

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



New year, new doc! bit.ly/inkcap-notes-2

Key links:

- Short link to this document: <https://bit.ly/inkcap-notes>
- Short link to Zotero library: <https://bit.ly/inkcap-zotero>
- Link to year 2: bit.ly/inkcap-notes-2
- Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/93240471512?pwd=QVVZME12U05iZHZKZFZ4TjhPK1Vhdz09>

In this document...

[Session 11: Insurgent Knowledge](#)

[Session 10: In Our Own Words](#)

[Session 9: Nothing Will Come of Nothing?](#)

[Session 8: Ecologies of Beauty and Ruin // Inhabiting the Cracks](#)

[Session 7: Whom do you teach?](#)

[Session 6: The intersections of academic freedom, political repression, and unrest](#)

[Session 5: On work, love, and invisible labor](#)

[Session 4: Comfortable for whom? On form, ease, and breaking institutional habits](#)

[Session 3: Who can know? On epistemic injustice in and around the academy](#)

[Session 2: Place, Memory, and a Situated University](#)

[Session 1: Spark Birds and Mushrooms](#)

Session 11: Insurgent Knowledge (Danica Savonick)

Aug 2, 2022, 2pm EDT

Texts

- Available [here](#)

Welcome/Intros

- How do we want to use this space and time in the year ahead?
- Let's also revisit days and times -- please fill out this poll <http://whenisgood.net/inkcap>

Discussion

- About the project - Danica gave an overview of how it came about
 - (1) what does free college make possible?

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



- (2) how can our classrooms become sites that move us toward a more just, equitable, and pleasurable world?
- How do material conditions shape teaching and learning? How can we create the conditions in which social justice teaching can flourish? Also obstacles / opposition / backlash.
 - inside/outside; permeable boundaries; what can thrive in the margins
- How universities exist to replicate power structures, though they can, at times, become sites of what Roderick Ferguson calls “fragile possibilities.”
 - And how do we navigate this tension—how do we cultivate the fragile possibilities without crushing them
 - Different kinds of possibilities in the space of a classroom, a poem, a budget
- Bambara’s decision to leave academia and shift focus to local community organizations, where her teaching could more directly serve working-class Black communities.
 - How do we see this decision within a broader context of the nature and purpose of higher ed?
- What does it mean to make learning useful?
 - Does 'useful' mean 'transactional'? How is usefulness connected to and/or separate from capitalist logics?
- Who has access to transformative learning?
- *Feel free to add!*

Upcoming Sessions

- Sept?? please fill out this poll <http://whenisgood.net/inkcap>

Session 10: In Our Own Words

July 5, 2022, 2pm EDT

Texts

- [Remaining Between](#) draft from Katina
 - Does this seem like it 'works'? In terms of content and structure both
 - What would you want/expect to see in a book like this?
 - What feels like it misses the mark?
 - Who can you imagine wanting to read something like this?
- Other projects to discuss? If you have something you're working on that you would like to talk about or get feedback on, please link to it here or email me
 - Danica - next session
 - Kathleen - future session

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



Welcome & Intros

Discussion

- In addition to the draft text, let's spend some time talking about the nature and composition of this group, where we'd like to put our energy in the year ahead
- Draft discussion
 - Needs greater specificity around broader ideas, more concreteness
 - Embodied, physical sensations - what can you see, feel, taste in care/flourishing
 - Evidence/research/stories is another route
 - Intersperse stories and examples of people who have ruptured - vignettes
 - Structural questions
 - Keep the disfluency, keep the strangeness
 - Might not be able to maintain both fluency and strangeness, but maybe I don't need to decide now
 - Focal points (Sujung's reflections)
 - Critical public intellectual
 - Mirror higher ed back to itself
 - Focus on people and lived experiences
 - Hermit crab essay
 - A nonfiction essay that takes the shape of something else (eg a personal narrative in the structure of a medical brochure)
 - Wherever it deviates, wherever there's dissonance, that's where things are interesting
 - Imagine a form it could possibly take - a field guide, a map (pretending to take readers where these photos are taken) - to highlight where maps are NOT useful
 - Go weird!
 - <https://themillions.com/2018/06/essays-strange-forms.html>
 - <https://brevitymag.com/craft-essays/the-shared-space/>
 - Where does tension come to life?
 - Stories, embodiment
 - fluid/disjointed does not necessarily map onto concrete/abstract - something can be disjointed but still concrete
 - Visible - to whom and why
 - Would you read this?
 - Would want to know other cool things that others are doing
 - Feels like I'm writing to people who want to change the university
 - How to let people see and feel that they ALSO have that power -- it's not just others

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



- Call to action for different actors at different levels
- From Letitia:

<https://www.universityaffairs.ca/career-advice/ask-dr-editor/break-bad-rules-how-to-change-language-norms-in-your-academic-field-individually-and-systemically/>

- Cross-fertilizing
- Everyone has their role but also institutional factors can be like climate change

Upcoming Sessions

- Tuesday, Aug 2, 2pm: Danica Savonick, *Insurgent Knowledge* (she'll upload materials [here](#))
- Tues, Sept 9, 2pm: TBD

Session 9: Nothing Will Come of Nothing?

