<josh.harle@gmail.com Josh Harle's

polemic unpaper on

Digital 'Capture' The Ethics of

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The apparent equivalency between digital representation and original site could also offer some a mitigating tonic to the possible destructive development of heritage sites, something that archaeologists are often instrumental in and specifically tasked with working towards: i.e. an archaeological heritage report is a necessary stage in a mining companies application for development permit.

The right and credentials of an outsider to speak for a site (to decide what is recorded and articulated and what is not) becomes extremely dubious without privileging western knowledge systems and its sources of authority. However, sites of indigenous cultural heritage are under threat, and many communities are keen to explore new technologies for management, education, and keeping sites alive, with researchers competent in these technologies able to inform discussions on developing culturally-appropriate applications.

In contemporary anthropology, a 'fictocritical' approach to research has been proposed as a way of escaping toxic colonial overtones of academic knowledge production. Fictocriticism could be considered a form of 'gonzo research': the author as embedded researcher, rather from an objective observer; research presented as personal reflection without an implicit claim to authority, and articulating the contingency of the research as a partial and tentative.

This year I was resident with the Centre for Rock Art Research and Management, UWA, and had the privilege of brief fieldwork with the Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation (Burrup Peninsula) experimenting with 3D modelling. With ongoing collaboration, I'm attempting to answer the question "What might a fictocritical virtual environment be like?"

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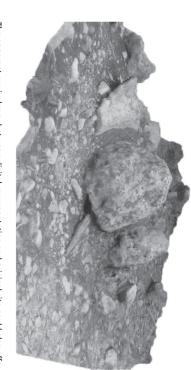
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