

Introduction

WRITING STORIES OF *MAKE-BELIZE*



Writing is always inseparable from becoming, always incomplete, always in the midst of being formed.

—Gilles Deleuze, *Literature and Life*

It matters what matters we use to think other matters with; it matters what stories we tell to tell other stories with; it matters what knots knot knots, what thoughts think thoughts, what descriptions describe description, what ties tie ties. It matters what stories make worlds, what worlds make stories.

—Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*

A rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo. The tree imposes the verb “to be,” but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, and . . . and . . . and.

—Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*

Swirling

Once upon a time a giant Flood devastated the coastal village of Wallaceville, Belize, issuing forth what Miss Grace calls the *beast-time*. And the beast-time ushered in another Flood: waves of tourists, madly buying into new life experiences of that seductive and unsettling azure blue Caribbean Sea. That was around the time a local character named Twitch mysteriously died and Twitch’s cousin, a seasoned local Creole named Richie, began to invent twisted stories of adventure for tourists with a wry sense of enchantment and the absurd. And it was just about then that the Belize government drew up plans for a Raelian¹ tourist welcome center. And around the time a crazy white man named Mr. Pete suddenly appeared and began maniacally to rake the village beach for days, agitating local life and gossip. And then he disap-

peared without word or trace. And that was in the time US money fell from the sky *like mana from heaven*, Miss June said. And that's about the time a mystery ship sailed silently into Wallaceville Bay. And a Belikin beer coaster helped to materialize a wild male strip-show beach party. And that's when a Creole woman named Parca became seduced by her number picks while playing Boledo, the Belize national lottery game, and winning more often than losing while using her numbers to help contemplate future life in a village that had gone *crazy for tourists*. Wallaceville is a make-believe beach town materializing out of this beast-time mix of intensities, images, hunches, strife, enchantment, giddiness, and tactility.²

This book is a collection of stories written by way of these odd and restless historical fragments, unfolding as random moments of the ordinary, set against a swirling current of forces that are continuously unsettling the Wallaceville shoreline. Each fragment generates a story that materializes like the heave of curling waves bending to changing tides, strange weather, sudden appearances of seaweed on the beach, cutting waves from the wake of boat traffic, and curious ocean currents fashioned of so many transecting intensities composing Caribbean-Atlantic historical rhythms, vitalities, and patterns that make and remake the ebb and flow of Belizean life (see Benitez-Rojo 1990, 1992; c.f. Sharpe 2016). Like the accumulating jumble of flotsam drifting the Belize coastline as a coiled entanglement of stuff somehow assembling beachfront turmoil, these swirling stories of wonder, luck, and lingering shock, recurring bother, and fresh hilarity energize the place. Each story recombines waves of roiling, excessive telling and possibility that collectively move things and change them across an orbit of a narrative *make-Belize*.

The make-Belize is instantiated in stories that are happenings, contingent re-combinations of images, events, networks, sensibilities, and situations that constitute the unfinishedness of life in Wallaceville and so conjure a Paradise impossible to fix and secure, an unsteady Paradise that stumbles beyond measure or cadence and so is always in the process of rendering place and time sensational in its efforts to make the beast-time resonate sensibly.³ Yet no efforts of Paradise-production can freeze time or space or transform its forces except through new forces, new compositional energies and inventions that are make-Belize.

But Miss Grace is only one of a growing group of aging Wallaceville locals⁴ and old expat locals⁵ who today feel that their "time is at hand." Something *crazy crazy* is happening that is deeply felt as both menace and promise. Some "get it." Others don't. For those who don't, it's "get in, take advantage, or get out and get lost." Belize time has entered into what Miss Grace calls the beast-time. And the beast-time took on a vital materializing force and somber strength in Wallaceville with the great Flood of 2001. When the

earth cracked open, the beast issued forth, Miss Grace says, and life was sucked out and under with a deafening racket. Disaster. Chaos. The atmosphere was suddenly electric when life fractured in dark sulfurous seizures riding a ruthless sea surge. And the village disappeared. Wallaceville. Gone in a day and a night. Swamped by fetid water then swept away or sucked into the ground.

It is not lost on those who still live there today that this devastating flood struck near the end of a very successful and promising 2001 tourism season that saw unprecedented growth of local tourism infrastructure and a surge of tourists with deep pockets and curious desires for this place they called Paradise. Wiping almost the entire village off the earth, the Flood left little in its wake but difficult questions, like *What else? What next? Why us?* Almost everything was destroyed; the rest was pushed over, under, sideways, down. The traumatizing event gave everyone the *jittas* and sent a nervous shock through the village and the country that is still deeply felt today.

The Flood was a *bad sign*, and it stirred up more bad signs. *It change up everyt'ing*, Mr. Richie said. First, the flood surge, a sure sign of the beast. The staggering chaos of an annihilating disaster that summoned another un-worlding wave, a remaking that assembled as a shocking, uncontrollable surge of tourists with money, with unrealistic ideas about life in the tropics, with odd practices, fashions, diets, and focus. A new flood of strange tourists, and all of a sudden, a stranger, doubtful nature and a nervous economy conjuring some fractured tropical Paradise. *Apocalypse*, Miss Grace whispers. Beast-time energies unsettled things fast and hard. This book marks a time of make-Belize in Wallaceville when the place went *crazy crazy*, for the tectonic shock of Caribbean tourism pumping up a post-Flood Paradise-comfort-zone, summoning beast-time demons and wonderful things.

This book is an attempt to craft ethnographic writing that creates conditions for opening the make-Belize out of those shades of experience that shape the nervous edges, the potentializing forces, of world-making, the non-linear lived duration of experience generating a “what-else” of things “in-action” (Manning 2016: 16–18). Today Wallaceville is a place and time that composes itself in incommensurate registers, circulations, expressions, and publics as beast-time *somet'ings*. These are made in the swirling eddies of dangerous feelings, fierce actions, offbeat moments, strange objects, eccentric ecology, temperamental elation, and touchy beach sensations that pull things into some alignment to become nervously generative of *somet'ing*. Wallacevillians have a strong sense that they are into *somet'ing*, that *somet'ing* is happening, *somet'ing crazy crazy* is materializing that they call the beast-time. This book tracks this unsettling, unending ebb and flow movement—local connections of one unpredictable event pushing and pulling against the next that, in swirling assemblings, make up Wallacevillian experience now.

Stories of beast-time *somet'ings* make Belize, materially. The make-Belize stories that I write are transitive compositions of beast-time make-believe. In kinship with Haraway's "speculative fabulations" (2016: 10), they are transformative because the make-believe moves Belizeans beyond the limits of their own possibility of giving themselves over to the concrete experience and circumstances of other instances of life, event, sensation, and matter, now especially focused on the dangerous prosperity promises of an international tourism Paradise settling in on a compromised marine ecology. It is the transitive potential of the beast-time make-believe, in the forces of movement, to move people and things through encounters of contingent entanglements with countless other beings, things, temporalities, sensibilities, and worlds that activate the transformative potential of make-Belize.

