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Environmental Justice Anthropocene Narratives: Sweet Art, Recognition, and Representation

JULIE SZE

In a 2005 article “What the Warming World Needs Now Is Art, Sweet Art,” activist and writer Bill McKibben writes that “time rushes on, in ways that humans have never before contemplated. That famous picture of the earth from outer space that Apollo beamed back in the late 1960s—already that’s not the world we inhabit; its poles are melting, its oceans rising. We can register what is happening with satellites and scientific instruments, but can we register it in our imaginations, the most sensitive of all our devices?”¹ Although the science of climate change has coalesced and the lived impacts of the problems of climate change are apparent to increasing numbers of people, the politics of what to do have only stagnated.

But what of the art, the sweet art? In one sense, perhaps the only glimmer of hopeful change has been in the rise of cultural production *around* climate change.² This piece focuses on one example of the art of climate change. My analysis draws squarely from the integration of environmental justice and environmental humanities with respect to climate change. The starting point here is that literature, arts, and the humanities offer a potential window into the *lack* of cultural recognition for the most oppressed and disenfranchised. In other words, art projects have the potential to highlight those places that are most unseen and unknown and at risk of climate disaster.

In doing so, these projects can facilitate a politics of seeing that also

expands cultural recognition by foregrounding the lives and experiences of those *hardest hit* by ecological injustice and those with the *least responsibility* for the problems, vis-à-vis climate change. It also draws about Mirzoeff's call for a countervisual politics of Anthropocene visibility, which he describes as a "decolonial politics that claims the rights to see what there is to be seen and name it as such."³ Specifically, he names a "planetary destabilization of the conditions supportive of life, requiring a decolonization of the biosphere itself in order to create a new sustainable and democratic way of life that has been prepared for by centuries of resistance."⁴

How does one make art in the face of climate change and social disaster? What is the function of a socially engaged and collaborative art-making practice? What is the role of *art* and *transformation* in contexts of great environmental damage and social divisions, or what scholar George Lipsitz has called a "moment of danger," in reference to changing political and cultural realities of globalization and neoliberalism?⁵ These are, of course, not new questions—earlier generations have asked these questions after great social, political, and natural catastrophes (e.g., the Holocaust, 9/11). Perhaps the only difference is of *kind*—the catastrophe of climate change acts differently in real time than a single-event disaster, what has been referred to elsewhere by literary scholars as "slow violence" and by sociologists as a "crescive trouble."⁶ What follows are some preliminary thoughts in response to these questions as they are related to climate change, as represented in the work of one artistic project called Re-Locate in Kivalina, Alaska.⁷ This project was presented at Visual Activism, organized by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, specifically on the panel focused on themes of environment and inequality.

The key questions at that Visual Activism event centered on unpacking the relationship between visual cultures shaped by activist practices that circulate in public space. Specifically, the Environment and Inequality panel was focused on understanding what strategies can be deployed to transform engagement with the built environment and broader ecologies, in a context of social inequalities. The topics covered in this panel were breathtakingly vast, from pollution in industrial US cities to global water issues.⁸ The artists presented eight-minute videos created specifically for this event that crystallized their responses to the key questions in the panel and to theme of Visual Activism more gen-

erally.⁹ The artistic projects together represent what scholar Rob Nixon has called for: an “*environmental justice* approach to Anthropocene story-telling.”¹⁰

The Anthropocene, as Crutzen and Stoermer argue, is the era when human impacts have shaped geologic time.¹¹ Although not accepted universally as a scientific term, the Anthropocene has gained much cultural and political resonance in the last five years.¹² In his piece, “The Great Acceleration and the Great Divergence: Vulnerability in the Anthropocene,” literary scholar Rob Nixon suggests that although environmental crises and human inequality are deeply intertwined, *narratives* about the Anthropocene have generally “sidestepped the question of unequal human agency, unequal human impacts, and unequal human vulnerabilities.”¹³ Thus, how people *talk about* and *visually represent* the Anthropocene is important, and the limits of emergent Anthropocene narratives matter immensely. Nixon writes, “Stories matter. . . . In a world drowning in data, stories can play a vital role . . . in the making of environmental publics and in the shaping of environmental policy.”¹⁴ In other words, the sidestepping of these perspectives of inequalities of agency or responsibility, impacts and vulnerabilities, are not minor and irrelevant. Rather, ignoring these perspectives reenacts and restages violence, epistemological and environmental.

