

REALTIME FILE
MIF
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>> Greetings. I am Vince Stehle, Executive Director of Media Impact Funders and I would like to welcome you all to our media impact forum. In today's program we are going to hear from some amazing storytellers and activists. As usual, the first hour of our 90 minute program will be devoted to expertly moderated presentations and discussions followed by 30 minutes of questions and comments with all of you. At any point in the next hour, you are welcome to click on the Q and A button at the bottom of your screen and then we will come back to you at the end to invite you to present your question or comment. In the meantime you are in great hands for the next hour as I'm going to turn the program over to Kaitlin Yarnall, who will lead our program today. As you can see in the program, Kaitlin is senior vice president at the National Geographic Society and also chief storytelling Officer there. Kaitlin is also a board member of Media Impact Funders and she recently was elected secretary of the board. So I guess you could say she's also the chief storytelling Officer at MIF, although that basically entails approving minutes of the board meeting. So it's not really as illustrious as her day job. Anyway later in the program, Kaitlin will be joined by Tim Isgitt, who is also on the board of Media Impact Funders and also managing director at Humanity United.

I would like to thank Tim and his colleagues at Humanity United for their generous sponsorship of this forum. As well I would like to thank the SKOL foundation for its sponsorship of this program and its particular fitting today because we know the SKOL foundation is particularly [committed to] great storytelling and we are certainly going to be getting a lot of that today. So Kaitlin, take it away thank you.

>> Thanks Vince. And thank you everyone for joining. That's quite a set up. Expertly moderated is a high bar. but we are going to do our best. And really I have the easiest job today because we have gathered some of the best storytellers and activists here with us, some of whom I know very well, some of whom I am just learning about their work and it's really exciting to dive into this work as we talk about ways that the human

story layers with the environmental story. So first up it's my pleasure to introduce you to my friend and National Geographic fellow Pete Muller, Pete is a photographer or author journalist, and his work focuses on masculinity conflict human ecology and often times it is centered in the intersection of those spaces. Today we are thrilled to have him share with us part of his body of work on a topic called [indiscernible] that I will let him explain to you all and his work was recently published in the April edition of National Geographic magazine with Pete contribute in both the images and the words so Pete, I will turn it over to you now.

>> Great, thank you very much Kaitlin. I assume that everybody can hear me. Yeah, as Kate mentioned my name is Pete Muller I've been a contributing photographer to National Geographic magazine for the last seven years and the last two or three years I came on as in the National Geographic Society storytelling fellow. I'm going to start sharing with you some images as I share some things about myself. For... All right, for the last 15 years I have been pretty deeply dug in on a lot of social anthropological photographic pursuits, most of which are kinda based in my initial research interests particularly in issues related to war and conflict. I've always been strongly interested in why outbreaks of armed violence arise. It's such a complicated analysis to figure out precisely why conflicts spill out from conflict and social discourse and narrative into instances of armed violence. I've always wanted to understand these things better.

I was based in decent central Africa from 2008 until 2019 covering instances of political unrest and violence and instances like this one, this is an image that shows soldiers from the national army of the Democratic Republic of Congo firing artillery in one of the direction of the largest rebel movements in recent history in DRC, the M 23. This image was taken on the outskirts of the city of [Gomo] which is the regional capital of eastern Congo. This is part of a larger body of work I was working on about the underlying causes of conflict in eastern Congo, mineral resources, scarcity, interregional political aspirations for control of the resources and ultimately I did sort of an explanatory component of this that examines notions of masculinity and how they were driving factors of conflict and the environment as well. Masculinity has been a kind of consistent theme in my work over the years. I worked on a larger explanatory reporting project about this that was published in National Geographic 2017 special issue on gender. This is an image from that project. This was an exploration of mostly cis gender heterosexual masculinity for the most part, how men and boys are inculcated with the kinds of ideas that give rise to their understanding of themselves as gendered creatures. You know, as their interactions with other people. And particularly how those types of instances in my own interest occasionally intersect with notions of violence and some of the more disturbing aspects of masculinity that so many of us are hoping to rectify if we can. This is another image from the project a young boy named Drew Moore standing in his bedroom. This was about a component that dealt with the tradition of hunting. This is in Mississippi and Arkansas. All of this work as Kaitlin mentioned tries to be largely intersectional. It's often cross regional ---

[No audio available]

[CC standing by]

>> Okay I wasn't sure if that was on my end, or if it was on the source that Pete was using, so it looks like we had a technical freeze from Pete's location in New York. And Kaitlin, do you want to say may be a few words about what Pete's work was trying to accomplish while we hope to reestablish with him momentarily?

>> Yes I will put I will just say a couple words. And if Pete comes back and that's great. If not maybe we can move on to the next segment and bring him in at the end. Sorry, he is texting me. I'm just going to jump in.

>> He is back. Here he is.

>> Sorry.

[Several voices]

>> I was pretending to be Pete. He's back.

>> Oh my God. I'm so sorry. Yeah, where... Okay.

>> You were at the Arkansas image Pete.

>> I'm so sorry, it seems like my connection is unstable.. Right, so you know, I wanted to so, this image of this boy, Drew Moore, this is a component I was doing about the tradition of hunting in Arkansas and how historically of course it had been something that was male dominant.

>> Can you share your screen again, Pete? sorry.

>> Oh my goodness.... Okay. Is that visible?

>> That's perfect.

>> Okay sorry about that. Right, so this was a component of that story that we were working on for the special issue of National Geographic on gender. On this type of approach, this sort of cross regional ethnographic visual, anthropological storytelling has always been the sort of centerpiece of my approach to my photographic work and I really wanted to bring that type of methodology to the really pressing conversations that we have been having about the environment. I really wanted to examine the human dimensions of that. I think we would all agree for the most part of an organization like National Geographic has been a standard bearer for a long time about disseminating information about the physical changes in our world the science that goes on explaining the changes in our world that we are seeing and giving us anticipatory judgment about the path ahead. But I wanted to really try to flesh out what that means poor people, for the human story. I spoke with Kaitlin and others and was fortunate to receive a National Geographic Fellowship to begin to explore the social human emotional psychological story of experiencing major forms of environmental transformation because it seemed

like something that was perhaps missing a little bit from that subject. So I would like to take you a little bit through how I chose to approach that complex conversation.

This is an image of the upper Hunter Valley. It is this incredibly beautiful bucolic river valley that is about 3 1/2 hours north of the Australian city of Sydney. And for most of its history the upper Hunter Valley has been known for really scenic wonderful positive things. It has been one of the mainstay industries there. The breeding of thoroughbred horses, wine vineyards, citrus groves, alfalfa fields, all this kind of typical rural bucolic positive things. But in late 1980s it accelerated in the early 1990s was a massive discovery of high-quality coal underneath the valley floor. There was a rising global demand for coal at that time in the markets and the Australian government along with international governments decided to massively explore and companies came in and started to dig big big holes to get at this coal. Holes like this one, this is the [mound] for [Lee walkworth] mine. It is in a Shire that is called Singleton. Of the upper Hunter Valley and it is a gargantuan hole. It's visible from space. It is kilometers long, kilometers wide. It's about 1000 feet deep at its deepest place. And you can see a little bit on the right side of this image some cars. This was taken with the drone. Above the mine. You can see the cars to give it some sense of scale as to how massive the mine is. They started opening minds like this all throughout this quiet rural place. It did not take long for this pace of exploration to begin to have noticeable impacts for the people who lived there. Here you can see a former farmhouse right on the edge of a large open pit coal mining facility. And behind it is what is known as overburden. These are like layers of rock and earth that have formed over the top of the coal seams and open pit coal mining is the process of removing all of that overburden, transferring it to a different place so the drag lines can then come in and harvest really exhaustively harvest all the coal that is in the seams. Obviously this makes a massive transformation of the environment as you can see here. There's a huge amount taken out of one place that makes a hole, a massive hole where there wasn't, a large embankment where there wasn't, and in addition there is huge amount of dust, noise and light pollution. Furthermore there is a social transformation that happens in that lots of new people coming into work temporarily in the minds who are less invested in the community begin to come. This changes environmental changes in the place drive a fair amount of the residents who had formerly lived there away so there's considerable transformation of the social tapestry of the place. This is a man named Glenn Albrecht. He is an environmental philosopher and at the time that the expansion operations were really happening heavily in the upper Hunter Glenn and his colleagues became particularly on the social impacts of the minds were having on the inhabitants who lived around them, Glenn Albrecht was particular interested in the emotional and psychological impact that these mines were having on residents. And as the mining intensified and the operations of the minds themselves expanded word of Glenn's interest really began to spread among Valley residents.

