

6S 2022 Sketch Groups Template  
Staccato Project Design

Use this sketch -- either quickly or more comprehensively -- to draw out an ethnographic research design -- for your own project or just for practice. Do this sketch many times for different kinds of possible projects -- thinking of it as calisthenics for ethnography.

For the 6S 2022 workshop, select one of the sites|initiatives|problem-domains below to design a project for -- thinking first about different types of projects that could be done for the site|initiative|problem-domain you have selected, then about a specific project design, filling in the graphic below. Don't describe your own primary project. This is an exercise in rapid research imagining **that you should spend about three hours on** -- honing your capacity for "analysis as craft." The sketch can be done individually or collaboratively (the latter is more fun). Feel free to reach out to members in your group if you want to do this collaboratively. Responses can be roughly drafted and in bullet points. Fill in as much as you can in the allotted time, purposely working fast. **Prioritize work on "Overview / Research Questions," "Methods and Data Resources" and "Theoretical Frames and Data Analysis."** All of the sites|initiatives|problem-domains we've listed as options somehow relate to climate change. We chose options within the climate change problem space so that the collection of proposals the group comes up with points to an array of STS research possibilities within any particular problem space.

TITLE

**The Cosmology and Mythology of the Board Room**

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ABSTRACT, INTELLECTUAL MERIT, BROAD IMPACT

Let the reader suppose that there is one planet Earth that all beings share. Yet the singular physical planet consists of many, many worlds and ways of being in those worlds. So we have a singular planet consisting of many worlds. Let the reader now suppose that all sentient beings on planet Earth have a cosmology that organizes the way they understand their world and planet and act on the world and planet they inhabit. What does the nature and description of an emergency as identified by a being (or group of beings) then tell the reader about the cosmology of the world that is threatened by said emergency? Is climate change a planetary emergency or a world emergency? Climate change will not destroy planet Earth. But it will destroy worlds. And it will create new worlds, in turn. Is the World Economic Forum's world in danger of collapse? I will draw from work on indigenous STS and afrofuturism along with religious studies to answer these questions in the form of creative non-fiction to write a cosmology and creation myth for WEF.

**OVERVIEW / RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

What is to be gained by applying a metaphysical framework to understanding the world of the World Economic Forum? How does such a framework help us understand if global environmental governance is desired or even possible? To what extent is global environmental governance an extension of the Abrahamic tradition of faith conversion, tied to a hundreds of year old project of world domination through colonization? For which eco-social worlds is climate change an emergency? For which worlds is it not an emergency, or even a problem?

#### BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The World Economic Forum (WEF) is currently organizing what it calls a “Climate Governance Initiative.” (<https://www.weforum.org/projects/climate-governance-initiative>) The following is my close reading of the initiative (WEF text in italics, mine is bulleted):

*The urgent need to address the climate emergency requires governments and business to accelerate the transition to a new economic model that is consistent with the 2018 recommendations of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) of a 1.5° degree scenario.*

- For whom (which eco-social world) is there a climate emergency for which we must act urgently? For the world that World Economic Forum lives in. What is the cosmology of the WEF (and the IPCC)? Can global governance only apply to those who live in the same cosmology as WEF? Do all governments and businesses on planet Earth share the same cosmology, and if not, are they to be held accountable to global climate governance?

*Climate change is shaping a new reality, creating risks and opportunities for business in a diverse number of ways. Investors, regulators and other stakeholders are now challenging companies to take responsibility by adopting an integrated, strategic approach to addressing the climate emergency.*

- For whom is climate change shaping a new reality? For those who are recognizing climate change is an emergency?

*Many if not most boardrooms are grappling with how to frame the risks and opportunities and embed a viable transition strategy into their business models. Boards of directors play a critical role in ensuring the long-term stewardship of the companies they oversee.*

- What is the cosmology of those who sit in boardrooms? What kind of being is a company? Is climate change an emergency for a being known as a company?

*The World Economic Forum has developed a set of Climate Governance Principles for boards of directors, with a view to enabling non-executive directors (NEDs) to gain climate awareness and skills, embed climate considerations into board decision-making, and understand and act upon the risks and opportunities that the climate emergency poses to the long-term resilience and business success of their companies, while taking into account all stakeholders.*

- It is starting to sound like climate change is a threat to beings known as and in communion with business and companies. Do these business/company beings that the WEF is addressing have the same cosmology (acknowledge as living in and sharing the same world) as WEF? Does WEF claim that ALL business and companies live in WEF's world?

*A critical element in ensuring that businesses are appropriately positioned to confront the challenges posed by the climate emergency is the role that boards of directors play in the long-term stewardship of the companies they oversee. To fulfil their fiduciary duties in the long-term service of their organizations, boards need to be fully aware of the implications of climate change, have the skills, tools, processes and information to act, and commit to steward their companies through the challenges climate change entails to embed it within their companies' strategic planning.*

- Is the “organization” a god in the cosmology of the boardroom? Do board members have a duty to serve their god? Is their god mortal (can be killed by climate change)?

