

**GUÅHAN AND BEING “GREEN”: PUBLIC RELATIONS AT THE INTERSECTION
OF INDIGENEITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

by

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ABSTRACT

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As the global environmental crisis continues to worsen, it becomes increasingly important to examine what elements are included or excluded from articulations of these issues, as well as articulations of possible solutions. The field of public relations can bring together a multitude of voices and is therefore an apt field from which to take up the tenets of articulation theory as they relate to environmental justice. More specifically to the current study, the island of Guahan is a site for a PR case study of environmental articulations and their related PR communication. It encompasses a myriad of stakeholder groups who engage in communicative activities, including the U.S. military, water and land activists, and the island's local government. This case study therefore employs qualitative research methods (interviews and textual analysis) regarding the construction of Camp Blaz, a U.S. Marine Corp Base on Guahan to draw conclusions on how these groups' communications characterize the natural environment, each other, and what it means to be indigenous. Findings point to ways public relations can augment conversations of environmental justice, specifically as it relates to how stakeholders are conceptualized, and how exploited voices can be brought to the fore.

Keywords: articulation theory, environmental justice, Guåhan, public relations

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Situating Guåhan in Climate Change Conversations

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has been assessing climate-related research, including knowledge in “technical and socio-economic” realms (Evidence is clear, 2022), on behalf of the United Nations since 1988 (About – History of the IPCC, n.d.). As part of the IPCC’s Sixth Assessment Report, projected to release in September of this year, the panel published the findings from its third Working Group (WGIII) earlier this month. In this subsection of the larger report, WGIII Co-Chair Jim Skea reminds readers that “climate change is the result of more than a century of unsustainable energy and land use, lifestyles and patterns of consumption and production” (Evidence is clear, 2022). Additionally, data presented shows that the planet’s average temperature increase is projected to exceed the widely recognized safe threshold of 1.5°C before the century is out, and “immediate and deep emissions reductions across all sectors” of human habitation is necessary to keep temperature rise under control (Evidence is clear, 2022; McGrath, 2018). Given this evidence that climate change continues to worsen, the current work posits that public relations (hereafter, PR) theory and practice constitute an apt field through which issues of climate change policy might be addressed. On the one hand, there is a historical basis for this argument. Throughout the Industrial revolution and the evolution of 20th century America, PR was used to disseminate narratives of environmentalism that served capitalist interests, inevitably contributing to degradation of the natural world (Aronczyk, 2018). On the other hand, there is contemporary recognition that PR practices are increasingly used to influence public opinion and policy (Ciszek, 2017), and that PR firms are “major organizational actors in climate politics” (Brulle &

Werthman, 2021). However, even while more recent turns to humanist perspectives in PR have attempted to overcome the field's fraught history, variations of "green" movements or mainstream environmentalism that ultimately fail "to fight against ecological inequities and social injustice" (Faber, 2007, p. 157) continue to prevail, especially through the harmful communication practice known as greenwashing.

These premises then locate two arguments at this research project's fountainhead. First, PR theory and practice can productively contribute to climate change discourse by expanding its decolonial spaces, with deference to indigeneity and environmental justice. This argument on a more granular level points to the fact "working toward decolonization" in any field of study "necessitates reconsidering the methods and practices of knowledge production embodied in our scholarship without replicating colonial logics and relations" (Mack & Na'puti, 2019, p. 351). Being that "the work of [PR] gets shaped within the contexts of different cultural frameworks" (Dutta & Elers, 2020, p. 2), PR is particularly poised to appropriately consider different epistemologies. Thus, the second argument at this project's fountainhead is that rooting current investigations in Guåhan is a means to perceive routes of CHamoru expressions of sovereignty, filling important gaps in PR literature and engendering practical implications.

Furthermore, anchoring research in environmental justice and indigenous sovereignty attends to the fact that communities "least responsible for the pollutants" degrading the natural environment are also the ones who benefit least from the patterns of consumption that cause the pollution in the first place (Roberts, 2007, p. 287). Anchoring research specifically in CHamoru sovereignty holds additional decolonial potential, as "the ocean" is becoming "an increasingly critical place to address in terms of regional political colonization as well as global ecological denigration" (Ingersoll, 2016, p. 21). Islands also have a particular stake in climate change

conversations, given the bleaching and acidification of coral reefs, fish populations dying off, and the threats of rising water levels (Ingersoll, 2016).

Environmental justice in PR communication can therefore be used as a space to explore discursive relationships between race and social structures, economic stratification, and political self-determination, iterating them as related problems stemming from the same neocolonial systems. A PR intervention can also make specific and culturally-centered critiques regarding how Guåhan's activism has remained "largely invisible from the mainstream news media outlets on the U.S. mainland" and the militarization it pushes against has "registered little to no protest on an international or national level" (Na'puti, 2014, p. 302). To mount these critiques and contribute to broader conversations of climate change discourse, PR communication will be analyzed using tenets of articulation theory, discussed below.

Articulation Theory

The current project is interested in the role PR activities play in expressing narratives of what it means to be environmental, with the broader goal of advancing justice-centered policy. Within this set of activities is the strategic characterization of groups of people into what is known as "key publics," as well as communicating "environmentalism" to these publics, both of which involve a "struggle to fix meaning" (DeLuca, 1999, p. 334) to people and to place. Articulation theory attends to this struggle over meaning-making, and will be used specifically as it relates to the discursive processes of constructing shared realities, and how that discursive construction reflects different epistemological renderings of Guåhan. Importantly, it is not the mere fact of these differences to which articulation theory attends, but additionally how these differences become ordered by degree of influence. That is to say, this theoretical commitment is

of use because questions of power are foundational to its explanatory capabilities, accounting for the way messages are constructed “so that some points of view are pronounced or accentuated” (Sikka, 2008, p. 130) while other points of view are marginalized, intentionally or by default.

General Assertions

The proponents of articulation theory who influence the current work accept that we live in an unstable world, that negotiating these unstable conditions is a process of different speakers constructing rather than discovering meaning, and that cultural contexts and the power dynamics they produce play a role in what meanings are accepted or disrupted (DeLuca, 1999; Hall, 1985; Laclau, 1977; Laclau & Mouffee, 1985; Oliha, 2011). Meaning is derived from *linking elements*, or “fostering connections” (Oliha, 2011, p. 259) between otherwise free-floating signifiers (DeLuca, 1999, p. 335) in a way that does not wholly reproduce a rationalist reality (Laclau, 1977) but instead ascribes one possible interpretation based on historical and social contexts, as well as economic and political ones (Hall, 1985). This interpretation of linkages, or an articulation, is therefore also subject to challenge and contestation in the form of a *re-articulation*, itself an interpretation that is also “contingent and particular” and “the result of a political and historical struggle” (DeLuca, 1999, p. 335). Given the premise regarding meaning being constructed, a foundational assertion for articulation theory “is that underlying the formation of ideas, concepts, themes, and knowledge is an ethic of *non-determinacy*” (Sikka, 2008, p. 122, emphasis added). Given the premise regarding power dynamics, “not all possible articulations are equally likely” (DeLuca, 1999, p. 334). Said another way, three interrelated characteristics of articulations emerge based on this nature of cultural contingency: they are not *inherent*, they are not *random*, and they are not *permanent*.

For example, Stuart Hall (1985) theorizes how shifting cultural conditions over time produce multiple, different “chain[s] of connotations” for the single identity construct “black.” One such chain links “black” to dispossession and lack of civility, an articulation used (non-randomly) to bolster the practices and ideologies contingent to “the era of [European] slavery” as “a very specific historical moment” (p. 111). However, as Hall describes, a “cultural revolution...swept Jamaica” in the 1960s and 1970s and “for the first time the people acknowledged and accepted their African-slave-black heritage” with pride. This acceptance allowed people of Jamaica to join “the moment of political radicalization, of mass mobilization, of solidarity with black struggles for liberation elsewhere” in the world, re-articulating blackness as a “site for the construction of ‘unity’” and empowerment of the black community. This *positive* connotation pushed back against long-held (but non-permanent) ideological stances, or connotative chains, that “made racism possible through the *negative* construction of ‘blacks’” (p. 112, emphasis added).

Antagonisms

As the above example illustrates, “a particular ideological chain becomes a site of struggle” not through accidental changes or conditions, but specifically through efforts that actively “displace, rupture, or contest” them, or “transform [their] meaning” (Hall, 1985, p. 112). By virtue of being specific to historical, political, social, and economic contexts, articulations are ideological and often presented as “common sense,” again calling attention to the role of power in discourse. Such ideological discourses can therefore only be dissolved if they are intentionally subjected to critical processes, or attempts to break “links between concepts which are the mere residue of opinion and custom” (Laclau, 1977, p. 7). Thus, dis-articulations are made possible by

what is known as an antagonism, or an interpretation that lays bare the flaws in common sense rhetoric and the “impossibility of the discourse constituting a permanently closed or sutured totality” (DeLuca, 1999, p. 336).

Being that antagonisms are aimed at unlinking specific elements and therefore target the particular non-random articulations that hold those linkages, it follows that antagonisms cannot be random, exemplified in several ways by Kevin DeLuca (1999). In one example, “global warming, ozone depletion, toxic waste, and pesticides in food and water” are elements that can be considered antagonisms to Industrialization-era logic, wherein it is supposedly common-sense that prioritizing technological progress over all other aspects of life yields more benefits than costs. Importantly, this list of antagonisms only take on their disruptive, critical role when taken up by environmental activists. This is because activists, similar to the previously discussed black communities articulating positive connotations of blackness, intentionally work to expose the limits of the previously mentioned Industrialization era sensibilities. In another example, the practice of enslaving people, basing oppression in gender, and the exploitation of workers are all antagonisms that interfere with the supposed infallibility of “the ‘American Dream’” (DeLuca, 1999, p. 336). Here again, the existence of these conditions alone does not undo the common-sense logic of the American Dream; rather, it is the ensuing counter discourse that intentionally uses these conditions to expose how the American Dream is typically limited to economically elite white men that transforms them into specific, effective antagonisms.

Dis- and Re-articulation

While antagonisms make “investigation, disarticulation, and rearticulation of a hegemonic discourse” possible (DeLuca, 1999, p. 336), they do not guarantee the expediency of

change. Ernesto Laclau (1977) discusses how the right to rule articulated by pre-WWI absolutism was linked exclusively and, throughout those centuries, quite obviously to a political institution such as a monarchy. Joanne Barker (2005) also addresses this articulation in her explorations of the term “sovereignty.” In Barker’s arguments, absolutism was interpreted specifically by European royalty (where sovereignty is linked to divinely inherited power to “make war and govern domestic affairs”) as well as by Protestant and Catholic church leaders (where sovereignty belonged to God alone, but church leaders could interpret divine will to enforce laws) (Barker, 2005, p. 1-2). These articulations that once “constituted the core of the political discourse” of the day, wherein absolutism was common sense (Laclau, 1977, p. 8), were only disrupted by “various political revolutions against the tyrannies of dogma and kingdoms” (Barker, 2005, p. 2) over the course of numerous decades. These repeated political disruptions eventually made room for the *re*articulation of social orders and sovereignty.

Furthermore, Hannah Oliha (2011) helps to demonstrate how the emergence of *re*articulations is not constituted by the complete evaporation of previous articulations, and the simultaneous existence of both sets of linkages is not only possible, but consequential in and of itself. Combining articulation theory with critical race theory, Oliha examines how several “contested discourse[s] on race” were concurrently articulated during Barack Obama’s 2008 campaign for U.S. presidency. This multiplicity brought to the fore “disharmony generated by pervasive racial tensions,” which she concludes negated the possibility that the U.S. had achieved “racial transcendence,” as some of the discourses had posited (p. 258). If this reality beyond racism had been achieved, Oliha argues, such a condition of transcendence would nullify the tensions of competing articulations. Instead, they served to deepen the construct of race as a site of continuing struggle. More contemporarily, it could be argued that Oliha’s findings, where

the competition between simultaneous articulations is itself evidence that disproves racial transcendence, apply to some of the tensions that have emerged around the use of critical race theory (CRT) in American schools for kindergarten through 12th grade education. This observation is not meant to oversimplify the vastly complex systemic issues in which these articulations are embedded. Rather, it is meant to further substantiate the claim that articulations of what it means to be black “have a long and not easily-dismantled history” (Hall, 1985, p. 112), and that rearticulation overall is a long process.

Work in articulation theory must contend with the fact that social, political, and cultural struggles often result in the simultaneous existence of multiple articulations, which supports the impermanent nature of linkages, but also exemplifies their discursively rigid nature. In revisiting the way elements like toxic waste antagonize logic of the Industrial era that would articulate technological progress as linked with the best quality of life possible (DeLuca, 1999), there are still more tensions between dominant ideologies and re-articulations working to disrupt them. Explored briefly here, the latter set of linkages often refers to the former as greenwashing.

Greenwashing as a Disarticulation

As the movement for change in environmental policy gained support in the 1960s and 1970s, “automobile, chemical, oil, and utility companies began to develop green corporate images,” which included increased efforts “to promote their products and activities as environmentally friendly” (Myers, 2020). Such was the enthusiasm of the public’s response to supposedly “environmentally friendly” offerings that “the number of new green product introductions in national markets rose from 60 in 1986 to 810 in 1991,” indicating about a 12 percent increase of market share (Banerjee, Gulas, & Iyer, 1995, p. 21). Though corporate

spending and general social focus on this matter continued to mount, there were not necessarily correlated efforts to actually measure environmental impacts of various activities, use resources in environmentally responsible ways, or invest in environmental efforts. Touting environmental claims without evidence to support them eventually became known as greenwashing, and its misleading influence on consumers desirous of environmental products was widespread. In 1992, Greenpeace published a book tracing how the behavior of greenwashing was now a global issue, “with transnational corporations (TNCs) assuming a significant role in the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, or Earth Summit,” and in 1999, the term was added to the Oxford English Dictionary (Myers, 2020).

The harmful consequences associated with “misleading...consumers on the environmental benefits associated with a company’s products, processes, or practices” (Chitaka, 2021, p. 98) continues to be relevant, especially in communication and marketing fields. For example, *PR Newswire* published an article earlier this year to promote a handbook published by a firm called Sustainable PR; the book is entitled *How to Pass the Millennial Greenwashing Test: 7 Winning PR Tactics for Green Companies*, and is meant to help companies avoid PR scandals with “a growing cohort of highly eco-conscious consumers-bolstered by Gen Z and Millennials-[who] are rightfully skeptical of corporate greenwashing claims” (How to Pass the Millennial Greenwashing Test, 2020). What is more, this phenomenon is hardly unique to corporations as entities or to the United States as a communicative space. Rather, “awareness is growing around the world about deceptive or outright false environmental claims made by companies, nonprofits, and even governments when communicating their strategies on environmental and climate issues.” (Nemes, Scanlan, Smith, Smith, Aronczyk, Hill, Lewis, Montgomery, Tubeillo, & Stabinsky, 2022, p. 1). In this way, greenwashing as a rearticulation of environmental claims in

and beyond marketing that continue to thrive is a prime example of how rearticulations do not immediately or completely replace existing discourses. The tensions between simultaneous articulations here, as well as those discussed above, demonstrates that “as social movements develop a struggle” around linkages that seem inherent, disarticulations become increasingly possible, and the shared “meanings which appear to have been fixed in place forever begin to loose their moorings” (Hall, 1985, p. 112). Thus, the case study presented in this project is a means through which we might examine the role PR plays in articulating socio-political as well as environmental discourses for activist organizations in Guåhan, and how those articulations are in tension with those presented by *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* (the Guåhan Legislature) and the U.S. military.

Preparing For the Case Study

As an island that carries the history and culture of CHamoru people embedded in its landscape, that has endured and adapted to the social and political conditions of multiple iterations of colonization, and that is the site on (as well as reason *for*) which activist groups continue to work to advance CHamoru interests, Guåhan is a microcosm of complex power dynamics. These dynamics complicate a multifaceted communication network that variously accommodates organizations such as activist groups, the local and federal government, and the U.S. military. At the heart of these communication relationships are issues of CHamoru sovereignty and its intersections with environmental justice. However, using the island as a site of research does not occur in a void. Feminist and cultural studies scholar Kenna Neitch reminds us that we are all “participants in a global culture entrenched with sexism, racism, and eurocentrism,” and we thus cannot ignore that these “social forces can influence even our own

pro-social scholarship” (2019, p. 427). If this work is an endeavor towards decoloniality in PR literature, then it is necessary to examine how qualitative research is fraught with tensions, and discuss how the roots of my positionality within this wider space simultaneously enables and forecloses certain routes for knowledge production.

Qualitative Research - Seascape Epistemology

Most broadly, I am a career student trained at American institutions, which means the current work is constantly navigating the coloniality inherent in the concept of research itself. Much of this coloniality is based in how the field of anthropology tended to study particular communities in particular places, wherein initial objectives were to send an observer to “strange and foreign worlds” and report on experiences using “colonizing strategies” of analyses, or “ways of controlling the foreign, deviant, or troublesome Other” (Denizen & Lincoln, 2005, p. 1). Evidence of these issues persist today, as “research is highly institutionalized through disciplines and fields of knowledge,” with the academy itself therefore often serving as a site of ongoing colonial projects (Smith, 2012, p. 213). It is also a place that “indigenous peoples” view as an elitist space for scholars to reproduce “various systems of privilege” (Smith, 2012, p. 213) regardless of their chosen site or subject matter. Even attempts that directly explicate decoloniality are not immune to spuriousness and inauthenticity. Future chapters will therefore assert that indigeneity is an important critical lens of analysis, not just a word used to nod at communities in a way that reifies the status of “other” to white or western.

More specifically, the current qualitative work aims to surface answers to research questions through the case of Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz, a military installment on a Micronesian island. The ocean as a physical space is “a place of adaptation” to constant change,

and these systems of ceaseless movement can - in indigenous perspectives - provide a *philosophical* space for ways of being and knowing (Ingersoll, 2016, p. 15). Explored more in Chapter 2, Indigenous scholar Karin Ingersoll refers to this approach to knowledge as “seascape epistemology.” Suffice it for now to say that accepting knowledge, like the ocean, is always interacting with and moving “through theoretical frames” opens up a research methodology that “splashes alternatives onto the Western-dominant” shores on which ways of being and knowing currently lay (Ingersoll, 2016, p. 15-25). Naturally, this rootedness in seascape epistemology influences not just the perspective of knowledge, but additionally the person-as-instrument for data collection and the procedures for analysis. These ideas are explored below.

Qualitative Researcher - Pacific Positionality

Annette Markham (2009) notes that researcher reflections on “the concept of being ‘situated’” are not new to endeavors of social inquiry, but feminist scholars were especially instrumental in foregrounding its importance in the 1980s and 1990s. Her account of this shift touches on how “being situated” is an amalgamation of paradigmatic commitments, training in particular fields, and attributes researchers as individuals carry:

Laying out powerful critiques of the ethnocentric, patriarchal, and colonialist traditions in the practice of science and the production of knowledge, scholars across disciplines called for more direct attention to the identification and/or interrogation of the frames delimiting the processes of inquiry, as well as the social, economic, geographic, cultural, racial, and gendered position of the researcher. (Markham, 2009, p. 3)

Thus, what follows is an effort to center the ways that my identity as a researcher is part of larger narrative where “Pacific Islanders continue a history of production and destruction through both a participation in and resistance to colonialism, patriarchy, militarism, Christianity,

nationhood, development, tourism, literacy, athletics, and other forceful modes of modernity and scholarship” (Ingersoll, p. 32).

Academic Positionality

While I am a scholar who undeniably benefits from the previously mentioned systems of academic privilege, I am also a CHamoru woman. This made certain spaces of authenticity available to me in setting up interviews, and also precipitated a level of trust (as a matter of negotiating identities and therefore also power differentials) that is helpful for garnering rich data during interviews (Charmaz, 2006). I also made the specific choice to honor the oral traditions of CHamoru people by conducting interviews, embodying the genealogy of our community and the value of story-telling as legitimate forms of producing knowledge.

What is more, I chose to physically be in Guåhan to engage in these conversations despite the setbacks posed by the global pandemic – a phenomenon which in and of itself has provided evidence for the ways current political ecologies have disproportionately insulated the socially and economically elite. As Dian Million (2018) reminds us, contrasting “Western epistemological ‘land’ as an environment and ecology” with “Indigenous place as relations with responsibility” creates “a critical philosophical difference” (p. 26). Sitting on the “land” that raised generations of my family – in full awareness that land includes the life-sustaining reef visible from many of my interviews, as well as the ocean that connects us to other islands just beyond that reef – talking *about* that land to someone whose family is just as connected to it has a particular, deep power. This power need not be quantified for generalizability or verified for reliability to be “academic.” It need only be embraced as part of my experience as a scholar approaching this work with a decolonial epistemology, producing knowledge with oral traditions, in a place that is more-than-land. That is, Guåhan as a place is all at once the jungle, beaches,

cliffs, creatures like *i ayuyu* (coconut crab) and *i lāggua* (parrot fish), coral reefs, riptides, and the ocean that connects islands of Oceania; Guåhan as a place is all these elements as an extension of CHamoru bodies, minds, spirits, desires, pasts, and futures.

Military Positionality

Furthermore, Ingersoll (2016) notes that “the decision to function within the dominant system” while discovering ways to leverage its benefits is also an act of decoloniality (p. 25). As I spent time with literature, an activist sensibility emerged that I must work through here. Part of my academic privilege stems from the economic privilege my father’s 20-year career in the U.S. Army afforded my family. However, rather than limit me as a researcher, this fact equips me with several things. I argue that I now have a multifaceted understanding of how articulations of the U.S. military as benevolent can be powerful, accurate on a micro level, and misleading on a macro level. This stems in no small way from the fact that my father’s career was an indispensable opportunity for him to leverage his aptitude for leadership and meeting challenges, to augment strategic skills in a system that rewarded him with upward mobility, and to provide a comfortable and exciting life for his family in and sometimes beyond this country. When he retired as a Lieutenant Colonel, I had spent my childhood being inspired by my father’s dedication and my mother’s adaptability. What is more, I had developed a fondness for learning and respecting how different communities (including neighborhoods, grade school cohorts, churches, local governments, and unnamed spaces where these groups overlap) construct and are constructed by varied realities.

These experiences inform my perspective of articulations on the individual and small community level. However, they also ready me for nuanced analyses on a macro level, through an epistemological approach like the seascape: I understand the multisitedness of identity, how

something like “indigeneity” can hold contradictions and ambiguities, and the value of both/and language when it comes to knowing how someone like my father, two of my uncles, one of my aunts, and two of my cousins can be both a proud CHamoru and a soldier in the U.S. military. Before carrying this positionality in analyses, the case study of Camp Blaz will be approached through literature whose organization is discussed below.

Chapter Outline

Alexander (2016) recognizes that “four hundred years of military colonization have put severe constraints on Chamoru culture, but not destroyed it” (p. 877), and debates over military buildup bring much of these constraints and expressions of culture together. Chapter 2 will therefore work to outline the opportunities and limits of discussing CHamoru people of Guåhan as an indigenous community in PR literature. It will set up their voice in the case study as people who have existed before colonization, who continue to have lived experiences, values, and desires during current U.S. military occupation, and who communicate in ways that formulate futures beyond these issues. Deeply intertwined with defining indigeneity is defining the concept of sovereignty. In situating Camp Blaz as a case for examining articulations of land use, Chapter 3 will outline the relationship between environmental justice and CHamoru sovereignty. Pertinent to developing these subject areas for the case is the hegemonic process of militarization. Chapter 3 will therefore also briefly discuss how militaries around the world have a history of conducting “reckless experiments with nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons” often in colonies, “causing indigenous people to suffer the consequences” (Mitchell & Dower, 2020, p. 2).

Literature will then aim to give the breadth of this scope a greater sense of depth. Specifically, Mitchell and Dower (2020) assert that “the US military is the most powerful organization in the world” (p. 6), and Chapter 4 will focus more narrowly on their particular history in the Pacific Ocean. It will then introduce Camp Blaz as the subject of the current case study, situated historically as part of a larger U.S. military project for relocating U.S. marines from Okinawa to Guåhan. Chapter 5 will explore the influence of methodological commitments and positionality before describing the research design itself, including research questions, data collection, and procedures for analysis. Findings presented in Chapter 6 focus on how organizations define and characterize their key publics, and how these relationships influence what it means to give or obtain consent for the construction of Camp Blaz and the buildup. These findings subsequently lead to conclusions drawn regarding how PR communication is used in environmental articulations. Finally, Chapter 7 discusses how these conclusions hold greater implications for PR scholarship, especially as it relates to environmentally just policymaking and indigenous theorizing.

CHAPTER 2: INDIGENEITY, ISLANDS, AND IDENTIFYING PUBLICS

Introduction

As stated in the introductory chapter, current investigations are interested in the manner in which PR activities intersect with matters of environmental justice. One such PR activity involves organizations identifying, characterizing, and communicating with their key publics. For Guåhan and its Chamorro people, this requires that the forthcoming examination be furnished with an understanding of what is meant by the term “indigenous,” and the value of communicating Indigenous *persistence* – a rhetorical pivot from the related but nonetheless different term *resistance*. However, in working toward this understanding, the first section is not an attempt to arrive at an unassailable definition or analytical approach. In fact, discussions after the meaning of “indigenous” shift into engaging with seascape epistemology, through which we might emphasize the futility of such a monolithic approach to indigeneity, as well as upset tendencies toward fixivity in general. This ocean-based way of knowing in mind, the chapter will then briefly review some of the particular demands and considerations important to islands as sites of study, and to Indigenous island publics or organizations as subjects of study.

Indigeneity is Identity, But More

There are myriad reasons to talk about what it means to use the term “indigenous” in the next section, especially for an academic research endeavor such as this. First, there is an increasing presence of diverse stakeholders in PR literature that offer opportunities to develop a more inclusive, socially accountable PR. This effort is an attempt to answer “calls to decolonize” literature, and thereby “interrogate the West-centric assumptions circulated in the scholarship, interrupt the universals built upon Eurocentric assumptions, and attend to the textures of power

that silence voices” (Dutta & Elers, 2020, p. 4). Second, there are useful ways indigeneity as an identity category further clarifies the multisitedness of organizations and their stakeholders operating in Guåhan. Third, there are ways the term also moves *beyond* the limitations of a category of identity and becomes a broader analytic with which we might think critically about the current case, as well as implications for how the purposes of PR might actively foreclose on decoloniality. This last point is discussed in the chapter conclusion.

