and the environment is seen as mutually influential (Balée & Erickson 2006). In general, culture is no longer reduced nor determinately conditioned to environmental variables. Similarly, cultural evolutionism has been generally eschewed in favour of more agentive and particularistic interpretations.

Conclusion

Farabee was a transitional figure between the anthropology of the museum and that of the academic department of anthropology. His extended visits to South America involved exploration, museum collections, and ethnographic research. Farabee was both an ethnographic explorer and a museum anthropologist. His contributions were primarily made within the context of the natural history and object-centred orientations of museum anthropology in the United States. Farabee’s publications reflect his adherence to the “museum paradigm,” although he sometimes goes beyond the constraints of this paradigm. His work shows the influence of the ontological and epistemological orientations of the museum period of anthropology. His primary theoretical contribution to anthropology was his emphasis on environmental determinism. However, Farabee seems to have adhered to both environmental determinism and a form of cultural evolutionism. His combination of these theoretical positions was idiosyncratic and reflects the transitional nature of the intellectual milieu in which his career was situated.

Many of Farabee’s writings seem to hover in a transitional space between an emerging professional anthropology and the literature of explorers. With the exception of his programmatic statements concerning environmental influence, Farabee wrote very little on theoretical matters and his texts are mostly comprised of detailed descriptions and travel accounts. His descriptions of material culture resonate with the emphasis during the “museum period” on natural history. He made much use of his training under Putnam in

his explorations in South America and Putnam's influence can be ascertained throughout his career.

Farabee primarily contributed to the ethnographic and ethnological literature through his detailed descriptions of indigenous societies in South America. His publications are still frequently referenced in this literature (Alemán & Whitehead 2009:264; Mentore 2005:74–78; Rivière 1984:116). In fact, it was within the context of reviewing the literature of South American ethnography, towards the goal of developing an ethnographic research project with the Makushi society of Guyana, that I first encountered Farabee's writings. In developing this project, I have found his highly descriptive accounts to be very useful.

Farabee was one of the first American ethnographers to do wide-ranging fieldwork in South America. His texts regarding indigenous societies in this region are more ethnographically focused than earlier explorers, yet more survey-oriented and ethnographically limited than later professional anthropologists. However, although Farabee is now a somewhat obscure figure in the history of anthropology, his contributions remain substantial. His current obscurity seems to be partially a result of his early death and the subsequent fame and relative dominance of the Boasian school, which came to eclipse much of the anthropology that came before it in the United States. One unfortunate result of the Boasian hegemony was that other historical traditions of anthropology in the United States gradually became poorly known. Anthropologists working within the older contexts of the museum and natural history fell into obscurity as the anthropology of the academic department rose in prominence. However, earlier anthropologists, such as William Curtis Farabee, were well-known during their time and made contributions that are significant to the history and development of anthropology.

The somewhat inchoate nature of Farabee's oeuvre may also be due to his early death. It is unclear at times whether the quality of some of his publications is due to the poor status of his health, which suffered as a result of his ethnographic explorations in South America. Some of his writings were edited by others and may lack the authorial attention that Farabee could have provided. Furthermore, he did not have the opportunity to produce the kinds of late career theoretical texts that frequently serve to articulate anthropologists' early work.

Farabee went to great lengths in his research. He overcame much adversity—sickness, dietary privations, and physical danger—to carry out original ethnographic research in South America. The results of this research were of relevance for both museum and departmental anthropology. For anthropologists in academic departments, Farabee's visits to little-known Amerindian societies, such as that of the Mundurucu of Brazil, would provide a broad range of ethnographic data upon which more particularistic and long-term fieldworkers could draw in developing fieldwork projects with societies relatively unknown to anthropologists. Although his own fieldwork and methodology was less rigorous and more concerned with object collections than that of many who would follow, the breadth of his ethnographic explorations provided a substantial foundation for the development of subsequent research in South America. His writings are filled with descriptive ethnographic data that allow for comparisons with the present and that provide a contrastive historical dimension for contemporary writers. The fact that this data has not been used as often as perhaps it could have been further highlights the eclipsing effects of the Boasian hegemony. In considering his overall contribution to anthropology, Farabee's writings remain a broad, useful, and primary source of ethnographic data on South American

indigenous societies and reflect a transitional practice of fieldwork that bridges between the museum and departmental periods in the history of anthropology.

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Notes

- 1 According to Sturtevant (1969:622), the “museum period” lasted from the 1840s to 1890. Wissler (1942:190, 194, 202) dates this period, during which professional positions began to appear in anthropology, from 1860 to 1900; this was the period when “the greatest contributions to anthropology came from men in museum positions or in bureaus and academies closely associated with museum collections.” According to Collier & Tschopik (1954:769), the general framework for anthropological museums was established by the 1890s. However, Stocking (1985a:8) claims that “from the point of view of both the employment of anthropological personnel and the support of field research, the great period of museum anthropology only really began in the 1890s.” Balée (2009:42) notes the embedding of anthropology in universities during the Great Depression. Although some disagree, such as Samuel Redman (2011:43), many scholars “argue that before the close of the 1930s, universities largely replaced museums at the forefront of academic research.” By the beginning of World War II, museum anthropology was “stranded in an institutional, methodological, and theoretical backwater” (Stocking 1985a:8).
- 2 I am using the concept of a “paradigm” to refer to an identifiable theoretical and methodological style of research. This is similar to Thomas Kuhn’s (1962) use (Osley 1985:72).
- 3 Farabee (1917b:65) writes that, when he was near Iquitos, Peru, the English consul informed him “that war had been declared in Europe the day before.” In Farabee’s article in the *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* (1918c:427), he is noted as “Capt. Wm Curtis Farabee, U.S.A.” and as “formerly with the University Museum, Philadelphia.” In a note in *American Anthropologist*, B. W. Merwin writes that Farabee was “called by the Government [in 1918] as Captain in the Intelligence Department of the Army” (AAA 1919a:104; Sullivan 1989:241, note 12). However, David Price (2008:285) claims that Farabee “did not use fieldwork as a cover for espionage, but ... [he] did collect intelligence during the First World War.” Price (2008:9) claims that Farabee conducted “espionage in Central America during the war.”
- 4 Collier & Tschopik (1954:771) write that “museums during this period were the centers of anthropological teaching, or rather, museum curators formed the core of university teaching staffs. The major university departments drew heavily on the staffs of their anthropological museums or established a working relation with a nearby large museum. Most of the important teachers were museum men or former museum men.”
- 5 Several of Farabee’s texts particularly evince his status as an ethnographic explorer (Farabee 1917c; Farabee 1921f). These texts weave travelogue-style narrative and stories of personal experiences in the field with ethnographic data, object descriptions, and geographic information. The ethnographic depictions are not generally presented in a systematic manner. Rather, they are comprised of various summary observations. These texts resemble the writings of nineteenth-century explorers. However, Farabee makes an attempt to distinguish himself from explorers. Nevertheless, his field activities appear to have been frequently oriented around exploration.
- 6 The Macheyenga society is now known as the Matsigenka society.

- 7 According to a note that appeared in 1917 in the *Geographical Review*, Farabee visited the highlands of Guiana, Marajó Island, the central Brazilian Amazon, and the Peruvian Amazon during this expedition (AGS 1917:149). He spent varying amounts of time in these regions—for example, four months in central Brazil (AGS 1916:143)—and was concerned with a variety of research questions. In central Brazil, Farabee conducted research with the Mundurucu society in an attempt “to settle absolutely the long-vexed question of the relation of this tribe to the Tupi” (AAA 1915:778). A note in *The Museum Journal* comments on the completion of Farabee’s “trip to the head villages of the Mundurucu Indians” (*The University Museum* 1915b). According to a lecture schedule found in *The Museum Journal*, Farabee gave lectures on November 25, 1916 (“The Amazon Expedition of the University Museum. In the Lower Amazon and Across the Unknown Guianas”), February 10, 1917 (“The Amazon Expedition of the University Museum. A Journey in Search of the Amazon Head Hunters”), and February 28, 1917 (“My Three Years with the Indians of the Amazon Forest”) (*The University Museum* 1916:199–200).
- 8 Farabee (1921f:145) notes that large trees are “often found growing on and about the mounds.” Unfortunately, he does not substantiate this landscape observation with a species name or with some other data to indicate a type of tree.
- 9 In 1915, Farabee claims (1921f:156–157, cited in Woods & Denevan 2009:6) that he found “black earth” (ADE) sites with pottery sherds. Farabee (1921f:156, cited in Woods & Denevan 2009:6) writes that “[t]he black earth marking these sites was found to be from one to two feet deep and covered in some cases, as much as ten acres of surface.” Farabee (1924:29) notes elsewhere the use of burning by the Makushi (Macusi) to increase soil fertility.
- 10 Prior to “the period of the great philanthropic foundations, ... [museums] marshaled the financial support that made possible the steady growth of anthropology” (Collier & Tschopik 1954:772). They also provided employment for many of the early professional anthropologists (Balée 2009:40).
- 11 Farabee was not alone in his institutional reliance during this period. The orientation of some of Boas’ research also necessarily fell “along lines consistent with the orientations of the institutions funding his research” (Jacknis 1996:192).
- 12 The Harvard anthropology department is the oldest in the United States (Jacknis 2002:529). The Peabody Museum and Harvard merged in 1897 (Browman 2002:510). The Peabody museum dates to 1866 and developed teaching during the 1890s; The University Museum dates to before 1900 and developed teaching around 1909; Columbia University had a long-standing relationship with the American Museum of Natural History and developed teaching during the 1890s (Kroeber 1954:765).
- 13 The emphasis on things eventually gave way to an emphasis on cultural contexts. Early traces of this shift are perceptible in the famous debate between Franz Boas and Otis Mason, in which Boas argued for a strategy of exhibition that emphasized the historical and cultural contexts of things (Adams 1998:241; Boas 1887; Bunzl 1996:56–57; Jacknis 1985:77–79; Jacknis 1996:185, 201, 206; Stocking 1974:57–58). This is in contrast to Mason’s (1887:534, cited in Bunzl 1996:58) argument that curators should privilege “the methods and instrumentalities of the biologist.” Boas (1974 [1905]:122–123, cited in Jacknis 1996:185–186) helped to shift the ontological and epistemological emphases in anthropology away from things. The museum paradigm was largely supplanted over time as the research emphasis moved away from things and the institutional centre moved from museums to university departments of anthropology.
- 14 According to Kroeber (1954:764), “anthropology is in part natural science, in part humanity, only secondarily social science.” Hinsley (1985:50–51) notes the shift from a humanistic to a naturalistic study of humankind during the mid-to-late nineteenth century.