And the phone in his office began to ring frequently and on the other end of the phone were people like this woman. This is Wendy Bowman. Wendy is now in her 80s. She's in your lifelong resident of the upper Hunter, part of a large dairy farming family there.

She has maintained a farm there for the better part of 50 years. Deeply connected to place. And Wendy was beside herself with this incredible sense of stress and discomfort. she was involved in really protracted battles with mining companies, trying to keep them from expropriating various parts of her property to expand the mining operation. She would serve as a community activist on behalf of other people in similar situations and her role is constantly expanding. Ultimately she would serve as an informal marriage counselor and personal health counselor for all these people undergoing this massive form of mental and emotional stress. She really couldn't sleep. The situation was on her mind day and night. Glenn got calls from people like Jon Lamb, who we can see here on the right side of this photograph in his car. Jon is a sort of tough older guy who comes from the generation that believed that emotional and psychological distress was really the domain somehow of the weak. And he thought that his mental fortitude and outlook would carry him through whatever adversity might happen.

But more and more as these mining operations really turned through the valley that he was incredibly connected to from beautiful green fields that he had known to the sprawling gray pits you can see on the left something inside of Jon Lamb really began to change on an emotional level also. Whenever he found himself delving into proximity, visual site line of the minds his heart would drop into his feet. He started driving 40 or 50 km out of his way just to avoid seeing these massive transformations to the place that he loved. He and his wife both began to take antidepressant medication to contend with the psychological state that they found themselves in as the mining intensified. Now Glenn Albrecht, the philosopher, began to hear a lot of-- among many of these stories. It was as though people who he was talking to understood very clearly that the minds themselves were the source of their distress.

But many of them had a very difficult time succinctly and clearly explaining how precisely it was that they felt about the transformation that they were witnessing. It was almost like they felt a sense of homesickness, that started to be the closest approximation that Glenn and others could identify. But of course I didn't entirely make sense because nobody had left home. Really the complicating factor in this description was it was sort of like homesickness but people were where they belonged. It was as though their homes or some essence of their homes had instead left them. It wasn't really a concept for that. Nor was there any kind of corresponding word to explain the concept in short order. It certainly wasn't a feeling of nostalgia. It wasn't really just about pining for better days gone by that it was the inevitable progression of change in our lives... This inevitable force. This was really about something, this key feature of the place that gave people a sense of comfort being taken or lost in the present so it was an active emotional sensation that had implications both for people thought about the past and how they thought about their story evolving in the future. As far as Glenn Albrecht could tell there really was no way to express the feeling he was encountering among so many people in the Hunter Valley. So he sat down with his wife and partner Jill who we see sitting on the home library, and they decided together we have the name the

feeling. So many people are experiencing it. There seems to be consistent features of it. There's no way to express it and without a way to clearly express this feeling and have a sort of collective acknowledgment of what it was, people were at a disadvantage. So they started to think very critically, in a sort of synthesis type of way of what exactly was underway in the valley. What was at the root of this consistent feeling that they were encountering among people? well they knew plainly that there was a pain, a sense of distress or pain or longing or -algia, like nostalgia, the pain to return as it was originally coined in 1688, but this algia really pertain to people's homes and their sense of connection and belonging in a place. What do their homes at a very baselevel gift was? they concluded that our homes at a fundamental level give us a sense of comfort. A sense of kind of refuge from things that might be troubling us otherwise and with the agreement in my Glenn sort of struggled to figure out how could he make a new word to name this feeling from the agreed-upon idea that comfort is a central part of it. Longing, algia, is a central part of it. How could we modify this... So they took out this book of synonyms and antonyms that Jill had from her days at school. And they looked up comfort in that small book and there they found a synonym, for the word solace from the Latin solasium, to have a sense of peace and Glenn thought I think I can make that work. I think I can adapt that to be a new term to describe this feeling. So in an academic paper in 2003, Glenn Albrecht began to refer to this complex sense of a loss of sense of place, the sort of homesickness that you have while you are still at home as Solastalgia. And as Glenn initially defined it it is this sense of emotional psychic distress that some individuals feel as they live through perceived negative transformations in their home environment. But it is sort of bumper sticker definition is this sort of homesickness you feel at home as a result of environmental transformation. And when people introduced this idea people started talking about it and circles of the Internet went to light, people started making art about it, in writing academic papers and convening conferences. All types of synergy happening around this unusual, interesting word to describe the feeling that evidently resonated with people not just in the case study where he had coined it in the upper Hunter Valley but it seemed to be resonating far beyond that. In fact I discovered the term Solastalgia as I was watching a National Geographic document refill intermittently produced and distribute it by National Geographic I think in 2015 that was about water shortages and droughts increasing around the world and this particular film is focused on droughts and water shortages in California. And they referenced this concept to describe this experience that seems to be expanding and more prevalent in people's lives as climate change which is changing things as we know beyond clinical boundaries and porters that we know in a global, has capacity for global change. And I thought this is a really fascinating new frontier of charting and understanding and identifying and naming things that pertain to our changing relationship with the environment around us. And what interested me most about it, that it didn't pertain solely to the changes that are happening outside of us in the world, which places like National Geographic has done historically such a--- these historical changes are being mirrored back within us. And what is interesting to me so much about it is without a sort of agreed-upon concepts and words that name those

concepts particularly things that are internal, all of our emotions of course are experienced at a purely internal level until we are able to express and share them, and without terminology to do that, we are unable perhaps to connect and see the true scope of impact that environmental change is having through the world. So I set out to interrogate this idea further.