As an Identity Category

Corntassel (2003) establishes that there is a debate over whether “establishing definitional standards” is most important to constructing indigenous identities, or if it is more important to make room for “an unlimited right of indigenous self-identification.” Intergovernmental organizations such as the World Bank and the United Nations have a tendency to use “checklists or composites” to determine legal degrees of indigeneity, and therefore have definitions that are overly utilitarian and deeply problematic. Most widely used is the definition for Indigenous people formulated by the Working Group on Indigenous Population in 1986, but it emphasizes that Indigenous communities “live more in conformity with their particular social, economic, and cultural customs and traditions” than they do with their current country’s institutions. This can be limiting in that it relegates Indigeneity to past customs that are dichotomous to a contemporary existence, and that there is some threshold point at which adherence to “tradition” becomes mutually exclusive to experiences in modern culture (Corntassel, 2003, p. 75-89). When it comes to contemporary PR theory, then, there is potential here for the current project to build out gaps in literature as it relates to mechanisms of defining stakeholders. Namely, we might ask how a given organization’s PR mechanisms account for the

specific, current lived experiences of Indigenous stakeholders, and what it means to give a community a voice if that community is cosmologically composed of elements not currently recognized by PR theory.

Within the academy, Corn tassel describes how some scholars see the process of “operationalizing concepts of Indigeneity” as requiring “rigor,” and working towards the ability to study “‘people versus state’ conflicts more systematically.” Others have preferred an approach of inclusivity such as Franke Wilmer, whose definition of Indigenous “allows for maximum flexibility,” making a turn away from hegemonic standards of study that is supported here. Anya Bernstein relatedly emphasizes that matters of Indigeneity include “continued colonial domination of Indigenous homelands as well as the ancestral roots of these ‘pre-invasion inhabitants,’” constructed and deconstructed across temporalities. Corn tassel himself describes his personhood model of four characteristics for who is Indigenous: 1) *genealogy* (“people who believe they are ancestrally related and identify themselves, based on oral and/or written histories, as descendants of the original inhabitant of their ancestral homelands”); 2) *shared cultural values and institutions* (people who typically have community-based “political, economic and social institutions,” reflecting “ceremonial cycles, kinship networks, and continuously evolving cultural traditions”); 3) *shared means of communication* (people who currently or at one point spoke “an indigenous language, often different from the dominant society’s language - even where the indigeneous language is not ‘spoken,’” but upheld in dialects); 4) *distinct relationship to land* (people who are distinct from the dominant cultural/societal group, with “a close relationship with their ancestral homelands/scared sites,” that are often “threatened by ongoing military, economic or political encroachment or may be

places where indigenous peoples have been previously expelled, while seeking to enhance their cultural, political, and economic autonomy”) (Corntassel, 2003, p. 78-89).

Features of this personhood model and the intent that drives them are certainly helpful, including the characteristics listed above relating to each other through interlocking rather than hierarchical structures. Indeed, these turns away from hegemonic standards such as “rigor” and instincts to put things in “order” are preferred, as these are often determined by Western and Eurocentric metrics for quality. However, they are bound by certain limitations. For example, Wilmer, Bernstein, and Corntassel all appear to leave open interesting questions regarding the ways in which “Indigenous peoples are different in terms of their cultural worldviews and goals from other minority groups,” which then leaves open how a “public” in PR practice is configured. It is here that Maile Arvin’s (2015) intervention into indigenous literature is pertinent, discussed below.

As an Analytic

Indigeneity is not *only* a way of thinking about identity, and attempts to “shore up Indigenous authenticity” can have the opposite effect, stifling exploration of its possibilities both in institutions and in the lived experiences of people (Arvin, 2015, p. 120). Maile Arvin (2015) points out that uses of the term “indigenous” tend to be “much too academic” (p. 119), often with problematic results. For example, the use of the term “Indigenous” becomes merely a shortcut to facilitate dichotomous discussion of what it means to be authentic (a concept that some posit is itself a fairly modern conception), or it becomes a practice of deciding who is and is not indigenous rather than a practice of challenging structures that seek to erase or homogenize indigenous spaces.

Arvin therefore posits that indigeneity can be treated as an analytic. This approach allows scholars to critique the power relations of raciality and coloniality that indigeneity is often articulated with, seeing them each as “linked but separately determined processes of social formation” in their own right. In the same way that racism is not the same as colonialism, not least because the latter predates the former, indigeneity is not a catch-all antithesis of racism or colonialism. Indigenous people can, for example, hold “strongly anti-immigrant” stances that can lead to the support of racist measures that are attempting to preserve “sovereignty” and “protect [from] perceived threats” (p. 121). Thus, indigeneity is not a category of self that speaks only to racism and colonialism as a way of mutually excluding them, it is a social process that is *linked* to them.

Said another way, efforts to exert an imperial global policy (colonization) are often rationalized by social constructs that associate physical appearances or assumed genealogy with particular traits, where the colonizer’s traits are considered superior (racialization). The spaces where these policies are enacted have historically attempted to erase the culture of those already present, while their resistance against, persistence through, influence on, and various adaptations to these processes continue to constitute fluid ways of being (indigeneity).

Explained in more detail in a later section, Mohan J. Dutta and Steve Elers’ (2020) position regarding how “colonial biopolitics” act on global levels additionally demonstrates a dimension of the relationship between these social processes. They describe how the “erasure of Indigenous voices” is essential for displacing “Indigenous peoples from sources of livelihood,” and displacement is a byproduct of “colonial occupations of Indigenous land to create extractive sites of profiteering (mining development, special economic zones, urbanization initiatives)” (p. 6).

Using this analytic also helps transform the view of Indigenous people as essentialized by their past. Instead, related to the fact that linkages are by no means necessary or permanent, articulations of raciality, coloniality, and indigeneity are subject to change depending on shifts in given social, political, and economic conditions. Indigeneity as it exists moment to moment can therefore hold cultural contradictions that do not foreclose on its validity, imagine futures that need not be based in how the past is viewed, and can generally avoid reinforcing a “false tradition/modernity divide” (p. 120). Awareness of indigeneity as an analytic therefore forces scholars to be more careful in discussing questions of power and how they become articulated in the discourse that mutually constructs social realities. This then moves away from attempts to qualify who is and is not Indigenous, and opens up “the boundaries of indigenous identity, culture, politics, and futures to new, productive possibilities” (p. 126). For the case study, this analytic can also be a vantage point from which we can perceive discursive spaces in Guåhan that hold strong pro-Chamorro cultural stances without also holding strong anti-militarization ones. In combination with PR’s ability to augment certain discourses, and articulation theory’s penchant for explaining competing discourses, indigeneity as an analytic therefore makes room for noting how the social processes that undergird these pro- or anti- stances are intertwined, but not inexplicable. Said another way, the presence of hegemonic discourses obscures the contradictions militarization holds for Chamorro sovereignty, while the proliferation of Chamorro activist discourse works against militarization as common sense ideology.

Persistence Discourse

The tendency has largely been to categorize Indigenous epistemologies and ways they are enacted as “resistance.” Kenna Neitch (2019) argues that resistance rhetoric can be, and often is,

used to generally refer to how social movements “constitute and articulate their opposition position,” suggesting movements are only possible as a second, reactionary position. This risks reifying social movements within the confines of an imagined inferiority to the status quo. Thus, scholars using “resistance” as an identifier of “the attitudes and behaviors of Indigenous and marginalized peoples” is often a matter of communicating where power is concentrated in these stories, as well as who has the subsequent power to tell them. The term “resistance” can have the “unintended effect of reducing these practices to mere reactions against European (and later Euro-American) colonialism” rather than respecting them as enactments that have validity, irrespective of colonialism’s genocides, exploitations, and erasures. This label of “resistance” communicates that power is centered in Europe and the West, and such undercutting of indigenous autonomy can eventually beget “the othering of non-dominant cultures, giving the position of primacy and agency to the colonizers” in PR theory and practice. A related problem is that resistance as “uniquely reactive, rather than active, mode of behavior” then becomes a response to the influence of global forces, without then offering the “corresponding consideration of how such interactions have also shaped global powers in turn.” Additionally, there is the risk that notions of resistance might naturalize the “colonial perspective of time.” Terms like “decoloniality” and “resistance” used without full explication can imply that the moment of “colonial invasion” is necessarily the point of inception for Indigenous projects of autonomy and expression. This impression is inaccurate because, even as multifaceted and changing as Indigenous cultures might be, they certainly “pre-date and persist through imperial interactions” (p. 427 - 434).

Along with these centuries-old conflicts, Neitch includes a more recent example of how this intervention in resistance rhetoric can have larger implications in public discourse. When

feminist activists witnessed the manner with which Massachusetts senator Elizabeth Warren read a letter by Coretta Scott King in the face of vocal opposition, the activists took up the phrase “nevertheless, she persisted” as a rallying point. This put focus on Warren’s action without needing to refer to Mitch McConnell’s interruptions as the origin of her power. It serves as an example of a rhetor already occupying a space of self-assertion, facing an attempt to leverage that power through subordination, and ultimately reformulating the self-assertion in a context that further solidified her initial position of power. The persistence rhetoric that was thereafter trending across social media posts established important linkages between “millions of women who have historically endured censure for speaking” with strength and imagination in their own right, rather than focusing on “the patriarchal, colonial forces that censor them” (p. 436-438). To persist, then, is to do more than respond to attempts of submission. Persisting is a matter of already having the power to sideline these attempts in the continued expression of self. Neitch ergo argues that “persistence” is an important intervention into resistance rhetoric for indigeneous studies, and the current work argues it has important implications for PR studies.

Humanist PR Scholarship

This brief exploration of indigeneity is an effort to contribute to the growing body of PR literature attuned to “the harmful effects of public relations as propaganda, the deleterious effects of one-way communication, and the threats to sustainability through one-way communication” (Dutta & Elers, 2020, p. 2). Extant literature locates several scholars positing that PR can do more than serve as the publicity arm of a corporation (though this history is given more detailed attention in Chapter 3). Among them, Robert Heath (2009) relies on Aristotelian premises of rhetoric to argue that PR can contribute to ethical projects. It can be part of the communicative

effort to bring private voices into public spaces, which then “instantiates the democratic process” because ensuing debates help ensure that only ideas able to “withstand vigorous critique” may prevail (p. 23). Heath, along with contemporaries Damion Waymer and Michael Palenchar (2013), additionally argues that practitioners should “devote professional efforts for maximizing the opportunities and means for diverse voices to be heard, regarded, and joined collaboratively” (p. 274). Steve Mackey (2014) also argues that PR activities can “help the corporation find and shape the virtues of its character in order to respond to appropriate public expectations” (p. 140).

While these scholars exemplify the possibilities of moving beyond the deleterious effects noted by Dutta and Elers (2020), these efforts are not without their limits. For example, Tiara Na‘puti’s (2014) exploration of the Chamorro movement for self-determination notes how Guåhan’s political status excluded the movement’s voices from dominant public spheres. Though the movement is explored in more detail in later literature review sections, the current point is that Chamorro discourse constituted a “subaltern counter public sphere” (Na‘puti, 2014, p. 304), which troubles Heath’s rhetorical rationale. Rather than being met with democratic inclusion, Chamorro rhetoric attempting to “voice opposition to the exclusionary practices and policies of a territorial ruler that maintains colonial ever-presence” (p. 304) has been met with exclusion and erasure. This helps to specifically justify the continued study of Chamorro rights activism, and to generally encourage adding to PR literature working to expand current humanist boundaries. Some examples of this boundary expansion are discussed next.

Indigeneity and Persistence in PR Scholarship

Ibraheem, Ogwezzy-Ndisika, and Akanni (2014) illustrate how the Ogani people of Nigeria pushed for increased social accountability from Shell Oil, which eventually led to “a wider practice of public relations that recognizes, and builds from, the power of activism and

agitation.” In order to trace this development, authors first point out that existing narratives of PR’s origins in Nigeria tended to “look for actions by Nigerian institutions, events, and people that mirror the history of public relations as told in the US and the UK,” such as early information management methods (e.g. establishing newspapers, PR departments or bureaus). This western-centric view of the history and development of PR was limited in that it did not contextualize communication in relation to “the history of Nigeria” and its varied Indigenous communities. Notably, current work finds that pointing out this shortcoming exemplifies the theoretical implications of persistence rhetoric in PR. It leads the authors to delineate the history of Ogoni activism concerning the environment and self-determination, giving primacy to the Indigenous people and framing their actions as legitimate, and consequential to the present PR landscape (p. 194-204).

Ibraheem, Ogwezzy-Ndisika, and Akanni set the stage for the social and political landscape of the country now recognized as Nigeria, noting that it has its own history with British colonization through the beginning of the 20th century, and sits on “underlying fault lines (ethnicity, religion, and resource control)” that shift around “power among the country’s more than 300 ethnic groups.” Moving through to the 1980s, resource-rich Nigeria experienced an “oil-dollar boom” and an influx of the extraction operations by multinational corporations, resulting in Nigeria being “one of the most resource-rich [yet] development-poor countries of the world.” Much of the oil production was concentrated in the Niger Delta, home to a number of ethnic groups, including the Ogoni people. In the 1990s, the “Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People” conveyed their outrage over “the destruction of their land and culture” by multinational companies (MNCs) extracting resources, as well as the cooperation of the government and the support of military forces these MNCs experienced. Helped along by the

fact that environmental activists were garnering increased influence around the world at this time, the Ogoni campaign against “environmental degradation” wrought by “the exploration activities of oil companies such as Shell” had global consequences. On the one hand, communication of Ogoni demands for self-determination were met with “brutal force” including floggings and executions, bringing Amnesty International into the picture for violations of justice. On the other hand, communication of Ogoni concerns of environmental destruction brought Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth into the picture for violations of environmental wellness; these organizations then mounted their own PR campaign to “promote a global boycott of Shell.” The Ogoni campaign had the material consequence of shutting down many oil wells in the region, but additionally the theoretical consequence opening “new frontier of public relations practice that was expected to respond to this changing societal and business environment.” Again, the focus for the authors is not on Shell Oil information management, but on the ways indigenous actions challenged how we think about PR (Ibraheem, Ogwezzy-Ndisika, & Akanni, p. 196-200).

While Chapter 3 will explore in more detail the relationship between rights to self-determination and land use, what is of interest currently is that these actions from an Indigenous community had “severe implications” for PR practice. Ibraheem, Ogwezzy-Ndisika, and Akanni go on to argue that nearly a decade later, when Shell Oil was able to resume operations in the Niger Delta, it was forced to introduce “a new way of working with the other communities...through what it called the Global Memorandum of Understanding.” The memorandum put greater emphasis on “transparent and accountable processes, regular communication with the grassroots, sustainability, and conflict prevention.” While this effort has “yet to produce definitive results,” it is still undeniable that the level of engagement engendered

by the indigenous campaign signaled to MNCs like Shell that their communication would have to “account over issues that ordinarily did not fall within their responsibilities in decades past.” Attending to the historical and indigenous milieu of Nigeria changes the perspective of PR theory development, and highlights that activist communication yields a multitude of consequences. Camp Blaz as a case study, then, can be guided by the milieu of being Chamorro in Guåhan to deepen insights regarding PR’s role in articulating or antagonizing environmental narratives.

Though her work is not entirely devoted to Indigenous communities, Erica Ciszek (2017) is another scholar who might help demonstrate how indigeneity in PR literature can expand humanist perspectives. She draws similar conclusions to those discussed previously regarding how activists engage in strategic communication, with or without the more formal training PR practitioners often have, to “challenge and redefine cultural discourses.” She engages in a productive but relatively underdeveloped space between scholarship on “communication for development and social change (CDSC)” and PR scholarship, arguing that activists are “cultural intermediaries” in spaces of shared meaning-making. More expansively, activists “make, remake, subvert, communicate, and circulate cultural identities, representations, and imaginations” in their communication efforts, and “produce discourses to influence how publics think, feel, and act within a specific context.” Ciszek’s work maps out strategic communication as nonlinear and non-functionalist (as mentioned in Chapter 1), wherein “activism is a relational process, focused on making connections between cultural components” (p. 702-714).

For Dutta and Elers (2020), turning to indigenous approaches for PR theory and practice manifests as the suggestion that dialogue can be the “instrument for incorporating cultural difference into organizational practice” such that “cultural sensitivity” is part of shaping an

organization's two-way communication. Using the communication landscape of India, they first argue that the growth of mining capitalism in the country relies on "the twin tools of public-private engagement and state-sponsored police-military violence" to acquire Indigenous land under pretexts of "indigenous development." In the example provided, a company tasked with building a new mining project in land home to Indigenous Dongria Kondh started with projects like building schools and health facilities, bringing in experts and NGOs to give the impression of "bottom-up development." The perspective of the projects as inherently good and desirable went hand-in-hand with the supposedly grassroots-driven structure of development, and both were then leveraged as passable communication engagement with the community. However, authors posit that without actually making space for indigenous voices in "determining whether the refinery and the mining operations are meaningful to the lived experiences of the community" in the first place, communication activities were not truly engagement (p. 1-4).

Relatedly, and parallel to some of the conditions of the forthcoming case study, the state and corporate language obfuscates the incongruity between supposed engagement and the community's non-existent role "in the decision-making process leading to the land grab" (Dutta & Elers, 2020, p. 3). Dutta and Elers argue that the legislation in the constitution of India intended to uphold Indigenous sovereignty was actually violated, as the government "was going to compulsorily acquire land for the refinery project" either way. There were plans to compensate those who lost their homes, yet those who did not own land but "whose livelihoods were going to be affected" by the various projects were not notified and essentially erased "from spaces of recognition" (p. 3-4).

It is here that Dutta and Elers turn to scholarship from Aotearoa, a turn towards indigeneity as an analytic in PR scholarship, as "struggles for Māori sovereignty (tino

rangatiratanga)” constitute “one of the strongest threads of decolonizing knowledge production.” They use “Kaupapa Māori protocols...that challenge the power inequalities inherent in the colonial approach to engagement as a utilitarian tool” to build a decolonial framework of analysis. Māori worldviews that anchor this framework include values such as tino rangatiratanga, (self-determination), taonga tuku iho (cultural aspirations), and whānau (the extended family). Applied to the Dongria Kondh, Kaupapa Māori highlights how “communicative infrastructures” that operated under the guise of engagement actually limited indigenous self-determination, and “ownership of dialogic processes” within these infrastructures did not account for extended social relations (p. 6). As one of many islands connected to Guåhan in Oceania also asserting self-determination and cultural persistence, drawing insights from Aotearoan values as a means of critique holds decolonial potential for the critique PR communication related to Camp Blaz.

Implications and Limitations

Though these scholars are not the only ones working to diversify PR theory and practice, with critical attention to indigeneity and expansive understandings of Indigenous voices, their presence here engenders certain conclusions. In centering an Indigenous activism campaign as influential for historicizing PR, and consequential for the future of PR practice, Ibraheem, Ogwezzy-Ndisika, and Akanni (2014) help demonstrate the importance of characterizing communication as practices of persistence rather than strictly resistance. Relatedly, Ciszek (2017) points to how this view of activist communication specifically for social change is a culturally embedded process, where PR might - despite what proscriptive or functionalist views tend to suggest - take on a variety of purposes and definitions, carried out in a variety of actions by a variety of identities. Dutta and Elers (2020) build on this, emphasizing that anti-coloniality

in PR requires interrogating issues of ownership of voice in physical spaces and infrastructural processes. They therefore propose use of the values of Kaupapa Māori, which stands as an example of how we might discuss Chamorro activist communication as grounded in Chamorro values and ergo circumventual of neocolonialism.

However, this brings the discussion to an important limitation, as endeavors to incorporate indigeneity “into mainstream colonial structures” can counterproductively promote “hegemonic structures [that] turn into performances of cultural sensitivity that perpetuate neocolonialism” (Dutta & Elers, 2020, p. 5). In Dutta and Elers’s example of such “dangers of domestication,” Māori values such as “‘tino rangatiratanga’ (absolute sovereignty) and ‘wairua’ (spirit/soul)” were used to talk about a prison, itself a neocolonial institution where “Māori comprise more than half of the prison population yet only 14% of the general population” (Dutta & Elers, 2020, p. 5). Cultural concepts were a communicative tool the state leveraged for social control. These contributions in mind, the case study at hand will work to refuse the idea that Chamorro activists hold “the position of the other” (Neitch, 2019, p. 438), instead centering their efforts as legitimate and ongoing communication of creativity, survivance, adaptation, and desires that might be in fluctuating stages of contestation, sometimes across communication structures that also work at the behest of the state.

Island Is Land, But More

“Indigenous” either as an identity or source of analytical thinking is often beholden to the “connotation it has of connection to place,” strictly in the geographical, land-based sense (Ingersoll, 201, p. 32). In conducting research in Oceania, it is important to recognize that water is sometimes the opposite of land, but it is not *only* this. “Water,” Karin Amimoto Ingersoll

(2016) notes, “is multistructural as a formless phenomenon, yet it never loses its identity” (p. 16). What is therefore of greater interest than comparing land and sea is basing current work in the multistructural, connective space water analytics and ways of knowing have to offer.

Island Studies

Study of islands and the waters that connect them are not new, but nonetheless replete with opportunities for growth. James Randall (2020) evaluates several types of institutions “practicing ‘island studies.’” These include international organizations, (e.g. Alliance of Small Island States, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, and the European Small Islands Federation or network) which work towards the “broader overarching goal of improving the well-being of islanders within their jurisdictions” through activities like lobbying and research; research centers and institutes that function similar to “think tanks,” considering particular environmental issues and policies at stake for island wellbeing; and scholar communities who are not part of “formal administrative units” who nurture their own professional connections in the interest of advancing the various goals of islanders through more grassroots efforts (p. 49-52). Within academia, Randall notes that the number of degree programs devoted to island studies is relatively disproportionate to the 600 million people who live across the world’s islands. Ayano Ginoza (2020) echoes this sentiment. She opens the collection of interdisciplinary scholarship on island studies that includes Randall’s work with the fact that the Research Institute for Islands and Sustainability (RIIS) is “only center in the areas of humanities and social sciences at the University of the Ryukyus that focuses on island research” despite the university’s proximity to and influence from the Pacific ocean (Ginoza, p. 1). Still, Ginoza points out that the name of the

RIIS itself, a rename for what was previously known as the International Institute for Okinawan Studies, indicates an “island turn” at the university.

Contributing to the breadth of issues, capabilities, and geographical locations these various institutions or organizations cover incurs particular demands. For example, there are particular linguistic complications and consequences inherent to Oceania as a site or subject. Randall himself notes that his overview of island studies sites focuses on English speakers, leaving out work that uses languages local to islands, or international work that does not exist in English. Ginoza considers these linguistic dimensions through what she calls the “heterolingual address” (p. 3), an attitude that eschews translation tropes and regimes. Islands are often sites of hybridity, especially for languages; Guåhan is home to people who speak English, CHamoru (that incorporates Spanish idiosyncrasies, such as spelling CHamoru as “Chamorro”), Tagalog, as well as people who can understand but may not conversationally speak more than one of these languages. Translating is often assumed to be an act akin to building a linguistic bridge, a politically and socially neutral act towards an inanimate structure. Heterolingual address rejects this. Being “aware of the sociality a translation may produce” (p. 4) and cognizant of the fact that translating is a performance is important when looking at PR messages that do not accommodate non-English speakers, or conducting a study in only one language.

Island studies and ocean literacy also require awareness of the gendered relationship that connects islands to mainlands. Ronni Alexander (2020) describes how small islands have historically been subject to “feminized othering” through which they are rendered as “unimportant, isolated, unable to manage their own affairs and expendable” (p. 17). Ginoza (2020) provides support here as well, noting that the “interrelated discourses between islands and gender” are both identities beholden to “dichotomies and hierarchical relationalities,” where

islands are the *other* to a mainland or continent, and femininity is the *other* to masculinity (p. 11). Linkages that then emerge from these hegemonic stances are able to “legitimize, normalize, and perpetuate colonial practices” (Alexandar, 2020, p. 19-21). This is particularly relevant for Guåhan, as an island subject to militarization that is continually articulating the “expendable” nature of its human and nonhuman resources.

Seascape Epistemology

As stated in Chapter 1, there are inherent decolonial underpinnings here, due in part to the commitments of environmental justice. More specifically, there is a particular kind of decoloniality that engaging in research on an island offers, especially when we consider Karin Ingersoll’s (2016) arguments for turning to the ocean as a way of knowing. She begins with the argument that he‘e nalu (surfing), lawai‘a (fishing), hoe wa‘a (canoe paddling), and ho‘okele (navigating) are all ways the Kānaka Maoli of Hawai‘i have for being in the ocean, each skill requiring a literacy carried in the body. They involve a genealogical connection to those who practiced these activities before, an understanding of how winds and currents are connected in a given moment, and they create particular realities that empower Kānaka Maoli. To employ seascape epistemology, then, is to accept that ways of coming to knowledge, as well as generating and challenging knowledge, are “fluid, multiple, and complex” (p. 16).

Theoretical, Political, Environmental Significance

Coming to knowledge through the sea is unavoidably an attempt to order the world in one capacity or another. However this epistemological intervention is different because it insists that the “boundaries are never complete” and can allow “for individual interpretation and adjustment within the continually changing and growing space and time” where knowledge is being created

or challenged (Ingersoll, 2016, p. 94). This is suitable for the current project, as qualitative research in general continues to push against paradigms of the first half of the 20th century. Therein, a “lionized” field worker was articulated with the “authority to tell stories of the other” by “offering valid, reliable, and objective interpretations” that align with “positivist, behavioral, totalizing approaches to the human disciplines” (Denizen & Lincoln, 2005, p. 14-20). Though not directly built upon these pushes, seascape epistemology nonetheless encourages counterproductions of “bodies of scholarship in a colonial reality that has rendered Native Hawaiian knowledge ‘cultural’ rather than intellectual or academic” (Ingersoll, 2016, p. 5).