June 8, 2022, 1pm EDT

Texts/Art

- Jenny Odell, [How to Do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy](#)
- Jenny Odell, [The Bureau of Suspended Objects](#)
- Mimi Onuoha, [The Library of Missing Datasets](#)
- Nikki Lindt, [The Underground Sound Project](#)

Welcome & Intros

- Share one thing you've noticed recently. What (if anything) had to shift in order to notice it?
- Or, share something you noticed because of its absence. What isn't there but used to be, or should be, or could be?

Discussion

- Key questions
 - Valences of "nothing"/silence/absence?
 - Modes of resistance (and resistance against what?)
- The problem with efficiency

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



- the problem is not *doing* things, the problem is the way that productivity and attention have been ruthlessly monetized
 - usefulness vs. worth
- Ecological metaphors
 - monoculture crops vs ecosystem diversity/bioregionalism
- Refusal as making space
 - refusal not as negative but as a way to insist on something or make space for something
 - esp something that doesn't have clear usefulness
 - the weird, the difficult, the inefficient, vague, nontransactional
 - saying nothing as a precursor of having something to say (Deleuze)
 - not just to withdraw attention, but to invest it somewhere else
- Pace/tempo
 - inclination of attention is toward the fleeting—so how do we work against that
 - "what I see depends on how I look, and for how long" (ch 4)
 - rendering — processing info differently even though it was always there
 - alternating openness and closure as organizing strategy (ch 6)
- Valences of silence/absence
 - Reflect on this re: the various art pieces included in today's texts
- Critiques
 - privilege (e.g. Stanford as main site of consideration of student experience)
 - intellectual genealogy seems to favor a pretty canonical approach - Benjamin, Thoreau, Deleuze
 - breathlessness

Upcoming Sessions

- Tuesday, July 5, 2pm: Share some of our own work?
- Tuesday, Aug 2, 2pm: Danica Savonick
- Tues, Sept 9, 2pm:

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



Session 8: Ecologies of Beauty and Ruin // Inhabiting the Cracks

May 10, 2022, 2pm EDT

Readings

- Carrie Smith & Natalie Loveless, "[Attunement in the Cracks: Feminist Collaboration and the University as Broken Machine](#)"
- Natalie Loveless, [How to Make Art at the End of the World](#) (intro)

Welcome & Intros

- Welcome/announcements from Katina
 - [Collaborative project](#) & [ASA conference](#) -- let me know if interested
 - Next session: June 8, 1pm (note different day/time than usual)
 - Summer thoughts: Maybe we choose one book to focus on for the summer, and use our time for discussion as well as brainstorming/project planning?
 - Book ideas: Sara Ahmed (*Complaint!*), Katherine McKittrick (*Dear Science & Other Stories*), Donna Haraway (*Staying with the Trouble*)...
 - or we could focus on poetry, or art, or something else. Think about it during the session and let's spend a few min planning at the end
 - Introduce Carrie Smith and Natalie Loveless
- Group introductions
- Opening thoughts from Carrie and Natalie
 - Natalie: deep work on what makes disciplines, disciplinary boundaries? How to think differently about structures while acknowledging these realities?
 - Carrie: reflecting on admin as doing while thinking while practicing
 - Dialogue
 - Started more idealistic
 - Caring mode of working, way of navigating fatigue and burnout
 - Performance, instructional score

Discussion

- Nurturing
 - Noting my (Katina's) sometimes-resistance to being seen as a nurturer in a professional context, reclaiming nurturing as intellectual and valuable
- Agreements, consent

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



- What are the parameters of reading-with?
- Accounting, accountability
 - Why a collective? More than the sum of the parts, bigger inside than out
 - Attunement as relational
 - Stephanie Loveless, Listening Prescription for Institutional Dysfunction
- Tempo
 - "What might happen if we were to gather speed (in the right directions) together?" (Smith, 276)
 - "When and where is obstinate slowness needed, and when and where does the 'speediness' of impulse and passion, or of aligned action, genuinely open up new worlds?" (Loveless, 276)
 - How to write pauses into the score
- Form
 - Research-creation and attention to form
 - Talk about the use of "score"
 - Care and nurturing built in
- Ruins
 - "How might we spin this conversation about time and the neoliberal academy out to think about death, ruins, and the ecology of rotten matter that carries with it a fecundity?" (Smith, 284)

Upcoming Sessions

- **Wednesday**, June 8, **1pm** (note different day/time)
- Tuesday, July 5, 2pm
- Tuesday, Aug 2, 2pm - Danica Savonick
- Tues, Sept 9, 2pm

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



Session 7: Whom do you teach?

