

No More Smashed Crabs: An Audio Journey

Stephanie Niu

Background

Christmas Island is a site of two key migrations: the annual red crab migration and the movement of boat-bound asylum seekers. Every wet season, 40 million of red crabs descend from the jungles to the sea to breed and continue their life cycle. In 2007, construction was completed on an Immigration Reception and Processing Centre to temporarily detain asylum seekers from neighboring islands. Asylum seekers depart by boat from Indonesia hoping to reach Australia, and Christmas Island is the first thing they encounter before reaching the mainland.

My project relied on a combination of anthropology and storytelling methods.

Anthropology Methods

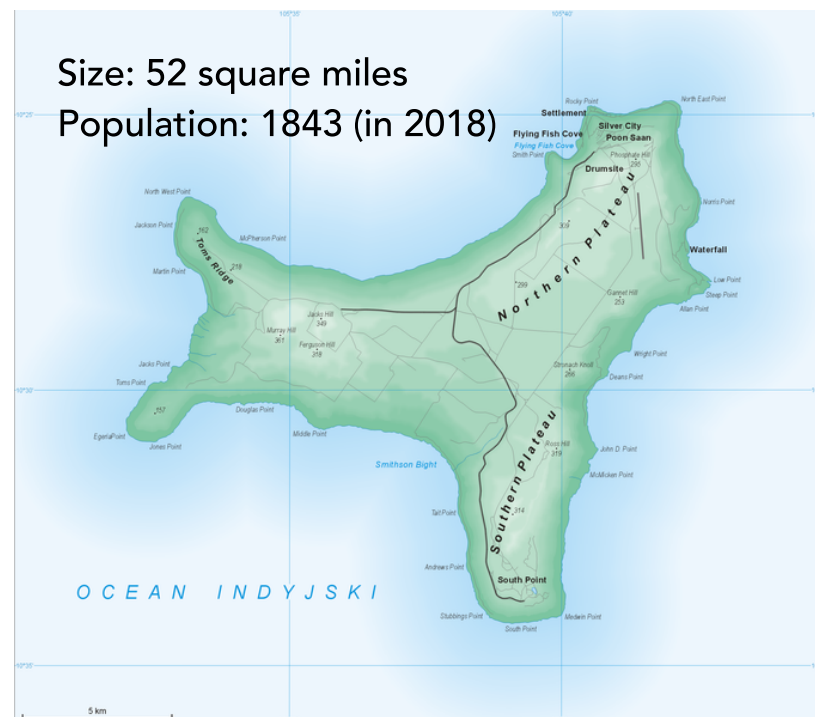
1. 20 Key informant interviews
2. Participant observation on Christmas Island and Melbourne



Visiting the Melbourne detention center

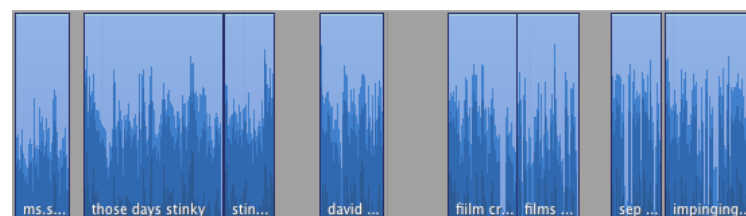


On-island observation



Analysis

I used Hindenburg, an audio editing software, to perform selects (a similar process to coding) in which I cut and labeled segments of audio. I used these pieces of audio along with transcriptions to create the podcast script in three acts, which included a selection of key informant interviews as well as ambient sound collection on the island.



Key Questions

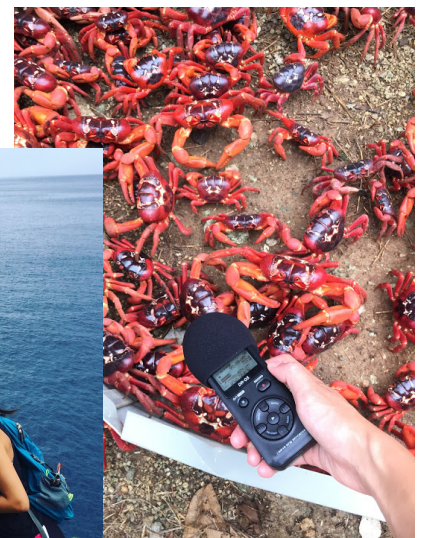
How are the red crab migration and the movement of asylum seekers through Christmas Island governed differently?

What does this differential governing reveal about which populations are seen as worthy of protection?

Storytelling Methods

1. Narrative-driven interview questions
2. Capture of ambient sounds with narrative potential

A cliffside interview

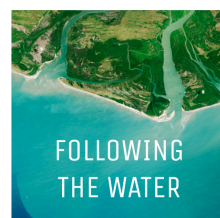


Collecting sound

Final Product

No More Smashed Crabs: When Moving is Surviving is available as the first episode of Following the Water, a series about what natural phenomena can reveal about human nature.

<https://anchor.fm/followingthewater>



Acknowledgements

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