This then has important political ripples. There is a tendency, especially in policy making, to build on knowledge in “narrowly constructed, technocratic, and dehistoricized ways” (Curnow & Helferty, 2018, p. 148) that therefore uphold the capitalist, neocolonial status quo and logics that separate person from community, and community from lived place. Where the “industrial world remains preoccupied with the immediate and potentially negative economic implications” of practices such as resource extraction, seascape epistemology can be a way of thinking through “the long-term economic, political, social, cultural, and human costs” (Ingersoll, 2016, p. 96). This harkens back to exploration of articulation theory conducted in Chapter 1, such that the ocean as a source of knowledge and turbulent yet bountiful reality construction is a source of dis- and re-articulation for the case study’s linkages between elements. Furthermore, seascape epistemology lends itself to the holistic potential of policies borne out of environmental justice discussed in Chapter 3, also focused on more than just the economic implications of environmental degradation. In any case, a seascape approach to PR activities related to interacting with a key public’s multifaceted sense of identity demands the ability to maneuver “Western institutions of statehood, capitalism, and ecologically challenging development” (p. 3)

with the same awareness and dexterity one might employ when maneuvering the changing conditions of the ocean.

Relatedly, Ingersoll explores how this approach to knowledge eschews a limiting dichotomy of the human-natural environment relationship. On the one hand is “nature holism” where humans have a “symbolic place in what is perceived as an enchanted and providential natural world” that is controlled by an unknown power; this “ambiguity and uncertainty” concerning how to relate to nonhuman elements “leads to skepticism and distance” (p. 97). On the other hand is “environmental management,” where the natural world is “a problem susceptible to rational control” through Enlightenment-inspired frames of having and sharing knowledge (“rational measuring, controlling, and ordering of the wilderness”) (p. 97). Rather than choosing between either of these dichotomous options, the relationship between humans and the natural environment in seascape epistemology acknowledges the “fluid connections between the self and the natural world” (p. 96). Discussed more in the next section, and more specific to Chamorro identities in the next chapter, this poses challenges to PR activities related to identifying a public, as well as assessing its needs.

Implications and Limitations for PR

Incorporating indigeneity as a way to expand PR theory and practice, specifically from the perspective of the ocean as a source of knowledge, has key considerations. In addition to the examples of PR literature intersecting with indigeneity discussed above, Larissa Carneiro and Melissa A. Johnson (2015) offer an example of how PR research can push against fixivity in temporal, social, and cultural spaces. They study U.S.-based ethnic museum websites to draw conclusions about how PR practitioners foster relationships between cultural institutions and important stakeholders. Namely, Carneiro and Johnson demonstrate that practitioners are cultural

intermediaries who use websites to construct identities that are not static but in a constant process of adaptation according to different contexts. Across 43 websites, two types of messages regarding collective memory and identity emerge: the *ethnic past* and the *ethnic now*. The “ethnic past” websites “act as repositories of an imagined and idealized past where forebears lived in vital harmony with community, nature, folkways, and simple lifestyles,” and are “predominantly marked by European ethnic roots (with the exception of one Latin museum).” Websites that fall into the “ethnic now” category represent “mostly Latin and Asian groups,” where “stereotypical clichés to describe ethnic identity” are still present, rather than being “used to fix the group in the past,” they “celebrate its ongoing presence in contemporary life and social affairs.”

This delineation is certainly telling when it comes to the relevance of Arvin’s observations regarding coloniality, raciality, and indigeneity as linked social processes, where the latter type of message also reinforces the value of persistence rhetoric in PR communication (p. 171-174). Additionally, one implication for PR theory involves its potential ability to open spaces that explore “new and always evolving hybrid American identity” (Carneiro & Johnson, 2015, p. 176), where practitioners are intermediaries between indigenous cultural expression and other, more general spaces of communication, attending to this identity hybridity. For Chamorro identities in Guåhan, there are constant shifts in context and therefore in meanings for being Chamorro, more than Chamorro, and/or other than Chamorro. Accounting for these ambiguities in communication requires tolerance for mutability in the processes behind creating PR messages, as well as the messages themselves. How do PR mechanisms currently account for multi-sited identities among their publics, the ways in which aspects of identity ebb and flow, and ways in which messages might prioritize one aspect over another? A second, related

implication for PR theory is offered by seascape epistemology and indigeneity as an analytic. Namely, the porousness and pliability of how a key public views its place in the natural world offers the challenge to theorize different stakeholder categories that move beyond humans as isolated, singular, countable entities.

While the sea as a source for experiencing, structuring, and challenging knowledge is fruitful, it is important to note that the sea, like methodological arguments and the research they beget, can neither be wholly good nor wholly bad. The sea is where people of Oceania “cleanse, dance, play, train, and die,” but it is also the means by which countries like Britain, France, Spain, Germany, the United States, and Canada enacted their imperial conquests, sending “missionaries, foreign merchants, whale fisheries,” and - especially for Guåhan - militaries as tangible means to execute colonial ends. The sea is “the point from which we [Kānaka Maoli] have always leapt off, physically and philosophically, into our pasts and our futures,” but it also brings tsunamis and fatal currents (Ingersoll, 2016). What is more, not all Indigenous people of Oceania harbor the same sentiments or passions regarding the sea, have the same genealogical literacies, or embody these literacies in the same way. Just as indigeneity is not a panacea for disrupting raciality and coloniality, the ocean is not a universally applicable and productive space of knowing and being.

Conclusion: Water Has Surface Tension, Which Can Be Broken

We have come to understand that indigeneity is a way to express personhood, but it is also more than this identity category. It is a critical lens through which we might disrupt (or, unlink the elements of...) the surface tension held by capitalist and neocolonial discourses in society as a whole, as well as their manifestations in PR practice and research. Incorporating

indigeneity, then, is not simply a matter of studying an Indigenous community as a stakeholder, but instead a challenge to ways PR activities might reproduce neocolonial biases and rely on communication structures largely owned by those who hold social, economic, and political power (the inception and historic patterns of these reproductions is explored more in the next chapter, as well as in the case study's analysis).

In breaking this surface tension, we connect with the depth of knowledge long held by Indigenous communities and establish that *persistence* is a core consideration for how we explore indigenous meaning-making constructed by and with PR messages. Whether as an identity or as an analytic, communication work adjacent to indigeneity must not relegate it to always existing in the past, or write it as always the “other” to Western hegemony and exploitive projects. The PR activities of Guåhan will therefore be examined with an eye toward how they embody, explore, and express Chamorro values that persist through the many, varied colonial iterations that contribute to the island's current reality. They stand as “self-asserting and self-affirming” (Neitch, 2019, p. 436) behaviors that express a continuance *capable* of responding to current events without being wholly *constituted* by those events.

We also recognize that land-based ontologies and epistemologies cannot directly transpose onto the aspirations and challenges of ocean-based ones. As with indigenous studies of any land mass, studies of Oceania have complex moments of intersection and falling away, resultant from the ways people's cultures and histories converge while simultaneously holding their distinctness, much like the mixing of saltwater and freshwater does not result in diluted salt water, but instead becomes brackish water. Seascape epistemology, then, accounts for the demand Ginoza reminds us is invoked when studying ocean indigeneity: “identity and islandness are not a priori categories but are open to the process of redefinition and rearticulating” and

therefore are applied in ways that are aware of “identity’s problems, contradictions, paradoxes, pain, and tensions” (2020, p. 12). This is especially helpful for PR activities, which often rely on identifying publics or setting goals in ways that rely on dichotomous measures of inclusion or exclusion.

As a means of addressing this, the current work theorizes an intervention that builds on some of the more abstract, metacognitive aspects at the intersection of indigeneity and PR. Namely, many Indigenous cultures have a relationship to place that views the natural environment as an entity that must be respected, encompassing its own powerful forces and systems of balance. When it comes to identifying publics, how does interacting with an indigenous public additionally account for the environment as a complex entity unto itself? In other words, how may PR be failing to account for non-human aspects -- the water, the species of animals, the weather patterns -- as holding places (at least to the Indigenous people) that are roughly equivalent to fellow stakeholders of, for example, military installations in Guåhan? In looking forward to Chapter 3, Dutta and Elers (2020) provided an example of state-corporate messages leveraging the appearance of engagement communication and “development” projects to justify “erasures of participation.” A key concept that emerges when thinking through decolonial possibilities in PR is that of *consent*. Where the Dongria Kondh of India were expected to accept the construction of institutions for health and education in place of giving their explicit consent to corporate mining operations, the issue at the heart of the matter is that this Indigenous population did not consent to mining operations in the first place. Up against logics of extraction and capitalist accumulation, the growing “recognition of global threats to climate change” creates a tension that is crucially “accompanied by the acknowledgment of Indigenous livelihoods brought about through ongoing Indigenous activism” (Dutta & Elers,

2020, p. 3). Thus, the next chapter will interrogate how PR activities might be used to approximate consent, especially from Indigenous communities in regards to their land, and therefore their sense of self and community.

CHAPTER 3: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, MILITARIZATION, AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Introduction

In the abstract, this project is motivated by the determination to push PR literature towards holistic, equitable perspectives of the natural environment. Concretely, then, this project uses the case of Camp Blaz to ask questions about who is involved in the communication landscape of Guåhan, and how their exertions amount to consequential articulations and re-articulations of the natural environment. The previous chapter was therefore built on the premise that forthcoming explorations must be well-versed in issues of indigeneity concurrent to PR activities. The current chapter will subsequently argue that environmental justice is a particularly appropriate space in which to continue developing a capable, dynamic analytical apparatus. Namely, justice perspectives helpfully link environmental issues (e.g. the use of land on Guåhan) with social issues (e.g. messages to, from, or about Indigenous communities) and political issues (e.g. militarization and independence). In defense of this, the section immediately following this introduction arrives at the logic that undergirds environmental justice, and how it generates important multivocal, multi-sited, and decolonial proclivities. The first subsection therein will problematize how PR has historically (and *unjustly*) been employed to render a functionalist articulation of the environment, followed by a second subsection that will lean on the explanatory potential that *sovereignty* holds for Chamorro communication of place and of environmentalism.

Next, the chapter will posit that militarization is a global process that is relevant to general conversations about justice. This argument will be mounted in part because the

warmaking activities and the innumerable harms they perpetrate on the natural environment proliferate consequences that are often felt most viscerally by BIPOC and poorer communities. Militarization is also necessary to discuss in this specific conversation about justice because the U.S. military in particular is guilty of injustices for Chamorro people. It should be noted that discussions of U.S. “safety-making” in Oceania and its role as a foundational stakeholder in Guåhan’s communication landscape do not take place until Chapter 4. However, the current chapter will note how the experiences of the Standing Rock Water Protectors are a precursory example of the U.S. military interactions with Indigenous communities and their lands. The concluding section then rounds out the possibilities Camp Blaz as a communication case study holds for PR and environmental justice. Specifically, the case can offer insights on how PR activities in Guåhan employ articulations that help overcome the field’s problematic history of injustice, or how their articulations remain beholden to these traditions of serving power centers. Additionally, as discussed in the introductory chapter, it is possible that PR activities are articulating both simultaneously.

PR and the Environment: Legacies of Manipulation

Melissa Aronczyk (2018) has traced the “twin evolution of American environmentalism and the public relations industry” (p. 838) in such a way as to suggest that speaking of the history of one is necessarily implicating the history of the other. She argues that the “culturally important ways...[PR] functioned to transform the meaning of the environment in the American mind” can be roughly split into three phases (p. 839). In the first phase (1948-1973), post-WWII corporate America was addressing public anxiety over rail, steel, and coal industry’s size and power, initially using PR as the “feminine’ face of the corporation’s ‘masculine’ ethos of production and

independence” (p. 840). Corporations employed PR at a “scale and scope” that was hitherto “unprecedented,” articulating stances around the necessary “tradeoff between economic and environmental needs,” pitting the two types of needs as mutually exclusive, and at odds with each other (p. 844-845). Burton St. John (2021) also substantiates this history of “manufacturing organizations, fossil fuel companies, and business trade organizations embarking on public relations campaigns,” additionally pointing out how industry campaigns were “asserting individuals and business were the optimal nexus for pursuing a destiny of fulfillment possible only through capitalism” (p. 9).

Though not placed directly into this timeline, Kevin DeLuca’s (1999) discussion of articulation theory does bring in an “example from environmental politics” that is pertinent for Aronczyk’s argument that “American environmentalism is deeply shaped by the public relations industry” (p. 840). DeLuca takes up a “discursive perspective” to toxic waste sites, which then sets aside rationalist debates over whether or not the nature of the toxic waste itself is material, and instead focuses on how it functions as a “site for political struggle” in the articulations/disarticulations that make the toxic waste meaningful in structuring reality (DeLuca, 1999, p. 342). In confirmation of what Aronczyk is suggesting, sensibilities handed down from the Industrial era – which linked together the elements of capital accumulation, efficiency, technological advancement, and human labor – articulate toxic waste sites as “the normalized cost of economic growth and the people affected need to sacrifice for the common good” (p. 342). This comportment to a utilitarian view of land and people as nonautonomous resources that should be used for good, where good “is whatever brings the greatest happiness to the greatest number of people” (Palenchar & Heath, 2006, p. 5), problematically removes itself from the interrogations of raciality and coloniality. For example, this articulation fails to address how

racism plays a role in value judgements. The later section on environmental justice delves into how this toxic waste site example becomes subject to an antagonism that accounts for elements of race; as a result, environmental activists are able to disarticulate these dominant linkages.

Aronczyk's second phase grows out of but also alongside the first (1969-1979) phase, further invoking the sense of technological futurism, especially where corporations tried to "scientize" public relations" (p. 849). Simultaneous to this timeline, Palenchar and Heath (2006) trace the evolution of *risk communication* as a subdiscipline of PR, officially termed in 1984, but arguably practiced out of necessity in the 1980s with the relevance of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), its various organizations, branches, and goals. Palenchar and Heath mark the first of three eras of risk communication beginning in the mid-1970s, when the prevailing view was "that risk estimates should be expressed quantitatively," through tools such as comparative estimates. This approach was limited in both "ethical and strategic effectiveness" (p. 4) as such one-way transfers of information are unable to account for public distrust, the lived experiences of stakeholders, the values associated with risk tolerance, and the level of comprehension of technical reports readily achieved. In this way, Palenchar and Heath appear to support Aronczyk's position that early PR practices concerning risk were mutually informed by increased environmental awareness, and were also focused on quantitative metrics of success at this time. At least, Aronczyk posits an explanation of her "phase two" that is pursuant to some qualities noted in this "era one" of risk communication. However, her perspective of corporations is less innocuous in that she states risk-benefit analyses were often employed "to narrow and weaken environmental politics by forcing cost-centered analyses of pollution control" (p. 850). It is also in this phase that corporations, responding to environmental activist pressures on policy makers, came to the realization that defensive responses to activists were insufficient.

This observation made in “phase two” is also present in how Palenchar and Heath’s set up there “era two” of risk communication, which began in 1985 with “the realization that risk messages should be persuasive” and attempt “to transform and lower people's risk estimations and thus increase their support of industry” (p. 4). Palenchar and Heath argue that, from the perspective of risk communication development, this phase was valuable because it “took into account people’s perceptions about risk,” and was therefore the launching point for “the concept of community dialogue among stakeholders” (p. 4). Here again, Aronczyk agrees to the extent that corporations indeed moved away from purely defensive strategies to deal with environmental activists, but views their intent more negatively. Specifically, the focus of her third phase of PR and environmental developments (1986-1991) is how corporations became advocates for their own interests, employing “long-term strategic planning” to implicate themselves as entities with a voice in matters of policy and regulation. They therefore started using PR tools to “predict, identify, and control issues in the ‘external environment’ so as to maintain the peak performance of the corporate system” (p. 837-853).

As an example, Aronczyk traces how the Business Council on Sustainable Development formed to proactively develop a “tightly organized and coherent response to the environmental issues” on behalf of larger political bodies; the formation of this organization was approved by the United Nations Conference for Environmental Development (UNCED) in the runup to the 1992 meeting. The Business Council subsequently went to work preparing “a series of publications, codes of conducts, and a Business Charter for proactive environmental management” from their internal perspective, and with their own needs in mind. These efforts were formalized at the World Industry Conference on Environmental Management in 1991, so by the time UNCED was held a year later, organizers had already seen and accepted the suggested

guidelines. Business sectors had successfully iterated themselves as necessary to “public deliberation and policy” in a closed-loop process, and “became an authoritative social and political technology” that cemented the role of business “in interpreting the possibility and limits of environmentalism” (p. 840). Said another way, in anticipating external issues rather than reacting to them, business entities were able to articulate themselves as victims of problems inevitable to the conditions of modern living, and therefore also the most capable source of solutions for these problems. This allowed them to circumvent any external regulatory barriers and formulate plans internally.

Unsurprisingly, this sets the stage for Palenchar and Heath’s “era three” as a time for recognizing that “communication should not solely focus on persuasive techniques because there [was] a profound lack of trust, uncertainty, and lack of control and risk issues.” Beginning in the mid-1990s and continuing into their work’s publication (2006), Palenchar and Heath argue that emphasis should be placed on stakeholder group’s “social interrelations” and resultant actions related to risk. They posit that current risk communication occurs among “complex social relations operating within community infrastructures where multiple voices weigh in from all sides of contestable issues of fact, values and policy” (p. 4-5), a perspective that relies on rhetorical roots of ethical standards and consensus through quality debate.

The implications this literature has can be framed from a temporally cyclical perspective, as discussing the past of PR influences how we are able to frame the future. Aronczyk’s arguments, as well as Palenchar and Heath’s, undeniably establish that there is a historical basis for having conversations about climate change from the perspective of PR. In detailing how corporations used PR tools to leverage control over environmental narratives for capitalist gains, this literature also points to centering Indigenous experiences and communication as a fruitful

next step for building on this critique. For example, Chapter 2 delineates Ibraheem, Ogwezzy-Ndisika, and Akanni's (2014) argument for historicizing PR activities of Nigeria from the perspective of the Ogoni people of the Niger Delta, as this places "a higher premium on the effects of activism" on social and economic stages (p. 202). Tracking the past consequences of an Ogoni campaign for their rights, authors demonstrated that Indigenous activism has constructed a future where multinational companies are "no longer able to focus on profit alone," and must "display adherence to procedures that emphasize respect for human rights in their operations" in a way that is "genuine" (p. 203).

Furthermore, Dutta and Elers (2020) also emphasize centering Indigenous voices to counteract misleading claims of engagement. Namely, the Māori people of Aotearoa have lived experiences based in values of sovereignty and relationality, which can create a future of communication similarly based in "kaupapa Māori protocols" that include "micro-practices of communication" that resist dominant ones. For example, protocols involve treating separate *iwis* as sovereign entities with valid contributions to public discourse, rather than as a homogenous group of *others* to non-native or non-Indigenous residents of Aotearoa. Another example is holding public forums in physical and emotional spaces that respect the role of *whānau* (the extended family) in decision making, that therefore "challenge the power inequalities inherent in the colonial approach" to communication (p. 4-6).

In continuing, these examples support efforts to overcome PR's history as supporting industry and logics of capital expansion against environmental interests. They also support this project's overall argument that Indigenous communities are key to productively including PR in discourses of environmental wellbeing. Namely, PR theory can help center Indigenous voices in these discourses, as well as critique their practices of exclusion or their neocolonial logics. The

next section will therefore discuss how the environmental justice movement of mainland U.S. in the 1990s was always already multi-vocal and anti-colonial. These principles in mind, we can situate Chamorro sovereignty as integral to the past, present, and – arguably, most importantly – the future of environmental stories communicated in Guåhan.

Environmental Justice: Legacies of Inclusion

Though awareness of environmental degradation often asserts that the subsequent disasters it begets are “a universal threat,” Leilani Nishime and Kim D. Hester Williams (2018) bring to the fore the fact that their “effects are most profoundly felt by poor people and people of color” (p. 6). Accepting this, environmental justice can be described as an ongoing movement that interrogates how economic, social, and political structures of power produce ideological and material conditions that marginalize certain communities, specifically as a function of environmental damage. It is a perspective of current and future realities rooted in the ways social and political rights are inextricable from environmental protections.

While the goals of mainstream environmental efforts and those of environmental justice are not inherently in conflict (Wenz, 2007), it is important to recognize how mainstream environmentalism’s articulations set the stage for legislative approaches that were not holistic or long-lasting, but are still relevant in policy today. Namely, the notions of preservation and conservation popular in the early to mid 20th century constructed the natural environment as something “out there,” reinforcing a separation between lived spaces and natural ones, as well as the separation of these natural spaces from humans in the name of protection of the former from the latter. As environmental awareness and logics of protection continued to evolve, shaped by the discourse Aronczyk outlined above, Congressional approaches to the environment in 1967

resulted in “notable failure” (Rogers, 1990). The “unsatisfactory” nature of this initial push for legal environmental provisions, “coupled with the public pressures” that the first “Earth Day movement” created, eventually resulted in the watershed legislation of the 1970s (Rogers, 1990). However, the problem of relying on the very systems of power that *precipitated the issues* in the first place to also be the same systems that *produce solutions* later came to light in Warren County, North Carolina. As a “predominantly low-income African American community,” Warren County residents were exposed to PCBs by companies skirting toxic waste disposal regulations, with horrific human and environmental health consequences that continue to effect the area’s development. The resultant “landmark struggles of poor, often rural, African American communities against some of the world’s largest corporations and unresponsive government agencies” during the 1980s (Roberts, 2007, p. 285) gave rise to the notion of environmental racism, and are “generally hailed as the birth of the environmental justice movement” (Gilio-Whitaker, 2019, p. 16).

Seminal formalizations of these ideas were articulated at the First People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit in the 1990s, wherein attendees drafted and adopted 17 principles of environmental justice. In the interest of genuinely engaging communities economically, racially, and politically disenfranchised by the same systems causing environmental harms, the principles open first with a conscious effort to “re-establish our spiritual interdependence to the sacredness of our Mother Earth” (First national people of color, 1991, p. 30). This demonstrates how the justice movement was always aligned with precepts of Indigenous epistemology, and how its “inclusion for Indigenous concerns” inherently forces critical examination of previous legislation (Gilio-Whitaker, 2019, p. 18). The principles therefore point towards the consequences of racialized iterations of the environment (irrespective

of intentionality), open up the multifaceted renderings of what it means to address wellbeing in a globalized and complex world, and deliberately hold space for varied epistemological and cosmological approaches to those renderings.

For the current project, and the other contemporary examples of decoloniality it builds on, briefly tracing the development of the principles emphasizes the value of “framing environmental justice in terms of colonial histories and oppressive political domination” (Gilio-Whitaker, 2019, p. 18). It recognizes that not only are the systems causing these issues across human and nonhuman spaces, but are doing so (and have been doing so) in ways that disproportionately harm nonwhite, non-affluent communities. Contrarily, early iterations of “what we would understand as [mainstream] environmentalism” today were originally situated in “racialized colonial logics that use environmental discourses as a ruse for the expansion of capital, the dispossession of Indigenous peoples, and the exploitation of slaves and workers” (Curnow & Helferty, 2018, p. 147). As this movement has developed, it has attempted to make changes to “meet the critiques” related to the fact that “solidarity [was] not a foundational element” for its origins (Curnow & Helferty, 2018, p. 150). However, these changes often mean the mainstream movement goes as far as articulating itself as post-racial rather than acknowledging that “race is inextricable from our understanding of ecology, and vice versa” (Nishime & Hester Williams, 2018, p. 4). Apart from race being an inherent element of environmentally just articulations, claims to post-raciality do not redress the mainstream movement’s history of working “in the interests of *wealthy* white people” (Allen, Daro, & Holland, 2007, p. 107, emphasis added). Of note, these differences are not meant to map an insurmountable faultline between environmental justice and mainstream environmentalism, especially if that faultline overly romanticizes the potential of environmental justice. In actuality,

Allen, Daro, and Holland (2007) note that justice activists largely support movements such as recycling as long as “these practices do not demand forfeiting core environmental justice positions that may be recognized as things that black people and poor people have been doing for a long time” (p. 120).

The main point for PR literature, then, is that theory and practice must focus on articulations capable of “attacking the fundamental processes that produced the problems in the first place” (Faber, 2007, p. 145). It is important that they resist mainstream tendencies to decenter race and economic status if they are to be holistic and long-lasting (unlike the initial legislative articulations of the late 1960s and early 1970s), and instead center Indigenous voices. Environmental justice and its legacies of deliberate and ardent inclusion is an important space through which PR theory can accomplish these goals.

Articulating Environmentalism: Indigenous Sense of Place

To reiterate, the current chapter is constituted by the assertion shared by both land and ocean based Indigenous communities, scholars, and traditions: sovereignty is intrinsically linked to a sense of place. Within scholarship highlighted in Chapter 2, we find that Dutta and Elers’s (2020) reliance on the decolonial potential Kaupapa Māori holds for communication necessarily includes the statement that “the fundamental Indigenous struggle to retain sovereignty is also a struggle for retaining land” (p. 6). Kanaka scholar Ingersoll (2016) also notes that assertions of sovereignty are “anchored in place,” remembering that place for islanders is a concept “continually (re)created with the modernization and development of Hawai‘ian bodies, minds, land, and sea” (p. 94). In the interest of adding more nuance to how we might think of sovereignty, as well as adding another island voice to this discourse, we can turn to Māori

scholar Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2017). She iterates the concept of “relationality” as a “historically enduring discursive formation” of person-to -person, -community, and -land interactions that is “grounded in a holistic conception of the inter-connectedness and inter-substantiation between and among all living things and the earth.” Research carried out as relationality work, then, privileges values of “respect, responsibility, generosity, obligation, and reciprocity.” It highlights that sovereignty is constructed in Indigenous spaces full of cultural elements that characterize “land” differently than utilitarian spaces might, and that political attempts to disrupt sovereignty are also actions of environmental injustice.

For Guåhan in particular, PR communication rooted in an indigenous sense of place can mobilize against militarization, routing justice through expressions of sovereignty. Environmental justice, as a decades-old movement, has no shortage of origin stories, each with contextual idiosyncrasies. More expansively then, the environmental justice principles that articulate indigenous linkages between autonomy and stewardship, and the earth as both a physical space and as an entity that transcends that space, offer an opportunity to engage with Chamorro sovereignty. Tracing iterations of Chamorro environmental justice in Guåhan is not about finding the first person who ever recycled or marched against the military build-up, or indeed claiming the inception of environmentally-inclined movements – mainstream or not – can be confined to a single moment. Rather, the current chapter argues that sovereignty is a dynamic concept that recognizes Chamorro people’s particular orientation to place, and thus can in and of itself be a foundation for Guåhan’s story of environmental justice. Its most recent articulations are discussed below.