April 14, 2022, 3pm EST

Readings

- [Poor Queer Studies](#) by Matt Brim (esp intro & chapter 4)
- [Blog post on PQS](#) by Janan Shouhayib, from a course Matt & Katina taught in 2021

Welcome & Intros

- Welcome/announcements from Katina
 - Possible [collaborative project info](#) -- let me know if interested
 - [ASA conference acceptance](#) (Alyssa Arbuckle, Mabel Ho, Danica Savonick, Carrie Smith, & Katina)
 - Next session May 10; info [below](#)
 - Introduce Matt Brim
- Group introductions—maybe in chat if group is large
- Opening thoughts from Matt
 - Chapter on Poor Queer Studies Mothers still resonates with students
 - Students also pointed out elements he hadn't yet thought of—like being misrecognized as a mother, and what implications that has for how a person is seen
 - Broader caregiving roles. "I'm not a mother, but..."
 - All of that comes into the classroom, and informs students' readings of the texts
 - Identifying those patterns is also knowledge making

Topics/Questions for Discussion

- "Public good" -- what is meant by this
- What constitutes knowledge?
- Material conditions of learning (p2): What have you seen, experienced?
- Redistribution of intellectual/scholarly resources (p3): What might this look like?
- Interdisciplinarity vs. class-based crossover (p.15): How does crossing some boundaries solidify others? Where else do you see this?
- What premises about higher ed do these chapters call into question?
- Why is queer studies a useful lens for considering these questions? Why *poor* queer studies?
- Reflect on the centering of 'mothers' in chapter 4.
 - How does this connect with the idea of teaching beyond the classroom? (for example, queer home schooling, p. 148)
 - How does it connect with what we've discussed regarding community vs individualism?

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



- Spelling, voicing, pre-hearing (p. 142)
- The pedagogies of public spaces (p. 149-50) and private domestic spaces
 - What does this strategy—centering mothers, specifically—bring up for you in conjunction with your own educational and life trajectories?
- Reflect on the notion of “queering graduation rates,” finding ways for students to linger in a momentarily safe environment (p. 139). How does this connect to questions of tempo, of success?

Next Session

- Tues, May 10, 2pm EDT; Carrie Smith & Natalie Loveless, "[Attunement in the Cracks: Feminist Collaboration and the University as Broken Machine](#)" + Loveless, [How to Make Art at the End of the World](#) (intro)
- Summer thoughts?

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



Session 6: The intersections of academic freedom, political repression, and unrest

March 15, 2022, 2pm EST

Welcome & Intros

- Tell us something you love about the place you call home

Discussion Questions

- What can we do in higher education to address racism & bias in talking about international conflicts? What are people already doing? - Cihan
- Compare and contrast the US public and academic response to this conflict with the wars on Afghanistan & Iraq – what can we learn from anti-war academics in Russia and Turkey about how we can mobilize our relationship to our governments, the society, the world? - Cihan
 - Have there been similar examples in the US? Please see the footnotes in the SAQ article and the latest MESA – how do we support people who break walls of silence? How can we better support them? - Cihan
- Precarity: What are the implications of higher education funding in the US on the realities of academic freedom? (see MESA letter to U Wash). To whom are we beholden? Who can speak? - Katina

Notes

- Conflicts can galvanize a clear bifurcation of good/bad, where the reality is much more nuanced
- How do we talk about academic freedom, different conflicts, etc
- Funding effects on academic freedom
- Connected to capitalism -- public research dollars funding private gains
- US institutional funding -- sustaining an ideology
- How do we build coalitions across places that takes context into account but doesn't get caught up in it?

