

A Return to Action (Seminar)

A discussion revisiting the values of Action Anthropology

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Dr Toyin Agbetu, (Lecturer in Social and Political Anthropology at UCL) revisits Action Anthropology, arguing although anthropology is centred around the study of humanity, in its applied and military guises, it is not necessarily egalitarian, equitable or activist. Historically, these forms of the discipline have worn a cloak of liberalism tied to extractive academic institutions and government agendas that are structurally violent. The solutions offered for existing social injustices are typically produced using a top-down approach, framed and defended under the banner of humanitarianism.

When the scholar-activist Sol Tax conceptualised Action Anthropology in 1958, he advocated for a radical approach. One that would enable anthropologists to work collaboratively with organic intellectuals from local communities seeking to solve their own problems and control their own cultural resources on their own terms. Today, the children of Action Anthropology go by names like collaborative anthropology, engaged anthropology, decolonising anthropology and participatory action research. However, is our ability and willingness to intervene at the community's discretion and, most importantly, direction still intact?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M3afLINcTnk>

Good evening everyone. We've got a really special talk tonight with Tu, who is a lecturer of political and social anthropology here at UCL. and he has also been for many years a community activist, and involved in, legal, the, human rights organization, pan-African Human Rights Organization, to, so toying is struggling with this scholar activist approach, or rather not struggling.

He's embodying the scholar activist approach and he's going to be talking about it in relation to the traditions of action anthropology, which is something very close to radical anthropology's heart.

So I'm gonna talk, I'm gonna hand over to Toya now and try to keep him in the zoom cam, but if he's not, he's got some fantastic, media for You.

Thank you very much for that lovely mind invitation.

probably mind because I don't block it.

This is gonna be an interactive presentation as well, and I'll try to keep it short.

Those of how I lecture knows that they can actually go over time.

So I really want this to be a discussion. So, but first of all, when I say it's an interactive, presentation, it means that you can use your phone to use your tablets, your laptops, and if you have them, it's really actually advised what you can do right now is go to mentee.

So if you type that in and then use that code 1 9 5 7 7 6 2 5, and you can do that on Zoom as well. So if you, if you can see the code, go to mei com and type in 1 9 5 7 7 6 2 5.

it's lovely to have you here. if I sound a little bit pause, I'm a little bit tired, but, I'm excited to talk about formal lectures today. A passionate Yes, it's been quite intensive today to have, you all here. I tend to start, everything I do lectures, discussions, workshops for a piece of music.

So that's what I'm gonna do. It's no change. Yeah.

So what I'm gonna ask you to do is just listen to the song, and then just kind of like take some notes in your mind, kind of what it invokes, what the words, what the visuals, what, what kind of comes out, what, what hits you. Because after the song happens, I'm gonna, or finishes, I'm gonna ask you to share those using that code, menti code, so we can, we can discuss it. Is is that clear to everyone? Sorry, Tanya. Can you just say that again for Zoom people? It was, was it mensey.com? I've got the number, but I just don't have the entire, the, we can't see the top of your screen, so we can't, a lot of us would love to access that here in Zoom. So it's cy So it's, I'll put it inside a chat, so, oh, wonderful.

Would you, that'd be great for everyone.

Is, 1 9 5 7.

Awesome.

7 6 2 5. Is that my, yes, it's, that's why I hate those things. At least it's better than breaking wind.

okay. Is that, is that okay? That looks great. I'm gonna try that now and if it's any trouble, I'll, I'll shout back.

Okay. Actually, because if you go on menti.com, then you can actually use the browser to see the slides directly so it actually be a better image using menti than it is actually getting through here. Right? So, awesome. It's really advise that you kind of like, try, try that approach.

Okay, let's go. I'm gonna play this song.

Hopefully we've got some bass in this room because I do like my base. You on the street.

So is G I g I is g I g G, Okay. earth is ghetto. Like I said, there's no right or wrong answer to this one. What did it invoke? What did the words, what did the videos, what did it make you feel? Feel what came to mind? Did you like the theme? Did you not like the theme? Did you like the bead? Did you like the tune? Was it rhythmic? Was it not? Whatever comes to mind. What really what, what share some words. I should also say as well, is that what I normally do as well is, is is provide a, is that me? It may be the microphone feedback. Is it One, two? Okay. I have no idea. Well, we'll keep going.

It's still, but don't move. Okay.

So I also like to say is, well that's gonna irritate me. The Microphone feedback.

What I'll do, I'll clip it here. Hopefully you can still, can you still hear me with the mic? If it's there? Is that, is that okay? So that's work.

Either switch it up, let's switch it up and just Shut, let's speak out.

Sure.

Yeah.

I, I prefer inclusivity as opposed a little bit discomfort. So, okay. We'll see how it goes for a little bit more. alright, let's go through some of the words. Yeah, you're right. I'll switch office.

This gonna drive me crazy. Okay, I'll try and speak a bit louder.

It's not really, so the first thing I was gonna say before I was really interrupted by the technology, is that these are very challenging times right now. geopolitically there's a lot of problems going on in the world, and generally with the themes that I discuss anyway, I ask students and everyone who's listening to generally be sensitive recognize that while we're here in this space, that we are actually in active learning community, we're working together.

So couple of baseline values, being sensitive, having empathy, speaking with clarity and honesty. Okay, so I hope everyone's okay with that.

Is, is, is that agreed? Does everyone agreeable with that man? Can we be angry as well? Definitely can be angry as well, but as long as we are recognizing that we don't wanna cause harm to anyone who's inside a room, and that would be respectful of each other's opinions and feelings. Okay.

Can I hear anyone? You're very silent right now. Yeah. Thank you.

It's really important we have new technologists.

You're not gonna be able to hide in this presentation, in this discussion with you. I, I don't run like that. Okay, so let's see the words you've come up with. Okay. Knowledge, global warming, childhood toxicity, division, trapped, sadness and future. These are all very powerful words. Very glued for, I like this joy of singing. It is a contradiction isn't, it's such a beautiful rhythm and it's very joyous.

But actually what it's talking about is things like ation and hopelessness and sub-urban usa. Does anyone wanna share anything? Ah, generational wisdom.

They can pick that up. That's really important. That last scene.

That was very important. Most people miss that one.

Does anyone wanna share anything that they, and over here anyone wanna share? One of the words that they, that they put up here? I don't wanna single anyone out.

I'm trying to be a better toy and I normally pick on people, anyone want to make a comment on any words that they're shared or we might as well just be back in rows and, and it all seem rather well healed. I mean, very nice ice cream and very crushed cars and, it all seem rather, Affluent. Yeah, aesthetically it was quite pristine, wasn't it? But the themes that were being shared certainly weren't, they're actually talking about transcendence, really escaping all, which is something I hope that we don't do this whole today.

This whole talk is actually about the opposite of that.

What can we do to prevent us trying to escape all those things? Is that a hand up at the back that I can see? Yeah. Thank you for sharing that and that was a really nice touch as well because we often talk about generational generational trauma, but

we, we sometimes forget that we also transport transform and transfer wisdom and ways to actually work around some of these challenges that we face.

That's just as important a ritual and a process as it is us learning strategies to cope with the trauma that we experience. Okay, I'm gonna move on to the next slide. Now, today's session really is about action anthropology. And, even though I'm gonna talk about Dr. Sot tax, who actually coined the phrase, and actually it's, it's, it's, it's founding, if you wanna put call it that it's not really a talk, it's not really a discussion about SOT tax.

It's really about the principles behind this approach.

cause they have changed and they've been inculcated in different strategies of across that anthropology. So this is some of the basic, information that you need to know. It is pioneered by SOT tax. it emerged in the 1950s from the University of Chicago to recognized that simulation was not a universal pan for all, aminian communities, indigenous peoples. it inve the approach to support the ambitions of marginalized communities for self-determination and cultural persistence, and more importantly, adopted a reflective approach to improve anthropology, developing better intercultural relations and this is a really core component, about action anthropology. does anyone have any questions? Any comments You really do need to be, engaged in this to get the best out this does? Anyone else? Any questions and comments? I mean, I'm gonna move from slides and we're gonna have a general conversation. he was an economic anthropologist as well, which is really interesting, comes from an economic background. Hands up.

I guess I have a question more about his background too. did he, was he like very traditionally privileged to, did he, like, where did he get the sense of, do ? Okay, that's a hard one. I mean, for me to ask, I'm not historian. He, he, he was, he was a product of the academy, so all of his work took place within the academy. So, and it's, it's quite a paradox. So even though his work was actually, kind of like the antithesis of what the academy often stood for, he did all his work within it and so he's literally embodiment of being inside the system to his job. It, it's really strange because often we, we hear the quote by Audrey Lord about you can't the master the master tools when actually that's often taken out of its total context of what she meant it and even though the principle has some, we need all tactics as an activist, we'll talk about like, like a repertoire, like a whole collective of different strategies to do it.

So I can't answer specific question about his Childhood and his upbringing, but what I could say he was a privileged actor, in a sense that he had a university salary, that he was quite a lot ill and got journals. but he used that, that, that privilege to actually engage in this practice. Okay. Anyone else Please? But Chicago remember also that it's quite, it's quite commonly for lots of people who are seemingly establishment types in Chicago educational institutions to actually say, look, we've got to improve people's, we've got to learn from the learning skills.

So I love this is the number of large number of people around at that time who were doing that sort of thing.

There were, but there's also a contradiction in That. Yeah, it's quite interesting. That's, they see, they look quite establishment when you actually look at what they're doing.

It's, they're trying to empower everybody. They're saying, look, I've managed to get here because I've been lucky. Yeah.

But not everyone's like me, but I have the ability to say, okay, how do you teach people? How do you empower people? So that's what we've gotta do.

Okay, thank you.