I spent time in Australia with Glenn, and I started to travel in these, with this comparative case study model to various places that were undergoing various forms of environmental transformation. A place like Paradise California, which experienced the most deadly wildfires in state history in November 2018 with the camp fire that burned over 90% of the structures, displaced tens of thousands of residents and killed almost 100 people. I spent time with people like [Gwen Norbert], who we see here sitting next to the pool of the house she formerly owned in Paradise California. And this was a place that was deeply rooted in her sense of identity. She brought up her children here, her grandsons were here. She is to come out through these double doors that she had built, this is a home that she built with her late husband she used to dive in the pool, float on her back and look up at the blue California sky and the swaying palm trees and felt a profound sense of connection with the place. I spent time with Don and W Criswell, Don is a six generation Paradisean, his family had been there for six generations. As a private investigator, he also plays the you and is part of the social tapestry of Paradise California. Then he played music all over town including at the Rocky Mountain smokehouse which you see the remains of on the left side of this diptych photograph. He was devastated by the loss of the smokehouse and all the other places, the churches and lodges, and all these places he used to contribute to the sort of subtlety of atmosphere in Paradise. We talked a lot about community, about the loss of built systems, built structures that facilitate our sense of interaction and what it was going to take to try to regain some of that feeling of connection. After that we traveled high up into the Peruvian Andes to attend an annual celebration that celebrated by multiple nations of the Ketchua community, the indigenous community that occupies not just a part of Brazil but also continuous South American states and each members each of these Ketchuan communities make a pilgrimage up to a series of glaciers to celebrate a festival --- called the snow star festival and it marks the beginning of the Peruvian new year and is thought that the--- deity resides in the glaciers that are rapidly receding. They've lost a considerable portion of the glaciers that used to descend hard on the mountain in years past and they receive more and more each year. There used to be a tradition among the festivalgoers, the observers of the festival to cut off parts of these glaciers that are thought to be imbued with medicinal healing properties that are bestowed into the glaciers by the Lord of [indiscernible] but as the glaciers rescinded further and further the practice was stopped. It was extraordinary to be with some of the orchestrators of the festival to hear about its history and the role that some of the environmental features that we are now seeing transform so profoundly play in our stories about mythology, religion and how the elements of court play strongly. We also worked high in the Russian Arctic in the Chico Peninsula particular in a small sea mammal hunting town called [indiscernible] where members of the [Chuchi] coastal

hunting community have been and continue to be almost entirely reliant on the harvesting of marine mammals for sustenance and survival in a place that otherwise does not facilitate any cultural cultivation, virtually nothing in the place of the communities will be entirely tied to the ability to successfully hunt migratory sea mammals. In this case we see a Chukchi Hunter successfully throwing a harpoon at a Pacific walrus. This was taken during the summer months, during, as the summer, which of course is a very short window in this far north of the Russian Arctic. In this part they see the migration of gray whales that move up from southern reaches of Mexico on the migratory route up until the northern regions of Canada through this patch of the Bering Sea, Chukchi sea. And of course as we know the Arctic is warming at a considerably faster pace than others. So there's been considerable transformations in the ice based ecosystem that tends to define how coastal communities can hunt during winter months along the coast. They are heavily reliant on the formation of what is called [coastal sea ice] that often historically extended out perhaps 20 km --- over the last 20 years there's been no formation of sea ice so this is a complex, creates a complex sense of transformation not just in terms of the practicality of hunting but the identity and practicality of survival. Finally we worked on the Gulf coast of Louisiana on a small island that has become sort of a Hallmark case of land loss. This is a place called [Atjean Charles] and it has lost nearly 98% of its landmass due to coastal erosion, rising sea levels, the digging of resource extraction and navigational canals by heavy industry. And it has eroded considerable parts of this place, which used to provide bountiful hunting grounds, agricultural grounds for the community that lives there. This community has since received the first ever relocation grant from HUD to ultimately change the community location from the island, which is a must in some ways become uninhabitable because of the increasing storm surges and the fact that there's no longer any land there. To be able to defend the inner habitat areas of the island from the storm surges. I spent a lot of time with a woman called Chantel Coverdale who we see in the photograph seated at the dinner table of her grandmother's house, her grandmother, Denise sitting in the foreground her father Boyle and three children there. Chantel spoke at length about the emotional experience of losing this place and what it meant for her and the community around her and I'd like to give her the chance to kind of share in her own words here, and this is often what I was doing is collecting this extensive audio interviews of people for their own reflections.

>> Going through this process we have met other communities and there's a community in Alaska who has had the same thing. And we were able to sit down and talk about things and it was almost exactly the same feeling. The same emotion that they went through was like oh, okay I'm not alone. This is not something I'm making up in my mind. You know. It was real. It became real.

>> I was really very interested in Chantel's remark that it became real. And it became real in part to her because she realized that other people felt it too. You know, she was in a somewhat unique position in that she was able to close the geographic distance with the community and you talk about Alaska which had profound coastal subsidence

and land loss but for most people experiencing considerable forms of environmental degradation those meeting points are just not possible and it left me thinking that words and terminology and things that signify our common experience are ways of connecting people when those types of in person physical distances can't be closed. We are at a fundamental level, we are social creatures and we have a deep strong abiding desire not only to understand our own experiences but to make sense of them in a broader continuum and understand we are not alone in this.

And I think that Glenn Albrecht's attempt to give new language to identify some of these increasingly prominent human emotional experiences that accompany the changing world we are living in is a really fascinating important endeavor that we should give more conversation to and I think interestingly we had an opportunity to get many of us most of us not living on the front lines of environmental transformation had a little bit of a window into what it is like to have an environment surrounding you that no longer facilitates your normal activities and is transformed into a hostile space so I did a short sort of exploration of my own experience during this period of quarantine that's gone by over the last 3 1/2 months were ultimately a component of our environment, in this case a pathogen did not cause drastic transformation to the physicality's of landscape but it's presence transformed the way that we were able to interact with the environment.

And I think many of us would say that the world outside of our door, it's the beginning of COVID, no longer brought us that same sense of comfort and familiarity that it once did. We have had to really try to understand how we are going to operate in an environment that has through this period anyway not support the types of things that we are accustomed to. So I thought it was sort of interesting to explore the concept of Solastalgia as a prominent sort of human emotional experience in the context of this universally experience a transformation that so many of us have now gone through through COVID. So I added a sort of additional chapter of that to this recent work. So that's it for me.

>> Thank you, Pete. That's wonderful. Thank you for sharing. And we, I already see a question or two coming in for you that we will tackle at the end of this conversation. Thank you very much and thank you everyone for bearing through our technical difficulties there as Pete comes from one of the largest cities in the world with maybe the worst Internet. So Pete I will ask you to stop sharing your screen at this point, and I will now introduce our next segment.

I am thrilled to have Michael Premo and Vic Barret is at organizer from the alliance for climate education coming to us from Madison Wisconsin and he is currently working on a big effort to get young people out to vote. But Vic was also part of the group again people who sued the government in Juliana versus the US. And so I'm thrilled to have Vic here with us. We also have Michael Premo who is the executive producer at storyline and an accomplished [journal maker] and artist. Michael was one of the early pioneers in the era of participatory filmmaking and also coming to us from New York City, hopefully with better Internet. And so welcome Michael and Vic.

>> Thank you for having us.

>> Wonderful, thanks Vic. Vic, since you're up on my screen I think we will start with you. I really am interested in hearing from both you and Michael about your origin stories. How did you get into this body of work and I'm thinking knowing you a little bit that Pete, the concept Pete is talking about certainly resonate with you and your origin story so I will let you take that.

>> Yeah, I got involved in the movement my freshman year of high school. I was 13, 14 years old, hurricane Sandy had happened a year before hand. And I was meeting so many young people on the ground who, I had been impacted by storm and school was shut down. I had never experienced anything like that or thought I would in New York. But meeting so many of my other peers of color especially black and brown peers and hearing experiences on the frontline of hurricane Sandy I realized it was an issue I could not ignore knowing the people who looked like you were being disproportionately impacted by storm like this and at the same time black lives matter was eking off in a big way. Was right after Trayvon Martin had been shot and it was amidst the uprisings in Ferguson and I was realizing we have these superstars like hurricane Sandy, and they disproportionately impact people of color and put as in the line of fire. Then we have these systems like police, like police who also do that people. Of color. And I was realizing there was a lot of frontlines that black and brown people were on and it was not just one that black and brown people were on. And so I decided to make the issue that I most cared about climate justice because I couldn't ignore the fact that the people who are the best stewards of the earth, indigenous people, black people, brown people, are the ones that have the earth turned against us by systems of power and we are the ones who get put on the front lines of environmental disasters that are perpetuated by a climate crisis that we did not contribute to in the same way that cor privilege communities have so I guess having those thoughts swirling at a young age, 13 and 14 and also knowing who I am and where I come from being Afro- indigenous, having a family that is right on the front lines of sea level rise in Honduras, it just felt like something I absolutely could not ignore and that is how I have been doing this work for seven, eight years now.