- 15 The debate between Franz Boas and Otis Mason highlights the tension that was present between the different tendencies in museum epistemology. Browman (2002:517) writes that “Boas advocated the kind of geographic focus on ethnological exhibits that Agassiz had imparted to Putnam, and it appears that Putnam may have passed this on to Boas or encouraged him to write about it.” Putnam emphasized the arrangement of artifacts according to “historic context and geographic areas rather than by evolutionary schema or industry” (Browman 2002:510).
- 16 Balée (2009:36) suggests that the emphasis on things “appears to have fit better with natural history than other academic consolidations.”
- 17 Farabee (1918c) also published an article in 1918 on Arawakan societies. Therein, non-material culture and sociological themes are emphasized more than material culture. Environmental influence on culture is mentioned (Farabee 1918c:430).
- 18 Elsewhere, Farabee (1917c:91) writes that the petroglyphs provide “the only evidence remaining of an extinct culture and represent the first efforts towards artistic presentation.”
- 19 H.P.C. Melville was a colonial figure who lived in British Guiana; he had some level of fluency in the local indigenous languages and “spent twenty-four years among the Indians” of southern Guiana (The University Museum 1915a:5). Farabee (1917b:77) claims that Melville “introduced irrigation [to British Guiana] by means of American windmills.” Farabee received considerable assistance from Melville and John Ogilvie (Farabee 1917c; The University Museum 1915a:5). They are mentioned repeatedly in his writings. Ogilvie accompanied Farabee into the interior of what was then British Guiana (Farabee 1917c:70). Ogilvie (1940) later published a text of indigenous creation myths. Farabee seems to have also met with the Governor of British Guiana, who was very interested in the geographical data collected by Farabee’s team on the colonial territory (The University Museum 1915a:21).
- 20 Farabee (1917c:103) notes that he spent a day with Roosevelt in Barbados whilst exploring South America.
- 21 Farabee (1918d: 59) claims that the art of “primitive peoples” is “instinctive in the beginning and confined in their use to decorative purposes.” Farabee (1918d: 61) writes that “decorative art is so directly conditioned by its environment that one must know all the elements of climatic, physical and social conditions before he can begin to understand or to appreciate the art.”

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Performing gender

The construction of black males in the hip-hop industry

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In 2011, a hip-hop artist by the name of Frank Ocean challenged the world of hip-hop in North America, announcing news about his sexual orientation. Many people have suggested that his announcement has created a new outlet for black male hip-hop artists to be able to express themselves beyond heteronormative behaviour. However, there exists a historically informed cultural norm of black male behaviour that continues to be deeply ingrained in American society. This paper will examine the hip-hop industry in North America and suggest that Ocean's announcement did not have any transformative effect in the hip-hop industry.

KEY WORDS hip-hop, gender performance, masculinity

Amongst African Americans in the hip-hop industry, artists have come to understand masculinity as a natural aspect of their performance. Artists regard their performance of gender as having an essence of “hardness” that is inherent to all male rappers. However, the construction of black masculinity in hip-hop has been culturally, psychologically, and historically informed. Since the 1980s, hip-hop music has evolved into a potent form of musical expression. This potency has led to the construction of a particular masculine image amongst African Americans. This essay will further explore the way gender has been constructed and performed amongst black Americans in hip-hop. In addition, I suggest that despite Frank Ocean's “coming out”, which challenged the dominance of the constructed hegemonic masculinity in hip-hop, the dominant notion of heteronormativity continues to exist as the most pervasive in the hip-hop industry.

Engaging in the notion of gender as a performance enables us to challenge essentialist explanations of sex and sexuality that assume male or female social existence is “derived from some fact of their physiology” (Butler 1988:520). In Judith Butler's *Performative Acts and Gender Constitution*, she problematizes the assumption that a human's biological sex dictates and determines the way a person should behave in society. Butler argues that, “the body is an historical idea that gains its meaning through a concrete and historically mediated expression in the world” (1988:521). Therefore, the body cannot be assumed to possess a natural and predetermined interior essence but rather, it is culturally and historically informed. Butler's argument regarding the culturally and historically informed nature of constructions of gender will be used as a

framework to analyse the cultural environment and historical events that have contributed to the construction of the dominant black masculinity in hip-hop. This challenges the assumption that heteronormative gendered behaviour amongst hip-hop artists is a natural essence based on their sex.

Contextualizing the construction of gender through a historical analysis reveals the central role that race occupies in the construction of black identity in the United States. The United States, despite being a country that promotes ideals of 'American Exceptionalism' has historically been deeply entrenched with racially informed hierarchies. African Americans continue to experience what Tricia Rose terms a system of "racial capitalism" that exploits and oppresses the black populations (1994). This system of racial capitalism has placed African Americans at the bottom of the economic social formation. Additionally, institutionalized racial oppression, which has explicitly informed systems of racial capitalism, continues to exist in American societies. In the 1970s, as a result of the frustration of many African American experiences of state violence, failed government promises, and an oppressive system, hip-hop emerged as a form of expression. Hip-hop, specifically rap, emerged decisively as "a cultural force of creativity, unity and social protest within the black community" (Rose 1994:102). Within an expanding hip-hop community, through cultural expressions of the black community, a particular identity of black males was cultivated and adopted into hip-hop culture.

Simultaneous to the expansion and growing popularity of hip-hop and rap, African Americans continued experiencing systematic racism and oppression in America. Black male Americans have historically adopted certain patriarchal ideals into the construction of a normative black male gender. Dating back to the 19th century, people of visible African descent experienced slavery in America in a white patriarchal environment. As slaves, men were granted privileged positions over women and thus, embraced their responsibility of enhancing the survival of the slave community. Thus, black male slaves behaved with the interest of "the maintenance of their own personal dignity under the most degrading of circumstances" (Rose 1994:45). Consequently, in the context of a white dominated society, particular hyper masculine narratives of the ideal male were developed.

This narrative of African male patriarchy has evolved and continues to be present in contemporary rap music. Throughout the last two decades, as America has continued to intensify its capitalist and white dominated context, African Americans continue to predominantly occupy marginal roles within society. The displays of violence and black masculine power in hip-hop give us insight into the "reality of the pressures of economically disenfranchised black Americans and is a conscious unveiling of what these rappers see as hypocrisies of the capitalist, patriarchal values of the mainstream American dream" (Sadikk 2003:114). Hip-hop functions as a weapon of resistance with the intention of reinforcing male power.

In rap music, artists demand agency while expressing their frustration and hatred towards an oppressive American society. This aggressive attitude towards American society has been codified as being a 'natural' attitude of all black males in society. Consequently, a main performative and evolving characteristic of black masculinity through rap music became the display of aggressiveness and resistance in society.

The expression of sexual desire is another important feature of the performance of masculinity in hip-hop. Murray highlights the importance of a masculine identity being performed in order to maintain respect and one's reputation as a man (1996), one of the most straightforward ways of asserting this masculinity is through displaying hypersexual behaviour towards women. In hip-hop music, what is revealed is the productive dependence on women, "specifically their sexualized bodies by black men in authenticating their claims and representations of manhood" (Miller-Young 2008:263–264). This accessibility of particularly black women's bodies through hip-hop music has become a way of asserting artists' masculinity in the industry. bell hooks effectively notes that hip-hop and rap express the realities of the cultural experiences and environment of black males in American society. Thus, "sexist, misogynist, patriarchal ways of thinking and believing that are glorified in hip-hop and rap are a reflection of the prevailing values created and sustained by white supremacist capitalist patriarchy" (hooks in Sadikk 2003:115). This is an essential point of examination and can serve as a response to common assumptions of the patriarchal and misogynistic attitudes of black males being an inherent and natural aspect of their physiology. An understanding of the cultural context of African American men allows for a genuine analysis of the construction of maleness in hip-hop. When black males do not perform what is constructed to be heterosexual behaviour, their identity as a real hip-hop artist is questioned.

In 2011, a well-known performer in the hip-hop industry, Frank Ocean, shared with the public a letter that he wrote which exposed that his first love was a man. To date, there has never been a hip-hop artist who has publicly "come out" as a gay man. In American societies, institutions and the media exercise disciplinary powers that contribute to enforcing normative gender behaviour. It is this discipline that "makes" individuals, allowing people in societies across culture and race to internalize the expected behaviour attributed to a gender (Foucault 1972). As discussed earlier, the image of an ideal black male hip-hop artist has been constructed and informed by a particular history of African Americans in a patriarchal context. Having an ideal image constantly promoted in society, artists have disciplined themselves to perform characteristically according to the normalized behaviour. This internalization of gendered behaviour is displayed through Ocean's continued performance of what has been normalized to reflect a black male hip-hop artists' behaviour despite the fact that he revealed that he does not fit this schema.

In contradiction to his announcement, through his lyrics and the content of his music videos, Frank Ocean embodies the behaviour of a heteronormative male in hip-hop. A few of his most popular songs: "Pyramids," "Novacane," and "Swim Good" are re-imagined visually through music videos that display women in strip clubs or women as the objects of his conquest. Therefore, despite his announcement that suggests he does not only desire women sexually, he has continued to perform the hegemonic masculinity that has been constructed in the hip-hop industry. These contradictions in behaviour can be termed as excessive semiosis, where in the media, Ocean's gender performance does not clearly reflect one single gendered category. His performance of gender produces several different meanings regarding masculinity, and simultaneously challenges the two-gender–two-sex model framework that informs the construction of masculinity in hip-hop.

In an interview conducted after Frank Ocean's letter was made public he responds to a question as follows:

GQ: So do you consider yourself bisexual?

Frank Ocean: You can move to the next question. I'll respectfully say that life is dynamic and comes along with dynamic experiences, and the same sentiment that I have towards genres of music, I have towards a lot of labels and boxes and [sh--]. I'm in this business to be creative—I'll even diminish it and say to be a content provider. [Wallace, 2012:25]

Although he justifies his firm refusal to place a label on his sexuality, I suggest that his choice to continue to perform hegemonic masculinity is influenced by the cultural reality surrounding black males in hip-hop. Terms such as 'gay' and 'homo' are used amongst rappers to offend and belittle other artists. Being gay is associated with being feminine; implying a lack of dominance, and a reproduction of the ideals of black masculinity that have historically been ingrained in American society. Exemplifying the intolerance of non-heteronormative behaviour is a lyric recently used by hip-hop artist Lil' Wayne: "Tell her I skate/I ain't got no worries/No Frank Ocean, I'm straight." This lyric, although not explicitly directing hatred towards Frank Ocean, displays Lil' Wayne's need to assert and reinforce the acceptable black masculinity in hip-hop. He addresses all women, reaffirming that normative black masculine behaviour entails no confusion regarding sexuality. The statements embedded in Lil' Wayne's lyrics display the importance of the way sexuality and sexual desire are performed by an artist.

Additionally, attitudes towards sexuality in the hip-hop industry suggest that constructions of gender have been informed by a gender binary. The implication is that there is no room for gendered behaviour outside of restricted male or female categories. If a rap artist does not embody the behaviour and performative nature of what has been constructed to reflect masculinity, then he is accused of being feminine and thus, gay. This gender dichotomy influences artists, such as Frank Ocean, who feel the need to protect their image by performing heteronormative and what is constructed as being 'masculine' behaviour.