Chamorros of Guåhan: Sovereignty is Justice

The current section's focus is on establishing how Chamorro assertions of sovereignty via pushes for self-determination constitute an environmental justice specific to Guåhan. As such, related but more detailed discussions of the relationship between the U.S., its military, and the island will take place in Chapter 4. Here, we note that Chamorro writers have marshaled their own set of conceptualizations regarding their Indigenous identities, the value of land spread across the Marianas and connected by the ocean, and how these ideas all mutually reinforce each other (Na'puti, 2019; Santos Perez, 2019). Michael P. Perez (2005), for example, discusses how his complicated identity, wrapped up in "personal and academic marginality and transnationality as a diasporic Chamorro," provides him with insights on how sovereignty is similarly "entangled in a complex web of legitimacy." As such, a key point Perez establishes at the outset of his analysis is that "static modernist notions" of identity and sovereignty are limiting because they broach "traps of colonial discourse" that bind these concepts in fixed spaces "determined by dominant epistemologies, ideologies, and institutions." If we instead accept that identity is "fragmented, fragile, and unstable" (perhaps in the same fluid way Ingersoll's ocean-based epistemology might approach such a concept), so too might sovereignty be untethered from "binary parameters of the nation-state" (p. 170-172).

Chamorro scholar Tiara Na'puti (2014) explains how "U.S. military, political and economic considerations have converged to hold Guåhan in a state of political limbo" (p. 301) for over 100 years. As many additional Chamorro scholars attest, and as the case study will demonstrate, this leaves the island caught in ambiguous, contradictory discourses that link the U.S. constitution to romanticized versions of sovereignty without actually articulating spaces for Chamorro rights to self-determination. Na'puti (1901) traces self-determination movements as

far back as 1901, when “indigenous leaders petitioned to receive political recognition” from the U.S., and advocated for “changes to the [U.S.] Naval government structure for several decades” (p. 302). In the 1940s, Perez posits that “years of festering animosity” between Chamorros and the U.S. military as a source of colonialism culminated with the first civilian-appointed Governor of Guam, and President Truman transferring “administrative control of Guam from the navy to the Department of the Interior.” In the 1950s, the Organic Act of Guam codified “Chamorro drive for U.S. citizenship and... limit[ed] military control.” However, present reflections of these past efforts call to attention how “sovereignty was constructed under the U.S. political framework, rooted in European discourses.” Subsequently, the 1970s – the same time that corporations were formalizing their uses of PR against environmental activists (Aronczyk, 2018) – saw indigenous organizations making progressive pushes for “multi-dimensional” movements that involved “the intelligentsia and Chamorros of lower socioeconomic status.” The activist group Chamoru Nation was subsequently formed in the 1990s – this also parallel with the drafting of the Principles of Environmental Justice – and facilitated marginalized people coalescing around the promotion of “the self-sufficiency of Chamorros as an indigenous people” (p. 174-178). Again, the current argument is that promoting these ideas is inherently part of the island’s history with environmental justice, and locating this history is a means through which we are also articulating the possibilities of the future. “The value of land to contemporary Chamorros,” Perez states, “is emphasized in the context of ancient Chamorro history, cultural continuity, and the ongoing centrality of land to Chamorro culture” (p. 174-178).

In her similar timeline, Na’puti adds that in 1980, the Guam Legislature “established the Commission on Self-Determination” that would later become “the Guam Decolonization Commission” in 1997. The Commission was “tasked with researching and conducting plebiscites

on the three internationally recognized options for self-determination” via political status: statehood inside the U.S., free association with the U.S., or independence from the U.S. (2014, p. 303). Most recently, activist groups such as Independent Guåhan continue to push for political sovereignty, where sovereignty as a persistent power against the U.S. military buildup and the hegemonic discourses it represents continues to articulate a competing, consequential relationship to place.

Importantly, Guåhan is far from the only island dealing with “cultural erosion, land acquisition, and ambiguous political status” (Perez, 200, p. 170). Though there are antagonisms to the U.S.’s ability to impose territorial relations to the “Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, American Samoa, and the Virgin Islands” as well as Guåhan, continued assertions of self-determination remain the “cornerstone of their parallel sovereignty movements” (Perez, 2005, p. 170-184). Chamorro fights for sovereignty in Guåhan are therefore fights for self-determined relations to land, sea, and all nonhuman species of its biomes. These fights for self-determination have implications for other islands and indigenous communities. Said another way, environmental justice, based in sovereignty, ties together the environmental issues of land use and the social issues of territorial relations on a global scale.

Given this, a project examining PR’s role in articulating environmentalism must be attuned to sovereignty as “emanating from [Chamorro] authenticity, multiplicity, and fluidity,” persistent through U.S. state and military emphasis on sovereignty as “politically constructed by those who wield legitimate authority” (Perez, 2005, p. 171). When research questions ask what stories are told about the environment through an organization’s PR communication, they are necessarily asking about power. How does PR communication involve asserting “legitimate authority” to use land in certain ways, who holds this authority, and who is marginalized by it?

Important to Marine Corps Camp Blaz as a case study, questions of marginalization must account for militarization, a source of hegemonic discourses that work against Chamorro sovereignty and therefore environmental justice. The following section therefore looks at how militarization “is a powerful intellectual and ideological tool with the capacity to make the absurd seem ordinary” (Alexander, 2016, p. 871).

Militarization: Legacies of Corrosion

Military buildup is an ongoing process, going beyond war-making logics, which are themselves problematic, and infiltrating “a range of social relations” that make the build up “seem ‘natural’ or ‘normal’” (Alexander, 2020). It includes the “assumed monopoly” state powers hold “over mechanisms of violence” and related constructs of “citizenship, security, and nationality,” as well as the pervasive, hegemonic discourse that articulates “military ideas, behaviors, language, and objects” as common sense (Alexander, 2016, p. 871). It is important to discuss here because the war-making practices the world’s militaries engage in have “devastated human life and the environment in ways once thought only to occur in the realm of natural disasters” (Mitchell & Dower, 2020, p. 1). They therefore play an indelible role in environmental degradation, and not be overlooked in articulations of environmental justice. The global impact of these practices is briefly discussed in the section immediately following. The section after addresses the more specific third reason militarization is relevant to this project: communication used to justify these activities, particularly for the U.S. and its presence in the Pacific Ocean, is part of the historical basis on which PR messages surrounding Camp Blaz have been built and are perpetuated.

Global Militaries: Conflicts of the 20th Century

While the U.S. military will be the focus of this project, it would underestimate the influence of globalization and minimize logics of imperialism to give the impression that the U.S. is the only nation guilty of environmental injustices. Mitchell and Dower (2020) describe how, during the Cold War, the former USSR conducted more than seven hundred nuclear tests that displaced Indigenous communities and contaminated Kazakhstan and the Arctic. In the 1950s, Britain's tests of nuclear weapons in Australia and the Pacific involved setting "safe radiation limits higher for 'primitive people.'" Decades later, France tested "almost two hundred nuclear shots in its colonies of Algeria and French Polynesia." China has also exposed thousands of Muslim Uighurs to radioactivity while testing nuclear weapons in Lop Nur (a northwestern desert region) (Mitchell & Dower, 2020, p. 2).

Japan also has a history of developing weapons of mass destruction during the early to mid 20th century. It is hardly the only country to leave this legacy, but it does help demonstrate the cyclical role race and nationalism play in militarization, as well as set the transnational stage for the build-up in Oceania. During post-WWI peace talks, Japanese leaders sought "international recognition as an imperial power" specifically through racial equality between Western powers and countries of Asia. When the proposal was rejected, Japan "ratcheted up the modernization of its military," and secretly began work on chemical weapons. The island of Okushima became the location of the main weapons programs (with other facilities in multiple prefectures), where scientists successfully developed vomiting agent, lewisite (a blistering agent), and mustard agent. The environmental injustices this research and development cost the natural world included testing on animals, the destruction of marine life by toxic runoff and of red pine trees by "fumes so strong they also corroded windows" of the island's facilities, and the

exposure of employees (1,000 of whom were children ages 13-15) to unsafe conditions. Beyond the island, Japanese occupation of Manchuria, China was “characterized by brutality, corruption, and exploitation of the local population” who was largely considered expendable; by the end of WWII more than a decade later, chemical weapons had been used in China “an estimated two thousand times, resulting in as many as forty thousand military and civilian deaths” (Mitchell & Dower, 2020, p. 10-13)

Communication surrounding these activities can be characterized by its absence, as Japanese officials relied on the Military Secrets Act and the removal of Okushima from maps to keep testing and research a secret, then spent decades denying it had ever used chemical weapons in China (Mitchell & Dower, 2020, p. 10-21). Even after the Tokyo Trials in 2002 reached the “unprecedented” ruling that “the Japanese military had violated both the Hague and Geneva Conventions,” no punishments were actually handed down. The courts ruled that peace treaties signed after the war showed “China had relinquished all such rights” to compensation, again emphasizing the value of legal articulations of rights (p. 28).

The U.S. becomes the next character in the story of Okushima island, continued in the next chapter (which is an effort to characterize the U.S. military’s relationship with Japan and Oceania). Beyond this however, there are still ways to talk about U.S. militarization here on this continent, as well as the communication used to obscure its nefariousness.

U.S. Military: Neocolonial Articulations

Tina Sikka (2008) discusses the articulations used to justify the U.S. ballistic missile defense programs at the conjecture of a post-9/11 world, primarily in the interest of identifying how these articulations render positions of difference as harmful to safety. The first articulation

links the program with national security, where “nation” is a rhetorical composition of social myths, such that “opposition to the missile defense shield is construed as opposition to the protections of America itself.” A related second articulation links the practices of missile defense with the suppression of “terrorists” as the “other” who poses an already and continuously occurring threat; this conflation of warmaking and danger sets up the acceptance that peace “achieved through military might and isolationism” is acceptable, or common sense.

Technological determinism contributes to an additional articulation derived from the discourse: critique of the program is an effort “impede progress and collective security” that only military technology can provide. By extension, a linkage between capitalist engines of progress and “military technological supremacy” form an articulation of the warmaking industry as “the vehicle through which economic dominance can be attained” (p. 125-129).

This is not the first time the U.S. and its military have articulated linkages between safety and the necessity of warmaking. DeLuca (1999) relatedly discusses how the bombing of civilians is a reality that is not up for debate, but that the meaning of these actions could be framed as an antagonism. The fact of these fatalities disrupts “the government’s articulation of the Persian Gulf War as a bloodless high tech operation of liberation against the demon Saddam Hussein” (p. 342). There are also more recent examples of Indigenous communities here on the continent often referred to as North America bearing witness to how the U.S. military has not only failed to practice ethical risk communication Palenchar and Heath imagined, but has actively worked against its tenets. “To be a person of direct Indigenous descent in the U.S. today,” Gilio-Whitaker (2019) argues, “is to have survived a genocide of cataclysmic proportions” (p. 49). While planning for the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline, Energy Transfer Partners and the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers conducted the legally mandated Environmental Impact Statement.

When research from this statement revealed that the pipeline risked poisoning a (largely wealthy and white) suburban neighborhood, plans were diverted through Lakota Nation lands. Thus, “safety” articulations, especially ones evident in U.S. military discourses, tend to exclude certain communities, often on racial or socio-economic bases by virtue of tending towards the inclusion of only white, only economically elite communities.

Thus, critical assessments of military articulations of safety can be levied from a variety of perspectives, especially if one bears in mind the gendered othering of islands and their people, as well as the subsequent articulation of disposability discussed in Chapter 2 (Ginoza, 2020). Specifically, the Camp Blaz case study is a microcosm of the safety and strategy rhetoric through which the U.S. attempts to obscure Guåhan’s people, such that consent is not explicitly contained but instead discursively constituted in the justified exclusion of the Chamorro people and denial of their sovereignty.

Conclusion

We have established that early uses of corporate PR are inexorably tied to 20th century narratives of the environment here in the United States. PR tools were leveraged to control activist antagonisms rather than react to them, eventually engineering a closed loop for business interests where corporations were allowed to be both victims of environmental degradation as well as sources of most capable solutions. This attempted erasure of mainstream environmental movements is not the only example of capitalist logics hegemonically superseding other interests. Namely, environmental justice, articulated by the 17 principles drafted at the Leadership Summit in the early 1990s, recognizes how current structures of power manifest interrelated social, economic, political, and of course environmental issues. In doing so,

environmental justice also centers multifunctional and holistic solutions for these complexities. More importantly for current purposes, this justice movement has also always foregrounded the multivocality of indigenous epistemology, which encompasses a particular sense of place.

It is this sense of place that additionally determines how the current research project frames the notion of consent. Specifically, Chamorro self-determination is an expression of indigenous autonomy, is therefore inherently tied to Guåhan as a physical and spiritual place, and is also inherently tied to environmental justice. How do the organizations of interest in the Camp Blaz case study use PR tools to attempt to obtain or approximate consent for their presence and subsequently their actions? How do organizations use PR messages to accentuate certain perspectives or activities, such that antagonistic perspectives are marginalized, or dissatisfactory activities are backgrounded? Garnering answers to these questions holds important implications for the future of PR scholarship, specifically because giving or obtaining consent is a reflection of power dynamics. These research questions ergo speak to a wider yet more detailed picture of how PR adheres to or challenges power that structures social relations such as self-determination, militarization, indigeneity. A deeper understanding of PR's role in these structures can then be used more broadly to develop effective articulations regarding climate change.

CHAPTER 4: ARTICULATIONS OF GUÅHAN AND THE PACIFIC IN MILITARY SYSTEMS

Introduction

Combined with literature reviewed thus far, the current case study of Camp Blaz situates the build-up in Guåhan as the latest transnational articulation of Pacific islands as, at best, strategic outlets for warmaking (Alexander, 2016), and at worst, spaces of expendable bodies that do not have autonomy (Ginoza, 2020) and extractable resources that only serve colonial powers (Gilio-Whitaker, 2018). This influences how organizations include or exclude voices in their key publics. To this end, we have explored indigeneity and island studies as junctures for multivocal and even nonhuman competencies in PR scholarship, and given primacy to Chamorro voices as a means of acknowledging the persistence of self-determination activism and engaging with demands of decoloniality. We have also outlined paradigmatic opportunities held by environmental justice, especially as a means for locating sovereignty while simultaneously criticizing militarization. The current chapter will now turn to characterizing the U.S. military's historical relationship with communities across the Pacific ocean. These relationships are important to explore in a project positioned as an environmentally just intervention because "during the last eighty years," as Mitchell and Dower (2020) point out, "no nation's military has damaged the planet more than that of the United States" (p.2), and "the Pacific communities it has poisoned are some of the poorest" (p. 6).

An important clarification should be made here. Writing about these issues is not meant to criminalize the individual people who are part of the world's militaries as inherently evil; articulations are made possible through hegemonic ideologies that are formed on structural

levels. Insofar as these structures pertain to the U.S. military's breadth of command and control, it tends to promote conditions where it is often more beneficial for individuals to cooperate with the military systems than to resist them.

After discussing the U.S. military's systemic relations to the west Pacific and Oceania overall, literature will hone in on environmental (and therefore, social and political) issues related to Guåhan specifically. This not only attends to the fact that "each Oceanic nation has a unique history, culture, language, and geography that should not be universalized" (Ingersoll, 2016, p. 17), but additionally serves as a precursor to the case study at hand. Given what we know about indigenous sovereignty as a place of environmental justice, the PR activity of additional interest in the case study is the attempt to obtain consent. The manner in which PR activities discursively arrive at or approximate a version of consent, the relationship between consent and the practices of interacting with publics (either from the perspective of Chamorro activist organizations, the U.S. military, or I Liheslaturan Guåhan), and the ways in which consent might be explicitly tied to sovereignty and place have not been widely explored. The case study of Camp Blaz therefore fills a gap in literature while also answering various calls for more ethical and decolonial PR studies.

The U.S. and Island Narratives

This section works to combine the fluidity of island indigeneity established in Chapter 2 with the U.S. military's environmental interactions in Chapter 3 to speak about the military's neocolonial presence in the Pacific ocean, specifically in relation to other imperial powers (i.e. Japan) and in relation to other islands of Oceania. While it may seem counterintuitive to speak about the shores of Guåhan specifically, then pull back into larger contexts, only to return to

Guåhan throughout these early chapters, this wave-like movement reminds us that islands are not isolated geographically, socially, or culturally. Navigating the changes in discursive conditions helps us engage with dexterity and adaptability as we explore what the literature has to offer.

An Island of Secrecy: Continuing the Okushima Story

Chapter 3 introduced the story of Japan's chemical weapons program headquartered on Okushima island initiated after WWI, and the application of its various machinations before and during WWII. In continuing, Mitchell and Dower (2020) describe how the U.S. military and government played a significant role in covering up the island's operations. During October of 1945, U.S. troops arrived on Okushima, after their interrogation efforts confirmed the existence of the chemical weapons program and revealed its location. American officials were not only eager to gain control of the information the program's testing yielded to pragmatically bolster its own global power, but – in this run-up to Cold War era global political relations – were additionally concerned with denying access to the Soviets. This priority of secrecy in mind, the “cleanup” efforts lacked ecological or even humane forethought and contributed greatly to destruction of ecosystems on the island and in the surrounding Pacific region. For example, U.S. authorities ordered facility workers (once, at gun-point) to pump a mixture of mustard gas and lewisite from storage tanks onto two ships, eventually sinking the hundreds of tons of chemicals into the Pacific Ocean. In another example, canisters of vomiting agent that were manufactured using arsenic compounds were soaked with sea water and bleach, then sealed into Okushima caves with concrete blocks that continue to contaminate the island's soil and drinking water. These shortsighted, callous strategies for quickly shutting down Okushima demonstrate a pattern of disregard for the natural environment, especially when it is not home to white, economic

elites. While we can certainly locate a capable criticism within environmental justice from these observations alone,

Obtaining information and keeping it solely in U.S. hands also influenced how American officials dealt with the scientists of the program themselves. The U.S. interviewed the island's Japanese scientists, delighted in having chemical weapons data on human "test subjects" (Chinese people and Okushima employees), destroyed or locked away paper trails that , and granted the scientists full immunity from prosecution (most of whom went on to have careers in medical, educational, pharmaceutical, or legal fields). In obfuscating the facts of the program, the U.S. was not only able to monopolize the way the information was used, but additionally able to avoid answering questions of how its own atomic bombing of Japan might also be considered chemical warfare. The "immunity deal brokered between the US occupation forces and Japanese army scientists [is] one of the most significant in the post war period" because it implies that collaboration with the U.S. military could be rewarded, regardless of "past misdeeds— no matter how evil" (Mitchell & Dower, 2020, p. 15-29).

In the warmaking eras following WWII, Japan's relationship with the U.S. developed specifically through the latter's presence on the island of Okinawa, where a 27-year occupation has included 32 military installations, (Gelardi & Perez, 2019). As a central precursor to the build-up on Guåhan, this will be discussed further in the case study background section.

Islands of Strategy: The Marianas and Military Resources

While the preceding passage is helpful, we cannot transpose conclusions from Japanese relations directly onto ones for Guåhan without further consideration, mainly because Japan is not a U.S. territory. Echoing the characterization of the U.S. as a source of imperialist

articulations with the same emphasis other fields have used is an important contribution of current research. These include Tiara Na‘Puti’s work in rhetorical studies (2019), Michael Bevacqua’s work in ethnic studies (2020), as well as Craig Santos Perez’s work on contemporary literature and ethnic studies (2019), Michael P. Perez’s work in sociology (2005), and most recently, Alan T. Butler’s call for more attention to these issues from a psychology lens (Butler, 2020). Building on this body of literature is important because communication fields like PR have intentionally set themselves up adjacent to these areas, but additionally because, as Mitchell and Dower (2020) point out, for many Americans “the word *colony* is anathema” (p. 175, italics in original).

This resistance to American colonization is not new. Amy Kaplan (1993), for example, considers this a symptom of American exceptionalism. In the introduction into a collection of work called *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, Kaplan critiques Perry Miller’s *Errand Into the Wilderness* as a means of launching a greater argument concerning the duplicity of narratives that ellide this country’s imperial and colonial history. Though not explicitly about islandness, we introduce these ideas here because “the multiple histories of continental and overseas expansion, conquest, conflict, and resistance” that mutually shaped the U.S. “within and beyond its geopolitical boundaries” are particularly pertinent to its territorial relations. Kaplan posits that Miller situates the entire continent of Africa with an “imagined blankness” so as to realize the “fullness of America.” She describes how Miller engages in the process of racializing the natural environment of both places: where Africa is nothing but “the enervated ‘barbaric tropic,’” America epitomizes “the ‘inexhaustible wilderness [that] offers the challenging space of implicitly white achievement,’” reinforcing “the racially inflected distinction between images of the ‘jungle’ and ‘wilderness.’” This wilderness awaits discovery in a way that supposedly

differentiates the U.S. from the failings of Old World empires (Kaplan, 1993, p. 4-9). This language is used to justify American imperialism while simultaneously claiming that America is not an imperialist nation, a narrative familiar to the Chamorro people.

Similarly, Mitchell and Dower (2020) attribute American aversion to the topic of coloniality and imperialism to the dissonance it ignites when compared with the popular origin story of the U.S. as a country borne out of anti-tyrannical solidarity. This story extolls the “revolution against imperialist Britain” and the “Constitution [that] enshrines the rights to independence, equality, and liberty for all.” In the same way certain perspectives relegate indigeneity to a romanticized past rather than a persistent present and future, this articulation of the U.S. leaves few “willing to admit that today, the United States possesses an empire.” Armed with this narrative of exceptionality (perhaps by default of denial), “the Pentagon has taken advantage of geographical isolation and lack of oversight to pollute this [Pacific] regions’ territories with zero regard to the environment or human health” (p. 176). This pollution is often articulated as the cost of using Oceania to “wage conflicts around the world” (p. 3).

This harkens back to DeLuca’s (1999) example of articulations of toxic waste sites. Articulations do not entertain the question of whether the sites exist or not, but instead attend to what the sites mean, and to whom that meaning is important. On one hand, the sites are considered the cost of necessary, utilitarian economic growth, which normalizes the suffering of those poisoned by their presence. On the other hand, introducing antagonisms like the threat of global warming helps to disrupt the linkages between economic growth and land use formed during the Industrial revolution, then handed down to the first articulation. This allows for the rearticulation of the sites as corporate colonialism and institutional discrimination.

However, exposing the logical fallacies encompassed in articulations is no small feat, but possible over the course of several decades or even centuries (e.g. the articulation of monarchies as politically sovereign seems outlandish, but only hundreds of years after their decline) (LacLau, 1977). As such, the ripple effects of U.S. warmaking in Oceania are still enabled by hegemonic discourses and practices:

for more than seven decades, the Western Pacific region -- Japan, Okinawa, and Micronesia -- had borne the brunt of US military contamination. Hundreds of thousands of civilians, service members, and their families have been exposed to toxic substances, including radioactive fallout, nerve agents, and dioxin; water, air, and soil have been polluted, and some areas have been rendered uninhabitable for the foreseeable future (Mitchell & Dower, 2020, p. 3)

During WWII, the U.S. attacked Tinian, one of the Northern Mariana islands that the Japanese had been “cultivat[ing]...for sugarcane production.” Its civilian population only numbered 15,000, and 4,000 were killed in the attack, along with 5,500 members of the Japanese military. The U.S. then proceeded with the invasive process of transforming the island into a base, including paving roads that were named after thoroughfares of Manhattan, New York, housing 150,000 U.S. soldiers and hundred of B-29 bombers, and eventually using it to help launch the atomic bombing of Japan. Lasting damage from these endeavors includes an ocean dump site, DDT contamination, and chemicals used to disinfect the base’s human waste. Instead of engaging in the same kind of secrecy associated with Okushima Island, the events were memorialized: “the loading pits of Little Boy and Fat Man still stand on the island, preserved as national historic monuments, framed in glass and surrounded by visitor’s origami cranes” (Mitchell & Dower, 2020, p. 188).

Saipan, a Mariana island north of Tinian, did not come under U.S. control until after WWII. As U.S. global conflicts shifted into anti-communist motivations, the CIA decided to use

Saipan for a base where “anti-Communist guerillas” could be trained. This endeavor saw a return to secrecy in the name of safety, as training Chinese operatives in this manner violated UN agreements. The CIA therefore used the premise of a Naval Technical Training Unit to construct facilities including housing compounds, fuel depots, an airstrip for CIA access, all with the price tag of \$28 million. A decade after construction began, “guerillas were met with little success” (p. 189), most of them completely disappearing after parachuting into China. Lasting damage for Saipan includes vehicles and fuel tanks left to corrode after the CIA scaled down operations, and later PCB poisoning from 200 electrical capacitors shipped to the northwest side of the island with no explanation. The U.S. Department of Defense initially tried to deny it owned the capacitors, attempted two experimental and ultimately unsuccessful cleanups 30 years later (in 1995 and 1997), shipped out 450 tons of contaminated soil (which still did not complete cleanup) in 1999, and finally finished in 2003, treating 40,000 tons of soil. This caused “widespread anger on Saipan” and ultimately “increased awareness of military contamination and the need for further investigations” (Mitchell & Dower, 2020, p. 190).

This treatment of vast swaths of these islands not only articulates a U.S. relationship to land that is epistemologically understood through dominant logics of colonialism, but additionally a relationship that is environmentally destructive. While the above discussions demonstrate that there are innumerable health consequences felt by residents who live in and around the “contaminated sites [that] abound,” what of the accountability for causing these issues? If accountability were rooted in environmental justice rather than narratives of American exceptionalism, this legacy of contamination would incur serious social, political, and economic ramifications. However, a “territories’ lack of democratic rights” legally empower the federal

government to “operate without accountability to residents” (Mitchell & Dower, 2020, p. 176) and the non-human elements essential to their homes.

To reiterate arguments from Chapter 3, the lack of self-determination under the contexts of “globalization and hegemonic neoliberal practices” of extraction limits the “opportunities for engagement” in and with the United States. These conclusions cultivate nuance for previous questions regarding how organizations characterize key publics, underscoring that these PR processes by the military might exclude certain people from having a voice to be characterized in the first place. This exclusion can occur by virtue of a fundamental (potentially willful) misunderstanding of sovereignty, which encompasses the relationship the people of Oceania have to place as well as political rights to self-determination. Extending this logic to other PR activities, the current work considers how groups discursively construct consent that they give or withhold as key publics, and that they receive as organizations.

The U.S. in Guåhan

As Paul Lai (2011) describes:

“...[the] distinctive cultural identity of Guam and its Indigenous Chamorro inhabitants today - mediated by centuries of Spanish imperial rule and Catholicism as well as brief but violent moments of Japanese colonization and military occupation - cannot be understood without examination of the influence of US military and civilian control over the last century” (Lai, 2011)

In following, the subsequent sections delineate the various, often overlapping ways in which the U.S. has articulated its relationship with Guåhan. Legal articulations of Guåhan and its people can be tracked through the Insular Cases after the Spanish-American War, and the Organic Act during the Cold War era. Simultaneously, there are socio-political articulations of Guåhan’s relationship to the U.S. military related to both these categories, explored below.

