Landmark: Towards an Alternative Testing Range, Vieques, Puerto Rico

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B.A.
University of Richmond, 1996

SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE IN VISUAL STUDIES AT THE MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY SEPTEMBER 2003

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ABSTRACT

How does land differentiate itself from other land by the way that it is marked? What implicit power relations are evidenced in these land marking processes? Whose interests are served in the designation of certain places for preservation and others not? What are the strategies for reclaiming marked land? What are the stakes? How does one articulate an ethics of land use? Who decides what is worth preserving and what is worth destroying?

Landmark is a working concept as well as an artistic proposition which considers the multiple and complex ways in which land is marked. Focusing on the contested United States Navy Training Facilities in Vieques, Puerto Rico, Landmark: Towards an Alternative Testing Range attempts to create a platform for cross-border exchanges, between local reclamation struggles and global resistance movements. By focusing on the area of greatest destruction, the inner range, as a metaphoric as well as physical ground from which to begin and engage in dialogue, Landmark, considers the possibility of sharing wounds across space and time, through the creation of a transitional geography, one between destruction and recovery.
LAND MARK: Towards an Alternative Testing Range, Vieques, Puerto Rico

“We are remembered by the traces that we leave”
-Walter Benjamin, Aesthetics and Politics

“Art is not a mirror to reflect reality, but a hammer with which to shape it.
-Bertolt Brecht, The Cultural Resistance Reader

What does it mean for land to be marked economically, culturally, and politically, by colonization, gentrification, war, and preservation?

These questions constitute the foundation for this study, a study into the violence that constitutes the marking of space, whether this marking is performed onto a psychological territory or a physical terrain. Let’s begin by proposing that land differentiates itself from other land by the way it is being or has been marked, and that these processes of land marking are what constitute and define the changing status of land. Operating at one and the same time, these processes can often be in conflict with each other. They are not fixed and their ever-shifting marking conditions are the result of complex global exchanges and power relations.

My investigation into land marking concentrates on the Eastern and Western lands of Vieques, Puerto Rico. Formerly a U.S Navy bomb testing and ammunition storage facility, this land is entering into a new phase of its history and use, the terms of which are being contested and struggled for at this moment, as negotiations between the Navy, the Department of the Interior, and the citizens of Vieques, Puerto Rico are currently taking place. While this particular case study seeks to define the contours of the particular marked terrain of Vieques, Puerto Rico, with its specific historical, social, and spatial ontology¹, the story of this contested geography will nonetheless reverberate in other lands around the world.

LAND MARK (Expropriation)

In the 1940’s the U.S navy marked its presence on the island of Vieques in the form of a military complex. Hundreds of families were expropriated from their land and relocated to a new part of the island. For the U.S Navy, this land was marked for military operations. As a result the land was re-developed as a military base, ammunition storage facility and firing range. In the year 1998 alone, 23,000 bombs were dropped in the live impact zone of the firing range. The eastern land of Vieques, since falling into the hands of the US Navy has been aggressively marketed to US friends and allies as “one-stop shopping” to practice land, air, and sea war games. For sixty years countries from Canada to South America to Europe have rented the U.S. military’s “university of the sea” testing out their latest maneuvers on the eastern shores of Vieques before applying them in other territories.  

In order to create this unparalleled simulated battlefield twenty-six thousand acres of the thirty-three thousand acres that constitute the geographic surface of the island were expropriated. Only those who had titles to their land were compensated economically: namely two military generals who owned the five sugar cane plantations on the island and a hand full of propietarios. For the thousands of Viequense agregados, or tenant laborers on sugar cane plantations, the U.S. military presence marked a new stage in their long history of exploitation and domination. For the “landless” poor, without the economic or political means to assert their right to a place, without a socially sanctioned

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2 Katherine McCaffrey, in her book, *Military Power and Popular Protest: The U.S. Navy in Vieques, Puerto Rico*, traces a brief genealogy of just a few of the military interventions that were prepared for in Vieques including the Balkans, Haiti, Iraq, Afganistan, Vitenam, Korea, the Persian Gulf, and Somalia to name just a few. Moreover, in the footnote section of her book, she points to the now inaccessible website published by the U.S. Navy which advertised rental of the Vieques facility to allied counties for $80 million, money which, underscoring the colonial relations of power which define the U.S. Navy-Vieques relationship, did not in any way go to the local municipality. The U.S. argued that it’s profit generating bombing facility benefited the local community in that it helped provide “defense” for the island. See Katherine McCaffrey, *Military Power and Popular Protest: The U.S. Navy in Vieques, Puerto Rico* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002), pp. 6, 95, 176, 182, 185.

form of representation, such as "title" to the land, the military expropriations of the 1940s constituted a violent mark on their very existence as a community.\(^4\) Katherine McCaffrey, in her book, *Military Power and Popular Protest: The U.S. Navy in Vieques, Puerto Rico*, recounts in greater detail the dispossession experience of the early 1940s:

Navy officials went from shack to shack, issuing eviction orders translated by an overseer from the sugar central. Soon after, military officials returned to load families onto the backs of trucks and began bulldozing their plots. Families brought with them whatever few belongings they had, and maybe some pieces of wood from their dismantled shacks. They were deposited in razed fields the navy declared ‘resettlement tracts’...Residents were assigned plots without title to the land and were not allowed to transfer lots. They were warned that they would be evicted if the navy wanted to reclaim the land.\(^5\)

During the 1940s the fate of the Viequense population on the island was as tenuous as the resettlement tracts where they now were forced to live. In 1947, the U.S. Military and Department of the Interior pushed to evict the population entirely from the island, like had recently been done on Bikini Island in the South Pacific for the testing of nuclear weapons. Plans were made to resettle the population in nearby St. Croix. This plan was one of several blocked by the Puerto Rican government over the next sixty years of shifting geo-political global relations and the subsequent demands on "national security" that continually threatened Viequense existence on the island. Perhaps the most sinister of such covert plans to eradicate civilian life in Vieques was the 1961 navy attempt to evict both the living and the dead from the island in a scheme referred to as "Plan Dracula."\(^6\) The navy’s goal was to completely sever any ties that the Viequense people

\(^4\) While the quality of life of the Viequense *agregado* was harsh, their ability to subsistence farm their small parcels of land on the sugar *centrals* helped them define an autonomous identity as well as foster a sense of entitlement to the land. The U.S. Navy evictions severely ruptured this long cultivated attachment to the land.


\(^6\) Secretary of the Defense Department, Robert McNamara, solicited Puerto Rican governor, Luis Muñoz Marín, to terminate the municipalities of Vieques and Culebra in order to create a Cold War training facility of strategic importance to national security. The navy argued that the civilian presence on these islands and the activities necessary to sustain these local economies,
had with their island, including returning to pay respect to loved ones who were buried in the local cemetery.