Thus, I suggest that it is *particularly* important to highlight artist-practitioners who collectively foreground these perspectives of inequality in their cultural and artistic representations, both in general and in the case of climate change in particular. For the purposes of this piece, I will highlight the Re-Locate project in Kivalina, Alaska, to give an example of an environmental justice representation of the Anthropocene.

Kivalina is an Iñupiaq village that may be destroyed in Northwest Alaska, as sea ice melts and rates of coastal erosion increase. Many coastal villages may become uninhabitable in the near future. As the Re-Locate website explains, “The community of Kivalina, home to around 400 people, is facing imminent relocation and the need for viable futures is urgent. For a host of reasons, previous relocation efforts in Kivalina are stalled, leaving the community looking for alternatives.”¹⁵ Re-Locate is a transdisciplinary global collective working with a group of delegates from Kivalina to initiate a community-led and culturally specific relocation, using social arts methods and online media. They “intend to make the social, political, and environmental issues related

to relocation *visible* to global audiences; support community discussion and consensus building; locate, connect and educate new relocation partners; create spaces where people in Kivalina can share original media and ideas about local identities and ways of life; and develop an infrastructure for managing global support and pursuing relocation planning opportunities.”¹⁶ The project is founded on “solidarity and engagement” and a long-term dialogue in which a group of transdisciplinary global partners travel to the village on a recurrent basis to develop shared priorities.

Through a long-term collaborative process with local residents and community leaders, Re-Locate foregrounds too often ignored dimensions of climate inequality and social injustice, as well as its environmental impacts through their images, narratives, and stories. In addition to “making visible” the narratives of Kivalina residents and their struggles, members of Re-Locate are deeply invested in the cultural politics of decolonial Anthropocene visibility. One part of their project is to see, and thus ask the viewer to *consider* their own positionality, and to *imagine* the world differently, grounded in knowing the particular political, historical, and cultural contexts of Kivalina. Re-Locate does so through a long-term engagement and a sophisticated analysis that highlights both the possibilities *and* the limits of empathy and recognition. This capability to imagine and embody different perspectives and worldviews is the hallmark of *empathy* and *recognition*. And although Re-Locate does not explicitly use the Anthropocene to frame their work, the project effectively foregrounds questions of agency, justice, and vulnerability, particularly in relation to global climate change, climate change’s disproportionately negative impact on indigenous populations, and its relationship with extractive energy politics.

Recognition: Why and How

In his book *Defining Environmental Justice*, political philosopher David Schlosberg expanded the definition of justice to go beyond the traditional understandings of justice as distributive or procedural.¹⁷ Under earlier definitions, the distributive model suggests that there are reasons why some people get more goods (and bads) than others, while the procedural model describes how politically and culturally disenfranchised people or communities can or cannot take part in governance. Schlosberg adds a third dimension. He argues (drawing on feminist philoso-

pher Iris Marion Young and others) that recognition of diverse cultural identities in a critical pluralism is a precondition for entry into the distributional system. Lack of distribution and participation are therefore linked to a lack of recognition. Part of the problem of environmental injustice, and part of the reason for unjust pollution distribution, is a lack of recognition of group difference.

