

Hag Island: A Speculative, Ecocritical Podcast About a Post-Oil Future in the North Atlantic

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...to listen is to enter that spatiality by which, at the same time, I am penetrated, for it opens up in me as well as around me: it opens up inside me as well as outside and it is through such a double, quadruple, or sextuple opening that a 'self' can take place.¹

My writing aims to counter the cultural and political saturation of oil in the North Atlantic using research-creation methods and feminist new materialist methodologies. My main research question is: How can digital media such as podcasting entangle and mobilize artistic and scientific ways of knowing in order to challenge dominant energy narratives? A secondary question is: How can a research-creation project lessen the gap between ecocritical knowledge and action, creating community connections for those working against the tides of fossil-fuel delayism and disinformation? As a digital humanities medium, podcasts sit comfortably in the new materialist sphere as assemblages of vibration, magnetic impulses, persuasion, ideas, affect, and mediated vocalities answering Stacey Alaimo's call for varied methods to broaden our understanding of ourselves in the environment.

An attempt to harness the affective power of podcasting to contest Newfoundland and Labrador's petroculture brought about *GYRE*, an interview-based podcast, as well as a speculative fiction podcast called *Hag Island*. *GYRE* is an ecocritical podcast that churns theories of climate justice and communications with art and political ecology.

At the Rachel Carson Center, I will complete the script for *Hag Island*, an episodic, speculative podcast about a post-oil future in the waters of the North Atlantic. Resisting pastoral and dystopian constructions, the narrative will instead adhere to Donna Haraway's call to 'stay with the trouble' (2016) and think beyond self-fulfilling apocalypse myths. Literary constructs such as metaphor, affect, and character arcs heighten emotions and empathy to address climate change's derangement of scalar temporality and can overcome the paradox identified by Timothy Clark in *Ecocriticism on the Edge: The Anthropocene as a Threshold Concept* (2015) that it is easier to predict global futures than to forecast nuanced futures for specific locales. *Hag Island* will attempt to draw on wonder, curiosity, and the weirdness of our current natural world to storify a post-oil future in contested North Atlantic sites of extractivism and colonialism—sites that are already being battered by climate calamities. In so doing, *Hag Island* aims to contest current power structures, disinformation, and hopelessness.

¹ Jean-Luc Nancy, *Listening*, trans. Charlotte Mandell (Fordham University Press, 2007), 14.