Hip-hop in the last decade has gone through a significantly transformative phase in North America. From the influence of America's capitalist ideals, hip-hop has increasingly become a commercialized and consumer-based industry (Hunter 2011). Consequently, the performance of gender has become essential to attracting bigger audiences and expanding fan bases. The culture of capitalism has placed pressure on many artists to perform specific constructions of gender that will appeal to North American audiences where heterosexuality remains the dominant norm. Amongst black male hip-hop artists, a reproduction of hegemonic masculinity continues to exist as the most accepted and publicly received gender performance. This cultural reality in American society has placed further emphasis on a need for artists to fit into the normalized gender dichotomy.

In conclusion, it is necessary to acknowledge that culture has a dynamic nature and is continuously changing. A direct reflection of this dynamism is the way gender does not function as a static category; rather, it is always being influenced by cultural changes. Above, I have shown the ways in which the historical experience of African Americans,

as well as the changing cultural environment in the United States, has constructed black masculinity in hip-hop. In this context, I argued that Frank Ocean's public performance of hegemonic masculinity suggests that this constructed version of black masculinity remains as the socially acceptable norm, despite his 'coming out'. Thus, gender is not "scripted on the body" (Butler 1988); it is culturally constructed and normalized by the circumstances of its cultural environment. It is evident then, that amongst black males in the hip-hop industry, the performance of a particular hegemonic masculinity demonstrates worthiness and legitimacy of an artist. Artists make a conscious choice to reflect the ideal image and behaviour of the culturally normalized identity to be an accepted and ultimately successful hip-hop artist.

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Eating politically

Food Not Bombs and growing resistance

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This paper aims to demonstrate how the organization Food Not Bombs fits into a history of counter cultural food movements, especially through focusing on multiple political aims and the building of community through mutual food production and consumption. Through speaking with members who fill multiple roles within the Ontario chapters of the movement, I explore how various issues around the commodification of food, meat consumption, and activism inform how these individuals conceptualize their ‘food activism.’

KEY WORDS food, counterculture, anti-capitalism

Because... FOOD is a RIGHT not a privilege! Because there is enough food for everyone to eat! Because SCARCITY is a patriarchal LIE! Because a woman should not have to USE HER BODY to get a meal, or have a place to sleep! Because when we are hungry or homeless we have the RIGHT to get what we need by panning, busking or squatting! Because POVERTY is a form of VIOLENCE not necessary or natural! Because capitalism makes food a source of profit not a source of nutrition! BECAUSE FOOD GROWS ON TREES. Because we need COMMUNITY CONTROL. Because we need HOMES NOT JAILS! Because we need ... FOOD NOT BOMBS.

—Keith McHenry, *Hungry for Peace* (2012)

Counterculture food movements can take many forms and encompass many different reactions to what is seen as an inadequate system within a given society. Despite this, in many cases, there seems to be a certain compatibility within the ideologies and methods of resistance which allows for a level of comparison regarding how food is eaten ‘politically.’ Such a simple action as eating or obtaining food can be highly charged with social meaning. In this paper I look at members of one such group or community, Food Not Bombs, and aim to gain insight into how food practices can function to communicate resistance, solidarity, difference, and protest. However, this can occur in many different ways within the organization itself, and is not carried out through any singular action. Based within a history of similar movements, I argue that these intersectionalities and multiplicity of issues, within a framework of community, are key in how these members I have interviewed understand their food activism.

Looking at the contexts in which Food Not Bombs emerged, the same types of dissatisfactions with the current industrial food system come up regularly in countercultural food movements. From the hippy communes of the 1960s and 70s, to the punk movements in the 1990s, issues such as large-scale food production, alienation of consumers, environmental issues, and sustainability are addressed through some type of alternative eating. The global movement surrounding the ideology of Food Not Bombs demonstrates the same types of characteristics as many of these groups, including the importance of community-building, and sharing of ideas in order to address what is seen as a social crisis in need of immediate action. Though limited, this paper attempts to understand the perspectives of several Food Not Bombs members throughout Southern Ontario within the framework of overlapping and intersecting forms of resistance and political concerns.

Food Not Bombs itself originally stemmed out of other types of activism and protest; primarily, the Clamshell Alliance in Massachusetts which set out to protest a nuclear power station in the community of Seabrook, including founding member Keith McHenry (McHenry 2012:97). This effort included bake sales to help provide funding to members of the protests who had been charged or arrested using an original poster with the slogan “It will be a great day when our schools get all the money and the air force has to have a bake sale to buy a bomber” (McHenry 2012:97). This demonstrates the early anti-military sentiments present in these types of movements that still remain integral to the Food Not Bombs community today. While the bake sales themselves did not result in much cash, those involved noticed that they facilitated political discussion and the sharing of ideas (McHenry 2012:9).

The first instances of free food distribution occurred by chance and were the result of the performances of street theatre groups such as Clamshell Alliance, which used such opportunity to spread their message. On one occasion, they staged a Depression-era soup line in front of the city hall. Lacking sufficient protestors, they invited individuals from the local soup kitchen to join for a free meal (McHenry 2012:13). This situation allowed for the realization by several of the activists that food is an integral aspect in the building of community, in humanitarian efforts, and in the sharing of ideas. With time, this expanded to include the staging of free meals through the use of surplus and scavenged food which makes up the activities of the organization today. This eventually led to the official establishment of the Food Not Bombs community, whose name aptly sums up the politics behind it. As Zinn states: “This slogan requires no complicated analysis. Those three words ‘say it all.’ They point unerringly to the double challenge: to feed immediately people who are without adequate food, and to replace a system whose priorities are power and profit with one meeting the needs of all human beings” (Zinn in McHenry 2012:31). With its development, it maintained a relatively loose and flexible set of parameters which could cater to different communities with a variety of political interests and remains so today.

Food Not Bombs abides by three main principles:

1. The food is always vegan or vegetarian and free to everyone without restriction: rich or poor, stoned or sober.
2. Food Not Bombs has no formal leaders or headquarters; every group is autonomous and makes decisions using the consensus process.
3. Food Not Bombs is dedicated to nonviolent direct action and works for nonviolent social change.

While regional groups may incorporate other aspects of political and social involvement depending on group consensus, these three principles are what marks them as a general chapter of this organization.

Groups built on the three pillars of the organization are prevalent globally, maintaining the same central ethos while allowing for flexibility depending on context and environment. The official website lists almost five hundred different chapters globally (as well as maintaining that there may be hundreds more groups unaccounted for). Though focusing primarily on the group within a broader context, this paper examines the testimonies of a few individuals involved in Food Not Bombs in varying capacities from two chapters—Barrie and Peterborough. The informants from different groups/chapters offer different perspectives of the organization. Individuals initially aided in organizing their local chapter; one interacts officially with the local chapter through another non-profit organization and protests, while another mostly frequents the meals with no organizational function (though may interact with the group in other ways occasionally). All interviewees subscribed to some aspect of the ideology of the organization which fit with their personal politics, often overlapping in their political stances and goals. By examining these three principles, their functions and their links to these members of the Food Not Bombs community, as well as the greater ethos present, it becomes clearer how this organization can allow for popular and pervasive food activism.

It is helpful to first understand why this type of movement is deemed necessary by members and food activists in general, and to see why their dissatisfaction with the current food system has led them to this type of activism. Many see the current food-based activism as a symbol of the problematic issues of society as a whole. While reasons for participation differ among the members, the same types of problems with the status quo seem to come up repeatedly in some form or another: animal cruelty, the commodification of food items and bodies, sustainability, environmentalism, and a rejection of the greater capitalist system as a whole. These vary in their intensity depending on the movement, but are certainly all present in the community of Food Not Bombs and can be seen in other food activism as well. For example in some punk-identifying communities in the 1990s and early 2000s, as analyzed by Clark, issues stem from an association of “the civilizing process with ... domination of nature and with white, male supremacy” (2008:411). Belasco describes some of the same themes present in counterculture movements of the mid- to late-twentieth century:

As for an underlying ideology, I have detected three major themes that intertwined to give shape and coherence to countercultural food writings and practices. A consumerist theme targeted foods to be avoided, especially chemicalized “plastic” foods. A therapeutic theme had to do with positive concerns for pleasure and identity, particularly a hunger for craftsmanship, leisure and tradition. Concerned with the integration of self, nature, and community, an organic motif addressed serious issues of production and distribution, that is, how to reconcile private consumption with wider planetary needs. [2005:220]

In this, one sees that it is not only the rejection of industrial food and a concern for the environment which drives many types of countercultural movements within food production and consumption, but also a desire for pleasure and the ‘local.’

Industrial food production is not only associated with class warfare and a more general detachment from our food products, but also the destruction of the ecosystem which is necessary to provide a future for the human race (Clark 2008:413). The connection between the attainability of food for all and the industrialization of food production is directly linked, in turn, to issues of environmentalism. The solution is seen as transforming food from a “commodity” to a right of all humans (Clark 2008:414), produced in a way which demands equality and fair treatment of all involved. Food Not Bombs members do not see their sharing as charity, but rather as contributing to rights for all to eat (Heynen 2010:1229). Keith McHenry also describes the way the current food system approaches class and sustainability as inadequate and, actually, the true cause of poverty and starvation: “Over a billion people struggle to have enough to eat because of the decisions of business and government leaders; trade agreements and laws forcing genetically engineered seeds and chemicals on farmers, commodity speculation, and taxpayer subsidies to agribusiness directly increase hunger” (2012:18).

Heynen (2010), in his analysis of the Athens, Georgia collective of Food Not Bombs, argues that the group is based in anarchist ideals of mutual aid (1227). Within a “post-welfare” state, Food Not Bombs provides a more involved alternative to charities, many of whom are indebted to corporations and entangled in the very issues they are attempting to work against (Heynen 2010:1226). He argues that the groups he is working with use public visibility, as well as the concept of food as a “right” to work towards a “decommodified mode of biopolitics” and chip away at the existing system of regulation (Heynen 2010:1227). The groups that Heynen has worked with in Georgia carry out similar practices and convey similar messages as those members I have interviewed in Southern Ontario.

Through this perspective, Food Not Bombs and other like-minded organizations aim to aid those who cannot afford to eat or are stripped from their rights to food, while resisting the very system that enables and nurtures such states of inequality. This process of resistance is done through decommodification of both the food and the bodies consuming it. The capitalist food system can be seen as one which, for profit, necessarily causes “overproduction and waste” (Gross 2012:85), which can be subsequently taken advantage of if desired. Belasco describes the environmental focus of many resistance and counter-culture groups as stemming from an “oppositional void” left through an inadequacy of social change accomplished in other movements (2005:226). In this, not only is the capitalist food system circumvented as much as possible, but the leftovers of large scale food producers are consumed with purpose. However, this production of food maintains a considerable effect not only on communities, but on the environment itself. Factory farming and other industrial food production impact the environment in a detrimental way, but also create a poor use of available land.