Make-Belize story arrangements exceed the worlds they fashion because "every arrangement installs its own possible derangements and rearrangements" (Povinelli 2014). As in, for every major normatively arranged tourist experience, for example a boat tour that stories an adventurous trip to the Belize barrier reef in attractively packaged images of reproducible tropical adventure, there are minor forces, things moving *otherwise* that course through the experience as other possibilities, like the threat of a shipwreck, a storm's menacing darkness, the fear of getting lost or being abandoned or abducted, the seductive pull of a drinking party, the alarm of a police drug raid, a sad death by drowning, each conjuring a nervous variation, a difference, in relation to repeated and established boat tour enjoyment. This *otherwise* is open to flux and rearrangement, conjuring stories and pulling at feelings that are not controlled by pre-existing, normative structures of tourist image and theme. The otherwise is a metastable derangement of things that conjures innumerable other things that are happening but that remain unfolded and undefined by the established tourism story line and so carry forces into things, wrapping around them, intensifying twists of things that coil like multiple historical-material currents that roll and recombine because of their excessive movement (see Ochoa 2017: 180–81). The otherwise creates a "cut" in the event through which new fields of relation can be fashioned, a composing process that opens experience to new variation, resonance, and expression (Manning 2016: 18–23).

As such, make-Belize stories are always unfinished composings, fabulations, always in a process of becoming more than one thing, theme, or experience. They are potentializing machines that recast the field of potential, open it to contrast, to a change in direction and quality that make a difference felt and so act as incitements of change. This is a book of such make-Belize swirls of incitement, actively generative stories that share their creative energies with the fields from which they emerge, in a state of emergence that makes them powerful potentializing forces of realization. This

is the *crazy crazy* that Miss Grace speaks of: the shifty, fugitive, devious, indiscriminating, unstable, erratic, dream-like, eccentric forces that animate life in Wallaceville, the power of which is resonant in everyday sensibilities, emergent vitalities, and immanent possibilities.

Make-Belize

If someone were to ask for a graphic picture of what Belize is like in its Caribbean setting, I would refer them to Benitez-Rojo's (1992: 4) evocative depiction of the Caribbean invented through his figure of a sea-sky:

Sea: aquatic . . . the natural and indispensable realm of marine currents, of waves, of folds and double-folds, of fluidity and sinuosity . . . a chaos that returns. A detour without a purpose, a continual flow of paradoxes; [the Caribbean] is a feedback machine with asymmetrical workings, like the sea, the wind, the clouds, the uncanny novel, the food chain, the music of Malaya, Godel's theorem and fractal mathematics. (Benitez-Rojo 1992: 11)

Sky: the spiral chaos of the Milky Way, the unpredictable flux of transformative plasma that spins calmly in our globe's firmament, that sketches in an "other" shape that keeps changing, with some objects born to light while others disappear into the womb of darkness: change, transit, return, fluxes of sidereal matter. (Benitez-Rojo 1992: 10)

Thinking with this double active figuring of churning sea and swirling firmament about how to make-Belize as an "other" shape that keeps changing because it is perpetually in transition and flux, invites us to speculate on how to compose the present moment in Wallaceville. To make-Belize is to think with and lean into this figure of the Caribbean sea-sky as a multi-dimensional, push-and-pull material relationality (Benitez-Rojo 1992: 11). As such, Wallaceville is an unstable connection of flowing liquescence and star dust, neither completely aquatic, celestial, or terrestrial, animal, mineral, or vegetable; too much connection to be any one thing, the make-Belize is a speculative "yet-to-come" *something* that is an indeterminate, transformative, and durative "becoming-with" (Haraway 2016: 10–12).

Make-Belize writing means understanding these processes of attraction and relation, imagining my way into a power fraught beast-time history-in-the-making, still indeterminate but moving *otherwise* into or as *something*. To do this means imagining Belize as aquatic-terrestrial-celestial. Like the Caribbean more generally, Belize is made up of the indispensable swirls of marine currents and star signs, of iridescent wave formations and folds of fluidity, coral build-up, celestial gravitational push-and-pull, and openly in-

determinate, polytemporal swirls of materials, people, languages, temporalities, and histories.

There is a promising liveliness in make-Belize fabulations that unsettle the stories of commercial and social forces of some gloriously luminescent floating European conquest (past and present) that relies on controlling the powers of both sky and sea. Colonizer England, Spain, and Portugal, their once-upon-a-time ships navigating Belizean waters like death-stars of floating menace and light, attraction and repulsion, centripetal and centrifugal forces, pulling into ports of call seduced by the gravitational pull of exploration, extraction, expropriation, and then the centrifugal push home, cargo holds full: a wave-making movement of commerce, dangerous and dense.

Colonizer Europe blasted its energies into space in waves and folds of creation, newly formed elements and molecules that floated off to seed the Caribbean for new generations of colonial satellites to form and grow arborescent. Today, postcolonial commercial efforts rely on Belizean nature, bodies, and culture as commodity attractions, yet again seducing white bodies to Caribbean shores with their own “seeding” efforts of leisure-class social reproduction, mythical tropical life, and image growth of all kinds. But my efforts to make-Belize means pushing past these seedy Euro-exceptionalist assumptions about what counts as a proper form of historical fact-telling, the purpose of which is to participate in projects of decolonizing the past, to critique the inequalities of the present, which includes the assurances of the new financial rule of state-sanctioned, globalized tourism in Belize. This planetary figure of a colonizing, penetrating, phallic-formed cosmos is instrumental in describing the local historical legacies of *anthropo-capitalocene* exceptionalism in beast-time Belize. But to make-Belize in the beast-time means activating storytelling differently than we ethnographers have in the past, to tell stories in an *otherwise* fashion (Biehl and Locke 2017: 5–11; Haraway 2016: 5; McLean 2017a; Ness 2016: 3–40; Pandian and McLean 2017b: 20–21; Stewart 2007).

Staying with the Make-Belize

Many Wallacevillians suspect that the phrase make-Belize was invented by some American advertising agency hired by the Belize Tourism Board in early 2001, notably and ominously just before the Flood.⁶ Regardless, it became a pithy sound bite, among others, each bit of language instrumental to an official state-inspired tourism campaign directed at international tourism industry leaders with the hope of encouraging them to sell Belize as a major ecotourism destination. The Belize Tourism Board developed international tourist campaigns using this kind of language to promote the image of Be-

lize as an enchanted, eco-friendly, tropical Paradise, a land of unsurpassed pristine nature, adventurous history, and friendly, attractive culture, the perfect affordable, safe, Caribbean dreamworld escape, a land of make-Belize. Industry leaders, visitors, and Belizeans alike were encouraged to activate generic “make believe”/“make-Belize” alignments that were meant to anchor the powerful Paradise tropicalization stories that endorsed the big picture of every Belizean tourist experience, thereby enacting the sensations of Paradise as a unique self-realization in order to bankroll the nation’s future economic success and happiness.