>> That's great, thanks for sharing, Vic. Michael I will turn to you. We will not make you go all the way back to when you were 13 or 14, I would not want to do that, but I know super storm Sandy was a turning point for you as well. I'm wondering if you can talk a little bit about that.

>> Thank you for having me. It's a pleasure, always a pleasure to be with you guys talking about these questions. You know, I have a sort of multidisciplinary background. I've worked in a lot of different mediums and I have worked you know, as a photographer I have worked in theater. I worked for story Corps for a wild making stories for the national broadcast. And I have always been interested in this question of how do we rethink our relationship to the people formerly known as the audience and what does it mean to sort of also in this vein of thinking about building healthy and

dynamic democratic societies, what does that mean, what does that involve and how can we sort of bring the same ethos of civic and community engagement to the process of media production of art creation. So what does it look like to really sort of engage in collaborative processes. A lot of times it's sort of a hard thing for folks to wrap their head around particularly when we just see the outcome. We just see maybe a film or maybe a radio story or photograph but how do we rethink and reengineer the steps and processes that got us to the point of creating a piece. So I had been involved in creating work almost coincidentally that we are dealing with lots of different systemic crises over the years. And that had, I have been doing work both sort of organizing relief efforts and documentation and reportage after Hurricane Katrina. And so when hurricane Sandy was making its way up the coast we were sort of instantly thinking very acutely how this moment, this particular national disaster was going to shed a light as all sort of acute crises do, how they shed a light on systemic inequities, on systemic problems that these individual events really allow us the unfortunate opportunity to really begin to dig into, because they expose systemic inequities. So when hurricane Sandy hit New York we did two things. One was we started a project called Sandy storyline with about six other people. It was part of our core group initiative and we were really interested in how rather than us just making a film or audio series or photographs, how can we create a way that anybody impacted by the event could share their story. And there were two kind of broad categories that we engaged our community of journalists and artists and other sort of community folks engaged in all sorts of work to participate. One of the ways that people could participate, could contribute stories in the form of radio, written stories, audio or film. And then the other way people could participate was as sort of producers actively helping us build out the infrastructure and architecture to be able to facilitate all of these pathways for engagement with the story. And that really made for this rich mix of experiences that were coming together in this really exciting production meetings with people who had wildly different varying degrees of experience with actual me to but they were recognized as experts in their lived experience to bring to bear their perspectives of how we could create a project that would engage all these people.

The outcomes, the sort of visible outcomes, the community to the outside world were a website that had these sort of interactive stories that evolved you know, I think it went up the week after the storm so they evolved in the five years afterward and we had life installations that were a mix of video, audio and photos and with the technology that was sort of right before VR became a thing and we were engaging with the sort of interactive technology, that allowed participants to the exhibition to contribute photos they would text to the project and instantly they would become part of the three-dimensional installation so the installation was constantly being created by the participants. And these are activities that are very resource intensive because they are process driven but in the sort of context of disaster there were a lot of people interested in being able to volunteer their labor creativity and ideas to create this project. And you know it was really a great way, and it evolved in a lot of collaborative participatory projects to that point but because of the sort of anxiety of navigated disaster we really learned a lot around how to create processes in ways that are reflected to sort of people

sort of emotional journey through a crisis. Which is really important and it sort of fed and informed a lot of thinking for subsequent projects. One of the projects absolutely was a project called water warriors and I will put a link in the chat so you can see it. It is a short film and photo exhibit which has been touring and the photo exhibit, the photo exhibit was touring a variety of spaces that ranges from museums to community-based spaces like community art spaces as well as powwows. On the sort of powwow circuit. And then the short film you can see now is broadcast pretty was on TV last fall, on PBS broadcast by POV and it is still streaming in the US and Canada on POV website. So water warriors was this community, a community I'm not from, this indigenous community which was faced with this very difficult question of how to protect their water in the face of a fracking company that had come to explore for natural gas. And so they set up a series of blockades on the road. And subsequently were able to successfully impede the progress of this company so much so that they built this multiracial coalition of white families and indigenous families who came together across sort of 400 years of conflict to be able to find a common goal.

>> So why don't we watch the trailer. I think we have it queued up. We can watch the trailer and Vic I would love to hear your reactions.

[Drumming]

>> Water is the gift of life. Nothing in this world can live without water.

[Music]

>> Disrupting the natural flow of the aquifers on the ground, for one, no doubt about that...

>> I could not know what I knew and not act.

>> Every day people were waking up and they were like, how am I going to fight today?

>> Listen to the beat of the mother Earth, of the drum

[singing, music]

>> We are all warriors and we are here to protect.

>> We are not going to stop. Neither are we.

>> We have to fight for this earth because there isn't another one. This is the only planet that we have.

>> Wonderful. Thanks for sharing that with us, Michael, and for those of you who have not seen the film or are not able to see the exhibition anywhere please do check it out. It's very powerful. Vic, I have been thinking about you and something Michael said about how do you document and fight against systemic problems while in the middle of an acute crisis. And I think about your work around climate justice but then specifically what you are doing right now in democracy building. How in your brain do you balance

these competing, or are they competing issues of the acute yet very chronic, both of which need attention.

>> Yeah, I think that is something I have struggled with, even just being an environmental activist for the amount of time that I have been , and kind of going in between these spaces and doing very local organizing at home and going to the world economic forum, or speaking at the UN Gen. assembly and taking these things that like you are saying, acute and systemic, and things that can seem so great. Especially right now I feel like with everything that is happening with the uprisings around the systemic systems that I read it with the other day that I thought was really interesting that people do not understand what systemic means. They still think it comes down to the individuals within these spaces. But if you were to take out every racist individual, the systems are still made to act the way that they do. And I think that in kind of the way I have come to terms with that is what I can control in my communities and with people I see right in front of me. I'm seeing also just how instances of the acute, what they can create, I think what I saw a lot, and what Michael was even showing or what he was talking about, what the woman in the video was that I could no longer ignore what was going on and I think these instances of the acute create later's, create people who want to step up and do something to address the systemic. I think the little localized lessons of what was going on in New York City is what propelled me to be able to realize the Global injustices that come with climate change and that come with racism. I think that also particularly young activists are very good at kind of looking at the acute and looking at the systemic because we have all these interactions online where we get to talk about the acute that we do not see really. And kind of build it into broader narrative of what is going on. The systemic narrative of what is going on and make those connections. So yeah. I think that kind of [spoke to what you asked me.]

>> Thank you. And unfortunately we are going to move on to the next speakers. We are so jammed for time we could have an hour of one of these segments but everyone tuning in think of questions you have for Michael and Vic and we will circle back in just a few minutes. But at this point as we transition, we have another trailer for an exciting project called the outlaw ocean that we are going to discuss next. So can we have the trailer please?