United Nations studies report industrial agriculture also uses exorbitant amounts of land, the world’s fresh water supply and oil supply, and is responsible for 19 percent of the world’s greenhouse gas emissions (McHenry 2012:14). While this is largely stemming from meat and meat products, plant-based agriculture is also responsible. More than one Food Not Bombs member interviewed brought up the issue of Monsanto seed patents, as well as the inequality within industrialized crop farming. One member of the Peterborough Food Not Bombs community linked the type of criminalization of seed saving to the criminalizing of the organization itself, where farmers are expected to pay for every seed they

plant and individuals are expected to pay for every meal they consume. These can be seen as not only monopolizing supermarket shelves, but overtly damaging small, local farms (McHenry 2012:15). Taking into account the negative effects of industrial farming and also the transport of food goods worldwide, these movements may be seen as resistance to globalization and the destruction of the environment as well (Gross 2012:79).

The first principle of Food Not Bombs links this rejection of industrial farming to a movement generally associated with vegan/vegetarian eating. This, being part of the first principle of the community, is indexical of much more than the choice of simply supporting animal rights (though this is certainly a factor for many) and addresses many issues including sustainability, environmentalism, inclusion, and health. Rejection of meat consumption is not new in counter-culture food movements and can be seen in many of the commune eating habits of the 60's and 70's (Belasco 2005), as well as punk subcultures (Clark 2008). Clark discusses this in reference to his studies with punk communities in particular, where meat is seen as violent and associated with masculinity, while veganism or vegetarianism is generally seen as feminist (2008:415). Eating animals and animal products are also seen as “collaborative with an unjust social order” and linked to “corporate capitalism, patriarchy and environmental collapse” (Clark 2008:416). Within this viewpoint, veganism alone may be seen as a powerful form of activism (Clark 2008:420). This is not a distinctly punk view of meat consumption, and many of those interviewed in this paper reflect a linkage of veganism or vegetarianism to feminist or environmentalist ideologies.

While this may be seen as individual, and allows for the “freedom to eat meat” if desired, this is often seen as an activity not only affecting the individual making the choice, but the animals involved, the environment, the future of humanity, and the amount of food available for all (Clark 2008:416). Food Not Bombs members offered varying opinions on the importance of vegetarian food within this movement. One Food Not Bombs organizer from Barrie, Ontario, believes that vegetarian/vegan food is important to the movement for several reasons: “having a large selection of animal-free products is safer, as we are scavenging lots of the food, and it sits around for a couple of days before we cook. It also builds inclusiveness, I know I would not attend a dinner event that doesn't cater to veganism and a lot of people I know wouldn't either.” He also expressed the ability to introduce individuals who normally would not try vegan foods to how “awesome” it is. Another member supports this sentiment, describing himself as a “snotty, privileged meat and potatoes socialist” until he tried the best (vegetarian) curry squash soup of his life. Such statements reveal the possibility of a political transformation through taste and the enjoyment of particular kinds of foods.

One woman who participated in consumption of meals at the Food Not Bombs Peterborough chapter did not believe that vegetarianism was essential to the political message of the organization and expressed anticipation for “the moment when it includes all sorts of food sourcing.” This demonstrates the fluidity that this type of organization allows for, and members—though served vegetarian and vegan meals—are not expected to adhere to this in other aspects of their lives in order to maintain membership. While claiming to be an activist in many capacities, she did not prioritize vegetarianism and veganism in the same fashion as many other members. She did however, understand that regulations surrounding animal products and by-products put forth by the government are

stricter than those on less easily perishable food goods, and donated items of meat or dairy would be difficult to “avoid from spoiling.” She also expressed the importance of gaining support within mainstream health organizations; something which is more likely without the use of more heavily regulated meat or dairy foodstuffs.

Another individual from the Peterborough Food Not Bombs community sees vegan/vegetarian food as in line with the explicit politics of the organization, albeit not part of the strict nature of the movement: “Food Not Bombs is certainly concerned about animal cruelty and opposes the factory farm industry. The primary message behind Food Not Bombs is not necessarily animal liberation...while I do believe it supports the animal liberation movement, providing vegan food is not meant to impose a vegetarian agenda onto the community but to provide as much food as possible that everyone can eat.” While there is no meat present, he points to the occasional presence of non-vegan goods provided by some members or chapters and echoes that meat is not practical for this type of food service, nor is it—in his opinion—necessary.

While these views focus on the more practical and inclusive aspects of refusing to serve meat products, there are many members of the community which stress the more overtly political nature of this decision. Keith McHenry, one of the founding activists behind the Food Not Bombs movement, emphasizes the cost of meat consumption environmentally and socially:

More people can be fed from one acre of land on a plant based diet than on a meat based diet. Our society’s current meat-based diet promotes centralized, profit-driven agribusinesses and a dependency on chemical fertilizers, pesticides and genetically modified crops, resulting in the declining nutritional value of the food that is produced, while contributing to the destruction of our environment.
(McHenry 2012:26)

This falls in line with commune cookbook ideology as well in many senses despite many of the recipes within not necessarily being vegetarian or vegan (Hartman 2003:34). In addition to vegan or vegetarian food, the first principle also indicates that the food should be “free to everyone without restriction.” It is difficult to separate this egalitarian strategy from the vegetarian ideology, and both can be seen as stemming from a dissatisfaction with the very same social and corporate systems.

Three Food Not Bombs members identified as anarchists (one more specifically as an anarcho-pacifist), an ideology which falls in line with this type of horizontal, consensual way of operating and participating in communities. One organizing member even distributed and discussed anarchist literature at meals directly, though certainly not every individual participating adheres to line with this ideology. Nonetheless it is simple to see the links between the two, and it is stressed by many that this is not a charity (McHenry 2012:18) but rather a “revolutionary” way of sharing and consuming food. In fact, the majority of members described periods where they are able to obtain food in other ways, but participated to help reinforce the message of community and resistance.

This addresses the perceived inadequacies in the current food system surrounding fair access and power relations. Clark discusses these sentiments as pervasive in punk cuisine, seeing corporate food producers as involved in “resource allocation, (where) food tends to

recapitulate power relations. Around the globe, unequal allocations of food according to a patriarchal system are common” (2008:415). These beliefs about the current food system in the West are often mirrored in opinions of members of other food movements. Some see the “Age of Cheap Oil,” where status, affluence, and wealth are demonstrated through the consumption of oil being tied to the consumption of global, “plastic” foods (Hopkins 2009:3). In this, the food created through these processes was not only often unattainable to those of lower classes, but also deliberately a marker of wealth and the gap between the rich and the poor.

One Food Not Bombs member from Peterborough listed her rejection of a “heavily subsidized fossil fuel food system” as the first reason she participated. In this light, the move toward convenient, packaged, industrialized food may be seen as one linked to not only a lack of sustainability, but class and socio-economic status as well; though this is shifting with the rise of “elite” organic and environmentally friendly foods (Wilson 2004). This popularity of organic and “local” foods with upper classes is taken advantage of by the same type of industrial food companies which are the focus of criticism, exploiting the perceived heterogeneous food choices through clever marketing (Wilson 2004:254). This makes even these foods outside of the price range of lower classes, which is rejected by certain counter-culture movements who make a point to “take back” these types of food through theft (Clark 2008:415).

While some may see this as an awareness of the responsibility of the consumer in regard to organic food versus industrial food, it is often an uninformed awareness. Some members expressed pleasure in sharing ideologies with “mainstream” individuals who came to try the food, and help them better inform their food choices. The presence of middle- and even upper-class individuals at meals became more common during the 2007 recession in the United States (McHenry 2012:13). The state persecution of activist groups (as mentioned below), and Food Not Bombs in particular, may be seen as reinforcement of these socioeconomic inequalities as well as, in some cases outright class warfare. With a refusal to allow free distribution of food to those who need it, many are left with no choice but to turn to the fetishized food of corporations, or starve (Clark 2008:420).

One Food Not Bombs member in Barrie said he initially expressed concern that the meals were not “political enough,” though with time realized that “the act of giving away food, the creation of an egalitarian space in the community, and the attention drawn to waste by serving food that would otherwise be discarded (and is also ‘veggie’) are highly political in and of themselves.” This more political view of the aspect of vegetarianism and egalitarianism within the movement is echoed in other members’ beliefs. Another Food Not Bombs organizer from Barrie, Ontario says that this fits in with the general non-violent ideology of Food Not Bombs. “[We’re] non-violent, and that has always explicitly included violence against animals and the environment.” One individual saw it as a “refusal to support the conversion of animals into food products and a reimagining of the relationship between animals and human beings.”

Vegetarianism, as the preferred diet of Food Not Bombs, is reinforced through the humanitarian goal of the organizations and also, the persisting ideologies against animal and environmental harm. Vegetarianism, as the preferred diet of Food Not Bombs, is reinforced through the humanitarian goal of the organization, as well as persisting ideologies against animals and environmental harm. One organizer emphasized the cost that meat

consumption inflicts on the environment and society in general: “As far as I’m concerned, the only future is one where we eat very little meat or none at all, because otherwise our planet’s insane meat consumption is going to precipitate such catastrophic environmental change that it’ll kill us all.” This echoes sentiments of individual and group accountability, and the responsibility expressed by many members of actively resisting unfair allocation of resources tied to animals used as food products.

In regards to the importance of veganism as a greater form of social protest, both within and without Food Not Bombs itself, one Peterborough participant likened this form of eating to the “personal political” (Hartman 2003:30). “Veganism ... gets people into the habit of making politically charged choices every single day. For many people, becoming vegetarian/vegan is the first major political decision made.” He expressed that it is a choice so simple even children can understand it: that the consumption of meat is a violation of a perceived equality between humans and animals. He also claimed that it was a gateway into more pervasive political ideologies and resistances, as it quickly becomes clear that it is connected to “a web of other forms of oppression.” Hence, vegetarianism or veganism becomes a way to engage with the community and a platform on which to appeal to simple food sustainability.

By adhering to veganism or vegetarianism politically one often uncovers greater systems of injustice that affect the food we eat, as well as the broader social environment. While Food Not Bombs may not attempt to impose veganism or vegetarianism overtly, these practices open the discussion and contemplation of these issues. In this view, veganism can be seen as something which cannot be detached from the political. As one vegan Food Not Bombs organizer from Barrie stated “I have met health vegans and apolitical vegans and they just drive me crazy!” This sentiment demonstrates the underlying theories present in many individuals belief that they hold a personal responsibility to be conscious and aware of the food choices they make. In fact, all members discuss the heightened awareness which comes out of the community, as well as the realization of the intricacies behind issues in food structures.