The past six decades this systematic exclusion from the natural and productive resources of the island as well as the continual threat of eviction from the island has had devastating effects on the local population and economy. For the Viequenses, this land is their heritage and birthright. As a result, it has played a major role in the popular land reclamation and environmental justice movement. While sociologists generally caution territorially based definitions of identity as having certain conservative resonances, in this context such place-bound attachments emerge as emblems of the local resistance movement. Katherine McCaffrey describes the sociology of the Viequenses' relationship to the land.

In Vieques, cultural identity, with its emphasis on a primordial link to the land, is less exclusionary than it is a product of exclusion. The heightened importance of land in popular notions of identity emerges from a visceral struggle over the right to exist on the island... The emphasis on a primordial connection to the island bespeaks to an obstinate resilience of the people in the face of efforts to remove them. It is a definition that anchors people to the island (and)...has acted as the lifeblood of the island’s resistance to the navy.  

The global environmental justice movement has seen many similar examples of cultural resistance tactics expressed as struggles to revitalize or reclaim traditional cultural practice and connections to a specific place.  

especially tourism, were incompatible with the navy’s defense needs and uses for the islands. See Appendix A

Katherine McCaffrey argues, “territorially based definitions of identity are often read as exclusionary, as constructions of identity that fail to incorporate the broader diaspora.” See McCaffrey, *Military Power and Popular Protest*, p. 123.

Ibid., p.123

as Community: The Convergence of Environment and Social Justice,” describes how environmental justice struggles are sometimes expressed as struggles to revitalize traditional cultural practice.

The question of what (and who) counts as an endangered species is another crucial aspect of the environmental justice movement’s reconceptualization of the relationships between nonhuman and human nature and the emergence of new ideas of nature and new forms of environmentalism.10

Miwon Kwon in her book, One Place After Another: Notes on Site Specificity tries to negotiate the ideological terrain between place-bound and de-territorialized notions of identity and their relation to specific sites. While acknowledging that the, “resurgence of violence in defense of essentialized notions of national, racial, religious, and cultural identities in relation to geographical territories is readily categorized as extremist, retrograde, and uncivilized,” she too recognizes the tactical value of certain territorially based identifications, as they are constructed in relation to and through hegemonic relations of power.

Yet the phantom of a site as an actual place remains, and our psychic, habitual attachment to places regularly returns as it continues to inform our sense of identity. This persistent adherence to the actuality of places (in memory, in longing) may not be a lack of theoretical sophistication but a means of survival.11

Experiences of alienation from nature, from one’s environment and sense of place, and the forms of identity that ensue, differ among various people of color communities. As numerous scholars of the environmental justice movement have shown, however, the framing of a collective experience of alienation and oppression often works to mobilize community activism. Many activist members of the Western Shoshone, for example, invoke their cultural heritage in relation to their intergenerational connections to the land as the political motivation behind their decades-long struggle against the U.S. government’s annexation of their ancestral ground for the Nevada Nuclear Weapons Test Site. The experience of alienation and dispossession, in the case of the Western Shoshone’s land-rights claims, constructs activist political identities. See Di Chiro, Nature as Community: The Convergence of Environment and Social Justice, p. 313.

10Ibid., p. 315.
For Viequenses, cultural identity is defined and understood as being threatened with extinction by the relentless efforts of the Navy to make survival on the island nearly impossible. Such cultural formations of identity are expressed throughout the population, from the grievances of the fisherman over lost fishing traps to official speeches delivered by the town mayor:

There are places in the world, on American soil, where one cannot do certain things because there are animals, flora, and fauna. Nonetheless we are people and no one takes us into account. We are a species in danger of extinction. We, the people of Vieques, are in danger of extinction. And no one heard us.¹²

The Viequense expression of their own cultural identity as threatened with extinction complicates and broadens mainstream notions of environmentalism to include questions of social justice that affect how people live in their environments.¹³ Giovanna Di Chiro describes the more complex and nuanced re-definition of the environment as it is articulated by the environmental justice movement, “Ideas of nature, for environmental justice groups, are therefore tied closely to ideas of community, history, ethnic identity, and cultural survival, which include relationships to the land that express particular ways of life.”¹⁴

The expropriations of the 1940s of the local population from the eastern and western lands of Vieques and the systematic efforts by the US Navy in the subsequent years to evict them through a process of violence and coercion has marked a psychological and

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¹³ Giovanna Di Chiro describes this transition:

What is new about the environmental justice movement is not the ‘elevated environmental consciousness’ of its members but the ways it is transforming the possibilities for fundamental social and environmental change through processes of redefinition, reinvention, and construction of innovative political and cultural discourses and practices. See Di Chiro, *Nature as Community: The Convergence of Environment and Social Justice*, p. 303.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 318.
physical wound on the Viequenses’ collective psyche. From this wound the resistance, movement has been born.

LAND MARK (RESISTANCE)

This is an intervention. A message from that space in the margin that is a site of creativity and power, that inclusive space where we recover ourselves where we move in solidarity to erase the category colonizer/colonized. Marginality is the space of resistance. Enter that space. Let us meet there. Enter that space. We greet you as liberators.¹⁵

–bell hooks, *Yearning*

The fisherman association was created in the 1970s as a result of a collective discontent with the military practices and their abuses to the Vieques population. Fishing, which had become an important form of subsistence for many Viequense as a result of the hegemonic control of the land by the military, also emerged as an expression of cultural resistance. The fishermen were also the first to detect the material and ecological damages being caused to the island by the military. Since their best fishing locations were located in the bombing range waters, they experienced first hand the devastating effects of the incessant bombing on the coastal ecology. Fishing trap yields continuously declined over the years as did size of the fish noticeably decrease.

In the face of unbearable indifference of the U.S. Navy to the social and material needs of the local population, this fisherman’s movement emerged to assert Viequenses’ rights and access to the land and sea. It was the first time in the island’s history since the initial marking of the U.S. military presence that a collective identification process transcended the three main political parties’ framing of the conflict. In Edward Soja’s *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*, he elaborates on bell hooks reworking of the discourse of marginality as a space of radically open political

identification and offers a possible reading on how such re-combinations potentially occur:

For hooks, the political project is to occupy the (real-and-imagined) spaces on the margins, then reclaim these lived spaces as locations of radical openness and possibility, and to make within them the sites where one’s radical subjectivity can be activated and practiced in conjunction with the radical subjectivities of others. It is thus a spatiality of inclusion rather than exclusion, a spatiality where radical subjectivities can multiply, connect, and combine in polycentric communities of identity and resistance; where “fragmentation” is no longer a political weakness but a potential strength: the spatiality searched for but never effectively discovered in modernist identity politics.  

