Of Monsters and Mothers: Affective Climates and Human-Nonhuman Sociality in Kathy Jetn̄il-Kijiner's "Dear Matafele Peinam"

Angela L Robinson

In 1971, US National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger responded to the plight of Marshall Islanders suffering from effects of the deadly US nuclear test program with, "There are only 90,000 people out there. Who gives a damn?" (Oberdorfer 1971). This framework of disposability is not new for Indigenous peoples. Indeed, within the United States, settler colonialism relies on the disposability of Indigenous bodies in order to acquire Indigenous lands and resources. In Oceania, however, it is not only Indigenous bodies that are considered disposable but also Indigenous lands and waters. Inhabited islands are framed as appropriate sites for detonating nuclear bombs, oceans on which Indigenous peoples rely are seen as perfect dumping grounds for radioactive waste, and, with the recent effects of climate change, entire islands risk being submerged under rising sea levels while wealthy corporations and governments stand by. This framework of disposability has been inherent to colonial projects in Indigenous Oceania for centuries, and climate change is one of the most pressing arenas in which this colonial discourse is evident today.

This article begins by exploring the colonial conditions of climate change and its subsequent material effects in Oceania, challenging recent theorizations of the Anthropocene by highlighting the ways in which Indigenous Oceania is disproportionately affected by climate change effects, a situation that mirrors unequal colonial relations of power. The maintenance of these unequal relations of power within the discourse of climate change importantly relies on the manipulation of public feeling and affect, thus necessitating an understanding of the affective states that circulate around

The Contemporary Pacific, Volume 32, Number 2, 311–339
© 2020 by University of Hawai'i Press

climate change and its effects. In particular, an examination of the production of doubt and apathy within climate change debates reveals that the material outcomes of these affects perpetuate colonialism in Oceania by furthering land dispossession, resource depletion, cultural loss, and impoverishment.

However, affects are never static or singular. Thus, while climate change functions in many ways as an affective regime of colonialism, this regime is dismantled through Indigenous Oceania's affects, epistemologies, and ontologies, as exemplified by Marshallese poet and activist Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner's poem "Dear Matafele Peinam" and its performance at the United Nations (UN) Climate Summit in New York on 23 September 2014. Through a close reading of the poem and performance, I argue that Jetñil-Kijiner's use of experiential and embodied knowledges, which inform the affects that circulate in the performance, intervenes into the colonial affective regime of climate change. Furthermore, Jetñil-Kijiner's evocation of Indigenous epistemes and ontologies regarding nonhuman entities points to forms of Indigenous intercorporeal sociality that can provide alternative frameworks for thinking through climate change and its effects. Ultimately, this article returns to the central figure of the Anthropocene—the human—to track how it has moved through colonial anthropocentrism, or the privileging of the "human," and has been productively recast in Jetñil-Kijiner's poem and performance.

The Colonialism of Climate Change

Collectively, Oceania produces the lowest levels of greenhouse gas emissions in the world, yet it is the region most critically affected by climate change impacts (Barnett and Campbell 2010, 10). A 2014 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report found that the effects of climate change are particularly evident in small island nations and will continue to be so as these effects increase (IPCC 2014). Since the Industrial Revolution, the development of Pacific Rim countries in Asia and the Americas has contributed to a vast increase in greenhouse gas emissions, particularly carbon dioxide. In 2017, these countries contributed a staggering 53.3 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, and they are consistently identified as the largest producers, with the United States alone responsible for 24 percent of all global emissions.[1] Meanwhile, Oceania produces less than 1 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, yet islands face rising sea levels, coastal erosion, and drought. Ocean temperatures

and acid levels are rising, freshwater resources are being contaminated with salt water, and coral reefs are bleaching (US Fish and Wildlife Service 2011), placing Oceania directly at the forefront of the devastating effects of climate change.[2]

This dramatic change in our environment has led to the development of the term "Anthropocene," which describes "a new recognition that humans have changed not only the earth's climate, but the earth itself" (Luciano 2015). Feminist literary scholar Dana Luciano importantly questioned the widespread use of the term by arguing that "the 'Anthropocene' was not brought about by all members of the species it names" (2015), stressing how the causes and subsequent effects of climate change are not distributed equally among the human population. As environmental science scholars Jon Barnett and John Campbell similarly pointed out, "The societies that are most responsible for the emissions of greenhouse gases are those that are least vulnerable because of the adaptive capacity conferred by the wealth they have generated largely through polluting forms of development" (2010, 10). The capacity to adapt to large-scale effects of greenhouse gas emissions is also lacking in the most affected regions, such as Oceania, due to legacies of colonial dispossession that have exacerbated the impoverishment of these regions, as well as the environmental changes of colonialism that affected these regions' resources. As Potawatomi scholar Kyle Powys Whyte argued, "Colonialism . . . can be understood as a system of domination that concerns how one society inflicts burdensome anthropogenic environmental change on another society" (2017b, 91). Thus, Indigenous peoples in Oceania are disproportionately affected by climate change, which, as feminist philosophy scholar Chris Cuomo argued, intensifies economic and social vulnerabilities "precisely because they uphold ecological values that have not been engulfed by global capitalism and technological modernization" (2011, 695).

The wealthy Pacific Rim nations responsible for the consequences of climate change in Oceania are the same countries that have historically exerted, and continue to exert, colonial and imperial power in the region. Philosophy scholar Michael D Doan importantly advised that the origins and impacts of climate change "cannot be understood without taking into account complex histories of the transformation and domination of lands and of peoples under settler colonialism and other imperialist systems of rule" (2013, 634). This connection between historical and ongoing forms of colonialism and climate change can be materially linked in several ways. For example, Barnett and Campbell wrote, "Whereas many

traditional Pacific Island communities lived in small hamlets and were often located on high land for defence purposes, the colonial authorities, in cooperation with missionaries, successfully encouraged amalgamation and the establishment of coastal villages" (2010, 35). Shaping the spatial landscape of islands, colonial authorities' development of coastal villages resulted in increased risk of damage and devastation from tropical cyclone events. Today, these coastal villages are now coastal towns and cities that experience rising sea levels and coastal erosion (McGranahan, Balk, and Anderson 2007, 19). Additionally, adaptation finance loans to combat the effects of climate change tend to follow colonial histories due to the exorbitantly high interest rates that cause island nations to remain economically dependent on and indebted to colonial states (Carmin and others 2015, 171). Finally, the displacement of Indigenous peoples due to drought and rising sea levels results in the loss of land, which translates into a loss of culture, history, identity, political power, and resources, all of which continue the legacies of colonialism and imperialism.