Suggested Readings

- *On Ukraine:*
 - [Arab and Middle Eastern Journalist Association Statement in Response to the Coverage of the Ukraine Crisis](#) – very brief, and I think this is an essential read, and as important for people in the West to think about while we react and respond to the invasion of Ukraine - Cihan

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



- [An open letter from Russian scientists and science journalists against the war with Ukraine](#) - very short read, brave protest letter by Russian academia - Cihan
- [A letter to the Western Left from Kyiv](#) - medium size read but quick - the word Left here is geared towards socialists – I'm not sure about the political alignments of this group, however I still suggest reading it, because the second part of the letter gives an autobiographical account of the author's personal experience in Ukraine with his far-right family members while he becomes a socialist, since the 2014 revolution and Russia's annexation of Crimea. This should resonate in the US context especially for people who are close to left or even liberal ideas, but who themselves come from conservative families. - Cihan
- **"There can be no Vne" by Marina Mogilner:**
http://www.slavicreview.illinois.edu/discussion/?fbclid=IwAR1wQnjrw7hsif_KZg537QxubvEMRMw6TLAiwOKSvebDSqxFHDTvZw9I5_M
- **[Studying Identity in Ukraine](#) by Olga Onuch, Henry E. Hale, and Gwendolyn Sasse.** This intro and the special issue it's a part of came out in 2018; the authors have been resharing it now to provide context for the current situation. - Katina
- **[Open letter/manifesto](#) by Feminist Anti-War Resistance**, a Russian feminist collective. - Katina
- *In other global contexts:*
 - **[#AşağıBakmayacağız \("We Will Not Look Down"\)](#) by Cihan Tekay (Liu).** This focuses on academic freedom in Turkey and international solidarity around the movement.
 - Academics for Peace (Turkey/Northern Kurdistan):
 - [HAKKIMIZDA/ABOUT US | Barış İçin Akademisyenler](#) - just see the about section, I am a member / signatory and can answer Qs - Cihan
 - [Academics for Peace](#) (just to browse the latest developments) - Cihan
 - **[Middle East Studies Association of North America's Committee on Academic Freedom](#)**
 - Especially see the latest violation of academic freedom in the US in the [Letter to the President of University of Washington](#) - Cihan
- Ukraine Solidarity Toolkit:
 - (many useful links here for concrete support – Cihan)
 - **Here's the [solidarity toolkit](#) & a tiny URL: adobe.ly/37qohf9 for social media posts.**

Upcoming Sessions

- Tues, April 12, 2pm EDT; [Poor Queer Studies](#) by Matt Brim (esp chapters 3-4)

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes

- Tues, May 10, 2pm EDT; Carrie Smith & Natalie Loveless dialogue + intro to [*How to Make Art at the End of the World*](#)
- Summer thoughts? Asynchronous ways to connect?



Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



Session 5: On work, love, and invisible labor

Feb 15, 2022, 2pm EST

Welcome & Introductions

- Announcements
 - Inkcap!
 - March 11 gathering -- please [sign up](#) if you're interested
 - MLA 2023 CFP Digital Humanities Forum: Together and Unequal: Labor and the Digital Humanities
 - This roundtable explores the unequal material conditions of work for women, BIPOC, LGBTQ+ faculty, librarians, staff, students, or adjuncts working in digital humanities. 250-word abstracts, Danica Savonick (danicasavonick@gmail.com) (March 19).
 - Discord? y/n?
- Intros
 - One thing you did recently purely for pleasure

Texts

- [Vocational Awe and Librarianship: The Lies We Tell Ourselves](#) by Fobazi Ettarh. An excellent consideration of the risk that people in mission-driven work experience when it becomes impossible to critique their workplace or labor conditions.
 - Here's an interview with Ettarh on the same subject:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6kiWHW_pj4
- [We Don't Have the Same Job](#), from the *Hear to Slay* podcast. In this episode ([available here](#) courtesy of Luminary), hosts Tressie McMillan Cottom and Roxane Gay speak with Patricia Matthew, editor of [Written/Unwritten: Diversity and the Hidden Truths of Tenure](#). (interview starts about 15min in)
- Additional texts:
 - Work Won't Love You Back by Sarah Jaffe
 - [Ch 5](#), [ch 7](#), [ch 8](#)

Discussion Questions

- Where is the balance between loving our work and being consumed by it? Why is it so difficult to find this balance?
- Connections w/ gendered labor, care work?
- How do we change the logics at play?
- Comaroff case vs the unbelievable number of tenure denials for POC faculty -- double standards -- why is it so hard to find a place of legitimate accountability?