While the fishermen’s crusade was materially and locally grounded, marked by the very land (and sea) that was no longer accessible to the people who lived there, suggesting a class based antagonism as the basis for this struggle, one also finds within this resistance a symbolic ground whereby various identifications were able to converge. Katherine McCaffrey speaks about the “symbolic repercussions (that) lay beneath the surface” of the fishermen’s grievances and how these cultural identifications made possible broader alliances.

The charges leveled against the navy...connect to broader charges leveled against the navy for deliberately conspiring to annihilate the community of Vieques. Fishermen, signifying the island’s authentic past, also embodied fears surrounding the island’s future: the future of its youth in a context of economic stagnation; the sustainability of the environment in light of continued bombing; the future of the entire community in the face of efforts to remove them. The fishermen were such

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effective spokespeople in part because their claims and their campaign had multiple layers of significance. 17

The fishermen organized a campaign that took the first legal action against the U.S. military. The fisherman held the U.S Navy responsible for the loss of one hundred thirty one of their fishing traps. Their claim was that the U.S military ships passing over their traps were breaking the ropes that attach to the buoys on the water’s surface that mark where the traps were located in the sea. The traps, once cut apart from the buoy, sink down to the ocean depths, trapping and killing hundreds of fish. The result, they claimed, was environmentally and economically devastating. The legal case, which the local fisherman won in a federal court, ultimately fueled further tensions between the navy and the local population.

In February of 1978 the U.S Navy announced that they would be conducting military operation testing in conjunction with all the NATO countries in Vieques for twenty-eight consecutive days, and that any fishing activities during this time were prohibited. These restrictions, which effectively signaled the termination of all fishing activity on the island, was perceived by the fishermen as a final blow to their integrity and way of life. Katherine McCaffrey, describes the implications of these new restrictions on the cultural resistance movement that was emerging in those years.

The military restrictions on the seas echoed earlier seizures of land. They challenged the frontier the fisherman had established of relative freedom and autonomy, of male-working-class identity, of cultural continuity. In the context of profound social and economic change that was both challenging established gender relations and leading to a growing dependence on public assistance, the fisherman stood as a cultural archetype that was now under threat. 18

However, taking up the feminist critique of representation, one must ask how and in what ways did the fishermen’s struggle reinforce certain phallocentric genderings of space,

how was this struggle marked in terms of normative gender roles? Women played a key role in this struggle, organizing pickets and demonstrations as well as writing and distributing pamphlets, however, their involvement was subjugated to a background role as the discourse framing the struggle centered on the male’s ability to provide sustenance to his family. Despite the apparent shortcoming of this ideological framework, the fishermen’s struggle nevertheless made a significant contribution to the formation of a broader coalition that transcended partisan based politics.

Soon after the navy’s announcement of their imminent takeover of the land, air, and sea space on Vieques for twenty-eight consecutive days, Carlos Zenón, president of the fishermen’s cooperative, went to plead their case to William Flanagan, the highest-ranking official at the Roosevelt Roads Military Base in Ceiba, Puerto Rico. He argued that the prohibitions imposed on the fishermen on their own land would prevent them from making a living and feeding their families. Fishing was a means of survival for hundreds of families and not being able to work for twenty-eight days would have been devastating. The navy official’s response to Carlos Zenón’s plea was that the practices cost millions of dollars and would not be stopped. Further, he suggested that during the twenty-eight days of military exercises, he and others like him should “go and get on the food stamp line.” Carlos Zenón, in an interview taken in his home in late July 2003, remembered responding to Mr. Flanagan, “You are mistaken with my country, you are going to have problems.” He recalled the navy official laughing at his proud remarks.19

Carlos returned to the island and informed the men of the fishing cooperative of the Navy official’s words. They decided that it was time for them to take direct action against the war machine that was threatened their livelihood. Giovanna Di Chiro traces the genealogy of the environmental justice movement back to the large-scale civil disobedience demonstrations organized by predominantly African American women in Warren County, North Carolina in 1982 to prevent the dumping of poisoned PCB-laced dirt into a landfill near their community.20 However, I would argue that the measures

taken by the Viequenses in the late 1970s forged similar alliances between race, poverty, and environmental degradation. The kinds of environmental damage inflicted onto the island was manifold: the restrictions on land-use prevented agriculture activities that had long been part of the island’s identity, the bombing activities destroyed habitats that sustained fishing activities, and the several thousand tons of ordinance that was being exploded nearly three quarters of the year was turning the eastern land into a toxic waste site. The fishermen recognized the navy’s blatant disregard for their way of life as being racist and colonialist in nature, and saw the restriction on the water use as yet another blow to the native population’s livelihood and continued existence.

The marking for destruction of both the land and people of Vieques became the crucible for a civil rights campaign that included the right to use the productive resources of one’s country and, most importantly, the right to survival. In response to the state of emergency in which the fishermen found themselves, a direct response to the navy was vital. They decided to embark upon a plan that would interrupt and stop the twenty NATO countries from practicing war-games on the island. After a long process of brainstorming and discussing the best tactics of resistance, the fishermen’s cooperative generated a plan for direct action.

Carlos Zenón recalled the events that transpired on first day of the fishermen’s crusade:

On February 6, 1978, at 7:00 am in the morning, the military practices began on land and sea. Forty small fishing boats left the shore and parked themselves in the path of the NATO warships...twenty boats on the right, twenty boats on the left, creating a type of road. Each fisherman’s boat was equipped with traps similar to the ones used for fishing that the U.S navy had previously destroyed. These alternative traps also had a buoy and a rope, but different from the ones used for fishing, these ones had a large metal chain attached to the rope’s end. As the

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21 The latter issue, contamination, did not emerge as a platform for protest until the 1990s, mostly when the results of living in a contaminated area were being observed in the health of the population living on the island. Cancer rates on Vieques have statistically been proven to be 40% higher than those on the mainland of Puerto Rico.
NATO warships approached, we proceeded to move in their direction, until we were right in front of them. At that point, we threw our traps five to seven feet in front of the ship. This was very dangerous since the NATO forces had enormous warships and our fishing boats were only sixteen feet long. As the warships passed over the traps, the propellers in the back formed a suction that drew up the rope and along with it the large chain. Once caught in the chain, the propellers stopped moving causing the motors of these gigantic ships to get stuck and ultimately causing them to stop.