Despite early awareness of impending sea-level rise and other climate change impacts, any large-scale preventative or regulatory action was stymied by the US government. In the early 1980s, the White House Office of Science and Technology asked the National Academy of Sciences for more studies on climate change and carbon dioxide accumulation. Among the reports generated at that time, the 1983 report from the Carbon Dioxide Assessment Committee, entitled *Changing Climate,* had the most significant outcome in that it was used to counter reports from the Environmental Protection Agency arguing for a reduction in coal use and the regulation of carbon dioxide–emitting industries. Furthermore, as science historians Naomi Oreskes and Erik M Conway contended, the "report pioneered all the major themes behind later efforts to block greenhouse gas regulation" (2010, 182). In response to natural scientists' concerns regarding rising sea levels and the potential displacement of residents of low-lying coastal areas, the committee chair, physicist Bill Nierenberg, stated, "Not only have people moved, but they have taken with them their horses, dogs, children, technology, crops, livestock, and hobbies. It is extraordinary how adaptable people can be" (National Research Council 1983, 53). Nierenberg's cavalier settler colonial logic not only discounts the violence under which migration often occurs but also affectively normalizes processes of dispossession, displacement, and involuntary migration. The report, which went on to significantly influence US policy on greenhouse gas emissions, importantly points to one of the ways in which

climate change and its effects operate as a site of public feeling and affective regulation. Affective charges produce material outcomes, whether they be a lack of government policies, a devastating increase in gas emissions, or the eventual displacement of Indigenous peoples in Oceania.

Producing a Climate of Doubt

A leaked 2002 memo from political consultant Frank Luntz to the Cabinet of the George W Bush administration, entitled *The Environment: A Cleaner, Safer, Healthier America,* exemplifies the ways in which climate change is affectively constituted. The memo provides detailed talking points for addressing the issue of climate change in ways that neither confirm nor deny its existence but effectively delay action through meaningless rhetoric. For example, some of the memo's talking points advise strategies such as telling a personal story that conveys sincerity and concern; emphasizing rationality, common sense, and "sound science"; and repeatedly using the words "cleaner," "safer," and "healthier," as opposed to "environmentalism" or "preservation." Most significantly, though, it states, "Voters believe there is *no consensus* about global warming within the scientific community. Should the public come to believe that the scientific issues are settled, their views about global warming will change accordingly. Therefore, *you need to continue to make the lack of scientific certainty a primary issue in the debate*" (Luntz 2002, 137; italics in original). Later, the memo states, "You must explain how it is possible to pursue a *common sense* or *sensible* environmental policy. . . . Give citizens the idea that *progress is being frustrated by over-reaching government,* and you will hit a very strong strain in the American psyche" (Luntz 2002, 136; italics in original). These two statements illustrate attempts to manipulate and regulate public feeling through the production of doubt in order to postpone action and regulation within climate change politics. As environmental literary scholar Rob Nixon argued, "Well-funded, well-organized interests . . . invest heavily in manufacturing and sustaining a culture of doubt" (2011, 39). Indeed, the Luntz memo exemplifies one means by which the production of doubt within climate change discourse occurs.

Industries such as oil and coal have also manufactured doubt around climate change in their efforts toward deregulation. In his 2008 book, *Doubt Is Their Product,* David Michaels, public health scholar and former US Department of Energy Assistant Secretary for Environment, Safety

and Health under the Clinton administration, tracked how these industries have funneled millions of dollars into manufacturing doubt around climate change. For example, he included an internal ExxonMobil memo titled "Global Climate Science Communications Action Plan," which states, "Victory will be achieved when . . . average citizens 'understand' (recognize) uncertainties in climate science; recognition of uncertainties becomes part of the conventional wisdom" (Michaels 2008, 198). This memo from ExxonMobil, "the hands-down largest funder of the [global] warming deniers," points to the larger organized effort to produce doubt about climate change among the US public (Michaels 2008, 198).

In order for doubt to successfully manifest, there is usually a contestation or lack of evidence, but there can also be a contestation or lack of witness. As Nixon argued, "Contests over what counts as violence are intimately entangled with conflicts over who bears the social authority of witness, which entails much more than simply seeing or not seeing" (2011, 16). Indeed, the fact that the continental United States has not faced the extreme effects of climate change as its colonies in the Pacific have is significant in the manufacturing and maintenance of global warming doubt. Indigenous Pacific peoples are rarely permitted the privilege of witnessing, as explored later in this article through a reading of Jetñil-Kijiner's performance.

The production of doubt has an enormous impact on the ways climate change and its effects are addressed. While US industries' and politicians' manipulation of affect to evoke doubt and uncertainty about global warming may seem inconsequential on a national scale, these affective campaigns have actually proved very effective in the United States. The percentage of US citizens who question climate science is among the highest in the world (GlobeScan 1999). Twenty-six percent of the US population does not believe there is scientific consensus that climate change is occurring, and general literacy regarding climate change is significantly lower in the United States than it is in most other industrialized nations (Krosnick 2009; Newport and Saad 2001). More important, however, is how these figures materialize into a lack of political action. "Skepticism's influence in politics and culture presents a dramatic threat to human ability and political will to protect the critical life support systems found in ecological goods and services," political science scholar Peter Jacques emphasized, "because they dismiss these systems as important" (2006, 96). The lack of action due to affective manipulation to evoke doubt and uncertainty has significant consequences for Indigenous peoples in Oceania and the rest

of the world. As argued earlier, the impacts of global warming effectively continue colonial projects in Oceania by furthering land dispossession, resource depletion, impoverishment, and, subsequently, economic dependence on colonial states.

Many environmentalist writers have now moved beyond the production of doubt as an urgent concern, choosing instead to focus on denial and apathy. Sociologist Kari Norgaard, for example, argued that while the production of doubt is a flashy headline, it has overshadowed the more important issue of apathy (2011, 179). However, in an American Geophysical Union study that Norgaard also referenced, it was found that what the US public is currently most skeptical about is not whether climate change exists per se, but rather whether we can actually address and solve the issue (Immerwahr 1999, cited in Norgaard 2011, 191). Thus, doubt is still relevant within climate change discourse, and it is deeply intertwined with apathy.

Apathy and Apocalypse

The US public's doubt that anything can be done to address climate change arises in part from the fact that, on an individual scale at least, they are correct. As Doan argued, "Should the vast majority of individuals and households the world over manage to drastically reduce their privately controlled emissions (changing light-bulbs, recycling more, and so on), their collective efforts would still be inadequate" (2013, 637). Cuomo called this the "insufficiency problem," in which, "even if personal sphere reductions that can be directly controlled by individuals and households are ethically imperative, they are insufficient for adequate mitigation" (2011, 701). Thus, at the level of the individual, the US public's doubt that climate change can be resolved is, unfortunately, valid.

The insufficiency problem again raises the important question of how affective public feelings and affects are shaped by national cultural ideologies. Norgaard argued that while the successful production of doubt is shaped by US anti-intellectualism, apathy is in large part shaped by US individualism. Indeed, many scholars have highlighted how US individualism, among other issues, contributes to a "crisis of civic membership," loss of political power, and consumer-citizen identification (Norgaard 2011, 192). Within the discourse of climate change, scholars argue that these tenets of US individualism exacerbate feelings of apathy, helplessness, and powerlessness. Environmental studies scholar Jennifer Kent argued that

discourses of individual responsibility merely "[alert] individuals to their essential ineffectiveness in tackling complex global environmental issues" (2009, 145). As such, because mitigating climate change requires so much more than individual action, individualism as an ideology is key to understanding the sense of apathy and helplessness many have regarding issues of climate change. To this point, Norgaard observed that "Americans are so immersed in the ideology of individualism that they lack the imagination or knowledge of alternative political means of response" (2011, 192). Importantly, however, the individualism Norgaard and Kent described does not equally characterize all communities within the United States. To the contrary, Indigenous communities have historically organized and continue to practice the kind of collective, community responses to issues of environmental injustice that these authors have suggested, as demonstrated throughout this article.