You have a direct question to your point Zoom as well. Can you repeat what the comments are for the zoom? Oh, so they're involved, Right? Sorry. Okay. Yeah, And they might have comments too.

Ah, god. Okay. Multitasking. Oh dear. Okay. Oh, and we do have some words about the video. Thank you Charlotte as well.

Hopeful from seen, from a deep space disassociation. Okay.

I'll try to be a bit more, oh, you've got someone in the waiting room.

Okay. I'm not, no, It's alright. The answer can do that. Okay.

If it switch between I can try and help as Well. Right. Okay. Now I am really disorientated, I'm sorry.

No, that's a question. You had a question here. I Think it's more a question to you.

So to what extent do you think representation of this was kind of like, was seem legitimate from the marginalized communities? Because obviously who would differ from people who would represent? So do you think they would see him like legitimate represents? I think we've gotta be aware of first, I think we've gotta be aware of reading things backwards and remember what was the time period that all of this was happening and we, 1888 nineties, where there were lots of people who have come from privilege and that more recently, well, we realize, okay, I was lucky, now I have to go back and that was just the way they were brought up. Okay.

So we have to empower people to think that Chicago went from being somewhere that was quite small in village and it was growing because it was essentially a distribution hub. And so people, people realize, okay, it's, I can empower more people to help people move stuff in one place from the ships off the boats on the trains and to, and to make sure that they were evening classes and there were technical colleges. Technical schools because part of, there were lots of people who created technical co high schools where you didn't just learn anything like geography, three maps. You actually learn how to do, hand across, and technical skills and talk to business people. There were, in close the white and black community, but I'm just gonna use them because that's, I have friends on the south side Chicago and they talked about it. They had, they replicated organizations that might seem to be like private professional class for men. They did it on the other side.

Of course they were where you could, you could join together and say, okay, well we've got these skills, let's empower everyone else so everyone else can have an edu-

cation that everyone else can what they want to do. And just, and that's what they thought.

They didn't think about, oh yes, I'm privileged. I can do what I want. I, I reached this point where I actually, I have all this possibility for doing more of my time, more than just making sure I have enough to buy my family food.

Now I have to give back.

Thank you. Can you check to see if the group can hear Well? Yeah, did well just to ask how did, did you hear Alice's comment on Zoom and your comment as well, which were questions about the position of somebody like, so tax in representing marginalized communities, and then a, a lengthy comment from talking about the context of Chicago in the 1950s and sixties. Yeah. Yeah. They said That they, so they can hear that. You can hear that. That's great. It, it's also important to remember though, in the context of, of, of Surtax, first of all, he was, like I said, a product of the academy.

So he was a research assistant for bound, for example, electric Brown was one of those responsible for that hi idea functions.

So I mean, I mean aspiration. Yeah. So, so we, so, so we really have to be mindful of that. And also, you're right, that even though the Chicago sector did have, this, this, this urge to start changing the way engagements worker, urban ethnography became a practice as well. it was very elitist and very exclusive to people like, wwas was excluded and not recognized. and by, by, by by by that community for there also as well, I mean I want to this in a discussion, I suppose me just transferring information, I'm gonna go to this slide, but there's also another issue that, that, being engaged as oncology at that particular time wasn't what we think of as engagement. What, so tax in particular was very, resistant and really opposed to was the forms of applied anthropology, which really was the application of, of institutional schemas from governments, from, corporations capital endeavors onto communities.

So even though it may seem like they were Actually actually engaged in trying to help people, they weren't really working ops, they weren't listened to the communities.

They came with their preconceived ideas of what change should look like.

I'm not saying that that was in their heart. I I'm not psychick at that.

I'm not child profess I can't go back in time and read their minds and kind of like gle it from that.

But about the situation is that engage and apply anthropology did have this insidious side to it as well and even though those are the better anthropologists than the physical anthropologists Who kind of like were regurgitating Doctrines of racialization, there were still problems and that's what makes Surtax and the people around them who we nurtured, insisted Stand out. And that's the reason why I thought this is a perfect discussion Point for today. I'm, I'm gonna move on and you can come back to all those fees.

and, I, I'll read this quote.

This is directly from Salt himself. It says, even under I circumstances where the projects operates unconnected with administration and its power, it is exceedingly

difficult not to exercise undue influence because the anthropologist has power, whether he wants it or not, to succeed in stripping himself in his power takes time, patience, luck, and a genuine desire to do so. And, and this is the issue positionality.

This is so taxed doing something that is only becoming involved now. I mean, really having those real in-depth issues of recognizing the power that's invested in when they go into the field that comes from their sponsor, whether it be a university, whether it be an N g O, whether it be a government, whether it comes from, and that what we have to recognize is that if we are going to work with communities, then it's, it's important to recognize that it's never disconnected from power.

It's always come to the level of privilege, even myself being working class, coming from the community that I work with. The fact that I have that time, the fact that I can suspend time to actually engage in a research project means that somewhere along the line I have attached and I've attracted some form of Privilege to enable that.

If I decide to use that provision service to the community, which is what we can, which is what today is about, is another question.

But it's recognizing that that influence is present and to deny it is actually to lie. so a model for action anthropology, it's really important to understand that, first of all, action anthropology at the time was revolutionary. I mean, I don't really use that. The thinking itself, it wasn't a lot of the changes we've seen in discipline from cultural to, to kind of like the move away from racializing happen, incremental stages.

They were bit by bit push and Throw, push and forward.

When Action anthropology Emerged, it was really contested because it was quite a big shift.

It was actually making a conscious effort to come, like throw away the shackles of colonial thinking that came with discipline.

So tax was extremely active moving from project to project.

This is one of those things about, and you'll find these characteristics with many scholar activists.

I declaration, I do classify myself as a scholar activist so that I, I am biased towards that. But because he worked inside the academy, and this is what I said, that he was really an inst institutional man. I mean, he, he was a fully fledged member of the academy. he used those skills to first of all, adver, give advice to institutional government and international bodies like unesco.

He influenced discipline for his editorial role at a current anthropology and he's a, he says the prestigious journals and so he was using his position to actually start sharing these different ideas that were influential.

He also ran voluntary academic projects that were entwined in solving the problems of local communities. And we're gonna come back to how he did that.

And, and this is a, a really famous conference, and I think I've got another slide that talks a little bit about this.

So this is a model for action ology. Then.

I don't think it's that far away from some of the things that a projects can do if they're inside the academy. There's obviously other things we can do outside.

Before I move on a a any other questions, we are gonna have discussion afterwards, so I'm just trying to get through the slides just to set the landscape.

Hi, sorry, I have a question here from, I'll come to you afterwards.

Zoom On Zoom. Yes, go ahead.

Yeah. Hi. yeah, actually, I wanted to just, say something about the previous slide about, the relationship of power between the anthropologist and, um the, the, the, the people you work with. because this is something I've been thinking about a lot for myself. I, I'm an Indian woman and I work with kind of, people in India, so in a way from the country of my origin, but they're from different communities.

They're forest dwellers and foresters and hunter ks and I come from a different world, so I come from the city. And so there is in that sense, a diff a relationship of power, but, in, in the way that you describe.

But on the other hand, as a woman working, in these communities, and also, in general, I think any anthropologist working in any community, there is also a kind of a reverse influence because the places you work in, and once you work in them over a long period of time, the more different they are as well, to you. it kind of, you bring home some of that to yourself and your own, relationship with your own culture and your own place. And, and I don't know, but I mean, I've been through periods of major overhaul where questioning self and questioning who you are and what you're doing. And, and in that sense, I think there is a reverse power as well of the people and the culture that you work with, with on you. and, and again and, and these are old questions as well, right? Also about, how much then that influences what you learn from them. I also know for instance, that in India when there was this tsunami, some years ago, and there was an anthropologist working in the Mann and Kouba Islands, and there was this question about whether he should interfere or not, in terms of helping the communities there. So, there's a love and a power that comes in reverse as well, in a way.

So I'm not sure it's as simple. I I, I, I acknowledge what you are saying. What you are saying is correct, but I think that there is also a reverse power and that's, is it sha is it Shay? Thank you Sha, that that's a really beautiful expression that, that you shared, that there's reverse power, and I, I'm in no way denying that exists.

The influence, if you're working, collaboratively and you're working in the spirit of actually trying to work in partnership and co-create knowledge, then there's obviously loads to be gained.

The best am first practice is a two-way dialogue. what what I never do is dismiss the expertise that the AM project might have, just as I don't dismiss the expertise that comes from the community.

We would not go to the community and work with them if they didn't have expertise. We have to pretend that they don't have expertise, but clearly they do was we wouldn't be there. But what I, I don't want to do is romanticize, the role of the anthropologists

during that area. And even now, back then, especially in Ninja, especially in places like Africa, most applied anthropologists were government administrators. They, they may not have worn the badge, kind of like kind of lightly, explicitly, but then with the white caps and funny white suits were certainly working on this on behalf of the state. And, and, and the, the kind of like pretense of having this level of impartiality was all part of a, a game to give legitimacy to the works that they were doing and they had no intention of actually, learning from the communities.

In fact, it's the same thing with a lot of engaged anthropology for a long time and I don't, I'm not trying to come a pain.

All anthropologists engage in this in the same way, but a lot of engaged, use humanitarian ideals and values to go out and do their work.

But what they were, again, they're trying to reinscribe values that were supposed to civilize in quotation marks, the communities they worked with. So I, I, as a practitioner, I like to be very honest about discipline that I'm a part of and I, I stand from the position that anthropology has two camps.

It always hasn't. In fact, that's a lie. Three camps and the three camps really are those that are really strictly conservative, and they, they don't have any problem with colonial tropes, even to this very day. They, they, they're out there, they're, they see themselves as missionaries or saviors or just extractors and exploiters, and they're quite explicit. They dare to either get the paper, publish it in a fancy journal, go on a wine tour around the country, around the world, and get kudos for it. You know, people have different reasons.

