

## Cycles of Discussion, Circulation of Images

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Karolina Sobecka (karolinasobecka.com) and Jamie Allen (jamieallen.com) are collaborating researchers, part of a research group interested in environmental humanities, art, design and science at the *Hochschule für Gestaltung und Kunst FHNW* in Basel, and associated with the media arts production facilities at the Critical Media Lab Basel. We are artist-researchers who often manifest our work as artworks, events and through mediums other than text-based publications, while writing and publications focus on the relationships between aesthetics, knowledge and environment (Allen 2017). Methodologically this work and research often encounters interdisciplinary collectives as a means of evoking, reflecting and understanding communities of practice (Allen *et. al* 2011) and attempts to devise alternative representations of these. Our current project and focus is on exploring the ways that climate science and planetary magnitude technologies are represented, deliberated and thought about in science, engineering on through policy, governance, technology and popular media.

The use of different languages, linguistic metaphors and canonical examples in discussions relating to our common environment of planet earth greatly influence the ways in which we imagine solutions, design decisions, create policy and enact governance. Geoengineers use hopeful, domestic and clarifying phrasings like “resetting the global thermostat”, to describe the necessity and effectiveness of, for example, aerosol injection into Earth’s atmosphere. The term “greenhouse effect”, for example, coined in 1907, forms part of a rhetorical trajectory begun by geologist Thomas Sterry Hunt in 1867 when he wrote of climatological conditions “producing an effect precisely as if we had covered the whole earth with an immense dome of glass, had transformed it into a great Orchid-house” (Hunt 1867). What would be different about our technological and geoengineering landscape were modelled on a somewhat or completely different “as if”?

Research into the ways that discourse can change behaviour is a central part of behavioural research around dilemma of the commons, and how the mobilisation of nomenclature and information is best transferred to embodied or actionable knowledge (Nerlich 2010). Just as with language, but further to and along with it, choice made regarding the formats and contexts of events and discussions, the visualisation of data, the distribution of images and iconography and the rendering of time based media (audio and video), impacts the ways in which we treat ecosystems and imagine their modulation and adjustment. How we imagine the future is predicated on the means and mediums we use to plan for and project into this future (Fløttum, *et. al* 2014).

For the 16<sup>th</sup> Swiss Geoscience Meeting in Bern, we propose a brief textual and image based interview and study for three of the workshops that are taking place at the event in Bern on November 30<sup>th</sup> and December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018. We would like to discuss with groups prior to the sessions, via a quick questionnaire and gathering of materials, the ways in which they imagine the

work they are doing and the presentations they will make in Bern. From these resources, collected over the weeks following the abstract submission deadline of August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018 and prior to the event itself, we would develop short reflections for the participating groups, to be presented as part of workshops. These would take the form of a re-narrativisation of the thematics, common examples, linguistic tropes, visual concurrences and aesthetics and information design styles emergent in the discussions and materials presented in Bern. (We have made contact with the “Geomorphology for a habitable planet at the Swiss Geoscience Meeting” and the “Sustainable social-ecological systems: from local to global challenges at the Swiss Geoscience Meeting” who have expressed interest in the research)

We would hope that such perspective, as arts and design researchers exploring the way that climate engineering is deliberated and communicated, would be of use to the community of researchers participating in Bern and these materials would for us form the basis for further research outputs to be shared with the groups in attendance.



Figure 1. Recent fieldwork in China, visiting the coal fired power plant carbon capture facilities and discussing with plant engineers.

## REFERENCES

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