While one might assume that providing more information on climate change would decrease public apathy, studies have found that it has actually led to increased apathy (Norgaard 2011, 2). As a 2008 study illustrates, "In sharp contrast with the knowledge-deficit hypothesis, respondents with higher levels of information about global warming show *less* concern about global warming" (Kellstedt, Zahran, and Vedlitz 2008, 120; italics in original). Respondents who were better informed about climate change felt less, rather than more, personal responsibility for addressing it. This phenomenon, which we might term "information overload," has both confounded and furthered scholars' arguments that apathy is one of the most critical issues facing climate change advocacy in our present moment. Environmental studies scholar Renee Aron Lertzman provided some nuance on the topic, however, arguing that apathy is actually a result of feeling too much, rather than too little (2013). In this view, it is the product of a sense of being overwhelmed and an attempt to allay anxieties. "The world's current state of ecological deterioration is such as to evoke in us largely unconscious anxieties of different varieties," psychoanalyst Harold F Searles wrote, "Thus the general apathy . . . is based upon largely unconscious ego defenses against these anxieties" (1972, 363).

Apathy toward climate change is also generated through apocalyptic narratives. Former US Vice President Al Gore's documentary *An Inconvenient Truth* is perhaps one of the best-known examples of the use of this tactic to attempt to motivate action around climate change. While apocalyptic narratives have the benefits of calling attention to climate change

and educating the public on its potential devastating effects, they also have the unintended consequence of furthering apathy. A study by psychologist Matthew Feinberg and sociologist Robb Willer found that dire apocalyptic messages about climate change increase doubt and apathy because they confront deeply ingrained "just-world" beliefs, in which one "perceive[s] the world as just, believing that rewards will be bestowed on individuals who judiciously strive for them and punishments will be meted out to those who deserve them" (2010, 1). This neoliberal ethos is profoundly challenged when faced with apocalyptic messages. Moreover, Feinberg and Willer argued, just-world beliefs prompt audiences to react defensively to such messages, which in turn increases their skepticism toward climate change and decreases their desire to engage in behaviors that combat it (Feinberg and Willer 2010, 3).

Scholars have also argued that apocalyptic narratives serve to depoliticize climate change through the use of populism. In his article "Apocalypse Forever?," critical geography scholar Erik Swyngedouw took up recent theorizations from Slavoj Žižek and Jacques Ranciere that posit our current political condition as post-democratic or post-political, in which "[There is] perceived inevitability of capitalism and a market economy as the basic organizational structure of the social and economic order, for which there is no alternative [and] [t]he corresponding mode of governmentality is structured around dialogical forms of consensus formation, technocratic management and problem-focused governance" (Swyngedouw 2010, 215). Swyngedouw examined the post-political frame alongside apocalyptic narratives of climate change, arguing that the politics of climate change not only express the post-political framework but also "have been among the key arenas through which the post-political frame is forged, configured, and entrenched" (2010, 216). Through his framing of carbon dioxide as a commodity fetish and of climate change arguments as being sustained through populism, he importantly highlighted how apocalyptic narratives of climate change depoliticize by externalizing the "threat"—here, carbon dioxide or the climate—and by universalizing the victims as all of humanity. He wrote, "We are all potential victims. 'THE' Environment and 'THE' People, Humanity as a whole in a material and philosophical manner, are invoked and called into being" (Swyngedouw 2010, 221; emphasis in original). In universalizing the victims, the impacts and effects of climate change are also universalized, but, as is clear in Oceania, that is most certainly not the case. Ultimately, the apocalyptic narrative serves to displace responsibility by fetishizing carbon dioxide

or "The Climate," effectively stalling any productive political action and furthering public apathy.

The apathy evoked by US individualism and apocalyptic narratives has significant consequences for Oceania. While populist gestures frame climate change as equally affecting all of humanity, these ideologies and narratives ultimately frame climate change as a problem that will reach "over there" first, effectively recycling colonial ideologies of disposability. As environmental studies scholar Anthony Leiserowitz argued, the United States "perceive[s] climate change as a moderate risk that will predominantly impact geographically and temporally distant people and places" (2005, 1433). However, the United States in particular cannot afford to see the impacts of climate change in Oceania as discrete events untethered to histories of colonialism. Insofar as the United States has been the primary contributor to climate change and its effects, it is therefore largely implicated in and responsible for the environmental devastation occurring in Oceania. Attempts to delay solutions that effectively address climate change can thus be framed within the larger regime of US colonialism and imperialism.

Nixon argued that "climate change, the thawing cryosphere, toxic drift, biomagnification, deforestation, the radioactive aftermath of wars, acidifying oceans, and a host of other slowly unfolding environmental catastrophes present formidable representational obstacles that can hinder our efforts to mobilize and act decisively" (2011, 2). Clearly, the production of doubt in climate change discourse exacerbates the impacts of climate change by stalling public consensus, and information overload and apocalyptic narratives either reinforce doubt or depoliticize climate change, both of which lead to increased apathy. While the production of both doubt and apathy works to delay any effective means of addressing climate change, Indigenous peoples in Oceania continue to face the effects of climate change brought about by wealthy corporations and nations. The challenge for Indigenous Oceania, then, is not only to intervene into the colonial affective regime of climate change in order to raise awareness and garner support but also to avoid the replication of apocalyptic narratives while ensuring that these apocalyptic scenarios do not actually come to fruition. As such, "A major challenge is representational" (Nixon 2011, 3). While Nixon found nonfiction by environmental writer-activists an effective format for representing the pervasive but elusive violence of delayed effects, I turn to performance for the powerful ways in which climate change is not only represented but also felt.

Jetñil-Kijiner's Affective Interventions

On 23 September 2014, the UN Secretary-General's Climate Summit commenced at the UN headquarters in New York. There, Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner, a Marshallese spoken word poet, writer, and activist from Majuro who had been selected out of more than five hundred candidates to represent "the voice of civil society," delivered a spoken word poem entitled "Dear Matafele Peinam."[3] She began with a tale from the Marshall Islands, urging the UN leaders to take seriously the concerns of Oceania, and then delivered her poem, which speaks to her daughter, promising her that her mother will do everything possible to prevent a lagoon from swallowing her home. The performance was widely acclaimed and received one of the few standing ovations in reported UN history (Johnson 2014). Since the performance, Jetñil-Kijiner has appeared and been featured in numerous mainstream media outlets and publications, such as CNN and *Vogue* magazine, making her one of the most visible Pacific Islander advocates for climate change and Oceania's self-determination today. As the following analysis shows, in addition to bringing much-needed attention to the devastating effects of climate change in Oceania, through Jetñil-Kijiner's use of experiential and embodied knowledges, the poem and performance also intervene into the production of doubt and apathy about climate change.

Experiential Eco-Knowledge and Unfelt Doubt

When Jetñil-Kijiner walks into the massive UN hall and takes her place at the podium, she greets the audience in Marshallese. Dressed in traditional Marshallese clothing and jewelry, her hair pulled tight into a bun at the nape of her neck and adorned with a woven flower, she says, "Those of us from Oceania are already experiencing [climate change] firsthand. We've seen waves crashing into our homes and our breadfruit trees wither from the salt and drought. We look at our children and wonder how they will know themselves or their culture should we lose our islands." On a day filled with various speeches on the intricacies of climate science and the economic benefits of alternative energy, Jetñil-Kijiner immediately brings the impacts of climate change into the realm of firsthand experience, effectively disavowing any notion of doubt one may hold about them. Indeed, her refusal to enter into any debate on the realities of climate change stems from her own personal experience and knowledge.