[bird call]

>> I think of the ocean as this space that has been kind of a metaphor for freedom. And it still is that. It is a place that people go to escape rules and escape government and escape other people because it is so expansive. But those very allures of the space are what has made the ocean a scary place

[music]

[chatter]

>> Don't take photos. Do not take photos.

[Music]

>> Few places on the planet are as lawless as the high seas. The ocean is a place of amazing beauty. But it is also this dystopia realm where severe and humanities occur and often with impunity.

[Radio chatter]

>> Over.

>> What you realize when you are in that void, or in that expanse is that most of that space is ungoverned and ungovernable. There are few laws and what laws exist are murky and overlapping and contradictory. Laws are only as good as their enforcement and enforcement mechanisms for any of the laws are anemic at best. You have human trafficking, see slavery, abuse of stowaways, weapons trafficking. When the UN looked at it in 2009, in the interview of Cambodian deckhands over 50% of them had witnessed a murder. A lot of the forced labor that end up on the fishing boats are trafficked migrants. And are very poor and easily taken advantage of. One mariner summed it up as this line of work is like jail with a salary except the salary is not guaranteed. We in the West would like to think the things are progressively getting better and in many ways they are. But in this space they are arguably getting worse, over 99% of crimes out there go unreported, and there's not a huge point in reporting them because it's not clear what would actually be done with that information. I think if there is anything to be learned about human nature from the outlaw ocean it is that we all have this visceral capacity to behave in ways that we thought civilization has stamped out. There is a vanishingly thin line between civilization and the lack of it. And I think the exploration of this frontier is an attempt to look at how thin that line is and what is on the other side.

[Music]

>> Well, that is quite a trailer for a book. And at this point I would like to welcome Ian Urbin and alto Tim Isgitt into conversation. Ian, we will get to him and he has quite the walk on real there, so we don't need a big introduction, but Tim is a fellow board member of mine from Media Impact Funders and his day job is he's a managing director of Humanity United and he has contributed to funding part of Ian's outlaw ocean work. Ian is an investigative reporter, National Geographic Explorer, and he's going to talk to us a little bit about the project and what is next. Ian, I really want to hear how you would weave together some of the conversations we have just been observing into your reporting. First I will start with the big why why the ocean? why focus there?

>> I think a couple reasons. One I was on staff at the New York Times for 18 years, 17 years and as a journalist up until a year ago, and as a journalist especially as an investigator journalist you are always looking for virgin snow topically and looking for stories that offer the potential to say new things or package old things in new ways. And the two thirds of the planet that is water kind of emerged as this right frontier for storytelling. And then before becoming a journalist I was an anthropologist and I think

that is relevant here, just because in some ways the attraction to the ocean was as much about the interest in the Diaspora type of people, the 56 million people who work out there from whom we rarely hear much and yet they are essential to our economy our existence, sweat up logically I was especially drawn to the space because it offered the chance to talk about and otherwise largely invisible people. And also to explore stories at the intersection of human rights labor and environment. So for all of those reasons it was a gift that kept on giving journalistically.

>> Yeah, and you did most of this reporting while on staff at the times correct?

>> Um... So we are going on year seven now and the first two years was a series that ran in the paper and then I took two years off, much thanks to Humanity United and other funders to produce the book and now we are a year on top of that. Post the book, so it is an even portion times non-times.

>> Did you think originally, was this always a book in your head? Was a series of articles for the times? Was it going to be your life's work? I wanted to know how you started thinking about it and where you are in thinking about it now. And then I'm going to turn to Tim.

>> Yeah, so I, when I was working on my dissertation I ran away from it and took a year off and worked on a ship and that was my first introduction to the space and ultimately when I got hired by the times I harbor this ambition to get the gray lady to pay to send me to see so I could land the story that I never got to really tackle anthropologically. When I finally found an editor who was willing to take the leap with me her name was Rebecca Corbett I had three ambitions and what was methodological in the sense that I wanted to do longform narrative explanatory sort of polished investigative storytelling but I also wanted to try to do it differently in the sense that I really wanted to get out into the space and tell these stories with eyeball, first kind of writing and not try to do remote--- deck sure [indiscernible] when they returned and other sort of big ambitions were sort of topical, I wanted to reimagine the space.

The space that about two thirds of the planet that was water that long been sort of thought of as adventure almost a watery desert that you fly over, most of us landlubbers fly over and no one is out there. There's marine life but it's just Maersk container ships and that's about it. And that's about it. And I wanted to blow the definition of an show to folks that this is actually a vibrant, well populated bustling frontier and largely ungovernable maybe even, but generally extralegal space. And there was a vast diversity and that was the other goal topically of things happening out there, sort of expand the taxonomy of understanding , the species of activity and players that are out there, not just BP spill or piracy but also see slavery and arms trafficking and murder of stowaways... And illegal dumping and a range of illegal whaling and all sorts of other things happening out there that were riveting. And so those were the ambitions.

>> And Tim I am wondering as a funder and all the need in the world, why Ian? White is project, what attracted humanity and you to it?

>> Thanks for the question Kaitlin. And I want to thank also Michael and Vic and Ian and Pete for sharing their work with us today. I'm with Humanity United. We are a human rights focus foundation and I would also, it is great to be part of the program particularly this program in climate justice because as we know so much social human degradation and exploitation in the world is intimately intertwined with climate environmental degradation, exploitation, climate justice.

So thank you for having me. Part of our theory of change as an organization is that we believe that you have to be aware and you have to understand human rights issues. Sort of the first step to addressing them. So we have spent a lot of time over the last decades supporting media around these issues specifically journalists and media outlets interested in shining a light on these systems that contribute to the abuses of human rights [in the world]. And thanks to both Michael and Vic for talking about the systems earlier. We have also worked over the last decade on the really specific issue of forced labor on Thai fishing vessels and I think it was about six years ago maybe, Ian contacted us knowing that we were working on this. And started talking about this series for the New York Times and also let us know that he was interested in writing a book and adjust appreciating Ian's dedication to the sort of issues of lawlessness and inhumanity at sea, in addition to his capacity as a storyteller clearly. We provided him a sort of modest grant for the developing of this book. I think what we did not appreciate at the time, or maybe perhaps could not have predicted is that Ian's work would continue in the way that it has that I think he's going to talk about that a little bit. And I would just make this note as a funder too, I think we often make investments to have impact.

And Ian is such a terrific example of sort of unanticipated impact and reach. We funded a book and it has become so much more than that.

>> Yeah, thanks Tim. Ian, so what is the more than that? we will stop being coy here. Tell us what you're up to now.