Legal Articulations

The first of three sources of legal discourse concerning Guåhan's relationship with the U.S. military is the Supreme Court ruling on what is known as the Insular Cases. After the end of the Spanish-American war, itself "an imperial war of U.S. expansion" (Na'puti, 2014, p. 301), Guåhan was articulated as merely the spoils of the victor and "ceded" to U.S. naval control. This claim of control shifting from Spain to the U.S. also extended to other islands, including Cuba, Guåhan, Philippines, Puerto Rico and parts of the West Indies. Naval control on Guåhan allowed "governors to implement a harsh colonial program," wherein they "codified racial segregation, forced CHamorus to speak English instead of their native language, and imposed heavy taxes that often resulted in the military seizing family lands" (Gelardi, 2021a). Faced with the question of whether or not the residents of Guåhan and other islands were residents of the U.S., the Supreme Court decided islands "were 'inhabited by alien races'" (Mitchell & Dower, 2020, p. 175) and not granted the full rights of citizens. Over a century after the American Revolution, during which time the country was supposedly building on these constitutional rights, the U.S. was using the Insular Cases to establish "racist foundations" to expand "its overseas empire," within which Indigenous communities "would be treated as second-class citizens" (Mitchell & Dower, 2020, p. 175). In this way, the ruling of non-citizenship "perpetuates the colonial relationship that began in 1521 when Ferdinand Magellan docked on the shores" of Guåhan (Na'puti, 2014, p. 301).

The second source for legal articulations is the Organic Act of Guam, passed in 1950. As discussed in the previous chapter, this act was not merely a result of a U.S. shift in perspectives of residents of Guåhan, but instead the culmination of decades of Chamorro activism regarding self-determination. The act "ended Naval control and afforded civil and political rights and

protection” (Na‘puti, 2014, p. 301), but it also organized political and legal articulations under the label of “unincorporated territory” (Alexander, 2016 p. 872). Importantly, the term “territory” marks “a semantic sleight of hand to conceal [U.S.] imperialism” in its discourses, as the use of this word helps avoid the negative chain of connotations associated with the word “colony” (Mitchell & Dower, 2020, p. 175). The logic of this articulation keeps Guåhan “exterior to the American nation” at the same time that it precludes the Chamorro people from governing “a nation or state on its own” (Na‘puti, 2014, p. 302).

Most recently, and in persistent pushes against these limits on self-determination, the Davis Decision constitutes the third legal articulation of Guåhan’s relationship with the U.S. In 2011, under Governor Eddie Baza Calvo, the Committee on Decolonization was reconvened after nearly a decade of dormancy. The committee met to discuss the options for Guåhan’s political status (U.S. statehood, free association, or independence), including the financial, economic, and social benefits or ramifications of each option, the logistics for maintaining the option chosen, and the kinds of research or task forces that would be required to aid in making an informed decision (About the Commission on Decolonization, n.d.). As such, the eventual vote on Guåhan’s political status was to be “restricted to ‘native inhabitants,’” or those of CHamoru descent (Gelardi & Perez, 2019). However, Arnold Davis, a white resident of Guåhan, filed a lawsuit against the local government claiming that his exclusion from the vote on political status violated the 15th Amendment, which prohibits voting restrictions based on race. In the case of “Davis v. Guam” courts upheld a precedent set by *Rice v. Cayetano*, an earlier case that concluded with the ruling that “Hawai’i couldn’t hold a native-only referendum in 2000”. Thus, Chamorro self-determination “continues to be attacked on constitutional grounds” through articulations like the Davis decision, while full “claims to U.S. economic and political benefits”

through articulations like the Organic Act only occur through activist efforts to disrupt the common sense logic of American exceptionalism, where the constitution's existence in and of itself absolves the government of justice violations.

Socio-Cultural Articulations

Importantly, these legal articulations intertwine with militarization to articulate Guåhan as “the most strategic military outpost in the Pacific Rim” (Na‘puti, 2014, p. 302). To reiterate Chapter 3’s points on militarization, it is an ideology “entwined with colonization, citizenship, and state-building,” that normalizes military symbols and behaviors in people’s everyday “intellectual, emotional, and physical lives” (p. 871). In limiting Chamorro sovereignty while continuing to occupy Guåhan, the U.S. is able to make the logic of Indo-Pacific strategy seem not only to be common sense, but to additionally be to for the benefit of all human and nonhuman elements involved. For example, the military has expressed that its “proposed AMDTF [Air and Missile Defense Task Force]” was in the interest of protecting “the territory of Guam, its citizens, U.S. and allied forces on Guam from the threat of harm from ballistic missile attacks from other countries and enemies of the U.S.” (Record of Decision, 2010). However, this reason for U.S. presence ironically “invades the safety of life on the island through increasing the likelihood of being a target” while also threatening “essence of Chamoru life -- land, water, and cultural practices” (Alexander, 2016, p. 875). Alexander (2020) posits that the conflation of “feeling safe” and actually “being safe” is the crux of strategy articulations.

Furthermore, security rhetoric exploits the pervasive sense of fear militarization created in ways that subsequently “reinforce masculinities based on power, strength, and the desire for protection through military means” (Alexander, 2020, p. 20). The admittance of women to

soldier's ranks also yields ironic, contradictory results, as it does not neutralize the "gendered binaries on which the military is based." Instead, "means that women must also conform to, or at least pass tests of, military masculinity" and perform its linkage with safety (p. 20-21). Imposing safety and security articulations on residents without the full extent of opportunities for self-determination has "helped to make invisible the contradictions of the simultaneous promotion of liberal ideas, of decolonization," while also instantiating the contradictory "dependence on military ideas of security, and support for the military as soldiers and hosts" (Alexander, 2016, p. 872).

Militarization as a hegemonic social process has been linked with cultural elements, as well as these economic, political, and social ones. Tracing the chain of connotations here begins with the well-documented Japanese occupation of the island during WWII. Their "short but brutal period of military rule" (Na'puti, 2014, p. 301) included such practices as "building concentration camps and forcing the indigenous Chamorro people to provide slave labor" (Harden, 2010). When this reign of "brutality" ended, many "residents felt immense gratitude toward US forces" even though that sense of relief was "tinged with apprehension, as the military occupied most of the island and developed it into a launchpad for the invasion of Japan" (Mitchell & Dower, 2020, p. 177). It is here that we introduce the Chamorro concept of *inafa'maolek*, which means "aid or favors that are given in a reciprocal network" (Bevacqua, 2020), and argue that justifying militarization involves a perversion of this concept. For example, the anniversary of U.S. troops' arrival in Guåhan to end Japanese control is still celebrated by Chamorros both on and off island through a holiday called "Guam Liberation Day." Hand in hand with this pervasive view of gratitude for the event, the notion of reciprocity is also often linked to the obligation of "hosting US bases and supporting the military" (Alexander, 2016, p.

873). However, “repaying” the U.S. military does not stop here. “Chamorros rank first by both geographical region and ethnic group in rates of recruitment to the U.S. military,” (Hsu, 2011) demonstrating that overall cultural adherence to obligation continues to extend to the U.S. military for actions during WWII, permeating multiple generations of Chamorros. This perpetuation of obligation and reciprocity, combined with the power militarization holds as an ideology, structures social relations on Guåhan such that military service is linked civic duty and patriotism (Alexander, 2016, p. 874). The prominence of these socio-cultural linkages is evidenced by the fact that the “island regularly ranks first in recruiting success” when compared to “the 50 states and four territories” (Harden, 2010).

Importantly, however, for this to be true *inafa'maolek*, the U.S. military's presence on Guåhan would have to be based in a goal of mutual respect. Indigenous traditions of *inafa'maolek* include gifts such as food or labor, expressing a kinship between members of a community and acknowledging the value of “[getting] the work done by helping each other” (Bevacqua, 2020). These gifts are additionally not aimed at altruism, but instead part of a continuing cycle of “helping each other” and laying “the foundation for our relationships as families, as neighbors, as people who share the same island” (Bevacqua, 2020). As the continued denial of self-determination in favor of strategy articulations demonstrate, militarization is not rooted in planting a “social seed,” or “creating and sustaining a sense of community” (Bevacqua, 2020), but in maintaining control over Guåhan. Thus, the persistence of Chamorro culture of reciprocity through the social relations structured by the military presence articulates a U.S.-Guåhan relationship of obligation, obscuring how Chamorro indigeneity and the value of *inafa'maolek* are actually contradictory to militarization.

Case Study Background

As previously mentioned, growing resistance to the presence of U.S. military forces on Okinawa precipitated the political and economic conditions for Camp Blaz to become a reality. Beginning with the Bush administration in 2005, and continuing through 2009 into the Obama administration, the Japanese and U.S. governments “signed a series of agreements...setting in motion the buildup on Guam” (Gelardi, 2021a). The project would include relocating “8,000 Marines and 9,000 dependents” from the island of Okinawa to Guåhan, a \$14 billion endeavor partially funded by Japan (Kakesako, 2007). As part of the relocation, military buildup projects in Guåhan brought to the fore key organizations that would eventually play a role in the discursive articulations of Camp Blaz. The first subsection herein takes a linear approach to relevant events, including the U.S. military’s release of environmental impact statements (first a draft version, then a final version with supplemental information), which detail a number of different construction sites all under the overhanging “buildup” project; legal and political efforts to define the relationships between the U.S. government and military, the government of Guåhan, and the people of Guåhan (variously coalescing into grassroots organizations); and the discursive memorialization of Vincente “Ben” Blaz, for whom the Marine Corps Base would eventually be named. The second subsection details events specific to Camp Blaz, a more recent development to the military’s buildup, with an eye towards forthcoming data collection and analysis.

Events of the Buildup, 2009 - 2015

In November of 2009, in comportment with the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA, passed during the legislative watershed in the 1970s), the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) and the Joint Guam Program Office (JGPO) released a draft of a document known as an

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the buildup (About – We Are Guåhan, n.d.; Gelardi & Perez, 2019). Therein, details included the Navy’s plans to “dredge more than 70 acres of coral reef” (Gelardi & Perez, 2019) in Apra Harbor to accommodate an aircraft carrier. The DoD’s announcement claimed that the EIS included a “marine resources impacts analysis...[that] provides sufficient information” for officials to weigh “direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts” of using “the only deep draft harbor on the island of Guam that could support such a berth” (Record of Decision, 2010).

The report itself “was 11,000 jargon-filled pages” (Gelardi & Perez, 2019) that the public was only given 90 days to respond to, leading many to conclude that the military had no intention of giving the public a clear view of the project, or realistic input on its effects (Gelardi & Perez, 2019). The nature of the communication to the public and the guidelines through which the public was expected to communicate back to the military gave rise to what would become the organization “We Are Guåhan.” According to their website, the organization is “a multi-ethnic collective of individuals, families and grassroots organizations concerned with the future of our islands” (About – We Are Guåhan, n.d.). However, at the time of the DEIS release, the groups started with informal volunteers focused on comprehending the DEIS and sharing their insights with the rest of Guåhan. To this end, the group divided up the report and met on a weekly basis to discuss their findings (About – We Are Guåhan, n.d.).

The DEIS also raised infrastructural concerns along with environmental ones, detailed in a *Washington Post* article. At its most robust, the buildup was estimated to “increase Guam’s population by 79,000 people, or about 45 percent.” Adequately accommodating these changes was estimated to require upgrading the island’s water and sewage systems (\$550 million), road improvements (\$1.7 billion), and expansion to “the already overburdened public hospital (\$100

million). It was reported that President Obama's budget had proposed "\$750 million...to address the civilian impact of the relocation," and had additionally requested \$1 billion from Congress the following year, but as of March 2010, Guåhan's officials had not received confirmation of federal funds. The *Post* article noted that "without a vote in Congress, the island has negligible lobbying power and no legal means of halting the buildup," and that the "push to further militarize this island -- combined with its heel-dragging in paying for the impact on civilians -- has led many Guam residents to doubt the value of their relationship with the United States" (Harden, 2010).

Despite this, a joint release in September of 2010 entitled "Record of Decision for the Guam and Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands Military Relocation: Relocating Marines from Okinawa, Visiting Aircraft Carrier Berthing, and Air and Missile Defense Task Force" confirmed that the Department of the Navy and the Department of the Army were proceeding with the buildup. The notice assured that the decision had carefully considered "the environmental consequences" along with the "operational and training requirements, strategic requirements, obligations under treaties and other international agreements, and cost." Of note, the manner in which the notice characterizes the buildup and its purpose further support previous assertions that the U.S. military articulates Guåhan as merely a factor of strategy. The buildup is described as the "result of redefining the United States (U.S.) defense posture in the Pacific region and the U.S. alliance with Japan," and as an effort to "fulfill U.S. national security policy requirements to provide mutual defense, deter aggression, and dissuade coercion in the Western Pacific Region" (Record of Decision, 2010).

Following this release, there were pushes from the local government to further discuss various, large, long-term projects all under the even larger buildup mission. Guåhan's

Congresswoman Madeleine Z. Bordallo issued a statement given to her by Guåhan Governor Felix Camacho, which highlighted that “concerns remain on critical issues such as the location of the live-fire training range,” one of the projects included in the buildup, and “the transit carrier berthing location.” However, the statement ended with the sentiment that Governor Camacho would “continue to work with my colleagues and stakeholders to ensure that the military build-up is done right and benefits our community.” (Congresswoman Bordallo Issues Statement, 2010). Concerns over the firing range location were echoed by the Tinian Chamber of Commerce President and Chairman Philip Mendiola-Long, who asked that Congresswoman Bordallo “refrain from ‘continuously and nonchalantly’ offering Tinian as an alternative location for the proposed Pagat range” (Bagnol, 2010). Though not the focus yet, these are aspects of the conversation that the subject of Camp Blaz would eventually join as an additional subject for discourse because its location in the northern region of the island would be adjacent to this firing range.

These efforts from local governments and grassroots organizations culminated in a lawsuit filed in 2010 by the Guam Preservation Trust and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, joined by We Are Guåhan, against the U.S. DoD. In their blog post discussing the lawsuit, the grassroots group discussed how the effort was “about protecting... a site that has great cultural and historical significance to our island.” However, We Are Guåhan also noted that:

This lawsuit is also about DoD deciding that “operational efficiency” was more important than the requests of our Legislature, our Governor, our Congresswoman and our community. In the name of military convenience, DoD has broken promises and, as will be shown in this lawsuit, it has broken the law... We Are Guåhan has and will continue to oppose the buildup as proposed. We are here, and we will use every tool that is available to us to protect our home, including legal action. (*We Are Guåhan joins lawsuit against DoD*, 2010)

The case was eventually dismissed based on the fact that the DoD had made plans to engage in processes for a supplemental EIS.

Amid this “initial wave of anti-buildup activism,” the year 2011 saw a renewal of 1990s-era enviro-political articulations via the reconvening of the Committee on Decolonization (Gelardi & Perez, 2019). As argued elsewhere in reviewing relevant literature, the continued debate over Guåhan’s is a pivotal feature of this background. Previous sections have asserted that the military’s naval occupation after the Spanish-American War and re-established presence following the defeat of Japan in WWII was not necessarily consented to, but allowed to occur based on Guåhan’s ambiguous political status. The current buildup, of which Camp Blaz is one of several contentious projects, is historically based on the same issues the Committee on Decolonization aims to untangle. According to the committee’s website, “decolonization is the movement of a colony from a dependent status to a self-governing status,” a process wherein “it is the colonized people who have the right to self-determination” (About the Commission on Decolonization - History, n.d.). However, the fight for sovereignty among Indigenous island people often meets challenges in how authenticity is discursively understood (e.g. Hawai’i also being denied in efforts to hold a vote outside of the settler colonial presence). Additionally, as noted in the previous section of this chapter, legal articulations of U.S. territories highlight the tension between Indigenous sovereignty and constitutional rights.

A programmatic agreement between the DoD (including the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps) and the government of Guåhan (including a State Historic Preservation Officer from Guam and one from the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas) was also published at this time, detailing terms and conditions of relocation for both Guåhan and Tinian (Guam and Commonwealth, 2011). Included was the measure called Stipulation 13, that “spells out what

should happen to archaeological sites discovered during military construction” (Kaur, 2020), particularly that military authorities are “required to inform Guam authorities—particularly the state historic preservation officer—and consult them on the best ways to “mitigate” harm to CHamoru heritage” (Gelardi, 2021b).

In the years following, the U.S. government “announced plans for a more modest buildup,” where the number of relocated marines would be reduced to 5,000 and the live-fire training range would be moved from Pāgat to Ritidian (Gelardi, 2021). A supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) was also developed in 2014 (Guam and CNMI, Appendix G, 2015). It received just over 900 public comments, and in the final version of the EIS published in 2015 dominant themes of these comments included: concerns about “the loss of Chamorro culture and culturally important sites” and “Guam’s political status within the U.S. and historical land acquisition and ownership issues;” land use that would restrict “access to fishing areas” and cause habitat loss that “impacts to terrestrial biological resources;” use of resources that would cause “environmental release of contaminants,” or that would reinforce segregations of “schools, housing, etc” between the community and the military (Guam and CNMI, Appendix G, 2015).

With the lawsuit against the training range’s original location denied, the announcement of this new location to the northern tip of Guåhan gave rise to the Chamorro rights activist group “Prutehi Litekyan: Save Ritidian.” They describe themselves as “a direct action group dedicated to the protection of natural and cultural resources” indelible to all sites identified to the “construction of the Live-Fire Training Range Complex (LFTRC)” (Prutehi Litekyan PSA, n.d.). The group’s petition to oppose the training range specifically lays out the “detrimental impacts that the firing range would have on the ancient village of Litekyan (Ritidian), Urunao, and

Jinapsan and all of the species, endangered or otherwise, within the Guam Wildlife Refuge” also located in the northern region of the island (Prutehi Litekian: Save Ritidian, 2017).

The Construction of Camp Blaz, 2017 - 2021

In 2017, two years after the EIS was finalized, the first contracts for buildup-related construction of Camp Blaz in the northern region of Guåhan were awarded. This area is home to the ancient village of Magua', and evidence of inhabitants' way of life would later surface. In October of 2018, when construction of the base was already underway, a U.S. military publication called *Stars and Stripes* announced that the project previously referred to as Marine Corps Base Guam would be renamed after Marine Brigadier General Vincente “Ben” Tomas Garrido Blaz (Burke, 2018). The following summer, as Camp Blaz was taking shape, Governor Lou Leon Guerrero (appointed in January of 2019) had her request to pause construction of the live-fire training range complex denied (Kaur, 2019). Also in 2019, activist pressures to secure a political status that would allow for such decisions to be held more securely in local hands mounted, including the Fanoghe March for CHamoru Self-Determination, sponsored by the Guam Community College Eco-Warriors (Fanoghe March for CHamoru Self-Determination, 2019).

Early the following year, during the initial construction stages of a parking lot for Camp Blaz, the discovery of human skeletal remains prompted the protocol for full investigation, which subsequently revealed several burial pits. In response to military efforts to continue the buildup without engaging in full transparency with residents, Guåhan's State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) recommended building a monument for the remains, and modifying

the parking lot plans (Kaur, 2021)¹. After initially recommending the plans for the parking lot be modified, Guåhan's State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) later confirmed that the “four burial sites” found during construction were “of CHamoru descent and about 1,000 years old” and proposed a monument be built on the base (Kaur, 2020). The monument was completed in February of this year (Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz, 2022).

In the midst of these developments, the base officially opened for operations in October of 2020 (Wilson, 2021), and efforts to advance the buildup continue throughout the island's northwest region. The military announced in the spring of 2021 that Camp Blaz would be collaborating with the University of Guam in a “forest enhancement project” (Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz, University of Guam, 2021), and also proposed a new danger zone that would restrict access to areas (land and sea) during training activities at Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz and the live-fire training range (Department of the army, corps of engineers issues proposed rule, 2020). As of April 2021, “At least 150 square meters of excavation units have been exposed to bedrock or sterile material as part of the site investigations with more units in progress” (Kaur, 2021).

Conclusion

Bridged with the brief history of Chamorro people centered in the introductory chapter, notions of persistence and adaptability in Chapter 2, and the matters of environmental justice in Chapter 3, Camp Blaz surfaces more narrow but no less complex gradations of indigeneity and Chamorro sovereignty in PR messages. In examining PR messages concerning Camp Blaz, we

¹ A full version of the timeline for both 2020 and 2021 was published in a Pacific Daily News article by Amunita Kaur, after she submitted a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and obtained emails between the acting State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and the U.S. military. At the time, Carlotta Leon Guererro was standing in for Pat Lujan. The timeline from the article is provided as Appendix B.

might draw conclusions about the discursive constructions of the organizations, the nonhuman elements of environment, and how the former expresses epistemological relationships to the latter. In examining the meaning-making practices that inform how and why these messages are created, we might draw conclusions about the historical, cultural, social, and political embeddedness of PR activities overall.

CHAPTER 5: POSITIONALITY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

Pacific Positionality

As Neitch reminds us, we are all “participants in a global culture entrenched with sexism, racism, and eurocentrism,” and we thus cannot ignore that these “social forces can influence even our own pro-social scholarship” (p. 427). Therefore, before discussing the logistics of carrying out research, I spent time in this project’s introduction establishing the positionality I am rooted in. My training in U.S. academic institutions, childhood as the daughter of a U.S. Army Special Forces soldier, and how both experiences have contributed to a fluid understanding of my own indigeneity have all simultaneously enabled and foreclosed certain routes for knowledge production. In the same way Chamorro scholar Michael Perez (2005) argued that his experiences navigating “personal and academic marginality and transnationality as a diasporic Chamorro” are precisely what provides insights, so too are my roots of value.

While conducting this research, I worked to collect “data” in a way that prioritized respect for my people (especially those older than myself), their embeddedness and meaning-making practices. Most importantly, even with the commitment to present a balanced narrative of Camp Blaz, there is a clear pattern of human rights violations committed by the U.S. military that no amount of neutrality can obscure. It is therefore with that fact in mind that analyses of PR activities proceed, leaning towards, as Ingersoll suggests, ways we might leverage the insights in the interest of Chamorro sovereignty.

Research Method

Research Questions

The central question that this project aims to answer is how do PR activities influence matters of environmental justice, and how might indigeneity meaningfully and productively intervene in these activities? Using Camp Blaz as a space to answer this question necessarily invokes three stakeholder groups, on which more granular versions of this overarching inquiry might be scaffolded: 1) Chamorro rights activists, 2) the government of Guåhan, and 3) the U.S. military. The first PR activity to examine is how an organization identifies and communicates with a key public. Examining the practices associated with key publics is an attempt to understand specifically how personhood and the value of personhood is articulated in Guåhan, and by extension, understand generally what it might mean to account for (Indigenous) intersectionality in PR scholarship. The following question is therefore posed:

RQ 1: How do the three stakeholder groups define and characterize their key publics?

The second activity of interest is PR's drive to obtain consent. Discussed in Chapter 3, the formalization of PR as a profession centered on *engineering* consent. The practices associated with this activity will help us understand the power dynamics at play on the island, as well as how they are communicated, which then also speaks to how these organizations justify their place in the case study, and in the island's future. The project there asks:

RQ2: How do the three stakeholder groups define and articulate their existence?

Relatedly, how do they attempt to achieve support for their objectives?

Finally, as previously stated, PR messaging surrounding Camp Blaz is wrapped up in current issues of rights to land use, histories of military atrocities, and the future of Guåhan sovereignty. The First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit recognized that environmental harm would continue to develop in tandem with cultural, political, economic, and social shifts. The storytelling and branding of PR activities therefore has consequences regarding what does and does not count as environmental. The last question of interest is as follows:

RQ3: What stories about environmentalism does each organization tell about itself in its PR communication?

Research Design

All three organizations (the military, the government, and activists) help form a robust picture of how communication practices articulate personhood and consent for operations adjacent to environmentalism. Being that “narrative is important for understanding how the threads of colonization, militarization, and gender have become woven into, and weave, the fabric of life” on Guåhan (Alexander, 2015, p. 876), interviews were chosen as an important method for assessing meaning-making practices associated with PR. However, an “attempt to secure an in-depth understanding” of any culture, phenomenon, or underlying meaning-making process – as well as an attempt to provide an “alternative to [quantitative] validation” when expressing that in-depth understanding – requires the triangulation of multiple qualitative methods (Denizen & Lincoln, 2005, p. 5). Thus, these interviews were supplemented with textual analysis. Taking into account Daymon and Holloway’s general definition of discourse as “a way

of talking or writing about something to make it meaningful” both kinds of data collected aim to demonstrate what form and content language takes, the ways people use it “to communicate ideas and beliefs,” and explore the “institutional and organizational factors,” and “wider political, social, cultural, or economic contexts surrounding the discourse” (Daymon & Holloway, 2010, p. 168-169).

The Internal Review Board approved the proposed study design (protocol number: 21-260) on October 24th, 2021, after which data was collected to be examined and explored for answers to the research questions posed above.

Sampling and Data Collection

Interviews – Interviews are rooted in the belief that “understanding is achieved by encouraging people to describe their world in their own terms” (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p.2). The purpose of interviews is therefore to understand more about meaning making processes, specifically as they relate to environmental justice – the cross section of social issues (cultural preservation) and environmental ones (land use). Englander (2012) notes that sampling criteria for scientific research are based on the idea that a given sample should be a representation of the larger population, which is a question of achieving a varied understanding of a single phenomenon. Participants were therefore selected using purposive sampling, based on the inclusion criteria of being at least 18 years of age, and involvement with one or more of the stakeholder groups, where “involvement” includes the following: 1) for Chamorro rights activists, membership to an established group operating on island, and/or acting in administrative, communicative, or voluntary capacities on behalf of that group; 2) for Liheslaturan Guåhan, serving as a senator, and/or acting in communicative or administrative

capacities; 3) for the U.S. military, acting in administrative, communicative, strategic, or combat-related capacities in or with a branch of service.