Native and women of color feminists have argued extensively for the recognition and inclusion of personal, experiential knowledges as legiti-

mate forms of knowledge production. Tanana Athabascan Native feminist Dian Million asserted that Indigenous women's narratives not only illuminate the dirty secrets of colonialism but also change this old shame into a site of powerful political experience from which to speak (2013). These narratives insist on the inclusion of affective, felt experience as real knowledge. At the same time, Million examined how, within academia, Indigenous women's personal narratives are often discounted as illegitimate knowledge due to their polemic nature. She wrote, "Our felt scholarship continues to be segregated as a 'feminine' experience or as polemic, or, at worst, not as knowledge at all" (Million 2013, 57). Indeed, experiential knowledge, especially from Indigenous women and women of color, is rarely, if ever, taken seriously by those in power. For Indigenous peoples in Oceania, the invalidation of experiential knowledge about climate change impacts is not only a political issue but also a matter of life and death.

Considering the ways in which Indigenous women's narratives have historically been dismissed as illegitimate knowledge allows us to examine knowledge production in and of itself. Within academia, valid knowledge production often privileges objectivity, but this overly pragmatic determination of epistemology reinforces strict boundaries that exclude the very subjects of that knowledge. These women's narratives may not be "objective," but as Million showed, they importantly challenge the dominant framework of what colonialism looks like, feels like, and enables, effectively illustrating the ways in which the objectivity litmus test often keeps dominant narratives intact, as well as how affects enable a whole range of knowledges about bodies and environments. Thus, while Jetñil-Kijiner's performance may not sway the United States to eliminate carbon pollution in the next decade, we can still view it as an important intervention into the affects of climate change, one that has the ability to recreate knowledge about the phenomenon, which is critical to eliminating its deadly effects.[4]

The performance's intervention specifically into the regime of doubt can be parsed out through a philosophical reading of doubt. Philosophy scholar Christopher Hookway argued that "contemporary epistemology has suffered through its failure to take seriously the role of affective factors" (1998, 204). Attempting to remedy this lack through an examination of doubt, Hookway undertook a thorough analysis of C S Pierce's theories on epistemic feelings, such as doubt and belief. Hookway argued that doubt is "a distinctive cognitive state, with a fundamental role in regulating inquiries," and he identified two forms of doubt: "real" and "unreal, unfelt" (1998, 224). Key to distinguishing between real and unfelt doubts

are cognitive habits. He wrote, “As well as habits that contribute to posture and gait, and as well as those which comprise practical skills such as the ability to ride a bicycle or dance a waltz, we possess cognitive habits” (Hookway 1998, 213). These cognitive habits, he argued, may or may not be readily accessible to us in the same way as the habits that inform our bodily natures. However, our cognitive habits of inquiry and evaluation are central to doubt as an epistemic feeling, in which “inquiries that are focused on ‘unreal doubts’ will be guided by evaluations which do not engage with our habits of evaluation in the right way” (Hookway 1998, 217). Furthermore, as Hookway argued, “if habitual assessments are going to provide evaluations of our cognitive position which spread through our beliefs and inferences, then it is important that evaluative states such as doubt have a strong affective flavour” (1998, 217–218). Our cognitive habits thus inform and are deeply informed by our affective knowledge.

Jetñil-Kijiner’s performance disrupts the affective regime of climate change by revealing manufactured doubt for what it is—unreal, unfelt doubt. Jetñil-Kijiner’s use of experiential knowledge is more trustworthy than the “reflective, considered” knowledge—or, as Frank Luntz wrote, “common sense” knowledge—that manufactured doubt attempts to privilege. As Hookway suggested, “This is because [affective responses] can reveal a habitual sensitivity to subtle features of the situation which are not formally acknowledged by calm reflection” (1998, 221). Jetñil-Kijiner’s habitual sensitivity arises from her experiential knowledge of everyday living at the forefront of climate change and its effects. For example, when she reveals, “We’ve seen waves crashing into our homes and our breadfruit trees wither from the salt and drought” (Jetñil-Kijiner 2014), this is the intimate experiential knowledge that informs her habitual evaluative practices, “reflect[ing] extensive experience and an acute sensitivity to the fine details of our environment” (Hookway 1998, 221). This knowledge serves to bolster the affects that circulate the performance.

Jetñil-Kijiner’s poem evokes resilience, power, and strength, and her performance moved some UN members to tears.[5] A post from the United Nations’ official Twitter account on 23 September 2014 prefaced a link to the video recording of the performance with “Poet & activist Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner moved world leaders at the #Climate2014 summit to tears.”[6] This overwhelming affective response to the performance indicates the possibility of an affective, experiential intervention into both the regime of doubt and knowledge about climate change. As Hookway wrote, “Affective presentations may be as essential to the successful pursuit of truth as

a well-attuned sense of danger is to survival" (1998, 222). Thus, through her use of experiential knowledge, Jetñil-Kijiner has effectively intervened into the colonial affect of doubt in climate change discourse by exposing manufactured doubt as unreal and unfelt to the degree that it successfully reveals trustworthy logic. The commonsense knowledge emphasized by Luntz encapsulates, as literary scholar Mark Rifkin wrote, "an ordinary felt sense of *nonrelation*" (2014, 37; italics in original). The audience's tears, a material response to an affective, ephemeral, and immaterial performance, cast doubt on manufactured doubt, opening a space for possibility through relation.

Embodied Stories as Mother and Witness

At the beginning of the performance, Jetñil-Kijiner shares a legend from the Marshall Islands. In the legend, ten brothers are canoe racing when their mother, carrying a heavy bundle, asks if she can come with them. Nine of the brothers refuse, knowing her additional weight would slow them down, but the youngest brother obliges and brings her with him. Once she is in the canoe, she unwraps her bundle, which turns out to be a sail, and together they win the canoe race, and he becomes chief. Jetñil-Kijiner goes on to say, "The moral of the story is to honor your mother and the challenges life brings." Her use of storytelling at the UN Summit positions Indigenous stories as powerful forms of knowledge production. As Tonawanda Seneca Native feminist and literary scholar Mishuana Goeman poignantly articulated, "It is our stories that will lead the way as they have for generations. Native stories extend beyond a beautiful aesthetic and simple moral or fable" (2013, 39). Stories, she argued, provide the tending and nurturing of Indigenous peoples' relationships to territory, each other, and Native and settler nations—"connections [that] are powerful in the struggle against colonialism and empire building" (Goeman 2013, 38–39). Indeed, Jetñil-Kijiner's storytelling bridges these connections when she says, "The people who support this movement are Indigenous mothers, like me. . . . I ask world leaders to take us all along on your ride. We won't slow you down. We'll help you win the most important race of all—the race to save humanity." In doing so, Jetñil-Kijiner challenges an important aspect of producing doubt—beliefs about the determination of who counts as a witness. She not only positions Indigenous mothers—whose knowledges have historically been coopted, devalued, or both—as holding the social authority to bear witness; she also insists that the movement to combat climate change will not be effective without their knowledges, stories, and insights.

