

**Thinking with/in surfing:
Podcasting as public pedagogy and scholarship in/for the global South**

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(Submitted: 3 April 2023; Accepted: 5 September 2023)

Abstract

This article introduces *The Deep Duck Dive* —a podcast engaging with the oceanic turn in the global South by focusing on issues that matter within surfing as a lifestyle sport. As co-hosts of the podcast, we have approached podcasting as forms of public pedagogy and public scholarship. Our aim is to increase the accessibility of scholarship and research by creating an alternative space for conversations with those outside of the academy. The article charts how we conceptualised and realised this podcast project as thinking with/in surfing. Within this epistemological approach, we seek to contribute to the intellectual currents of hydrocolonialism, hydrofeminism and critical surf studies, and to open our soundwork as an alternative pedagogical practice within justice-to-come public scholarship. To illustrate our podcasting style, reflexive of our positionalities as scholars and surfers, we have provided the transcript of our pilot episode.

Keywords: hydrofeminism, hydrocolonialism, podcast studies, scholarship, South Africa, surfing

Introduction: Making (sound) waves

This article documents the conceptualisation and creation of *The Deep Duck Dive Podcast*, which we co-host. The podcast is presented as a form of alternative scholarship that engages with social, political, and environmental issues that matter within surfing as a nature-based sporting lifestyle. In reflecting on our podcast project, we provide a primer on podcasting as a public intellectual practice in the global South, which allows us to locate it within the currents of podcast studies, public pedagogy and scholarship, and the oceanic turn in southern African studies.

We are both scholars and surfers and bring together our critical and embodied practices of surfing texts, sounds and waves to produce a sonic journey into surfing's past and present. We are cognisant of how surfing's past shapes its present in ways that wash ashore both social and environmental harms, and how new groundswells of change and care anticipate a socio-ecological justice-to-come. Paddling into these 'waves of knowing' (Ingersoll, 2016: 1-3) has required reflection on how our present positionalities are haunted by settler colonial pasts, which



have shaped our separate experiences in academia and surfing. This reflexivity has prompted us to look to complementary ways to do audio scholarship and engage in dialogue with oceanic publics—whether academic or the surfing community.

In the mode of knowledge-making-as-sonic-practice, we first set out the transcript of the pilot episode of the podcast as an example of producing an academic soundscape (Brabazon, 2022), and then locate *The Deep Duck Dive Podcast* as public pedagogy and scholarship for/in the oceanic South.

Soundwork in practice: Sampling the pilot episode

The Deep Duck Dive Podcast is still a soundwork in process. In the near future, we plan to publish our pilot episode to podcast platforms, alongside the planned first season, and develop a website. In podcast episodes, we intend to include the voices of those who have previously been excluded or erased in surfing's 'established' history, media, and culture. A second season of the podcast is also planned and will focus on the outsized cultural impact that surfing has had in society, film and media, given the relatively small number of people who actually surf.

We have provided an edited transcript of our pilot episode below, recorded on 3 March 2023, to illustrate our emergent podcasting style. In publishing the pilot episode, we invite readers to think with the transcript text as we riff on surfing in the South.

Transcript of the pilot episode

GT: Alright, so this is Take 1. Off we go.

KG: Hi, my name's Karen Graaff. I'm an academic. I've been doing work on gender studies for many, many years.

GT: And I'm co-host, Glen Thompson. I'm a historian who's been thinking about surfing, and probably surfing more than I've been thinking about surfing, for a long time.

KG: And this is *The Deep Duck Dive Podcast*, where we talk about surfing matters that matter from the global South.

GT: This podcast came out of conversations that Karen and I had, about a year or so back, when Karen approached me about looking at surfing studies. I'd been working on South African surfing and our conversations grew to the point where we thought, 'well, maybe it's time to share what we're talking about'. And *The Deep Duck Dive Podcast* emerged out of that.