Understanding the interlinking dimensions of justice helps explain how calls for justice from social movements have been co-opted and absorbed by state entities and corporate actors. Early attempts to have *distributional justice* (i.e., to address issues of production or political power) have been co-opted into changes in *procedural grounds*, as environmental justice programs have proliferated in the US regulatory and civil-society contexts.¹⁸

Under intensifying conditions of global climate change, the contributions and creativity from literature, arts, and humanities present a *unique* possibility to inhabit different worldviews, to promote more recognition, and thus to contribute to reducing political injustice. In part, I make this claim based on the *particular* ways in which the forms of the artistic and collaborative practice in Kivalina make their arguments and translate the struggles of the Kivalina people for a global audience. In short, rather than assuming that the problems of climate change are based on the future forecasts of climate change disaster, Kivalina residents focus on their current realities and struggles. Thus, Kivalina residents, with the Re-Locate project, frame the climate change debate with their lives and struggles at the center, rather than at the margins. Unfortunately, these perspectives tend to be overlooked in discussions of technocratic and political debates on climate change, which have focused primarily on the science of climate change and on the reactionary politics of climate change skepticism.

Agency, Impacts, Vulnerabilities

According to the Re-Locate website, Kivalina, an “isolated whaling community . . . home to around 400 people, is facing imminent relocation and the need for viable futures is urgent.”¹⁹ Kivalina is a one-and-a-half-hour flight from Anchorage to a hub village and then another thirty-minute plane ride. The village is located eighty miles north of the Arctic Circle. Kivalina garnered global attention to their situation and to the relocation process they had initiated through their lawsuit on cli-

mate change, *Kivalina v. ExxonMobil Corporation, et al.*, filed on February 26, 2008, in the Northern District of California.

Kivalina was represented in the case by the Center on Race, Poverty, and the Environment and by the Native American Rights Fund, along with a number of major law firms. The lawsuit, filed against the twenty-four largest oil and electric companies in the United States, alleged that these corporations are substantially contributing to global warming and are liable to Kivalina for the resulting damage. The lawsuit also alleged that a small number of defendants led by ExxonMobil have engaged in a conspiracy to mislead the public about the causes and effects of climate change.²⁰ The suit, based on the federal common-law theory of nuisance, claimed up to \$400 million in monetary damages to pay for the relocation of the village. The economic, moral, and political issues in Kivalina are huge. Take, for instance, the issue of relocation. In the rural Arctic, cost estimates for relocation of individual villages range from \$20 million to \$200 million, according to the US Army Corps of Engineers' Alaska Village Erosion Technical Assistance Program.²¹

The district court dismissed the case on the grounds that regulating greenhouse gas emissions was a *political* rather than a legal issue. Kivalina appealed to the Ninth Circuit, which affirmed the lower court's dismissal. Kivalina then appealed the Ninth Circuit's dismissal to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court declined to hear the case.²² This distinction between the political, legal, and cultural in regards to climate change is a view rejected by climate justice activists and, in particular, by indigenous and small-island communities.²³

According to the most recent report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, "The poorest people in the world, who have had virtually nothing to do with causing global warming, will be high on the list of *victims as climatic disruptions intensify*."²⁴ The report cited a World Bank estimate that poor countries need as much as \$100 billion a year to try to offset the effects of climate change. The \$100 billion figure, though included in the 2,500-page main report, was removed from a 48-page executive summary to be read by the world's top political leaders.²⁵ It was among the most significant changes made as the summary underwent final review during an editing session of several days in Yokohama. In other words, those facing the *greatest impacts* are those with the *least culpability* and with the *least ability to pay to mitigate* these disastrous impacts.

It is in the global context that indigenous voices on climate change matter immensely. Although the actual number of Kivalina residents is small, the moral and legal critique they level is particularly important in light of global climate change. This struggle and history has been written about by others, based in large part on the voices of those active in the village—notably, Colleen Swan, a former tribal administrator and a current city council member in Kivalina.²⁶

Swan has been at the center of initiating and managing Kivalina's host of strategies—including lawsuits to revitalize traditional practices—for claiming political agency and supporting village relocation. One of these lawsuits covers a twenty-year dispute with the Red Dog Mine, which has polluted the Wulik River, which the residents rely on for food and drinking water. The mine discharges millions of gallons of mining waste into Red Dog Creek, about forty-five miles upstream from Kivalina. The mining waste contains cyanide, lead, zinc, selenium, and a chemical cocktail called “total dissolved solids,” among other pollutants. The mine has been prosecuted by the United States for violations to the Clean Water Act.