In her examination of Native women's narratives of colonial violence, Million wrote, "Stories form bridges that other people might cross, to feel their way into another experience. That is the promise of witness" (2013, 76). Indeed, Jetñil-Kijiner's poem continues to foreground the importance of Indigenous mothers' affective and material experiences to the climate change movement. In doing so, she intervenes into the affective regime of apathy within climate change discourse. Her poem begins:

> dear matafele peinam,
>
> you are a seven month old sunrise of gummy smiles
> you are bald as an egg and bald as the buddha
> you are thighs that are thunder and shrieks that are lightning
> so excited for bananas, hugs and
> our morning walks past the lagoon
>
> dear matafele peinam,
>
> i want to tell you about that lagoon
> that lucid, sleepy lagoon lounging against the sunrise
>
> men say that one day
> that lagoon will devour you

Highlighting the embodied knowledge of Indigenous mothers, Jetñil-Kijiner speaks of her walks with her daughter past the lagoon, which stands in contrast to the men who passively "say" their apocalyptic tales of the lagoon. Her only personal reference to the lagoon in this excerpt is her walks with her daughter, yet these embodied experiences provide the foundation from which she is able to tell her daughter of the lagoon and to promise that she will not be devoured:

> they say you, your daughter
> and your granddaughter, too
> will wander rootless
> with only a passport to call home
>
> dear matafele peinam,
>
> don't cry
>
> mommy promises you
>
> no one
> will come and devour you

Here, Jetñil-Kijiner addresses the apathy produced through apocalyptic narratives when writing about the men who claim the lagoon will devour her daughter and leave her wandering rootless. Through her use of the term "rootless," she again highlights the connection between Indigenous land and identity, demonstrating that the loss of land is not simply an inconvenience but rather an affective uprooting of one's sense of self. As she counters apocalyptic narratives and the resulting apathy with her third-person use of the word "mommy" and her insistence that it will not happen again, she imbues Indigenous mothers with the strength and will-power to effect change and provides a bridge with which others may cross into feeling the experience of having your child told she will be devoured. Her powerful call for world leaders to take Indigenous mothers with them on their "ride" to address climate change thus stems from her embodied knowledge and storytelling, which disrupts narratives of apathy by showcasing how the struggle for land is intimately tied up in a struggle for personhood.[7]

Jetñil-Kijiner's connections to and solidarity with Indigenous mothers across the world stands in stark contrast to the ideology of individualism within the United States, which, as asserted earlier, crucially shapes the affective regime of climate change through public apathy. As many environmentalist authors and climate scientists have argued, this collectivity is crucial to the movement to address climate change; large-scale action is the only effective solution.[8] Indigenous peoples in Oceania not only have practiced and continue to practice these forms of sociality through our epistemes of collectivity; we also have learned to evoke the "power in numbers" strategy in political discourse through colonial encounters. Consequently, while our colonial experiences have shaped how we practice expansive forms of solidarity and sociality, our Indigenous epistemes of the ocean as our mother, the land as our ancestors, and nonhuman entities as important to our ontologies have also shaped our practices of sociality.

Human-Nonhuman Intercorporeal Socialities

As explicated earlier, climate change is a site of affective regulation through the production of doubt and apathy, operating as an affective regime of colonialism. By exacerbating the material effects of climate change in Oceania, the production of doubt and apathy further colonial and imperial projects of economic dependence, land dispossession, and

resource depletion. Jetñil-Kijiner's performance at the UN Summit intervenes into this regime by dispelling doubt and apathy through experiential and embodied knowledges. More than this, "Dear Matafele Peinam" importantly calls forth Indigenous forms of sociality that not only enact Indigenous self-determination but also point to forms of political mobilization that are necessary to combat climate change. As illustrated through the following reading of its nonhuman entities, the poem upends colonial constructions of the human that work to further the narrative of Indigenous Oceania as disposable. Furthermore, the poem, as well as its performance, stems from Indigenous epistemes and calls on important forms of sociality that can, as Jetñil-Kijiner puts it, "win the race." Before examining the anthropomorphic elements of Jetñil-Kijiner's poem, however, it is important to return to the relationship between climate change, colonialism, and anthropocentrism.

Colonial Anthropocentrism

Climate change profoundly shapes understandings of the human's place in the world. Resolving climate change entails massive upheavals in the way power and capital accumulate, as well as in the very onto-epistemological underpinnings of what the human is and what the human's relationship to the world looks like.[9] Appropriately, literary scholar Timothy Morton described climate change as a "hyper object," a term "refer[ring] to things that are massively distributed in time and space relative to humans. . . . [and that] are 'hyper' in relation to some other entity, whether they are directly manufactured by humans or not" (2013, 1). Such objects, he argued, "cause us to reflect on our very place on Earth and in the cosmos. . . . [They] force something on us, something that affects some core ideas of what it means to exist, what Earth is, what society is" (Morton 2013, 15). One of the challenges posed by climate change is an onto-epistemological upheaval in what it means to be in this world. Postcolonial literary scholars Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin argued that this entails reimagining and reconfiguring the place of the human in nature (2008). Doing so "necessitates an investigation of the category of the 'human' itself, and of the multiple ways in which this anthropocentrist construction has been, and is, complicit in racism, imperialism and colonialism, from the moment of conquest to the present day" (Huggan and Tiffin 2008, 6–7).

It has been well documented that a particular notion of the human influenced by Enlightenment thought was and remains central to the proj-

ect of colonialism. Aleut education scholar Eve Tuck and K Wayne Yang have illustrated the ways in which anthropocentrism facilitates the displacement of Indigenous peoples, thus continuing the project of settler colonialism. They explained, "The settler, if known by his actions and how he justifies them, sees himself as holding dominion over the earth and its flora and fauna, as the anthropocentric normal, and as more developed, more human, more deserving than other groups or species" (Tuck and Yang 2012, 6). This positions the settler as "both superior and normal; the settler is natural, whereas the Indigenous inhabitant and the chattel slave are unnatural, even supernatural" (Tuck and Yang 2012, 6). Anthropocentrism is often defined as the privileging of the human over all else, yet, as Tuck and Yang illustrated, this human is a particular construction of colonial encounter and imperial imaginaries. Huggan and Tiffin further contextualized this human, arguing that such "Enlightenment concepts as 'reason' and 'civilization' depended, in both theory and practice, on the assumption of an apparently obdurate species boundary line. The very definition of 'humanity,' indeed, depended—and still depends—on the presence of the *non*-human, the uncivilized, the savage, the animal" (2008, 6; italics in original). Thus, the anthropocentrism of colonialism not only privileges a particular construction of the human but also constructs this human through and against Indigenous peoples, in large part due to Indigenism's non-anthropocentric epistemes and ontologies.