KG: So, our aim is to take a deep duck dive, which is to disrupt or challenge the dominant and normative modes of how and by whom surfing as a sporting lifestyle is produced, represented, and consumed. The short version of that is, we pick a topic, we talk about it from an academic point of view and see how we go from there.

GT: Ja, and a lot of that, what we want to talk to, are things that get produced by popular culture in surfing. So, we will be looking at magazines, surf films, surf contests, which are streamed via the World Surf League and other platforms, and other cultural events, like the Wavescape surf festival, for example, as things that we can talk about... So why did we take

podcasting? Because there are other ways of doing this as scholars. We really are looking at alternative ways of getting academic thoughts and critical thoughts about surfing into the public sphere. Hence why we've taken the podcast approach. We're both keen surfers. And the ocean is a very important part of our lives. And thinking critically about it is where we get down to surfing matters. And with that, we draw on three interrelated approaches that come out of recent scholarship. The one is hydrocolonialism, which basically brings critical studies of colonialism together with the ocean or water bodies in mind. Linked to that is a very specific focus on hydrofeminism, which takes a feminist approach to the ocean, waves, and other bodies of water. And as well as looking at a third area of studies called critical surf studies, which is focused specifically on surfing from a broad interdisciplinary perspective. And this then gives us a way of looking at surfing, both as a sport and as a lifestyle, and then thinking of it within a cultural perspective. So, we approach surfing through the podcast, with history, with sociology, gender studies, media studies in mind, and we hope to have lots of conversations around those topics.

KG: Yeah and given that we're both situated in the global South, we thought it was pretty important to start out by locating ourselves in the broader context. So, for myself, based in South Africa, I'm a descendant of settler colonisers. My access to the beach or the ocean or any body of water has never been limited in any kind of way, legal, physical, social, economic. I'm an able-bodied, white, cis-gendered queer woman. I spent my childhood at the beach, I learnt to swim when I was young. So, the ocean and the beach has always been a place that has been available to me. I only started surfing in my late 20s, but I became quickly aware of how unequal surf spaces are. My experience has mostly been of men being quite patronising, and sometimes just a bit creepy, in the water and at the beach. And line-ups in South Africa are overwhelmingly white. As I've become more embedded in feminist and queer theory and activism, I've become much more aware of how much I don't know about how other people experience the ocean, beaches, and blue space in general. In trying to learn more about it, I've also been frustrated by how narrow the space is for creating "knowledge", and who's allowed to create it, share it, and access it. Certain people's voices are prioritised, and their views and opinions are recorded, and everyone else is erased. And in this, I've been wanting to find out who and what has been missing. But also acknowledging that my experience has been very different to a lot of other people's. I haven't had any systemic barriers to my time in the ocean at all.

GT: In many ways, my own story mirrors a lot of what Karen has been outlining. I come from a middle-class background and settler colonial descent, in which I've had access to the beach from my childhood, both in where I live at the coast, either in Durban or Cape Town, or going and staying at Southern Cape holiday destinations. I learned to surf when I was about 12, as I entered my teenage years, and I pretty much would describe myself as a surf rat at that point of time, and that was during the 80s, in a white social bubble of apartheid South Africa. I came to an awareness that my life at the beach was actually scripted by race in a very clear way when I was conscripted into the army in 1988, and realised, at that point,

that politics was determining the world I lived in. I came to political consciousness there and brought what I had seen about my privileges and positionality as a white cis-gendered male, back to thinking about the beach. And when I returned from the military and started university in 1990, just as the political transition in South Africa began. The beaches were opened up legally, and I watched what was happening. I saw the integration of beaches in Durban, and I became fascinated with it as a social and political process. And from that perspective, I kept on asking myself questions about my own past and how I fitted into this history, in this changing history. And that's why I started writing about the history of surfing in South Africa to start understanding both how the idea of freedom in surfing and freedom on the land, as political freedom, were intertwined. I started writing on surf history in the 1990s and went on to do a PhD on the topic in 2009. I continue to think and write and be an observer critic of surf culture.