Some are to, to boast the careers inside a private industry.

Then there's the other sector, which is the liberal, anthropologist and a liberal anthropologist really does care and does listen and does try to engage. Sometimes it's engaged NGOs that are very patronizing and so the changes that they affect are still tainted with this bias, which has still got that little bit of the Roger Kipling about it.

It still is kind of like the burden, the white savior thing that's still there and in the third sector, which is the most, a tiny little sliver right in the middle, are those that are generally radical.

They're the ones that no one likes. The awkward ones, the ones that always get fired, the ones that fun things pull, the ones that the scandals come about, and they are the small minority in the middle, and they exist and this is a strange thing.

They can exist in the academy and outside the academy, and that's, that's, that's the anomaly about it.

They find ways to exist often with the help of each of the camps.

So you are right that actually the best type of anthropologist is actually learning from the communities that they're engaging with without a shadow of a doubt, because they recognize it's an exercise in co-production, but they, we must never forget the influence of the other kind of anthropologists, the careerist part, anthropologists, the extractive anthropologists, the colonial minded anthropologists, and they still exist. Okay? So that's, that's, that's what I'll say.

But that's a really great intervention, and I hope everyone could hear that, because that's a really great part from Jackie. Thank you. I'm gonna move to the next slide. I, sorry, that we, that we, we did that slide. I, I should say that, has it gone back to it that this was, an amazing conference in 1961.

It was called the American Indian Chicago Conference. It brought together 90, indigenous communities together, and it was about 200 at a present. ax had a, a, he was familiar with one. I never, I think it was called, they, they render it as Fox, but it had own indigenous term. And this was kind of almost unheard of bringing all of them together and to actually discuss policies to do with their own future, and we're gonna come back on that as well.

It didn't work quite as was he had hoped, but this also formed another important tenant to actually have apology some of the rules that he, that he shared about and what he learned from this experiment. But it was, revolutionary his time. Everyone kind of like was thinking, this is not gonna work. How, how can you bring all these community groups together and expect them to kind of like work in harmony together? They didn't quite, the SRI nation actually dominated, um and, and that had its consequences, but it doesn't mean that they didn't emerge stronger with a social, a movement that actually made some really, radical and impressive change, just not in a way that tax imagined. so just another thing, just so, I thought because we're here of adequate anthropology, and just remember there's a certain tradition, one of the things that ax did he engaged in what we now recognize as public anthropology, which is what the radical anthropology team's doing right now. Okay? So he had this ha habit of running an evening course that was open to the public on Wednesday evenings, okay? So Tuesday, and he called anthropology in the modern world, and each week auditorium was filled. And you've got to imagine, remember this was really an amazing feature to do because he placed anthropology on this international stage. I mean, at that time, probably, I think it was Margaret Lee, who was the most famous anthropologist at that time. She was the most, well-known. I mean, we had Graver before he became an ancestor afterwards.

But Margaret, me and Sold Tax you'd see on the television, you'd hear kind of like pushing these ideas. And, and, and, and so it's really important not to forget that even though he was an academic, even though he was an institutional man, he was also a public man and he did try this whole democratizing, access to knowledge and it is a tradition that we should always remember is a very important one to do. so I wanna ask you a question, really simple question you meant me to, again, if you go to you should have it on your, on your phones by now, and can action anthropology exist in today's neoliberal universities? Let's not be around the bush.

The universities that we have right now are neoliberal models, including this one, and it exists.

Like I said, there's no right or wrong answer. I have my opinion.

It doesn't mean I'm right, but, interesting.

I just wanna get a snapshot, a poll of what we think about this.

Lemme just double check if you've got any comments.

It's quite hard to hear speaking in the room. I'm so sorry, Kiki.

I'll try and talk up a bit louder. I'm a bit worried about using that. Mike, do another one.

It's more about being close to, of course, that case around, aren't it? That's, that's why, because you, they lose your voice, then you change. Okay.

Sorry to No, I'll try. And, okay, so where are we on this? Okay. first we have not sure. Second, we have true, and third, we have force and it's, and it's still changing. I mean, if I saw, okay, that's, that's, this is not the winner. That's almost 32 of you. that's really good and still growing. Okay, brilliant. Okay. that's a really interesting, response. I mean, the good thing is clearly, like manager just said, force is not the winner. I'm not gonna try and give you an answer. I mean, I, I have my opinion, but I'm, I'm human just like everyone else. I can be flawed and I, I have a SpongeBob attitude, so I'm always optimistic, even in the base of facts. That's why I'm a scholar activist, right? I do like this answer. I'm not sure, Dave, I'm gonna be really honest. I, I do like it. I mean people do exist, which is why it's good that true came second.

But this landscape is always changing, constantly changing.

Every time scholar activists finds a loophole and they exploit it and do some good with it, what then happens? Anyone? What does the university do? It either closes it down option one, what's the other option? What's the other option? Opposite co-optation. Oh my God, universities are very good at co-opting. I mean, that's a, yeah, absolutely.

I mean, I, I, I live with angst working at U C L thinking.

I told them when I took the job that I'm not gonna change.

I'm a scholar activist, either a lump, and they do, they quit it. I'm here, I'm a scholar activist, but I have angst about whether they're trying to score clout of my own reputation, and that really gives me angst. Okay? So yes, quotation, shut it down, change, change, change the goalposts. What's the third thing, final thing that universities do? Let's be really clear. Bureaucracy.

Bureaucracy. Well, bureaucracy is a way of shutting it down and everyone else's about that, but that's very cool. We live in a capitalist environment.

If scholar activism finds a way to actually break through and actually attract clout, actually make a difference, then it'll be commodified.

It'll be found a way to make it. I remember when I was doing my PhD, I was upstairs, and I remember when the climate, change debate started, and I was talking to my peers. We were all working on different projects, and I was looking at governmental and institutional forms of activism.

I remember everyone was really worried about the climate, and we're gonna do this, we're gonna do that. And I said to them, like my colleagues, I said, you don't understand the way capitalism work if you're saying this. It's like, even though right now kind of like people are making the right noises, what would happen is that those actors who are causing the damage will find a way to turn a narrative that they become

the saviors and start producing products to exploit the harms that they have caused. And I guarantee you, if you just look at what's taking place with the sponsorship deals from the most polluting organizations, those that have caused the ravages off, off this planet over all the years, they are now the cheerleaders and what happens is that I see the public seeing groups like just up oil as disruptors in a bad way. I mean, I that's, that's where we are right now.

So action exploitation and in shutting down with the full weight of the law are all tricks that not just the university employees, but the state doesn't mean that we can't do it. So it's not false, but not sure. I think we can always do it. We just have to be adaptive.

okay, another quote, and this is talking to the legacy, an influence of, so tax. So I've put a couple of things. okay, so a negative that we have on how action oncology works is that we now have collaborative forms of anthropology. And this is really, an important process. I'm sure you're familiar with that.

You also have engaged forms of anthropology, physics as beforehand, but it's more concrete and not, so, no, you're not so linked to these aid that are extracted. But also, even though we don't associate it very much with, anthropology, we have action research, which we tend to align and associate with sociology and, and, and, and work of that nature. But action research falls into this camp.

So different approaches that many of us from different disciplines or different ideas can engage in, they're all literally the same. there's this really interesting, quote, in this piece, tax exposes.

The Indian administrations have absurd tology. The Indian administration is, is the government's, wango body that determines what they should do and what it shouldn't be.

So that left to their own powers of decision making.

Indigenous peoples will make mistakes because they will not assimilate. in other words, the political agency of indigenous peoples does not fit with Indian policy not made by the indigenous people. Thus, whatever they decide will from the state's point of view, be a mistake.

Tax ends his exposition with a dire warning to the colonial medications of the state bureaucracy that says, we are now in an era when in many parts of the world, colonies, which are not given the freedom to make their own mistakes will take that freedom. Ironically, we're seeing some of that to today. I'm, I'm not gonna exaggerate on that, but the, the, the right to make mistakes in the quest for freedom is part of being human. Perfect. I give as an example, and this is part of the mantra, because the, the right to make mistake is a really good part of, taxes, kind of methodology, is that this idea that decisions affecting the community are best made by the community action and anthrop projects fearful will work with the community to define problems and issues, develop alternative solutions, and to implement the chosen plan of action. And what's, where taxed about, and his, his fans and his followers from other entities who were

engaged in kind of a, a, applied things about anthropology was that tax made it very clear that the community themselves have acknowledged they're not in weight.

They're not waiting to be civilized, but they they already are civilized. They already have the well ideology.

They have their own. Every group of people have their philosophy.

It's only if we believe in racializing logics where we think that people on different hierarchies and civilization, and some are barbaric, and some are, we're hearing that language again. Right now, we're hearing savage and barbaric and in dehumanizing language, if you are an anthropology and you believe in your pH project and it's, its greatest potential, and it's at its best, then you recognize that we are one family and we express ourselves differently.

You know, we might not all agree with the decisions that we make, but we are one. And it's a very difficult concept for some people to get, because we're not socialized to believe in that.

We split divide continuously by gender, by height, by a, anything the system can find to exploit, can modify and sell to us.

It'll split us by.

But this means that we recognize that every community has that. And this is, ot. This is, this is a, a, a, I was wanna say a herb, because we have the same thing that people talk about marijuana. This, this, this, this is a cactus used in, by indigenous communities. it's got spiritual values. It's a sacred values, but in some parts of America, it's illegal to use. This isn't uncommon. You'll hear this with ioas, you'll hear with white Boer, you'll hear with marijuana, you'll hear, governments and state actors determining what they think is right, what they say, what they think is wrong. And, and there'd be no one from no size talking about how alcohol use of being prohibited, how there was a prohibition. It was illegal. Alcohol, as we know, is, one of the worst killers of humans, than, than any kind of a narcotic. But because it's legalized, because it's capitalized and people can make money off it, there's an industry of it. While alcohol actually is a poison, that's how it works. It poisons your system.