As Swan states in Re-Locate's video presented at the Visual Activism conference, “When we have fights about contamination limits, the government will adjust the laws to accommodate the polluters, and that is what is happening with carbon emissions. They are creating laws or making adjustments to make our lawsuit and our issues not matter anymore. But no matter what the law says, *we still exist*. They can't write us away, regulate us away. We are still here. It is utterly foolish to think that just because they write laws because they want to, that we don't exist. *We still exist.*”²⁷

She is foregrounding a politics of self-recognition in highly specific political, legal, and cultural contexts that seek to write and regulate the community away. The repetition of “we still exist” is overlaid in the video with a diverse set of images of Kivalina residents engaging in their everyday activities, some of which are universal (groups of kids playing) and some of which are culturally specific (residents hunting). Thus, in a deeply contested cultural and political context, their fight dovetails with other communities fighting for their survival as a result of disruption from climate change.

Through the cultural politics of representation and recognition, alongside a long-term engagement with Re-Locate members, Kivalina

residents are able to push multiple political and cultural agendas. One of these is to argue that despite their small numbers, the moral, political, legal, and cultural issues raised by the potential physical disappearance of their village is significant for those with no direct contact with Kivalina residents, through a network of both responsibility and solidarity.²⁸

The Limits of Recognition

Re-Locate offers a complex model of social art praxis that draws on a long-term engagement model. There is much to learn from the project, but what is particularly important in this context is the attention to complexity, ambiguity, and theory building from the standpoint of Kivalina residents, as the Re-Locate curators themselves narrate in this *Resilience* companion piece.

As Jennifer Marlow, codirector of Re-Locate, says, “Re-Locate recognizes the roots of structural inequality in Kivalina’s displacement and seeks to *frame* prospects looking forward that renegotiate power structures and realize material change in the village. These material changes and political retooling efforts are one in the same.”²⁹ At the same time, Marlow confirms that the project is focused on politics “*beyond recognition*, capacitating Kivalina’s own comprehensive set of actionable strategies [being] our goal.”³⁰

The Re-Locate collaborative effort is grounded in academic theories of the limits of recognition, and it uses this critical stance to develop what they call “transformational empathy.” As chairman of the Kivalina Relocation Planning Committee, Enoch Adams Jr. explains that there is a distinction between sympathy and empathy. Empathy is not liberal, but it is transformative. As Adams explains, in conversation with one of the members of Re-Locate, “We get a lot of *sympathy* from a lot of people . . . but we need more than sympathy, we need *empathy* To empathize with another, you’ve got to really put yourself in their shoes for an extended period of time. Empathy is going to take time . . . it’s more than feeling sorry for someone. To really empathize with someone in our situation you really have to experience what we experience; eat our food; face our seemingly compounded dilemma. We know that there are solutions to our situation. We know that there are ways that our problem can be resolved.”³¹ Here, the distinction between sympathy and empathy and distinctions between different varieties of empathy are key. In some ways, these distinctions parallel the different ways

in which recognition is operationalized. What links an environmental justice approach to recognition and empathy, whatever the issue, is perspective and a focus on systemic change.

Michael Gerace, an artist and architect working in Anchorage, is the other codirector of Re-Locate. The perceived isolation of Kivalina is belied by the collaborative engagements and uses of technology that link people from around the globe to the village, through a set of social relationships. Re-Locate speaks to a global audience, including United Nations–affiliate organizations working on climate displacement, as (in their words) a “context provider, a body and space where people from Kivalina can provide their own content and begin to affect and reform relationships.”³²