The tourist industry story of make-Belize is a powerful seduction, responsible for putting Belize on the international tourism map as a desired destination, a Caribbean, eco-friendly, tropical experience worth the purchase. The practical and imaginative efforts of the Belize government and the international tourism industry to pin down a tropical Paradise, as well as the capital-financializing logics of incentivized resort, cruise ship, and retirement resort development and management schemes necessary to administer it as a profitable destination, have been very successful, despite the economic fluctuations and interruptions in international leisure markets and housing markets that dramatize the contingency of tourism capitalization projects overall. Efforts such as these are endorsed by much of the applied work being done in schools of tourism, leisure, and hotel management; together they encourage different kinds of “positive tourism” development and management, economic success, and profit.⁷ But the positive tourism development-management stories they tell are mired in lands, cultures, and bodies already controlled by the commodity logics of tightly regulated capital and by the moral economies that are meant to maximize the profits of Belize tourism for local elites and international leisure consortiums in the Anthropocene: less expenditure, more efficiency, progress, meaningful product—so more success, profit, and pleasure all around.⁸

This is system-based tourism study. It builds on the understanding of a contemporary Belize economy and society and an ideology of progress and growth for its success. Since its independence in 1981, Belize has invested heavily in tourism as one of the key economic and cultural engines for national development. Belize is sometimes said to be a nation that “skipped modernity” (Sutherland 1998: 3, 4–9), a young country that took a bad bounce into post-Cold War, neoliberal economic growth and development to become a tourist state located on the “roughed up” edges of Empire (Hardt and Negri 2000). Since the 1980s Belize has become linked globally through the introduction of new privatized media forms with the latest mass communications and fiber optics technologies and, not unusually, there are cyber cafes almost everywhere.⁹ Almost everyone has a cell phone, Smart or Belize Telemedia’s DigiCell, and cable TV, and WiFi. This has allowed Belize

to transform its banking and telecommunication systems, its national image production, its propaganda machinery (now linked closely to the Belize Tourism Board), its tourism industry, and everyday community social life through Facebook interfaces, Instachat, WhatsApp, and the “twitter-sphere.” It is through these new finance and image-making models underwritten by new social media platforms that tourism is sold off-shore to future tourists and to Belizeans themselves. A 2005 Love FM radio and television advertising campaign made Belizeans aware of their connections to the tourism industry and the future of tourism in their lives. Each segment ended with the telling message: “Tourism is for you, tourism is for me, tourism is for all of us. It is our future, get involved.” Today, the Belize government and its agencies advertise statistics that boast a quarter of working Belizeans are directly involved in tourism for their livelihoods.

Historically, Belize never did develop a base of industrial or agricultural mass production as an engine of economic and social success. Until the late 1970s Belize was a remote and internally disconnected British colony without the modern structures of liberal democratic government. It had a “colonial economy based on import and export trade and import-substitution agriculture” (Sutherland 1998: 3). Until it became an independent nation state, Belize did not have its own complete written history, no modern public system of education, and its diverse ethnic population was not recognized officially as it is today, as a unique “multicultural mosaic.” Many big changes have occurred since Belize gained independence, and since then Belize has grown under the strong influence of “transnational movements and ideas such as environmentalism, liberalization of the economy, democracy, international tourism, and the international drug trade” (Sutherland 1998: 3).

To this list, I can add the dramatic expansion of the NGO sector, the new offshore banking industry, and the transformation of Belize into a site for global money laundering, the burgeoning evangelical Christian church movements, and the internationalization of local corruption and crime (Duffy 2000). But it is through the dramatic and recent development of international tourism, through the cultural logics and economic supports of the World Bank, the American Development Bank, “Chinese money,” “Lebanese money,” “Coca Cola money,” “Mennonite money,” possibly Raelian money, and the money of several wealthy individuals who dropped cash into the country through various investment schemes and opportunities (famously and infamously big rollers like Sir Michael Ashcroft, Francis Ford Coppola, and John McAfee), and a long list of donor interests through which Belize realizes its future and invents its past. It is most forcefully through the introduction of transnational tourism industry (hotels, leisure and fashion industry, sports adventure, nature and culture) that Belize has moved from

an economic backwater in the region, and in the world, to a transnational nation tapped into and moving in the gravitational orbit and flows of the global forces of money, leisure, and entertainment, all part of the spectral phantasmagoria of neoliberal capitalism, “Belizean style.” It is through an official plan for economic and cultural revitalizations seen through a contemporary ecotourism prism that Belize feels much of its future depends and that deepens the characterization of the *anthropos* as the geological epoch of human-dominated capital entanglements.

You betta Belize it: the all-purpose advertising slogan, along with others, *Make Belize*, *Belizability*, *Un-Belizable*, and *Belize it or not*, attach to Belize’s “can do,” positive, public face and create an official discourse about the promise the nation makes to the world and to itself. Advertised as *Mother Nature’s Best Kept Secret*, Belize has done everything it can to cash in on a theme of an international ecotourism Paradise filled with an “awe-inspiring nature,” a scientifically managed “exotic prehistory,” and a remarkable variety of tours and accommodations (from the latest in full-service, air conditioned luxury to cruise ship mass tourism, to a dwindling variety of cheaper, locally owned and operated services) to make exploring Belize “fun, safe, and exciting.” There is a Belize experience for everyone’s pocketbook and the *Lonely Planet Guide to Belize* and the *Rough Guide to Belize*, among several other comprehensive guidebooks of Belize, list almost all of them. Belize, like the international tourism industry more generally, has become expert at producing glorious images of itself alongside the construction of monuments, memorials, galleries, “houses of culture,” and museums, which act as the containers and vehicles that embody, encode, and distribute the nation state’s official heroic, anticolonial master narrative about its rich culture, art, nature, history, and industry, all transformed into a “product” to be bought and sold on the global market. This imagery also works to fashion and define national citizenship as it promotes the official iconography and messages of what it means to be Belizean.

Ironically, all of this has become a seduction engine for waves of the world’s white retirement crowd and for those who seek long-term “come and go” arrangements through condo timeshare or private property purchases. Lan Sluder, who writes the tour guidebook of Belize for Fodor, also sells the “bible” of retirement guidebooks for those thinking of retiring to Belize.¹⁰ For the most part retirees and the “nearly-retired” are the “money people,” and in Wallaceville in particular there has been a concerted effort to attract them with a local, sustainable ecotourism narrative of laid-back living in a tropical seaside Paradise, close to nature, in the latest condo or new subdivision, accommodations complete with infinity pools and sophisticated security systems, marine toys, and with fun-loving, industrious, and peaceful locals as your labor and neighbors.

While it is images of prehistory, pristine but vulnerable nature, relaxed Caribbean culture, and friendly natives that have been the main attractions for national tourist development and transnational ecological and archaeological interests, the Belize government is now involved in a process of transforming its own population into attractions worthy of national holidays, holiday adventures, and long-term expensive expat Paradise hideaway purchases. Belize has now recognized the great international interest in ethnic and cultural tourism and has begun the national process of inventing cultural traditions, art and music, and ethnic celebrations and holidays for both the global tourist and local Belizean markets (see Holmes 2010; Roessingh and Bras 2003). As Sutherland explains: “There is now a Belize cuisine (before people just ate stew chicken, rice and beans) [see Wilk 2006], a Belizean flag and national anthem, Belizean ethnic goods, Belize beer and Rum, Punta Rock (Belize’s own music [along with Boom and Chime]), and Belize beauty pageants . . .” (1998: 186). Belize is available for consumption and every site of consumption promotes local knowledge, national and regional development plans, ethnicities, and cultures as the metonyms of national identity fostering points of identification, common anticolonial struggle, and a unity of Belizean purpose and spirit (see Medina 2003).