>> Well, I mean at its root, the more than that is built on a foundation that is the same that it was at the beginning. And it must stay true to that foundation and what I'm referring to is I left the times. Became a contract writer so I could publish in the magazine but created a nonprofit called the outlaw ocean project with, at its root, the foundational ambition of producing four, five, six major high-gloss tier one level investigative narrative stories. And that had the same methodological ambitions that I cited originally. Get out into space and talk about the range of concerns. It all added up to general lack of governance at sea, be they labor, be they human rights or environmental concerns and give life to the 56 million people out here who are doing this work. But it starts with storytelling and really told in this rigorous polished way. The other ambition that I carried with me into this new endeavor was to try to innovate in the methods of distribution. So one of the frustrations I had , I only ever worked for the New York Times and have nothing but wonderful things to say about it as a journalistic institution. I think it is one of the best around. But the gray lady is a slow-moving sort of

entity and when it comes to innovation and distribution how you in short that the investment in a story gets seen, and even translating the story into other mediums, other products, that was one place where I was frustrated creatively and I wanted in the new chapter of my career to lean into the attempt to innovate [in distribution] I thought if you're going to drop a half-million dollars on a series over the course of 24 months and you probably should think about not just running single 4000, 5000 word stories but think about a whole slate of other things that you will do from the same core material. In my case the innovation and distribution sort of front of what I have been doing has lots of aspirations and chapters but the first chapter of it was taking the reporting and teaming up with musicians around the world, be they classical, ambient, electronic, a diversity of different musicians in different genres and attempting to recruit them to engage with the stories in two different ways. One was, I think of it as a top-down way, which was this classical soloist pianist would read the book and feel an emotional connection to specific material in it, up to them what, and then write music that attempts to in that different language tell the stories, their linkage of music. That is the top-down emotional relationship, the emotional relationship. The bottom up relationship was it to be five years of reporting and stripped from it rich sound, and the sound is either ambient or prose. There are two different archives of field recordings. The ambient is textured sounds like machine gun fire in Somalia or chanting Cambodian deckhands on the South China Sea. That's ambient textured sound and the other is the prose archive which is Secretary of State Jon Kerry at the UN talking about the reporting or interviews I have done or other people talking about characters, interviews even with individuals in the recording, take this collection of sounds and the bottom up relationship with the musician is put that ingredient bucket, if you will at their disposal and ask them if creatively they feel motivated to use the sounds and the music. Ultimately what they produce is this five track EP. We put out an album, we put the music out and published it in a standard way that you might digitally. Not CDs, but modify, Pandora, Sirius radio, etc., YouTube music, and the play here journalistically as number one, there are almost 4 experiments going on at the same time. One is the creative experiment, an experiment in translation, in moving from words to music. The second is a sort of experiment in distribution in the sense that if my 16-year-old son does not read the New York Times and the New Yorker when I publish their how do I get stuff in front of him into his head? and the same thing with readers in Australia that might not see stuff I'm writing for these US focused venues. So the thought there was from a distribution play why don't we go to they are and where a lot of people are consuming information on alternate platforms like YouTube and spotify so the distribution was bringing content over, pairing it with music and making a music video that talks about the footage, having interesting back end explanations as to what the music is about as an alternate way to get people in a different way and at different people. And the other two experiments are the notion of social change and driving social change through journalism. I'm a journalist not an advocate but I do have an agenda. I want to people through my storytelling and explanation understand this realm better. And have an informed way of making decisions about how to fix things. And I think the social change experiment here is using

these alternate platforms and the translated versions to roll out the reporting in a longer runway and have people, more people but over a longer period of time consuming this stuff.

The last experiment, then I will shut up, is there is an experiment in funding and everyone knows especially in this room that journalism is struggling in terms of financial models and relying on the generosity of Tim and Nat Geo and Humanity United is amazing, but not a sustainable from a journalistic point of view plan. So I'm trying to figure out alternate ways to monetize the journalism and reporting if I paid \$8000 to produce a story the cost \$85,000 I've got to figure out some way to close the gap and the music model has a streaming revenue source. It is pennies but it adds up when you do it at scale, that funds all the money we make goes directly back into the nonprofit which funds new stories. So that is the other experiment here, and the other, initially I planned on doing this with four artists. As of last week we had 415 artists from 90 countries, each artist producing a five track album that will be producing 50 albums every two months, releasing them for the next 20 months. So it has grown to this massive thing and what is really exciting about that is the collective listenership and eyeballs on spotify and other platforms between the artists and in between and that is more eyeballs than at the New York Times in a year. So there is something really exciting about all the experience that I think may actually work.

>> I think the scale is hard to comprehend. And I know we want to pivot to questions now, but Tim, I am wondering as a funder, as you listened, and we talked about Ian's new models that he is putting forward how are you thinking about different funding models, or are you, is being the seed to someone like Ian enough?

>> Yeah I mean that is a great question, Kaitlin and a tough one for us. We are part of the [indiscernible] group ecosystem of organizations and our specific focus is human rights. What we have not focused on is the business model for journalism. And democracy fund, Limited, others within the ecosystem are really hyper focused on the business model for journalism. For us, and I don't know if this is answering your question, but an investment in Ian, is as much an investment in the content that he's producing, in this case a book as it is in the individual himself who is working on this as his life's work. I don't know where it is going to go or what it is going to do but we are taking a bath. We are taking a risk by investing in Ian. To put it in financial terms I guess in this case it paid off. But he has been... We invest in a number of storytellers and journalists. Film, investigative journalism just over the argument just to raise awareness of the issue sometimes you hit a home run and sometimes it does not work but that is the business.

>> That was actually mainly a question for me, and just some, yes some self-serving conversation among friends. But thank you Ian so much for sharing your project and where it is going and I see that Roshni has already put the link to the outlet ocean music project in the chat so be sure to check it out on spotify, and if you have not read the book, do. It is captivating and amazing. At this point I'm going to hand it back to Vince,

and we already have two questions in the Q and A box and I think one ended up in the chat as well, so Vince, over to you.

>> Thank you Kaitlin that was so fascinating, and I realize we are past 2 o'clock, when we say we are going to move to Q and A, but we are actually pretty flexible about that. We really just view it as 90 minutes of discussion. So if the discussion is rich we are happy to benefit from the extra innings of great program content there. I want to see if John Funabiki is going to join us in the discussion here... If he wants to ask the question himself he can. But if I do not see him up here momentarily I will ask for him. Let's see. Well so I am going to go ahead and jump in here and ask on behalf of Jon... There he is. He is arriving. And he just has to take his microphone off mute.

>> So, hi. Yes thanks. I did not realize we would have this opportunity this is actually terrific, I lost some of the transmission my Internet went out as well today so maybe this is a national trend. I was very curious about Pete's work and there was a lot of focus on these really almost disastrous kinds of events, whether it's climate or natural disasters. But it seems to me that a lot of the emotional tug that we are talking about could also apply to gentrifying neighborhoods. Because you hear this time and time again across the country here and in other countries as well that there's just this rapid gentrification that disrupts established neighborhoods, disrupts the history and culture and people who are living there. And I'm just wondering if that might also fall into this category. Thank you.

>> Sure. Everybody can hear me? Yeah, it is a great point and it has arisen whenever I'm presenting this work I always feel like it is important that I say that I have added to some degree to the essential thinking that has been done by Glenn Albrecht on the subject. This is his intellectual framework that I was doing some investigation about certainly the question has been posed to Glenn on a number of occasions that he would absolutely say that gentrification and the feeling of the sense of loss of place while being emplaced where you belong, but the elements and surroundings are being transformed such that you no longer feel familiar and comfortable with the place, that would absolutely be an instance where he would say this term would be applicable to. And in fact we thought, you know, the way that National Geographic is providing support for some of its contributors is like in my case for instance, the others can speak if it is of interest, we were always trying to thread the needle be between support coming from National Geographic Society and distribution strategies of that output work in media in the partner side of National Geographic so magazine and websites and all that stuff and we did in fact consider doing a component on gentrification. But as you mentioned, there are so many instances of this experience, of this type of transformative experience that we could only get as far as we could and we wanted to try to be as wide ranging, diverse, both in terms of regions, communities we are visiting and in terms of the factors of transformation. So ultimately we got as far as we could and hope that others will contribute their own stories and observations.

>> I wonder if I could build on John's question and ask any of the other presenters Ian, Vic, Michael if they want to reflect on Solastalgia from their lens, if they are experiencing, if it resonates with you or, and if there are other ways of applying the concept. If anybody has any.