The function of the Re-Locate website is to make the *local* climate change impacts of Kivalina visible to a *global* audience. The website hosts a number of different projects, each of which has different goals and partners. These projects include such efforts as TV broadcasts produced by Kivalina youth; Modeling Kivalina; a design project for a relocation center; History of Dwelling in the Kivalina Region, which contextualizes the contemporary relocation process within a broader environmental and social history; and an emergent web platform that will share the stories of Kivalina residents. The KVAK youth broadcasts consist of short videos—clips of daily life, ranging from playing Hacky Sack to hunting caribou in the river, and silent filming of recent flooding. These diverse projects range in style, whether they are ongoing, onetime, or still under construction; but they share a generalized goal to make real the experiences of Kivalina to a global audience, for whom the washing away of Kivalina homes and communities most likely either is something they either never knew or thought about or seems a mere abstraction when confronted with this reality for many indigenous and small-island communities, particularly in the Pacific.³³

Gerace explains the region’s complicated and contentious politics that preceded the recognition of climate change impacts in Kivalina.³⁴ These tensions include lawsuits against large energy companies (e.g., Red Dog Mine) and a 1905 forced sedentarization of the tribe by the Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs. Others put the history further back. According to Swan, “The doctrine of discovery came from Spain and Portugal. . . . They have a huge part in this. It should go back to its roots. They need to be accountable also, not just churches and government. If

there is any justice in the world, it will go that far.”³⁵ She locates the contemporary challenges her community faces back to contact, in a decolonizing historiography and time line.

Re-Locate’s priorities are codeveloped with village residents and leaders on an ongoing basis, and major issues include collective projects that lead to territorial reinhabitation and renegotiation of governmental autonomy and integration. Participants in this process, both Kivalina residents and those coming from afar, are very aware of the politics of *coproducing* their knowledge at the same time that they are focusing on a shared goal of increasing awareness and recognition for the threats that Kivalina residents face. Project participants focus on foregrounding their stories and perspective, as well as on making public enormous amounts of data and information related to relocation planning.

Re-Locate is building an online and physical archive of Kivalina’s relocation history that digitizes, preserves, and consolidates relocation documents, studies, texts, photos, and videos created and stored by people in Kivalina over the last one hundred years; that makes visible and accountable particular issues affecting the relocation process; that ensures continuity between past and future relocation-planning efforts; and that operates as tool for the planning of territorial reinhabitation. The goal is to ensure that a digital archive functions as a design tool, to transform *information* from that hidden away in a binder (or as a technocratic set of unusable data) into a more active and public tool that can be applied the local and indigenous inequalities of agency, impacts, and vulnerabilities related to climate change.

This notion of making information and experience public aligns with the goals of the social art and collaborative practices of the project. Gerace describes art-making practice *expansively*, to include projects like the biochar initiative, which aims to develop a sanitation system for Kivalina. According to the Climate Foundation, which is working with Re-Locate in Kivalina, “Biochar draws carbon from the atmosphere, providing a carbon sink on agricultural lands. Biochar is biologically unavailable, sequestering fixed carbon in the soil for centuries to millennia, providing a potential tool to absorb net carbon from the atmosphere.”³⁶ The foundation is developing a reactor that can process the solid waste of two thousand people, or up to eight hundred kilograms, per day. A particularly challenging aspect of the process is removing moisture from the waste while keeping the energy balance positive.

Gerace says, “We approach the work as individuals, then the collaborative process itself is art . . . opening with eyes to seeing, somehow to build a new commons.”³⁷ In addition, he critiques the dominant focus on professional identities as limited. In contrast to that narrow focus, Re-Locate highlights the blurring of technical, artistic, and political domains. One example is in the biochar toilet project, which Re-Locate views as art, ethnography, law, and architecture, requiring “an overlapping of various systems.”³⁸ By systems, Gerace is referring not just to technological but to local and cultural systems—for example, those systems not based on cash and money exchange. He says, “Studying poop may not *seem* artistic, but studying with someone young who moves the poop around and understanding why he does this highlights how this is a very regionally specific system, hidden to outsiders.”³⁹

Technology, from sanitation to web-based platforms, can make these relationships visible *as part of the art itself*. The imperative of this artistic practice is to capacitate the flourishing of existing systems, to show how we “might habituate differently under the current violent system,” and to activate the “collective continuance” of the community.⁴⁰

Empathy and Action in the Anthropocene

Gillis and Chang reported in the *New York Times* that scientists showed that “a large section of the mighty West Antarctic ice sheet has begun falling apart and its continued melting now appears to be unstoppable. . . . The melting could destabilize neighboring parts of the ice sheet and a rise in sea level of 10 feet or more may be unavoidable in coming centuries.”⁴¹ Clearly, in an era where the scientific alarm around climate change is reaching new heights, the political inaction on emissions reduction and global climate change shows that existing practices are not working.