Wired into global information flows, Belizeans, who just some fifty years ago lacked more than a passing knowledge of, or local interest in, each other, now find themselves in instant contact with the world. That world appears at their doorstep with new commodity seductions, money, and refugees, get rich schemes, populations, attitudes, diseases, corruptions, debt, fashion, enjoyments, and lifestyles. Today, Belize is located on one of the shifting fault lines of a de-territorialized and transnational global empire, where local worlds are caught up in new fantasies of becoming that in turn act as the catalysts for new life in Belize (see Hardt and Negri 2000; Piot 2010). Such is the context for the critical tourism studies stories of Belize and beyond, set in the context of Caribbean financializations, addressing issues of media, gender, ethnicity, food, health, history, and the like (see Wilk 2006, 2002, 1995, 1994, 1993).

My interest in Belize tourism is not easily captured by the applied tourism work that addresses these themes, even as some of it touches on the turmoil of tourism development and management projects. But neither are my interests completely captured by the work in critical tourism studies with its strong social, economic, and political critiques of the international tourism industry, or with its efforts to take up critically the racial, gendered, sex, and class politics of local tourism development and encounter, or with its critique of tourist representations, or with the critical study of neo-liberal social and cultural constructions of life in a rapidly changing and “developing” nation that relies heavily on tourism today. Critical analysis of these and other

tourism-related subjects may be helpful, but the work is mostly burdened by the assumptions of some high ground of strong evaluative critique about tourism, tourists, the industry, and its futures. Here the hope is to recognize and critique tourism logic and practices and identify or even stop bad things from happening and so make some imagined future safer, improved, and more self-aware for coming generations of tourists and the toured. As Biehl and Locke (2017: x) remind us, “the flat realism that comes with the standard practices of contextualization and historicization” is not enough to find ways into arresting encounters, images, and forces of life in order to consider the uncertain and the otherwise incommensurate agitations that open into what Tsing calls “the middle of things” (2015: 251–77). Relying on critical analysis may simply echo the drab determinisms that orchestrate much of tourism theory and social theory more generally. Here, too, tourism, as an event, is held in place and its potential tunes toward reactivity. This is the work of interpretive judgment, not affirmation. By affirmation I do not mean that the work of thought is comfortable and reassuring. By affirmation I mean that “its work is to invent conditions for new ways of activating the threshold of experience, new ways of experimenting in the complexity of what does not easily fold into [position in a field or code] . . . Where negation remains so certain of the stakes of the encounter, affirmation delights in the creativity of *what else* that encounters could do” (Manning 2016: 202). Speculative fabulation is affirmative. It invents and does “its work at the limit where *what if?* Becomes *what else?*” (Manning 2016: 202). It is the *adding to* rather than the *adding up* that interests me here.

There is a long and productive history in the critical studies of tourism dealing with questions of encounter as self-other relationships, spatialized embodiments, identity politics, gender politics, racialization, and sexual relations (see Brennan 2004; Castaneda 1996; Frohlick 2013, 2016; Frohlick and Harrison 2008; Kempadoo 2004; Picard and Di Giovine 2014; Salazar 2010; Salazar and Graburn 2014; Simoni 2016; Shepard 2018; Smith 1989; Thomas 2014; Urry 1990). This literature consists mostly of rich and detailed ethnography framed through one or another social and cultural constructivist approaches to tourism and I make reference in the short list above to some of the very best of this material in order to acknowledge its important goals while gesturing to how the work as a whole still relies on a dialectics of self/other and subject-object relations and gesturing to the questions of encountering and representing otherness in the context of tourist spectacle consumption and the world as exhibition (Bærenholdt, Haldrup, Larsen, and Urry 2004; Little 1991; Mitchell 1988; Urry 1990).

A long look through these works gives you all of the significant references for critical tourism studies since its inception. But what is especially important about this most recent critical ethnographic work on tourism is

how it focuses on the politics and poetics of representation or on the social, gendered, racial, economic, and power dynamics (colonial and postcolonial) that underwrite the uses, strategic or otherwise, of cultural images, inequalities, imaginaries and practices (both every day and exceptional) for personal enrichment, entertainment, and exhibitionary purposes (see Bruner 2004; Crick 1994; Graburn 1983, 2001; MacCannell 1976, 1992).

Regardless of how critical and valuable this writing and thinking is to tourism studies in Belize, its analytical focus is to adopt useful concepts and to apply them in order to build a system or a metaphor to better understand the tourism problem at hand: getting the “problem” of the tourist situation, the tourist, the industry, or touristic encounters right. But “getting it right” means, as Massumi puts it, developing analysis that

. . . disavows its own inventiveness as much as possible. Because it sees itself as uncovering something it claims was hidden or as debunking something it desires to subtract from the world, it clings to a basically descriptive and justificatory modus operandi. However strenuously it might debunk concepts like “representation,” it carries on as if it mirrored something outside itself with which it had no complicity, no unmediated processual involvement. And thus could justifiably oppose. (Massumi 2002a: 12)

While both critical and applied approaches to tourism may be useful and evaluative procedures for tourism studies, they are not mine.

Contemporary shifts in tourism studies have introduced a new level of concern with the spasmodic effects of local and global flows of capital, information, people, and culture (see Colman and Crang 2002). Acknowledging such effects, attention in tourism studies is now turning to how tourist encounters are performed, enacted, and embodied under the exhilarating and anxious conditions of transnational cultural mobilities and sensibilities (Franklin and Crang 2001: 17–19; Fullagar 2001). In their editorial for the journal *Tourist Studies*, in which they describe the contemporary troubles with tourism research, Franklin and Crang (2001: 17) comment on the “welcome attention” now being paid to questions of tourist enactments and the “move beyond the study of representation toward seeing tourism as a system of presencing and performance.”