KG: Based on that, this is what we outlined for the first season of the podcast. The theme for the first season is, 'What could surfing (be)come'. In this season, we want to discuss what surfing could be and become in moving beyond surfing's past and present. We look at how surf films and surfing perpetuate forms of hydrocolonialism. We look at hydrofeminist and decolonising initiatives and approaches that seek to challenge and subvert surfing's normalisation of certain raced, gendered, classed, and ableised bodies. And look to reimagine surfing's past, present and future. Some of the topics we want to cover are surfing's colonial history, surfing in Africa, surfing and social change, discrimination and the waves, inclusive surfing spaces, and surfer environmental consciousness.

GT: Each of these topics build on the theme that we're looking at in the first season, of what could surfing become. In this, we hope to think critically about surfing and the social spaces we see in the water. And for those who surf, to consider these critical perspectives on how surfing has shaped their lives and how their lives shape surfing. And really, that's what we think of as the deep duck dive, it's really being able to go underneath those waves, get out to backline, and consider the beach from the perspective of the waves.

KG: So that's our intro episode.

GT: We want to say thank you very much for listening to this pilot episode of *The Deep Duck Dive Podcast*. We hope you'll join us for future episodes. Find us here and at any other channel that you might be listening to... if we don't see you in the water, we'll see you on the soundwaves.

KG: There we go [laughter].

The pilot episode transcript above illustrates our experimentation in conversation style and emerging approach to academic podcasting. On reflection, our first recording session felt more like waxing up a surfboard before a surf than actually riding a wave. We also recognise that our positionality requires further problematization—we want to explicitly acknowledge that, as white South Africans, we are both people whose voices and bodies have been historically prioritised in surfing, and whose presence in the water has likely contributed to others feeling that the space

is not welcoming to them. We also recognise that publishing the voices of two white surfers continues that imbalance, so our aim for the podcast is to be in discussion with those who have historically been excluded from conversations on surfing matters. This locates the podcast as a justice-to-come project and, as we set out below, the making of it amplifies the politics and possibilities of our waves of knowing and belonging in/of the oceanic South.

Catching the podcasting wave I: The making of the podcast

The genealogy of *The Deep Duck Dive Podcast* is located in our private and public conversations about surfing that drew inspiration from our scholarship on surfing, as well as our experiences of podcasting as a cultural form. The possibilities of podcasting as a means of knowledge production and dissemination became evident during the hard lockdown months of the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa during 2020 and 2021. Barred from the ocean due to beach bans, surfing for online content became locked-down 'room travel' (Thamm, 2020). We both explored and consumed podcasts during this period to remain in touch with our interests in academic and surfing worlds, in South Africa and elsewhere.

In June 2021, Karen was researching surfing in South Africa through a hydrofeminist lens and approached Glen about his historical work in critical surfing studies. Over the next year, we continued email and WhatsApp conversations about the politics of gender and race in South African surf culture, and the state of mainstream competitive surfing, as the world championship tour returned to 'normality' post-pandemic. On 4 March 2022, we were invited by the *Wavescape Surf & Ocean Festival* (2022), along with pro surfer and surf contest director, Tasha Mentasti, to be panellists to discuss the documentary film, *Girls Can't Surf* (Nelius, 2021) at the film's African premiere in Cape Town. The panel discussion reflected on the film's focus on sexism and the experiences of professional female surfers on the world championship tour during the 1980s and 1990s. This event provided us with a space to speak publicly as scholars to an audience outside of higher education about historical and social injustices in surfing. These threads came together on 27 May 2022 when we initiated *The Deep Duck Dive Podcast* as an alternative scholarship project where we, as scholars who surf, talk critically about surfing. The podcast was made public at the CriSTaL colloquium, *Thinking with oceans/s for reconceptualising scholarship in higher education*, held in Cape Town on 21 September 2022.