On this first day of tactics against the US-NATO war machine, the fishermen stopped military activities on the land, air, and sea. After debilitating the warships at sea, the fishermen went onto the shores of the bombing range interrupting the military practices on the land as well. These resistance acts by the fisherman against the U.S and NATO forces, effectively captured and communicated the fishermen’s message to a wider international audience. Katherine McCaffrey elaborates:

> The image of the fishermen at war with the navy on the high seas conveyed a heroic tale, and the media readily told the story of Vieques’s David and Goliath battle to an international audience. The island’s struggle was translated into a variety of different contexts and created a wider support network.\(^{22}\)

The fishermen’s tactics for reclaiming and recovering this contested space suggested that the military hegemony and control of the island would not go unchallenged. In the successive months, numerous spirited, creative, tactically disruptive actions were employed that embodied the ethical ideals of the civil rights movement as well as the playful remixing of symbols, codes, and languages emblematic of Creole and carnivalesque Caribbean culture.\(^{23}\) However, the spirit, aims, and goals of the movement that were thematized as materially grounded and local in nature, and most importantly,


\(^{23}\) In interviews taken over the summer of 2003 with various fishermen involved in the late 1970s protests, I have collected an archive of first hand testimonials of tactics used during this time. There are too many to go into detail about at this moment, but these stories will be available in a forthcoming documentary I am making about the tactics of resistance used in Vieques.
the collective identification and sense of unity in resistance that it engendered, began to
disintegrate in the immediate years following the initial fishermen’s battles with the navy.

Partisan politics re-entered the struggle creating divisive boundaries as local issues were
incorporated into larger political platforms about Puerto Rican sovereignty. In a climate
of heightened tensions between the United States and Puerto Rico, the Puerto Rican
governor Carlos Romero Barceló’s involvement in this local struggle proved to be its
ultimate setback. Just as the fishermen were preparing a class action lawsuit against the
navy in federal court, Barceló stepped in and filed case of his own which effectively
absorbed all of the fishermen’s claims into one consolidated case. Barceló, whose
strategy was to use Vieques as an argument for statehood, was ultimately cornered by his
own claims, as the U.S. Navy linked Puerto Rican statehood with the continued presence
and active functioning of military installations on the island. This political pressure on the
governor resulted in the dropping of the lawsuit filed against the navy and the signing of
the “good neighbor” accord with the navy.24

What was left of the resistance movement in Vieques continued in varying degrees of
intensity over the following fifteen years. The movement’s main objective was to stop
the bombing exercises and to reclaim the expropriated land. In addition, new charges
were being made against the navy regarding its illegal use of highly toxic substances such
as napalm and uranium. “Residents were increasingly concerned about contamination
from military explosives and reports of high levels of certain types of cancers in the
community.”25 In 1994, the proposal to erect a “Relocatable-Over-The-Horizon-Radar-
Installation” (ROTHR) in Vieques, elicited new fears of health risks to the community.
The newly formed Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques (CPRDV),
galvanized a new base of support around emerging health issues facing the island. The
potential exposure of the population to massive radiation from the ROTHR was cause for
renewed non-partisan mobilizations against the navy.26

24 McCaffrey, Military Power and Popular Protest, p.95-96.
25 Ibid., p.139
26 Ibid., p.144-145. Catherine McCaffrey describes two successful CPRDV campaigns:
On April 19, 1999, during routine military training exercise a stray bomb missed its target killing a Viequense civilian security guard, David Sanes. This event re-catalysed the resistance movement as the community would no longer tolerate the casualties caused by its destructive neighbor. The next series of protests began as a humble memorial to the slain guard. Marking the site of his untimely death, a group of CPRDV members, fishermen, and family member of David Sanes, entered the live impact zone of the firing range and planted a white cross in the soil in his remembrance. One of the members of the group, Tito Kayak, vowed to stay in the range to prevent further bombings by the navy. His gesture was soon joined by numerous sympathizers who entered the bombing range and for next few years set up peace and justice camps, using their bodies as human shields that prevented the navy from dropping even “one more bomb (ni una mas)” as their popular slogan declared. With the aid of new and old media technologies, from

In January 1997 the Committee to Rescue and Develop Vieques organized what it declared to be the largest antimilitary demonstration in Vieques in twenty years. Over five hundred people gathered in front of the gates of the Western Ammunitions Facility, the proposed site for the ROTHR. Leaders of the local political parties and churches delivered messages of opposition. The demonstration was coordinated with the movement in Lajas, which held its own protest simultaneously in front of Fort Allen.

In February 1997 the Committee organized yet another well-attended protest, this time a “Walk for the Health of Vieques.” The purpose of the walk was to dramatize the community’s concern over high cancer rates and other illnesses stemming from environmental contamination, and resident’s fears that electromagnetic radiation from the proposed radar installation could exacerbate rates of illness. As in January, over five hundred people attended. See McCaffrey, Military Power and Popular Protest, p. 145.

27 Catherine McCaffrey recounts the event in all its tragic and gruesome detail:

Two F-18 jets, traveling between 500 and 1,300 miles per hour, missed their mark by one and a half miles. The jets dropped two five-hundred-pound bombs not on the range, but on the barbed-wire ringed complex where the navy surveyed the shelling. The navy’s range control officer and three security guards inside the OP were injured by fragments of shattered glass and concrete. Sanes, standing outside, was knocked unconscious by the explosion and bled to death from his injuries. See McCaffrey, Military Power and Popular Protest, p. 147.

28 Carlos Zenón, in a recent interview, recounted the motive for him to create Monte David, the longest lasting encampment on the firing range. He recalled:

The difference between our camp as the others which started to emerge on the beaches in the restricted area of the U.S bombing range was primarily its location...it’s ability to interrupt the bombings, now more than ever. Camp David was located inside the most dangerous part of the bombing range. The area was filled with unexploded bombs, uranium covered tanks...heavily contaminated . It was extremely dangerous to access this camp and this choice was strategically designed to interrupt the bombings. We built it with the help of experienced Puerto Rican army veterans who opposed the bombing

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internet sites to film festivals, newspapers to television, the civil disobedience campaigns of the late 1990s and early 2000s made the Vieques Libre struggle for peace internationally known. The largest mass demonstration in Puerto Rican history was organized in San Juan over the Vieques struggle, and similar showings of solidarity could been seen within the global community from New York City to Okinawa, Japan. Through the use of media the resistance movement communicated to the larger sectors of the population, locally and internationally, that the Navy had exhausted its welcome. Their efforts succeeded in finally stopping the bombing and in May 2003, the U.S military abandoned its sixty-year domination of the island.

While battle to evict the navy from Vieques has been won, the land occupied by the U.S military for the last 60 years in Vieques is still in federal hands. The United States Department of Interior controls the Eastern and Western areas of the island and has enlisted the Department of Fish and Wildlife to administer it, through a designation of these contaminated lands as “wildlife reserves” and “conservation zones.” Until this land is passed to the municipality of Vieques, Viequenses will not be able to assert their rights to land. This will be the next challenge, the future development of this contested territory. Here a new battle begins.