What we need, perhaps, is to inject different ways of looking at climate change, efforts that highlight different ways of knowing and being in the world or, at the very minimum, insist that those audiences in Western developed nations pay attention to those who are being currently and imminently threatened by climate change. What we need is to center decolonial visual politics of the Anthropocene. Those in Kivalina and in other small-island states, as well as other climate change activists, are insisting that climate change is already proving disastrous in their lives and in their communities.

The Re-Locate project is an important part of defining an environmental justice approach to the Anthropocene. This perspective both accepts (in part) the metanarrative of humans affecting geologic time and insists that human impacts are themselves variable and uneven, being shaped by politics, culture, and histories of exploitation. As Colleen Swan said, “If we want justice in Kivalina, restorative justice, we have to lead. We have to take the lead, because we know what needs to be restored. One of the important things that I see is getting that *self-determination kind of thing* that we used to have a long time ago, to where we never depended on anyone outside the village for anything. Our people have, well, I wouldn’t say that we lost it, but I would say that it was stolen from us. A lot of things need to be restored.”⁴²

Looking at Kivalina and Re-Locate suggests one possible pathway from the problems of the lack of cultural recognition and empathy currently plaguing climate change politics. That perspective centralizes the lives and stories of those most impacted by the current economic and social system, for those who bear the greatest responsibility in the context of climate change, those in the United States, China, Western Europe, Japan, and other industrialized nations.

Only by recognizing the humanity of those who have the least culpability and who suffer the most impacts can totalizing and imminent disaster be averted. We already have too many examples to speak of for the problems of lack of cultural recognition. According to Brian Wolshon, an engineering professor at Louisiana State University who served as a consultant on the state’s evacuation plan, little attention was paid, before Hurricane Katrina, to moving out New Orleans’s low-mobility population—the elderly, the infirm, and the poor without cars or other means of fleeing the city, about one hundred thousand people. As reporters Shane and Lipton documented in a presciently apt article in the aftermath of Katrina called “Government Saw Flood Risk but Not Levee Failure,” when explicitly asked about what to do with those populations at disaster planning meetings, Wolshon said, “The answer was often silence.”⁴³ In other words, the failures to *see* and to *act* are closely interlinked. And this failure to see is in part a failure of recognition of the worldviews and experiences of those less visible and legible—in this case, the elderly, the sick, and those too poor to own a car.

The Re-Locate project and the Kivalina residents refuse to accept this silence. We need art, love, creativity, restoration, relationships, and hu-

mor in the face of the calamity that is climate change. Re-Locate shows us what that might look like, not as a prescription or scaleable project or process, but in an insistent local and indigenous context.

Here, the “tip of the iceberg” is no longer metaphorical but harsh reality, ready to flood Kivalina village—and hundreds of other Native Alaskan villages and small-island nations in the Pacific. The Re-Locate project is an example of the sweet art of the Anthropocene, one that foregrounds environmental justice perspectives and that uses collaboration and creativity at its expansive definition of art and action. As Swan says emphatically, “We are still here”; and through Re-Locate, those outside Kivalina are brought, however tentatively and temporarily, into that hopeful “we.”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Julie Sze is a professor and the director of American studies at University of California, Davis. She is also the founding director of the Environmental Justice Project for the University of California, Davis's John Muir Institute for the Environment. Sze's research investigates environmental justice and environmental inequality; culture and environment; race, gender, and power; and urban-community health and activism and has been funded by the Ford Foundation, the American Studies Association, and the University of California Humanities Research Institute. Sze's book, *Noxious New York: The Racial Politics of Urban Health and Environmental Justice* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007), won the 2008 John Hope Franklin Publication Prize, awarded annually to the best published book in American Studies. Her second book is called *Fantasy Islands: Chinese Dreams and Ecological Fears in an Age of Climate Crisis* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015). She has authored and coauthored thirty-five peer-reviewed articles and book chapters on a wide range of topics and has given talks in China, Abu Dhabi, Canada, Germany, France, and Italy.