In the sections that follow, we position the podcast as alternative scholarship within podcasting practices, and the academic approaches informing the experimental method of the 'deep duck dive' as a way to think with/in surfing.

Catching the podcasting wave II: Scholarly podcasting and podcast studies

Podcasting has emerged as a popular digital media practice since 2004 (Berry, 2016). As a low-bandwidth digital audio medium that is accessible via the internet, podcasting has increasingly been taken up by academics to promote, explore and engage with topics of a scholarly nature outside of traditional forms of academic output: the monograph, edited volume, peer-reviewed journal, conference, or seminar paper. This has become more prevalent recently, largely inspired

by wider access to digital content during the stay-at-home phases of the COVID-19 pandemic, and as a means for scholars and educational institutions to create a public space for knowledge-dissemination. Podcasting as an alternative academic practice or educational tool in higher education has been studied in a number of fields, including Africanist history (Alegi, 2012), Africanist media studies (Sibanda & Ndlovu, 2023), decolonial public pedagogy (Smith, 2022), ethnographic method (Cook, 2020), feminist media studies (Doane *et al.*, 2017; Tiffe & Hoffmann, 2017), feminist religious studies (Scharnick-Udemans, 2021), gender and queer studies (Hoydis, 2020), geographical studies (Kinkaid, *et al.*, 2019; Scriven, 2022), health communications (Harter, 2019), mental health counselling (Casares, 2022), public pedagogy in urban education (Carillo & Mendez, 2019), public sociology (Lewis, *et al.*, 2021), social work studies (Singer, 2019) and sport and physical culture studies (Clevengar & Rick, 2019).

These studies reflect the evolution of the nature and meaning of podcasting, away from being purely a technological innovation and towards being a cultural form.¹ In the field of radio and podcast studies, the practice of podcasting has come to be seen as part of a 'soundwork, the entire complex of sound-based digital media that enters our experience through a variety of technologies and forms' (Hilmes, 2013: 43). Within this definition, Hilmes narrows podcasts to a soundwork that is 'independently produced, downloaded not broadcast, infinitely time-shiftable, not tied to broadcast schedule or content restrictions' (2022: 11). Bonini expands on this in understanding podcasting as a 'socio-technical assemblage' (2022: 20). The "hybrid" nature of podcasting's cultural form' is foregrounded, in that,

podcasting should not be intended solely as a media object (the podcast episode) nor as a distribution technology (the .rss format, the podcast networks, or the podcast streaming platforms), but as a new, hybrid, cultural form, that draws not only from radio, but also from theatre, performing arts, design, and internet culture (Bonini, 2022: 20).

The nature of the podcast medium is therefore well-suited, as Hilmes (2022: 12) has stated, to create a space of intimacy between podcast host and audiences that collapses the personal and public spheres. This opens up a sonic space for the personal to be political by speaking to social injustice in a documentary-styled exploration of a topic within a practice-as-method that provides space for research experimentation and reflexivity in producing new knowledge within a field (Jorgensen & Lindgren, 2022). Making these podcast concepts work in practice is the art of podcasting as alternative scholarship and is the aim of our podcast in exploring new materialist oceanic epistemologies in thinking in/with surfing.

Scholarship out loud: Podcasting as public pedagogy and scholarship

The nature and form of podcasting lends itself to fostering an alternative space for scholarship that addresses publics in and beyond higher education. As co-hosts, we have approached the

¹ This takes place within a wider context of the monetisation of educational and commercial podcasts, and the mediatisation of YouTube content. The crowd-funding platform, Patreon, has emerged as an important source of funding for podcasts, alongside advertising support or grant-based funding for academic projects.