I'm not saying it doesn't have benefits. So we, we, we, I don't drink alcohol, but I have friends who drink alcohol. And it is quite amusing as an act, as, as an activist, and as an hoist for me to sit back and listen to all the nonsense they do when they're intoxicated. So this is what we have to recognize. okay, I wanna play this. I, I, I need to make this really clear that what I'm talking about, even though, so t work was decades ago, the principles he established, we need to keep coll alive today because the changes you'd think we've learned from him, the changes that he advocates, the approach he advocates, we are not really still normalizing. and this is why I say it's really important to understand as a discipline and not just anthropology further than that, that there is always this camp in existence. We have our conservatives, we have our liberals, and then we have this sliver of radicals and that's the environment we, we have to deal with. And it's not good news.

It's not news. I'd like to say, I'd like to pretend it was worse.

It was better than that, but it's not. It's actually worse.

Radicals have short life expectancy that have more of a career outcomes.

If you decide to do the ethical thing, you are gonna have it tougher.

We live in a strange topsy-turvy world like Alison Wonder Wonderland, that if you decide to be an unethical actor, you'll be rewarded and I'm not joking. I wish I was lying. It's literally like inverse matrix, it's like cipher. You take the, the blue pill everything's a lie, but you just don't want to know anything else.

You forget everything else, and you eat the steak, and, it's a fake steak. You know, if you wanna be a radical, you have to live in an ri, you have to fight the sentinel. You, it's, it's difficult. I'm gonna play the clip, and I'm a nerd.

So please begin the, it's, It's very clear that reconciliation is dead. a majority of Australians have said no to, an invitation from indigenous Australia with a minimal proposition, to give us a, a bare say in matters that affect our lives and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, I want to say this, I know the last few months, Ben, but be proud of who you are.

Be proud of your identity.

Be proud of the 65,000 years of history and culture that you are part and you rightful place in this country.

Our government will continue to listen to people and to communities.

Our government will continue to seek better outcomes for indigenous Australians and their children and the generations to come.

This is not only in the interest of indigenous Australians, it is in the interest of all Australians to build a better future for our nation.

Well, Paul, I, I think there's a real arrogance in the way in which, the prime ministers, approached his discussion with Australian people.

Even tonight in his speech.

You can hear the words almost of contempt, for the Australian people tripping, from what he's saying and that doesn't have any place, Very important observation, Expressed a very strong rejection of the Prime Minister's proposal.

I I, I can't explain, but does anyone else, does anyone want, wanna explain what's taking place? What is this about? Does anyone know? so there, there was, You might have to speak up for the people on Zoom, please. Sorry. That's okay.

there was a, proposal to have an indigenous, a permanent indigenous, sort of like voice or, position, role in the Australian parliament who would advocate for indigenous people in the Australian parliament. and as the, as you got from the video, there was A vote on that, and they voted no. Right? And thank you. And, and it was overwhelmingly, no, yeah, there's every State except that, the states, the areas with indigenous majorities did actually vote Yes. And the indigenous people were voting 80 plus.

Yeah, I, I saw that, that metric. So, I mean, there's a quote I, I wrote my high says the referendum became by proxy, a vote on indigenous people's rights to exist in our own land and our fellow Australians voted to reject us. it and, and, and, and so it's

really important to remember, it's like there's a reason why we have to talk and listen to indigenous communities, marginalized communities and reflect their voice and use our privilege to amplify their concerns.

Because one of the problems about what I call mob rules democracy, which is what we live in, is that we get caught up in what I call majority logic, which is very much where we think that the more numbers, the more people that vote, the more ethical that action is. And I, my class will know we've been playing around with trolley problems and talking about, utilitarian and, and, and can logic and these are ideas where you maximize happiness, and that's always the right outcome, when actually it's not often there's a really good maximum about, you can tell at the level of, of, of civilization that a community has by looking at how it treats most vulnerable people. And it's not a perfect max, but it's actually an interest one to bear in mind.

Majority rule is not always the right one.

Can I just make a point? I think it's true to say that every single social anthropologist, since the war has been working with aboriginal people, I would think it's true to say that every single one of them been somewhere or other, has been actively supporting indigenous land rights, indigenous religious rights renaming various religious sites back to their aboriginal terms. In Australia, the anthropologist have had a pretty damn good record, to be honest. Yeah.

Much better than other parts of the world. Well, thank you. Thank You, Chris. And this, this is one of the amazing, rose than projects have.

This is one of the spaces where our ability to create papers that go across the world and, and, and, and, and, and go into journals and go into newspapers and influence publics, and we still didn't get the outcome in this particular case.

New Zealand's different, different places. You know, change does happen, it does take time. But as I always remind my students, and I'll remind you all now, if you didn't know that over 90% of most activists campaigns fail, it's a really ugly truth. you have to remember that.

So the idea is not to look for the quick win, which happens with a mass protest, which is what we've been sold, is what activism is.

We've been told wearing a t-shirt gun on a march, and then we'll get changed.

It's a complete myth.

Marches are great tactics and great tools for actually building solidarity, for reaffirming our beliefs and manufacturing hope and we need hope to sustain the struggle. But the real work, the real work for change is actually boring, laborious. It's the meeting, it's the organizing, it is the silent processes, it's the listen, it's the engaging, it's the hugging, it's all of that, the very essence of what it is to be human. So I'm walking away from here.

I can't stop pacing. okay, I don't wanna leave an ana.

I've got a few more slides. Not many. We can take a break now, but I really wanna have a discussion, so I'm gonna leave it democratically up to everyone else.

Do you want me just to rush through the last slide so we can take a break and discussion after and come back? Because that, would that make more sense? Let's hear from you first. Yeah. Okay, well, let's do that.

okay, so tenants of action, anthropology, these are some of the rules, and I've just kind of summarized them.

What sole tax is really pushing for. If we're an action anthropologist, we serve at a community's discretion and direction.

We also admit that we will never fully know their needs.

So put an in there, right? Mm-hmm. Listen to what they've got to say.

We might not understand it, but if we are saying that we're working in partnership and we're co-creating knowledge, be humble, work collaboratively to develop alternative options, don't pretend that we don't have expertise. So by working in collaboration, we can find opportunities to politically exploit and make games.

That's important. Not saying to push straight between before, our community partners, they are partners, but it's to recognize that we all bring something to the table or can respect the rights of others to make their own choices and mistakes.

This is fundamental to action anthropology.

Sometimes the community group that you're working with will engage or want to engage in a path that you disagree with. If it violates your ethical code, then if you have to put away, put away, but don't try and hit inhibit what they're doing just because you do not understand it. Build capacity, sustainability and openly towards and, and work openly towards our redundancy. And what this means, essentially, is that if we are working with grassroots communities, the whole point of our work is not to make sure that they always need us and rely on us. We're not trying to engage in white saviorism.

What we're trying to do is build a capacity for them to supply, to exist sustainably and ultimately make ourselves redundant in the process.

I don't use racializing language, and my objective, hopefully is that one day we stop using racializing language.

So the work is actually redundancy. use our experience to improve our methods in theory. Okay? So we're in a a, a university and talks theory, talks methods we are these privileged actors. We are the ones who can, we are the chosen ones.

I don't wanna crack that. what did Gram she call us traditional intellectuals are we, we are the traditional intellectual. We have the skills and stuff like that.

Well, no, sometimes we we, we are committing violence by regurgitating that nonsense answer critically. So let's learn from public, from, from, not public inte yeah, public intellectuals.

Let's learn and improve our methods in theory, do that collaboratively and then finally learn from our experience with communities and share lessons to help others. I, I would hope that be self-explanatory, but unless we want to do those circuits with the wine and champagne and various different universities, and I like, it was quite

this community, and yeah, so yes, so yes, they used to go every time they used to eat something, they used go it on the floor.

I had no idea what that was about. But yes, I've wrote fantastic paper about it.

Yes, it be publish. No, that's not what it's about. If that's what you wanna do, that's fine, just don't come to lectures like this.

But if we're talking about engaging in action, anthropology, then we're writing and I've got a rule that anything I write, the community that I've written it with must be able to read it.

Even if I squirm a little bit and they squirm a little bit, we both agree it's the truth. And if they say, I don't want that in there, even if it's anonymized, then I have to take it out. It's not easy.

I'm not gonna pretend that's an easy thing to do, but I'm just saying that's the principle that items are working almost there on survival of the fittest. I wanna really close with this quote from Sotak, great Nations.

Surely empires are built on the destruction of peoples and cultures.

Those who survive often think that, that this is natural and inevitable and indeed survival of the fittest and so are able to put aside their unjustly moral behavior of their forebearers, even as they enjoy the profits.

But the people and cultures left for dead on the wayside have not died.

Really important, especially when we're seeing this idea that false winds overall we can use overwhelming force to change. We live in a very, very violent world.

We use overwhelming force, and we can squash descent, we can squash the aliens that have different views from us.

We can squash the bugs as the terms are being used for human beings into today's, world triggers me actually. But they are never gone.

They're always there simply because ideas, I think it was, Thomas Sankara. But ideas, transcend us as individuals transcend off physicality.

Once you have a good idea and, and the people share and they coding their language and they start writing songs and poems and drawings and art and dances, food rituals, it's impossible.

Is absolutely impossible and with that, I say thank you And we can, So if we hit the light on, we'll take a break And then we can just get the zoom people on screen, screen the big screen, and so we can integrate them as much as possible. I no Worries. I'll share the slides. So I'll send them and then you can, Yeah, we can, we'll put them on. No, that, So what we want is to, and do you want, I want, I want the PC with the laptop, so don't push that off you. Yeah, I just want that one. Certainly can and I, excellent.

