

Political ecology and the changing nature of social theory

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shortlink for details: <http://bit.ly/taylorag16>

Late proposal for 3/31 session in honor of
Michael Watts

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Cultural and Political Geography of Water

Late proposal for 3/31 session in honor of
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Cultural and Political Geography of Water

0. Take-homes

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1, 2,...Reconstruct my intellectual
development,
starting with research on water

Changes in

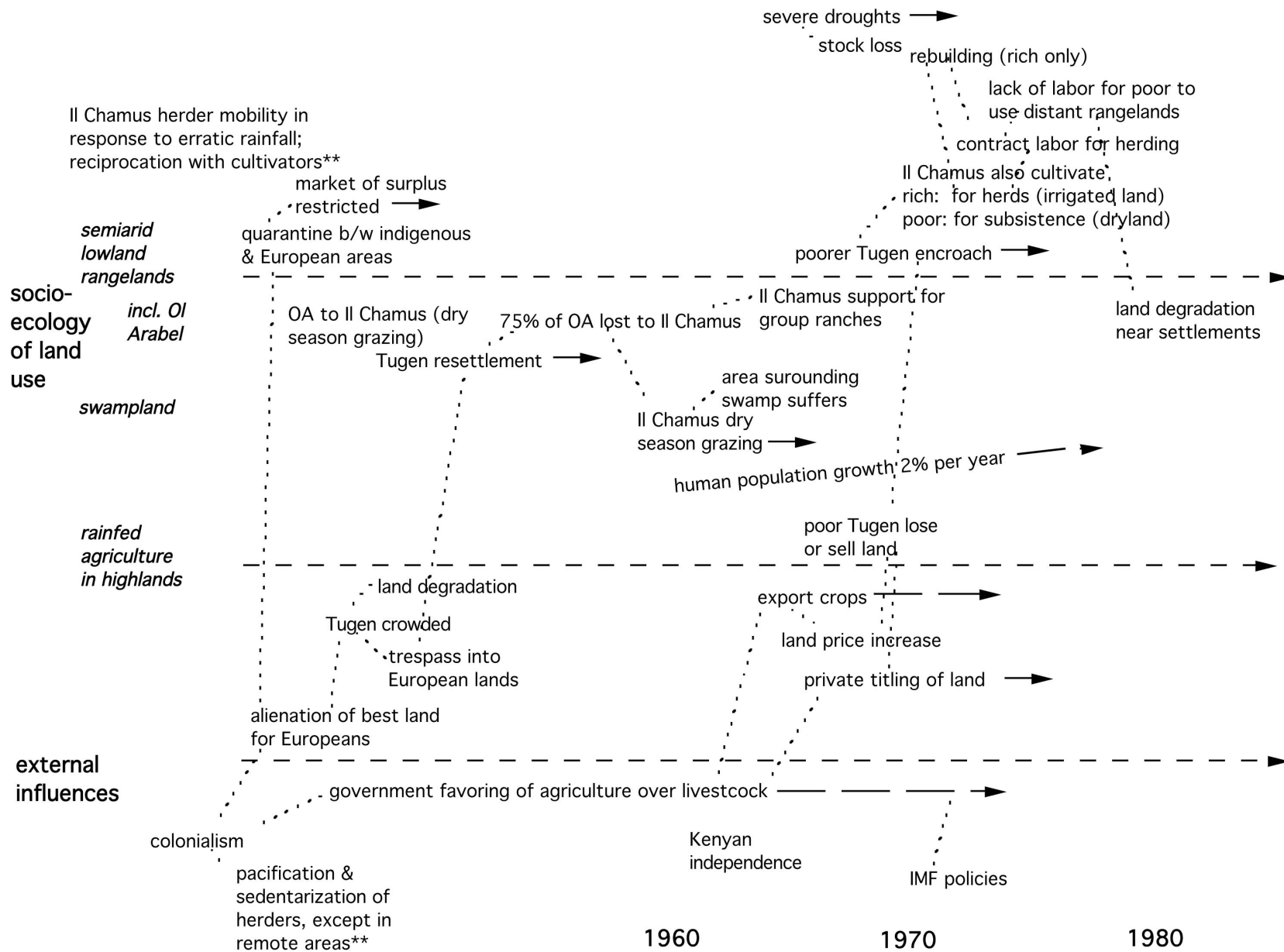
political-economics of environment

can be seen as the outcome of *intersecting processes*

operating across different spatial and temporal scales,

transgressing the boundaries of the situation under consideration &

restructuring its "internal" dynamics



Implications for Social Theorizing

*Intersecting processes (IPs) involve **inseparable dynamics***

***Differentiation** among unequal agents implicated*

***Heterogeneous** elements & scales involved*

***Historical contingency** significant*

***Structuredness not reducible** to micro- or macro-determinations*

Agency distributed across different kinds of agents and scale, not centered in one class or place