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



Notes & Quotes

Discussion notes

- "We're all in this together" -- myth
- Loving work vs love/care for humans
- Language? Are there different ways we can talk about work-love and personal-love?
- Love sliding easily into martyrdom/weaponization
- Keeps the focus on individual rather than collective; can be a union-busting tactic
- Joy & pleasure vs. love? Ephemerality?
- Agency -- do you have the space cleared to do the work you want to do?
- How does this language get in the way of critique
- Family language around depts etc (e.g. German Studies, the PhD supervisor as a the "Doktormutter/vater" Doctor Mother/Father)
- Professional reward structures are missing relative to carework -- more like feelings than work
- Capitalism as context

Fobazi Ettarh:

- "'Vocational awe' refers to the set of ideas, values, and assumptions librarians have about themselves and the profession that result in **beliefs that libraries as institutions are inherently good and sacred**, and therefore beyond critique."
- "I would like to **dismantle the idea that librarianship is a sacred calling**; thus requiring absolute obedience to a prescribed set of rules and behaviors, regardless of any negative effect on librarians' own lives."
- "Awe is not a comforting feeling, but a fearful and overwhelming one"
- "Tasked with the responsibility of sustaining democracy and intellectual freedom, taking a mental health day feels shameful. **Awe is easily weaponized against the worker**, allowing anyone to deploy a vocational purity test in which the worker can be accused of not being devout or passionate enough to serve without complaint."
- "The problem with vocational awe is **the efficacy of one's work is directly tied to their amount of passion** (or lack thereof), rather than fulfillment of core job duties. If the language around being a good librarian is directly tied to struggle, sacrifice, and obedience, **then the more one struggles for their work, the "holier" that work (and institution) becomes.**"

Tricia Matthew, Tressie McMillan Cottom, & Roxane Gay:

- Tenure denial protests tend to come from students, not faculty
- "Fantasy that people still cling to that merits matters. And if you've gotten a PhD, you've mastered numerous systems that are designed to exclude you"
- References Robin Kelly's essay on Cornel West tenure denial

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



- “If you’re going to bring in Black faculty for the purpose of having them serve Black students [rather than on the merits of their scholarship and teaching], then you either need to pay them a lot more or tenure them on that work.”
- “You’re not a member of the community, you’re a benefit, a resource.” (TMC)
- “Anytime you take [Black faculty] away from [their area of expertise], you’re undermining the entire mission of the university. It’s not what we’re trained in, and it’s not why we went to graduate school”
- What are you actually doing, what does it feel like you’re doing
- The more you do it (writing etc), the better it gets
- References Ayanna Thomson who negotiated a solid hiring practice for her center
- “Every tenured person you bring in shifts the balance of power” TMC
- “White academics want everyone to have followed a path that affirms their own path”

Next Session

- Tues, March 15, 2pm EST
- Text options:
 - **Matt Brim, *Poor Queer Studies***
 - Natalie Loveless, *Making Art at the End of the World*
 - Bhanu Kapil, *How to Wash a Heart*

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



Session 4: Comfortable for whom? On form, ease, and breaking institutional habits

Jan 20, 2022

Texts

- [Sara Ahmed, *What's the Use*](#) (especially [ch1](#))
- [Clelia O. Rodríguez, *Decolonizing Academia*](#) (especially [ch1](#))

Welcome & Introductions

- Introduce yourself and share a quick thought, feeling, or intention (not necessarily higher ed related)
- Possible shift in timing so more/other folks can join; [availability poll](#)
- FYI, ASA proposal [draft](#) -- what it has looked like to work on this, reflections on the work we're doing as a group

Notes

- These texts call attention to the constructed nature of the systems in which we live and work. I'd like to focus on matters of **ease and comfort**—and, more specifically, **how and why ease/comfort can make change exceedingly difficult**. Within this framework, I'd like to talk more about refusal, and **how the act of refusal can interrupt an otherwise well-worn (but perhaps undesirable, unjust, or outdated) pattern**.

Ahmed

- I love **the way Ahmed follows movement**—the movement of a word through time and context; the movement of a document through an institution. That movement reveals more than a single snapshot could, and always reminds me of the angles of a prism. In *What's the Use*, consider not only the writing but also the images and captions—their repetition with variation, their content, what you see differently each time they are presented. Ahmed does something similar with the image of a brick wall in her earlier book, *On Being Included*.
 - "Form follows failure"
 - Thinking outside the confines of the institution from inside the institution

Rodríguez

- In *Decolonizing Academia*, consider the ways Rodríguez **uses—and breaks away from—familiar forms of academic discourse**. In terms of structure, I'd be especially

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



interested in discussing "Eleventh Layer: The #Shithole Syllabus."

As she notes just after that section, "We must scrutinize the logic of power that is behind our syllabi and our research work. If we are truly committed to the work of decolonizing, **we must listen to the silences, that which is not written**" (p.33; emphasis mine).

From an affective point of view, I'm curious about ways the questions of comfort and ease come into play in Rodríguez's work. Who is comfortable reading her words, who is uncomfortable, and why?