The colonial construction of the human is directly informed by the man/nature dualism of Enlightenment thought, which also informs profoundly devastating ideological and material impacts on nature and the environment. As sociologists Riley E Dunlap and Aaron M McCright argued, "Enlightenment thinking emphasiz[ed] the use of science and technology to master nature and transform the environment into resources for human use" (2015, 302). Indeed, because the human is the master of nature, and Indigenous peoples have been framed as being within the realm of nature, this colonial anthropocentrism provides the rationale for the displacement and destruction of both Indigenous bodies and Indigenous ecologies. The environmental destruction of colonialism has entailed, to name just a few examples, the privatization of land, water, and other ecological resources, the introduction of non-native plants and animals that have dramatically changed native ecosystems, and deforestation and industrialization that have led to plant and animal endangerment and extinction, all of which have profoundly altered the wider global climate and environment.

We can therefore connect the environmental devastation of colonial-

ism's anthropocentric ideologies, which continue to this day, to the current state of global warming as an affective regime of colonialism. Political science scholar Peter Jacques has argued that "deep anthropocentrism" is at the core of climate skepticism and its counterpart apathy: "Deep anthropocentrism believes humanity is utterly independent of non-human nature . . . [and] sees humans [as] fully exempt from ecological principles, influences and constraints" (Jacques 2006, 85). This ideological perspective is also informed by the colonial man/nature dualism: "The dominant social paradigm between nature and civilization, 'savage' and civilized, wild and rational, developed and undeveloped, are fully embodied and strongly held in deep anthropocentrism" (Jacques 2006, 85). Throughout his review of literature from global warming skeptics, Jacques found deep anthropocentrism as a guiding ideology, which not only participates in the production of doubt but also leads to public apathy. Because deep anthropocentrism fosters a belief that humans are not interdependent with nature and the environment, that "humanity has no obligation to nature itself, then human society is released from any expectation or obligation to consequences that may result from changing nature," despite the well-documented fact that climate change is by and large anthropogenic (Jacques 2006, 88).

As Jacques showed, the anthropocentrism originated through colonial projects contributes to our present-day issue of climate change not only materially but also affectively. Anthropocentric worldviews have furthered the impacts of both climate change and colonial projects, and, as many writers have argued, these worldviews must be upturned in order to successfully combat the effects of climate change. Indigenous Oceania's ontologies and epistemes of nonhuman entities are, therefore, an important and necessary addition to the discourse on climate change and to environmental literature and criticism.

Monstrous Animacies

Jetñil-Kijiner's use of anthropomorphism throughout "Dear Matafele Peinam" points to the importance of nonhuman entities within Indigenous Oceania's cosmologies and onto-epistemologies. The de-privileging of the human evinced in the poem markedly aligns with recent work on the posthuman and new materialisms. However, in her important critique of posthumanisms, Black Atlantic literary scholar Zakiyyah Iman Jackson observed that "it has largely gone unnoticed by posthumanists that their queries into ontology often find their homologous (even anticipa-

tory) appearance in decolonial philosophies that confront slavery and colonialism's inextricability from the Enlightenment humanism they are trying to displace" (2013, 681). Thus, while I employ some posthumanist theory in this section on nonhuman entities, Jetñil-Kijiner's poem and the Indigenous epistemes it calls forth already provide much of the theoretical insights found in such texts. Similarly, much of the environmental literature I have engaged throughout this article posits theories and solutions that have already been theorized and implemented by Indigenous peoples and people of color who have been facing the effects of climate change on an intimate, daily level. Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies of nonhuman entities are therefore another important site from which the struggle against climate change is fought.

Recall how Jetñil-Kijiner's lagoon lounged in the sunlight as mother and child, a passing of generations, walked along the shores:

> dear matafele peinam,
>
> i want to tell you about that lagoon
> that lucid, sleepy lagoon lounging against the sunrise

She describes her daughter as "a seven month old sunrise of gummy smiles" and animates the lagoon as a sleepy, languid creature. Importantly, the lagoon remains lucid and sleepy, her daughter's benign playmate, until the men of the apocalypse enter the poem:

> men say that one day
> that lagoon will devour you
>
> they say it will gnaw at the shoreline
> chew at the roots of your breadfruit trees
> gulp down rows of your seawalls
> and crunch your island's shattered bones

It is the men with their apocalyptic tale who animate the lagoon in monstrous ways with teeth capable of gnawing, chewing, gulping, and crushing. The island's shattered bones call on the importance of land and its living, agential capacity as a corporeal ancestor essential to her survival. We can read this section of the poem, then, as situating apocalyptic narratives as overdetermined by the very humans—men—who have contributed to their possibility. However, through the interconnected relations with the lagoon and the island, Jetñil-Kijiner also points to the fact that she and her

daughter are entwined with the bodies of these entities. Thus, the effects of climate change that impact the lagoon and island inherently impact them as well.

While nonhuman entities figure as the agentive, corporeal beings of Indigenous Oceania's ontologies, humans, too, are transformed into nonhumans. Jetñil-Kijiner's daughter is a sunrise with thighs of thunder and shrieks of lightning—all elements of the natural world. Corporations are sharks in political backwaters, and Jetñil-Kijiner herself is the ocean:

> no greedy whale of a company sharking through political seas
> no backwater bullying of businesses with broken morals
> no blindfolded bureaucracies gonna push
> this mother ocean over
> the edge

Later in the poem, witnessing through those who "see us" enables the political organizing actions that follow. To this end, Jetñil-Kijiner has disrupted the affective regime of doubt by showing the ways in which witnessing is the precursor to action:

> still
> there are those
> who see us
>
> hands reaching out
> fists raising up
> banners unfurling
> megaphones booming
> and we are
> canoes blocking coal ships
> we are
> the radiance of solar villages
> we are
> the rich clean soil of the farmer's past
> we are
> petitions blooming from teenage fingertips
> we are
> families biking, recycling, reusing,
> engineers dreaming, designing, building,
> artists painting, dancing, writing
> and we are spreading the word

In the poem, Jetñil-Kijiner not only gives life to nonhuman entities in accordance with Indigenous ontologies; she also de-privileges the colonial human by making humans more vibrant and powerful through nonhuman entities—animals, places, and things. Using dynamic action verbs, such as "raising," "booming," "blocking," and "blooming," Jetñil-Kijiner highlights the effervescence of nonhuman entities, while fusing the corporeality of humans with that of seemingly inanimate, passive objects. The poem's emphasis on the nonhumanness of who and what "we are" through the line breaks, as opposed to the singular "we are" when referencing humans, emphasizes and privileges the nonhuman entities that produce our bodily assemblages. Importantly, Jetñil-Kijiner creates a bodily assemblage made up affectively and intercorporeally by inanimate objects. In doing so, she illustrates that Indigenous Oceania's ontologies of intercorporeality with nonhuman entities already enact the Spinozist philosophy that "bodies enhance their power *in* or *as a heterogeneous assemblage*" (Bennett 2010, 23; italics in original). Indeed, she illustrates how agentive qualities are "distributed across an ontologically heterogeneous field, rather than . . . localized in a human body" (Bennett 2010, 23).

