

GONE TO THE WAR DOGS

GONE TO THE WAR DOGS: AN ANALYSIS OF HUMAN-CANINE
RELATIONALITY IN TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY CONFLICT AND WAR

By SHANDELL HOULDEN, BA, MA

A Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

McMaster University, © Copyright by Shandell Houlden, October 2019

McMaster University DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (2019) Hamilton,
Ontario (English and Cultural Studies)

TITLE: Gone to the War Dogs: An Analysis of Human-Canine
Relationality in Twenty-First Century Conflict and War

AUTHOR: Shandell Houlden, BA (University of British Columbia,
Okanagan), MA (University of British Columbia, Okanagan)

SUPERVISOR: Dr. Susie O'Brien NUMBER OF PAGES: viii, 229

LAY ABSTRACT

This project looks at weaponized and military working dogs within the context of war and conflict to examine the stories we tell about them, and what these stories do. I ask, how do these stories work and who are they for? To answer these questions, I traverse an expansive archive that includes, among other things, popular media representations, military memoir, mainstream journalism, and documentary film. I am especially interested in the ways stories about dogs inform how we understand war, militarization, and race, and how they impact the operation of power and sovereignty. I argue that dogs have been used to teach us who is and isn't human, but that our obligation and responsibility to the gift that dogs bring is to undo the oppressive story of Man, which institutes untold amounts of suffering and oppression across species, and to tell new stories in its place.

ABSTRACT

This dissertation approaches both being and knowledge as functionally no different than storytelling, with stories themselves given life by the various theoretical and narrative frameworks and strategies through which they are shaped and made credible. Storytelling is the foundational methodology of this work, and the work itself takes imagination as central to complicating and disrupting the normative terms (i.e., the stories) of both being and knowledge. Its particular agenda is in making space for imagining futures without both war and the figure of the human, especially the human as Man, as a way through the interminable conflict characteristic of the contemporary historical moment.

Situated in the field of human-animal studies, the analysis takes up military working dogs, which I argue are made to sustain the disimagination processes inherent to militarization. The innate dehumanization of war requires narratives that recover the human, and dogs, as companion species and creatures of the home, are especially well positioned for this task. Drawing on Black feminist thought, and anti-colonial insights from Indigenous thinkers, this work also shows how such dogs are used strategically within assemblages of whiteness to reify certain forms of sovereignty at the expense of both racialized people and dogs. Finally, I argue that imagining futures without conflict and war requires asking seemingly unimaginable questions, such as why sacrificing dogs in combat seems an unassailable truth given the alternatives. By asking such questions, I seek to engage a kind of radical imagination unconstrained by the limits of Man as the locus of ethics, especially during times of conflict, and to bring about an appreciation of dogs, whether in combat or otherwise, as beings for whom our responsibility to, and ethical relation with, runs far deeper than most humans willingly acknowledge.

*In memory of Oslo, a thread between this world,
past worlds, and worlds to come.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, and the Department of English and Cultural Studies at McMaster University for their support, without which I would not have been able to complete this project.

In my experience, the best and most pleasurable work happens in collaboration. A heartfelt thank you to all my collaborators, who include the members of my supervisory committee, Susie O'Brien, Gena Zuroski, and Marshall Beier. Susie, thanks for your unfailing generosity and support. I'm not sure where this project would have ended up without the space that your care made possible, but I am forever grateful for it. Marshall, thank you for your enthusiasm and interest, especially when it was asked so late in the game. Your input has significantly improved the interdisciplinarity of this work. Gena, thank you for your continued encouragement and the example you set as a public-facing scholar, and especially for showing the way that humility and attention to privilege is essential to doing good work.

Thanks also to my colleagues elsewhere, especially the team I've had the good fortune to work with at Royal Roads, headed by Jaigris Hodson and George Veletsianos. Your support and enthusiastic mentorship have been a gift. And of course, thank you to our fourth team member, "the other Chandell," Chandell Gosse, whose friendship has been a reminder to treasure intellectual connection, especially when it can be shared with someone who can just as easily switch from talking about good recipes to dissecting structural oppression. I'm also grateful and thankful for friendship with Kaitlin Blanchard; you've taught me a lot, and done so patiently, so thank you.

Neil, what to say. Thank you can't begin to cover it. Two graduate students working on dissertations in one household is a lot, especially when you throw a kid into the mix. But your evenness of mind and steadiness of heart has always been there, always enabling us to do the work together. Thank you for respecting my rhythms, thank you for celebrating my victories, and thank you for calling me on my shit. This work wouldn't be what it is without you, and this is especially true of the second chapter, even imperfect as it is. Thanks, of course, to Fox as well. You have been more than I could ever dream, and your presence in our family has provided such grounding for this work, and made it, and me, so much more purposeful in my embrace of joy and rejection of institutional constraints. Thank you to Ralph, the dog who resists being a dog more than any other dog I've ever met. You are a mystery to me, but I'm happy that you're sleeping at my feet right now. Thank you also to my parents who have always supported me in whatever path I follow, whatever scents I track. The freedom you've always enabled is no doubt reflected in the unruliness of this text, for which I'm grateful.