podcast medium as 'scholarship out loud' (Hagood, 2021: 184), a form of public pedagogy using online and audio technology. Academic scholarship to date has been overly focused on written, 'rational', 'objective' data, told through the researcher's voice. Furthermore, academic knowledge, despite the recent push toward open-access publishing, largely remains behind a paywall, and thus inaccessible to publics without research funding or academic institutional access to journals and books. Making use of the podcast as an aural-digital channel accessible online creates a digital commons for public pedagogy that broadens access to academia for those who would usually be excluded from it—thus, by going public, academic podcasting, as a practice of public knowledge-making and engagement, may be seen to contribute to the field of the scholarship of teaching and learning (cf. Chick, 2022: 20, 26). In addition, a podcast as a soundwork is more inclusive than textual scholarship. It can be polyvocal and participatory by including the voices of research participants, not as footnotes referencing quoted speech but, in the spirit of oral historical research methods, through conversational narratives about lived experience 'with the encounter between the interviewee and interviewer at its centre' and where 'telling a story is more than simply producing knowledge about the past. It is – or at least has the potential to be – a life-changing event' (Denis, 2008: 3, 10).

There is a push in academia to regularly produce a very narrow type of knowledge and we see the podcast medium as a means to broaden the scope of academic work through public education and scholarship dissemination. While academic output in the form of peer-reviewed journals, book chapters or monographs is recognised as scholarly knowledge-production, and informs academic career development and access to research funding, academic podcasting is not—despite universities encouraging scholars to be public intellectuals as part of their educational outreach. As scholars located in South Africa, we continue to struggle to produce a scholarly podcast in the current academic institutional environment. The hurdles faced in getting it off the ground included securing funding, determining whether that funding could be used for podcast technical services (such as subscription to a podcast platform), and making time for the podcast outside of existing academic and other commitments. This raises an important question: can the production of a podcast be considered an academic output and enable access to existing funding for academics who publish peer-reviewed research outputs, thereby financially sustaining the podcast as a scholarly project? These are real pressures with material impacts for us due to the persistent push within higher education institutions to publish for career advancement and research funding.²

Despite these challenges, there have been efforts by scholars to gain institutional recognition for their podcast work, such as through the development of scholarly podcast networks. In the global North, initiatives such as the Amplify Podcast Network, Podcast Studies (The Podacademics Network), Humanities Podcast Network, and H-Podcast (part of the H-Net: Humanities and Social Sciences Online initiative) provide platforms for scholars to network and

² Both Karen and Glen are in relatively precarious academic positions. Karen is an unpaid research fellow associated with a university department; Glen held a similar position until mid-2022 and is now an independent scholar outside of the academy.

share academic and technical knowledge about podcasting. Since 2018, there has also been discussion around ways to peer-review scholarly podcasts (e.g., Copeland & McGregor, 2021: 27 and 36), and experimental, peer-review guidelines have been published by an academic online community (H-Podcast, n.d.) and university publishers (BC Studies, n.d.; McMememy, n.d.). The question remains whether this is a desirable outcome, or if it will simply force podcasting into the same narrow academic parameters that already exist. However, what academic podcasting has accomplished is to demonstrate the possibilities of an aural medium for promoting scholarship within a context of digital communications accessed on-demand by wider publics.

From this academic podcasting community, we have drawn inspiration on form, style and content from podcasts that focus on various topics, including *Africa Past and Present* (2008-2021) on Africanist scholarship; *Burn It All Down* (2017-2022), a feminist critique of sport; *Drafting the Past* (2022-present), on the writing of history; *Feminist Killjoys, PhD* (2016-2019), on feminism, politics and popular culture; *High Theory* (2022-present), on thinking with critical theory; *Saltwater Library Podcast* (2022), on human-ocean health and wellbeing matters; *The Academic Citizen* (2016-2022), on southern Africanist scholarship; *The End of Sport Podcast* (2020-present), on capitalism and the politics of sport; and *The Surfing Historian* (2021-2022), on US history and critical surf studies.³ In producing *The Deep Duck Dive Podcast*, we take note of, and are learning from, these developments in academic podcasting and, following Hagood, approach podcasting from the position that scholarship 'can and should be done *in sound*' (2021: 190 [emphasis in original]).