LAND MARK (Alternative Testing Range)

“The world is not as we represent it, and its act of representing itself can open new interpretations of the world.”

-Alan Berger, Reclaiming the American West

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range. Camp David was in one of the highest points in the bombing range, it could clearly be seen from the observation towers. It too functioned as an observation point from which we informed the other camps by radio of the military activities. When the monthly bombing events were about to begin, all the civil disobedient camps on the beaches got arrested since they were easy to access. The U.S Military knew there were people inside the center of the bombing range, but, since it was so dangerous to access this site, they couldn’t get us out and so we stopped the navy’s bombing for quite some time. From an interview with Carlos Zenón, July 25, 2003.
In the aftermath of such a long struggle to reclaim the land, air, and sea that have systematically been denied to Viequense population, a new era has begun. The need to develop an intermediary, transitional geography's between the destruction of this land and its physical and psychological recovery is crucial. Such a site will function as an alternative testing range, not for military bombing exercises, but rather a place to practice, test and develop, ideas, dialogues and proposal towards the future development of this contested territory. This alternative testing range should function as a place from which to foster imagination before taking further action, where people interested in the demilitarization, decontamination and land reclamation project in Vieques can meet and create networks that will benefit the entire community invested in this process.

Alan Berger looks at how representational strategies of reclaimed landscapes can critically, “probe, reveal, discover, and contest some of the hidden relationships and processes of reclamation.”29 He says,

Any project representing landscape should deliver an inclusive strategy for the cross-fertilization of potential ideas, or meanings (speculation) and physical presences of the landscape medium (forms and processes). This generative potential of representation allows one to construct readings of the landscape that otherwise would remain hidden or too complex to be organized into any comprehensible form. It is the agency of representation that allows one to find hidden relationships and processes rather than simply ‘image’ them.30

In Vieques, the spatial politics of the former naval facilities are complicated by the dominant perspective of the seasonal residents from North America who have little interest in the local population’s historic struggle over rights to their land. The Vieques Conservation and Historic Trust, a preservation group founded by North Americans invested in conserving, among other things, the “scenic vistas” and the perceived “natural beauty” of the former ammunitions storage facility on the western third of the island and

30 Ibid., p.65.
life firing range on the eastern third of the island, perceive the navy’s exploitation of these lands as a fortunate intervention that has “protected” these landscapes from destruction by unchecked development.

The North American property holders of some of the most prized real estate on the island, concerned with conserving the “scenic view” of an “untouched landscape” from unchecked land speculation reinforce a colonial power relation that continues a long tradition of exclusion of the Viequense people from their land. Giovanna Di Chiro describes how certain representations of nature, such as a “Lost Eden” in need of restoration and preservation close down certain forms of participation in the land reclamation struggles. “The Edenic notion of nature becomes, for many communities of color, a tool of oppression that operates to obscure their own ‘endangered’ predicaments.” Rosalyn Deutsche calls for the necessity of critical projects that “disrupt, rather than secure, such apparent coherence of...sites.” She argues, “space is not a preconceived entity created for its users; it arises only from a practice (or counterpractice) of those groups excluded from dominated space.” Critical projects, she continues, “should contest the neutralizing concepts of “historical preservation” and “contextualism.”

The Department of the Interior’s transfer of the former military property to the Department of Fish and Wildlife Services, under the rubric of “conservation” echoes Rosalyn Deutsche’s suspicions about urban “redevelopment as a ‘revitalizing’ and ‘beautifying’ process. She says,

31 James Corner in the introduction to the anthology Recovering Landscape warns the reader, “landscape is not necessarily to the benefit of all in society...its apparent innocence and idealism can often mask hidden agendas and conceal social inequities and ongoing ecological destruction.” See James Corner, “ Recovering Landscape as a Critical Cultural Practice” in Recovering Landscape: Essays in Contemporary Landscape Architecture, (New York: Princeton University Press) p. 11.

32 Giovanna Di Chiro, Nature as Community, p.311.
34 Ibid., p. xiv.
I view it as the historical form of late-capitalist urbanism, facilitating new international relations of domination and oppression and transforming cities for private profit and state control. The mechanism of redevelopment, I argue, destroys the very conditions of survival... for residents no longer required for the city’s economy.  

A similar case can be made for the non-urban land use debates currently forming the next horizon of struggle in Vieques. One sees the spatial politics described in Rosalyn Deutsche’s book, Evictions, echoed in the land use debates over the 21,020 acres that make up of former navy munitions storage facilities and live firing range in Vieques. Consisting of two thirds of the entire island’s geography, these newly transferred lands, are the contested grounds of the next battle of Vieques, its future development.

At the core of both an urban and non-urban spatial politics is certain mode of representation, or way of seeing, which perpetuates normative social relations that thrive on domination and exclusion. One example of such a spatial operation is the totalizing panoramic view. William J.T. Mitchell describes the power relations masked by the panoramic view, “If a landscape, as we say, “draws us in” with its seductive beauty, this movement is inseparable from a retreat to a broader, safer perspective, an aestheticizing distance, a kind of resistance to whatever practical or moral claim the scene may make on us.” 37 Whether of the city or a landscape, such detached vision pictures space “as a closed entity,” whereby “conflicts and social groups associated with conflict- appear as disturbances that enter space from the outside and must be expelled to restore harmony.” 38

The panoramic view reinforces a kind of exteriority or disembodiment that elevates, “the subject of the image to a vantage point from which he can supposedly “see” the social totality,” and, as a result, “relegates different perspectives to subordinate or

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36 Rosalyn Deutsche, Evictions, p. xiv.
invisible positions.” In the case of “picturing” the landscape of the former naval facilities, North American property owners, “invested in the idleness of the landscape...depict Viequense as little more than squatters, for whom the navy built houses,” and perceive the navy controlled land as a “protected” reserve, sheltered from uncontrolled development and “‘native’ sources of environmental contamination.”

Clearly distancing themselves from the actions, movements, and conflicts that have defined this contested terrain for the past half a century, the North American seasonal residents encounter the bomb-testing site as a “complete” or “whole” image of romantic and sublime nature. Moreover, such “Euro-American constructions of nature” which serve as key metaphors for the mainstream environmental movement, historically have been used to classify and encode “people of color” and “Third World natives...as antinature, even toxic...Wilderness or Eden must be located where these ‘toxic’ or ‘fallen’ peoples are not.” Such spatial representations of the Vieques landscape dangerously masks the reality of contamination and destruction that the navy has inflicted onto this terrain, while simultaneously creating a new method of exclusion in which to keep the local population form participating in the productive use and development of their land.