Fantastic.

Okay.

Oh, Hello. well, I, We can kind of see it. We can kind of see it. How, how did you do with keeping track of, of, toying pacing up and down? Was he, we, did he manage?

It was really fine and his, yeah, it was fine. That's great. Yeah, his voice was great. Thanks. You worked. It worked fantastic.

Wonderful. Wonderful, wonderful. Okay, I'm Gonna run and use Lou. So we take, Come back.

We'll, we'll just have a couple of minutes break. And so if anyone's, lining up questions on Zoom, I can see Matthew wants to, was right on the starting line already.

So we'll have a couple of minutes and then come back for discussion. Any stuff in the chat to help with? Can I just ask a question of all of you? How many of you here are students at U C L? Did Toan tell you about this going on? So you came along or you just came Along? Can I just suggest? Brilliant. We've got so many people here. Yeah.

Wonderful.

Six or 12 people.

Well, it was, So how did you hear about this event? Is it because it's on the university U C L and quality website? Did you like from there? The program? What? The program.

Our program program.

I see. Well, that's great. Yeah. Brilliant. You're mostly, those are from u c you're mostly, is that right? Not all right.

Okay.

Well, you, you were saying you've had a few questions to make about attendance.

Do we, any more questions? it's not here.

Maybe, maybe we can worried. We were a bit worried.

Yeah. Well, well we, we are really pleased to see so many people.

cause there were so few last week, but C Strike meant we had to, but it, and then it was, it was called, and then something called off. We caught on guard by that. But it, it's, I mean, usually over the years this will just been like patched out with 60 people.

so it's great to see we're all back again. Fantastic.

people on Zoom as well. How do about the events? Is it mainly from Eventbrite or do you pick it up through social media? We don't. Some of you have been coming for a long time, but anybody who hasn't can type in. You can type in for the chat for me. If you, you can't speak, I'll, we, we wanna find out where we come from.

You from Twitter. Thanks, Chucky.

Facebook are good. I'm glad to hear that Facebook still, still, useful bringing people along and people on Mastodon. Excellent. We, we spend a lot of time on Master these days.

Mastodon to Letitia is the ti verse.

It is the horizontal version of autonomous servers and instances linked up altogether in the ti verse.

So it is the one that billionaires cannot take over.

Okay? So unlike Twitter, unlike Blue Sky, unlike like, threads, unlike Facebook, it is not owned by billionaires.

So Mastodon is forever. I mean, it's, it's part of what's known as Febu and it it is the Mastodon Harry Raddon. It's coming extinct. We're not extinct.

It's coming to build a void of Twitter. It is, It is. Are you all masteron yet? I'm not yet, no.

Ah, come on man. Come on, twin. You can, we can bring this down and you sit, you Can as well. The only thing I hate, We've lost you Camilla, You can sit in that area. I'm happy to get, I mean, I'm, But you're still part of the hierarchy. You're a professor.

I'm part of the hierarchy.

Oh my God, I've lost everything. Hello? Is Zoom still there? It's back.

Yeah. You've covered now en So Yeah.

Minutes. Alright, let's go. Okay. Yeah, That's Matt. we have a Zoom question. okay.

From Matthew Doyle who's been waiting I can window have you, Hi there. Can you hear me okay? Yep. Yeah. Can we get Hi.

Hi, Tony. Thanks so much for your talk. I, I guess the question I had for you was, how do you see what it means to be, to engage in action anthropology today? Because you talked a lot about, so tax, and I guess sot Tax was carrying out anthropology in the mid 20th century and in the mid 20th century, there was a kind of neat symmetry between what anthropologists tend to do their field work and the theory they operated in. So British structural anthropology operated as we know within the structural functionalist paradigm. So it, it's about they believe studying small scale societies, the sociology of small scale societies, and studying in a holistic way, social institutions through ethnography to kind of compare them and understand how social structures reproduced and SOL Tax was a North American cultural anthropologist.

So North American cultural anthropologists, they were studying culture, this idea of culture. And they were studying, basically the, sort of the cultures that had survived North American settler colonialism and so there's this kind of neat symmetry, I think, between being an, an advocate or even a kind of activist in North American anthropology, specifically for indigenous peoples and this kind of action anthropology and the theory, I understand that the, the Fox, project that he carried out was about studying culture change, but also working collaboratively alongside a, an indigenous community to see how they could understand the nature of culture change and, and participate in the project. So the question for me is, what does it mean to do action anthropology in the context of the sort of modern, kind of North American or, or British or, or kind of global anthropology. You know, how is it that you are combining doing field work and researching topics or sort of researching of an objective study and actually doing something which is, socially or politically meaningful or, or, or collaborative and the other issue was something that you raised in your talk, which was about engaging in action anthropology in the, in the neoliberal university and I think one of the major problems with it is that in the mid 20th century when when people at so tax were doing research, you had quite, the people had a much more sort of pri privileged position if they're a university professor where they were free from doing work.

They were free from having to constantly self-promote themselves as a brand. they, they had secure jobs, they weren't precariously employed. And, that meant that they had this kind of privilege to carry out this kind of work and I think that working in a neoliberal university as you, as you put it, basically pushes people into, kind of competitive individualistic careerist behavior because you have to, to some extent engage in that to just have a job in the academy.

so the, I guess my question is in the context of that sort of neoliberal university, how do you engage, how do you, how do you still have a job and also engage in action anthropology.

So thanks very much. Sorry if that was a bit long-winded.

No, it's okay. Two great questions. I mean, I'll try and Can we come a bit close at the, come on, you need to, you need to talk to the people as well as people. Yeah.

It long enough to move there? It's trouble Is that it, it just flips in and out the troubles.

I know. I'm always Why Don't sit here? If you sat there, we might have a chance.

Okay. We might get a chance then. I have friends And I've lost, I've lost the Yeah. Trouble is, it doesn't, well, we, we've lost that. Why we lost.

It's all very well these, okay, we're back. No, we're not back.

We we're back on our book's. The Zoom. We've lost the Zoom.

Can you still hear us on the Zoom? Yeah, we have got the Zoom. Can you hear? Oh, great. Okay.

Yes. Okay. So I have a whole table myself now. Okay. Matthew, so two questions.

So the first one's about dealing with the realities of, of working in an neo institution that is trying to co-opt, any kind of what you have and trying to survive, long enough to actually make a foothold to make a change with the work that you're doing. I'd say with difficulty, that that's how we do it, we have to recognize is that there is, a commercial value clout chasing that can't, could do an activist themed work and it means knowing how to game the system. That's not always easy, but it is actually possible. It, I'm still learning how to engage in creating research projects, as, that have activist outcomes while actually not leaving them at the mercy of, an institution to actually extract them for maximum gain. And that's a tricky, difficult, walkin a walk to, to, to, to, to follow. I don't have an easy solution, is all I can say to that.

But perhaps in answer to your first question, how do we do that now? Seeing a difference in the time between, when Action Anthrop was at its heydays and where we are now? I would say that I would take the approach that some people advocate for abolition when it comes to the police. and so if you look at an institution like the Metropolitan Police, which has its, so 19, it has its armed units, it has, its it has its territorial squad, the Bully Boys. many people argue that it's become so big in institution that it needs to be split up. it needs to, come again, if not completely abolished.

There's one thing that I loved about, Boas. He, he, he, he talks, I can't, I can't remember the German term about these cultural lenses that we wear and I would say that even the most liberal of us, even those like myself, who who thinks themselves are, are radical. I am still infested and in and, and in, and I inculcated a lot of these colonial traps, this ways of thinking and so it is important that we actually recognize, and I would argue separate, those two components. And not for every project, but we recognize that as a valid way of working. But again, that would not work well for the academy as an institution.

It would have huge financial implications and epistemological wise and ontologically wise, there'll be a massive amount of pushback. but that's what, that would be my answer. That would be my answer.

I'm sorry if I used too much jar. I try to avoid, using jargon, but it was, it was really good question or questions.

Thank you. Sorry. I was really interested in what you said about, how there are multiple repertoires of solidarity, right.

Or multiple spaces that we can kind of enact as resistance or kind of do this sort of work. And I was just wondering, because your perspective is both a community organizer and an academic and considering these sorts of questions of the institutional constraints we have with working within the academy. Like, what's your perspective on, is the Academy the best space to do this kind of work? And like, like you said, in terms of equipping people ethnography can happen, in in community, it doesn't necessarily happen have to happen within these sort of formal boundaries of the academy. And I'm just wondering, like from your own reflections, what value does the academy still have as a space and like what is it giving us or like what ways can we still see it as a space that we can operate within? And I guess like that kind of links to these questions of abolition and what that looks like in, in, in University.

Great question. That's probably an extension for math. Slightly Repeat the question to Zoom just of the, did you hear on Zoom? Did you hear, Did you hear, did you hear? Oh, yes. They've got thumbs up. Great. Okay.

Thank you. so this is an extension of Matthew's, first question in many ways, I mean, from experience, I would argue that the, the Academy inhibits, pure radical action. It's designed to do so, it's designed to commoditize design to, to make legible ideas and that making legible of the imagination of the, of the spiritual, of the, it, it just doesn't work. The two are incompatible. but you asked me about my Interested in your personal Experience. I'm, I'm, What can they teach? Right? So, so U C L couldn't have handed me when I was younger.

Okay. It's just, it is just the truth. Okay. I, I, I, I, I would've been fired within five minutes if I wouldn't even come into the space because I just, I just couldn't have done it. Okay. but as I've got older, and recognize that there's value in my nerdiness and understanding, and, and there is, I mean, if you are in this room, you've probably got know it.

Unfortunately, the bad news is that you're probably nerds, okay? You are interested in knowledge. you are interested in humanity to some degree. and, and you have this curiosity. You don't want to be spoonfed, headlines from the sun, the Daily Mail, or telegraph or the sun for grownup, which I all the times. So the reality situation is that we are nerds, and that's okay. That's the diver.

That's what makes the world a beautiful place.

That we all have different skillset. the academy is a good place in theory for us. Okay. That's, that, that's the thing. I mean it's not quite how I'd hoped it would be.

I thought it'd be much more radical, probably how it was in the sixties.

I was studying at anti university and so I probably got too carried away thinking that there was hope. neoliberalism has done too much of a to, to well of a job. But lemme clear, I believe that I'm at the stage where, as a human being, I am capable of retaining my spirit, my radical spirit, and doing the work outside the academy, which has meaning for me. And while I'm in the academy, that I have a successful tactic to what I call Rev to call reverse co-optation. So it means that I can utilize, I'm not saying everyone can I say, but it is possible to utilize the, the credentialization power that comes from working in a university. It's brand, it's resources, it's money, to actually siphon off resources to help the causes that I want.

I find it very difficult to do that, but I recognize that those resources don't just come, in, in, in a financial form. They also come, every one of my modules, for example, has an open classroom, every single one. So every year, I, I teach two modules, the colonizing anthropology and nationalism, acy and racism. And, and one in the classes take place in hacking in a community group, and anyone can join and so these are my ways to slowly democratizing access to this knowledge.

like I said, I'm trying to learn how to do that with research.

I think it's been really honest and clear about the limitations that a neoliberal institution has. It will always seek to co-opt or destroy, shut down commod, seek clout, anything that it perceives as a threat.

That's it is, even though we, we claim that structural function is, is, is has gone away, we still are living under functional structuring, a scheme. It's the same thing about colonialism. You know you, you'll hear the rabid kind of racist say that, well, we're no longer colonialism. We no longer do slavery.

But all the legacies of those enterprises, we live to this very day from the patriarchal structures that we live under to the captive structures we live after. And, and the thing that p****s me off the nose is this demonization not the most, but this, this demonization of anarchist thinking and this, this rendering of violence as if only physical violence matters. We, we, we ignore structural violence. We ignore all local violence.

We ignore it all and we are being convinced that unless you can see blood from a wound, ah, you're just snowflake. Get over it. Okay? All of these things matter.

All of them. And so for me, the university provides me a space to do that. And, and, and like I said, the credentialization, as much as I hate it, and I do hate it, I, I use the doctor part of my name for mischief making.

Like if I'm doing something on the news, I cannot deny that in April, was it 2020? No, 21 when I got my PhD. so, so in March, 2021, I was just this radical Pan-Africanist called Tonic better.

My committee called me Brother Toy. And in, in April, 2021, somehow I became a new person who was Dr. Tobe, who now is, works at U C L and is this respectable intellectual scholar? Well, it's just a load of s**t. Excuse me. It's okay. I am the same individual, but I cannot deny that the opportunities to cause mischief in institutions of power and to disrupt paradigms of knowledge, which have been in place for far too long, are real.

I have that the younger toin would not have had the discipline to keep his mouth shut. I, I, they would've seen me coming and I wouldn't have got a thought through the door.

Now that I'm a bit older, I hope a little bit wiser.

I can use those resources and those experiences to better effect and that's what I try to do. I'm not always successful.

I hope that it's a long wind, but it's a personal question. I it doesn't work for I, okay, you Well go edit the back.

Yes. Go first if you want. Online, yeah, they just put their hands up. letisha, I mean, go, go somebody from the room. And there's one, there's two. Who else? Just go, somebody.

Anyway, anyway, So I'm an evolutionary biologist, so I'm familiar with practices, but I do think there's a lot of overlap.

There's practice many different places out, extract data, extract knowledge, and then bring that extract back to quote unquote prestigious universities like you scale or, or what have you to publish and so my question is, I'm wondering is is there value in publishing instead universities, local institutions in, or is this like as such a meaningless No, it's, it's a great question, but I unfortunately, because I have this pragmatic approach to everything I do this, this is what comes with being a scholar of activist.

The scholar part of me can play around with theory, but the activist has to deal with the real world and harms and practicalities of it. So I would say yes, in theory, practicing, in, publishing, in, in, in institutions that are in the global self, make great sense and if you can always do, always empower, but be real about the impact. Unfortunately, the, there's a monopoly on, on knowledge, even my linguistic capabilities. So the fact that I'm, I'm fluent in English will allow, give people, make the assumption that I'm somehow intelligent. I could be an buil, but I'm fluent in speaking English. And we'll make that assumption and yet there could be someone in this room who's trilingual, who's a f*****g genius, excuse the language again.

But when they come to expressing their ideas using English, their competency is really poor and they can't do it.

There might be someone in here who actually hates reading a theory, but if I said, explain that to me for a song or for a piece of art, they can explain it with a level of clarity that I just get it instantly first time. And so my challenge is, is recognizing that there is a monopoly on knowledge, and it's still in place.

So we have to do twin strategies. It's not, it's not a popular view because activists gen, we as activists, we tend to engage in hyper foia. We, we, we, everything is down with a system.

All cops are bought with absolutes, buying absolutes, which sound great.

They raise hope. They keep us going the fire away, but it doesn't change Jack, what I mean? It just makes us continues to work.

The reality of the situation is that we need those who can actually survive inside these toxic places. I'm not saying this department is toxic, but I'm saying the institution itself and its foundations are toxic and we need those who can't survive in these spaces to work outside them and do their work, gather the information, and then we work together in, and this is why an, this is where anarchist principles can become very important.

We work in other spaces that are neutral and so publishing in both spaces has merit.

I would just say don't do one over the other. Because if you, if you only publish in Global South, and you have work that's capable of being published inside, like a, a, a elite journal, what happens is that the kudos you get from publishing in the unit journal credentializes you in a way that when you deliberately choose to do your next paper in a journal, it's in the global south, the audience will hemorrhage from the global north and actually read your paper in the suburb journal and that journal will then get an influx of resources that can or sometimes gets an influx of resources that can help. So there's, so there's utility in doing both, but just being real about it And then Not first simultaneously never pro My personal thing is never prioritize a hegemony, but be aware of its influence, its power.

Just, just, just if you, if you have that competency that you can navigate, it's, its, its rules. Then exploit it, it the way it will exploit you and it will, this is what Matthew was talking about when it comes to precarity constantly changing, having to be, become a brand it will exploit you, you exploit it and don't feel any way about no guilt sleep. Well have a hauling, exploit it. Okay. Right. Sorry, there was a, was it online? Well Go there. Is it? Yeah, so it's a, Can we raise voice so Zoom can hear? Thanks.

I guess it's kind of relation to that. it's more of a cynical question because I'm a second year undergraduate student, and what will hopefully be like a lifetime student of anthropology.

So I don't wanna come off as intellectual in any way and anti intellectual in any way. Sorry, who Say something Wrong with me. But, I'm also somebody who's like pretty engaged outside of uni with, political stuff. And I, I, I love to read like political

anthropology, and it's something that I see myself doing in the future, but sometimes I wonder if like, I'm spending so much time reading, and writing about, like essays about, activism and so on and sometimes I feel like I could just be a better anthropologist, or I'm talking about the future, but sometimes I feel like I can be a better, more ethical anthropologist if I just, just doing what the community from working with past instead of being at home writing stuff and being like the normal anthropologist.

So I'm wondering, and I totally acknowledge the value of like, the sheer ability to apply for funding and get like a very opportunistic relationship with an academy that has resources and then give that to the community.

But I'm wondering if there's any example that you can get from your research, orders from anybody else's in which, surely experiences with community are helpful for us as academics, but where does academia, I mean, have you found a, an experience in which your academic research has applied directly into, your exercise? there are cases, I'm not historian, so I'm, I'm, I don't have this encyclopedic memory of all the papers either. I mean, I, I, I have a lot from just experience. I, I'll answer the question that you have and I'll, and as I'm talking, I'll try and go through the Rolodex of ideas and think about which papers in particular. The first thing I would say is that lived experience is, is, is, is crucial. so you are right. There is immense value in that.

You just getting engaged and doing what it is that your heart is heading to do and learning from their experience. And, and, and that's very much what action, action anthropology is about in many ways as well. and, of course, perfect example is David Graver, the late David Graver of, of, of an, of an academic who actually understood the theory, but was never afraid to actually engage directly with the work itself.

There were many others as well. but I, I don't want you, and, and it's not coming across anti intellectual.

I don't want you to diminish the fact that you have this ability to read theory, understand theory, and to challenge misapplications theory. that is a skill.

It's just like someone being able to play the piano or play the sax or to knit or to cook an amazing dish. And as nerds as I've established that we, most of us are, if we have that ability, we have to develop that skill alongside our ability to just get dirty in the field and actually help the communities we work with.

There's a reason why you find in that, states like the US states like the UK are demonizing ideas like critical race theory. It's not because, they, they feel that by itself.

It's a, it's a potent threat on racist ideolog, and it's gonna lead to an equitable share of resources and, and bring about social justice.

It's just what they're worried about is the sheer notion or one of the things they're worried about. That the concept that we establish, critical race theory looks at, history and looks at law and recognizes that all these arguments cannot be understand without actually going back in time and placing an evaluation that is not a historical, but is based on historical trends, is petrified because it opens up wound, it opens up doors,

it means that we start to learn that nothing is stable, nothing has stayed the same. That change is always emerging.

Ideas are always shifting. I, I use a, an example, with, chat G t P. So some students use chat G B T, right? And, they're challenging with it. And I, that's not either here anywhere where I hear about that.

But it's understanding how chat PT works.

It harvests this knowledge of the information that's on the internet that's available. So many people will use it, and it's good to use as a fun and to learn what it does and it seems really amazing, right? So it seems to be knowledgeable.