Lisa Heldke discusses these greater webs of ethical food consumption in *An Alternative Ontology: Beyond Meataphysics*. She examines the suffering present in all eating, not simply meat-eating—the consumption of industrial food perpetuates the injustices present in the process of its production that affect both the animals and the factory workers. (2012:6). Even with the boycott of commercial foods based on the suffering of animals, the environment, and humans “we do not cease to consume the symbolic just because we cease to consume the literal” (Heldke 2012:7). In a stark contrast to the practices of Food Not Bombs, who also attempt to avoid these types of suffering, Heldke comes to the realization that this type of “cruelty-free” garden diet would leave the individual incredibly isolated (2012:8) without the kind of community so many members attested to feeling when participating in food movements.

One organizer from Barrie expressed similar problems with a “cruelty-free” consumption of food, stating that “capitalism is a very flexible system that moves to co-opt and contain resistance, so I’m wary of arguments that there are ethical types of consumption.” Despite this, he maintained that there are “consciousness raising” aspects of the choice to serve vegan food, regardless of its ability to supply a totally ethical food option. This is often approached through “expanding the non-capitalist aspects” of food production and

consumption, which are already in place (Gross 2012:71), and include a variety of ways counter culture groups work around the industrial food system. This brings to mind a type of food consumption which Heldke does not explore in her search for a way around the food systems based on suffering, and one which is an integral part of Food Not Bombs' strategy: food recycling, collecting, and recovery. The success of this movement is greatly impacted by the decision to serve food which has been donated, collected locally, or as one organizer in Barrie explained the process as "scavenging and recycling." This can be linked to other, similar food ethos such as dumpster diving, gleaning, back-to-the-landers (small scale agriculturists), and freeganism (those who attempt to avoid the participation in food commodity exchange or purpose). While it may be argued that in some cases these practices may be linked to the commercial food industry in that they use the refuse of such a system, the principles which compose them are based in cooperation and membership to this system through refusal of direct financial support (or in fact purchasing food at all).

McHenry attests to this as part of the success of Food Not Bombs from its beginning while it was still targeted at specifically needy aspects of the community (2012:99). "We picked up muffins and bread at bakeries, produce and tofu at natural food stores, and surplus stock from the food co-ops. Each weekday, within hours of collecting the food, we delivered it to battered women's shelters, alcoholic rehabilitation centers, immigrant support centers" (McHenry 2012:99). Not only does the organization offer food that attempts to eliminate animal cruelty, but through food which is donated or found without contributing to the capitalist system it further communicates its politics and goals. This not only allows for a sustainable flow of food without the need for exorbitant funding, it refuses the need to take part in the market economy and support the systems which often lead to hunger, poverty, and the suffering which Heldke addresses.

Though practically this gives a reason to why animal products are not appropriate for Food Not Bombs meals (as they spoil quickly), it also demonstrates the link that is undeniably present between different types of food activism and the permeating nature of industrial food systems. One member describes the practices of food scavenging and recycling as demonstrating a deep-seated ideology within the community—"healthy, vegan food which has been gathered from ethical sources such as local farmers, donations, gleaning, and dumpster diving represent us as communicating a political message of food sovereignty." While dumpster diving might at times use foods which are produced globally, the majority of the food is found from local sources (due to necessity, but reflecting an emphasis in counter-culture food movements for homegrown goods). Another member states that one of the reasons she visits Food Not Bombs is that they are "smart about playing the cards of the system—getting the food that otherwise would be thrown away and using it for the benefit for all. It is a true and smart way of utilizing all the energy that has been already put into making food and reducing waste."

This type of food recycling can again be seen in many types of resistance movements, where not only local and individual food sourcing but also dumpster diving (or even theft from corporate establishments) may be seen as the "de-commodification" of food (Clark 2008:413). The scavenged food, which was previously part of the industrial food system, is then "transformed" from its "civilized and fetishized" state (Clark 2008:416) to one that represents the rebellion of eating alternatively. One Peterborough Food Not Bombs

member saw food in capitalist society as “one of the most heavily marketed products, a major pillar of consumer culture mainly because everyone needs it.” Another described being drawn to supporting the community because of its “use of resources from the system to better the community.” Types of recycling practices may be seen as functioning to “resist the harm that is done to the earth and human health in the process of producing commodity food and work against the production of waste by buying bulk rather than packaged food, gathering their own food, and rescuing items” (Gross 2012:71).

These types of practices are also sometimes viewed as preparing individuals for the future. With an industrial food production, which is not sustainable long-term, many see a return to hunting, gathering, farming, and individual food production as “envisioning a post-capitalist food system” (Gross 2012:74). McHenry also describes Food Not Bombs as freeing people from “corporate domination” and showing skills needed to collect, share, and produce food sustainably (2012:12). He certainly adheres to this belief in organizing of Food Not Bombs, linking the group to a history of these practices as well as to historical and pre-historical hunter-gatherer groups (2012:18). Working within a system that he believes perpetuates poverty and hunger through the mass-production of food, Food Not Bombs goes a step further in its level of organization and consistency, making it, as McHenry states, “revolutionary” (2012:19).

One organizer from Barrie believes that this is only part of the political resistance present in Food Not Bombs, believing that, “counter-culture food practices are a form of social resistance, whether its dumpster diving or the community getting together to feed itself. It shows that we do not need to rely on the government if we have a strong, willing community—that’s why we get arrested.” This brings up another aspect of the Food Not Bombs community which is implicit in the second pillar of the organization, that of social resistance and protest in the fact of the criminalization of food sharing. The importance of a lack of any formal leaders within the organization, as well as the method of consensus for decision making is linked to the overall egalitarian efforts of the movement. McHenry describes this lack of centralized governance within the group as denying the opportunity for government or media to persecute a centralized leader in order to hurt the larger community—ensuring the endurance of the group regardless of which members are present (2012:13). It also allows for more flexibility in the face of police or state action against the organization, as the community is still intact regardless of which members are removed.

The community certainly has reasons to fear this type of legal action, with arrests and state interference being common since its foundation. Laws, which were explained officially through ideas of food safety or space usage, were often passed against the distribution of food. This reinforces Clark’s ideas surrounding mainstream food culture and capitalism and their obsessions with “cleanliness, whiteness and sterility” (2008:416). Food Not Bombs, unlike the community of punks Clark was studying, does not overtly attempt to subvert this through ‘rotten’ and unclean food practices; though they certainly do not meet the industry standards set for restaurants and other food-serving establishments. Nonetheless, this seems to be secondary to the real reason such extensive police involvement has occurred regularly, and many accounts by members explain it as a fear of the revolutionary messages the organization allows to circulate. This is perhaps confirmed in one interview with a San Francisco Police Captain as early as the mid-nineties, in which

he states that “they [Food Not Bombs] don’t want to feed the hungry, they just want to make an anarchist type statement and we aren’t going to allow it.” (McHenry 2012:17)

Food Not Bombs certainly supports many protest movements, sit-ins, refugee camps, disaster relief funds, and generally any non-violent resistance which falls in line with their ideology of human rights and anti-war sentiments (McHenry 2012:30). They do so through making available free food to protestors or refugees, acting on the belief that all have a right to free food regardless of their social status. This is represented by the third central pillar of Food Not Bombs which advises on nonviolent direct action. The majority of the members from Peterborough and Barrie described membership in other types of political movements, ranging from community-run outreach and aid programs, to the Occupy movements in various centers, and typically adhered to the idea of supporting social change in other aspects of their lives as well. Many encountered Food Not Bombs as a direct result of their presence in these types of organizations where police presence is often common.

The police interventions in the case of Food Not Bombs often result in the seizing of food from people’s hands directly, as well as whole meals brought to share. It may also involve the arrest of volunteers if they do not agree to stop serving meals. Often arrests are countered with arguments concerning the right to free expression and organization, with mixed results (McHenry 2012:13). Some members described this resistance to arrest as bolstering to the organization and legitimizing the cause, with the goal of demonstrating how ludicrous it is to arrest people for “feeding the hungry for free.” One member in Peterborough indicated the recent crack-down on some chapters in the form of criminal punishments for refusing to cease their meals, and explains it by stating that “the system expects people to pay for their food and sees organized public food sharing as a barrier to profit.” This may also be viewed as one small characteristic of the greater problematic system “arresting volunteers for sharing vegetarian meals with the hungry was a graphic example of the misguided policies of corporate and political leaders in the United States” (McHenry 2012:21). There are guides provided by organizing members on how to deal with attempts by police to seize food goods.

Despite this, some local police forces have become more accepting as a result of constant interaction with Food Not Bombs, as is the case with San Francisco police force which was previously very active in attempts to deconstruct their Food Not Bombs community:

After years of arrests and beatings for sharing food in San Francisco, the police became moved to noncooperation with their superiors. Our respect for them as people made a huge impression. Efforts to describe our volunteers as terrorists failed. As the economic, environmental and political crisis grows increasingly extreme, it will be more important than ever to maintain our dignity and to influence the police and military to rebel against their superiors.” [McHenry 2012: 67]

Heynen’s experiences in Athens also involve limited police interference, though he sees this as atypical (2010:1228). This demonstrates the type of gradual but eventual acceptance that many Food Not Bombs members expressed hope for: to bring this type of food consumption from a “fringy” status outside of mainstream society to a more regularly accepted solution getting around the industrial food system.

This level of acceptance leads to the strengthening of the community of Food Not Bombs, an aspect which many members deemed as a significant factor in joining the movement which gradually encouraged political discussion, exchange of ideas, and participation in other, similar types of events. When examining such organizations it becomes very clear that the isolation which Heldke speaks of in her text on ethical and individual gardening is absent. Instead, there is a shared sense of camaraderie among the members which strengthens and legitimizes the movement. In other counter-culture movements the same sense of community seems to be stressed an important movement for reimagining how “we” eat. This ranges from Clark’s punk culture, where food “helped shape community, symbolize values and foster group solidarity,” as well as a sense of empathy and equality with those less fortunate (2008:420), to “freegans” (scavenger/gatherers) and small scale-farmers who emphasize community with like-minded individuals as integral to maintaining their lifestyle (Gross 2012:76). These communities are not mutually exclusive, and often intersect as a result of similar ideologies.

This can be linked to the importance of not only eating but of food’s role in the human desire for community, belonging and socialization. As Gross argues in relation to freegans, “social networks are important to all people, and building social networks usually involves the sharing of food” (2012:77). It is clear in the insistence of Food Not Bombs movement that food is a right and not a privilege, and should be available to all communities and individuals (both members and non-members) no matter their physical, mental, or economic state or status. The fact that any individual, whether they are in law enforcement, homeless, maintain an opposing ideology, or are simply unknown to the volunteers, is still welcomed indicated the importance that is given to the practice of spreading the message and involving local individuals.

Every Food Not Bombs participant or organizer interviewed, described the strong link between eating and community within the movement. One organizer in Barrie stated the importance of these types of groups, and that “nothing brings people together like food does. Building this sense of community is the most important thing to me and it is a great way to open people’s eyes and to start thinking more critically about what they think and buy.” A sense of community therefore, is not only created by food, but also a sense of enjoyment and the sharing of ideologies. It is clear how integral shared eating is to many political movements: whether food is the main focus of the activism or is purely one of the issues addressed.