If what we understand as nature is both historically dynamic and culturally specific, then the question of what to preserve versus what to be destroy needs to be rethought in all its ethical, political, and philosophical dimensions as fundamentally a question of representation. Edward Soja, returning to the early conceptualizing of space by Henri Lefebvre says,

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39 Ibid., p. 214.
40 Katherine McCaffrey, Military Power and Popular Protest, p. 108.
41 W.J.T Mitchell elaborates on the politics of distancing that landscape engenders, “As a distancing device, landscape can be used (or deployed) by those in power to conceal, consolidate, and represent certain interests. Landscape is particularly effective in this regard because it so beautifully conceals its artifice, ‘naturalizing’ or rendering invisible its construction and effects in time.” See W.J.T. Mitchell, Landscape and Power, p.11.
42 Giovanna Di Chiro, Nature as Community, p.311.
43 “space is, rather, political, inseparable from the conflictual and uneven social relations that structure specific societies at specific historical moments”)
Spaces of representation...are vitally filled with politics and ideology, with the real and the imagined intertwined, and with capitalism, racism, patriarchy, and other material spatial practices that concretize the social relations of production, reproduction, exploitation, domination, and subjugation. They are the ‘dominated spaces,’ the space of the peripheries, the margins and the marginalized...they are the chosen spaces for struggle, liberation, emancipation.44

The last part of this description of spatial practice is the most promising, in that it posits sites of marginality as locations from which potential resistance and radical change might emerge. If we cultivate what Rosalyn Deutsche calls “critical spatial strategies that emphasize the social production and therefore the mutability of spatial arrangements...” whereby “creative social practices of resistance and re-appropriation of dominated and hegemonic social productions of space”45 can emerge, then the possibility for radically open spatial projects might be possible.

LAND MARK AND IMAGINATION

Landmark: A prominent identifying feature of a landscape...A fixed marker, such as a concrete block, that indicates a boundary line...An event marking an important stage of development or a turning point in history...A building or site with historical significance, especially one marked for preservation by a municipal or national government...adj Having great import or significance: a landmark court ruling...tr.v. land-marked, land-mark-ing, land-marks...To accord the status of a landmark to; declare to be a landmark.46

- The American Heritage® Dictionary

A land differentiates itself from another land by the way it’s been marked...economically, culturally politically, etc. These processes of land marking are

44 Edward Soja, Thirdspace, p. 61.
45 Rosalyn Deutsche, Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics, p. xvi.
46 The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition
what constitute and define the status of a land. Operating at one and the same time, these processes often can be in conflict with each other.

These processes that constitute and define the politics of space have formed the basis of my theoretical inquiry and have directly informed the conceptualization and development of Landmark: An Alternative Testing Range, Vieques, Puerto Rico.

Through a tactically chosen representation of the bombing zone space, a digitally rendered model of the land, the eastern land in Vieques, Puerto Rico serves as a simulated terrain from which debates, discussions, and investigations can take place. This contested geography functions as a discursive terrain upon which questions relating to the US military war-machine, colonial relations between the US and Puerto Rico, ecological, urban, and land use debates, identity and landscape, technology and war, class, race, and ethnicity issues related to social and environmental justice can be tested, challenged, and contested.

Over the summer of 2003, Landmark functioned as a classroom at the Escuela de Artes Plásticas newly renovated annex building, an 18th century Spanish Colonial hospital, currently designated an historical landmark site. Situated in Old San Juan, the architectural epicenter of Puerto Rico’s Spanish Colonial heritage, this building, marked for preservation, is part of the city’s historic district. Over 500 years old, this area was originally conceived as a military stronghold. It is now designated as a World Heritage Site by the United Nations.

A special course was offered to students fro the Escuela de Artes Plásticas and Universidad Politecnica de Puerto Rico. The class combined theoretical readings, lectures, and workshops on the theme of Land Mark, with a critical examination of the specific case study of the Eastern Land of Vieques. It looked at how land gets marked, physically as well as socially, culturally, and historically. What are the historic trajectories of land marking on a local and global scale? Whose historical, aesthetic, and cultural values are reinforced through the designation of certain sites for preservation and
others not? What are the strategies for reclaiming marked land? What are the stakes? How does one articulate an ethics of land use? Who decides what is worth preserving and what is worth destroying? What is the relationship between land and memory? What are the possibilities for critical memorial projects within the socio-cultural-political matrix of destruction, reclamation, reconstruction, and recovery? The course attempted to unpack the terminology of base redevelopment and land reclamation in general to open the possibility for critical design projects to emerge.

LANDMARK/ LANDSCAPE

The term "landscape" has a long history within the arts, in music, literature, the plastic arts, and architecture. With landscape, as Vito Acconci has aptly described it, the "land escapes," it's "that portion of a territory that the eye can comprehend in a single view." Because it defines the very limits of the observer's gaze, it exists as a prospect or "a mental picture of something to come." Its meaning is continually encoded and re-coded through the productive apparatus of cultural and political value systems. Landmark, while participating in many of these systems of meaning, is distinguished as something that marks the boundary of land(scape). A landmark fixes a limit or extent to the landscape. It records a specific position because it is marked. It's a target of sorts; its value is determined by its ability to register, fix, or trace out its bounds and limits

LANDMARK.... for preservation.... for destruction...the site, the Inner Range, in Vieques, Puerto Rico

In visual terms, the most impressive environmental impacts in the "Inner Range" are found in the areas where tropical lagoons and wetlands used to exist. Those lagoons do not exist anymore; they are dry and their beds are filled with bomb craters. The decades-old naval bombardment in the "Inner Range" area, with its concomitant removal of the

47 I recall his use of the term landscape from a lecture he gave at Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in the Summer of 1998.
48 The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition
49 Ibid.
topsoil has substantially altered the topography. Many hills show the unmistakeable effect of dense bombardment, evidenced by the absence of vegetation and topsoil. Many mountains display the effects of fire-bombing, their slopes are full of projectiles and charred military junk. This topographic alteration has converted this area into a virtual wasteland. Moreover, the land is littered with fragments of bombs and projectiles, unexploded bombs, charred junk, military debris, discarded parachutes, and other wastes. The coastline also shows signs of intense bombardment that has completely changed its configuration. In general, the damage is so vast and deep, that it will take years, even decades before the environment recuperates -- if it is allowed. Therefore, it can be concluded that the effects of the Navy activities during the last 60 years in Vieques have provoked the most intensive and extensive environmental damage associated with a single actor in the history of Puerto Rico. The intensity and extent of the damage is so great that traditional categories cannot describe them; they are damages beyond description.