- "This text is like peeling an onion. Removing layers is a process of untangling deadlines in the name of higher education, letting fluidity be the guiding light instead of a rigid process that suffocates the breathing pattern floating in my dreams. This is a book that acknowledges tension as part of an experimental exercise linked to decolonizing ways of expression. The form is yours to feel. The content is yours to create in a space framed by critical thinking" (2)
- "A token when dropped in the middle of a fast-moving river will never have enough weight to stop the speed and fury of the water so that a bridge can be built" (9)
- The role of the syllabus, the footnote
 - Breathing room for ideas, calls attention to the form and to artifice and to decisions

Bringing these two texts together will give us **ways to think about barriers and boundaries**.

We often think of barriers as stopping points, obstructions—but as Ahmed's cover image suggests, **a barrier to one may be necessary in order to ensure another's access**. What is easy and comfortable for one is necessarily less comfortable for another. Perhaps rather than thinking in terms of barriers, we could think of diversions—like water flowing around a stone rather than stopping entirely. **Where might these stones be beneficial in rerouting institutional habits**, for the sake of justice and equity and hope?

- Where do we see post boxes being used as birdhouses?
 - Unexpected radical coalitions
 - Participatory budgeting
 - Relational moments
 - People declining to abide by restrictions
 -

Other texts/thoughts

- Ahmed interview with Maya Binyam: "[You Pose a Problem](#)"
 - "I don't know that universities can be places where you can go to have breathing space, given the kinds of pressures academics are under, and given the extent to which these institutions rely on precarious staff. All that makes it much, much harder to fight for alternatives. At the same time, the most inventive academic work comes from those who occupy precarious positions. A lot of the really important work—in Black studies, in gender studies, in women's studies—comes

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



out of a battle with institutions for something. When people become more secure and better resourced institutionally, they also tend to become more conservative and more willing to do, as I call it, the work of institutional polishing—play by the rules, make the institution look good—because there are benefits attached."

- Tuck & Yang, *Toward What Justice* -- echoes some of the ideas in *What's the Use*
 - "Like a path in tall grasses, choosing one path instead of others, over time, will make that path more obvious. [. . .] Over time, with repetition of use, other possibilities become less possible. Investments make some paths possible, and others untraceable" (7)

Next Session

- Week of Feb 14. Please fill out [this availability poll](#)
 - Discussion leader:
 - Texts:

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



Session 3: Who can know? On epistemic injustice in and around the academy

December 16, 2021

Led by Alyssa Arbuckle

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/95298843198?pwd=UEV1cDhjemNZeFR5azdwZ3VnYkVsUT09>

Zotero: https://www.zotero.org/groups/4470827/higher_ed_reading_group

Texts

- **Denisse Alborno**, **Angela Okune**, and **Leslie Chan**, "[Can Open Scholarly Practices Redress Epistemic Injustice?](#)," from *Reassembling Scholarly Communications: Histories, Infrastructures, and Global Politics of Open Access* (2020)
- **Robin Wall Kimmerer**, "[Mishkos Kenomagwen: The Teachings of Grass](#)" from *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants* (2015)
- **Azar Causevic** and **Anasuya Sengupta**, "[Whose Knowledge Is Online? Practices of Epistemic Justice for a Digital New Deal](#)" (2021)

Welcome & Introductions

- As we look to 2022, what can this group move toward? What would you like to see?
 - The space itself is valuable
 - Vague desire to do more but also reticence
 - We can consider submitting to ASA ([deadline Feb 1](#)) -- Katina will reach out

Discussion

- Prompts:
 - North American higher ed perpetuates epistemic injustice, but change can't happen overnight. Embedded in the processes. Aspirational: How can we begin to move toward greater justice?
 - Who is a *listener*? An important question in advocacy. Who are we trying to convince, who can make change?
 - Student-centered focus can be a movement toward epistemic justice
 - Human communication
 - Storytelling, funding, how things get shaped and sometimes distorted to fit a goal
 - Who is a particular process/system/etc serving?
 - The risk of "innocent" "neutral" "just how things are" etc
 - Examine our own subject positions, areas of power

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



- Radical coalitions for change <3 -- who else can be in the conversation? Disparate groups
- Sometimes we can't see the change that has already happened because it feels so natural already
- Collective refusal
- Coalition building
- Right to refuse knowledge sharing - calling attention to epistemic injustice
- Refusing in ways that do something; doing yes differently; stay and do better
 - Collectivity, reciprocity, "no, but" -- imagining otherwise
- Betsy Stevenson and Ezra Klein - the great resignation, leaving jobs as a sign that people have hope
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/18/opinion/ezra-klein-podcast-betsey-stevenson.html>
-

Background notes from Alyssa:

I'm hoping that these readings can spur on a discussion about **epistemic injustice** and **diverse and/or plural knowledges**.