Another organizer from the Barrie chapter described communal eating as a favourite activity in other protest groups such as the Occupy movement, and saw the need for this to be reinforced when he relocated to Barrie where social issues were prevalent due to “austerity and industrial decay.” Eating together in a socially conscious way allowed for “community building based on food security.” They expressed moving past the capacity of food banks by creating an “inclusive and positive space to bond, to build community and sharing around food.” Again, others adhered to this sense of communal eating and sharing, stating that even when they were making enough money to afford their own food, spending time with the community and friends was important to them. They saw the meals as “a community hub, a gathering space where people come to be together and talk to one another in a politically empowered space.”

Food Not Bombs is also involved with other community based projects, such as Homes Not Jails, Food Not Lawns (aiding with community gardens), Really Really Free Markets, and Free Radio. These organizations help reinforce the types of anti-capitalist and humanitarian sentiments present in the organization as a whole, and allow for the expansion of the ideology beyond food (McHenry 2012:15). Despite this, the idea remains the same, with a desire to allow for a more sovereign decision making process within communities, a link to the local and a self-sustaining, anti-commodity way of living. Food Not Bombs can be approached as a way of changing people's behaviour and thinking through greater dependence on local and self-sustainable food sources (2009:5).

Many members described enjoying participation in Food Not Bombs in particular, and the movement as a whole, because it constituted something "real" (or effective), while still performing political ideologies. One member who encountered similar issues academically, expressed pleasure from "active activism" which was "palpable and real," not present in academic work. Many enjoyed that it was about the everyday, the real, and the observable ways in which food protests can make a difference. Another member described similar sentiments, saying "we can't identify our struggles theoretically, but rather by listening to the community and hearing about its concerns," and that communities must struggle together as well as eat together. The identifying anarchist members interviewed especially emphasized the importance of community in political movements they aligned with, not only Food Not Bombs. In addition, they demonstrated the reciprocal nature between politics and food, with one member pointing to Napoleon's idea that "an army marches on its stomach," and stating that this was also true of cultural revolutions.

This seems to add an aspect to Heldke's analysis of "meataphysics" and the possibility of eating ethically. While she supposes that a more ethical diet is necessarily linked to a lonely food existence, the community of Food Not Bombs and its large and vibrant membership, would suggest otherwise. While they may not be eating in a totally "cruelty-free" manner which Heldke suggests (2012), they are certainly working toward it and achieving a reasonable solution to a variety of issues which are fundamental to food activism. Through egalitarianism, anti-animal cruelty sentiments, attempts at scavenging and sustainable behaviour, Food Not Bombs attempts to drastically change the way food is consumed and produced, not only for "fringy" counterculture communities, but rather for the greater society. The organization leaves room for autonomy as well as multiplicity of voices, thereby allowing for the incorporation of many different political goals for the sake of a stronger community. Though they are working toward rethinking food, as one member concludes: "Food Not Bombs is good but not sufficient, it should be a platform from which to launch other anti-capitalist projects and develop revolutionary consciousness." As seen in many activist movements mentioned, food certainly seems an appropriate place to start this revolution.

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Engaging sex, sexuality, and gender in ethnography

Don Kulick. *Travesti: Sex, Gender, and Culture Among Brazilian Transgendered Prostitutes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 2009[1998]. 277 pages.

David A.B. Murray. *Flaming Souls: Homosexuality, Homophobia, and Social Change in Barbados*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. 2012. 160 pages.

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This review meditates on the various themes of sex, gender, and sexuality in the anthropological works of Maurice Godelier, Don Kulick, and David Murray. These brief vignettes consider each scholar individually and attempt to apply a critical anthropological analysis, first by unpacking their respective arguments and then determining their theoretical relevance within the discipline of anthropology.

The first of three sections begins with Godelier's (1981) quote regarding the historically "haunted" impasse of sex-negative (Rubin 1999) sexualities within the Western context; following the quote, Kulick's thoughts on the role of third genders/sexes among Brazilian *travestis* is reviewed from *Travesti: Sex, Gender and Culture among Brazilian Transgendered Prostitutes* (2009); lastly, David Murray's considerations of popular feedback media in Barbados, and its implications for stigmatized homosexuals, is assessed from his ethnography *Flaming Souls: Homosexuality, Homophobia, and Social Change in Barbados* (2012).

Using these examples I hope to illustrate how contemporary academics are engaging ethnography and anthropological methodologies within the realm of sex, sexuality, and gender. Each author presents a unique perspective on these themes, both engaging and personalizing their experiences within the discourse of sexuality. These rich data sets serve not only to gain an understanding of cross-cultural sexual performance, but can also, through ethnography, wield social scientists with the relevant tools to address future anthropological issues.

Maurice Godelier: "It is not sexuality which haunts society but society which haunts the body's sexuality" (The Origins of Male Domination, 1981)

What does it mean to discuss one's body as a repressed thing? The intimacy one has with their body is so definitively tied to identity and, by extension, one's well-being, so that to inhibit one's body, whether by force or coercion, implicates an act of repression. This is the reality of an incalculable number of individuals throughout history who, from antiquity to modernity, represent the gender-liminal / 'intermediate' gender (Besnier 1994), 'diseased' bodied, and 'sexually deviant' victims of their respective epoch in time (Weston 2011).

But, as we will see in this review, this tense relationship between the body and the social world does not have to be—precisely because it has not always been. This brief

meditation will contextualize the “haunted” sexual body as it relates to society, first through a historical reflection on the nature of its fluidity, then by comparing ethnographic examples of repression, and also an analytical unpacking of why these phenomena persist. By using the term “haunted,” Godelier means to describe an act of transgression. When he uses it in the quote “it is not sexuality which haunts society but society which haunts sexuality,” we must understand the transgression not as an infraction on the part of the sexual individual—though he often is the scapegoat—but as an act of hubris and power by the society which deems the individual’s sexuality as deviant. With that in mind, when we begin to discuss the body as a repressed sexual thing we must first understand the construction of its taxonomical gender/sexual hierarchies.

A common misconception in Western belief systems is the stasis of sexual identities. As Harding puts it, “The distinction most commonly made is between ‘essentialist’ and ‘constructionist’ approaches” (1998:6) substantiating a man-made regulation of what ‘the sexual’ comprises. The Western love-affair with dualism is extensively historically rooted: we have Descartes’ substance and mind opposition, Christianity’s moral good versus evil, Adam and Eve, the homosexual and the heterosexual. Although these binary systems are useful, they neglect certain grey areas between the extremes that beg the question: is duality always the way we should be thinking about these types of things?

Fausto-Sterling suggests the developmental systems theory as a method to understand sexuality/gender as a continuum rather than unchanging opposites vying for control of the body (2004:25). For example, a ‘wild child’ raised without human conditioning has the innate mechanics and drive for sex, but without socialization she knows not how to direct or understand her brooding desires. Much like the Möbius strip, the ribbon presents two alternating sides; a twisting duet seemingly born from nature (2004:24). In reality we are being deceived—the same side is running continuously, negating the need for a duality. The analogy stresses the somatic continuity of the body which exhibits variation, though nature presents it as an optical illusion. Short of advocating for a strict monistic approach, these ideas reveal avenues from which to platform new ideas in lieu of revisited dead-ends in the nature–nurture conversation.

When we examine sexuality deeper in the Western tradition, we likewise find ourselves at odds with inconsistency. Sexual orientation as a defining concept of personal identity did not exist in Classical Antiquity. The act of same-sex relationship was not the basis of one’s *identity*, rather, it was a behaviour based around class and age which was divorced from the need for an additional constructions of identity and connotation (Roberts 2007).

Classical Greece however was not an egalitarian paradise free from gender and sexual ‘hauntings’, especially in regards to females and femininity. Men and boys who were “penetrated” were assumed to exhibit inherent feminine characteristics of passivity (Roberts 2007). Parallels can be drawn to the contemporary *travesti* of Brazil, in which young *viado* boys assume the receiving role in same-sex encounters, and by extension, assume feminine characteristics attributed to traditional constructs of what a woman is (Kulick 2009). For women, ‘hauntings’ can be traced as far back to Greek theorists Hippocrates and Galen, both whom prescribed the antidote of marriage a nymphomaniac-like condition called *furor uterinus* (Groneman 1995:224).

The Victorian era, guided by the British puritanical bourgeois’ sexual hegemony, marked a shift towards ‘proper’ utilitarian sexuality (Foucault 1978). Though sexuality

was grounded in certain norms before the seventeenth century, the marketplace for public conversation was now a transgressive act unfit for ‘civilized life.’ This “speaker’s benefit” (1978:6) regulated language and exerted repressive power on non-compliant individuals. Because language becomes synonymous with knowledge, the prohibition of pleasure-knowledge ultimately becomes entangled in the polymorphous techniques of power within the broader discourse of sexuality (1978:11).

Women in the Victorian era were especially susceptible to repression because of their perceived closeness to nature, which suggested a threat to civilization: “Women were more easily overwhelmed by the power of their sexual passion because they were closer to nature ... potential for explosive sexuality jeopardized the self-discipline and control of desire that the Victorian middle class asserted” (Groneman 1995:233). Naturalization of sexualities and genders found a comfortable place within the framework of the scientific method, where sexologists could demarcate distinctive physiological responses with a degree of “objectivity” (Harding 1998:8). This “flora and fauna” approach became conflated by searching for the “the big picture,” whereby sexual form outside of Western sexual hegemony was ‘savage-like’ and lagging behind in the social Darwinist unilinear social-evolutionary model (Harding 1998:15).

Returning to Godelier’s quote, we can see how individual bodies have been “haunted” by a range of social establishments throughout space and time. The perceived threat of individual bodies on society are often more complex than they seem; they are frequently stand-ins for hidden inequalities of race, class, ideology, nationalism, and colonialism—masquerading as sin or morally ambiguous. These “spectral ghosts” or “bogeymen” (Murray 2012) represent heretofore marginalized groups, and as such, are easy targets to vilify in order for vilifiers to make sense of their changing world. This first text outlines the issues of misrepresentation of marginalized groups while ignoring systemic undercurrents which makeup that representation. As such, Godelier’s ideas on the “haunted” individual, whereby sexual minorities must linger in the shadows of a foregrounded sexual hegemony, is a fitting set-up for both Kulick and Murray’s ethnographies—both of which address the issues and implications of sexual and gendered normalization.

Don Kulick: Exploring third gender/sex in *Travesti: Sex, Gender, and Culture among Brazilian Transgendered Prostitutes*

The liminality of gender shifts the foundations of our biological and social understandings of the world. How do we understand ideas of homosexuality and third sex/genders when our science stresses strict needs for Darwinian natural selection, reproductive fitness, and speciation? Additionally, the social Western world acknowledges the natural binary truism of men and women dating back to our most dated traditional canon.

