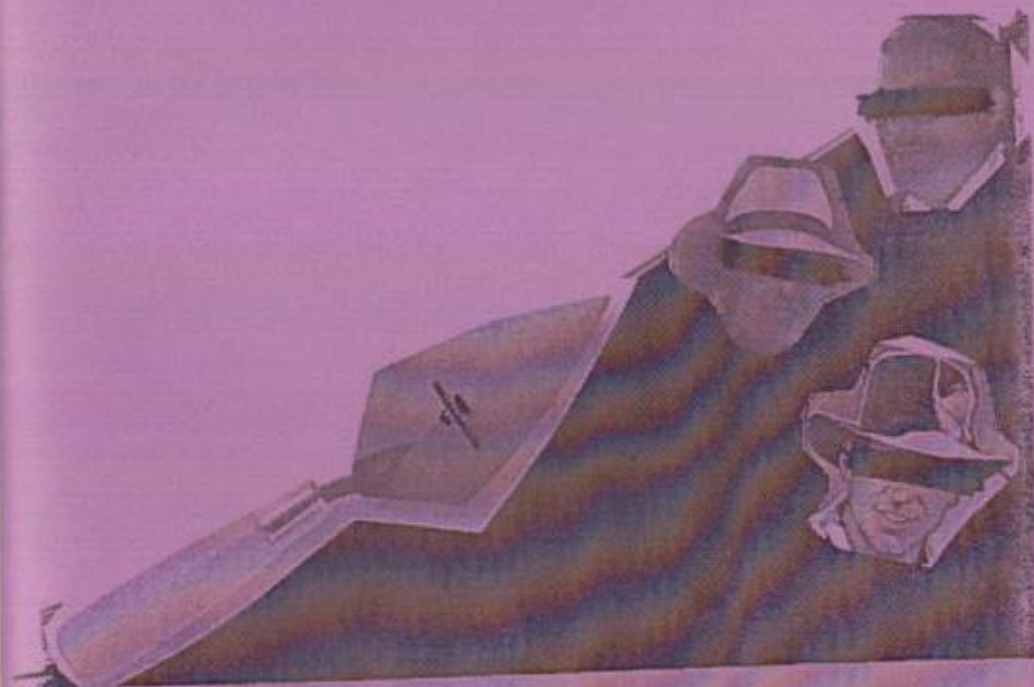


in DIGNANT



ARCHAEOLOGY BY & FOR ACTIVISTS,

FEMINISTS, PUNKS, QUEERS, ANARCHISTS,

& COPROLITE DISTURBERS.

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Background illustrations and cover design by Meghan Walley

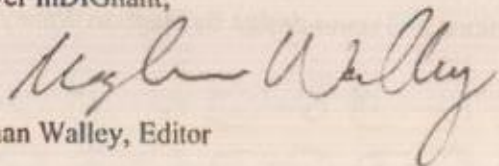
This zine was born of discontent.

It is the kind of discontent felt by archaeologists, all weirdos in our own right, who have become confined and restless socially, politically, and academically. The kind of discontent felt by ex-archaeologists who have left or been pushed out of the discipline in favour of their own health and happiness. It is also the discontent experienced by non-archaeologists who have been named, but not truly heard, in the realm of community-based research.

The idea was to provide a space where people could be creative and subversive, either in their content or chosen medium, and to articulate perspectives that are not represented in academic literature. I contacted the most passionate people I know and invited them to submit something—an essay, a poem, a sketch, a comic, a photograph—and to my surprise, most of them jumped on the opportunity. I intentionally left the themes broad and have done minimal editing beyond formatting adjustments. The result is a collaborative work with a voice of its own. As told by the title it is a bringing together of activists, feminists, punks, queers, anarchists, and folks who have big things to say but are offered little room to say them. It is a critique of politics, of restrictive norms, of marginalization, and of archaeological identity and practice.

But while it is a critique it is also, at its heart, a love letter. Because even the things we do that appear macabre to most—defleshing animals, unearthing bones, committing entire careers to meditating on the lives of the dead—are to archaeologists, acts of love and devotion. We put such profound care into this strange (dare I say *queer*) work of ours. None of us choose archaeology for the money or the stability (anyone who does will inevitably receive a nasty shock), but are instead driven by an ardent love for what we do. The passion in these pages is an outgrowth of that love and the desire to change archaeology so that it might learn to properly love us back.

Forever InDIGnant,



Meghan Walley, Editor



>>> STEALING TIME <<<

by maresi starzmann

it clicks and clacks, it rattles, it breathes steam, it swallows souls, bodies, and brilliant minds. it has a soul of its own, but it is not a cyborg. it has no heart, no tendons, no connective tissue that give hold to its brutal machinations.

+++

a cyborg is a living, breathing thing, part flesh, part steel. electric currents, pulse, and process. an emergent form, always becoming, it is forever failing to reach completion. the cyborg: a hybrid.

+++

the university refuses hybrid forms. it demonstrates completion, perfection, excellence. what gives it hold is a massive data complex. the university machine produces, manages, distributes, reigns in, predicts, explains. it is a machine that gives answers where no questions have been asked, but it is never answerable.

these are its control mechanisms: class schedules -- attendance sheets -- performance evaluations (figs. 1, 2) -- room bookings -- exam deadlines -- fire drills -- overdue dates. every fine-tuning of the machine a disciplinary measure.

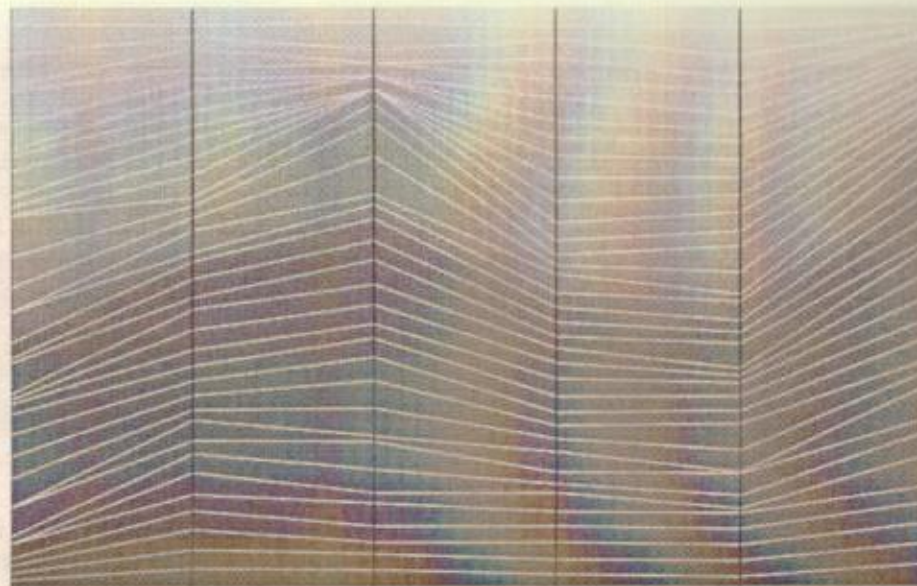


figure 1: partial results from students' course evaluations of the author's teaching performance at mcgill university, translated into a color spectrum graph.

its rhythm is exact, it works 24/7 on 365 days. no sleep no break no interruption. its time too is measured perfectly, beyond human time: machine time, working incessantly, without anything outside of or beyond itself. they tell you there is never enough time, but the tale of chrono-austerity is just another variation of capitalism's foundational myth, and the university eats it up like sugar pie.

input < > output is a perfectly measured equation that leaves little room for anything else -- for risk, for random patterns, or, say, for the endless possibilities that lie in encounters with unpredictability, with ambiguity. that come with movement through

borderless spaces or along the thin edge of the margin. those possibilities that we promise each other in the fleeting touch of shaking hands or quivering hearts.



figure 2. color-coded raw data (percentage results) for select questions answered in students' evaluations of courses taught by the author at mcgill university between 2013 and 2016.

tissue softens, tendons slacken, but not the machine. the machine clicks and clacks, but it doesn't crack.

the cyborg, always unstable, always uncertain, always somehow already messed-up, lives in the underbelly of the machine, but it doesn't operate it. it feeds it, it bleeds into it, it is its soul, but it has lost its own soul, has forgotten its very self. it raves in the steaming basement of this shining, screaming apparatus set to destroy the cyborg, to devour it, to make it part of the machine - and finally, to replace it.