Favoring a non-representationalist, assemblages, productivist approach (for examples see Crouch 2010; Ness 2016; Saldanha 2007; Tucker 2017) instead of a dialectical, representationalist, reactive one, means that my writing and thinking are always in a productive tension with critical and applied tourism studies, whatever their approaches are to creativity, invention, and relatedness (See especially Bruner 2005; Frohlick 2016; Harrison 2003; Hutnyk 1996; Kaplan 1996; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998; Picard 1996; Rojek and Urry 1997; Salazar 2010, 2013; Scott and Selwyn 2010; Urry

1990). Nevertheless, my writing, my storytelling, is meant to provisionally grasp the embodiments of rapidly changing material-semiotic encounters through tourism, in hopes of evoking some idea of what Franklin and Crang (2001: 17) mean when they go on to say that: “Tourism is a productive system that fuses discourse, materiality, and practice.” Unpacking this phrase has helped me develop questions about the way tourism in Belize may be thought of, through an affirmative, vital materialism generated as ecologies of the insensible. By this I mean fields of sensation and assemblages of forces are emergent properties of human-nonhuman, material-semiotic liveliness, forces that impel new tendencies for life, new forms of fascination, vitality, attention, and distraction: “sense as matter forming, as cohabitation,” forming “new practices of sensation and new sensibilities” through such unruly and intractable issues as encounters in tourism development, ecological change, and social life reanimations (Yusoff 2013: 208). This has more to do with opening up possibilities than forging judgments while enforcing analytical schemes. Such writing practices disregard other potential sources of creative emergence by bracketing whatever is not already given according to the strictures of representation itself. This limits things and reduces the unexpected, as Deleuze says, to the invention of forms not the capturing of forces (2003: 48).

I came face to face with having to think about the enactments of encounter in tourism studies while conducting my Belize fieldwork, in the awkward but always intense nature of configuring imaginatively the milieu in which a tourist and a local, a scene, a performance, a culture, a dance, a thing, an animal, a movement, a disaster, an elation, an ethnographer, or a nature meet and what is activated in the contact. Ethnographic-tourist encounters examined by tourism scholars are almost always taken up in the context of “the one and the other,” subject and objects fashioned in that space of the “meeting ground” of “hosts and guests” while unraveling the political, social, economic, sexual, gendering dynamics of the engagement (see MacCannell 1992; Smith 1989). Instead, to think the multiple activations and practices of which the encounter experience is composed is to think with encounters as emergent moments of chaos, chance, insensible attunements of time before they are named as “encounters” proper. “What else could be at stake in the encounter if it weren’t organized around the certainty of knowing? What might become thinkable if knowledge weren’t so tied to an account of subject-driven agency? And, what else might value look like if it weren’t framed by judgment” (Manning 2016: x)?

This book, therefore, through the stories it tells, engages the anthropology of tourism with a literature that it mostly doesn’t think with, namely critical post-humanist work in ontogenesis, concerned with how encounters “matter,” and how matter is thought and constituted through vibrant entangle-

ments, refrains, knots, and figures of human and nonhuman bodies, affects, objects, and practices. Attending to tourism studies thusly reorients thinking around questions of relationality, about the resonances of material-semiotic forces co-implicated in what bodies can “do” and how “matter” “acts” rather than a concern with what “is” a body or the agentic meaning of experience when considering the relational processes of encounter. Here, I am interested in how tourism activates potentialities in bodies to be otherwise, to generate certain kinds of Paradise natures, mutations, and affects as insensible natures, as the agitation or provocation, and curiosity and desire that draws over the work of intelligibility in acts of encounter. So the insensible draws its energy as an agitation in movement what Grosz calls “nicks in time” or Barad thinks of as “quantum cuts” or Deleuze and Guattari call “virtual ecologies” or Massumi calls a “rhythm without regularity.” These are focused indeterminacies, in the example of Caribbean Belize sea-sky swirlings, and attention to them might possibly energize thinking through encounters in tourism as indeterminate processes that remain otherwise, incommensurate with given forms of knowledge production that anchor the study of encounters in tourism and tourism studies.

What would it be like to think of the indeterminacies of encounters as an ecology of insensible practices (Yusoff 2013), a movement of thought, oscillating forces of becoming active, activating new registers of “becoming with,” co-constitutions that enact a contingent durability conjuring an ethical concern as a political yield? And how does the work of encounter include our own encounters too, with writing the limit, as Blanchot (1997) says? Encounter writing, writing at the limit, at the edges of what can be thought and felt, the unspeakable “more than”: how might it be possible to write as an ethical practice of making a difference? How does such writing activate a poetics of difference marked by how our senses might attune to artfulness and storytelling in other modalities, as stories told differently and in registers not eclipsed by an ideology or a structure, by binary thinking, or by describing some moment in time that keeps things on track and in time through the usual sequential writing practices of clarity, disavowal, and debunking? By binary thinking I mean the usual “us and them” “host-guest” descriptions of encounters that still ground tourism studies, still caught up in the referential logistics of dialectical thinking and practices of description that do not begin to describe the generative forces of the *what else* and the *otherwise*, work that reaches beyond the security of evaluation and solutions to what is at the heart of “speculative fabulation” (Haraway 2016) to create an “untimely” mode of active inquiry into the *what else*.

So an important activation experiment that makes up a central theme of this book is how to take a concept like the “moment of encounter” in tourism and imagine actual encounters as difference generators and thereby,

inspired by the curiosity of what is the otherwise or the insensible of encounters, draw a different attention to the nonlinear lived duration of encounter experiences, attending through our own experiments in writing to co-composing moments as the creative generative intimacies that are the contingent and unfolding enactments of encounters themselves. Working along these lines generates my interest in the beast-time make-Belize. My politics and ethics here are anchored in questions about how to relate, how to write, how to “sense beyond security” (Manning 2007: 134–61), and how to become touched with that which is beyond you and me and yet is co-composing, as things forming beyond the exclusionary tactics of working with representations of encounters and so with the term “encounter” as already framed and anchored in thought and practice. This is storytelling that works the “as yet unthought” in the act of its becoming: an act of make-Belize.

Through the processes of make-Belize, invention things modulate, affect, and transform each other. The materializing metamorphosis of acts of Wallaceville make-Belize are the processes that transform one half-formed historical thing into networks of other half-formed things as if by some crazy conjuring trick right before everyone’s eyes: an apocalypse out of chaos, the narrowing specification of chaos from a particular point of disorder and unpredictability, a profusion of forces gathering and intensifying, a materiality mustering a measure and a rhythm out of nature without norm, into *some’ing* until the next *some’ing* begins to happen. Attending to these ebb and flow processes as newly forming rhythms of life, a temporality with its newly textured and unsettling sensations and new forces and energies, I encounter the beast-time in Wallaceville.

My project is an attempt to conjure beast-time make-Belize worlds out of the world that we all share, if unequally, to detail what Tsing calls “the possibility of life in capitalist ruins” (2015). Conjuring inspires new ways of telling stories beyond the strictures of the master narratives of modern economic rationality, progress, and growth or of its critique. But telling make-Belize stories is not an act that neglects the horrors, death, and destruction of Belize and the planet or the urgency of “staying with the trouble,” as Haraway (2016) puts it, and attending to the ecological mess we all are living. There is no intention of replacing this story by slipping into some idealist, utopian, or romantic mode. The aim here is to craft a make-Belize as an otherwise, for better or for worse, that manages to live despite capitalism’s ruinous forces as a logic-action machine. There is always “more there, there,” as Nigel Thrift (2004: 58) says. Tending to the muffled or stumbling rhythms and registers of becoming, to the entangled material-semiotic-affective dimensions of life popping in and out of possibility, widening the potential number of relational connections that things can enter into, that can increase the density

of transformational possibilities in the act of their composition the act of make-Belize writing is a conjuring, an improvising with worlds in the making, unfinished, becoming.