Epistemic injustice is a term originally coined by Miranda Fricker (in [*Epistemic Injustice: Power and Ethics of Knowing*](#)) and can be considered as an injustice specifically associated with one's knowledge-based experience (within a context of social power). Fricker's definition of the term is "a wrong done to someone specifically in their capacity as a knower." Epistemic injustice is two-pronged, according to Fricker: it can take the form of testimonial injustice—where a speaker is discredited due to the hearer's prejudice—or hermeneutical injustice—where a broader social misunderstanding or conceptual gap puts a speaker at a disadvantage.

The concept of **diverse and/or plural knowledges**, to me, recognizes that there are many different knowledge systems that interplay with each other. These can be social, historical, community-based, cultural, academic / scientific, personal, etc.

- I selected the **Albornoz, Okune, and Chan** article because it encapsulates a really key issue: **the perpetuation of epistemic injustice by well-meaning actors in the higher education system, namely, open access advocates**. The authors argue that the current state of open scholarship has failed to live up to its democratizing promises and has, in some cases, devalued marginalized groups and their knowledges. If openness is a value of the future higher ed system, it is critical to **examine**

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



the ways in which it can contribute to epistemic injustice and how to shift open practices and policies in a way that renders them truly representative and supportive of diverse and plural knowledges.

- I included this chapter of ***Braiding Sweetgrass*** because it blends Indigenous knowledge with the scientific method (with the caveat that of course there is no one single “Indigenous knowledge”; Kimmerer is looking at very specific practices of sweetgrass harvesting in the eastern part of the US). I think there’s some interesting discussion to be had about **the primacy of a specific knowledge system in the academy** (e.g. the scientific method) and how **rethinking this primacy may open up the university as a space of diverse and plural knowledges** rather than one committed to the hegemonic order of academic tradition.
- Finally, I shared the **Causevic and Sengupta** piece because it explores the ways in which **the infrastructure of the Internet enacts epistemic injustice**. Again, thinking of the theme of this discussion group, I wonder **how academic-based infrastructures — digital and otherwise — can be epistemically just spaces and in doing so become sites of rich, multivalent, and overlapping knowledges**.

I hope that you all find these readings as interesting and thought-provoking as I do, and I’m very much looking forward to engaging with everyone over this on the 16th.

—Alyssa Arbuckle

Next Session/Looking Ahead

- Jan 20?
- Readings?
- Discussion leader?

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



Session 2: Place, Memory, and a Situated University

November 18, 2021

Led by Britt Munro

Texts:

- **Excerpt from [Trace](#) by geographer Lauret Savoy** (Front Matter; Prologue: Thoughts on a Frozen Pond; and The View from the Sublime, p. 11-27)
- **"[A Journey in Writing Place](#)" by Waanyi fiction writer/essayist Alexis Wright** (*Meanjin Quarterly*, Winter 2019); [read & annotate with hypothesis](#)

Other recommended readings:

- Coline Chevrin, [Bringing the territory into the discussion: how to work towards a situated university?](#)
- Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, "[Land as Pedagogy](#)" [added by Coline Chevrin]
- Naylor et al, "[Interventions: Bringing the decolonial to political geography](#)" [added by Coline Chevrin]

Welcome & Introductions

- Key terms: capacity, hope/interest, exhaustion (for self and students), frustration, burnout, overwhelm (budget, restructuring, place), "like we're on the edge of something," pausing, commercialization, grief, beyond the limit, complex, pessimism about U.S. higher ed, hope, interstices, mourning, collective trauma, praxis, transmitting knowledge differently

Discussion

Overview from Britt

- Interested in the relationship between history and place
- Knowing who you are in a place -- contextualized self-awareness, relationality
- How do we experience place and time in a university context?

Things that stood out

- Savoy: ways that place shapes our perception; how that determines what we see and how we see
- Do these different ways of seeing combine over time as we move and grow? Do they shift into foreground and background?
- Classroom as a space
- Ref to Kiese Laymon [interviewed](#) by Tressie McMillan Cottom, talking about his relationship to place and writing
- Belonging and alienation, inclusion and exclusion

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



- Some forms of 'decolonial' scholarship is still deeply extractive
- Increase in "Indigenous Studies" etc but with very little challenge to the actual ways of doing
- Turn to libraries and archives for other examples of how this has been unfolding
- ASA call for papers - <https://www.theasa.net/annual-meeting/years-meeting/next-years-2022-theme>
- Critical hope
- Being in place takes time

Key Questions:

- In what ways do we inherit place, not just the stories of a place and the collective life of that place, but our own 'place' within those stories?
- How might place shape perception?
- In what ways might the organization of the academy discourage us from thinking and acting in place?
- What about the university, how does it relate to place, and to the (often violent) histories and ties that keep it in place?