>> Vic, I don't want to cut you off. Were you about to talk? I will throw on one point. I wish I knew that term when I was writing the book because I struggled to capture this thing I noticed among especially long-haul fisherman, but seafarers who spend real amounts of time away from home. That they seem caught between two places. And on the one hand they seem very much at home at sea as much as they might suffer abuses of various sorts. Then, but they long for their family and landed life. But then when they get back to land they feel almost in a PTSD sort of way ill-equipped to readjust to that realm and the amount of stimulation and the pace of it all and all these things. Or ex-offenders. You know, seeking to readjust to life on the outside and you can look at a lot of different communities and use the term to better capture potentially what emotionally and psychologically they might be going through. So it is a really beautiful thing created there.

>> Vic did you want to jump in?

>> Yeah I love this idea of Solastalgia also I learned a lot about nostalgia too, where the word comes from, something I always say about myself I know what it means. [Indiscernible] but yeah, I think this phrase of Solastalgia is making me think a lot about the uprisings that are happening right now and the way that landscapes of cities are changing. I am in Minneapolis right now. My partner is from Minneapolis, and we have been talking a lot about,

or a bit about how the landscape of the city in itself has changed and I'm thinking kind of about maybe tapping into Solastalgia are creating the uncomfortability among the people as a tool to call attention to people who felt uncomfortable for most of their lives. And so that is kind of what I'm thinking a lot about. With this word. And how, what it means definitely. So. That is kind of what first came to mind just in the current context of what is going on, how the uprisings tap into that for people, changing the landscapes of their homes and their communities and forcing them to look at what has been going on.

>> Yeah. A lot to think about there. Michael did you want to reflect?

>> I mean, one thing, we had a project called housing is a human right for a while that we did that was sort of ruminated on the idea of a dignity of a place to call home. And I think what I am thinking about as in relation to the provocation around sort of like breaking down words is this current moment and the ability to have imagination to very often we think about place is just a physical place but we don't think about the textual relationships that really sort of constitute a place and I think that is relevant now when we think about the conversation around defunding police. People are like oh I cannot imagine a world without police, but it's really just like looking at the suburbs. And we see that. Where there is a subsequent investment in the texture of community rather than

sort of this punitive mechanism. So I think that is sort of what I was thinking about as Pete was talking around this idea of what is the sort of the ethereal like layer of community that we can invest in a way that really supports communities.

>> Yeah, there are so many ways that you can apply this concept. I'm thinking of all the attention over the last several days to the race massacre in Tulsa in 1921, the dislocation, the violent dislocation of that community from their place would have to be another dramatic example of this. I think it is a good time to switch to thank you, Jon, for that great starting question. Diane Ives is a question for us too. If we can light her up and bring her on. Thank you, welcome back. Diane was with us just a few days ago sharing her perspectives which build on the essay that she wrote for our new report, environmental grantmaking, and be sure to tune back in and watch the recording of that if you missed it. But Diane, you have a question.

>> Thank you so much but I'm with the Kendeda fund but Vic, I just want to acknowledge the way that you took the term of Solastalgia and turn it into an organizing tool. I think that is brilliant, so I look forward to seeing how you are able to use that for your own best advantage. The question I had for you all is I am curious about what is storytelling for racial and environmental justice kind of impacting and organizing like in a virtual world?

>> Anybody can answer.

>> I will kind of go first. I feel like when it comes to virtual organizing and storytelling for sure I think that you get a lot more access to stories that you may be would not have been able to see close by. I think that is, I think all the potential that exists in online and virtual storytelling is really exemplified by the way that young people use the Internet to share lived experiences, to share stories. I think that young people a lot of the times use, I mean obviously it could be like a desensitizing tool too, but I think for a lot of young people it could be a way to learn empathy and other people's stories because you get to be placed into other people's worlds in ways that you never have before. I can't be sure that I would have the platform that I have or that people would listen to me the way that they do if I was not able to create an online community where I met other people look like me or I was able to get the language to talk about the things that I care about. I think especially for young people who hold marginalized identities, the Internet is so important for storytelling and how we relate to other people because if you are in the community where you're not around other people where you are may be trans or Afro Latino or Afro indigenous I could find those people online even if they are not around me and it means I can strengthen my own story through that. That is kind of my take.

>> Great. Great start there. Anybody want to add a point?

>> I would just throw in... You go first. You are on mute.

>> Ian, take it and he will,

>> The methodological point of ensuring that you get out there becomes a bit of a problem when you can't get on the plane or the boat. On the other hand, and furthermore if this Diaspora or tribe of 56 million people are of interest largely because they are transient and usually invisible many of the migrants and undocumented and geographically separated from anyone that would maybe protect them or check up on them, so if this population was already in visible and accessible, COVID has made it 10 times worse. A lot of them are stranded. Commerce is slowed down so there's hundreds upon hundreds of boats that we are hearing about daily where you have got seafarers stuck in they have no idea how they are going to get on land anywhere. So the problem has become very acute from a storytelling point of view and the challenges are telling.

On the other hand on the distribution side for us at the outlet ocean project it has been a boon frankly because a lot of musicians are stuck and events are canceled and they too can't travel and they can't tour, so they have been very eager to jump on board with the project. And so we have been really doing a lot of really great stuff on the distribution front, but on the journalism front it has been tough.

>> And Pete?

>> I was just going to say, I think we are sort of fortunate in a way that we are living through a period right now where we are rethinking so much of what the conventional models were, their efficacy and merits. I'm interested I'd like to hear Michael talk more about the phrase that he used, the people formerly known as the audience. I think that is an interesting turn of phrase and the audience question is so important. But what I mean in terms of further rethinking, we are in the midst of rethinking so many things that I think certainly related to environment issues, I come from a kind of traditional photo journalistic background and it is something I encountered almost immediately was my recognition as I was trying to approach this idea of let's try to explore something that is not as steeped in tropes and something that in a lot of cases is devoid of a lot of the things that drive the typical kind of reaction barometers at least two photojournalistic images, which is drama. You know, people, audiences, however we define that, have often been either conditioned to appreciate or appreciate intrinsically images, stories that follow these archetypal types of dramas, and I think tickly with issues related to incremental climate change these are incredibly difficult, these are stories that whisper. And we have got to, incremental dimensions of course you have acute instances, hurricane Sandy, the fires in Paradise California but for the most part we are dealing with quiet mental changes that are extremely real and pronounced in the experiences of those who go through them each day. But it is a communication strategy of how we relay that to audiences I think we need to think critically and creatively about how we are relaying these stories. Because the conventional models do not cut it

>> It's also fascinating the ways that the categories are disappearing and Ian is producing a book and articles and music. And your photography is not just its own, you are also providing the words as well as the photos and then your photos are incorporated into Ron Howard's new movie about paradise, which just had its premiere

the other day. And so the way that the media formats are connecting and more powerful to those connections I think Nathalie Applewhite from the Pulitzer Center is going to add to Diane's question?

>> I mean, sort of building on both what Ian had Pete had said I think there's obviously this challenge and we are planning on supporting Ian to do some reporting this spring and couldn't. So obviously we have had to put a lot of things on hold. But we have seen in terms of outreach around the projects that we do this in critical growth in our audience. We have always supported global issues increasingly also the US in terms of poverty, incarceration and other issues like that, now COVID and racial injustice of course, but there had been a gap between our audience and the people that we report on. And what we have been seeing in the outreach we have been doing is the growth of these communities that are completely cross-border and conversations that are happening that are really inspiring. And the rain forest work we have been doing, organizing seminars and webinars, for environment journalists in tropical rain forest zones in the amount of engagement we are seeing, I just want to point back to the opportunity because I think that maybe what Diane was getting at that yes these are the challenges but you know, what are the opportunities here to actually reach new audiences and give voice to, or just provide channels for people that we are not normally hearing from, especially the indigenous communities where we report. So in terms of environmental issues.