Hope and Storytelling in the Beast-Time of Make-Belize

Real problems must be given time.

—Henri Bergson, *The Creative Mind: An Introduction to Metaphysics*

Full-bored ethnographic writing tries to let the otherwise break through, to keep it alive. To tend it.

—Kathleen Stewart, *Crumpled Paper Boat*

The temporal grounding of the beast-time in Wallaceville is the different capacities of turbulent vibration (unliveable power) to link bodies and sensations into forces of becoming. Make-Belize stories are acts of extracting something of these sea-sky swirling forces of the ebb and flow of events, stories, and new sensations that are activated as incipient social flows, material relays, attunements, images, and life practices. Waves of ebbing sensation compress things, and chaotic forces condense into potentializing patterns of polyrhythms: acts of beast-time shaping and creating out of forces of swirling vibration. Waves of flowing expansion dissolve movements of rhythm, blurring them back into the resonances of sensation. The relation between ebb and flow is precisely definable in terms of rhythm and current, not as a mathematically measurable and finalized form but as a duration-movement, uncountable because it is always in process, an open-ended movement of compression and expansion, the common ground of the durative make-Belize or what Deleuze, while working with Francis Bacon's art-making process, calls "the power of the future" (2003: 54). Make-Belize storytelling is fabulation, a mode of attending to the rhythms and textures of things as they differentiate and compose vibratory forces that constitute atmospheres and worldings as future-making acts. Deleuze says that this kind of writing is an art practice—in my case writing make-Belize stories—when it aims to capture the "force of time," by which he means opening sensation to the force of the future, sensing time, not in order to control duration, *chronos*, but to live it as one can, *kairos*, even if that means becoming-different (2003: 52–54), becoming-monster.

My storytelling is "an activist, occurant art" of fabulation (Massumi 2002a: 17), a process of composing that, as I said earlier, adds to the making of stories even if those stories never add up. By that I mean that my storytelling is an act of "telling together" that extracts something of the strains of uncertainty and vulnerability of Belize Paradise event-fragments captured

through the very force of, and encounter with, the writing. This composing practice narrows my focus onto these particular event-fragments enough that a certain *something* begins to take form in the rush of Wallaceville nervous intensity and yet still picks up on the imponderable forces of emergent potential that make this crazy Paradise impossible. A Belize vibratory pulsing: a “rhythm without a regularity” but still something durative, time unsettling because it is busy forming out of “too much connection”: an act of becoming as emergence, the insensible.

When *something* takes form as an expression in Wallaceville it instantiates things, it acts as an incitement, rather than representation. Make-Belize *somethings* are becomings that Stewart calls “emergent vitalities.” As such, they are what Sianne Ngai (2004) calls “bad examples” (see Stewart 2003b). As emergent vitalities, the seven stories I tell are bad example incitements. Stewart goes on to say that bad examples are

... not perfect representations of an ideology or structure at work in the real world, but actual sites where forces have gathered to a point of impact to instantiate something. They are not things gathered under the sign of meanings or types but radical singularities with particular texture and density, hybridized mixes of things, flirtations along the outer edges of a phenomenon, or extreme cases that suggest where a trajectory might lead if left unchecked. They are not representations at all but constitutive events at the point of their affective and material emergence. (Stewart 2003b)

The stories that partake of the forces of becoming compose the make-Belize in Wallaceville. Taken together they are meant to unofficially de-constitute the European-based time of “a world picture,” as Heidegger called it, or what Timothy Mitchell (1988) calls “the world as exhibition.” In Belize today, the political certainty of the phantasmagorical world picture, as its very own “anthropo-scene,” is underwritten by a story of pristine tropical nature and culture under threat and close to social, emotional, and ecological collapse. Save the planet scenarios run through national and international ecotourism campaigns: “save the reef,” “save the jungle,” “save the culture,” “save the beaches,” and “save the manatee, lobster, conk.” Belize tourism generally, and volunteer NGO-tourism organizations and some evangelical missionary operation (as we will see in Chapter 2) specifically, thrive on multiple iterations of a conservation ethos that juxtaposes seductive Paradise nature and culture scenes against dire warnings of decay and death that lie just around the corner for Belize if humans are not careful (see Taccone 2019).

But such scenes of salvation instantiate a disquieting local Wallacevillian resignation, “a participatory drag,” as one unsettled tourism group leader put it, describing what she found to be a shocking disinterest among old expat and Creole locals in Wallaceville to actively participate in social-ecological

salvation projects. Volunteer tourists and the tourism industry more generally find this “attitude” to be disturbing because it seems never to be categorically “reasonable.” Yet the chaos of an inchoate future, an otherwise that we cannot yet picture and over which there is no human agency, only desperate and urgent beast-time signs and moves, instantiates a “will to be otherwise,” a radical immanence governed by things at hand, “unfinished not merely because our mind has not yet succeeded in categorizing it like scientists now sequence DNA but because in attending to it in a certain way we pull it into being in a way it was not before we did so” (Povinelli 2016: 15, 137). Such semiotic “reasoning” is not a decoding exercise (see Kohn 2013: 15, 50–51; Ness 2016: 3–40). Rather, it is an assemblage and coordination of the habits of things and beings that are ceaselessly “becoming otherwise” in the acts of their assembling formation and coordination.

Everyone in Wallaceville has felt the Beast’s presence, movements, and transformative powers. It is through these expressions of the Beast’s time: flooding tides, strange weather, an increasing number of hurricanes (while I was writing this as a first draft, 3 August 2016, Hurricane Earl was bearing down with a growl, Belize City square in its menacing sight lines), “nature-culture” extinctions of all kinds, burning jungles, destroyed reefs, potable water shortages, staggering garbage pile ups on shore and at sea, massive, mysterious Sargassum seaweed “invasions,” and an alarming increase in population density that has accompanied the influx of new and demanding wealthy lifestyle migrants, cruise ship chaos, new tourism financializations, new international tourism salvation programs in tension with short-term tourist excess, and so an unprecedented pressure on all resources, human and nonhuman (ask the poor sea cucumber). And for those who live in Wallaceville, beast-time signs of chaos, confusion, and destruction are palpable, and they see how such signs initiate “big fix” intervention movements and schemes. The beast-time is upon them and us both, along with all of the unsettling social, economic, and ecological anxieties through which it is fashioned. Crisis looms large. Chaos is a deeply real and haunting presence and it overwhelms the imperfect present. And yet might there be some hope in make-Belize stories or at least an otherwise, experimental time-space conjuring, a speculative futurity, an invention-creation interplay?