Next Session

- Dec 16, 5pm ET
- Discussion leader: Alyssa Arbuckle
- Possible theme/texts:
 - Gender, COVID, care work, higher ed?
 - Sustainable conferences??
 - **Part of Braiding Sweetgrass?**
 - Or just keep it simple with a chat/reflection on the year/happy hour?

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



Session 1: Spark Birds and Mushrooms

October 21, 2021

- 🦉 **Spark Bird** by Emily Raboteau (*Orion Magazine*, Feb 2021)
 - Annotated version [here](#)
- 🍄 Excerpts from [*The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*](#) by Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing (Princeton University Press, 2015). "Autumn Aroma" and "Arts of Noticing" ([excerpts here](#))

Welcome & Introductions

- One thing you want to share

Discussion

- Patchy assemblages + grad ed → we have all these ways that we encounter one another, that we influence each others beings . . . what emerges from the ruins, what new growth is possible, what can thrive, through these landscapes
- How do we cultivate attention? And hold space that attention can be loaded with negative, positive, and in betweenness
- From the Raboteau- 'Bird-watching is a way of bearing witness—of being transported by the beauty in nature. I'm yanked from that reverie, knowing that Blackness is not a beauty that everyone sees; some see danger, and so my watching is always tenuous, provisional, unstable.'
- Something about embracing death, and death positivity as part of survival and flourishing, but I'm thinking of Mbembe's "Universal Right to Breath," about how some humans "delegate death to others," but... mushrooms take on dying with the ferocity that some humans, say, take on birth. In thinking about collectivism and the necessary death of some, but thinking through that in terms of unity, equity, and antiracism, anti colonialism - it's one unsolvable puzzle (for me) mushrooms offer up. Full disclosure, I worked in hospice before academia, so I am very death positive and promortality. Sorry to be entering convo through chat only! It's my night to cook dinner :)
- <https://nowviskie.org/2011/a-skunk-in-the-library/>
- Sedgwick, Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading
<https://www.ias.edu/sites/default/files/sss/pdfs/Critique/sedgwick-paranoid-reading.pdf>
- I think this sentence was already mentioned but just dropping it here too: "I hardly know how to think about justice without progress. The problem is that progress stopped making sense."
- This is an article about Alexis Nikole Nelson - the forager on TikTok I was talking about - <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2021/09/09/173838801/meet-alexis-nikole-nelson-on-the-wildly-popular-black-forager#:~:text=More%20Podcasts%20%26%20Shows-,Mee>

Inkcap Collective Reading Group Notes



t%20Alexis%20Nikole%20Nelson%2C%20The%20Wildly%20Popular%20Black%20For
ager',belong%20to%20%5Bher.%5D%22

Text Ideas

- *Plantation Politics and Campus Rebellions* (Williams, Squire, & Tuitt, eds)
- *Complaint!* (Sara Ahmed)
- *On Being Included* (Sara Ahmed)
- "[The Shush](#)" (Kyla Wazana Tompkins)
- *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Donna Haraway)
- *On Freedom: Four Songs of Care and Constraint* (Maggie Nelson)
- *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants* (Robyn Wall Kimmerer)
- [Venus in Two Acts](#), Saidiya Hartman
- Excerpt from *Listening in Detail*, Alexandra Vazquez
- Excerpt from *Caring to Know: Comparative Care Ethics, Feminist epistemology and the Mahābhārata*, Vrinda Dalmiya (Maybe Chapter 1, pp. 1-36?)
- Excerpt from *Trace: Memory, History, Race and the American Landscape*, Lauret Savoy
- *Decolonizing Academia*, Clelia O. Rodríguez
- Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, "[Land as Pedagogy](#)"
- Naylor et al, "[Interventions: Bringing the decolonial to political geography](#)"

Next Session

- Date/Time -- **Thurs Nov 18, 5pm EST**
- Discussion leader: **Britt Munro**
- Texts: I am thinking pp. 1-13 in 'Trace' by Lauret Savoy (plus those great quotes at the front!) and [this article](#) by Waanyi writer Alexis Wright, if people are okay with that? The Wright essay is relatively long, so perhaps if you read the Savoy and then just what you want of the Wright :) I can send a copy of 'Trace' to anyone if they need it- britt.munro0@gmail.com. Can't wait!