NOTES

1. Bill McKibben, “What the Warming World Needs Now Is Art, Sweet Art,” *Grist*, April 22, 2005, accessed May 30, 2014, <http://grist.org/article/mckibben-imagine/>.
2. For an overview of some of these projects, see “Artists and Climate Change,” *Artists and Climate Change* (blog), <http://artistsandclimatechange.com/about/>.
3. Nicholas Mirzoeff, “Visualizing the Anthropocene,” *Public Culture* 26, no. 2 (Spring 2014): 203.
4. Mirzoeff, “Visualizing the Anthropocene,” 203.
5. See George Lipsitz, *American Studies in a Moment of Danger* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2001).

6. See Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011); Tom Beamish, "Waiting for Crisis: Regulatory Inaction and Ineptitude and the Case of the Guadalupe Dunes Oil Spill," *Social Problems* 49, no. 2 (May 2002): 150–77.

7. Collaborators in Re-Locate include a multidisciplinary group of partners, including several scholars and artists from the California College of the Arts; University of California, Santa Cruz; and the University of Washington. For a full list of collaborators, see Re-Locate, "Collaborators," Re-Locate Kivalina, accessed May 30, 2014, <http://www.relocate-ak.org/people/collaborators/>.

8. For an overview of the panel, see "Visual Activism: Schedule and Participants," San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, accessed May 30, 2014, http://www.sfmoma.org/exhib_events/visual_activism_schedule. Participants included the following: Harriettan Theater, an environmental theater company based in New York City, is focused on artistic implications of climate change and global water politics, especially after Hurricane Sandy. Veejayant Dash is an artist who focuses on community engagement with water issues in villages of Odisha, India, where villagers are negatively impacted in the areas of health and sanitation, inequality in terms of rights and access to water, and changing habitats. Mel Chin is a well-known artist, whose recent work in St. Paul, Minnesota, and New Orleans addresses scientific and artistic practice in fascinating ways; see especially her work with Revival Field, a state Superfund site in St. Paul, Minnesota, located at Pig's Eye Landfill, which was a replicated field test using special hyperaccumulator plants to extract heavy metals from contaminated soil, "Revival Field," Mel Chin, accessed May 30, 2014, <http://melchin.org/oeuvre/revival-field>. Operation Paydirt organized the Fundred Dollar Bill Project as a multidisciplinary project with a critical mission to support awareness and solutions for lead contamination and to help end childhood lead poisoning; see "About," Operation Paydirt, accessed May 30, 2014, <http://www.fundred.org/about/operation-paydirt.php>. Tracy Perkins directed a community-engaged photo-documentation project focused on environmental and social inequalities in the Central Valley region of California. And Nathalie Anguezomo Mba Bikoro incorporates "collaborative engagements, international community dialogue, body politics and development across continents through a merging of creative practices in live art performance"; see Nathalie Anguezomo Mba Bikoro's home page, <http://www.nbikoro.com/>. Mba Bikoro writes about how in Gabon her childhood cancer, and its treatment, in part shaped her view of the body.

9. As moderator, I introduced the artists and facilitated the question-and-answer session with the audience.

10. Rob Nixon, "The Great Acceleration and the Great Divergence: Vulnerability in the Anthropocene," *Profession*, March 19, 2014, <http://profession.commons.mla.org/2014/03/19/the-great-acceleration-and-the-great-divergence-vulnerability-in-the-anthropocene/>.

11. See Paul J. Crutzen and Eugene F. Stoermer, "The 'Anthropocene,'" *Global Change Newsletter*, no. 41 (May 2000): 17–18.