Perhaps one of the most significant nonhuman entities in Jetñil-Kijiner's poem is the ocean. It is no coincidence that she calls the ocean our mother and also refers to herself as a "mother ocean." In Indigenous Oceania, many of us share our life-giving Mother Ocean. Through her corporeal connection with her daughter, Jetñil-Kijiner calls forth the intercorporeality we have with our common mother.[10] While "men" would have us fear the Mother Ocean and the different parts of her body, such as her lagoons, we do not. We praise her. We honor her. We protect her. And we know her rising levels are not of her doing, but of human's—that same human of colonial anthropocentrism. As Jetñil-Kijiner declares in her poem, none of them can push "this mother ocean over / the edge." The North American Indigenous–run grassroots media project Reclaim Turtle Island states in their piece "Terra Nullius is Rape Culture #LandBodyDefense" that "to acknowledge [Terra Nullius] as rape culture is to acknowledge the connectivity between our bodies and our lands, that what happens to our Mother will happen to us" (Reclaim Turtle Island 2016). Using Indigenous ontologies and epistemes of the land as mother, the authors importantly contextualized the colonial concept and practice of terra nullius, or "nobody's land" in Latin, as a foundational tenet of violence against Indigenous women. In doing so, they critically connected gendered violence to ecological violence. Similarly, Jetñil-Kijiner's emphasis on an intercorporeal-

ity with our mother ocean signals that violence against her is violence against all of us, and vice versa.

The anthropocentrism of colonialism has continued to affectively and materially influence the discourse and materiality of climate change. The intercorporeality with nonhuman entities highlighted in Jetñil-Kijiner's poem—and the Indigenous ontologies and epistemes it represents—is precisely the kind of sociality needed to change the current trend of climate change. As Whyte argued, "Renewing Indigenous knowledges can bring together Indigenous communities to strengthen their self-determined planning for climate change. . . . [R]enewing knowledges involve[s] renewing relationships with humans and nonhumans and restoring reciprocity among the relatives" (2017a, 158). The forms of intercorporeal sociality proposed by Jetñil-Kijiner and evoked throughout many Indigenous peoples' ontologies are, therefore, a critical site where the human and its place in the cosmos has already and continues to be ontologically reimagined.

Conclusion: Returning Our Mother

As demonstrated through this exploration of the production of doubt and apathy within climate change discourses and of the material effects this affective regulation produces, climate change operates as an affective regime of colonialism. Jetñil-Kijiner's "Dear Matafele Peinam," performed at the UN Summit on Climate Change, importantly challenges this colonial affective regime. Jetñil-Kijiner draws on affective, experiential knowledge to unveil manufactured doubt as an unreal, unfelt doubt and uses embodied storytelling and witnessing as a means to foreclose on apathy. A colonial, Enlightenment notion of the human continues to inform the affective regime of climate change, and Jetñil-Kijiner's use of Indigenous epistemes of nonhuman entities points to the forms of intercorporeal sociality that we in Oceania practice, thereby lending some insight into the ideological upheaval necessary to combat climate change.

In an *Intercontinental Cry* magazine article, science education scholar Elizabeth Walsh wrote, "Indigenous Peoples are the most effective managers and protectors of their territories which they view as a partner, a provider, and a living being. [A] perspective [that] carries tangible results" (2016). The article importantly illustrates how climate change is exacerbated when Indigenous peoples do not have control of their lands—and I would add oceans. Furthermore, as Jetñil-Kijiner and Reclaim Turtle Island have shown, the return of territories to Indigenous peoples is ulti-

mately a return of the very fabric of our being. In order to begin effectively and affectively addressing climate change, Indigenous peoples and our knowledges must be front and center. After all, if we are at the forefront of climate change effects, we should be at the forefront of climate change solutions.

* * *

MY THANKS TO *Dr Mishuana Goeman for her generous feedback, as well as* The Contemporary Pacific*'s reviewers and editors.*

Notes

1 This figure is the sum of each Pacific Rim country's emissions, calculated through the CAIT Climate Data Explorer Historical Emissions Tool, available here: http://cait2.wri.org.

2 I use the terms "climate change" and "global warming" interchangeably throughout this article; however, some scholars have importantly argued for the sole use of the latter due to its more urgent tone. For more, see Morton 2013 and Tiatia-Seath, Tupou, and Fookes, this issue.

3 For the full poem and a video of the performance, both excerpted here, see Jetñil-Kijiner 2014.

4 One could argue that this issue of being counted as legitimate knowledge stems from Jetñil-Kijiner's place of privilege within the Marshall Islands. Being the daughter of renowned educator and politician Hilda Heine, who would later go on to serve as the president of the Marshall Islands from 2016 to 2020, Jetñil-Kijiner was by the time of the summit already well suited for a public role in politics and had the access, resources, and social capital to be heard and taken seriously. However, one could also argue that this is the power of performance. Indeed, the United Nations' standing ovation for and overwhelming response to Jetñil-Kijiner's performance, one of the few recorded in UN history (Johnson 2014), points to the possibility that the United Nations sorely lacks the affective and imaginative possibilities of cultural production. While these factors are important to consider when examining how Jetñil-Kijiner's piece may be received as "real knowledge," the focus here is on the affective knowledge her performance enables and produces.

5 For example, in the United Nations' video recording of the performance, representatives from Sweden appear to be moved in this way.

6 United Nations' Twitter account (@UN), accessed 21 February 2020, https://twitter.com/un/status/514603357076738050.

7 See also Kim 2020, which engages with both Jetn̄il-Kijiner's poem and related issues at the intersection of maternity, agency, and indigeneity.

8 For examples of such actions, see Cuomo 2011 and Doan 2013.

9 For more on the term "onto-epistemological," see Bennett 2010 and Barad 2007.

10 Some scholars, such as Stacy Alaimo, call this phenomenon "transcorporeality." For more, see Alaimo 2010. However, I choose to use intercorporeality here because of the ways in which it levels the ontological plane of human and nonhuman entities, much like Jane Bennett's "onto-tale" of vital materiality (2010, 116–117).

References

Alaimo, Stacy

2010 *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Barad, Karen

2007 *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Barnett, Jon, and John Campbell

2010 *Climate Change and Small Island States: Power, Knowledge and the South Pacific*. London: Earthscan.

Bennett, Jane

2010 *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Carmin, JoAnn, Kathleen Tierney, Eric Chu, Lori M Hunter, J Timmons Roberts, and Linda Shi

2015 Adaptation to Climate Change. In *Climate Change and Society: Sociological Perspectives,* edited by Riley E Dunlap and Robert J Brulle, 164–198. New York: Oxford University Press.

Cuomo, Chris J

2011 Climate Change, Vulnerability, and Responsibility. *Hypatia* 26 (4): 690–714.

Doan, Michael D

2013 Climate Change and Complacency. *Hypatia* 29 (3): 634–650.

Dunlap, Riley E, and Aaron M McCright.

2015 Challenging Climate Change: The Denial Countermovement. In *Climate Change and Society: Sociological Perspectives,* edited by Riley E Dunlap and Robert J Brulle, 300–332. New York: Oxford University Press.

Feinberg, Matthew, and Robb Willer

2010 Apocalypse Soon? Dire Messages Reduce Belief in Global Warming

by Contradicting Just-World Beliefs. *Psychological Science* 22 (1): 1–5.

GlobeScan
1999 *Environics International Environmental Monitor Survey Dataset*. Toronto: Globescan, Inc.

Goeman, Mishuana
2013 *Mark My Words: Native Women Mapping Our Nations*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Hookway, Christopher
1998 Doubt: Affective States and the Regulation of Inquiry. *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 28 (S1): 203–225.

Huggan, Graham, and Helen Tiffin
2008 Green Postcolonialism. *Interventions* 9 (1): 1–11.