It seems to be not sensient, but it seems to produce competent answers. It's, it's fluent, but it's based on the information that's available. Now, it's not sent and so what happens is that I like to remind everyone that if it was launched many years back, it would rationalize that the earth is flat because people thought the earth was flat. And the idea that the earth are flat is a, is a rational proposition.

If you are a human and you are walking along a beach and you see it's flat and you go on a boat and you look at the horizon and you see it's flat, and no matter how far you walk, it's flat. It appears flat.

I think you might have heard me 'cause you are one of my classes talk flats before. And so what I'm trying to say, essentially, and I'll, I'll, I'll, I'll, I'll wrap up, is the idea that you have to do both lived experience as well as engaging in theory. And even though sometimes it can be frustrating engagement in theory, it's like that's your superpower whether you like it or not, whether some of the ideas put you to sleep. You know, it, it, it's, it's, we have, we all have different talents and abilities I'm a musician, but what happened was that I learned one day that I could read government policy, I could read these most boring theories, and I can make the words dance and I, I, it's not something I'd rather be bumming it around the world, gibbon and playing video games. But unfortunately I've hit too many comics.

Uncle Ben said to Pete Parker, we're great one's, great responsibility, and, and I'm a mug. I fell for it. Okay. We have to do both.

I know. It's much shame.

I've got Letitia and then we'll bring Chris in. Okay.

Is that right? Leticia? Hi, Letisha.

Hi. Thank you for wait. Thank you. Thank you. Can you hear me okay? Yes. Okay.

I, I wanna ask you how you, how you feel about, younger education.

So I'll explain. after many, many years of being an activist, I and an anthropologist, I, I didn't have the money to go on and do a PhD.

also I was part of the U e l, anthropology, team. And, and, what happened there? It was I wasn't gonna be able to continue with them. I was then sort of headhunted by, the rye because of this, magical thing called an anthropology A level.

I don't know if you heard of it, but Oh yeah. They decided that, that they were going to start an anthropology a level, and they needed anthropologists to teach it because they had sociologists, psychologists, geography teachers doing it the first year

and failing miserably because sociology isn't anthropology, basically. Yeah. So, they were struggling. So, despite having to get a loan, it was a smaller one that I would've needed for a PhD and I remembered something that I, a quote something like, they will never give you the education you need to overthrow the system. Right? So I thought, maybe I've been doing it wrong all these years instead of trying to fix the problem once it started, maybe we should go to the kids and change the mindset and as, as youth, so I trained to teach 16 and plus, right? The P G C E P set, which is for post compulsory education and training up to foundation level at university. So I did that and started teaching anthropology.

the curriculum was very wide, too wide, very difficult, but we were allowed to use our own judgment as far as what ethnographies we would use what tactics we would use, strategies to teach.

as long as they could then do the exam, sit the exam and pass the exam. Well, most anthropology A levels were being taught at private schools or within the International Baccalaureate.

I ended up teaching at Newham sixth form, which is was one of the only places of, in a challenging neighborhood, with kids that had many challenges. but, I went in full, full blown within two months they were calling me Che Guevara, the other, the other teachers. The other teachers tutors were telling me off for, for what I was teaching the kids, for what sources I was using. Even though I was like I was basically expanding their minds too much and then they would use the fact that their, their their parents would get angry 'cause their parents were Muslim or their parents were African, or their parents were this, or their parents were that. And, and, and that wasn't the case at all. The parents had no problem with it.

The kids had no problem with it. It was these mainly white, stuck in their ways. Um I don't know. Gatekeepers, yeah, gatekeepers. And, I mean, they, they've ended up pulling the anthropology a level, about six months killed. Yeah. Michael Gar. Yeah, he killed it. But, it was very clear that I wasn't going to be rehired when my contract was up because I was making them think, ? and so my question is, how, how do you feel that active, that as active and active applied anthropologists, however you wanna call it, I, is there a space for us to engage with younger gen generations through education and not just go into the field one? Um once, the communities are struggling as adults, if, if, if you, if you understand what I mean, I, I Do.

It's, it's, it's, it's a great question. It's about decolonizing education, obviously.

It's also about giving the children the tools they need to then become activists, because I find that they often don't until they're in it as, as grownups.

Okay. No, that's a, that's a great question. That's a tragic ending. And, and, and I applaud you and thank you for actually That's okay. That's, do you remember when I said that when we look at a discipline that, I gave you a schema, like, Yeah. One part, One part and, and a sliver radical. Mm-hmm.

The first thing we had to recognize is that when we introduce anthropology to someone, is that we had to accept with all our heart that they could go in either sec,

and that's okay. Yeah. Even if it might break our personal heart, we can introduce anthropology to, to different human beings, and they'll respond how they feel, how it talks to them. So we, we have to recognize that if we go in there with the idea that they're gonna come out as ethical actors and start engaging in activists, approaches, that, that, that engine, that energy actually turns some students off and engages others. Yeah.

So we have to recognize that potential.

That's just the caveat I wanna say there. My, my thinking on this, I'm a fan of pro of free air, and so I, I I, you probably notice that I, I, my approach towards education is very based on critical pedagogy. Mm-hmm. and so I would argue that the education system, as we know, it's not an education system, it's a training system. It's a training program.

It's being co-opted by, capitalist, system. I, I am an anti-capitalist, so I'm sorry if I keep coming back to these biases. I I I'm not a Marxist, which is interesting because, but that's another discussion, and I can explain that if you want, want me, but I am an antica. No, no.

Mark Marxist is a brilliant theorist, but unfortunately his theories are Marxist theory, anarchist practice. Yes, yes. Perfect.

I, I've never heard it. That's the way to do it.

So the point I'm trying to say is that the educ system plugs into this cap just mansion and so what it it tries to do is produce drones who are serving the economy, right? And so it looks we hear claims about Lazar fear and freedom and democracy and stuff like that.

That's not what's really happening.

Young people are been indoctrinated at a young age into particular career paths, which might not actually suit them, but serve the, the global economy as if that's the, the most important part of life.

What was your contributing to economy in your lifetime? You know, I mean, that's, that's what you wanna wear when you're, I icon I 0.665 to the British economy. But I do, I mean, it's just a stupid mantra and so what I would say is that when you recognize that the education system isn't the best place for this, then what it means is that it's, it's extra work, but it means you have to recognize that you have to service also the public intellectuals who are not served by the education system. Yeah.

So I used to work with a project called Anti University. I did my, my, my, my, PhD and my field work with them. And they're amazing. the niche, the original, version of the group was amazing. and the, the ation the ation was, was amazing. and what they do is provide spaces where education is free.

It's part of free school movement, and people can learn. They wanna learn.

It has its strengths and its weaknesses. So its weaknesses are if you take this match to its natural conclusion, I mean, we had classes and I had to administer classes where people will come in to teach sessions on, what, what dragons we've had.

We've had classes on dragons. We've had, I think the one that I was the most squeamish about, and I'm not squeamish person, was a painting class using menstruation fluids.

Yeah. You remember anthropology? Was that Yeah, I, I I, I, I, I, it's another menstrual painter. No, that was the one. I, I, I, I, I read that and I just decided that, Hmm, maybe not, maybe not, but I agree with the right to do. So.

I agree that that is the approach to expose people and have the young people have the choice about what it is that they're going to study. Yeah. So that's, that's the key there.

So you can always run your classes in an ideal world would say do something on YouTube. YouTube is transforming the educational sector, but that's not really the ideal world.

The the ideal world really comes down to finding a physical space. Yeah.

Because regardless of what anyone says, we are human beings and as much as the internet has democratized access to information, we learn best when we make a conscious deliberate action to be in the same space. And even though we don't see it, and we don't feel it, and this is my spiritual beliefs coming out there, what we're doing is shoving energy to each other by being in this space and sharing information and that cannot be replicated through technology. And I'm a, I love technology.

I'm an ex computer program. I write software, but I'll tell you, we can't because the moment we take the human experience and, and channel it through technology, it's translated in the way that it loses nuance. So it means that, unfortunately for you, it is that you have to find spaces where you can practice your craft and then create avenues that, that they're accessible so that young people can join them.

Yeah and the only way in my experience that young people will join an anthropology class is if they believe it's of relevance to their life.

I have found that once young people learn what Pon G is and how they can engage in it, and the practical, practical uses of it, they tend to be really passionate about it. Like you said, I mean the, the, the, my students were super passionate about it.

That's because it was a school that didn't like the fact that they were passionate about it. You know what I mean? So it means building your own school, it means working with other peoples and finding it's a whole, it's a ugly truth, but there are always groups that have spaces.

There are always people who put on things. You can go into a, a use the Black Cat Cafe in Hackney's and Anarchy. Yeah, yeah.

No, yeah. They're friends of mine, just me, Few people. There's always basis use spaces.

Yeah. I, I do teach. I'm just, I, I, excellent. You know, I, I, I do seminars, I do things like that, but excellent. Um and then I also think it's important to give platforms to the people that need them indigenous people in the communities that I do activism in. And every, everything. I was just wondering from a because you were talking about academia, you were talking about universities.

If, if then if the, the, the people that are going to access those universities and that academy are coming from these schools, coming schools, whether we like it or not, what I mean? The, the system as it is and that, so that's why I was asking Basically. Well, thank you very thank, Thank you. But thank you very much. Thanks Leticia.