Soundings in the oceanic South

In conceptualising the podcast, we draw on the 'liquid category' to locate our area of study in the global South, within a broadly delineated postcolonial new materialist approach 'that dreams of new worlds to come' (Samuelson & Lavery, 2019: 38). This aligns with Brown and Peters' (2019: 1 and 6) conception of the 'oceanic turn' in scholarship that 'takes seriously the place of seas and oceans [and waves] in understanding socio-cultural and political life, past and present' as a means to 'help make sense of our relations with the sea' and as 'a call for collective action' to enable 'all of us to retain a sense of humanity and community'. The oceanic turn has produced productive fields of study in ocean history (Rozwadowski, 2018), coastal history (Freitas, *et al.*, 2022), the blue humanities within literary and cultural studies, (Jue, 2020) and the interdisciplinary approaches of critical ocean studies (Foley & Silver, 2023 in press). Within this oceanic turn, we have found an assemblage of disciplinary currents that are useful to think with/in surfing in the

³ Here, we differentiate our soundwork from those produced for surfers by surfers in the surf media or in organised surfing, for example: *The Lineup with Dave Prodan*, produced by the World Surf League (2019-present), *Stoked Bloke Show* (2022-present) and *Shredding the Gnar*, in association with Wavescape (2022-present). Surfers outside of academia also produce podcasts that seek to transform surfing, albeit from within surfing as a sport and lifestyle: *The Double-Up: Women's Surf Network* (2021-present) aims to empower women in competitive surfing, and *WeSurf BIPOC Surf Talk* (2022-present) brings to the fore the history and voices of BIPOC surfers.

oceanic South, namely hydrocolonialism, hydrofeminism, and critical surf studies. Each area of study makes visible the watery, the oceanic and the ocean as embodied places, spaces and ways of knowing (Ingersoll, 2016).

We draw on these academic currents in different ways in our own southern Africanist studies on surfing and place them in dialogue in the podcast. Where Karen deploys hydrofeminism to document socially inclusive spaces in surfing to explore what surfing may become (Graaff, in press), Glen approaches critical surfing studies from a socio-cultural historical perspective (Thompson, 2017; 2018; 2023). Hydrocolonialism draws from historical, literary, and cultural studies to read past and present (con)texts onto dispossessed and dispossessing bodies and consciousness, to locate postcolonial resistance and struggle against the politico-economic power of colonial empires or apartheid states, as well as against the effects of climate change on postcolonial subjects and objects (Gupta, *et al.*, 2010; Hofmeyr, 2022; Van Eeden-Wharton, 2020). Hydrofeminism draws on feminist theory and practice and new materialism to reframe the self phenomenologically with/in both the past and present and to consider the relationality of human subjectivities with the more-than-human in the Anthropocene (Neimanis & Bezan, 2022). Special attention is paid in hydrofeminism to an ethics of care and justice to foster knowledge, community, and activism in post-apartheid South Africa (Shefer, *et al.*, 2023 in press).

Meanwhile, critical surfing studies draws on several disciplines and brings attention to the history, cultural politics and meaning of the surfed wave and surfing as sporting lifestyle and physical culture (e.g., Booth, 2001; Comer, 2010; Ford & Brown, 2006; Hough-Snee & Eastman, 2017; Laderman, 2014; lisahunter, 2018; Walker, 2011; Westwick & Neushul, 2013; Wheaton, 2013). In making surfing both the subject and object of study in the oceanic South, critical surf studies have contributed to both hydrocolonialism literature, in studies of surfing, culture, and politics in apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa (Samuelson, 2014; Thompson, 2014), and hydrofeminist literature, by studying surfing as a space for activism against sexist, racist, homo/transphobic, and ableist sporting practices (Graaff, in press). Hydrofeminism also swims with critical surf studies from the North, in Krista Comer's (2019) and Cori Schumacher's (2017) theorising of the term surf feminism for scholarship and activism, which draws on feminist and queer studies of surfing (Comer, 2010; Comley, 2016; Knijnik, *et al.*, 2010; lisahunter, 2017; Olive, 2019; Roy, 2013). As Comer notes,