Account has **intermediate complexity**—neither highly reduced, nor overwhelmingly detailed

favor **multiple, smaller engagements linked together** within the IPs

Corresponding **shift in scholarly practice**

Preserves a role for **some kind of social scientific generalization**

Fertile Site for Social Theorizing??

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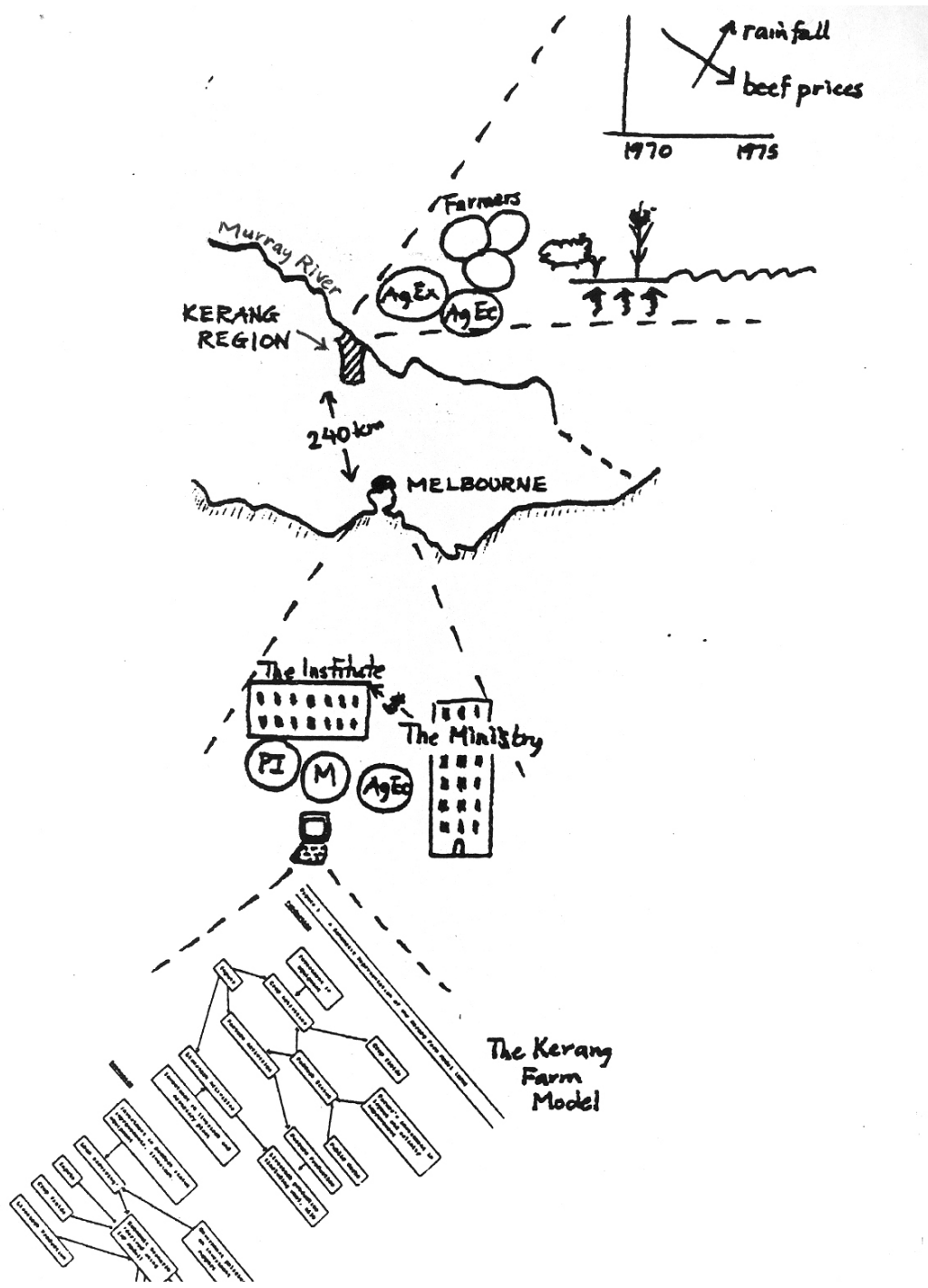
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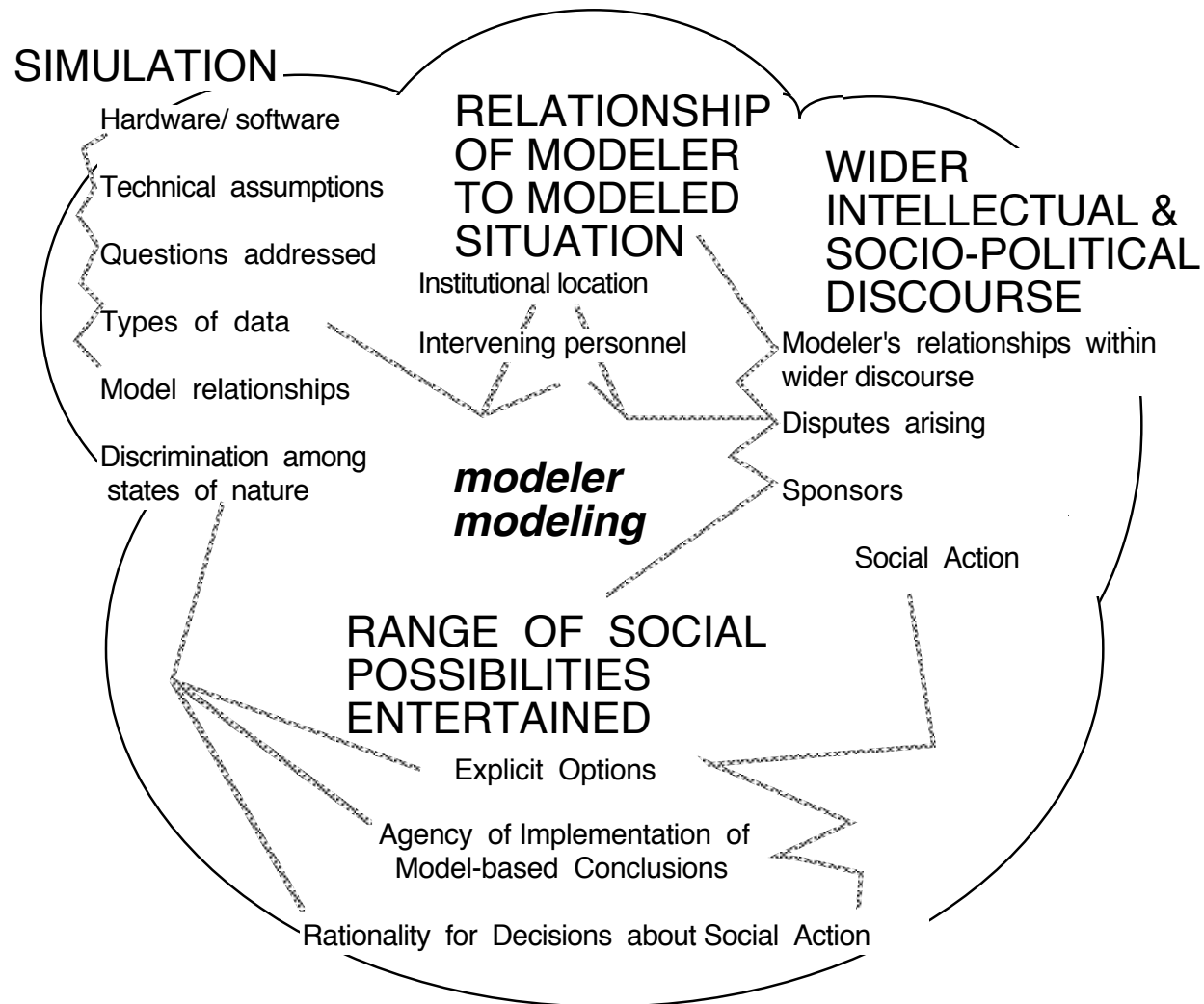
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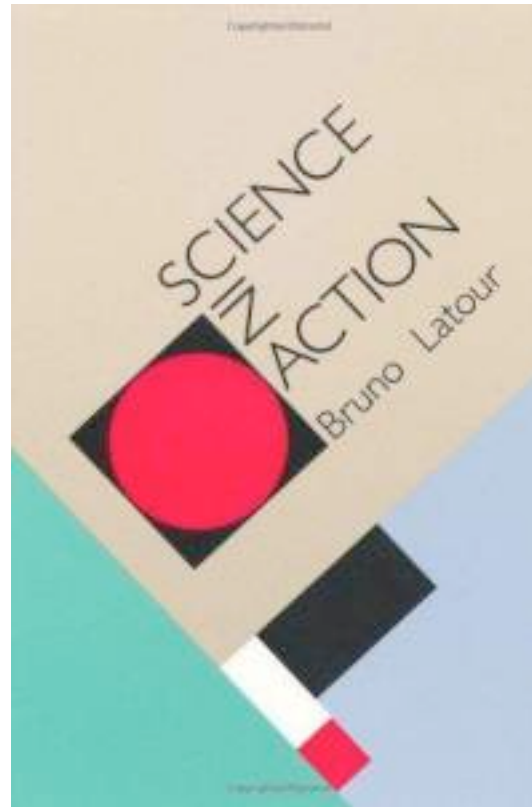
1. Young researcher: Salinization in Australia