12. For a short and popular discussion about the debates over the term, see Joseph Stromberg, "What Is the Anthropocene and Are We in It?" *Smithsonian Magazine*, January 2013, <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/what-is-the-anthropocene-and-are-we-in-it-164801414/?no-ist>.

13. Nixon, "Great Acceleration and the Great Divergence."

14. Nixon, "Great Acceleration and the Great Divergence."

15. Re-Locate Kivalina, "Overview," Re-Locate Kivalina, accessed May 30, 2014, <http://www.relocate-ak.org>.

16. Re-Locate Kivalina, "Overview," emphasis added.

17. See David Schlosberg, *Defining Environmental Justice: Theories, Movements, and Nature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

18. See Jill Lindsey Harrison, "Neoliberal Environmental Justice: Mainstream Ideas of Justice in Political Conflict over Agricultural Pesticides in the United States," *Environmental Politics* 23, no. 4 (2014): 650–59.

19. Re-Locate Kivalina, "Overview."

20. "Climate Justice: Addressing the Disproportionate Impact of Climate Damage on Low-Income Communities of Color," Center on Race, Poverty, and the Environment, accessed May 30, 2014, <http://www.crpe-ej.org/crpe/index.php/campaigns/climate-justice>.

21. US Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District, *Alaska Baseline Erosion Assessment: Study Findings and Technical Report* (Elmendorf Air Force Base, AK: US Army Corps of Engineers, 2009), http://www.climatechange.alaska.gov/docs/iaw_USACE_erosion_rpt.pdf.

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25. Gillis, “Panel’s Warning on Climate Risk.”

26. See Christine Shearer, *Kivalina: A Climate Change Story* (Chicago: Haymarket, 2011).

27. Re-Locate, video presentation (Visual Activism, San Francisco, March 14, 2014), emphasis added.

28. Here, I am speaking of the audience that is engaging with Kivalina only through the website. Re-Locate’s audience also includes many who do in fact have regular or semiregular contact with Kivalina, including federal- and state-agency representatives and private and public partners.

29. Jennifer Marlow, quoted in Re-Locate video presentation (Visual Activism, San Francisco, March 14, 2014), emphasis added.

30. Jennifer Marlow, quoted in Re-Locate video presentation (Visual Activism, San Francisco, March 14, 2014), emphasis added.

31. Enoch Adams Jr., quoted in P. Joshua Griffin, “Ethics: Translation,” *Fieldsights—Field Notes*, *Cultural Anthropology Online*, April 17, 2013, <http://www.culanth.org/fieldsights/221-ethics-translation>, emphasis added.

32. Jennifer Marlow, e-mail message to author, May 15, 2015.

33. See Stephen Leahy, “The Nations Guaranteed to Be Swallowed by the Sea,” *Motherboard*, May 27, 2014, <http://motherboard.vice.com/read/the-nations-destined-to-be-swallowed-by-the-sea>.

34. Michael Gerace, telephone conversation with the author, May 20, 2014.

35. Re-Locate video presentation (Visual Activism, San Francisco, March 14, 2014).

36. See “Land Carbon Sequestration,” Climate Foundation, accessed August 26, 2015, <http://www.climatefoundation.org/what-we-do-b/land-carbon-sequestration>.

37. Gerace, telephone conversation, May 20, 2014.

38. Gerace, telephone conversation, May 20, 2014.

39. Gerace, telephone conversation, May 20, 2014.

40. Gerace, telephone conversation, May 20, 2014.

41. Justin Gillis and Kenneth Chang, “Scientists Warn of Rising Oceans from Polar Melt,” *New York Times*, May 12, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/13/science/earth/collapse-of-parts-of-west-antarctica-ice-sheet-has-begun-scientists-say.html?_r=0.

42. Colleen Swan, quoted in Re-Locate video presentation (Visual Activism, San Francisco, March 14, 2014).

43. Scott Shane and Eric Lipton, “Government Saw Flood Risk but Not Levee Failure,” *New York Times*, September 2, 2005, <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/09/02/national/nationalspecial/02response.html?pagewanted=all>.