Make-Belize as an act of making and remaking the relationalities of life entanglements is a different kind of ethnographic practice. Writing ethnography as lively enactments of “becoming-with” encounters opens risky and uncertain relational extensions that generate make-believe spaces in which diverse bodies of all sorts, human and nonhuman, “succeed one another in mutual movement; hence the continual movement of parts of a body toward parts of another body [not necessarily human or living], across a continuous, uninterrupted space, as if the void was the mediator between

two plenitudes” (Sonnier and Donne qtd in Massumi 2002a: 258). This book grows out of this hope for an ethnographic practice that might share in the creation of worlds otherwise, a tenuous and fraught effort to pursue a project of ethical transformation, writing stories as an experiment in attuning one’s fugitive feelings “otherwise,” something heretofore felt as *potencia*, still unspeakable but in transit, in movement (see Braidotti 2002). Such story-writing practices instantiate passions as the power to act itself, insensible, moving force into matter as potentiality. Where there is potentiality there is the hope of finding new ways of reuniting human purposes with the endless yet precarious vitalities of the world in which all things and beings play at making life liveable, and so co-creating possibility in new forms of fabulating the life of the world (see McLean 2017a).

While writing this ethnography I think again and again about the processes of make-Belize as the work of experimental expression, in the world of relational life enactments in Wallaceville. The expressivity that ties work and world is something more immediate and intimate than ethnographers of tourism are accustomed to acknowledging. Like the magic of storytelling I spoke of earlier, language works with the substance of the world in the way Giordano Bruno, after Lucretius (Nail 2018), reminds us. My story writing engages with transformative potentials immanent in the Belize world at hand.

Affirming the actual has always been imbued with the possibilities of being otherwise—the “always more than” of unruly *potencia*, of things in the act of their composing a reality that is always different from itself—my writing presses closer to the unrest and turmoil that is immanent in the emergence of a discursively knowable Belize world. My writing is meant to stay with the transformative metamorphosis of make-Belize, its disquieting becoming. As such, it is fashioned of its own excessive and transgressive exteriority, a writing that drops me into a potency and peril that can never be mastered but remains excessive of such powerful conscriptions of mastery to act as an unruly capacity, a “minor gesture” that challenges those given orders of meaning, legitimation, and power: unsettling acts of Belizean world-making (see Manning 2016).

Provocations

My make-Belize opens several provocations that I hope to address in the following chapters or that I think are necessary vocabulary reminders that reference my unconventional use of language.

1. What is ordinary about how life unfolds in tourist encounters in Belize? Of what processes are unfoldings generated (see Stewart 2007)?

Here I am especially interested in the affective intensities that generate the movement of an unfolding in the context of travel and the play of tourist temporalities consistent with movement and change as they take on expression in Belize.

2. While the expressive economies that configure the temporal dynamics of encounters in Belize are created in terms of tropicalized representations of nature and culture to create nervous Paradise images that buckle under the burden of the work they are expected to do, the collective challenge of this Belize “bad example” is in how it may help point to the specters of imperial tourism capitalisms as systems of capture by attending to their destabilizations and to the contingent articulations and the inconsistent sense-uncertainty of emergent capitalisms and globalist forms.
3. The temporal dynamics of unfolding tourist futures, I suggest, burden the linear sequencing of time and the rationalist logic and binaries through which a future is determined differently from the past and the present. This is enacted in each case through gaps. Mind the gap, Tsing (2004) cautions, those nervous zones of erasure and incomprehensibility. Gaps occur where official and formal tourist-futures projects do not comfortably move or reach so far (or deep) as to change everything according to their plans.
4. Encounters. Is there more to them than what is commonly understood as the act of a tourist and an other, establishing a relationship and a contact zone? I use the concept of the milieu rather than the more recognized concept of the encounter as a “contact zone” in order to distinguish the way the zone is often used as a social description of liminal creativity, as a space of identifiable affects, a sociocultural zone of mobilizations that engages given political and economic infrastructures not from one side or the other (tourist or local) but from their merging. Encounters may include all of this in that they are interstitial and engaged, but they are more than that too. They are more like different edges of an interface touching in a moment and then changing—moving thresholds. As both real and ephemeral fields of movement, a milieu is also a trajectory enacting new infrastructures of difference, new modes of relatedness that affirm, augment, and keep the interface of encounter open to the multiple occasions of its collective presencing. “The trajectory,” Deleuze says (1997: 61), “merges not only the subjectivity of those who travel through a milieu, but also with the subjectivity of the milieu itself, insofar as it is reflected in those who travel through it.”
5. Affect: there is a tendency in tourism literature to invoke affect largely as a placeholder concept, bracketing more substantive concept work

and the growing concerns with affective thresholds of political agency in an age of neoliberal capitalist ruins and epistemic crises (for an example, see Buda 2015). This poses timely questions, and also finds a corollary in shared ethnographic engagements with that which is otherwise, incommensurate, emergent, or immanent. My hope is that ethnographic engagements in tourism studies will further turn its attention to the ineffable as a vital dimension of social existence or attend to the labors by which the elusively immaterial and ephemeral is made tangibly present to exert material force as the everyday unfolding thresholds of gender, sexuality, class, race, debility, and age. This is to suggest that a power of writing tourism ethnography lies in its abilities to surprise, provoke, and trouble the descriptive habits of systematizing and critical explaining and so push the borderlands of concepts and writing in a way that can destabilize our sense of what constitutes our object of inquiry, our stances toward it, and our ways of communicating it. This is not to argue that the conventional genre claims of tourism ethnography have no merit. And this is not a plea for a new proscription for writing ethnography. It is simply an invitation to all of us writing tourist ethnographies to help invent and share new ways to describe the protean, the as-yet unformed, the unfolding, and the socially fluid.

Notes

1. The Raelians are a science-religious movement. Members believe the “Elohim,” an alien race of extraterrestrial super-beings, planted life on Earth 25,000 years ago. They created human life by cloning it. Raelians believe in immortality through cloning. They seek to establish an earth-based embassy as a welcome center for the “Elohim,” a sort of tourist visitor center that will also provide the facilities for a super extraterrestrial computer to be used for future cloning purposes. The Raelians consider Belize to be a possible site for the center if their initial plans of building a center in Israel fall through. They have visited Belize on several occasions for high-level talks with the Belize government eager to attract “foreign” investment (see Chapter 2 for more details).
2. There is no actual village of Wallaceville, Belize. Wallaceville is a make-believe place and presence, a composite of several coastal villages and towns heavily invested in tourism that populate the shores of Belize from north to south. So too are the names of the people and events of which this book is composed. They are made up, fictions created of people, events, and experiences that I encountered in Belize. I have moved into the realm of the “all made up make-believe” not only because doing so meets with the kind of literary fictive ethnography I am trying to write but also out of respect for various villages, village councils, and for

the individuals who have requested anonymity for the sake of their privacy, their reputations, and to ward off bad press that may encourage future tourist to avoid these places, people, or Belize altogether. Some of the stories of people and places could be “bad for business as usual,” as Mr. Richie once said to me. Wallaceville, too, is a made-up name that incites a relation to Belize history and agency. It fashions a place that is an unfolding present, a fabulated ongoing presence. On 21 June 2007 I came across a document in the Belize National Archives in Belmopan entitled “The Origin Of The Name Belize.” It is a record of very early name changes with documentary evidence to support them. It is said that in the seventeenth century a “daring Scotch buccaneer” by the name of Peter Wallace established a small village that soon became known by his name “Wallace.” The village was established on a river that soon took on his name as well. There these Scots buccaneers raided Spanish and English ships of their loot only to escape capture by moving effortlessly through the cayes and reefs to disappear up the river that protected them from detection and attack. The name “Belize” is the result of several bad Spanish pronunciations of Wallace’s name that are referenced in historical documents. The evidence is found in several letters and reports to British and Spanish authorities. In 1677 there is a Spanish record of Wallace’s name in referencing his river settlement, “Balis.” By 1705 the Spanish used the name “Bullys.” There are 1720 and 1724 documents that named him and his settlement “Bellese” and “Valis.” The latter name morphed into “Valiz” by 1783 and “Valix” by 1785 but this time referencing the place and not the person. In 1790 the name changed to “Belize” and from then on, the river, the settlement, and the region became known as “Belize” and Wallace was all but forgotten. In the spirit of name metamorphosis, I deploy *Wallaceville* as yet another creative historical erring that combines “Wallace” and “Belize” into an otherwise imagined place.