2. Social shaping of science





Latour: “long, heterogeneous list of resources and allies that scientists... gather... to make dissent impossible”

-> Q: How difficult is it, *in practice*, to modify established knowledge & practices?



-> a. Humans, other living & non-living things
all resist being mobilized (ANT)

vs.

b. Reflexive, embedded, self-conscious human
modifiers

3. Science studies meets Political ecology

Changes in

political-economics of environment *and science*

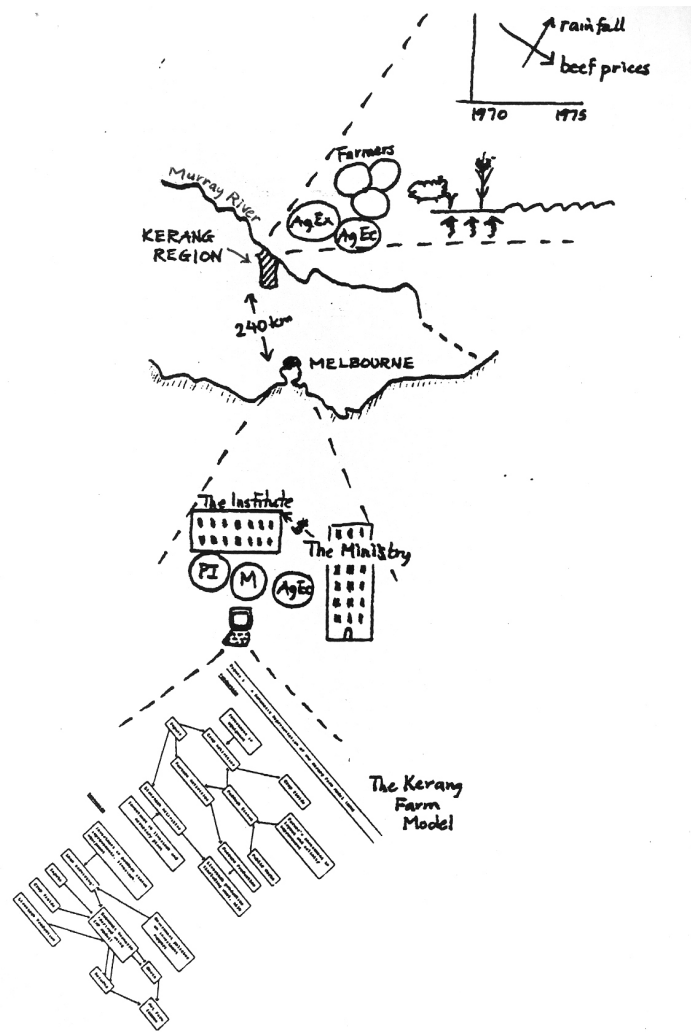
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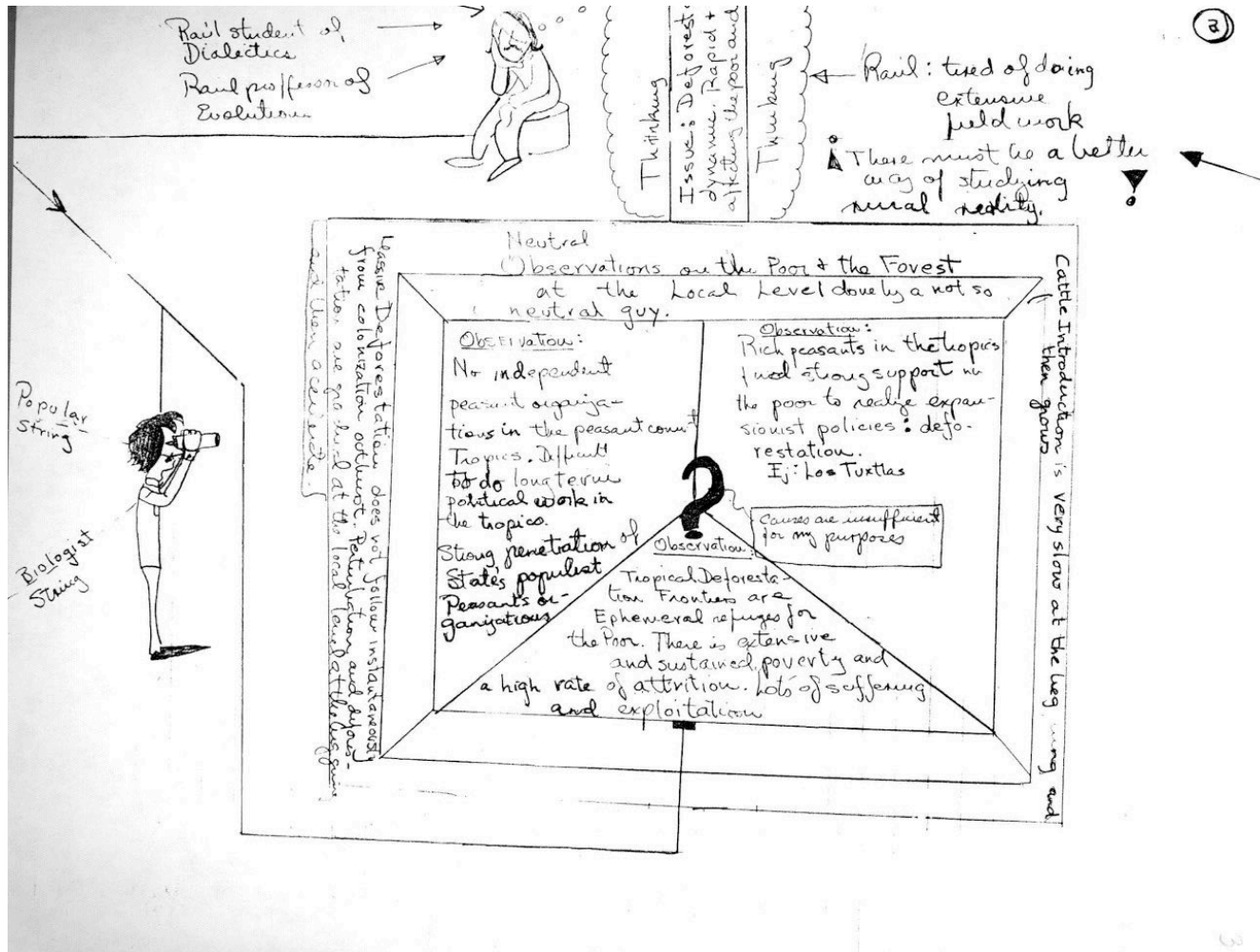
transgressing the boundaries of the situation under consideration &