Landmark: An Alternative Testing Range, Vieques, Puerto Rico is one-to-one scale bi-dimensional rendering of a portion of the former bomb testing range in the form of a felt floor. The topographical measurements were purchased from Caribbean Spectrometry, Inc., a GIS company in Puerto Rico that uses military-developed radar and surveillance technology to create computer-generated models of land surfaces. Their chief customer is the United States military, who uses these models for tactical intelligence and target training. As a result of the Viequense struggle to close the Navy facility described in this paper, the US military is currently developing and testing digital or virtual bombing ranges in the middle of the ocean. According to a recent Reuters article,

The military will shift its war games into the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Ocean using new simulators that can make targets far out at sea look like downtown Baghdad, according to a top U.S. Navy official... Most bombing would take place far out at sea, using a new system that lets ships simulate the terrain of any area — ‘anyplace you have overhead photography... They can simulate an aircraft overflying that location and give you an actual picture of the target and that can
tell the gun crews where to place their rounds,’ the Navy official said. The image is superimposed over targets placed far away from populated areas or sensitive marine habitats. Sonor buoys around the targets measure where the rounds fall and relay the information back to the ships and planes, letting the crews know if they hit their mark.. The Virtual At-Sea Training systems were created by the Navy, using computer, radar and global-positioning technology.50

Paul Virilio, in his book, War and Cinema, describes the intimate relation between vision and the war machine. The newest technologies being developed and used by the US Navy hauntingly enact new developments in this long tradition of perception and destruction. He says,

In fact, by upsetting geocentric cosmogony, this reverberation of the human look called perceptual faith itself into question, and ‘remote perception’ anticipated the grave philosophical problems that have recently been posed by ‘electro-optical television’, as a preliminary to a new science of ‘visionics’ concerned with the automated interpretation of reality. Thus, alongside the ‘war machine’, there has always existed an ocular (and later optical and electro-optical) ‘watching machine’ capable of providing soldiers, and particularly commanders, with a visual perspective on the military action under way. From the original watchtower through the anchored balloon to the reconnaissance aircraft and remote-sensing satellites, one and the same function has been indefinitely repeated, the eye’s function being the function of a weapon. However, great the area of the battlefield, it is necessary to have the fastest possible access to pictures of the enemy’s forces and reserves. Seeing and foreseeing therefore tend to merge so closely that the actual can no longer be distinguished from the potential. Military actions take place “out of view’, with radio-electrical images substituting in real

time for the now failing optical vision. Weapons are tools not just of destruction but also of perception…

Weapon of Resistance...Tactical Value

Conceptually, the choice to represent part of the Vieques bomb testing range as a simulated testing ground, literally transcribing three-dimensional information into two dimensions, raises a lot of interesting questions. Drawing upon the strategies of appropriation art, which open up the possibilities of a cultural artifact to be rewritten and therefore always open to contest, while paying close attention to the hidden agendas of such a representation, in particular in this instance how it depersonalizes war and violence through its distancing effects, the simulated range will be inverted into another kind of terrain, open to alternative meanings. Moreover, defining this simulated ground within the parameter of “landmark,” the linguistic implications between how land gets marked for preservation and how it gets marked for destruction can be played out. In a larger sense, the relationship between preservation and destruction in historical, social, and cultural terms, the power relations, and thoughts on value engendered in the process of deciding the fate of places, “Does it become a historical landmark, or a place to practice destruction techniques?” can be raised.

On another level, within the material constitution of the work as a felt ground, I am also interested in re-appropriating the use and ultimately the meaning of a material that has a specific meaning within the history of contemporary sculptural procedures, while at the same time considering if the work can resist aesthetic appropriation. Can it be abject? Specifically, artists such as Joseph Beuys, Robert Morris, and Barry Le Va, have all utilized felt as a signature material within their artist oeuvre. The work that I intend to create will extend the potential meaning of this sculptural material and recode it in new ways that bear upon present day experience, and specifically, the contextual associations that come from the subject of the work.

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I decided to use this material first and foremost because of its material and associative attributes, as it seemed to best accommodate the intentions of my project. Felt is a flooring material that absorbs sound, and can be found underneath the surface of things. Often it is used as an under-layer for other flooring materials, a type of “unconscious” located in the everyday. Felt can also refer to the suppression of presence due to its common use as a support or cushion for something else. In addition, felt is a verb used to describe when something either physically or psychologically has being experienced or marked. Within the context of Landmark, the material is intended to suggest how the military presence has been felt, and how this that was felt needed to be addressed...the floor as a document of something that was felt.

The simulated testing range is constructed in a manner such that its very constitution is visibly fragile. It is composed of thousands of pieces of the felt arranged side by side in a manner that, taken as a whole, reveal a triangulated topography of a computer model I’ve generated from the Caribbean Spectometry data. This representation system was chosen since it registers the elevations and depression of land. In a sense it is an index of how land is marked. The graphic representation also portrays the geography as a negative, a predominantly dark ground with highlights indicating the areas of elevation. It looks similar to what is seen through radar, tracking and targeting devices. In this manner, the simulated terrain depicted through the work suggests a negative image from which various positives can emerge. The pieces that make up the floor are not fixed to each other in any manner, so that the entire simulated terrain potentially can come undone, through simply shifting or moving any of its individual parts. The intention for this unstable arrangement is to allow for the possibility for re-structuring, re-configuration, and change. It is meant to mimic the actual status of the land represented, its undefined future after the departure of the Navy.

As Roberto Rabin, head of the Comite Pro Recate y Desarrollo de Vieques, has suggested, “Now the time has come... after a long struggle for the US Military to leave the land to the Viequenses...to begin the ‘New Battle of Vieques: its Future Development...If another Conquistador Hotel along with the program that such an
enterprise carries with it is built here, all the effort and struggle that was made to get the US Navy out, will be lost.”

A new era of resistance has begun whereby protesting will take the form of proposing; a collective and collaborative proposing methodology for a complete de-militarization, decontamination, devolution, and future development of this contested geography. The key questions in New Battle of Vieques, “Who develops this land?” “Who will benefit culturally, economically, and politically?” need to be confronted. These issues must be examined together by scientists, economists, urban planners, as well as artists and designers. Such needs fundamentally inform my thesis project. Landmark: An Alternative Testing Range hopes to function as an emergency intervention that can provide a transitional space to test and develop ideas, dialogues, and proposals towards the future development of this contested geography. Utilizing a variety of sculptural procedures, from process and distributional sculpture, radical architecture, to constructivist design,\textsuperscript{52} the simulated terrain is intended to mutate into a wealth of diverse forms cumulatively portraying an abundance of ideas and thoughts pertaining to these questions of landmark.