Thanks. And Chris, You wanna go? So anybody else But Chris. And So I think you've hinted, between right here as we speak, things are happening, which all of us are sort of aware of. I mean, we can't help be aware of what's happening and making me cry and what as well, all of us have got opinions on politics, religion, all sorts of things and in rag we've always been rather careful not to just allow everyone here to feel this reader to come up with our opinions. 'cause we just, that happens, we all disagree about almost everything and people come to the anthropology group for one reason to learn about an anthropology. So we're, we are always fairly careful to make sure that I, I'm, I'm particularly careful that you, you don't come here to hear about Chris Matt's opinion or things you can learn about antibody. Having said all that, I mean, I can guess what your opinion might be about what's happening in Palestine right now. You to not to sort of beat it up the bush, but, and, and of course when you began, you sort of say it's really important, especially under these circumstances, these sensitive listen to make sure that we don't sort of take side too much to sort of stir up damaging pathologies and passions. Having said all that, is there a role for action anthropology in this situation? yes, there is a role, simply because tenants of vaccinate anthropology is to take guidance from the community, listen to what they want, what they need at this particular time, and, and work in service to that community. So, that's definitely relevant. But I, I would, and I'm not someone who sits on the fence, but I would advocate that it applies both to Palestinian people and also to Jewish people. I, I, I am has to be very mindful of my words. One of the things I say, I'm, I'm a pan-africanist, so I tend to view things through the lens of African history.

That's what I've been doing as I've been as an activist.

That's what I've been engaging in for the most of my adult life.

So it means that I have a particular bias towards all forms of oppression, all forms of kind of colonial violence. I, I, I just don't stomach it very well.

and I have a knee-jerk response, which isn't always, I won't say fake. I don't like that word fear, but it's a bias that I have. I was alive during the time of apartheid.

I remember breaching a certain level of consciousness and seeing it on television and in feeding this massive amount of kill as in, hold on, I'm a teenager. There's apartheid in this world.

What the hell am I doing here playing music? Am I supposed, and I didn't know what to do and I had to speak to my father. It was so, I would say that there is a role for action anthropology in this conflict.

it would take a brave anthropologist to actually decide to go into those that, that zone and actually do it. But I think, there probably is an action anthropologist there already. I mean, I mean, we we're everywhere. and, it's our role to, once we aware of

them, to empower their voice. I'm, I'm trying to be, unless you ask me an explicit question about politics, I won't share my view on it. you're right.

You could probably guess my opinion on it. and bearing in mind as well, what I spoke about with, Linda Toi Smith talking about this concept of time and space not being fixed and so it's very easy for someone to look at a map and see it as it is now, and think that that is how it should always be.

When the reality of the situation is, is that that's not how everyone views timeless space. We tend to, we, we, we tend to lock onto concepts of space, time, knowledge based on our lived experience and perhaps a couple of generations behind.

So maybe our parents and their parents and everything else we get from books and films and culture. And so that's where it's real.

But anyone who's actually transmitted this information into generational wise, then the concepts of whose land is what land, and where this boundary is, transcends any kind of legible map, which is, which is on a piece of paper written by people who didn't have your best interest in place. Even the, there used to be, what's it called? The, the global map on here until we had a ga projection map, the upside down one we had, because even, even what we conceptualized, the sizes that we relate to the continents on the earth are not what, Africa's always too small. They, they don't reflect the reality of, of the world that we live in. So that's the role for action anthropologists.

and that's the other thing to say.

If you decide to be an action anthropologist, I, I'm always pragmatic about this thing, then be prepared that you put yourself in an emotional ringer because you are fighting hegemonic forces. Your your life becomes a potential, at risk.

It's not easy. we live in a bizarre world, same way, say, remind everyone about activism, 90% of it fails and that's just one situation we deal with. Not, doesn't mean we shouldn't try.

It's also recognizing we live in this bizarre world where if you work on the side of hedge money and of oppression, you will be actually rewarded. That is a fact. It's not a theory, it's a fact. We have the most diverse parliament government, not parliament, government in, in a very long while in acting the most horrific, xenophobic, racist, anti-human rights, acts ever.

So the illusion of inclusion yeah. Is, is you are rewarded to be unethical. And that creates a tension, especially as humans. We are wired to survive.

We are wired to make the decision that maximizes our life expectancy. Um these are things that, it is a bizarre scenario.

That's where we are. So thanks for the question.

Well done. you got one more question on Anybody else? More into, we have to assume cashier education.

So my question is, how do you think could potentially avoid like going native and perpetuating exclusivity once to have been engaged with the community? Can we just repeat that for Zoom? Did you hear, So look, essentially, how do you avoid becoming like native within the commun Going native? I, I think we've gotta be careful termi-

nology. So first of all, I mean, the concept of going native was, seems a pejorative term.

It was never seemed to be a good thing. And I, I think there's a level of, arrogance that people have with this idea about, polishers going native, you can never go native. you are always got a, a level of privilege is one of the slides I think that, that so, spoke about. So when we perceive ourselves as going native we're, we're, we've been a bit facetious.

We can have complete solidarity with the community group that we're working with, but from the moment that we always have the option to leave that group with no repercussions, we have the freedom to, to, to, to, to sever links, to write what we want about it. We we're not native. It, it doesn't mean, and it's that subjectivity.

It doesn't mean that the advantage of being almost like an honorary insider doesn't come with perks, anthropology. And it's, it's a, it's a, there's a paper by, Levi Straus or Levi Straus, which not a greatest fan, but it's actually a good piece. even though it has, its, its biases. he's, this is in, I think around 1967 when he's trying to save or make the case for saving anthropology. And he's saying, we need more anthropologists, more native anthropologists. You know, we need we've got to be careful though that we don't think that that's the only solution, but we need to be engaged in salvage. He doesn't use the word salvage.

That's what he's talking about and stuff like that and I do think the part that I liked about his paper, which is why I sometimes use it, is that he does make the argument that there's something to be said about being, an, an impartial, observant anthropology and being, actually being an outsider that enables you to bring a perspective which is not seen by those who are insiders. And I use an ex an example, and I'm sorry if anyone's in my class today, who's heard me say this before, I just said it this afternoon.

There's an advantage in actually being a cultural outsider who's actually made a deal with the community. Because I think all anthropologists, you sit down, same, like if you're supervising a student, you, you kind of have a discussion about what the project is.

If you're doing research with a community, you kind of like say, okay, what do you expect from me? This is what I can do. I can't do that, but I'll try and you negotiate exactly what you both expect out the research to make sure that there's no overblown, expectations before you're engaging work.

You are co-producing knowledge together and I think that's something that we sometimes forget that we should do.

So the reason I'm saying that is because if we think about language, if we think about how we are socialized, I explain that I'm using English.

So the constructs, even my, my, my social ref, my references that I'm making, my cultural references come from a Western experience. I was born in uk, I was born in Hackney. I still live in Hackney. I mean, I might work in Houston now, but I st in fact, I still work in Hackney 'cause I'm a community hack. When I finish here, I go and

do work and this week I'm dealing with another case of police brutality where police officers pointed a gun at a young African child who had a toy gun.

I've got to deal with that.

So I have to switch off the academic hat and become an activist.

But the point I'm trying to say is that when we're in these spaces and we're using this language, we sometimes forget that we're, we're, we're, we're always subjective. We're never objective.

This is a myth that we can pretend that we're objective and the example that I used earlier in the class is when I said that we forget, not only are we living in the captive world, but we're also living in a patriarchal world. And, and that's become so normalized, that's become so like, well, such as life, that's the way it is that we use language and we use cultural constructs and traps without thinking. And that underpins me theory. An example I use, like I said, I apologize if you've heard me say this before.

It's like trying to refer in English to a, a woman without making a reference to men. It, it's almost impossible because the system was constructed by men who decided that they are the default group, and they use the language to create this cultural trap where there is no offer alternative paradigm. And, and this is why I'm saying you can never really be donated.

So in this situation, and like the example I use is that if you wanna talk about women, so war man, you, you, so you, you're saying war, but man has to be in that.

If you say feed Mel Mel is inside that it's impossible to escape this paradigm and the only construct that has been allowed is lady and lady comes loaded with baggage, class sensitivities. it's a cultural strait jacket. You are demure, you are you're kind of like, you will not rock the boats.

You can make a lovely cherry pie and produce dinner and all these kind things.

Arrange flowers. You can arrange flowers. Okay, so this is the problem. And I'm, so I'm saying that we can't see that we're in those drafts.

So when someone goes native, they're not going native.

If they're not checking their ego. I mean, that we, we, this, this, this, today we was talking about the Nancy Chap Hughes paper, if you've ever read it, it's a really challenging piece. It talks about activist, register, but it's actually almost I won't say colonial, but it's, it is actually promoting harm in, in, in, in the other side. And it's, it's horrible because as an activist, I want to say that we should be engaged with our, with our communities, but we have privilege. We are never, ever insiders if we're coming from outside the community and so we have to own that and actually not be ashamed of it, but be honest about it and say, how can I help? What do you think I can do? And then just have an honest dialogue. I can't do that.

I can't stop that company from putting that oil pipe underneath your reservoir.

What I can do is when I get back, I can write as honest as I can and write about the effects of it and if that can reach someone who's got power to make a difference or to start a debate, or to start problematizing the problem, then that's the best I can

do and if they say that's good enough, hey, we, off we go. If they say, well you're just every other anthropologist, and then we have to own that.

So I think honesty about that. So it's a long answer, but it's, it's, it's a passionate issue.

Wonderful. I, I think we have reached time. Yeah, that's amazing and brilliant. talk media, show discussion, interaction. it's, certainly shaken up, radical anthropology, parameters today, all the, interaction here. So I think we've just got to really say thank you. thanks to everyone, for everyone on Zoom and thanks for everybody to coming here tonight.

Glad to see everybody, but thanks Bob to Toy for leading this.

The Ted K Archive

Toyin Agbetu
A Return to Action (Seminar)
A discussion revisiting the values of Action Anthropology
Oct 17 2023

<www.vimeo.com/876816157> & <www.youtube.com/watch?v=M3afLINcTnk>

www.thetedkarchive.com