*The Climate Governance Initiative is establishing a global network of national and regional Chapters to promote the implementation of the Climate Governance Principles, by mobilizing NEDs who either are locally based or serve on the boards of locally based companies and providing a range of engagement opportunities aimed at enabling them to drive action in this area. The initiative has operational Chapters (often called Chapter Zero) in Brazil, Brussels, Canada, Chile, France, Germany, Italy, Malaysia, Nordics, Poland, Russia, Switzerland, the UK and USA.*

- In what ways can we understand the Climate Governance Principles to be a religious text? For which religion? For which god(s)?

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

Blok, Anders, and Ignacio Farias, eds. *Urban Cosmopolitics: Agencements, Assemblies, Atmospheres*. London: Routledge, 2016. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315748177>.

Hoover, Elizabeth. *The River Is in Us: Fighting Toxics in a Mohawk Community*. 3rd ed. edition. Minneapolis ; London: Univ Of Minnesota Press, 2017.

Jackson, Zakiyyah Iman. *Becoming Human: Matter and Meaning in an Antiracist World*. Vol. 53. NYU Press, 2020.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv1n6ptnn>.

Liboiron, Max. *Pollution Is Colonialism*. Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2021.

Murphy, Michelle. *The Economization of Life*. Duke University Press, 2017.

ROBIN, WALL KIMMERMER. *BRAIDING SWEETGRASS INDIGENOUS WISDOM, SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE AND THE TEACHINGS OF PLANTS /ANGLAIS*. London: PENGUIN UK, 2020.

Robinson, Daniel N., and Richard N. Williams, eds. *Scientism: The New Orthodoxy*. London; New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015.

Stenmark, Mikael. “What Is Scientism?” *Religious Studies* 33, no. 1 (1997): 15–32.

Watts, Vanessa. "Indigenous Place-Thought and Agency Amongst Humans and Non Humans (First Woman and Sky Woman Go On a European World Tour!)." *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 2, no. 1 (May 4, 2013). <https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/view/19145>.

**METHODS AND DATA RESOURCES**

Creative non-fiction: Write WEF's creation myth

**THEORETICAL FRAMES & DATA ANALYSIS**

Worlds within worlds, comparison of creation myths, ontoepistemological justice, ancient wisdom traditions

PLAN OF WORK

CHALLENGES AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

VALIDITY AND EVALUATION

PREPARATION AND WORK THUS FAR

REFERENCES

DATA MANAGEMENT PLAN

FURTHER NOTES

**POINTERS**

- Make sure to come up with a title (though this is hard and always feels -- and is -- reductive).

- The abstract should describe your project significance, aims, methods, expected findings/contributions (intellectual merit) and expected societal implications (broad impact). Describe each in a sentence.
- In the Overview / Research Questions, try to articulate the scales, systems or objects that will be foregrounded in the project, and its context|location (geographic, ecologic, geopolitical, discursive, etc). Include both theoretical and empirical questions, and a description of the types of data you will generate and mobilize. End with a few statements about what the project will push *against* (methodological nationalism or essentialist constructs of identity or place, for example).
- In the Literature Review section for a literature review, describe two to four topical literatures that you will build on and contribute to through this research. See [Annual Reviews](#) for ideas but reach for [bibliodiversity](#).
- In the methods section, describe *what you will do, where and with whom* -- and the different kinds of data and insight these activities will produce. Consider, for example, how you might include multisited ethnography ([Marcus 1995](#), a tale of implosion ([Dumit 2014](#)), tactile analytics ([Patricia Alvarez Astacio 2021](#)), drawing as analysis ([Rachel Douglas-Jones 2021](#)), or archive ethnography ([Fortun et al. 2021](#)).
- In the section for theoretical frames, describe the basic theoretical insights that you can mobilize in your study design, data collection, analysis, and writing. You could mobilize understanding of “the subaltern,” for example, or Foucaultian ideas about discourse and subject formation. This can be a long list with very cursory descriptions. Note that this section is not usually included in a proposal submitted to funders -- but should be part of your thinking and dialogue with collaborators
- In building your references, reach for bibliodiversity and a transnational field of reference.

## sites | initiatives | problem-domains for 6S 2022 April 26 Workshop

- [Melting Siberia](#)
  - Troianovski, Anton and Chris Mooney (photo and video by Michael Robinson Chavez). 2019. “Radical Warming in Siberia Leaves Millions on Unstable Ground,” Washington Post. October 3. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2019/national/climate-environment/climate-change-siberia/>
  - Struzik, Ed. 2020. “How Thawing Permafrost Is Beginning to Transform the Arctic,” Yale Environment 360. January 21. <https://e360.yale.edu/features/how-melting-permafrost-is-beginning-to-transform-the-arctic>
- [Climate Change and Combo Disaster in the United States](#)
- [Climate Change, Labor Productivity and Politics](#)
- [USAID's Climate Links](#)
- [World Bank's Climate Change Knowledge Portal](#)
- [WHO et al Environment and Health Compendium](#)
- WHO, UNDP, UNEP and UNICEF have partnered to create a new compendium of 500 actions aimed at reducing death and diseases driven by environmental risk factors, the first such resource to unite this expertise from across the UN system.
- [Climate Change and Social Media](#)
- [World Economic Forum on Climate Governance](#)