Finally, Landmark: An Alternative Testing Range draws upon the history of the Vieques testing range, which has been used by numerous countries for military maneuvers and which simultaneously emerged as a global icon of resistance to military hegemony, as a model for the work’s relation to public participation, audience, site, and community. Landmark will consider how to make a testing range to test weapons of resistance against forces such as colonization, globalization, militarization, and ecological destruction. It will function as a platform from which to stage fundamental debates about ethics, human rights, and justice in a global society increasingly prone to greater and more destructive forms of violence and aggression. Thus, the representation of this wounded territory will

\textsuperscript{52} Among the various precedents within this long tradition that I will specifically be looking at are; Marcel Duchamp’s Roto Reliefs, Matisse’s Cut-Outs, Gordon Matta-Clark’s Anarchitecture, Cutouts, and Splitting Pieces, Robert Smithson, Site/Non-Site Ideas, Archigram’s Crater City and other Utopian Models, Land Art, Robert Morris’s Continuous Project Altered Daily & Felts, Barry Le Va’s Distributional Sculpure, Walter de Maria’s Bomb Crater Earthwork Proposal, Russian Avant Garde, Bridget Riley’s Op Art, Constant’s New Babylon, Carl Andre’s Floor Pieces, the Grid, the Void, Yves Klein, Lygia Clark’s Bicho Sculpture, and many others.
become a fertile ground, raw material to imagine, develop, and explore these possibilities. It will function as an intermediary, transitional geography between destruction and recovery.
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Appendix A: Land Mark, A Visual Essay

LAND MARK (Expropriation)

Sugar Cane Field (Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques, Puerto Rico)

Sugar Centrales (Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques, Puerto Rico)
Sugar Centrales Processing Plant (Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques, Puerto Rico)

Agregado Dwelling (Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques, Puerto Rico)
“Some Real Natives” (Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques, Puerto Rico)

Navy’s Arrival to Vieques, 1940s (Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques, Puerto Rico)
LAND MARK (Military Occupation)

Crater in the Live Impact Zone of the Atlantic Fleet Naval Weapons Training Facility, Vieques, Puerto Rico (Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques Puerto Rico)

Aerial View of Inner Range, Vieques, Puerto Rico (Department of Highways, San Juan, Puerto Rico)
DEPT OF THE NAVY
ATLANTIC FLEET WEAPONS TRAINING FACILITY
APR. 1983

* RESTRICTED AREA BOUNDARIES EXTEND 1,000 YDS (1,400 METERS) OUT TO SEA.

ARIES CHART FOR USE IN CONJUNCTION WITH NOTICE TO MARINERS

US Navy Weapons Training Facility Map (Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques Puerto Rico)

US Navy Weapons Training Facility Map (Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques Puerto Rico)
US Navy Weapons Training Facility Map (Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques Puerto Rico)
US Navy Observation Point, Eastern range (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)

US Navy Observation Point, Eastern range (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)
US Navy Ammunition Magazines, Western Range (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)
US Navy Ammunition Magazines, Western Range (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)

US Navy No Trespassing Signs, Eastern Range (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)
US Navy Bombing Range (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)

US Navy Camp Garcia (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)
US Navy Camp Garcia (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)

US Navy Weapons Test (Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques Puerto Rico)
US Navy Bombing range (Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques Puerto Rico)
US Navy Bombing range (Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques Puerto Rico)

US Navy Weapons Test (Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques Puerto Rico)
US Navy Bomb Testing Range (Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques Puerto Rico)
US Navy Bomb Testing Range (Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques Puerto Rico)

US Navy ROTH Antenna (Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques Puerto Rico)
US Navy Observation Point, site where David Sanes was killed (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)
David Sanes Memorial walk, April 1999 (Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques Puerto Rico)

US Navy Ammunition Storage Magazine Map (Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques Puerto Rico)
LAND MARK (Resistance)

Fisherman's Resistance Tactics against the US and NATO forces 1978  
(Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques Puerto Rico)

Fisherman's Resistance Tactics against the US and NATO forces 1978  
(Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques Puerto Rico)
Fisherman’s Resistance Tactics against the US forces 1999- Seen here bringing civil disobedient to the bombing range (Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques Puerto Rico)

Civil disobedient adopted road, Vieques, Puerto Rico (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)
Mass Protest in San Juan, Puerto Rico against US Military presence in Vieques, Puerto Rico. This was the largest mass demonstration in Puerto Rican History (Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques Puerto Rico)

Cross Commemorating People who have lost their as a result of the US Navy’s presence on the island of Vieques. (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzarilla)
LANDMARK (Preservation)

Previous naval weapons storage area currently designated an Ecological Conservation Zone
(Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)
Brown Pelican Island, Aerial View. The endangered birds on this island have strived despite being located in the bomb testing range. (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)

Brown Pelican Island, View from the sea. Originally there were two islands of this kind, but between 2000 and 2003 one of them was completely obliterated. All that is seen today are some rocks jutting out of the sea. (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)
Map of Archeological and Historic Sites on the Western Ammunition Facilities Land. 
(Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques Puerto Rico)

Ruins of Historic Structure in the Western Ammunition Facilities. (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)
Ruins of Spanish Colonial Lighthouse on the Eastern Range. (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)

Land Use Zoning for the Former Ammunitions Storage Facilities Land. (Photo Credit: Fort Conde de Mirasol Archives, Vieques Puerto Rico)
Sacred Rocks, Pre-Columbian Archeological Site, Vieques, Puerto Rico. (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)
Sacred Rocks, Pre-Columbian Archeological Site, Vieques, Puerto Rico. (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)

Notice

Collection of cultural material or disturbance of "cultural sites" (historical or archaeological) is prohibited on Navy premises and subject to penalties imposed by law.

Penalty

$10,000 or 1 year prison, or both

Aviso

La remoción o extracción de material con valor cultural, o el perturbar lugares con valor cultural (histórico o arqueológico) está prohibido en los terrenos de la Marina y sujeto a penalidades impuestas por ley.

Multa máxima

$10,000 o un año de prisión o ambas cosas

Sign Marking Land for Cultural Preservation in former Ammunition Storage Facilities. (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)
Sacred Rocks, Pre-Columbian Archeological Site, Vieques, Puerto Rico. (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)

Contemporary Ruins, Site of Woolnor Resort, A vacation complex which started to be constructed in the late 1960s but was stopped by the Navy when it took the land where the resort was to be located as part of the navy bombing range. (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)
Popular Science article showing the Navy's new VAST program which used computer generated models of land surfaces for target training in the sea. (Photo credits: Popular Science, January 2003).

Computer generated model of the US Navy Bomb Testing Range, Live Impact Zone, detail view. (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)
Computer generated model of the US Navy Bomb Testing Range, Live Impact Zone, detail view. (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)

US Navy Virtual Bomb Testing Range (Photo Credit: US Navy)
Computer generated model of the US Navy Bomb Testing Range, Live Impact Zone, detail view. (Photo Credit: Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla)