Abstract

*Eat, Pray, Mourn: Crime and Punishment in Jakarta* presents anthropological research about law and justice in marginalised Indonesian communities as highly crafted radio: a blend of documentary, literary journalism and soundscape that shows the complexities of a post-authoritarian society still deeply enmeshed in corruption, magical thinking and communitarianism. Anthropologist Jacqui Baker (JB) and documentary-maker Siobhan McHugh (SMH) collaborated in designing this URC-funded project. Based on JB’s deeply grounded research in two Indonesian communities, and featuring the rarely heard voices of self-styled ‘coolies’, the documentary uses the affective power of sound and the narrative hook of personal story to deliver an intimate sonic portrait of the lynching of a delinquent and the casual execution by police of a suspected motorbike thief.

This paper discusses the challenges, rewards and compromises involved in this interdisciplinary work, which sets out to frame scholarly anthropological research as a creative audio text and offer an accessible template for the broad dissemination of academic research. *Eat Pray Mourn…* was broadcast 7 April 2013 on ABC RN 360 Documentaries and across Asia on Radio Australia. **PLEASE LISTEN BEFORE SEMINAR IF POSSIBLE.** Podcast here: http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/360/eat-pray-mourn/4598026

Bio – Siobhan McHugh’s doctoral thesis examined intersections between oral history, the affective power of sound and crafted radio documentary, themes on which she has published widely. An internationally recognised oral historian and author of acclaimed social histories of the Snowy Mountains Scheme (*The Snowy…* Harper Collins 1995) and Australian women’s involvement in the Vietnam war (*Minefields and Miniskirts*, Doubleday 1993), her radio work won a Gold medal at the New York Radio Festival (*Marrying Out*, 2010) and was co-winner, with Kumud Merani, of Best Radio Documentary at the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (*Sweet Sorrow: Indentured Indian Labour in Fiji*, 2004). She is Senior Lecturer in Journalism, UOW Faculty of Creative Arts. [http://siobhanmchugh.org](http://siobhanmchugh.org)

Jacqui Baker writes about states, security and order in Indonesia. She has 14 years experience working and researching across the country. Jacqui holds a PhD in comparative government from the London School of Economics. She is currently writing a book about the democratisation of the illicit economy of security in Jakarta. When not engaged in ethnographic fieldwork with coercive groups and marginalized communities, she listens to radio documentaries. Jacqui has worked for a number of international organisations, including the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation in Timor Leste, the European Commission, The Asia Foundation and Amnesty International. She was Research Fellow, UOW Centre for Transnational Crime Prevention, Faculty of Law, until March 2013.

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