>> It is a great point. Rather than hear from anyone to respond to that point I do want to get to Nikita Kumar's question that she has in the Q and a that people may have already seen. She had to drop off, she told me but I will voice it for her. During pizza travels did communities and residents get to share what they wanted to see to and the cycle of Solastalgia I really appreciated Vic's point that acute events can create leaders and start looking at the interconnections and systems-based problems which seems like whatis what happened with water warriors. What should media and communications be doing to help support that trajectory? and we know you have to... We have a heart stop, Pete, so if you want to pick on that, like did anyone that you met with that whose stories you featured, did you have any idea how to interrupt this dynamic?

>> I mean certainly everybody that I encountered that is living with a facet of their surrounding that they feel is seriously degrading the quality of life and their ability to enjoy the environment, in the way that they always had wants to see whatever the impediment is to the feeling of comfort stop. Ultimately I think Glenn Albrecht's interest in the reverberations in these circles feel fundamentally that unless something has a name we can actually recognize its prevalence. It is sort of this ambient part of the atmosphere until we give it a name, which signal some kind of collective recognition of its existence. But ultimately his ambition is to, you know, there is certain irony in this and I think we're getting to a point where the experience is prevalent for enough people that there needs to be assents to be connectivity among enough people to end the thing that it --- can we get it to a point where we do not need to talk about it anymore. He is

naming this phenomenon that unfortunately seems to be rising in a considerable way throughout the world. But ultimately his hope is that naming of it ultimately brings about its reduction in a funny way.

>> And you just touched on, at the end of your presentation, but you are really exploring how COVID is creating the dislocation in all of our lives. So maybe we will all have a better ability to empathize with the stark cases because we have all experienced that kind of dislocation too.

>> I think I will just say very briefly that I could send around this article that I wrote that accompanied those series of pictures, but really what I said in there is as I set out to try to better understand Albrecht's concept of this which he really focuses on the physical dimensions of things, I can't recall who precisely mentioned earlier the built environments ultimately are, I think perhaps it was Michael, these are the stages of course for all the interconnections of our personal social lives and what I thought was so interesting about COVID is as I talked to people living in the midst of major environment will transformation the facet of distress that stood out the most in my findings was the social dimension. This physical transformation is underway, but what cuts the deepest is the way that it undermines the sense of community cohesion and that felt to me like COVID was skipping steps. Okay we didn't necessarily have physical transformation of the landscapes around us but all the social culture that so many of us rely on and gives us that sense of inclusion was just immediately undermined and that felt like some small window. I'm not saying it's comparable, but it is a small window through which we could get some sense of what an inhospitable environment might mean to us at that level.

>> We will provide a link to the article and the follow-up materials for all of this and for the recording that people will get. And if you have to drop off that is fine. I know we are over time but I want to give anybody else a chance to respond to Nikita's question about what can we do about this. Such a powerful starting point that Pete has given us. Anyone want to offer, Michael, I see your mic is on. I think one of the things that I wrestle with addressing that both the distress and I think some of the things raised by Diane's question about the sort of digital space is apathy is not enough. But there is this other piece of, how do we demonstrate people's ability to have agency in this scenario, both themselves and the people around them. Because that is a critical piece of the conversation that I think we can talk more about to be able to address this sort of distress of the existential crisis I think there's also think there's a piece that I worry about it relates to Diane's question particularly around the distress is the duration of media. So I think definitely a maker and artist and journalist has really benefited in some ways, you know like I joke I was fired twice from the Village voice only because they got caught and restructured and move the photo department to interns, but in some ways that forced me to be creative about the sort of ways that we can harness the fragmentation of media. But in that I also worry about the confirmation bias that is happening in the media landscape where we are just getting what we already know and are not introduced, and I'm not the type of person who is always like we need to bridge the

chorus because I do think the chorus needs to eat and part of the chorus's nourishment is being able to introduce new ideas that challenge their own understanding. And I feel like at least in what I have experienced, and I worked with this project with Naomi Klein as an impact producer for the film this changes everything. So when I saw that people were breaking out of the distress was when they could be sort of engaged real life with different ideas and series of dialectics that allowed them to sort of deepen their own understanding of their own perception but also understand where the people were coming from. And I feel like so much of the political polarization we are experiencing where people are like oh, you over there you don't know because XYZ, there is the assumption that they are an idiot or that they are done or have not seen the truth that my side nose. So like that is where I worry about sort of the fragmentation really exacerbating. And I feel like it is a space in the media landscape that could use more investment around how do we invest in sort of programmatic and curatorial prerogatives that bring lots of ideas together to, so we can really appreciate where people are coming from and I feel like that is something that could help us navigate the existential.

>> I do want to give Vic a chance to jump in there too and then we will probably wrap.

>> I was just going to say on the question of what should media and can indications be doing to help support the trajectory of people becoming leaders of these moments, I think that I see especially in kind of impact media I see a lot of media that teaches people about their privilege by showing the trauma and stories of black and brown people where we lack privilege. And I think that there's a lot of opportunity for more media to be made for white allies in a way that does not necessarily frame the story of marginalized communities like look, these are people that are struggling and they need help, and instead frames at about actually teaching people about what their privilege is and what it does, without having to kind of put on display all the day today difficulties that come with being a person of color or marginalized person. I think there's a lot of opportunity for more media that focuses on allies. And creating allies in the white community and in privilege communities in general. Without having to kind of put trauma on full display.

>> We should probably hear more about that. But I don't think we have a lot more time today since we are already over time. Ian, did you want to offer any observation?

>> No, I mean, I think all three Pete, Mike and Vic really touched on systemic change through journalism. I think in my own work, what Michael was saying hit a note with me in that you know, writing a 5000 word piece for the New Yorker and before you file it to the editor you stop and think have I done right by the people I disagree with in this piece. And often that demographic in your own story want to engage with you. They will not answer your calls.

So you actually have to channel their perspective without them sometimes and that sense of duty is one of the methodological things that I think us in journalism have to not forget about because that runs us into the very problem that Michael was identifying and

in each individual product that we put out does some work toward perspectives be they marginalized communities, or non-marginalized communities, but really trying to, from an explanatory perspective understand things even for those that will not engage with you. So that's just one thing that I think is a change factor in how you do long for narrative journalism. I will just up there with that.

>> That's a great place to land. Tim, did you have any final thoughts you want to share?

>> no, just a word of gratitude and with a lot of humility, thank you to everyone for sharing your stories and thoughts with us.

>> Yeah. I would echo that. And thanks to Kaitlin who seems to have had to drop off. And to everyone for giving us a little extra time for such a rich discussion. I think we were all enriched by this experience. I want to thank Ian and Michael and Pete and Vic for bringing these stories to us and sharing them and hopefully we can really do something with this knowledge and construct even more powerful support for you and all the people who are being highlighted in the stories.

Thank you all. At the end of this process if you could stay on for the link that gives you a prompt to do the short survey we would appreciate that. Otherwise, hope to see more of you on the next program on Thursday. And that will be the final program. But thank you all speakers for today. Thank you bye-bye.