Interviewees were not excluded based on identity in gender, race, or ethnicity, nor based on religious affiliation. Participants were recruited using approved protocol language in emails and WhatsApp messages. A total of six interviews were conducted, each lasting between 1-2 hours, with interviewees affiliated as indicated under in Table 1 (p. 83). The table lists information according to pseudonyms assigned to each participant after initial contact was established. Of note, no response was received to the interview requests submitted via the online contact form available on the U.S. Marine website for Camp Blaz. However, as stated earlier, attempts to supplement the discourse gleaned from interviews and prevent biasing the data were made by collecting textual data (details provided in the next section).

For the interviewees successfully contacted, data collection utilized an interview guide for semi-structured interviewing (see Appendix A). While the guide was a valuable tool for ensuring data collection is systematically inclined and theoretically informed, as well as for allowing me to be fully present during the conversation, the underlying goal of open-ended interviews is to gain a thick description of a given topic. Such a description would make “explicit the detailed patterns of cultural and social relationships and puts them in context” which give the topic of interest meaning, and also determine the way it is given said meaning (Daymon & Holloway, 2010, p. 152). Thus, semi-structured techniques were used, eschewing the survey-style interview assumption “that each question means the same thing to each respondent” (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 33), and that each participant needs to be asked the same questions. Conversations unfolded according to the topics each participant brought up or wanted to explore, as well as topics participants each felt individually comfortable speaking about.

Textual Analysis – The current project also recognizes that texts are not “simply a device for producing and transmitting meaning” (Damon & Holloway, 2010, p. 167). Rather, texts are constructed under the subjective conditions of humanity for “specific purposes,” with specific implications (depending on how they “record, explore, explain, justify, or foretell actions”), and within “social, economic, historical, cultural, and situational contexts” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 35). After initially relying on purposive sampling to gather texts that specifically mention “Camp Blaz,” sampling then turned to snowball techniques to more fully capture the scope of discourse. As such, collection of texts as data includes online articles, testimonies of Guåhan government officials for the U.S. House of Representatives Natural Resources Committee, contract and tender notices from the U.S. military, reports on environmental or archaeological happenings during the construction of Camp Blaz, and press releases used in levels of completeness for outlets at local, national, and international levels. Of note, communication that addresses the buildup projects that overlap (physically, discursively, and temporally) in the northwest region of Guåhan is included insofar as it informs the research questions posed. This choice was made to keep robust data detailed, as well as focused and full (Charmaz, 2006).

Data Analysis

Analysis of discourse is meant to show “how concepts are constructed in communication” (Daymon & Holloway, 2010, p. 168-169). Though there are overlaps in the manner of analyzing discourse that emerged in both kinds of qualitative data, interviews focused more on assessing the meaning-making processes behind creating PR messages, while texts were assessed as the effect those practices caused (the cyclical nature of texts, however, is such that they produce their own effects as well). The fact that there is a slight pivot between these two interrelated but not interchangeable approaches introduces nuance into the questions

Table 1. Interviewees

Name	Stakeholder group	Involvement	Meeting/record modality
Benson	Chamorro rights activist	Independent Guåhan, Fanohge Coalition	In person, tape recorder
Fiona	Chamorro rights activist	Independent Guåhan	In person, tape recorder
Lenny	Chamorro rights activist	Independent Guåhan, Prutehi Litekyan: Save Ritidian	In person, tape recorder
Lita	Chamorro rights activist	Fanohge Coalition, Guam Community College Eco Warriors, Prutehi Litekyan: Save Ritidian	Zoom, recorded to local device
Jen	Liheslaturan Guåhan	Senator, testified in front of U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources within duration of case study	Zoom, recorded to local device
Sonja	Liheslaturan Guåhan	Senator serving on relevant committees within duration case study, U.S. Army veteran	Zoom, recorded to local device

I asked myself during coding processes for interviews versus texts. Procedures for separately analyzing both kinds of data are therefore discussed first in initial coding stages, followed by more collective procedures for drawing conclusions across all data in axial and theoretical coding stages.

Initial coding – Coding interviews followed steps laid out by Daymon and Holloway (2010). First, provisional categories were created with a combination of vivo coding (where categories attempt to account for the linguistic nuances of concepts relevant to the research questions) and line-by-line coding (where categories attempt to account for implicit and explicit switches in meaning). At this stage, questions I asked myself related to methodology include: how do interviewees talk about identity expression on an individual, organizational, and societal level? Is this expression related to social and cultural practices of Guåhan, to their specific role in their organization, and/or to their goals for the organization? How are interviewees gesturing to relationship-building efforts that may not traditionally be recognized as PR strategy? What do their communication goals appear to be? What ideas and feelings are associated with constructs such as Guåhan, Chamorro, the U.S. military, land and environmentalism, strategic communication, consent/permission? What are the indications of tone across these categories?

Coding PR texts followed a similar structure, but without line-by-line analysis. I asked myself: how do the texts linguistically incorporate aspects of identity in multiple or singular ways, and how do practices of inclusion reify those of exclusion? Who appears to be the target audience for these texts, and how can the interaction be characterized? How are elements of culture or environmentalism invoked? How do messages assume responsibility, attend to obligation, spread information or otherwise deal with constructs related to obtaining consent?

What words and symbols are associated with constructs such as Guåhan, Chamorro, the U.S. military, land and environmentalism, strategic communication, consent/permission?

Questions regarding articulation theory as an analytical guide for both interviews and texts centered on how data might break down into smaller elements, keeping in mind that no two elements have a necessary, predetermined, totalizing, or permanent linkage between them.

Axial Coding – Next, analysis shifted into focused and axial coding, where categories were revisited for how well they account for as much of the data as possible, subcategories were developed to more clearly explain the nuances *within* each category, then organized into themes to map out the relationships *between* categories. Here, for both kinds of data, I asked: how do the findings in initial coding speak to what it means to characterize a public, and to work to obtain consent? Where are there tensions between implicit and explicit meanings, and between the organizations themselves? What elements appear multiple times, and what conditions are they linked under?

Theoretical Coding – Finally, theoretical coding was conducted, seeking ways to contribute to theory and policy, with deference to how data speaks to questions of power and hegemony (Daymon & Holloway, 2010, p. 45-63). Questions regarding how we might use the data to build out theories include: what can we conclude about linkages as part of broader articulations? How do themes and the categories they synthesize amount to larger implications for policy making, for PR theorizing and practice? Where are the themes from interviews and texts different or the same, and to what effect?

CHAPTER 6: PR ACTIVITIES FROM CHAMORRO ACTIVISTS, LOCAL SENATORS, AND THE MILITARY SYSTEM

Introduction

Findings presented here are organized by research question, such that data pertaining to each of the three organizations of interest (Chamorro rights activists, I Liheslaturan Guåhan, and the U.S. military) is thematically summarized first by how they interact with their publics, second by how they refer to consent as a concept, and third by how they articulate narratives of environmentalism. The themes surfaced across data are multiple, overlapping, and in tension with each other, but the presentation of findings will refrain from engaging in analysis until Chapter 7. Key passages across both texts and interviews are highlighted below for ease of visual navigation.

RQ 1.1 - Activists' Missions Identify Their Publics

To summarize, when interacting with the people of Guåhan as a public, activist communication is focused on information sharing, where the activists are providing information *to* others to encourage debates and make decisions. When interacting with the government, local government seems to be a public with more gradations of positive and negative characteristics, whereas the federal government is more contentious. Similarly, the U.S. military as a stakeholder in the case has negative characteristics associated with it, sometimes to the point where it is no longer considered a key public for activists. Examples for this are also included below.

Informing the People

Discursively referring to the people of Guåhan as a public with whom they wish to communicate involves community-focused, inclusive language, with the goal of increasing awareness, as well as making decisions and taking action based on that awareness. Lita stated that “we hope to **reach the community**, people who **might not know what's going on**, people who may have heard a little bit, but maybe they're maybe not as informed about what's going on” (Lita, personal communication, 31 October 2021). Fiona similarly described that “one of the things we try to do a lot, of course, is kind of more of the **community outreach part**” specifically because influencing policies “won't mean much if the people don't **understand what's going on**” (Fiona, personal communication, 8 November 2021). Lenny stated that “the work that I do **in the community**, and at a professional level” as taking place in the larger context of “being for the good of **all people who call Guam home**” (Lenny, personal communication, 6 November 2021).

It appears that activists feel that reaching a variety of people through their inclusive notion of community will have important domino effects. Fiona described how activists' collective knowledge is “not supposed to be for a niche community,” and that sharing it has the following potential:

We gotta figure out ways to reach **all of Guam**. And we know that no matter how hard some of us try, from whatever perspective we're coming from, or whatever knowledge that we have, we will only reach a certain type of audience. But maybe this person over here, they have a **whole different kind of perspective**. They have a different, like, skill set. They can more easily reach the people that...I have trouble reaching. (Fiona, personal communication, 8 November 2021)

Even while activists discussed sharing information to help people come to their own conclusions as a major communication goal, they also want to be clear on their stances. When describing her

involvement with the Eco Warriors of Guam Community College, Lita noted that “so in our messaging... we’re kind of **very specific** about what the gripe was about with, you know, with the **military**” (Lita, personal communication, 31 October 2021). Lenny’s involvement with Independent Guåhan similarly noted that “there’s a **unified voice against militarization and against colonization**, and there is a unified vision of what decolonization should mean for the Chamorro people” (Lenny, personal communication, 6 November 2021). The group Prutehi Litekyan was also described as “doing a lot of work in trying to **get the message out about Camp Blaz**...and just every kind of **military environmental destruction** that’s going on on Guam” (Fiona, personal communication, 8 November 2021).

Texts from activists support that the people of Guåhan are a major public characterized by the interest of providing information to make community decisions. For example, an invitation to the “Fanohge: March for CHamoru Self-Determination” was extended to the community through a story in *Pacific Daily News*. The article explained that “this will be a peaceful and lawful march” that is “simply meant to be a chance for those who call Guam home to show their support for the idea of CHamoru self-determination.” Rather than push for one particular status over another, the march was intended to emphasize that it is Chamorros who should be the ones to decide, no matter the outcome. The march was articulated as a “chance to unite through respect and start that journey in the right spirit” (Bevacqua, 2019).

In characterizing the people of Guåhan as a key public, activists also make room for multi-sited identities that relate to having a sense of community. Fiona noted that “part of being an activist is **constantly learning**, improving, and helping,” and that embodying the fight for Chamorro values does not have to be any one thing. One does not “have to go to protest” or “write letters to the editor.” Instead, she reasoned, “you just have to not keep it to yourself.

Because what's the point of having all this information if it's not going anywhere?" (Fiona, personal communication, 8 November 2021). Lenny's description similarly stated that "we're not in a board meeting, like with a whiteboard, we're not drawing things out" because coming to activism is "**more intuitive**" than such processes (Lenny, personal communication, 6 November 2021). Members rely on ways they "have occupied some sort of professional or scholarly space or a career that gives them the skills and the insight into, you know, how to approach ... messaging, and communications" (Lenny, personal communication, 6 November 2021).

Among the people of Guåhan, activists further parse out another subcategory: the local media. Lita noted that activist communication is partially about "knowing...who are your sympathetic reporters," or those who are "on the same page" of activist organizations (Lita, personal communication, 31 October 2021). In discussing this public, Lenny noted that they are not necessarily adversarial, but that they are often sources to which activists "present a counter discourse" (Lenny, personal communication, 6 November 2021). As he explained, this is because "mainstream media will portray these [buildup] issues as distinctly Chamorro issues only," but that activist groups are "very successful" at showing that "these are issues that affect everyone on Guam" (Lenny, personal communication, 6 November 2021).

Differences Between Levels of Government

When it comes to the local government, activists describe some of their actions positively, but do seem to regard this key public with some tensions. Lita described how Senator Sabina Perez had "actually introduced bills to preserve certain areas of land to keep them from being developed" and "**that's really good**" (Lita, personal communication, 31 October 2021), while Lenny noted that "optically," former governor Eddie Calvo "**did a lot for political status**

and...engaging with the UN.” Lenny said that “the very fact that...he stated his **discontent with the status quo is, is good**” (Lenny, personal communication, 6 November 2021). However, the relationship that the local government has with the larger federal government of the U.S. and with the U.S. military complicates this public for activists. “The first thing that jumps out at me,” Lenny explained, “is the fact that there **isn't a unified** voice against militarization or our political status” that was more than “parroting US political frameworks” (Lenny, personal communication, 6 November 2021).

Relatedly, the government at the federal level is a public that invokes language of contention. When describing the articulation of the U.S. as a benevolent entity, Lita was skeptical: “OK, so the U.S. gave us money. But as the administering power, that's [their] responsibility, so **we don't have to be grateful**.” She later questioned this articulation again: “why should we be grateful for the US? Really, we should be demanding that the US stick to their promise of helping Guam” (Lita, personal communication, 31 October 2021). Fiona felt a similar desire to question narratives linking the U.S. to power, pointing out that “if you keep believing the victor narratives of history and of our present,” then it will normalize the belief that the people of Guahan “**don't have power in any of this**. We'll always believe...that's just what DoD does, that's just what DoJ does” (Fiona, personal communication, 8 November 2021). Lenny also pointed to the federal government in this specific manner, stating that “whenever there's...a federal action that necessitates...a consultation,” the current congressperson “has been **very oppositional**, I guess, to... the actions that our community organizations have taken” (Lenny, personal communication, 6 November 2021).

The Military: A Non-Public?

Interacting with the U.S. military sometimes involves requesting details, updates, and clarifications regarding the buildup. In adding a public comment to the proposal for a danger zone that would encompass land and sea, Laurie Peterka, executive director of Friends of the Mariana Trench, wrote a letter with nine subparts, asking for more specifics on the consequences for violating the safety zone, how the public (especially spearfisherman) will be educated on the issue, and how the boundaries would be patrolled. The letter ended with the comment that “several public outreach meetings should be held, notices should be periodically posted in local and social media on an ongoing basis” to keep the public updated on the logistics of the zone. The comment then noted that “specific notice to mariners should also be made on an ongoing basis,” demonstrating activist awareness of the people of Guåhan encompassing a variety of subgroups with specific communication needs (Friends of the Mariana Trench Issues Public Comment, 2020).

Activists seem to find that considering the military as a public is futile owing to a lack of trust in their powerful communication spheres, or the notion that any perceived criticism of the military is poorly received. Lenny, for example, noted that “they [the military] have all of these **resources to pour** behind, you know, their PR” and can ensure “media outlets here on Guam are **saying the right things at the right time** to the right people” (Lenny, personal communication, 6 November 2021). Lita stated that “skepticism is a healthy thing” when it can “cut through the crap that's...the **PR machine for the military**” (Lita, personal communication, 31 October 2021). On the other hand, Fiona shared an example of a fellow member of Independent Guahan facing backlash for publishing an article about an American soldier Chamorros hid during WWII, including the sacrifices they made for him: “they're like... ‘**you're just so anti military.**”

Why would you be saying these things?’’ (Fiona, personal communication, 8 November 2021). Lenny shared a similar story when he helped members of Liheslaturan Guåhan draft a resolution related to Guåhan’s aquifer. When it was presented, “republican” senators claimed “[they] should just call the resolution what it is, it’s an anti-military resolution.” He concluded saying that “even a resolution to protect our water resources like that, in itself **becomes contentious**” if or when “what is **implicated is our connection to the United States and the military**” (Lenny, personal communication, 6 November 2021). Because of this, any change desired by activists is “not going to happen by appealing to the military” (Lita, personal communication, 31 October 2021).

RQ 1.2 - The Law Identifies Guåhan Government’s Publics

One key public that the Guåhan government’s discourse brings to the fore encompasses government officials that act within the larger political structure of the U.S. legislative branch, furthering the tensions between how local government has discursive relationships to the larger U.S. political context. However, members of Liheslaturan Guåhan shared that, like activists, the people of Guahan are the key public they serve, though their manner of articulating this public differs slightly.

Value for the U.S. Legislature

Governor Lou Leon Guerrero’s voice featured prominently in this space, often using language emphasizing patriotism and value to U.S. strategy, and discursively reifying a unity between Guåhan and the US as interrelated entities. In a 2019 testimony to the Natural Resources Committee, the governor stated that “as you [the committee] know, **Guam is among the most patriotic places** in the entire country,” citing the statistic that “per capita, we have one of the

highest enlistment rates and veteran populations in the nation” as evidence. Governor L. Leon Guerrero stated “for decades and up until today, Guam understands that our location provides **our country** with a **valued location** in which to monitor and project military force in the Asia Pacific region.” She also communicated that this knowledge holds firm despite varied stances on military buildup: “it is **inarguable that we possess strategic value** and contribute to the national security of **our nation**” (Senate Natural Resources Committee Issues Testimony, 2019).

Carl Gutierrez, a former governor of Guåhan, similarly expressed strategic value and unity with the U.S. in an open letter published in response to comments made by Congresswoman Greene about Guåhan being a foreign country. He encouraged Greene to come see her how her “**fellow Americans'** hard-earned tax dollars are constantly being reinvested into this island, to **advance U.S. interests**,” and learn about how “our island's rate of military enlistment leads the nation.” He continued, recommending that she come see:

just how carefully we **protect our American borders** (especially during Covid), how **proudly patriotic** our people are, and how sacrificially devoted we remain to the protection of U.S. socioeconomic and geopolitical advantages in the Pacific, for the **security** of the 50 states and five major territories of our union. (Gutierrez, 2021)

The governor also noted that all of this is a “demonstration of Guam's commitment to American principles” (Gutierrez, 2021).

Public Servants

Similar to activists, the people of the island itself are a key public for the government of Guåhan, frequently characterized as the most important public to communicate with and for. When asked who she sees herself as being responsible to, Senator Sonja replied that it is “the

whole island, really... we don't limit who we communicate with" (Sonja, personal communication, 10 November 2021). She added that senators "even [communicate] with groups that are adversarial towards one another, in many instances" (Sonja, personal communication, 10 November 2021). Senator Sonja seemed to view the identification of this public as a matter of professionalism. She was asked "is there one particular party or is there like a hierarchy of parties that you see yourself as being most responsible to first and then it kind of trickles down? Or are you equally responsible to all of the different voices involved in these issues?" Her reply was "you're **equally responsible as a public servant**." She elaborated that "you shouldn't favor one [group] or the other. Yes, you still have your own personal beliefs. But I think when it comes to **matters of government process**, I think you should give everyone an opportunity for government process and make it fair across the board" (Sonja, personal communication, 10 November 2021). Senator Jen, on the other hand, agrees that reaching everyone is important, but more so in the interest of mobilizing the community. "I like to share it with those who are paying attention because they can mobilize faster" (Jen, personal communication, 17 March 2021). What is more, Senator Jen expressed that "I feel like if I can get the info because of **my official position here**," even if it is information that "if they [the military] don't want to share," she has the professional power to "**demand** a little bit louder" (Jen, personal communication, 17 March 2021).

In any case, after being informed of discoveries "in the form of Latte period ceramic scatter and lusong, or mortar and pestle" that "point to the potential existence of an ancient village" where a live-fire training range was being built, Senator Therese Terlaje expressed that "**future generations are relying on what our community does** in the next few days." In supporting Terlaje's call for a pause on construction, Senator Kelly Marsh also said that doing so

would be acting in “the **best interests of the CHamoru people and our community at large**” (Kaur, 2019). Joe Quinata, chief program officer of the Guam Preservation Trust (GPT, a non-profit, public corporation) also commented on the military’s proposed danger zone rule with a statement that declared “**access** to properties both on land, by the shore, and in the territorial waters of Guam **by the community** is crucial to continue traditional cultural practices” (Guam Preservation Trust, 2020).

However, serving the people as a public appears to have its limitations. Discourse from governing entities framed issues in a way that acknowledges different opinions that might be held by the people of Guåhan, but with an emphasis on legal parameters. At a public hearing held in July of 2019 by the Committee on Education, Air Transportation, and Statistics, Research, and Planning, Chairperson Telena Cruz Nelson explained that the “hearing **does not address whether we are for the military buildup or against** the military buildup” but to focus on the more singular issue of pausing construction in light of the archeological discoveries (Gelardi & Perez, 2019). In the 2019 testimony, Governor Leon Guererro stated that “**we welcome the military buildup** and the economic impact it will bring” with conditions on its pacing. Later, the governor focused on asserting Guåhan’s value to the U.S. “**whether one agrees or disagrees** with U.S. military presence on our island” (Senate Natural Resources Committee Issues Testimony, 2019). Here, it seems that following the law means focusing on more narrow and singular issues at a time, despite awareness that the people of Guåhan have varying opinions about the buildup.

There are also variations in how the senators make room for multisitedness. Given the slight differences in how the people of Guåhan as a key stakeholder, the manner in which the Senators communicated about multisited identity also differed. For Senator Sonja, she discussed

that “I work in the military and I've done it my whole adult life,” and she therefore “understand[s] giving information out on a need-to-know basis” as the military often does (Sonja, personal communication, 10 November 2021). Senator Jen does not have that same background, and therefore talked more about how “I can demand access” and when it is received, “I'm going to share that information.” “Whatever information you have,” she elaborated, “share it, because even if you can't use it, somebody might be able to, right? Somebody might be able to put a perspective on that that I haven't yet or no one has yet.” Mobilizing the community is part of placing herself within the community: “I think even in...in my official capacity, I want everybody to know above everything else, I am a Chamorro woman” (Jen, personal communication, 17 March 2021).

Military and the Letter of the Law

Characterizing the military as a public often emphasizes that they are technically within their legal right to act in certain ways, while lamenting that they are unwilling to take any action beyond following the letter of the law. For example, when the evidence of how Latte-period Chamorros might have lived were confirmed to be human remains approximately 1,000 years old, State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) Pat Lujan stated that “we are very, very interested and excited” a finalized version of the excavation reports, and that the findings “definitely [have] changed the dynamics and structure of Guam's northern plateau and what we thought it was.” However, language from the SHPO does not seem to indicate that operations came to a full stop. Instead, the office “**worked with** Camp Blaz and (Joint Region Marianas) to redesign their parking lot” that was supposed to be built where the remains were found, “so they've done that.” Additionally, in stating that the plan for honoring the history being revealed

was to build a monument and visitor's center at the base, the SHPO said that “we’ve **already moved onto** the designing of the monument” to memorialize Magua (Kaur, 2020). In interviewing Senator Sonja about the military's efforts, she states that “they're **following everything that we requested** on the programmatic agreement. They're not saying, ‘no, we're not going to do it.’ They're following everything that is there.” In general, “they're always good at implementing the process. They're good at keeping that standard, especially if it's written in the rules and regulations” (Sonja, personal communication, 10 November 2021).

The interview with Senator Jen deviated from this impression, as she emphasized that when “[senators] asked them to put a pause” on activities while issues related to assessing the burial sites were resolved, “there was not a pause. No pause was put on any of these projects.” They did not technically break a law, but have “gone full force at every opportunity for this construction” despite objections (Jen, personal communication, 17 March 2021).

RQ 1.3 - The U.S. Military Identifies its Own Publics

Two of the major publics the military interacts with are businesses (awarded contracts for the buildup) and the Japanese government (helping fund the buildup, with stake in moving Marines out of Okinawa). Both of these relationships are communicated with amicable character. Interacting with the people of Guahan, on the other hand, focuses on either meeting legal requirements, or opening up space for input without expressing the influence such input will have.

Businesses and Government

An August press release from Stanley Consultants, “a worldwide provider of engineering,

environmental and construction services” announced it would be part of a joint venture out of Alabama awarded a contract related to constructing Camp Blaz. Therein, Stanley Consultants Business Unit Leader John Downes stated the company was “**pleased to be affiliated with a tremendous group of professionals** working together toward a common goal of supporting the **needs of the Department of Defense** and furthering the interests of the U.S. government and its Japanese allies” (Stanley Consultants, 2020). When announcing a strategy meeting between U.S. and Japanese government officials that encompassed several Mariana islands as well as a stop at Camp Blaz, the DoD issued a press release that described how “Defense Secretary Dr. Mark T. Esper and Japanese Defense Minister Taro Kono discussed ways to **strengthen the already strong U.S.-Japanese partnership**” (DoD: Esper, Japanese Defense Minister Discuss, 2020). In the press release, Esper “**thanked the Japanese defense minister** for Japan's contribution and for Japan hosting American service members” (DoD: Esper, Japanese Defense Minister Discuss, 2020) and said that “it was a **pleasure to meet with** [Defense Minister Kono] again to **honor [the] strong bilateral relationship** and defense partnership” (Ngirairiki, 2020).

People of a Territory

As with the government of Guåhan, the U.S. military puts messages out to civilians both in the U.S. and the people of Guåhan. In addressing outcry against the construction of Camp Blaz, Lt. Brett Lazaroff, a communications officer in Marine Corps Activity Guam, said “that the Marine Corps is trying to **mitigate concerns** through transparency, dialogue and partnerships with **local government agencies while balancing the need to build a military base**” (Okinawa-based U.S. Marines, 2019). While actual engagement with “transparency” and “dialogue” would ordinarily be welcome, they appear alongside the message that the military

would be working to “mitigate” concerns, not address them directly. These mitigation efforts would also be through the system, not with the public directly. There is a notable tension that characterizes the people of Guåhan from the perspective of the U.S. military. In some cases, the military’s rhetoric is more stiff, focused on elements like legality. For example, when the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Marianas told the people about a Programmatic Agreement (PA) Memo, the memo was described as providing “new cultural and natural resources information associated with planned construction projects” (NAVFAC Marianas Announces, 2020). Opening the memo for comment was “an opportunity for interested members of the public to participate in the Section 106 **consultation process required** under the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)” (NAVFAC Marianas Announces, 2020). Additionally, when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers proposed implementing a danger zone related to Camp Blaz and the training range, directions for submitting public comment followed all rules of technicality, but did not make efforts to be intelligible and accessible (see Appendix C).

However, there are also cases where, as with the quote above, military discourse refers to its own concern for the people of Guåhan and their desire to be informed. In another example, an announcement of Camp Blaz’s official activation in *Stars and Stripes* magazine included a statement from the base’s first commander, Col. Bradley Magrath: “As the Marine Corps presence on Guam grows, I am confident that we ... will honor the history of the island of Guam, we will have the courage to defend it, and we will remain committed to preserving its cultural and environmental resources” (Robson, 2020c). The danger zone proposal also noted that it is “necessary to minimize potential conflicts between local populace activities and ongoing military training in the subject area.”

RQ 2.1 - Activist Consent and Self-Determination

While notions of personal consent are often denied as having been given, discursively constructing consent as a whole community often manifests in articulations that link consent to issues of political status. Activists do not make much explicit mention of how they go about obtaining consent for their own activities, continuing to reinforce the idea that the sharing of information through a variety of mediums leaves the decision to agree or disagree up to people who receive that information.