Surf feminism thus names a thinking project in which feminism is a theory of power relating to women, girls, heteronormative sexuality, and sport, as well as indispensable in critical analyses of global political economies and surfing's dominant political ideals of freedom. (2019: 3)

Turning their attention to hydrocolonial themes of decolonising surfing's white settler colonial and patriocolonial pasts, scholars have surfaced the histories and experiences of exclusion of people of colour who surf or live in surf tourism destinations, as well as the cultural

politics of reclaiming surfing spaces and resistance to surf colonialism (Dawson, 2018; Gilio-Whitaker, 2017; Leonard, 2007; McGloin, 2017; Mizuno, 2018; Ruttenberg, 2023; Walker, 2011).

Each of these academic currents offer productive ways of studying surfing in the oceanic South, providing categories of analysis to document and critique how power and injustice shape surfing and, in turn, how surfing may shape consciousness, society and the environment within a justice-to-come view of the future. It is in the confluence of these currents that our podcast emerges to provide a channel for alternative scholarship to think with/in surfing.

The podcast-as-practice to think with/in surfing

In the soundscape of *The Deep Duck Dive Podcast*, we seek to disrupt, challenge, and subvert the dominant and normative modes of how, by whom, and in what context, surfing as a sporting lifestyle is produced, represented, and consumed. In using the term ‘deep duck dive,’ we advocate for a justice-to-come approach to people, critters and things entangled in the surfing of waves in the era of the Anthropocene. A ‘deep dive’ is ‘an in-depth examination or analysis of a topic’.⁴ Building on this definition, and drawing on surfing parlance, a duck dive (also known as a push under) is the ‘[t]echnique to duck under oncoming waves ... The desired result is to pop out behind the wave’ (Pike, 2007: 260) while paddling out from the beach on a surfboard to reach the back-line. The ‘deep duck dive’ is therefore an in-depth conversation about a surf topic, pushing under and through normative notions in surfing as a lifestyle sport to surface a radical re-thinking of surfing’s past and present and to open up utopian, inclusive futures for surfing in the South.

Our ‘deep duck dive’ is a way to think reflexively with/in surfing. It draws on our lived experiences as surfer-scholars and allows us to take the liquid category of the waves and the littoral category of the beach seriously in undoing surfing. We acknowledge that our respective board-type preferences and surf-abilities for catching and riding waves informs our approaches to surfing—and duck-diving—waves.⁵ In experiencing and reflecting on the surf zone, we are attentive to surfed pleasures and harms within the assemblage of human and non-human actors when surfing—to surf a breaking ocean wave recreationally requires relations between a (human) body, technology (surfboard, leash, wetsuit) and nature (wave), and a keen attention to wind, tides, currents, critters, pollution and other surfers or water-users at a particular surf spot. This awareness, as oceanic-sensory knowledge, is borne from surveillance of the wavescape when paddling out into the line-up to catch a fleeting ‘dream glide’ (Ford & Brown, 2006) during a surf session (Preston-Whyte, 2002).⁶

⁴<https://www.google.com/search?channel=crow5&client=firefox-b-d&q=deep+dive> (Accessed: 30 March 2023).

⁵ For a reference to the various board choices in surfing, see <https://www.surfertoday.com/surfing/the-most-common-types-of-surfboards> (Accessed: 27 March 2023).

⁶ In contrast to recreational surfing, competitive surfing gains further meaning through organised sporting and media attention to judging wave-riding by top athletes, in the context of spectators, whether on the beach or online.