The easy answer may be to maintain our taxonomical distinctions, labeling anything outside our agreed upon pre-sets as unnatural, deviant, or diseased. Aside from being incredibly cruel and inhumane, this approach is not consistent with the natural world outside of human culture. In a TEDx event, Joan Roughgarden (2011) describes the great variety of sexuality in the animal kingdom. Commonsense, according to Roughgarden, would dictate that sexual liminality is the exception not the rule. As she suggests however, there are over 300 species that have been officially documented in primary works noting this phenomena. For example one in three species existing along the coral reefs either

exhibit both sexes or change sexes at some point in their life. Wrasse fish exchange anatomic sexes, and the reversal of sex roles, whereupon the egg is carried by the male instead of the female, is exhibited in sea horses, pipefish, and birds. Furthermore homosexual acts are ubiquitously apparent in the animal kingdom, especially among our closest ape cousins.

Among human-beings, we can challenge the biological imperative by posing the question, why do people have sex? A study of college students listed 237 reasons for sex which included biological reproduction, but also pleasure, money, love, spiritual transcendence, novelty, exercise, curiosity, duty, social status, self-esteem, attraction, and revenge (Miller 2012). Given our understanding of sexual liminality we can then ask the question: Why have anthropologists developed the term third sex/gender?

Third sex/gender terms give a framework from which to understand gender difference which exists beyond the traditional gender binary. In places where third sex/gender occurs, the term acknowledges them on an institutional level rather than being a fringe or unincorporated subcultural group. These groups do not necessitate biological categorization, although depending on the specific group, they can. The fluidity and capaciousness of this definition is meant to provide a broad and inclusive identifier for anthropologists to utilize when speaking about genders outside of common male and female dualities. Stephen O. Murray (1994) has critiqued this categorization suggesting that third gender/sex still works within the paradigm of Western binarism, as seeking a “third” option implies a hybrid or portion of the traditional sexes. Though Murray’s claim is valid, perhaps the most accurate way to describe these groups for social scientists is by allowing them to inscribe themselves, utilizing the group name they use.

Brazilian *travestis* are a group which initially seem representative of this third gender classification. From an early age many ‘to-be’ *travesti* boys are keen on embodying femininity to its fullest, dreaming of becoming ‘true’ *travestis* (*travesti mesmo*) through a transformation consisting of *aplicação de silicone* (silicone application) and hormone treatment (Kulick 2009). The reservations of applying the third gender label arises when Kulick remarks: “What is evident in *travesti* talk about transsexuals is their firm conviction that one can never change sex. If you are born with a tendency to have a penis . . . then you are a man, and, as Banana says, you will die a man” (2009:87). In Western gender hegemony this may be an idea that seems frankly hypocritical; *travestis* spend their lives transforming their bodies into feminized creations and yet do not consider themselves as, or want to become women, even berating transsexuals who have had operations to remove their genitalia (2009:86).

Reading Kulick’s ethnographic excerpt, one may understand the *transvesti*’s reasoning by thinking of femininity differently. Recognizing femininity as something which may exist independently in both males and females, the reasoning becomes clear. Both binary genders may tap into this characteristic behaviour, often females more so, but it is not exclusive to the realm of women. In this framework men who are born anatomically male will always remain men, but they may negotiate and accumulate their feminine essence to any degree they desire.

The eunuchs represent another group sometimes categorized as third gender. The film *Harsh Beauty* (2005), which documents the lives of several eunuchs living in Indian society, shows how they balance their threshold existence between acceptance and undesirable

among their fellow Indians. Their final passage requires a ritual castration to complete their transformation, along with the less intense day-to-day performances of traditional female gender-roles, many working as prostitutes to make daily ends. Where we may be correct in categorizing the eunuchs as a third gender categorization—where the *travesti* differed—is by their own endorsement of gender autonomy. As one eunuch states in the film: some men like women, some men like other men, and some men like us.

Gender liminality and third gender labels are evolving ideas which do not exist in a vacuum. Because we see such a wide variation of identity and sexual practices cross-culturally—from the *travesti* and eunuch discussed here, to Bajan queens (Murray 2012), to the *fa'afafine* of Samoa—one must be aware of the social constructions which make up our understandings of gender normativity. To understand these concepts we may one day choose to dispose of our inclination of duality, choosing instead to grasp gender / sexuality in more reflexive terms which addresses sexuality in terms of continuum and not closed systems.

David Murray: Exploring the opinions of popular feedback media in *Flaming Souls: Homosexuality, Homophobia, and Social Change in Barbados*

The negative opinions of homosexuality in Barbadian feedback media constitute a complex array of intersections which collectively formulate a narrative of homophobia (Murray 2012). Though these homophobic belief systems are publicly broadcasted on popular media channels throughout Barbados, Murray notes how it is critical to avoid a reaction which would paint every Bajan with the same brush. Calling an entire nation homophobic is not only a simplification of the facts but has deep-seated implications, surfacing legacies of colonialism and jeopardizing its citizens to value judgements when travelling abroad.

The following will be an overview of what form this feedback media takes, what is being said and who is saying it, and how media shapes the Barbadian socio-political landscape. With an understanding of what is going on we can then analyze the cached forces which provide the foundation for why homophobia exists. By noting the organized public meetings, the discourse of sexual rights, and ethnographic documentation of gays and queens, Murray (2012) weaves the social tapestry of homosexuality of Barbados into a concise narrative.

Homophobia is rarely just about homosexuality. Its precepts represent a constructed apparition of masculinity, gender, political powers and balance, race, and other intersections, which, when understood, turns the spectral mediascape into an understandable concept. “Wrong, immoral, dangerous, corrupt, perverted, and sin” are the common terminology heard in the Bajan media when speaking of same-sex marriage (2012:17). Barbadians who express their opinions on popular feedback generally use a variation of one or more of these themes to justify their feelings: the nation’s law which are subjectively read to include homosexual discrimination, Christian morality, nation morality compared to other nations, local homosexuality created by global actors (spurred by consumerism), and the ‘diseased’ body which hosts HIV / AIDS (2012:21).

Murray suggests that these surges of intolerance stem not from a simple hatred for LGBT people, but as structural inequity which provokes people to intolerance. As an economy transitioning to a ‘feminine’ service-based industry, those looking to a romanticized

past adopt a sort of “nationalist nostalgia myth” which posits the romanced past as a time of prosperity and peace and mind (2012:24). The spectral ‘new pariah’ of the millennium represents a fabricated figure—an unseen and unobservable scapegoat—who is the cause for all that is bad in contemporary Barbados. This belief in an unreal figure negates the desire to understand any outside forces which carry baggage from Barbados’ colonial past, causing knee-jerk reactions when global forces like the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* or the *International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights* challenge the sovereignty of this independent state when suggestions of human right principals are made in local contexts (2012:42-3).

Though moving forward means challenging the current human rights, legislation, and culture of Barbados, caution must be exercised when describing existent homophobia. Blanketing entire societies as ‘homophobic’ has implications which reignite colonial legacies, where ‘civilized west versus the rest’ attitudes create hierarchies based on misattributed Darwinian principals. Additionally, by identifying nations as homophobic on the world stage, we implicate its citizens, causing problems when immigrants wish to enter countries but are turned away due to incorrigible values that are not compatible with the accepting nation’s.

As Murray suggests, if negative opinions on homosexuality are to change an internal dialogue must occur (2012:47). This dialogue must develop from within the culture, not by transnational force, and must be read within the vernacular of existing cultural norms.

Conclusion

The three authors, though addressing culturally divergent practices and beliefs, collectively meditate on a common theme: how sexuality and gender can become convoluted when the individual interacts with the social world. The usefulness of anthropological insight with its insistence on participant-observation, history with the sexualities, and its general self-reflexive manner, positions anthropology in a unique way to address sexual discourse.

The anthropologists selected for this review employ those anthropological techniques to contemplate their specific research topics, but the result often speaks to larger currents in sexual anthropology. Though Godelier speaks of the “haunted” individual, the idea of the transgressive deviant “pariahs” in Murray’s ethnography meets at the threshold of common experience. Likewise, Kulick’s *travestis* meet at this threshold, showing how both their diversities and commonalities of sexual experiences traverse both time and space. Thinking about how these ethnographies fit into the matrix of sexual studies, and their ability to transform our knowledge about ourselves, allows us to contextualize each narrative into greater understandings of what it means to be a gendered, sexed, and sexual body in the social world.

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Skillful avoidance

Megan Warin. *Abject Relations: Everyday Worlds of Anorexia*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. 2010. 229 pages.

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Biomedical institutional perspectives on patients' experiences with eating disorders coalesce within metanarratives of objectivity and deviance, thus deepening the chasm between established 'norms' and the patients' own perceived "abject relations" (Warin 2010) with their bodies and food. Simultaneous repulsion and desire fuel an exploration of these abject relations with food as a life-sustaining contaminant, an obsession with purity through emptiness, and dissociating one's identity from the "disgusting" body (Warin 2010:128-151). Warin distances this ethnography from the "carnavalesque image" of anorexia (Warin 2010:9) which dominates the mass media by contextualizing the participants' lived experiences within constructed illness narratives. Instead of stripping the sufferer's agency by depicting the female body fracturing under societal pressures to maintain bodily control, Warin highlights the role of agency in the complex relationship of repulsion and desire within anorexia's hierarchical structure (Warin 2010:71-74). Warin acknowledges her own nursing background, but endeavors to de-medicalize the public perception of the female body by examining the abusive relationship between her informants (primarily from the Lane Cove residential treatment facility) and "Ana"—or their personification of anorexia. This book review will discuss the efficacy of Warin's innovative ethnographic approach to anorexia, focusing on the use of the "individual body" paradigm (Lock and Scheper-Hughes 1987), ambiguity of concepts regarding anorexia, the ethnographer's position, and the exclusion of particular discursive sociopolitical frameworks.

The individual illness experience

Warin ventures beyond "psychiatric pathology" into the contradictory realm of lived experience in order to extinguish the "psychiatric ownership of anorexia" (Warin 2010:46) by (re-)introducing agency into the conceptualization of anorexia. She does so by showing how participants, like Emily and Josie, choose to purge to obtain an elusive sense of 'purity' through the expulsion of literal and symbolic waste. It is in this way that Emily seeks temporary relief from the stresses of low self-esteem by purging to feel pleasantly "empty" (Warin 2010:133), as opposed to merely succumbing to a pathological desire to be thin (Bordo 1993; Greenhalgh 2012). Warin's emic perspective, obtained through multi-sited interviews and participant-observation at Lane Cove, affords the disciplines which study and treat anorexia (namely, psychiatry, biomedicine, and medical anthropology) a deeper understanding of the patient's motives and the role of individual agency in an abusive intimate relationship with "Ana" (Warin 2010). Gaining access to participants in the field required some flexible maneuvering on the part of the anthropologist through the biomedical system's gatekeeping (Warin 2010:30-35), as Warin faced limited access to certain patients based on clinicians' diagnoses and 'expertise'. However, by cultivating relationships with each participant (often through one-on-one interviews due to the inherent secrecy of anorexic practices such as hyper-selective consumption and compulsory

purging) (Warin 2010:175–178), she is able to focus on each participant’s “individual body,” or their phenomenological lived experiences (Lock and Scheper-Hughes 1987). Thus, Warin’s reconceptualization of anorexia consciously strays from fragmenting biomedical discourses that strip agency from the sufferer by depicting the female body fracturing under societal pressures to maintain bodily control.