3. On the concept of the unfinished, I draw attention to the volume edited by João Biehl and Peter Locke, *Unfinished: The Anthropology of Becoming* (2017). Among the most recent experimental works of ethnography useful in working out the form of this book I am grateful to these authors for helping me develop the concept of the unfinished in the context of Belize and tourism studies. In the same manner the work of the “Crumpled Paper Boat” collective in *Crumpled Paper Boat: Experiments in Ethnographic Writing* (Pandian and McLean, eds., 2017a) was also useful. See also the volume edited by Gretchen Bakke and Marina Peterson, *Between Matter and Method: Encounters in Anthropology and Art* (2017). On the processes of creative writing and imaginative storytelling more generally it is essential to reference the volume out of the Center for Imaginative Ethnography: *A Different Kind of Ethnography: Imaginative Practices and Creative Methodologies*, edited by Denielle Elliott and Dara Culhane (2017).
4. The Wallaceville locals in this book are for the most part Creole. *The National Tour Guide Training Program Manual* (2001), the text that every tour guide working in Belize must now know in order to prep for the big test necessary to earn an official tour guide license and so be able lead tours for visitors anywhere in the country, describes “Creole” in the following way:

In Belize, the term Creole has been defined as a person of mixed European and African ancestry. Immediately after slavery, the term was also applied, in very few cases, to some locally born whites. Leo Bradley elaborated on the term, writing that, “Creole as used by us, and referring to one of our ethnic groups, means that anyone who has a tinge of African blood, however small or however large.” (2001: 215)

This definition is as close to a popular definition of Creole in Belize as there may be in both its historical and contemporary contexts. This definition may answer the question about what Creole means or how it is fashioned essentially, but it doesn’t address, in fact it studiously avoids, questions about what Creole, as a designation and a population, *does* when it is deployed as a term and especially in relation to life in Wallaceville today, under the dramatic pressures of change that bear down on this place that are the result of what I am calling the beast-time. For further complications on becoming Creole and local see Johnson (2019) and Wilk (1995).

5. By “expat locals” I mean those white visitors who came to Belize for a holiday or maybe to work on some special project but remained to make the place their home. Locally they are known to each other and to indigenous locals as *come-stay* expats. These are people who now have occupations in the village as professionals. Others once had businesses tied to the tourism industry but are now retired. They sometimes do odd jobs loosely connected to the tourism industry but usually in very informal ways. *Come-stays* have lived in the country for years and are commonly understood to “get it” when it comes to understanding the new tourism industry and what it is doing to Belize communities. They are insulted when confused with the new, much more aggressive, less locally attuned, and entrepreneurial *come-stays* who are the newest residents. They are often retirees who find economic “opportunities” and are sure that they are improving the community with their efforts. The other group are *come-go* expats who, like Canada–Florida “snow birds,” spend the winter months in Belize. They usually own property and have been following this come and go practice for dozens of years. These are mostly retired people or those who have professions “at home” that allow them the opportunity to travel like this. Then there are short-stay tourists who may own timeshares or their own property but do not spend more than a couple of months at a time in Belize. Short-term tourists are those that arrive as part of a packaged deal tied to one of the gated communities or resorts or they are the more adventurous do it yourself “ecotourists” (once called backpackers) who spend a short time in Belize “exploring.” You find them at local hotels and cabanas owned and operated by local tourism entrepreneurs.
6. There are several tourism advertising slogans that are plays on the word “Belize”; “Make-Belize” is one of them. I will introduce several others later in this chapter and use these slogans for my own purposes in Chapter 1. As for the slogan “make-Belize,” many Wallacevillians are not sure which tourism advertising campaign it came from and I cannot trace the term to a single one of them.
7. The range of literature in tourism and leisure studies dedicated to positive tourism or to the “negative and positive effects of tourism on the political, social,

economic and cultural development” of regions around the world is massive. Several presses like Routledge, Channel View, Ashgate, and Elsevier have produced large and successful publication series dedicated to the theme. Altogether there are over three hundred journals devoted to tourism studies, a majority of which are committed to the analysis of tourism planning and “tourism as applied economic progress.” The number of these journals grows as the number, impact, and significance of faculties and schools of tourism and leisure studies expand dramatically. A list of references is too large to reproduce here but it is dominated by a focus on applied studies in tourism and of the tourism industry. This was a focus of conversation during the Plenary Panel: “Ethics, Creativity, and Diversity: Understanding and Changing Editing and Publishing in Tourism,” Critical Tourism Studies VII Conference, Palma de Mallorca, Spain, June 28, 2017).

8. For an example of the work consultants do for the Belize Tourism Board, the Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation and Culture, and the Government of Belize look no further than studies such as “A Social Viability Assessment of Cruise Tourism in Southern Belize” a report (no date) submitted by Seatone Consultants of San Francisco, USA. Seatone conducted a confidential “situation assessment and review” with 28 “stakeholders” in southern Belize in 2010 for the Belize Tourism Board and Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation and Culture. The fifty-nine-page report provides a positive analysis detailing how “cruise tourism” (not cruise ship tourism) in southern Belize fits into the Ministry of Tourism’s National Sustainable Tourism Master Plan. Seatone Consultants has conducted several other environmental and tourism related projects in Belize (Seatone Consulting 2015).
9. The odd predicament of introducing space-age communication technologies before the thought of developing even the simplest, most modest, and most conventional modern waste management infrastructure or reliable roads, or a hydro grid to support it is more than telling about how priorities are set and put into practice in Belize.
10. See Lan Sluder, *Easy Belize: How to Live, Retire, Work and Buy Property in Belize, the English Speaking, Frost Free Paradise on the Caribbean Coast* (2010); or Bill Gray and Claire Gray, *Belize Retirement Guide: How to Live in the Tropical Paradise on \$450.00 a Month, 4th Edition* (1999); or Bob Dhillon and Fred Langan, *Business and Retirement Guide to Belize: The Last Virgin Paradise*, 2nd ed. (2018); or the popular International Living Inc. website, which will send you a free copy of their report, “What You Need to Know about Retiring in Belize.”