restructuring its "internal" dynamics

4. Extensions: multiple, smaller engagements linked together



multiple, smaller engagements linked together, reflexive



multiple, smaller engagements linked together,
self-conscious human modifiers

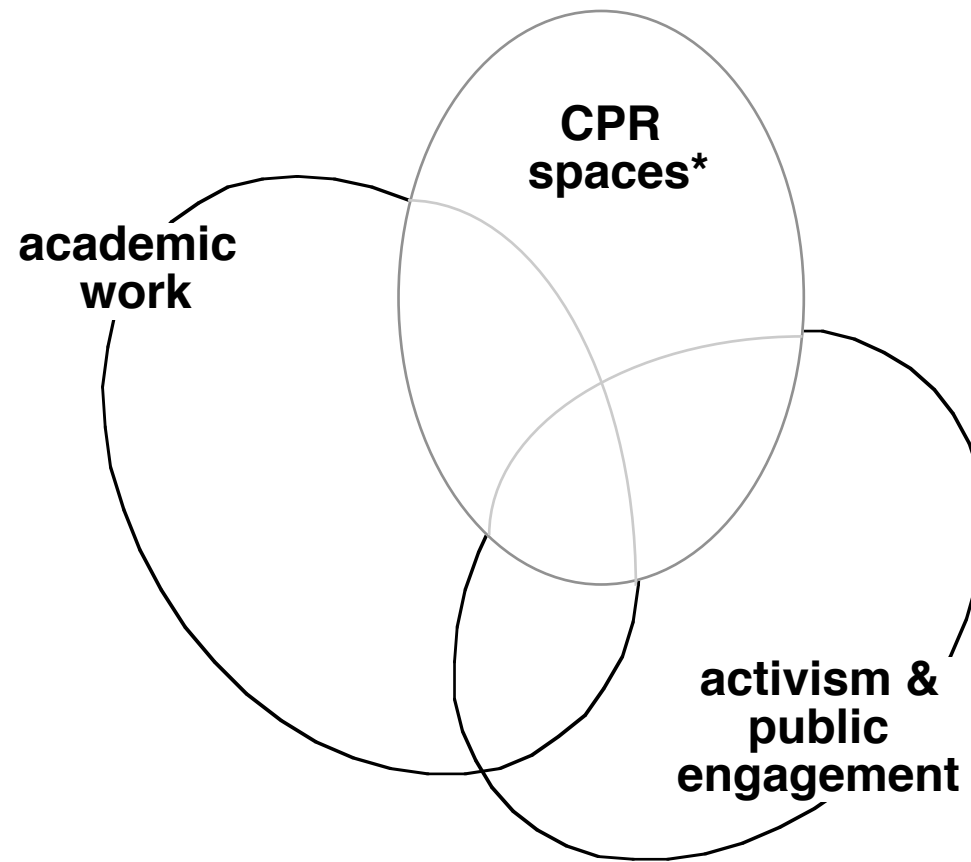
| Vision 20/20 | | | WEST NIPISSING VISION | | | February 1993 | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|--|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| STRONG DIVERSIFIED ECONOMIC BASE | | | EXCITING ATTRACTIVE COMMUNITY TO LIVE IN | | | ACTIVELY INVOLVED POPULATION | | |
| WIDELY PROMOTED TOURISM BASE | EXPANDED BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT | APPROPRIATE NATURAL RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT | WELL MAINTAINED EXPANDING INFRA-STRUCTURE | COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES | RESPONSIVE ACCOUNTABLE UNIFIED GOVERNMENT | ACTIVE INVOLVED COMMUNITY | IMPROVED RECREATION OPPORTUNITY | LIFELONG EDUCATION FACILITIES |
| Broad Based Tourism Promotion | Modern Recycling Facilities | Forestry Development | Improved Transportation Network Locally/Area | First Response Teams | Effective Cooperation Between Municipalities | Active Involvement of Citizens in All Community Developments | Youth Activities Promoted and Supported | Accessible Expanded Adult Education |
| Improved Four Season Accommodation | Northern Ontario Service Industry Centre | Expanded Local Agricultural Market | | Community Based Services for Mental Health & Physically Challenged | | | | |
| Accessible Waterways and Waterfronts | Appropriate Natural & Resource Based Industry | | Fish Hatcheries | Well Serviced Community | Expanded Local Access to Specialized Clinics | West Nipissing Friendly Welcoming Community | Broadened Leisure Activities and Facilities | Focused Job Training Programs |
| | Packaged Tourist Attractions & Tours | Incentive Programs to Attract Businesses | | | Environmentally Responsive Community | | | |
| Expanded Coordinated Community Festivals | Francophone Bilingual College | Clean Lake Nipissing | Environmentally Responsive Community | Expanded Vibrant Senior Citizen Community | | Re-evaluate Land Use By-laws | Open Communication across West Nipissing | Improved Organized Sports |
| | | | | Local Businesses meet all needs | Restructured Social Assistance System | | | |
| | Attract Government Offices | | | | | | | |

multiple, smaller engagements linked together,
cultivating collaborators

e.g., New England Workshop on Science & Social
Change

Topics since 2004 have included

- social shaping of the use of genetic knowledge
- complexities of genes-environment-development
- social implications of ecological restoration
- collaborative generation of environmental knowledge and inquiry
- heterogeneity in biosocial development
- teaching and public engagement beyond disciplinary boundaries
- collaborative production of knowledge: health, environment, and publics (Portugal)



* Connecting, Probing, Reflecting

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