The anorexic hierarchy of purity and secrecy (Warin 2010:71–74) exemplifies agency’s role in the complex interactions between repulsion and desire. For example, the participants at Lane Cove envy newcomer Josie’s thinness as it represents her membership of the seductive secret club, free from the ‘pollution’ of ‘recovery’ (Warin 2010:83–85). This hierarchy of ‘pure,’ or restrictive, anorexia (Warin 2010:131) solidifies the notion that these patients are not merely pathological subjects attempting to conform to societal pressures, but members of a culture which values cleanliness and despises the “disgusting” body and its functions (2010:128–151). However, belonging to this exclusive group requires “self-discipline” (Foucault 1980) in regards to the fluidity between the desire for sustenance and the repulsion of food’s bodily intrusion. Warin reflexively analyzes her own ‘taken-for-granted’ daily food practices with respect to her participants’ highly ritualized consumption (Warin 2010:52–58), wherein the specificity of their food selection becomes the “central focus of their worlds” (Warin 2010:51). Furthermore, Warin’s pregnancy during a portion of her fieldwork facilitated a unique understanding of her participants’ experiences with the transformation of the female body into a public figure: an object for the biomedical gaze (Foucault 1973) and popular discussion. Her emic insight within the “individual body” context (Lock and Scheper-Hughes 1987) problematizes the dialectic between perceptions of the body and lived experiences. That is to say that the participants’ narratives depict the ambiguity of a tumultuous personal relationship with the body as a simultaneous temple of purity and public site of contamination which prompts them to make particular choices, such as avoiding food or purging.

Thematic relevance of ambiguity

The organization of this ethnography effectively counteracts the potential threat of ambiguity within the framework of “abjection” (Warin 2010: 115). There is a very clear, linear progression following the introduction of the theoretical framework and embodiment, into the contradictions within anorexia and ideals of ‘purity’, and ending with a reflexive conclusion. Warin notes others’ critiques against Kristeva’s universalist generalizations and the inherent ambiguity within the notion of “abjection” (2010:115). This concept offers both a framework for examining relationships within the context of anorexia and a window into the tenuous grasp one can actually have on such a fluid construct. That is to say that the immense obscurity of the notion of “abjection” appropriately illuminates the complexities of anorexia. Warin emphasizes the importance of moving beyond reductionist binary views of individual and social relationships, particularly those equating physical appearance with conceptions of identity and self-worth. Participant Elise’s concern that fats may seep into her skin and contaminate her body (Warin 2010:123) exemplifies this complex contradictory dialogue between what one considers ‘rational’ (2010:53), and the participant’s illness experience (the uncontrollable fear of contamination). Warin further illustrates the central role of ambiguity in anorexia by demonstrating the characteristic ambivalence of participants’ relationships with their bodies: for instance, the impulse to disappear, as one informant, Ellen,

wants to do (Warin 2010:138–139); and the subsequent irony of the increased visibility of the anorexic body, evidenced by Jemma’s hostile encounter in Australia (2010:66–67). In an interview, Jemma recounts her unexpectedly volatile interaction during a vacation in which passers-by yelled obscenities and critiqued her physical appearance as an “anorexic” (Warin 2010:66–67), thereby contextualizing the unsolicited scrutiny of a ‘public’ female body (Bordo 1993; Greenhalgh 2012) based on the perceived pathology of Jemma’s weight.

Additionally, Warin confronts the ambiguity of her role as a researcher within the context of ethnography. She expresses concern that her background as a nurse may interfere with participants’ willingness to disclose information to her (Warin 2010: 33–35). Thus, the anthropologist must not only contend with her position’s effects on research outcomes, but also consider the ethical implications of her involvement in potentially harmful practices. For example, one participant, Natalia, breaks down after recounting her sexual assault, prompting her to exhibit potentially dangerous behavior, such as leaving her door wide open when she lives alone (Warin 2010:3–35). In this instance, Warin closes the door and contacts the head nurse the next morning, but interferes no further. What are the ethical obligations of a fieldworker in these situations? Where might a researcher draw the line for intervening in “life-threatening” situations, particularly given the established risks of conditions such as anorexia? The ambivalence of her position in the field distinguishes this ethnography as an analytical work of meaning-centered anthropology (Baer and Singer 2012:38–39), as she does not interfere or attempt to implement any measures of prevention or intervention with regards to the participants’ health.

Exclusion of discursive frameworks

In an attempt to avoid mainstream analyses’ confinement of eating disorders within popular cultural “primitivism” and exoticization of the “skeletal” anorexic “Other” (Warin 2010:181–183), Warin does not delve into the greater social and political contexts of anorexia. Therefore, she does not reflect much on ‘sickness’—the symbolic representation of the individual body within society (Stephens 2012)—unless a participant mentions it directly. For instance, Natalia offers an analysis of her place in society by reflecting on a cultural fear of death and the public’s subsequent adoption of either a messiah complex or the active abhorrence of skeletal figures which represent a desire for death (Warin 2010:67). Moreover, Warin acknowledges Foucault’s (1973) theoretical framework regarding biopower, medical institutions, and discipline. This illuminates the institutional impact of biomedicine on the individual, often with the intent of facilitating behavior modification (just as the Lane Cove residential treatment facility monitors anorexic patients’ eating habits, hoping to modify their daily food practices). Foucault (1973) also highlights manifestations of knowledge production and power relations within the “dependence” of individuals on the “expertise” of medical professionals who have privileged access to views of the body that are inaccessible without an intricate understanding of biotechnologies, such as MRIs and CT scans (Pfaffenberger 1998, Taussig 1992:83–87). However, Warin chooses to focus on the phenomenology of the “individual body” and the internalization of social relationships (that is, with other people, food, and “Ana”) instead of the “body-political”, which explores the “individual and collective surveillance and regulation of bodies” (Lock and Scheper-Hughes 1987). This limited perspective does not

allow for relevant critical analysis of the production of “docile bodies,” or bodies which modify their behavior in accordance with established norms, (Foucault 1980) as a result of the medical gaze. That is to say that the “tyranny of slenderness” (Bordo 1993) perpetuated by the epitomizing of weight loss and self-control by the mainstream media may hold relevance to the illness experiences of these participants’ self-discipline (Foucault 1980). Furthermore, Greenhalgh’s (2012) analysis of America’s “war on fat” highlights the appropriation of scientific discourses in popular culture to discuss the dangers of obesity and establish the “slender, healthy body” as the norm, demanding compliance for the sake of “good health” (Bordo 1993:185–189; Foucault 1975:97–100; Greenhalgh 2012). Pursuing a potential underlying discursive motivation for one’s purging practices does not strip the individual of agency or downplay the importance of embodied experiences; rather, it provides sociopolitical context for such actions. Thus, choosing to engage the discursive frameworks of Bordo and Foucault would provide a more holistic interpretation of the participants’ experiences.

Finally, Warin’s recognition of an inability to neatly define anorexia (or confine it within a specific set of criteria and practices) immediately places this ethnography at odds with the biomedical institutional approach to treatment. The language used to refer to patients’ experiences differs from patient to practitioner (Warin 2010:104), as doctors and psychiatrists constantly equate purging with “getting thin” in an effort to succinctly match cause with effect. Warin highlights the ways in which this undermines the fluidity of the disorder. For instance, a common thread among participants’ motives behind purging is a desire to rid their bodies of the contaminating forces of food. Even the participants downplay the medical system, as Beth (an informant) states that her skin lesions from self-inducing vomiting are “only medical signs . . . not what it’s really about” (Warin 2010:132). This view of biomedicine allows for a de-medicalization of the eating disorder which has been marginalized within medical terminology by emphasizing the individual’s agency as opposed to defining them by psychiatric pathology. However, a certain amount of relativism to the ethnomedical practices and methodologies of the practitioners in these treatment facilities—or recognition of their contextual validity with regard to scientific understandings of the effects of anorexia—would have further enriched the perspectives within this research.

Conclusion

Warin’s emic perspective de-medicalizes the body by using illness narratives to understand participants’ experiences in their own context. This analysis discusses the efficacy of Warin’s focus on the “individual body,” the thematic use of ambiguity to enrich the understanding of the inherent contradictions of the anorexic illness experience, and the consequences of excluding discursive frameworks. By choosing not to incorporate in-depth analyses of Bordo’s and Foucault’s models, Warin ignores the foundation of the hegemonic power of the biomedical gaze: she avoids it in order to re-humanize anorexia. The biomedical accumulation and control of “specialized” knowledge of the body perpetuates a discourse of “scientific objectivity” (Foucault 1980) that discourages questioning disease labels. However, Warin attempts to subvert this dominance by examining the individuals’ contradictory experiences and the ambiguity of their relative positions in society.

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CONTINGENT HORIZONS

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2014 **VOLUME 1**

v Acknowledgements

vi Editors' note or, An open-ended collective discussion (or digression)

ARTICLES

- 1** **An islander's notes** | BY JEREMY COOPER
The man, the lover, the expat musician on the streets of Athens
- 9** **Loves me, loves me not** | BY SARA BENČEKOVIĆ
The Museum of Broken Relationships scene analysis
- 19** **Lines that divide** | BY LINDSAY MOORE
Aboriginality, Canadian applied anthropology, and transgressing the 'national anthropological tradition'
- 31** **Silences on Hindu lesbian subjectivity** | BY LUCILE CRÉMIER
- 47** **My Peruvian museum** | BY PRIYA CHENDKE
- 63** **Star parties** | BY RAYNA SLOBODIAN
An ethnographic exploration of amateur and professional astronomers
- 83** **William Curtis Farabee** | BY JAMES ANDREW WHITAKER
Ethnographic explorer and museum anthropologist
- 103** **Performing gender** | BY NAYO SASAKI-PICOU
The construction of black males in the hip-hop industry
- 109** **Eating politically** | BY JAYNE MALENFANT
Food Not Bombs and growing resistance

BOOK REVIEWS

- 123** *Travesti: Sex, Gender, and Culture Among Brazilian Transgendered Prostitutes* by Don Kulick and *Flaming Souls: Homosexuality, Homophobia, and Social Change in Barbados* by David A.B. Murray | REVIEWED BY CURTIS DIXON
- 130** *Abject Relations: Everyday Worlds of Anorexia* by Megan Warin
REVIEWED BY JENNIFER NEWTON