+++

I AM THAT CYBORG. I AM THAT SOUL. and i am mourning the loss of my self.

on some days, my machine parts attack my human flesh. they charge at me, they cut me, bruise me, tear at me, etching my vulnerability into my

the cyborg, always unstable, always uncertain, always somehow already messed-up, lives in the underbelly of the machine, but it doesn't operate it. it feeds it, it bleeds into it, it is its soul, but it has lost its own soul, has forgotten its very self. it raves in the steaming basement of this shining, screaming apparatus set to destroy the cyborg, to devour it, to make it part of the machine - only to replace it.

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I AM THAT CYBORG. I AM THAT SOUL. and i am mourning the loss of my self.

on some days, my machine parts attack my human flesh. they charge at me, they cut me, bruise me, tear at me, etching my vulnerability into my flesh. my scars a steel-cold matrix in hues of purple and blue. they show me how my relationship to my humanness is always precarious, and that to the machine only my machine parts matter.

I AM NOT SAFE HERE. THERE ARE NO GUARANTEES. but every bruise is also a reminder. that's how memory works -- through the body, in the flesh, along the screaming traces of black paint on pale skin. where a forgotten river marks your arm, history house sits squarely on your shoulder, the line of a song travels on your wrist.

+++

we might be cyborgs, but we have memory. remind yourself then that the machine is not a default setting. it might not crack and you cannot shut

it off. but there's a way to mess it up/to steal from it/to make it fall out of rhythm.

STEAL TIME.

>>> be lethargic, be useless -- socialize in hallways. drink wine in your office. eat cake in your classroom.

>>> outcrowd your syllabus. don't be interdisciplinary -- be undisciplinatory, be non-disciplinatory, read irrelevant stuff. go to conferences that aren't meant for you. there, drink their coffee and eat their food but don't pay for a thing. and mostly, waste (their) time.

>>> refuse to multitask and yet, never be just one thing, never provide 'the answer.'

>>> don't teach, don't study -- play. just like you would play an instrument, be a virtuoso. with nothing beyond or above.

>>> think on your feet, but never know a thing safe what doesn't matter.

>>> and when you play with matter, be like an archaeologist -- i mean, pick up what's been forgotten, lost, deemed useless, and thrown out. but don't make a museum either -- loose these things again, forget them, let them sit without a purpose, without a cause, until someone sneaks them off your shelf, adopting those useless things until they, too, have had enough of them.

>>> listen even as you're speaking -- to the random noise in stars.
(they say we're made of stardust?)

>>> know that there are no good maps. in fact,

throw out the map, turn off your computer, get lost wandering in the underbelly of the machine.

+++

and there is your opening -- the crack in the machine that never cracks. the underbelly is that forgotten space inhabited by the otherwise unseen. it's deep, cavernous, open, but there's nothing to be afraid of here, because the walls are soft to the touch. so be in touch, tangentially. never inhabit but dwell, however fleetingly, in the underbelly. keep checking in about the coordinates of that space, which you share with others:

the janitors, the night-time security guards, the night-shift librarians, the adjunct teachers in make-shift offices, the unseen hands and hearts and tendons that keep it all together. the bruised cyborgs. they're everywhere, drifting through the underbelly of the machine like stardust through outer space.

remember: you are that soul. you have a soul.

and you are no longer mourning the loss of your self. you are yourself, because you are part of an organism, not a machine. cyborgs are not things nor are they aliens. they are the alienated other in ourselves. they are the intimate otherness within ourselves that ties us together, that makes us relate. you are other in yourself, and you are yourself only ever in/through the other. with our very existences folded into each other, our souls unfold in the fugitive moments -- when we share the time we've stolen from the machine.

The Excavated Woman

By

Krista Amira



he excavated woman, overlooked and forgotten, her value determined only by the goods that surround her in her grave and often, nothing more. Wrongly interpreted, her legacy suffers for the pernicious presence of androcentricity in archaeology and anthropology. One would expect a change in such methods of thought, but unsympathetic modernity still sees a great deal of gender misinterpretation in burial finds due to cursory assumptions, ingrained prejudices and the swift hand of social media. Our peers, champing at the bit for more macabre material to feed a dark ego. So what of the woman? Why does she remain an object discounted, even after the benign brush of a weary trowel across her unstirred bones? What evidence exists of her unfortunate paucity in the periodically fallacious timeline of history, and where does she exist in the written words of man and the self-proclaimed conscientious archaeologist?

We sought her body in Old Russia, a Viking Age Varangian, for she was omitted from ink voraciously spilled across parchments by centuries old pen. Only until anthropologist Anne Stalsberg saw her there did we know her true parity to the men with whom she cohabitated, men once thought to have left her famished and blotted out by the call of waters wild. She was found in the earth, buried with scales that told tales of her unwritten contribution to trade. These scales spoke volumes of gender equality only understood when those once misconceived grave goods were re-interpreted, with no attention to our own deep rooted prejudices. In 1974, Stalsberg's work in what was once Old Rus illuminated the role of this excavated woman. Despite scholars' awareness of feminine presence in the archaeological record of Old Rus, their storylines record that

Varangian women were left behind, never once hauled by their men into Eastern Europe. What Stalsberg found, in absoluteness, was that the records written by both women and men alike were erroneous; there were more finds of women's graves than the graves of men.

Exceptionally, the tenacious bones of these women lost were laid to rest with the tools of a trade thought to belong only to the brave and boisterous Varangian men. Medieval sources penned by Rus'ian, Arab and Scandinavian intellectuals boast of audacious warriors whose piracy predominated the activities of Old Rus. But these scales, they have rewritten the book in the favor of women. These small weighing tools spun the threads that would weave a web of research, research that found these free Varangian women were once warriors and matrons. Buried with devices that signify her contribution to the economic micro-unit, it can be determined that tradesman and tradeswoman as terms were not felicitous; the equality of tradesfamily seems more apropos (Stalsberg 2001).

Amidst scales, Stalsberg wrote of swords, large and small, entombed in the dusts of women's graves as well as the burials of young girls who never saw their place as the matron of their familial unit. These swords, were they armament for defense in a perilous afterlife? Or were they conjectures of the power they would have held had these young women lived to flower fully? Upon this, we ruminant. Educated speculation is oft the foundation of the field, but the heart of archaeology should beat with oneness, compassion and brash veracity.

These women, identified by a brooch, a sword, a gemstone or a scale are but ghosts in literature, imperceptible amongst the deeds of the excavated man. But Stalsberg has proven that these excavated

women in particular were not of the antiquated Victorian ideal, *Kinder, Kirche, Kuche* (children, church, kitchen), too frail for education, too meek to be trusted with the "burdens" of men. Rather, these women were the matriarch in the absence of their husband, the dowager in the case of his untimely death. Her contributions to her home, her village, and the story of she, albeit unwritten, exists in the dirt and the ashes of the earth. We, as feminist archaeologists, are conferred to weave the story of these women neglected, these women forgotten. When we brush away the soil and the muck, we must also brush away what remains of androcentric notions in archaeology, releasing the excavated woman from the silence that has oppressed her for so long.

Stalsberg, Anne. "Visible Women Made Invisible: Interpreting Varangian Women in Old Russia." *Gender and the Archaeology of Death*, edited by Bettina Arnold & Nancy L. Wicker, Altamira Press, 2001, pp. 65-79.

@trowel_and_bone

Digging up disabilities

By Amy Chase

Archaeology has recently begun to pride itself on being inclusive-expanding our understandings of the past to include narratives of people who were previously considered to be invisible in the material record, such as women and children. Archaeologists, once predominantly white males, are now considered to be made up of a diverse group of people, and this diversity may help us to understand the past in a different light. While archaeology has certainly made some recent steps in the right direction, marginalized groups are still being left out, both in terms of the demographic of archaeologists themselves, and in their invisibility in our interpretations of the past.

I'm never quite sure if I'm a 'real' archaeologist or not. I study the past, but I don't dig. My physical disabilities will never allow me to dig. Or to kneel to look at an object. Or to camp. Or to hike to a dig site. Having spent my undergrad in an anthropology department, I never considered this to be a problem. I considered myself to be a paleoanthropologist/archaeologist who studied prehistoric art and symbolic behaviour. Much of the material culture I am interested in does not need to be dug up, but can instead be observed in caves. Many of the sites I'm interested in have been dug up decades or even centuries ago, and materials to be analyzed are part of museum collections. I've never needed to dig. And yet, as part of an archaeology department, and a culture of archaeologists, I am often asked about when I will be digging, and told that I am missing out on important experiences, which are essential to all archaeologists.

Digging in the dirt, braving the elements, putting in the hard work, and ending the day or the field season with a sore body is considered to be a badge of honour, a rite of passage as an archaeologist. Field experience on an archaeologist's CV is of utmost importance, and without excavation experience, an archaeologist is often considered to be lacking in skills. As much as we say we are inclusive, and that archaeology encompasses many things, this rite of passage is still central to our identity as archaeologists, an identity which only accounts for able-bodied individuals who can devote the time and energy it takes to dig.

Just as disability is invisible or unaccounted for in archaeologists themselves, disability not accounted for in our interpretations of past peoples. People have always had different abilities. We see this in Neandertals and in Modern Humans alike, and yet, when this becomes apparent in the archaeological record, it is considered to be a special case, or an anomaly. We have yet to write disability into the common narrative of both current archaeologists and into the narratives we create for the past. This is obviously very damaging. It is damaging in that discourages people with different abilities from becoming archaeologists. It is also damaging in that it excludes various perceptions of the world and of the past from our narratives. By not including archaeologists with disabilities, we are limiting our discipline and limiting our understanding of the past-archaeologists inherently project our understanding of the world onto our interpretations of the past, and these interpretations need to include as many different possibilities as they can, in order to engage and begin to understand how different people experienced the world in the past. Digging up artefacts is only part of the story, but it is how we study and interpret those artefacts that matters the most.

Speaking of digging up artefacts- although it is important to gather material culture to study, archaeologists sometimes seem to be hoarders first and on a quest for knowledge about the past second. We have collections in museums that have been sitting, unstudied, for decades, sometimes untouched save for the archaeologist who originally catalogued them. Perhaps archaeologists should be more focused on what the items we do have can tell us about the past, rather than attempting to keep gathering clues and never fully understanding them. The materials don't speak for themselves; as archaeologists, it is our job to speak for them, and we must then be constantly reflecting and theorizing, searching for what we may have missed. I can't dig, but I don't want to dig. There is plenty right here for me to learn from and to understand. Including more people with varied world views, such as disabled people, in our archaeological practice and interpretation, will help us to gather a meaningful understanding of the past and of the diverse groups of people that inevitably lived in it.



"DISCOVERY"

in the beginning

we call this
Science.

feet planted
in Dirt, firmly,
physical.

we champion
Evolution.

absurd, the idea of Earth
only six thousand years old, that
in the beginning, god said
"let there be light," and there was
everything.

every
natural wonder, every
stalactite hung, every
bone embedded in ground, every
organism,
all unchanging under the weight of Physical
processes whose very job it is to
Change,
prepackaged by
god for
'Man'
we call this uneducated.

that Strata layered themselves beneath our feet
as we took our first steps by
His
Grace.
we call this superstition.

yet when we dig, we're still digging for adam.
and when we find his ribs we call them eve (less preserved, sure, these bones decay in acid soil).

but how can we see the earth,
how it moves,
freeze-thaw displacement of Stones and Things,
sites swallowed by rising seas
worlds in flux,
and still accept that in the beginning, god said "let there be Man (The Hunter), and let there be Woman (The Gatherer) and let them be cis and let them be hetero and let them live only to procreate and die.

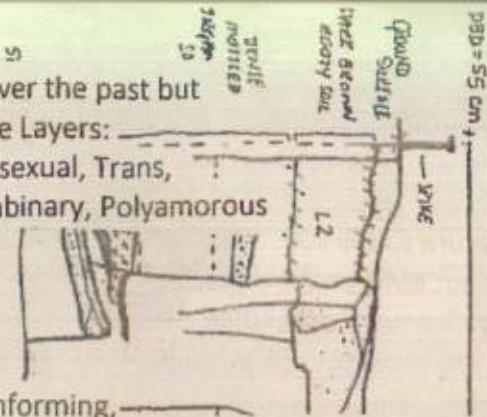
because here's the thing:
i refuse to believe that adam and eve only ever had eyes for each other,
that there wasn't a single ancestor in my lineage who was just as queer as i am.

if you think the bible is unfit to be the intro to archaeology standard,
Know
that the story
of adam and eve is
just
as
ridiculous
as a museum exhibit wherein jesus mounts a velociraptor.

26.3.04

↑ FUTURE SOUL

that if we uncover the past but scrape away the Layers:
Lesbian, Gay, Asexual, Trans,
Two-Spirit, Nonbinary, Polyamorous
Pan
Intersex
Bi
Gender Fluid
Gender Nonconforming,



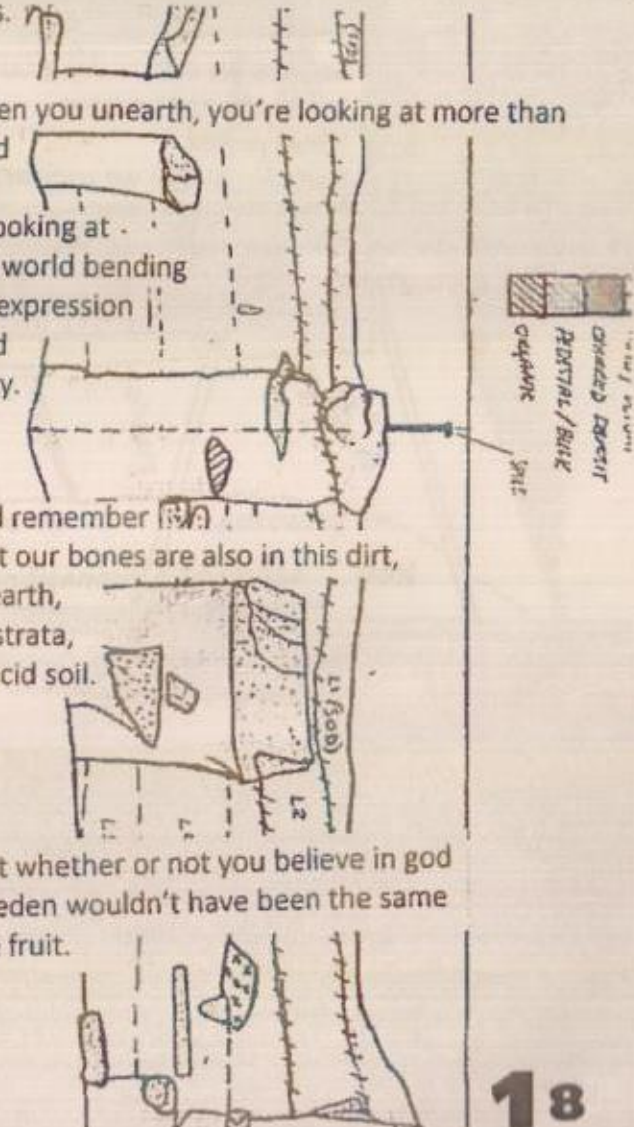
we are taking pages from the same book that missed the mark by 4.5 billion years.

that when you unearth, you're looking at more than Man and Ribs.
you're looking at a whole world bending moving expression stratified humanity.

and remember
that our bones are also in this dirt,
in earth,
its strata,
in acid soil.

SOIL

remember that whether or not you believe in god the garden of eden wouldn't have been the same without a little fruit.



↑ FUTURE

and whether you look to the pages of the bible or to the pages of Nature to tell you about our genesis, you'll never really know if you leave queers in the backdirt.

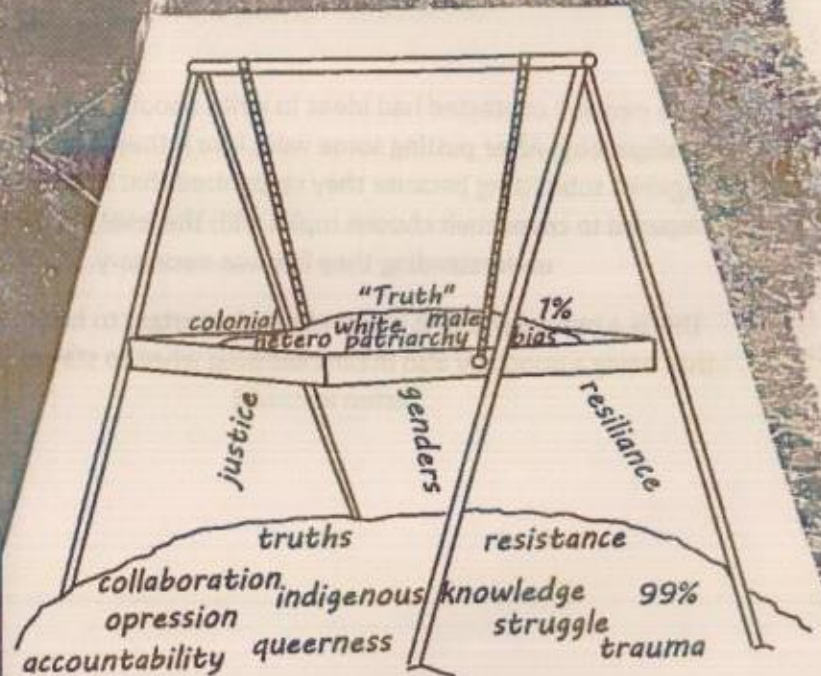
5cm

because we exist in dug ground. in test pits and trenches traces persist. don't forget that we were here too,

in the beginning.

-meghan walley

What we lose to the sieve of "hard science"



[Two people I contacted had ideas to write about archaeology and Indigeneity. After putting some work into it they both decided against submitting because they recognized that they were not prepared to cover their chosen topics with the level of nuance and understanding they felt was necessary.

This is a reminder that it is sometimes important to be vocal, but that being a good ally also means knowing when to stay quiet and listen instead.]

They thought I was going to tell them in order to...
...to...
...to...

...to...
...to...

...to...
...to...
...to...

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Pass the mic.

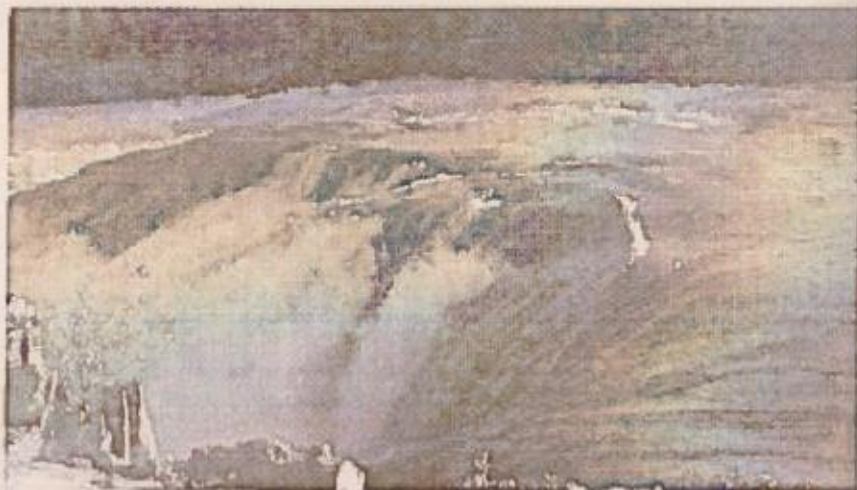
...to...
...to...
...to...

"They Dug Up My Culture"

I live downstream from a mega hydro project being constructed on the land of my ancestors in Labrador, Canada. The land I call home next to the river that I hold sacred. The same river that took the life of my older brother back in 1993, yet I still hold such a love and respect for this water.

Muskrat Falls was a place on a mighty river long before it was ever the name of a hydro project. Grand River or Mistashipu was the name of the river before Joey Smallwood joined Newfoundland into confederation and renamed it the Churchill River. It seems culture goes that way with colonization; someone from away can come in and call it "theirs" and everyone else who called it home before then must adapt.

It's hard to explain what it feels like to have your culture taken, renamed, and repurposed. The land, water, and lives for generations all comprise a culture. When the Muskrat Falls hydro project came to our home, many of us fought it; many of us are still fighting it. We are trying our best to protect our lives, land, and water.



I will never forget in the early days of the project. Since fall of 2012 I would go weekly to the north side of Muskrat Falls, what they now call the North

Spur. I would go and document with pictures and let it sink into my spirit that someday I would be responsible to tell the story. See I am indigenous to these lands, and therefore a caretaker with responsibilities. These include responsibilities to the land, to my ancestors, to the river, and to the next generations. It grew harder every week to go there as more trees were removed, more destruction took place, and more and more the place I always knew on the river bank next to Spirit Mountain (which the 'company' now calls the rocky knoll) looked less and less like the lands of my ancestors.



One day in fall of 2013 during one of these weekly trips I came upon a site that broke my spirit and heart into more pieces than I could ever try to put back together. I saw the squares of mosses and brush removed, the outlines of these squares roped off with different coloured flagging tape. Buckets inside the squares, everything removed right down to the clay and sand. Steel mesh grids closed in by wooden squares propped up with mounts of dirt beneath them. There were five huge marked out areas with these barren grids within them. I knew right away what I was seeing. They were literally digging up my culture. They were digging up the traces of my ancestors and showing me exactly where camps existed, where

artifacts were being found, and where our Labrador people once sat many years ago. Security drove up to me in their trucks telling me to not touch anything. I was shattered! How dare they tell me to not touch anything but allow a company to come and dig up the pieces of history my ancestors had left behind. And to know they were digging up these pieces of culture to make way for their hydro project. That was hardest to reconcile in my heart. They weren't digging culture up to protect these areas and mark them as world heritage sites even though they found over 70,000 artifacts some dating back 3000 years. No, they weren't doing all this to protect anything besides government's project. They were getting the culture of indigenous Labradorians out of the way for their colonial crown corporation's project.

I fell to my knees and sobbed, I begged forgiveness from my ancestors, and I pleaded for Mother Earth to step in and stop them. I laid tobacco down outside the marked off areas. My tears were mixing with the tobacco and dirt as I prayed. A part of my soul was lost that day, I'll never be able to get that back. It was the same as if the workers boxed up a part of me along with the artifacts.



I went to my Elders and I knew I had to do something. I worked with others and went back and held ceremony there. We laid tobacco and prayers at each site. The archaeologists involved asked if they could be a part of the ceremony, the Stantec people. We allowed it even though it hurt knowing they were responsible. I knew they needed to see how it impacted us to have them take our culture away in boxes. We held pipe ceremony. We lit a sacred fire and offered tobacco to the fire along with a plate of food and a salmon. We offered tobacco to the river. We played our drums and sang and held each other. We cried and shared food and laughed recalling memories at this sacred place. Then we cried again realizing that our history was not the only thing being wiped away by this mega project. We knew that our future ability to make memories here and to have our artifacts, our culture, found someday was lost. It was lost in the name of development. And now the history and culture of those who call this land home – the Innu, the Inuit, the Metis, and Labradorian Settlers – is gone, boxed up with tags and descriptions. The spirits of the land cannot be catalogued. This is what digging up culture feels like.

Denise Cole, Land Protector and Labrador Inuit

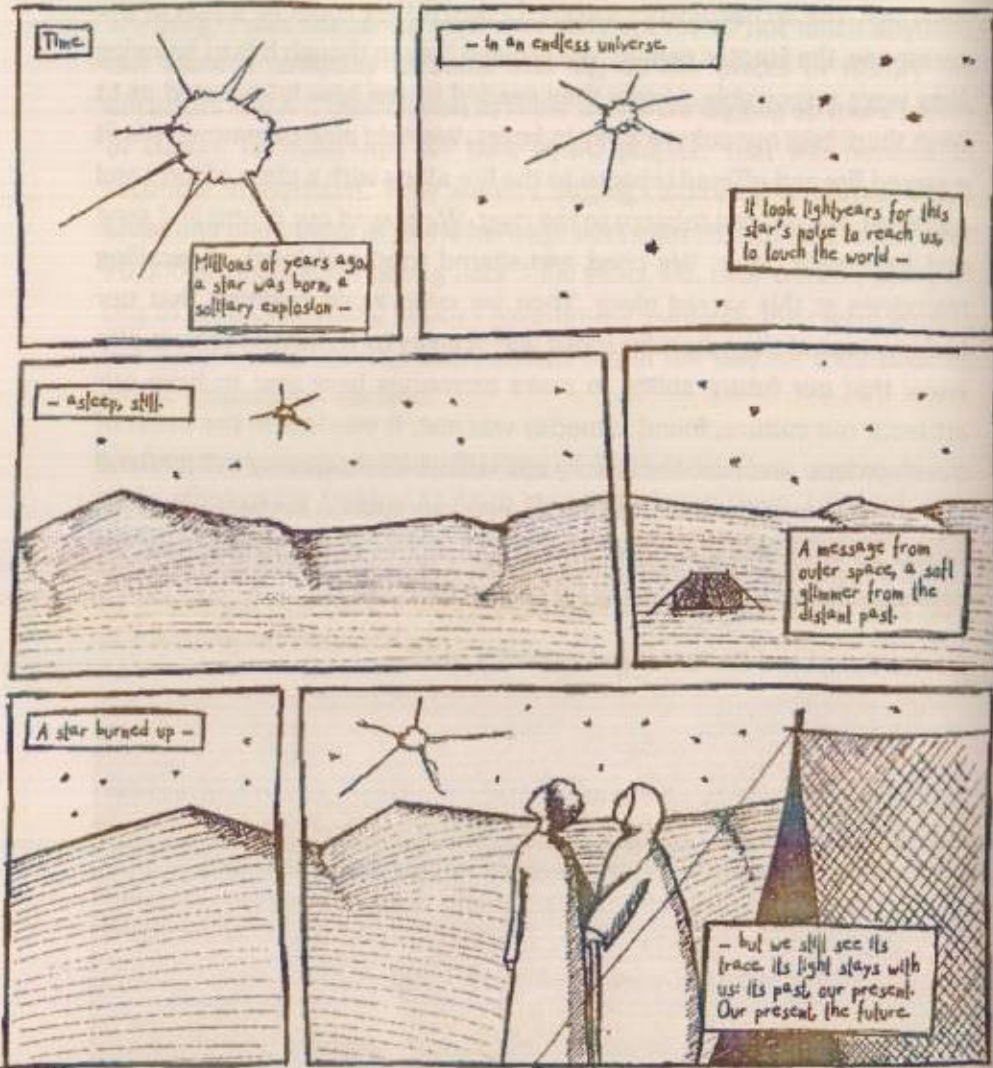
Labrador Land Protectors: We are Protectors of land, water, and life! We are concerned citizens standing up against the Muskrat Falls hydroelectric mega-project in Labrador, Canada. We believe the environmental, humanitarian, and economic impacts of this mega-dam are too costly to the present and future generations! Together we can and must #ShutMuskratDown! Please join us!

FB Page: <https://www.facebook.com/labradorlandprotectors/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/protectlabrador>

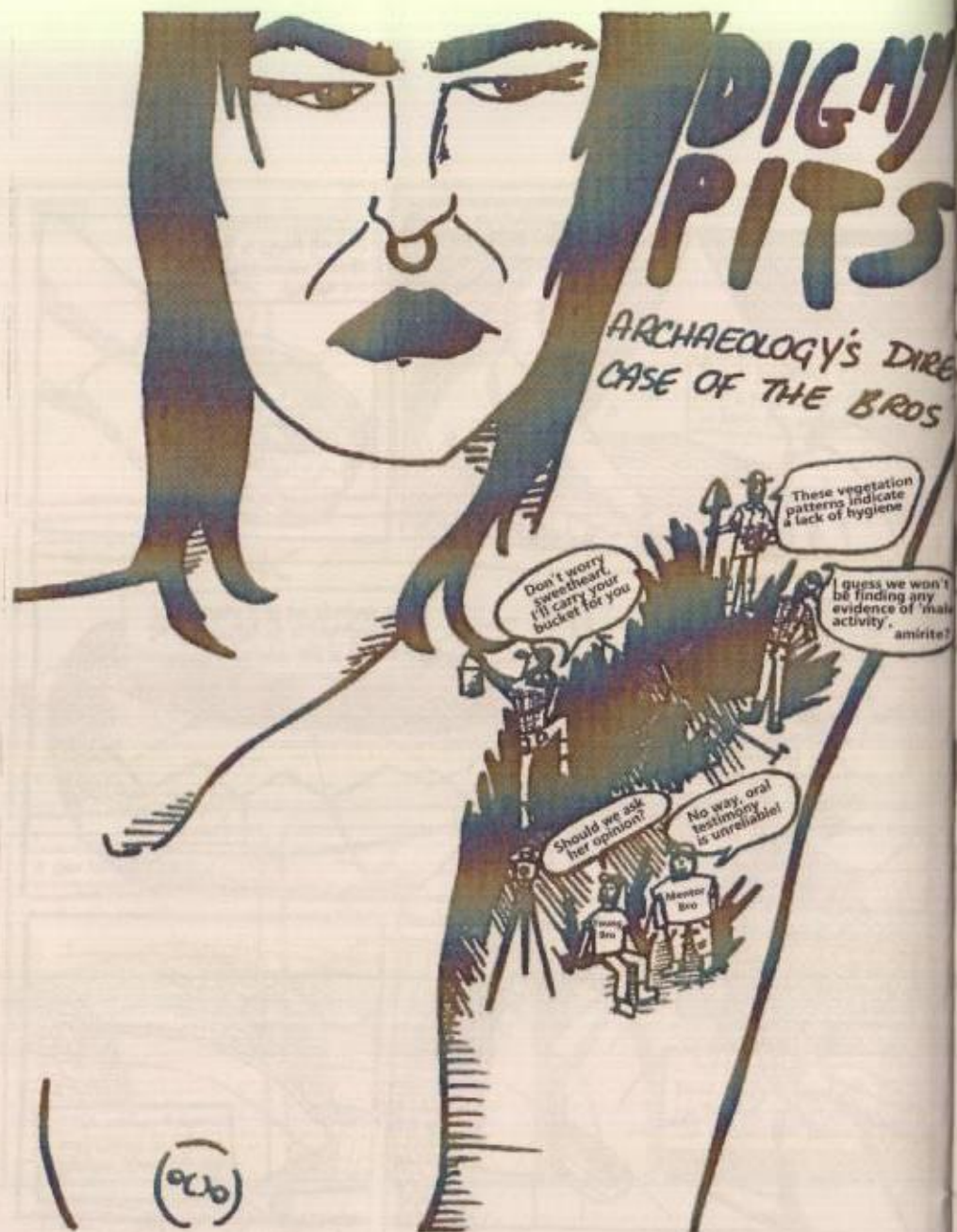
Labrador Land Protectors Legal Fund:

<https://fundrazr.com/labradorlandprotectors>



The Ancient one





The above image was the title page of a feminist pipe dream that eventually spat out InDIgnant instead. It expresses the exasperation women and female-bodied people often feel in the field, when Archaeology Bros' *innocent* comments make our bodies and ideas feel co-opted, invaded, infested. —M.W

Being an Island: On Expected Loneliness By Geneviève Godin

As I begin writing (or rambling, really) on the topic of loneliness, I am plagued by the same thoughts many of us have had—often—and will probably continue to have—a lot. Will anyone care? Will anyone find it worthwhile? Most of all, will anyone relate?

In a way, I am writing this for myself. Not really as a cathartic release, but because I believe in little stories, in ordinary things, and in everyday lives. I think there is power in recognizing them, and I think there are times I would have felt less lonely if I had known, or known of people like myself. It becomes much harder to feel alienated when there are dozens of you in the lonely corner. In a way, I know they are out there, but there is little record of their presence. We walk in and out of our collective chronic loneliness, all of us looking at the ground, hoping no one recalls our visit or calls us out on it. Because we're being bad.

We know that loneliness is bad, because we've been told that it is. It is a societal health crisis. It supposedly makes people sick, and alienation makes them do dangerous things. In itself, it is an intricate concept: being lonely both elicits pity and the sense that there must be something wrong. It is at once asocial and unfair, as a simultaneous rejection of sociability and the apparent inability to attain it in the first place. When we declare ourselves lonely, we identify ourselves as the antithesis of happiness, the misfit, the queer, the ones who have shamefully failed to pour the foundations true Western happiness builds on.

Through conversations, I have found loneliness to be a very personal experience. No surprise here. For some of us it is indeed intrinsically tied to happiness, but for others it is not. For myself, loneliness is a lens through which I look at the world, a fog of sorts, and it becomes most strongly felt when my bonds with others are not as deep as I would like them to be. It is in this discrepancy between desire and reality that loneliness dwells—incalculable, unpredictable, and most often inarticulate, but very real nonetheless. In its simplest manifestation, it boils down to a feeling of non-connectedness.

You can be sociable and still be lonely, and this loneliness can be interrupted by moments of bonding that persist for some time after their occurrence, but eventually fade. There is a difference between mere presence and connectedness, which to me is best expressed as having shared experiences, striving for the same social and political ideals, working together towards the same goals, or having a common interest that plays an important role in how we define ourselves.

Attempts to discuss loneliness can be met with a "you made your bed, now lie in it" mindset by the most well intended of our peers. While loneliness remains a taboo and a difficult reality to discuss, some of us are naturally expected to be lonely as a result of the way we live and the things we do. The elderly are lonely because everyone's dying. Heavy drinkers are lonely because they're assholes. Teenagers are lonely because they're dumb. Of course you're lonely. If you were a well-adjusted, financially stable, heterosexual, monogamous, and highly extroverted young adult, you wouldn't have to be lonely. It is both tragic, and fully expected.

Interestingly, academics—from the grad student to the faculty member—appear to be expected to become lonely at some point in their lives, and to maintain some form of loneliness throughout. The difference is that there is glamour in it. If you have time to form deep bonds with others, you

must be doing it wrong. If you are not utterly bitter and miserable, you must not be working hard enough or truly striving for success. The lonely academic or the lonely student is the man who is an island, hardworking and blissfully content with their own thoughts. There is something enviably cool about the cynical academic who drinks too much coffee, goes on worldwide adventures, and refuses to be held accountable to anyone. Their loneliness is noble insofar as it is productive and paints a romantic portrait of an independent, strong-willed individual.

In placing those demands and upholding such expectations, it becomes implicit that we will grow from our loneliness. It is a rite of passage for joining the "you know how it is..." club, as you cancel dinner plans until no one invites you anymore. I think this is wrong. As any loner with a laptop would, I googled the thing. There are plenty of tips out there, but I will generously summarize them for you: if you are lonely, stop it.

I don't recall where I read it and I don't care to look it up, but one blog suggested stepping outside of your comfort zone and pretending you connect so that you can grow into a better, more successful person. Loneliness is good, the post said. It tells you it's time to evolve beyond that loneliness. But while it is there, you must be grateful for it, because only then can you truly see yourself. I also think both of these things are wrong. It is precisely in those moments of meaningful and nurturing connectedness with others that I grow the most and come to know myself best. Isolation, distress, discomfort, anxiety—none of these things are required to learn how to be good to yourself and to others. You do not need to suffer to be kind, and happiness shouldn't have to be earned through pain.

Identifying as queer has long been associated with such expectations of loneliness, suffering, and unhappiness. Historically, it has been a catchall label for failed ways of life, often pathologized and always outside the norm. The present-day idea that "it gets better" relies on the assumption that it's going to get real bad in the first place. In failing to meet the standards of Western partnership, citizenry, and happiness, the queer has a price to pay and stripes to earn. Moreover, the pictures of queer fulfillment presented to us in the media tend to conform to a very specific narrative, and follow a dissonantly heterosexual pattern: that of the happy metropolitan queer in a long-term, monogamous, stable relationship with a

realized or heavily implied reproductive potential. Perhaps it is because it exists outside of Western ideas of happy, accomplished sociality that we find loneliness so scary.

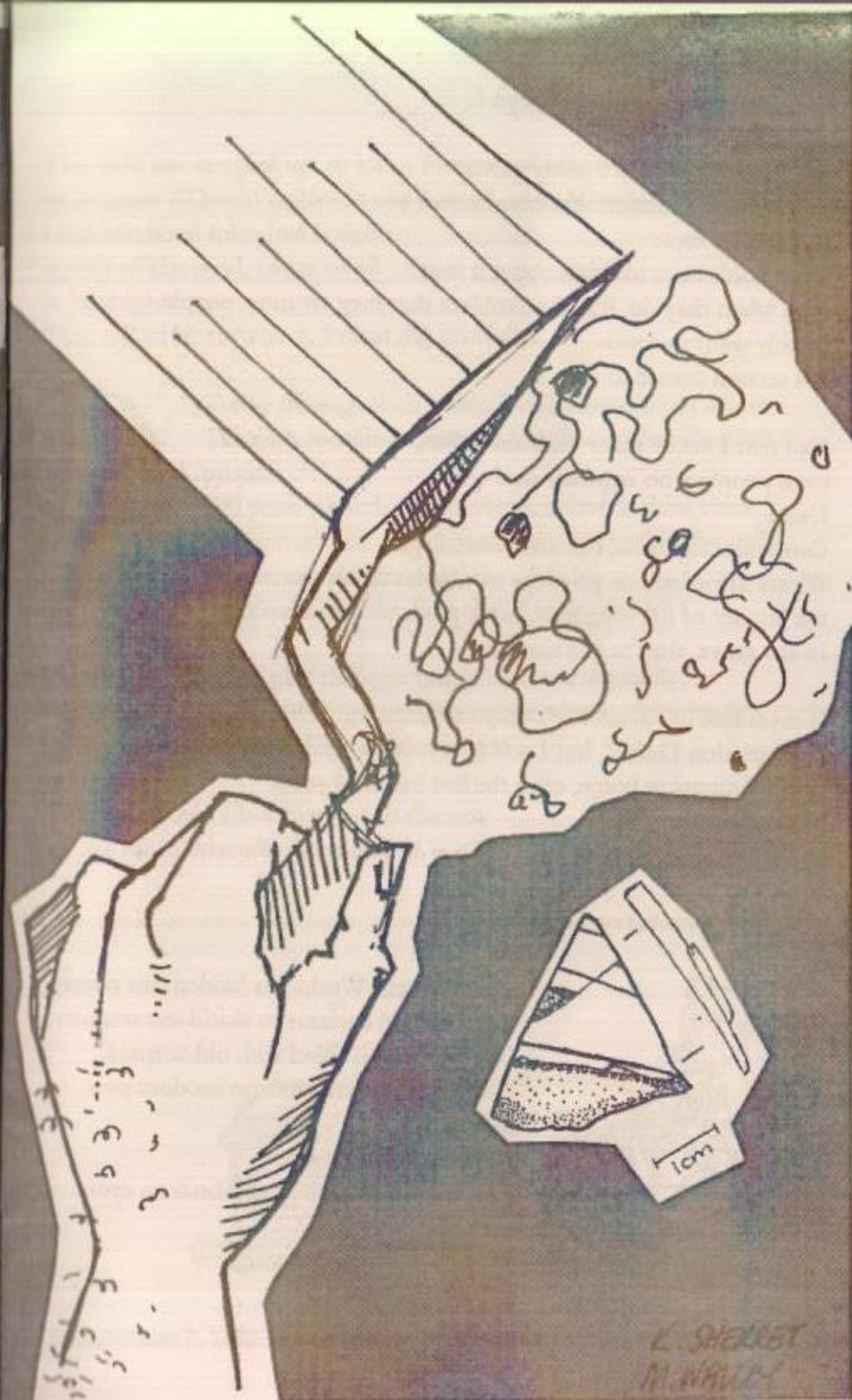
At the heart of queer loneliness specifically, there is something threatening. Here, let's look at the case of female queer loneliness. Perhaps due to the hypersexualisation of the female-identified body, desires for connectedness are to be regarded with suspicion. The asexual is marketed to the straight man as a challenge, the trans as a novelty, the lesbian as a spectacle. In attempts to reach out and create lasting bonds of care, reciprocity, and closeness resides the promise or the threat that there could be more. That the queer body could at any moment long for, and attempt to grasp something that the straight body isn't willing to give. From the bullied LGBTQI+ teen accused of checking others out in the locker room to the field worker sensing a discomfort from colleagues with whom living quarters are shared, there is an assumption of inexorable and uncontrollable queer sexuality.

Maybe, then, it is something in those taken-for-granted Western societal norms and their dislike for non-conformity that makes the queer lonely, that makes loneliness threatening, and that alienates so many of us. Maybe it is our ideas of what it means to be properly social that need to change.

Maybe we are pointing fingers in the wrong directions when we put the onus solely on the lonely folks. And maybe loneliness is not the result of lacking in sociability, but a symptom of the shortcomings of sociality itself.

Concluding on a somewhat utopian tone might be too predictable and unsatisfying for the reader, but you've already made it this far so please humor me. I don't know if I want to normalize loneliness and detach it entirely from the experience of being queer. I don't know if I want being lonely to be an acceptable thing, because I certainly don't enjoy my own loneliness. I endure it, but it does not benefit or improve me in any shape or form. What I think it can do, however, is bring people together—in academia, yes, but also in the world at large.

I want us to stop being afraid of loneliness because it deviates, it bothers, and it doesn't do what we're meant to be doing. I want us to enter a culture of acknowledgement, wherein the experiences of the alienated are visible and spoken about, even if they remind you of the terrifying possibility of your own loneliness. In doing so, we connect through this loneliness and can be brought together in solidarity, rather than the individuality and the one-man island we are told is a by-product of thinking really deep thoughts. I no longer want to have to fight, be ashamed, or play pretend to gain some sense of connectedness. Most of all, I want us to care recklessly for others and for ourselves—for our shared shortcomings, our everyday disappointments, our inevitable fuck-ups, all of the things that constrain and enable us, and for our collective and immense loneliness.



Speak often of Death. Robyn L.

Hi, I'm _____ and I study graves
as a look of bewilderment comes over a
layperson's face;
They don't have to think about it much.
And when they do, it's not a subject that they, or most people
usually want to touch.
It's second nature to me.

Not that I know many who have died, or
even people who regularly deal with
Death;
Dirt under my nails, I'm an archaeologist.
We are afforded this privilege to witness a moment,
the last act of life long past, one's pious atonement.
In the grave, they're not sleeping.

If taxes and death are life's only certainty
then, pardon Defoe¹, but I will take neither fearfully.
Our moments at home, over the last hundred years
were outshone
by *life-prolonging, death-defying, quality of life* removing moments
til they're gone.
It's a sealed casket on astroturf.



Our Western World has hidden this course
away behind curtains to shield out remorse,
but the earth is filled with old corpses.
And to hide them all from modern eyes
would take
Unspeakable forces.
Last month I brushed soil from an eye-
socket.

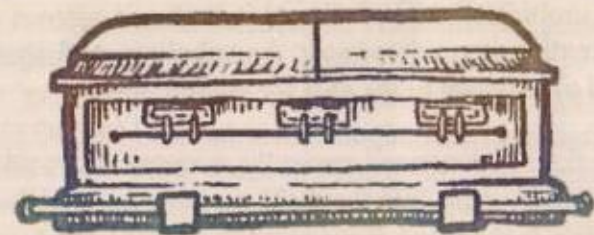
¹ Defoe, D. 1726. *The Political History of the Devil*.

This field has stepped up, to join a movement across countries
to be more #DeathPositive in our actions, and through our studies.
High Medieval folks had it right;
agency of the dead, sways us all
in hindsight.
They might be anywhere, I must dig carefully.




Today through their study, I've become more aware
Through speaking Often of Death, no time like now to
prepare.
400 years passed, embalming was not in their veins.
They once took to the earth, reconnected in the soils,
and we can do the same.
I dreamt about the first skull I uncovered.

We connect with the past through bones of those we study,
I would take that as a privilege, to witness 'the wreck of the body'².
To know where we're going and share what
we've learned,
If my words can allow just one to discern:
It's not morbid to talk about Death.



² Yeats, William B. 1928. *The Tower*.



Untitled

Early last summer, one of the rare sunny days in Manchester, I was sitting outside a bar on Canal street, Manchester's gay village. My MA supervisor, promising me free drinks, persuaded me to come to meet her friends. There we meet her friend and her companion, an Irish artist. After a drink or two, the Irish woman turned to me and begun talking about her son who was experiencing a crisis of masculinity (was it do with sexual orientation? Or something more fluid? The exact nature of the conversation escapes me). She asked me how I made my own masculinity, what my experience was. At the time, I had no real answer, nothing profound that I sensed she was looking for. All I could tell her was I managed to make my own.

Constructing my own version of a queer masculinity, or simply being myself, resulted from my engagement with a series of interesting events. One, particularly relevant, bisects two aspects of my identity: being gay and being an archaeologist. Specifically, it explores a dissonance between contemporary ideals and going into the 'field'.

I have what some have called 'gay voice', meaning that my sexual orientation is apparent once I start speaking. What does this have to do with archaeology? Why should you care about the time I felt insecure? In writing this confession of sorts, I hope to draw attention to a strong tension within archaeology.

In classrooms and seminar circles, archaeology celebrates multivocality, championing the perspective that the past is composed of multiple perspectives not just one as often it seems. Increasing attention is paid towards the subaltern and alternative forms of lived experience in the past (or contemporary).

However, the field is discussed statically, a space where one must be tough. It is as if going into the field requires one conform to a specific type, one that embodies the idealized 'boy's club' member.

Someone who can work outside, isn't afraid to talk 'banter' (locker room talk, as it were). The archaeologist is a real man's man. In effect, we are being told that fieldwork is still a boy's club, a predominantly straight white one at that.

A counter-point to my argument could very well be: but we don't want students to underestimate the strenuous nature of fieldwork. Yes, fieldwork, like any form of labour outside in varying weather conditions can be daunting. However, the language we use, to denote toughness, alienate those of us who do not fit within typical forms of masculinity. The point is not to forsake illustrating the hazards of field work, but rather to open up a space for changing the dialogue, creating a space for celebrating individual contributions that do not rely upon older notions of what an archaeologist should be. It doesn't help that the idea of archaeologists, as Indiana Jones, types persists within the public imagination.