Giving Consent - A Political Impossibility

In the invite to the published in *Pacific Daily News* to the “Fanohge: March for CHamoru Self-Determination,” the notion of consent as legally and culturally constructed is accounted for. “For centuries,” the story notes, “**no one asked the CHamoru people** what they would like for the future of their island” and “they were not respected and their interests not accounted for” (Bevacqua, 2019). The invite also posited that self-determination is a step towards addressing “symptoms of colonialism,” and “represents a promise made to Guam’s people that has long gone unfulfilled.” In signing the Treaty of Paris “formally annexing Guam in 1898” and in signing the UN Charter in 1946,” the U.S. itself “affirmed and reaffirmed its own commitments to advance the political rights of the people of Guam, one of them being the right to self-determination” (Bevacqua, 2019). Self-determination is about fulfilling a historically based promise, and about a community’s ability to give or withhold consent outside current political apparatuses. Similarly for Lenny, “what comes to mind is the notion of **free, prior, and informed** consent, you know, from, of course, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.”

He continued:

what we see time and time, again, is that **our consent isn't a requirement** for any federal actions that are taking place, including the construction of Camp Blaz. And so all like, I feel like all I can say, really, is that there hasn't been a practice of, you know, consent with these actions. So consultation, sure. But there is no active and significant consultation or role that our compensation takes place. (Lenny, personal communication, 6 November 2021)

Here again is the notion of the military following the “letter of the law.” Where this effort was enough for some members of local government, activists note that this is related to the lack of explicitly given consent. As an example, Fiona described a time when the “official email for public comment that was posted on [the military’s] website,” but during the final hours of comment submissions, “it wasn't working and it was shut down.” Those who reported the issue were told nothing could be done, serving as “a reminder that, as much as they have these ‘for-show’ things...it's just a tick off a box.” Fiona concluded that “they don't actually have to hear us” (Fiona, personal communication, 8 November 2021). Lita also stated that “**the people have not given their consent. They've been consulted**, which is different” (Lita, personal communication, 31 October 2021).

Texts similarly indicate that activists feel the need for increased participation in political spaces. An article in the *Guam Daily Post* detailed how activists involved with the U.N. reached out to U.S. President Biden over the buildup happening “in the **absence of adequate consultation** with the Chamorro people and the associated threats to indigenous lands, resources, environmental and cultural rights.” They additionally asked for more information regarding how the informed consent of the Chamorro people would

be obtained in the face of continued construction, and how their inclusion on decision making processes would be addressed (O'Connor, 2021a).

RQ 2.2 - Guåhan Government and Legal Consent

If given, consent from members of this organization is conditional, and often uses language referring to the buildup as a given reality of the past and therefore an inevitable part of the present reality. In this way, giving consent for how the buildup came to be in the first place is not addressed, only consent for the resultant projects. For example, Governor Leon Guererro's discourse iterates a pro-buildup stance, but qualifies this stance with the condition that "**it must be done at a pace that will benefit our local people, our island, and the military**" (Senate Natural Resources Committee Issues Testimony, 2019). She voiced this *pro-build up with conditions* stance several other times. In May of 2019, when plans for the relocation of Marines projected their arrival as early as October of 2024, she said: "with the military buildup and the economic influx it will bring, our administration is determined to see that it **be done responsibly** and at a pace that will benefit and respect our local people, culture and environment" (Okinawa-based U.S. Marines, 2019). Later, she reiterated "I have been very transparent and consistent with my message that our administration **supports the buildup as long as it is balanced, responsible, and responsive** to the needs of our people and the protection of our environment and culture" (Post Staff, 2019).

At the time of this reiteration, the governor was part of the sixth Civil-Military Coordination Council, originally created in 2010 to "facilitate discussions and make recommendations to the Department of Defense to revise the military buildup's current and future construction tempo" (Post Staff, 2019). Similarly, in July of 2020, SPHO Lujan "invoked

Stipulation [13] of the 2011 Programmatic Agreement,” stating in a letter to Rear Admiral Menoni that “the numerous findings of historical sites and human remains” at both the training range and Camp Blaz revealed the “deficiencies” of the 2015 Training Range Review and Analysis (TRRA) (Post Staff, 2020b). These are further examples of discourse involving the local government where the base is already an assumed reality, and voicing concerns remains confined to legal structures. The Coordination Council would not question the buildup, only decide on the pace of construction. Stipulation 13 was one of the conditions of the Programmatic Agreement, itself a contract that does not allow for consent to buildup projects, only the conditions for them to occur.

RQ 2.3 - The U.S. Military Approximating Consent

Consent is rarely explicitly obtained. Instead, the military leverages the power of press releases to control narratives that would question its place on the island at all. They push articulations of their presence as always already apparent, and always beneficial. This includes linking the buildup to Chamorro pride, progress, and strategy, as well as linking the U.S. military to cultural embeddedness.

Articulating Camp Blaz: History and Honor

The name of the base in and of itself is an articulation that links Chamorro pride with military service and sacrifice, and also links the government of Guåhan with the U.S. in a way that is inspiring and unifying, rather than fraught with colonial tensions. In *Stars and Stripes* news, it is announced that the base will be named “after one of the island’s most revered sons.” Guåhan Congresswoman Madeleine Bordallo recommended the “**honor**” of being the base’s

namesake be given to Marin Brig. Vincente “Ben” Tomas Garrido Blaz, the “highest ranking Chamorro to have served in the Marines.” She stated that Blaz “embodied the values and **spirit of Guam, the Chamorro people, and the U.S. Marine Corps,**” and was “a true patriot and statesman” who “served **our country and island** with distinction” (Burke, 2018). Describing the basename as an “honor” continues throughout its development, mentioned several more times in other texts (Robson, 2020a; Stanley Consultants, 2020).

In naming the base for Ben Blaz, the military also appears to be addressing his potentially more antagonistic stances on Chamorro rights. The discourse of the *Stars and Stripes* piece memorializes Blaz as follows:

[Blaz is] best remembered for his advocacy in seeing the return of unused U.S. military land to the people of Guam, publicizing Guam's role during World War II, fighting for federal benefits for low-income, disabled and elderly constituents and for attempting to establish Guam as an American commonwealth rather than an unincorporated U.S. territory (Burke, 2018).

In aligning themselves with a figure who wanted to advance Chamorros politically, they do not have to actually engage in those political changes. They point to awareness of his stances on political status and increased rights for Chamorro veterans, but make no mention of plans to continue discourse on these issues.

Later, when the base announced its activation, discourse focused on the physical structure itself having historical significance, noting that Camp Blaz is “the first new Marine installation since Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany was commissioned in Georgia on March 1, 1952” (Robson, 2020c). Discourse in *The Guam Daily Post* similarly announced to local readers that “this will be the first new Marine Corps base activated in 68 years,” as “Marine Corps Logistics Base in Albany, Georgia” was the last activated base previously (Daleno, 2020).

Buildup is Progress, Progress is Priority

There are several examples of discourse in the text that discursively articulate the buildup as a given, and its developments as a good thing. Deputy Officer Donald Baldwin, in charge of Marine Corps Activity Guam at the time, called one of the earliest contracts awarded for base-related development “a tangible symbol of **progress**” (Navy Awards Contract, 2020). Commanding Officer Capt. Joe Greeson said that “the Office in Charge of Construction Marine Corps Marianas (OICC MCM) is **ready and energized to begin construction** of the first major buildings situated on Camp Blaz,” and that the contract award “signifies not only our commitment to force relocation, but also **represents the hard work of many dedicated professionals** in preparing the site for construction.” (Navy Awards Contract, 2020). Later, when a \$36 million firm-fixed-price contract was awarded, the next Commanding Officer, Capt. Steven Stasick, described it as “**a key milestone** for the Officer in Charge of Construction Marine Corps Marianas and Camp Blaz” (Post Staff, 2020c). The article covering this contract and the statement released by Joint Region Marianas noted that the awardee is a company based out of the Guåhan village of Dededo. At the very bottom of the article, it is briefly noted that the statement also said “Navy **construction on Guam is to continue** despite the halt to civilian construction ordered by Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero last week” (Post Staff, 2020c). Again, this emphasizes that articulations of progress take priority over dealing with ways the government of Guåhan and the people they represent work to withhold their consent.

Alongside this discourse of contracts as economic progress is the mention of technological progress: “the heart of Camp Blaz, where barracks will be built for unaccompanied Marines, is **next door to Naval Computer and Telecommunications Station Guam**... The top secret listening post includes an **impressive array of white domes** that look like giant golf

balls.” (Robson, 2020a). Other positive discourses include Defense Secretary Esper visiting Camp Blaz before meeting with Japanese Defense Minister, stating that “I just came from Camp Blaz, where **I saw firsthand the tremendous progress** we've made on the buildup of facilities to accommodate 5,000 Marines under the realignment plan” (Ngirairiki, 2020). A press release about a local company being awarded a contract described the project as “the **new state-of-the-art digital communications** backbone at Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz” that would “provide on-island connectivity to more than 60 facilities within the new base, along with worldwide connectivity.” Will Boudra, NAVFAC Pacific Guam Program Management Office Director, said that “best way I have found to visualize this project is to think of it as the **digital superhighway** for Camp Blaz,” and that it was an additionally important update because “we were able to award the additional Telecommunications Cabling project **three months ahead of schedule**” (Post Staff, 2020f).

Safety and Strategy

Examples of this theme abound. Continuing the buildup represents “long-standing rules and norms” of military operations that would not be changed, as Marines “remain dedicated to **preserving a free and open** Indo-Pacific region, working with our partners and our allies, such as Japan” (DoD: Esper, Japanese Defense Minister Discuss, 2020). The activation of Camp Blaz is contextualized in larger geo-political conflicts, occurring “at a time of rising tensions in the Pacific as China presses claims to sea territory and builds military forces that threaten U.S. forces stationed in the region,” but the base “**secures a Marine Corps posture** in the region that is geographically distributed and operationally resilient” (Robson, 2020c). As such, “MCB Camp Blaz will play an essential role in strengthening the Department of Defense's **ability to deter**

and defend, and is also a **testament to the strength of the U.S.-Japan alliance**, which is a cornerstone of peace, security, and prosperity in the region” (Athey, 2020). Even aspects of the base itself are defined in terms of prioritizing safety. Capt. Steven Stasick, commanding officer of OICC MCM, stated that a contract awarded to a Dededo construction company to build a gate is of great importance because the gate “will provide the main and commercial entrance for the installation, and **will be the first line of force protection**” (Post Staff, 2020c).

All of this rhetoric assumes the buildup is the best option for U.S. strategy. Texts reveal that not only is the buildup an undisputed part of Guåhan’s past, but that it will continue to construct Guåhan’s future. In March of last year, an article in *Arab News* described how “the Biden administration has important plans for Guam’s future in terms of military projection and protection” and that “Guam is an important part of the larger US strategic picture” (Karasik, 2021).

Community Embeddedness

In a *Stars and Stripes* article describing the base’s construction, Navy Cmdr. Brian Foster states that the base and all related infrastructure projects will be “a **huge benefit** to everybody who lives on the island” (Robson, 2020a). About a year later, a press release announcing more contracts being awarded noted that “two companies included in the contract are based in Guam,” and that as a result, “significant funding will flow into the Guam business economy” (Navy awards \$990M, 2021). Coverage of this same release in the *Guam Daily Post* noted that “**active participation of the Guam** engineering and architectural design firms, construction companies and suppliers is **critical to the success of the build-up**,” implicating local labor in the success of the base. In keeping with this theme of community embeddedness through local economic

channels, NAVFAC Pacific Deputy for Small Business Programs Regina Pasqualucci released a statement regarding a telecommunication contract that was awarded to a company based in Dededo. She said the military was “very pleased to have awarded this contract to a **local company** in Guam” because this decision “**helps spread the work** throughout small businesses on the island” (Post Staff, 2020f).

Additionally, the annual Toys for Tots campaign is a major way the military’s communication appears to highlight its community embeddedness. Rather than through economic involvement like the examples above, the Toys for Tots campaign embeds the military in Guåhan’s community through mutual desire to help. Col. Bradley Magrath’s language described the drive as “an opportunity for us to **unite as a community** and provide hope and joy to the children and families of those less fortunate,” and that the Marines of Camp Blaz “intend to **honor our commitment and responsibility to the community by executing our Toys for Tots campaign**” (SECNAV: Strengthening Partnerships, 2020). An article in the *Guam Daily Post* also included the colonel thanking “**all our partners**, volunteers and anyone who was able to contribute to the campaign. Their **selflessness, charity and dedication to the community** ensured the success of the Toys for Tots campaign.” The next year, press for the Toys for Tots campaign continued into March when “Master Sgt. Eugenio Ramirez of Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz presented a certificate of appreciation” to Saipanese partners in the campaign, stating that “we were able to work together to overcome the challenges to make the 2020 Toys for Tots Campaign a success. We look forward to a bigger and better 2021” (US Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz thanks, 2021).

RQ 3.1 - Activist Environmentalism and a Sense of Place

Activist communication regarding environmentalism has both external judgements and internal narratives. Externally, activists take the time to assess the degree to which they trust the claims to environmentalism shared by the key publics they engage with, and leverage explicit criticism of the military's environmental discourse. Internally, activist narratives of environmentalism are again tied to notions of sovereignty, and its implications for cultural awareness and indigenous futurity.

External Judgements

Lita established that “the business community tends not to understand...the importance of protecting the environment. So they're thinking of the bottom line, bringing more tourists in.” However, she noted that there might be ways to “preserve some of [the natural] forest on site” and still make a profit, such as leaving evidence of latte in place to create a destination where people can pay to “walk into the area and look around.” While protecting profits is not necessarily an activist goal, “if we can get more...developers thinking along those lines,” Lita posited, “that could help” overall environmental efforts (Lita, personal communication, 31 October 2021).

In her past background in marine biology and current capacity as a science educator, Lita also spent much of the interview calling attention to the ways in which the military is degrading the environment. She first stated that “the [U.S.] **military is the biggest user of fossil fuels** in the world.” She also commented on the following: *deforestation*, where the construction of the base involved “coming in and taking down a resource that actually helps, you know, is like a carbon dioxide sink, the forest. I'm not saying that it would have been there for forever, but

coming in and, and doing that is not a good thing”; *warmaking* technology, where “the activity associated with the military” including “emissions from the jets, the emissions from transporting troops or people” adds to pollution; *aquifer pollution*, where “the heavy metals that are going to come out of the range” could “potentially, you know, find a way into the water system, the aquifer” that the people of Guåhan “depend on”; *ocean habitats*, where “the activities that are, that are going to be going on in the region on the ocean” with battleships or submarines could cause more pollution. This last issue was of particular concern for climate change because “we have...our own Mariana humpback whale population” that “stir up the water” by moving “up and down in the water column,” providing “nutrients for the phytoplankton at the surface of the water” which then help “produce 20 to 50 percent of the oxygen that we breathe on Earth.” Lita was concerned that training exercises could disturb the whale’s habitat and role in this process. She was also skeptical of the military’s plan to deal with this concern:

they say, “Oh, we’re going to have lookouts at the bow watching for the whales and the sea turtles, you know, and the dolphins.” And I’m just like, “honestly?! How fast are you going?”...but there is an accepted take of the marine mammals. **To them, it’s an acceptable take.** And to me, there is no acceptable take of marine mammals! I mean, they’re endangered to begin with! Why would you even say anything like that is acceptable? (Lita, personal communication, 31 October 2021)

Lenny also felt that their narratives of environmentalism can be traced back to reliance on articulations of strategy and sacrifices made in the name of progress. “They’re very successful, and shaping an image of themselves and their actions as environmentally conscious” and “that’s something we see with ... the Department of Defense ... when it comes to the build up as a whole.” He claimed “they say ‘we’re going to rip up your native forest, but we’re going to make it better in a different place,’ you know?” while also reminding the people of Guåhan “‘we’re

doing this for you guys, we're doing this for conservation, and look at all the great things we're doing'” (Lenny, personal communication, 6 November 2021).

Internal Sense of Place

Fiona succinctly ties together elements of environmental justice with those of sovereignty, saying “independence is indigenous rights, its environment, its economy, its culture” (Fiona, personal communication, 8 November 2021). For Lenny on a personal level, environmentalism includes the fact that “land to me means not just .. this land, but I mean, ... the ocean surrounding it.” As such:

“it's not just the conservation of the habitat or species...but it's the preservation and protection of these things. For the people as well, as much as it is for the land itself. Because as indigenous peoples of these islands ... this is our home. And ... there's the idea that if we take care of the land, land will take care of us.” (Lenny, personal communication, 6 November 2021)

When it comes to the organizations he is involved with, Lenny noted how the linking of pollution prevention and sovereignty may not seem obvious. However, this supports the arguments of sovereignty as environmental justice inherent to Chamorro self-assertions outlined in Chapter 3. Specifically, Lenny referenced how Independent Guåhan's messaging spends time “drawing the connection, for instance, between displacement, land displacement, and political status, or pollution and political status.” He argued that the organization “is great at...showing the implications of political status on all of these different issues that we wouldn't normally think of as being related” (Lenny, personal communication, 6 November 2021).

RQ 3.2 - Government of Guåhan

Local government officials all express narratives of environmentalism that invoke elements of stewardship. Quinata's public comment on the danger zone proposal on behalf of the Guam Preservation Trust centered culture and articulated an indigenous perspective of nature:

GPT maintains a strong position to advocate for the preservation of the CHamoru Culture and elements of its cultural heritage. This includes supporting an approach that recognizes the **connection between nature and culture**, its resources **both on land and in the waters** surrounding Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands" (Guam Preservation Trust, 2020).

However, not all interviewees expressed emotional connection to the land as Lita did. On the contrary, Senator Sonja actively delineated emotions as nearly opposite to facts. In talking about how communication often relies on emotion, she noted that "I think that we need to know real journalism." As an example, she talked about "The sentimentality of the insular cases, right?" and how "there is this big push in Congress" to "do away with the insular cases. And then, somehow, the Legislature kind of...latched on" to the emotion of the discourse. As a counter, she stated: "Well, don't forget, the insular cases started a foundation on how we receive federal money!" and that stepping back from emotions would remind people that changing Guåhan's political status is "going to take away some of our rights, some of the funding that we receive." Here again, some government officials speaking in their professional capacity choose to communicate within the framework of legality. Senator Jen communicated different ideas when it comes to emotional ties to the land, with meaning-making aligning more closely with activists. In discussing developments of Camp Blaz, Senator Jen observed that "Sometimes I feel like, maybe not by choice, but by necessity or by just because that is what comes natural to me," but either way "I'm going to communicate emotion."

Additionally, where activists were explicitly critical of the military as a larger system degrading the environment, Senator Sonja was hesitant to give an opinion on overall military systems and their environmentalism in this way: “That’s hard to say, you know?” Instead, she turned to personal narratives, more comfortable speaking on her own experiences. “I know that as a soldier that, when we go to a place, we ensure that we...leave it cleaner than...the way we first came onto it” (Sonja, personal communication, 10 November 2021).

Senator Sonja also turned to a more specific example of military activity and environmentalism; however, this creates a noticeable tension between her other statements mentioned previously. In discussing how “we do have a lot of concern when it comes to the effect” of military activity that is “on top of our aquifer,” Senator Sonja stated that “there has not been a pause” despite “efforts where we have asked for a pause...for further testing, for the data, for the science - to prove that whatever it is that they’re firing will not damage our aquifer.” However, rather than adhere to this request, Sonja stated that “the mission still continues.” She then noted that speaking out against the continuance of “the mission” is a point of contention. “This is highly controversial, protecting our aquifer. But it’s because...this is the military. And you’re talking over a billion dollars.” This linkage of military activity with economic elements and focus on mission stands contrary to her personal experiences, as well as her hesitancy to comment on the military overall, especially considering that “if we talk environmentalism” Senator Sonja thinks protecting the aquifer “is the most important one” (Sonja, personal communication, 10 November 2021).

Senator Jen was more willing to criticize military conceptions of environmental stewardship, stating that the “destruction of [burial sites] removes our connection to our ancestors. It removes our connection to our heritage,” but that the military “told us all kinds of

stories all along.” Reports and pictures provided by archeologist protocols “are so not the same as being able to stand in the spot that the village was, right? And think, too, to stand in the same place, to experience the same resources around you. For example, how close are you to the ocean? How close are you to the cliff? How close are you to freshwater?” This is connected to person and sense of self. When discussing what it was like to stand in places like Litekyan and Magua, Senator Jen described the following: “It makes you breathe. It makes your brain imagine. It makes your brain pray. It makes you connect to spiritual elements and it does all of that just because you're able to stand there” (Jen, personal communication, 17 March 2021).

RQ 3.3 - Military Legacies of Corrosion Continue

Early texts from the military articulate Guåhan as empty space, supporting the narratives surfaced in answer to RQ2, where progress is priority. Before construction of Camp Blaz began “taking shape,” *Stars and Stripes* described the land as “covered in a thick jungle **full of snakes** and littered with **World War II-era bombs and bullets**” (Robson, 2020a). That is, it *was*, “until recently.” Notably, this language overlooks the U.S. military’s role in why warmaking debris was evident on the land in the first place. Later in that same text, more details of the condition of the land are revealed, again without reference to the military’s role: “In 18 months, the workers have cleared snake-filled jungle that covered a small arsenal of unexploded munitions, including bombs as large as 500 pounds, grenades, rockets and bullets.” Robson (2020a) does note that “not everyone agrees” with the buildup, describing how “more than 100 residents held a roadside protest south of the planned base to voice concerns about the construction's impact on the environment and cultural sites.” However, this is followed with mitigation language, as “the Navy is trying to **limit the impact** of the projects on the island's ecology.”

Additionally, Camp Blaz's website has an entire page dedicated to "environmental stewardship and cultural preservation." The military's perspective attests to its "good stewardship principles," wherein "the natural environment is a **key asset** to the **mission**," rather than a source of life or sovereignty (Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz, 2015).

Later discourses utilize language of mitigation restoration to set up their narrative as environmentally responsible, while also echoing previous themes of and cultural embeddedness, and prioritizing progress. For example, the press release announcing the forest enhancement project last year noted it was "the largest forest restoration effort in the island's recorded history." Al Borja, Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Marianas Environmental Director, also stated the belief that military conservation efforts would need "to infuse **community** values" from "**our region**'s best and brightest." Borja's statement also contained "hope" for "the partnership with the University of Guam" eventually being able to "further attract and create opportunities for **our aspiring local conservationists** to develop and contribute to solutions for our declining forests." Again, this language removes the military's culpability for forest decline in the first place, positioning the military as generally concerned for environmental well-being while also integrating its presence into the futures of "local conservationists." Ultimately however, leveraging conservationists to include community values in conservation efforts was discursively situated as a way to "to achieve long-term success **supporting conservation and the DoD mission** in Guam and throughout the Marianas" (Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz, University of Guam, 2021). Progress, as ever, is priority.

CHAPTER 7: CURRENT IMPLICATIONS FOR CHAMORRO PR, FUTURE POSSIBILITIES FOR PR RESEARCH

Discussion

While literature from other fields has long accounted for the need to question militarization (Alexander, 2016; Na‘Puti, 2014), there is a dearth of research concerning how PR communication, its tools, and its theories could formulate a productive intervention for Chamorro sovereignty. Filling this gap is necessary in the face of the continued militarization on Guahan, evidenced recently by Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz activating, despite local efforts to call the project into question. Nationally, it is also pertinent to continue studying articulations of Guahan because aversion to the word “colony” and narratives of American Exceptionalism continue to pervade in U.S. discourse (Kaplan, 1993; Mitchell & Dower, 2020). In addition to clarifying PR’s role in the communication landscape of Guahan, these conclusions will also aim to appropriately leverage PR strategy in indigenous spaces as a way to address the larger issue of effective climate change communication.

Tools of Distribution

In describing the meaning-making processes, activists make it clear that their communication is for the people of the island, voters who can support their goals in legislative spaces, and people who might generally benefit from the information activists have. While their disinterest in communicating with the military directly (rather than through local and even federal governing bodies) stems from the view of these conversations as futile, this does limit the volume of their messages in the PR communication landscape. The sheer number of press

releases containing figures and statements journalists can use, the frequency with which they distribute them, and the reach this distribution achieves drowns out many activist attempts to share information. For example, when the military announced that Camp Blaz had been activated, the story appeared in *Stars and Stripes* magazine (Robson, 2020) and was then picked up by the *Guam Daily Post* (Daleno, 2020). The *Post*'s story then appeared in *The Newton County Times* in Arizona (Post Staff, 2020f), James Madison University's newspaper in Virginia (Marines activate Guam base, 2020a), a university paper in Kentucky (Marines activate Guam base, 2020b), *The Daily American* in Pennsylvania (Marines activate Guam base, 2020c), *Harrison Daily Times* in Arizona (Marines activate Guam base, 2020d), and Indiana University's newspaper (Marines activate Guam base, 2020e). When Defense Secretary Dr. Mark Esper met with Japanese Defense Minister Taro Kono, the story was picked up by U.S.-based *Eurasia Review* (Garamone, 2020) and appeared in Thai News Service (United States: Esper, Japanese Defense Minister Discuss, 2020). Activists interviewed expressed the impression that the PR capabilities of the military are well-resourced, and texts gathered in this research support this perspective. However, activist communication strategies did not express a clear plan for using PR practitioner tools such as story pitches. This contributes to the larger problem of "a complete lack of regard for Guåhan and no significant media attention directed toward island issues" (Na'Puti, 2014) in U.S. media discourse.

Practical implications therefore emerge for expanding PR practitioner roles in Indigenous spaces as cultural intermediaries (Carneiro & Johnson, 2015; Ciszek, 2017). While paying for stories to appear on distribution services might be out of the question for Chamorro activists working with limited financial resources, PR practitioners could be of use in helping pitch activist stories to media contacts outside the island. In doing so, a greater variety of stories

featuring voices from activist organizations (e.g. official statements, facts and figures, etc) could be distributed across an increased number of outlets, and the awareness of Guahan's endeavors for self-determination could increase along with this distribution. A potential fringe benefit could be correspondingly fewer public figures such as U.S. Representative Majorie Taylor Greene referring to Guahan as a foreign country that should not receive U.S. federal aid before American citizens. More importantly, however, PR strategy could increase reach specifically to diasporic Chamorros. Michael Perez discusses how his own multisitedness as a Chamorro scholar from California means that sometimes, he is "at the edge of political and cultural life on Guam as an insider without" observing Guahan from afar. At other times, he is an outsider within the U.S. mainland, a "place where Pacific Islanders tend to be socially invisible as native islanders," or only visible insofar as minorities are "homogenized...assumed to fit under umbrella categories such as Hispanic and Asian Pacific." However, he allows this complex identity of "personal and academic marginality and transnationality as a diasporic Chamorro" to empower him with particular insights, navigating its nuances like Chamorro ancestors navigate the changing oceans (Perez, 2005, p. 170). It is possible that reaching other Chamorros not physically located in the Marianas through press releases could similarly empower them to join conversations about sovereignty the way Fiona and Senator Jen hope for, and offer support and perspectives regarding self-determination initiatives.

Relatedly, a key player in the communication landscape that is not present in current work but could augment these conclusions in the future is the voice of local Guahan media professionals. This directly relates to the military's volume in communication, as they are constantly providing stories for local journalists to cover. Activists indicate a difficult relationship with local media wherein they have struggled previously to be seen as legitimate,

and are consistently up against the narrative that anything remotely critical of the military is inherently bad. Whether or not local journalists hold this view of organizations or the military, or the extent to which they do so, cannot be clearly concluded from the data. What is shown, however, is a clear presence of military voice in local and national outlets, with military officials being quoted more often and buildup stories being from the perspective of the military compared to activist narratives of sovereignty. Future research could seek to more definitely map out the communication relationship between those who carry out PR activities and members of the local media.

PR and Disarticulation

When it comes to messages originating from the governor of Guahan, and communicated to wider federal government structures, one theme from the findings was the continuous efforts to discursively signal Guahan's value to the U.S., and its strong patriotism inherent to ongoing buildup projects. While this strategy might help to articulate Guahan as relevant to federal affairs, it is limited in that it prevents the ability to surface antagonisms. In Stuart Hall's example of articulating what it means to be black addressed in the introductory chapter, it was not until those marginalized by the linkages between black and elements of "laziness" and "disenfranchisement" truly recognized the linkages as negative that disarticulation became possible. If PR communication from Guahan's government continues to adhere to narratives that link the U.S. to military supremacy and subsequently the island to military strategy, disarticulations of Guahan as the "tip of the spear" for neo-colonial powers discussed in Chapter 4 will likely remain elusive.

Here, PR theorizing could instead root itself in concepts of environmental justice to point out that this political and economic discourse are all attempts to justify the military buildup on an island of people without the full rights of residents in U.S. states (Alexander, 2016; Na'Puti, 2014). Thus, it is precisely this discourse that also articulates the island, its people, its resources, and the epistemological relationships therein as disposable if it does not serve U.S. purposes. The Standing Rock Water Protectors were able to draw many non-Indigenous people to their cause by linking the original route of the Dakota Access Pipeline through a white neighborhood (elements of race) with the violation of Lakota nation treaties (elements of policy) and their sacred burial grounds (elements of culture). PR theory could extrapolate these developments to highlight Guahan's value being contingent on U.S. narratives of strategy, violating Chamorro rights to sovereignty and environmental justice.

Relatedly, the statement from Col. Bradley Magrath regarding Camp Blaz's activation noted that "As the Marine Corps presence on Guam grows, I am confident that we ... will honor the history of the island of Guam, we will have the courage to defend it, and we will remain committed to preserving its cultural and environmental resources" (Robson, 2020c). This PR communication brings several linkages to light. First, nowhere in "honoring the history" of the island did military PR acknowledge US naval occupation after the Spanish-American War, or how the people of Guåhan had to fight the federal government for citizenship through the Organic Act, historical factors detailed in Chapter 4's discussion of Perez and political sovereignty. Second, articulating the U.S. military occupation as a matter of bravery and defense elides that the military's presence is not purely *reactive*, but part of a *proactive* strategy that involves maintaining a threatening presence in the Pacific region. Third, saying that the military will "remain" committed to environmental and cultural preservation articulates these efforts as

always already occurring. Here again, without concerted efforts to support those calling attention to these linkages and searching for effective antagonisms, military PR will continue to successfully posture the buildup as already culturally sensitive, and inevitable to the future of the island.

Tools of Stakeholder Identification

One possible way to center decolonized practices in PR theory focuses on expanding what it means to be a key stakeholder. The project proceeds with caution here – working to avoid some of the ways mainstream environmentalism slips into Western elitism, and keeping an eye toward indigeneity as an analytic – as it proposes that the natural environment should hold a more concrete place in processes used to identify stakeholders. This is of course not to say that organizations should write press releases or design website copy to target the natural environment. Rather, the current work posits that what we might call a *stakeholder-adjacent* category should exist that affords the natural environment the level of complexity and power it holds for indigenous publics. In this way, interacting with Indigenous publics would then *require assessment of the natural environment as having value and needs in and of itself*. More so, this assessment would need to be specific to a given community's epistemological relationship to their geographical space's history and future. Working with an indigenous community as a key public would require more sophisticated apparatuses to understand their particular relationship to the natural environment, and to augment their expressions of sovereignty as tied to how identities move in and around a sense of place. Considering the land and sea of Guahan as holding stakeholder-adjacent status could have several implications for the buildup. Apart from the inaccessibility of the 11,000-page EIS created for the relocation of Marines, Senator Jen talked

about how the pagecount indicated that just “the baseline of risk” for the projects was already “huge,” only to later discover that “the risk is actually much higher than anyone predicted.” Rather than rely on data estimations that ended up inaccurately representing the environmental and cultural risks anyway, stakeholder adjacency could demand, for example, that Chamorro experts be brought in as more consequential decision-makers in regards to land use. This would also recognize Chamorros and their culture “as subjects of discourse rather than passive recipients or mere objects of discourse for academic research” (Na’puti, 2014, p. 305). Here again, PR could be a field for cultural intermediaries, expressing indigenous epistemology in messages shared between an organization and its publics, bringing the concerns of the adjacent stakeholder to the discourse in a way that privileges indigenous voices. The natural environment *would be recognized as having necessary, specific, consequential needs*, expressed through those whose sense of self is tied to a sense of place.

Stakeholder adjacency might also give those who hold professional positions a means through which to legitimately express their emotional connection to the island and all it offers those who take care of it. For example, Senator Jen expressed being unsure of what validity there might be by having an emotional reaction to discussing the construction of Camp Blaz, or even how expressing emotion might jeopardize how seriously she is taken. Implementing tools for stakeholder adjacency could be a means through which that emotion might be expressed as necessary to, rather than contrary to, a public service office. If PR activities recognize that the Chamorro community as a public is tied to sovereignty, and that sovereignty is tied to land, that emotional expression is part of how to interact with that public, not an individualized response. It becomes a sign that full and explicit consent for all activities has somehow been violated, and the organization responsible must be held accountable.

Relatedly, stakeholder adjacency has the potential to mend the gap that seems to exist between local government interests and activists interests such that their unification might be more effective against strong military strategies. Some local government interests seem to align with military messaging that emphasizes the buildup as potentially having economic benefits on the island, and political benefits for the island as a larger part of US military strategy. Activist interests, however, emphasize that they find this information misleading. Here, we may turn to PR strategies of reaching consensus through two-way communication and open public discourse. All parties agree that the buildup has not regarded the land with the level of respect and caution Chamorro culture would warrant, but, as indicated previously, articulate this dissatisfaction with the buildup through discourse about its effects. However, if the land itself was treated as if it had some degree of autonomy (e.g., it has ecosystems that can regulate themselves), this could strengthen overall discourses related to irresponsible land use. Before discussing what the effects, positive or negative, of the build-up might be, stakeholder adjacency could root conversations first in the matter of the reality of the land use in the first place. Rather than perpetuate discourse of the buildup as an apparent reality, PR processes could again rely on amplifying the voices of those connected to the island as experts.

Limitations

One major limitation this project faces is that data collection, analysis, and presentation is monolingual. Bearing in mind Ginoza's discussion of how translation is not an objective act that perfectly reconstructs language, working to bring PR theory and practice into spaces of indigeneity and its discursive expressions using only English language leaves some gaps. For instance, use of the Chamorro concept of *inafa'maolek* in drawing conclusions from data can

include that it has many different meanings. Some of these include the promotion of interpersonal, personal, and ecological harmony, as well as honoring the gifts presented in the past with appreciation in the present. However, extracted from the rest of the Chamorro language and displaced from the regions that speak it means the fullness of this value cannot be realized here. Additionally, interviews were conducted by an English-only speaker, and texts were filtered by English-only search terms and results. This limits the extent to which boundaries of communication can be pushed, much less a specific subfield of communication such as PR.

Data collection limitations also manifested in the inability to represent meaning-making processes *behind* messages distributed by the military. Its discourse (including press release content, and frequency of distribution) can be somewhat accounted for, and the lack of access to thought processes behind message creation in and of itself has implications. However, the lack of interview data from a solely buildup-oriented perspective must be acknowledged. Not speaking to anyone directly in the military is especially difficult because much of this analysis is about the military as a greater system working in tandem with the federal government's motivations; not having a specific person's values and belief systems represented to compare and contrast with the press releases is limiting.

Temporally, the completion of Camp Blaz construction and projects associated with the buildup for relocating the Marines from Okinawa to Guåhan overall is expected to continue for the next few years. Thus, analyses for the year preceding the activation (2019) up to the year after the activation of Camp Blaz (2021) are a snapshot of an ongoing story.

Future Directions

Current analysis looked at the meaning-making processes that influence how and why PR messages are created, as well as the content of the messages themselves. While the data inevitably revealed some of the ways messages are received and perceived, it mostly focuses on outgoing communication. Building on this research could therefore involve analysis of how PR communication is more multi-directional. More specifically, different mediums allow for publics to respond to messages, or facilitate ongoing conversations between organizations and their publics: both Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz and Independent Guåhan have Facebook and Instagram pages where different publics can engage in Web 2.0 communication dynamics. Analysis of these platforms could be conducted from the perspective of dialogic theory, which looks at the “openness of organizations to consult publics in matters that impact them and the willingness of publics to voice their demands to the organization” (Dutta & Elers, p. 3). How do varied mediums provide the *opportunity* for two-way communication, and what is the extent to which the organizations then actually *engage* in two-way communication? If there are comments, what are the differences in how organizations respond? What are the metrics (reactions, comments, shares) associated with different posts, i.e. what type of message receives the most circulation? How do messages across mediums reflect the identification of different publics, or reinforce messaging targeting the same publics? What can we conclude about the role PR communication tools play in receiving input from and interacting with different publics?

In the interest of furthering decolonial spaces in PR literature without reifying hegemonic, largely Western systems of coming to knowledge, future studies could also extend data collection. First, beyond sharing knowledge orally, what are the ways in which identifying sites of data could better account for more embodied communication practices? For example,

augmenting this research could include ethnographic tools that can document how people move around a space at public hearings hosted by the local government, or public forums hosted by activist organizations. How can PR theory and practice productively think through embodied communication for groups epistemologically and cosmologically tied to the natural environment? Second, what are the ways in which Chamorros of the past split heterogeneous groups of people into smaller, homogenous groups (or, publics), and how does that differ from the way publics are identified and characterized today? Historicizing the development of Nigerian PR in Chapter 2 in indigenous communities showed how the development of PR was influenced by their efforts. What can historicizing Chamorro PR activities offer for current rights activists?

Conclusion

This project initially set out to understand how PR practice and theory might play a role in advancing environmental justice efforts to holistically address climate change. Situating this inquiry in the context of the Chamorro people of Guahan's fight for self-determination precipitates a number of robust opportunities. First, we have highlighted how the U.S. military uses PR communication to bolster narratives of progress, safety, and strategy on and through Guahan. This push, backed by the military's ability to leverage PR tools to reach wide audiences, has contributed to an articulation of the buildup that attempts to justify environmental degradation as the cost of progress. Some local government officials then attempt to leverage greater discursive power in places where these articulations are often used, but base the attempts in the strategic facet of the articulation. This serves to reify Guahan's value as being contingent on U.S. purposes, and does not challenge the buildup as a necessary reality in the first place.

Thus, we can expand PR theorizing by thinking through messages that disarticulate these elements, specifically using values of environmental justice and facts of the military's history of environmental degradation. This is related to the second opportunity the case study of Camp Blaz offers, as activists are already engaging in the act of disarticulation in their messaging. The U.S. military's emphasis on Guahan as an entity in its Indo-Pacific strategies has historically led to pollution in the air, water, and sea, impacting the wellbeing of those who call Guahan home. Among them are the Chamorro people, who have been denied the right to self-determination and sovereignty (e.g. through the Organic Act that granted citizenship in limited ways, and the Davis Decision that limited Chamorro voice in the decision of political status). Thus, critically examining communication related to the buildup from the lens of environmental justice antagonizes the articulation of the buildup as encompassing permissible damage in the name of strategy. Without the recognition of Chamorro sovereignty (itself a fight for justice), there can be no consent to Guahan's place in military strategy. If there is no consent to this role, there is no consent to the buildup, and subsequently no consent to bearing the burdens of environmental degradation, especially in the current disproportionate manner.

Here, PR practitioners as cultural intermediaries would aid in bringing notions of sovereignty as environmental and cultural persistence *through* the buildup to public discourse. In using strategies to augment these messages inherent to activist meaning-making processes, PR practitioners could aid in distributing these messages of environmental injustice and self-determination to wider audiences, including diasporic Chamorros. These efforts could eventually help PR messages regarding environmental policy become justice-oriented and holistic, and potentially more capable of addressing the complex, socially and economically intertwined environmental issues facing society today.

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APPENDIX A.

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Questions about Camp Blaz

- Could you describe what Camp Blaz is in your own words?
- Do you think the construction and operation of Camp Blaz relates to Chamorro culture?
How?
 - Additional prompt: What does the word “Chamorro” bring to mind for you? What about the word “military”?
 - Additional prompt: How does Camp Blaz relate to the imagery you’ve brought up?

Questions regarding RQ 1 - defining publics

- Who do you see yourself being responsible to or for in your professional work?
 - Additional prompt: If your organization’s actions have negative consequences, who are the main people who will suffer?
 - Additional Prompt: Who do you feel you don’t have to answer to? Who decided this?
- When you send out messages, who are you trying to reach?
 - Additional prompt: Would you say you have a target audience?
 - Additional prompt: If a group of people you’re communicating with could be represented by one person, what would that person be like?
- How are the groups you communicate with connected to Camp Blaz?

- Additional prompt: Not everyone agrees on Camp Blaz’s purpose, where do your target audiences stand on the issue?
- Additional prompt: Does opinion on operations like Camp Blaz matter when you’re deciding who your organization is trying to reach?
- How do you define “public relations”?

Questions regarding RQ2 - defining consent

- How does your organization define consent?
 - Additional prompt: Who has said “yes” to the work your organization does? Who has said “no”?
 - Additional prompt: What rules does your organization have to follow? Are they social or legal?
- How does your organization communicate about consent?
 - Additional prompt: What does it look like to get consent from people for things you do?
 - Additional prompt: How do the people you’re accountable to communicate what they want from you?
- How do people expect your organization to act when it comes to Camp Blaz?

Questions regarding RQ3 - defining elements of environmentalism

- Why/how is the land important to your organization?
 - Additional prompt: How do you communicate about the land to people your organization talks to?

- Additional prompt: when was the last time your organization talked about the land in general?
- How would you say your organization behaves environmentally?
 - Additional prompt: how does your organization define what it means to be environmental?
 - Additional prompt: How do you talk about that in your communication efforts?
- What does the word “justice” mean to you? How does it come up in conversations about Camp Blaz?

APPENDIX B.

Timeline according to emails between State Historic Preservation Officer and U.S. military personnel, obtained by reporter Anumita Kaur for Pacific Daily News via FOIA request

2020

- Jan. 9: Human skeletal remains consisting of a single tooth was discovered by a Navy archaeological contractor on the main cantonment.
- Jan. 24: The Guam State Historic Preservation Office was officially notified by the Navy of the inadvertent discovery of human skeletal remains.
- April 20: Discovery of the isolated tooth triggered a protocol for investigation of fragmented remains in non-burial context.
- May 22: While following the protocol, the archaeologists encountered a burial within a burial pit.
- June 5: Preservation office was formally notified of the burial discovered on May 22. The preservation office and the Navy agreed not remove the remains in an effort to determine age and ethnicity.
- July 8: Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero, preservation office and state archaeologist John Mark Joseph visited the burial at Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz.
- July 15: Two separate burial pits were found which contained multiple individuals.
- July 17: An additional burial pit was found which contained two separate individuals.
- July 20: Preservation office was formally notified by the Navy of the in-site burials discovered on July 15, and both decided to expose but not remove the remains in an effort to determine age and ethnicity.
- July 24 - Sen. Therese Terlaje, Guam SHPO, and Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz environmental staff visited the consrution site.
- July 28: Preservation office was formally notified by the Navy of the in-situ burials discovered on July 17, and both decided to expose but not remove the remains in an effort to determine age and ethnicity.
- Aug. 14: Navy consulted with Preservation Office regarding disposition of the remains and preservation in place was recommended. The recommendation of preservation in place was supported by Gov. Leon Guerrero. Camp Blaz Commanding Officer Col. Bradley Magrath supported preservation in place and Rear Adm. John Menoni and Naval Base Guam Commanding Officer Capt. Jeffrey Grimes concurred. Preservation office recommended a burial monument design for preservation in place, which was accepted by the Navy.
- Sept. 15: The Sabānan Fadang treatment plan was signed by Rear Adm. Menoni and later signed by Guam SHPO on Sept. 18, 2020. The decision entailed modification to a future parking lot to accommodate preservation in place.
- Nov. 4: The governor, State Historic Preservation Office and Joint Region Marianas attended a "return of grave goods" ceremony at Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz.

2021

- March 2: Pacific Daily News began inquiring about the burials at Camp Blaz and both the military and preservation office declined to disclose details.
- March 3: Pacific Daily News reported that multiple burials were found at Camp Blaz, and sent a records request to the Guam State Historic Preservation Office on the issue.
- March 9: The preservation office rejected Pacific Daily News' records request.
- April 9: The preservation office released a preliminary report on the burials at the governor's request.
- April 15: At least 150 square meters of excavation units have been exposed to bedrock or sterile material as part of the site investigations with more units in progress.
- April 16: Monument construction plans were submitted to the preservation office for a 14-day review.

This article originally appeared on Pacific Daily News: Preservation Office sought military's perspective before releasing information

APPENDIX C.

GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC COMMENT - DANGER ZONE RULE

ADDRESSES:

You may submit comments, identified by docket number COE-2020-0015, by any of the following methods:

Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

Email: david.b.olson@usace.army.mil. Include the docket number, COE-2020-0015, in the subject line of the message.

Mail: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Attn: CECW-CO-R (David B. Olson), 441 G Street NW, Washington, DC 20314-1000.

Hand Delivery/Courier: Due to security requirements, we cannot receive comments by hand delivery or courier.

Instructions: Direct your comments to docket number COE-2020-0015. All comments received will be included in the public docket without change and may be made available on-line at <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information provided, unless the commenter indicates that the comment includes information claimed to be Confidential Business Information (CBI) or other information whose disclosure is restricted by statute. Do not submit information that you consider to be CBI, or otherwise protected, through [regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) or email. The [regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) website is an anonymous access system, which means we will not know your identity or contact information unless you provide it in the body of your comment. If you send an email directly to the Corps without going through [regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), your email address will be automatically captured and included as part of the comment that is placed in the public docket and made available on the internet. If you submit an electronic comment, we recommend that you include your name and other contact information in the body of your comment and with any disk or compact disk you submit. If we cannot read your comment because of technical difficulties and cannot contact you for clarification, we may not be able to consider your comment. Electronic comments should avoid the use of any special characters, any form of encryption, and be free of any defects or viruses.

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or comments received, go to www.regulations.gov. All documents in the docket are listed. Although listed in the index, some information is not publicly available, such as CBI or other information whose disclosure is restricted by statute. Certain other material, such as copyrighted material, is not placed on the internet and will be publicly available only in hard copy form.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. David Olson, Headquarters, Operations and Regulatory Community of Practice, Washington, DC at 202-761-4922.

* * *

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) is proposing to revise its existing regulations to establish a danger zone at the U.S. Marine Corps Base, Camp Blaz in the Pacific Ocean, Guam.

The Marine Corps requested establishment of a danger zone extending over the Pacific Ocean adjacent to the Mason Live-Fire Training Range Complex (LFTRC).

Establishment of the danger zone would intermittently restrict commercial, public, and private vessels from entering or lingering in the restricted safety zone to ensure public safety during small arms training activities.

This danger zone is necessary to minimize potential conflicts between local populace activities and ongoing military training in the subject area.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Pursuant to its authorities in Section 7 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1917 (40 Stat 266; 33 U.S.C. 1) and Chapter XIX of the Army Appropriations Act of 1919 (40 Stat 892; 33 U.S.C. 3) the Corps is proposing to amend the regulations at 33 CFR part 334 by establishing a danger zone in the Pacific Ocean. The amendment to this regulation will allow the Commanding Officer of the U.S. Marine Corps Base, Camp Blaz, Guam to restrict passage of persons, watercraft, and vessels in the waters within the danger zone during use of the Mason Live-Fire Training Range. The establishment of the danger zone would intermittently restrict passage of persons, watercraft, and vessels from entering or lingering in the danger zone to ensure public safety during live-fire training activities at the Mason LFTRC. This danger zone will be in place as a precautionary measure to protect the public from any potential impacts in firing small arms to the north.

The Department of Defense military forces and the Government of Guam law enforcement agencies are required to qualify with their assigned weapons prior to executing their duties and further the execution of their assigned mission. These ranges are not only used by military forces assigned to the island, but also deployable military forces (Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines). The Department of Defense requires frequent firing of assigned weapons to ensure proficiency in the use and operations of assigned weapons.

The proposed danger zone would comprise approximately 3,660 acres extending into the ocean approximately 2.8 miles from the north coast of Guam. The proposed establishment of this danger zone was considered in the Final Guam and CNMI Military Relocation Environmental Impact Statement (2015). The Department of the Navy considered the environmental consequences of the proposed action, strategic implications, operational training requirements, and obligations under treaties and announced its decision to construct and operate a live-fire training range complex on Guam in support of the relocation of U.S. Marines.

The Mason LFTRC will consist of five ranges firing small arms up to and including .50 caliber rifles and heavy machine guns. This location is part of the Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz (MCBCB) facility and meets all of the landside requirements of a small arms range. With limited land on the island, it is not feasible to have the firing range and danger zone completely on land.

The Installation Range Control Officer (IRCO) will be responsible for submitting all Notice to Mariners (NTM) no later than 24 hours before the use of the range and publishing the range schedule and standard operating procedures on the MCBCB web page. The establishment of the danger zone would ensure public safety and facilitate safe live-fire training. "Day" operations would occur between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. "Night" operations (estimated to occur two nights per week) would occur between 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. or 6:00 a.m. and 6:59 a.m. No training is planned to occur between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and

6:00 a.m. When the danger zone is activated it will be closely monitored by surface radar and personnel designated to serve as observers. Due to the extreme depth of the waters off the coast of Guam buoys will not be employed.

Procedural Requirements

a. Review Under Executive Orders 12866 and 13563

Executive Orders 12866 and 13563 direct agencies to assess the costs and benefits of available regulatory alternatives and, if regulation is necessary, to select regulatory approaches that maximize net benefits. Executive Order 13771 directs agencies to control regulatory costs through a budgeting process. This proposed rule has not been designated a "significant regulatory action," under Executive Order 12866. Accordingly, this proposed rule has not been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and pursuant to OMB guidance it is exempt from the requirements of Executive Order 13771.

The Corps determined this proposed rule is not a significant regulatory action. This regulatory action determination is based on the proposed rule governing the danger zone, which would not allow any person, vessel or other craft to enter or remain in the area during times designated for live-fire except those authorized by the enforcing agency. When the range is not in use, the danger zone will be open to normal maritime traffic and to all activities, including anchoring and loitering.

b. Review Under the Regulatory Flexibility Act

This proposed rule has been reviewed under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (Pub. L. 96-354). The Regulatory Flexibility Act generally requires an agency to prepare a regulatory flexibility analysis of any rule subject to notice-and-comment rulemaking requirements under the Administrative Procedure Act or any other statute unless the agency certifies that the rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities (i.e., small businesses and small governments). The proposed danger zone is necessary to protect public safety during use of the small arms range. The proposed danger zone will be in effect on an intermittent basis, and persons, vessels, and other watercraft can transit around the danger zone when it is in effect and live-firing exercises may be conducted. The proposed danger zone would not allow any person, vessel or other craft to enter or remain in the area during times designated for live-fire except those authorized by the enforcing agency. When the range is not in use, the danger zone will be open to normal maritime traffic and to all activities, including anchoring and loitering. Unless information is obtained to the contrary during the comment period, the Corps certifies that the proposed rule would have no significant economic impact on the public. After considering the economic impacts of this proposed danger zone regulation on small entities, I certify that this action will not have a significant impact on a substantial number of small entities.

c. Review Under the National Environmental Policy Act

Due to the administrative nature of this action and because there is no intended change in the use of the area, the Corps expects that this regulation, if adopted, will not have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment and, therefore, preparation of an environmental impact statement will not be required. An environmental assessment will be prepared after the public notice period is closed and all comments have been received and considered.

d. Unfunded Mandates Act

This proposed rule does not contain a Federal mandate that may result in expenditures of \$100 million or more for state, local, and tribal governments, in the aggregate, or the private sector in any one year. Therefore, this proposed rule is not subject to the requirements of Sections 202 and 205 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA). The proposed rule contains no regulatory requirements that might

significantly or uniquely affect small governments. Therefore, the proposed rule is not subject to the requirements of Section 203 of UMRA.

e. Congressional Review Act

The Congressional Review Act, 5 U.S.C. 801 et seq., generally provides that before a rule may take effect, the agency promulgating the rule must submit a rule report, which includes a copy of the rule, to each House of the Congress and to the Comptroller General of the United States. The Corps will submit a report containing the final rule and other required information to the U.S. Senate, the U.S. House of Representatives, and the Comptroller General of the United States. A major rule cannot take effect until 60 days after it is published in the Federal Register. This final rule is not a "major rule" as defined by 5 U.S.C. 804(2).

List of Subjects in 33 CFR part 334

- * Danger zones
- * Navigation (water)
- * Restricted areas
- * Waterways

Thomas P. Smith,
Chief, Operations and Regulatory Division Directorate of Civil Works.
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