Immerwahr, John
1999 Waiting for a Signal: Public Attitudes toward Global Warming, the Environment and Geophysical Research. Public Agenda Foundation Report, 15 April. Available from https://www.policyarchive.org/handle/10207/5662 [accessed 17 Feb 2020]

IPCC, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
2014 Climate Change 2014—Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability: Part B: Regional Aspects: Working Group II Contribution to the Fifth Assessment Report. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jackson, Zakkiyah Iman
2013 Animal: New Directions in the Theorization of Race and Posthumanism. *Feminist Studies* 39 (3): 669–685.

Jacques, Peter
2006 The Rearguard of Modernity: Environmental Skepticism as a Struggle of Citizenship. *Global Environment Politics* 6 (1): 76–101.

Jetñil-Kijiner, Kathy
2014 United Nations Climate Summit Opening Ceremony—A Poem To My Daughter. Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner (blog), 24 September. https://www.kathyjetnilkijiner.com/united-nations-climate-summit-opening-ceremony-my-poem-to-my-daughter/ [accessed 17 Feb 2020]

Johnson, Giff
2014 How a 26-Year-Old from the RMI Received a Rare Ovation at the UN. Pacific Islands Report, 26 Sept.

Kellstedt, Paul M, Sammy Zahran, and Arnold Vedlitz
2008 Personal Efficacy, the Information Environment, and Attitudes toward Global Warming and Climate Change in the United States. *Risk Analysis* 28 (1): 113–126.

Kent, Jennifer
2009 Individualized Responsibility and Climate Change: "If Climate Pro-

tection Becomes Everyone's Responsibility, Does It End Up Being No-One's?" *Cosmopolitan Civil Societies* 1 (3): 132–149.

Kim, Myjolynne Marie
2020 Nesor Annim, Niteikapar (Good Morning, Cardinal Honeyeater): Indigenous Reflections on Micronesian Women and the Environment. *The Contemporary Pacific* 32 (1): 147–163.

Krosnick, Jon
2009 The Associated Press–Stanford University Environmental Poll. Conducted by GfK Roper Public Affairs & Media for Stanford University.

Leiserowitz, Anthony A
2005 American Risk Perceptions: Is Climate Change Dangerous? *Risk Analysis* 25 (6): 1433–1442.

Lertzman, Renee Aron
2013 The Myth of Apathy: Psychoanalytic Explorations of Environmental Subjectivity. In *Engaging with Climate Change: Psychoanalytic and Interdisciplinary Perspectives,* edited by Sally Weintrobe, 117–133. London: Routledge.

Luciano, Dana
2015 The Inhuman Anthropocene. Avidly, 22 March. http://avidly.lareviewofbooks.org/2015/03/22/the-inhuman-anthropocene/ [accessed 6 July 2016]

Luntz, Frank
2002 The Environment: A Cleaner, Safer, Healthier America. The Luntz Research Companies—Straight Talk, 131–146. Excerpt from memorandum to Bush White House. Available from https://www.the-republican-reversal.com/uploads/1/2/0/2/120201024/luntzresearch.memo2.pdf [accessed 17 Feb 2020]

McGranahan, Gordon, Deborah Balk, and Bridget Anderson
2007 The Rising Tide: Assessing the Risks of Climate Change and Human Settlements in Low Elevation Coastal Zones. *Environment and Urbanization* 19 (1): 17–37.

Michaels, David
2008 *Doubt Is Their Product: How Industry's Assault on Science Threatens Your Health*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Million, Dian
2013 *Therapeutic Nations: Healing in an Age of Indigenous Human Rights*. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press.

Morton, Timothy
2013 *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

National Research Council
1983 Changing Climate: Report of the Carbon Dioxide Assessment Committee. Available from https://www.nap.edu/catalog/18714/changing-climate-report-of-the-carbon-dioxide-assessment-committee [accessed 7 July 2016]

Newport, Frank, and Lydia Saad
2001 Americans Consider Global Warming Real, but Not Alarming. Gallup News, 9 April.

Nixon, Rob
2011 *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Norgaard, Kari Marie
2011 *Living in Denial: Climate Change, Emotions, and Everyday Life.* Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Oberdorfer, Don
1971 "Former Nixon Aide Describes His Firing." *Tuscaloosa News,* 19 September.

Oreskes, Naomi, and Erik M Conway
2010 *Merchants of Doubt: How a Handful of Scientists Obscured the Truth on Issues from Tobacco Smoke to Global Warming.* New York: Bloomsbury Press.

Reclaim Turtle Island
2016 Terra Nullius is Rape Culture #LandBodyDefense. 14 July. http://reclaimturtleisland.com/2016/07/14/terra-nullius-is-rape-culture-landbodydefense/ [accessed 18 July 2016]

Rifkin, Mark
2014 *Settler Common Sense: Queerness and Everyday Colonialism in the American Renaissance.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Searles, Harold F
1972 Unconscious Processes in Relation to the Environmental Crisis. *Psychoanalytic Review* 59 (3): 361–374.

Swyngedouw, Erik
2010 Apocalypse Forever? Post-political Populism and the Spectre of Climate Change. *Theory, Culture & Society* 27 (2–3): 213–232.

Tuck, Eve, and K Wayne Yang
2012 Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1 (1): 1–40.

US Fish and Wildlife Service
2011 Climate Change in the Pacific Islands. 2 November. https://www.fws.gov/pacific/climatechange/changepi.html [accessed 1 July 2016]

Walsh, Elizabeth
2016 To Combat Climate Change, Restore Land Ownership to Indigenous

Peoples. International Cry Magazine, 15 June 2016. https://intercontinentalcry.org/combat-climate-change-restore-land-ownership-indigenous-peoples/ [accessed 1 July 2016]

Whyte, Kyle Powys

2017a Indigenous Climate Change Studies: Indigenizing Futures, Decolonizing the Anthropocene. *English Language Notes* 55 (1–2): 153–162.

2017b Is It Colonial Déjà Vu? Indigenous Peoples and Climate Injustice. In *Humanities for the Environment: Integrating Knowledges, Forging New Constellations of Practice,* edited by Joni Adamson and Michael Davis, 88–104. London: Earthscan for Routledge.

Abstract

This article examines the production of doubt and apathy within climate change debates and argues that the material outcomes of this affective regime perpetuate colonialism in Oceania. By furthering land dispossession, resource depletion, cultural loss, and impoverishment, the affective and material impacts of climate change have been and continue to be a site of activism for Native Pacific peoples. While climate change functions in many ways as an affective regime of colonialism, this affective regime is dismantled through Indigenous Oceania's affects, epistemes, and ontologies, as exemplified by Marshallese poet and activist Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner's poem "Dear Matafele Peinam" and its performance at the 2014 UN Summit on Climate Change. Through her use of experiential and embodied knowledges, which inform the affects that circulate in the performance, Jetñil-Kijiner intervenes into the colonial affective regime of climate change. Furthermore, her evocation of Indigenous epistemes and ontologies regarding nonhuman entities points to forms of sociality that I argue can provide alternative frameworks of thinking through not only climate change and its effects but also what an inter-Indigenous Oceanian sociality and politics might look like within contested colonial territories.

KEYWORDS: climate change, affect, Indigeneity, sociality, embodiment, nonhuman, new materialisms