Queer, and other alternative types of experiences, have yet to be fully integrated within archaeological practice.

I've heard children exhibit shock and say "women can be archaeologists" while witnessing some of my best friends excavate. I've heard countless horror stories from other queer and female archaeologists about being assigned 'archaeological house work' since they allegedly couldn't handle excavation, or being having to find inventive ways to hide tampons from male colleagues or face social ridicule. My own experience consists of strange looks, or an eye brow raise, when I tell people I am an archaeologist. When I bring up their visible shock, they usually laugh it off and tell me I just don't look like an archaeologist. As someone, a socio-cultural anthropologist who themselves is part of the LGBTQ+ family, put it I have 'gay voice'. Prior to this point, I had not paid much attention to the fact I was an archaeologist who happened to be gay, let alone did I ever think about my voice. However, being told that because I speak with a specific intonation somehow disqualified me from doing archaeology caused a crisis of confidence.

I always thought I was 'tough' enough for fieldwork. I spent my summer's outdoors, hiking, camping and backpacking. I wore flannel and hiking boots (Obviously, this meant I was tough right?). However, I worried my 'gay voice' would signal my inability to work long days outside in various weather conditions, to tolerate getting dirty. In many ways, I feared having stereotypes projected onto me simply because of the sound of my voice.

This was my 'fuck-it' moment

In many ways, I have been exceptionally lucky in that many of my field experiences have been queer positive. Field experience was extraordinary for a variety of reasons. My field school had very high queer representation, out of around 30 people, 7 of us (it could have been 8 or 9) identified as falling somewhere along the LGBTQ+ spectrum. At one point we all worked together in a single trench, affectionately dubbed the rainbow trench. After this, I became fully comfortable with being a queer archaeologist. Often I'd transform my own queerness into jokes, such as my ability to notice acute colour changes in the soil (Queer Eye for soil change). Since then I have had the pleasure of working on as a trench supervisor on a project run by a queer woman. In this environment, being queer wasn't something that prevented someone from being tough, but was outright embraced. I mean, we did even have a massive pink poodle sculpture on site one day (if that doesn't scream queers doing fieldwork, I don't know what does).

Not all experiences are like mine. I've meet people who have altered their voice to sound like a 'man' and people who refer to their girlfriend as their boyfriend. In some cases, fieldwork is a space which forces people back into a closet. In saying this, I fully acknowledge my privileged position having a 'fuck it' moment and then working in environments where being queer doesn't impact my ability. Perhaps it is time field practices begin to reformat their language, one that does not celebrate one kind of archaeologist, but embraces all.



M. HILLEY

Ian Petty
Feb. 21, 2017

In Which Donald Trump is Incompatible with Archaeological Employment

I am an American archaeologist, currently living and studying in Newfoundland, Canada and I, like many of my colleagues, are presently staring into the abyss of landing archaeological employment after our studies are complete. The field of archaeological employment, specifically within the context of cultural resource management in the United States, currently affords an already narrow margin of successfully landing steady employment. That margin continues to swell ever shut with the constant influx of archaeological graduates. Whether one possesses years of prior experience on a CV or a single field school, the frequency of jobs available fails to keep up.

Luckily, some of us have managed success through navigating the tumultuous world of permanent archaeological employment after making the dive into the hyper-competitive foray of pursuing work for the few federal agencies that hire archaeologists. The bulk of these positions come up through agencies including the National Park Service as the top employer year in and year out, and the United States Forest Service. The ever-present thought of future employment has brought feelings of excitement in the past under the guise of geographic uncertainty with "Where do I want to move next?!" as the main theme. While still present, the excitement that accompanies this geographic hopscotch in pursuit of archaeological employment is undercut with the knowledge that Donald Trump is currently the President of the United States. The man is at best, your oft-incoherent drunk uncle, and at worst, a malignant narcissist and an ill-educated cancer. All in all, a piss-poor collection of atoms.

Within his first three weeks in office, Trump has extended his overtly negative influence to archaeology, albeit indirectly, through

the implementation of a federal hiring freeze on January 23rd. The freeze, although temporary, is in place for 90 days and during a critical window in federal hiring. This timing undoubtedly hampers the efforts of these agencies to hire the seasonal employment, archaeologists included, that they depend upon in time for the rush of visitors to national parks and federal lands at large.

While the implementation of a federal hiring freeze isn't new, with previous instances occurring several times during past administrations, the rationale for this particular instance is naïve and politically motivated. As justification for the freeze of 2017, Trump and company have stated that it's time to trim the bloated federal workforce and to fast track the procedure for firing underperforming employees.

Addressing the first issue, the number of employees actively employed in the federal workforce is hovering right about where it was during the Kennedy administration in the early 1960's. The federal workforce actually reached its peak level of employment during the early 90's has been on the decline ever since, due in part to federal agencies seeing their budgets cut back ever further as the years march on. So in the end, the term bloated doesn't aptly apply given the historical context supplied by federal employment statistics over the last 50 odd years.

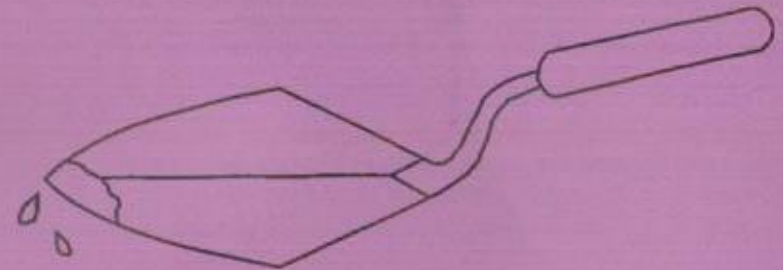
As for the second point of easing or outright eliminating the regulations around firing federal workers who are underperforming in their assigned role, I agree to a slim extent. Having seen firsthand the bureaucratic nightmare it takes to even formally reprimand an employee who is fully deserving of such an action, I suspect it's a stark contrast to the firing procedures in place through most other lines of work. Once you're in a federal position, it's near impossible to be fired, even if you're wholly incompetent and outright damaging in your role. Yes, it should be easier to fire these people who don't fulfill the duties of their assigned role but beyond that, Trump's logic finds itself unsure of how to proceed as critical thought doesn't appear to be a part of his mental repertoire. The

child acts on a whim and in strictly reactionary fashion. I'd be surprised to see two coherent thoughts follow one another back to back out of his cheeto visage. These agencies, facing continuous budget cuts and sensing a renewed threat of hiring freezes in the future would rather endure an underperforming employee rather than fire them given that if they let them go, there's not a chance in hell they'll have the ability or the money to replace them in the future. As a result, this hiring freeze rather locks the problem within the system, as most agencies would choose to soldier on with the team they have rather than lose an employee. The reasoning behind this most recent freeze is asinine and is presently sowing lasting damage within the functionality of these various agencies. Grinding the hiring of 8-10,000 seasonal federal employees to an immediate halt won't ever produce a positive impact no matter how the Republicans choose to spin it.

With cultural resources already receiving declining funding within these federal agencies, notably the National Park Service, continued budget cuts and the ravings of a would-be dictator have some serious implications for finding steady archaeological employment in the federal sector. The number of available positions within the cultural resources departments of these agencies is dwindling. Coupled with the real possibility under Trump's administration of the deregulation of environmental impact assessments, CRM is facing a similar crisis with the threat of losing thousands of potential projects across the nation if the EPA is systemically dismantled as their new head, Scott Pruitt intends to do.

Looking southward for employment at the country I've known as home for 27 years is looking increasingly bleak. Steady work within CRM has been difficult to obtain for a while now for those stuck within the perpetual cycle of shovelbumming and with this yet further damage under Trump to the hiring powers that be for archaeologists within the federal sector, the prospect of future archaeological employment in the US is increasingly daunting.

*"Out damned spot! Out I say! (...) What need we fear
who knows it, when none can call our power to account?"
-Macbeth, Shakespeare*



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