Meaning is made in making waves, too. We have found the broad field of critical surf studies instructive in conceptualising how method and meaning intermingle when studying surfing. The immersed feminist autoethnographic research of lisahunter considers 'that the surfing of the wave in some ways "makes" the wave. This is not to say humans have total agency over the ocean. Rather they can be imbricated in it. It is neither just physical nor just human-constructed' (2019: 103). In extending that line of enquiry, media and cultural studies scholar, Clifton Evers (2019; 2021; Evers & Phoenix, 2022), deploys a 'wet ethnography', a way of doing embodied, representational and relational research on the more-than-human experiences of 'polluted leisure' in surfing spaces as a result of capitalist industrial excesses that flow into ocean environments. Similarly, feminist cultural studies scholar, Rebecca Olive thinks relationally in approaching research on surfing and surf activism:

empirical and theoretical threads are constantly woven together to understand how power, ethics and pedagogies operate through the experiences and meanings of people's everyday cultural lives ... how we come to perceive ourselves to be part of the complexity of ecologies rather than feeling dominant or having more rights over them ... sport and leisure practices play a role in challenging worldviews that include human/nature dualism to recognise how our health and wellbeing, how our lives, are intertwined. (2022: 4-5)

Taken together, these critical surf studies approaches bring to the fore how the pleasure/s and harm/s of going surfing, as a leisured and sporting activity, are relational, gendered, contextual, haunted, and immersed in a non-representational 'blue perspective' (Samuelson, 2022: 465; Olive & Wheaton, 2021). It is this salty ethico-onto-epistem-ology that we bring to the soundwork of our podcast.

There is resonance between our podcast-as-practice on surfing, and the affective, 'thinking-doing' approach in Slow scholarship on wild swimming, which allows for scholarly experimentation and draws from 'alternative ethical and political ontological, epistemological, and methodological practices in ways of thinking-writing, spurred on by the wave of alternative thinkings' within feminist new materialist perspectives (Shefer & Bozalek, 2022: 28). Shefer and Bozalek's pedagogy is located within the hauntology of the oceanic South, 'deeply aware that our sea swimming and thinking are powerfully shaped by fraught political contexts of privilege and subjugation' (2022: 28). This approach to disrupting normal scholarship draws from a 'wild pedagogy,' a way of doing education, as envisaged by Jickling, *et al.* (2018) in their explorations of canoeing and sailing in wild places in nature, as embodied experience-based reflections when doing scholarship. Surfing too fits these descriptors of thinking-doing and wild pedagogies, and the podcast allows us to amplify what matters when going surfing with an audience located within and outside of academia, including those engaged in surfing scholarship and the surfing community.


Conclusion: A soundspace for what surfing may become


In this article, we charted how *The Deep Duck Dive Podcast* was launched as an alternative scholarship project in higher education and as means to open conversations about what surfing could become. We located it within podcasting as a scholarly practice, attentive to the institutional challenges of launching a scholarly podcast in the South African academic space, then situated it within podcast studies and the humanities, demonstrating the links between our research on the history and cultural politics of surfing in South Africa, and the academic currents of hydrocolonialism, hydrofeminism and critical surf studies. We emphasised how hydrofeminist wild pedagogy and the watery thinking-doing of critical surf studies methods swim together in surfacing a salty ethico-onto-epistem-ology as a justice-to-come project. In exploring these academic currents and practices, and considering the podcast-as-practice, the transcript offers a sample of our critical soundwork on surfing and wavescapes. The podcast is thus an experiment in both alternative scholarship in higher education done in sound, and a way to think with/in surfing as a research-based practice in the oceanic South. The title of the podcast itself denotes our watery thinking and reflexivity in doing surfing as scholars who surf. The documentation of our process of becoming podcasters may offer a guide to other scholars looking to do podcasting as public pedagogy and public scholarship within the context of higher education in South Africa.

Acknowledgement

We received funding from the Department of Women's and Gender Studies, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, at the University of the Western Cape, as part of the *New Imaginaries for an Intersectional Critical Humanities Project on Gender and Sexual Justice*, a project funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

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