Lastly, thank you Oslo, my canine co-researcher. We always continue together as long as I remember to hold space for your lessons in this life. Your material absence is still a wound, but that wound continues to open to something grander than I ever expected.

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION: ON STORIES & DISIMAGINATION REGIMES	1
Disimagination, War Dogs, and the Lifeboat Problem	17
CHAPTER ONE: WAR, DOGS, AND MILITARIZATION	33
Thing as They Really Are	33
Ontologies of War	39
Militarization	48
The Role of Dogs in Militarization Stories	54
What is a dog?	59
Conclusion	69
CHAPTER TWO: THE RACIST DOGS OF WAR.....	71
Race in Critical and Human-Animal Studies	71
Racializing Assemblages and the Possibility of (Animal) Flesh	81
Speciating Assemblages	91
Assemblages of Whiteness: Architectures of Disavowal	97
CHAPTER THREE: THE DISIMAGINATION OF MAN	106
Human Scent and Its Detection	106
The Disimagination Machine	109
The Disimagination Machine: Bobby and Levinas	114
The Anthropological Machine Meets Speciating Assemblages	120
Sacrifice-as-Sacrifice	127
CHAPTER FOUR: EPISTEMIC VIOLENCE & MILITARY WORKING DOGS .	135
A Shift in the Wind: The Intolerable Spectacle	135
Militarized Aesthetics of Care	140
Benevolent Carcerality	151
CHAPTER FIVE: RADICAL IMAGINATION.....	172
Feminist Dog Writing	172
Recognition & Witnessing	184
Witnessing & Radical Imagination.....	188
CONCLUSION: WHAT IS SACRED.....	197
CODA: ARRIVAL AT DEATH.....	203
BIBLIOGRAPHY	210

LIST OF IMAGES

2	1.0) Author. China Beach, B.C., c. 2014.
57	1.1) Sgt. Megan Sindelar. Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, date unknown.
66	1.2) Adam Ferguson. Texas, date unknown.
71	2.1) Lefteris Pitarakis. German soldier's dog biting an Afghan man. Kabul, Afghanistan, 2002.
79	2.2) Kim TallBear. N.p., 2019.
95	2.3) <i>Democracy Now</i> . Standing Rock, 2016.
96	2.4) Wikimedia Commons. Abu Ghraib, 2003.
99	2.5) Zoé Samudzi. N.p., 2019.
103	2.6) Wikimedia Commons. Germany, date unknown.
107	3.1) Adam Ferguson. Afghanistan, date unknown.
144	4.1) Sgt. Pete Thibodeau. Farah province, Afghanistan, date unknown.
145	4.2) Brennan Linsley. Helmand, Afghanistan, 2011.
147	4.3) Wikimedia Commons. Abu Ghraib, 2003. *145
149	4.4) Cpl. Logan W. Pierce. Helmand, Afghanistan, 2011.
150	4.5) William F. Browne. Location unknown, c. 1861-1865.
152	4.6) Cpl. Reec Lodder. Afghanistan, 2012.
194	5.1) Jen Pennington. N.p., n.d.
206	6.1) Author. Jordan River, B.C., 2018.

Introduction: On Stories & Disimagination Regimes

This is how this will unfold, if I can remember to feel Oslo's heart as I work.

In an instant he is off. I am walking along a trail that cuts across a steep hillside of Ponderosa forest, the smell of hot pine and hot earth in my nose, an entirely more complex world in his. A bright joy shoots through him and he dashes straight up the slope above us and back down, leaping across the trail, zig zagging wildly as he goes. In a quick zip he turns 180 degrees and races back across the trail and up above again, crackling branches and dry shrubs breaking as he tears through them, the weight of his strong, large body too much for their slow stillness to resist. Back and forth he weaves, the trace of his happy electric velocity a dark line through the bush. I can feel the thrill of his movement in my own body, a kinesthetic empathy more ancient than any verbal language. When I catch up to him, breath heavy, he is waiting for me in the middle of the trail, observing my more pedestrian approach, deep satisfaction on his panting face. This is what it was to be Oslo, to be Oslo and me, the two of us traipsing, him ahead, looking back, waiting, a certainty in the moment that things were well and right with the fullness of together and now.

I remember the last time I saw this wild bodily expression from him. We were walking the steep road near our home and he zipped up and down the slash of even steeper ditches on either side of us, a brief blast of lightning energy. I winced a bit, thinking of his old joints, but I also remember thinking, oh old boy, what a gift to see this still. And I remember thinking it would probably be the last

time I would see him like that, given his elderly body, and how stiff his limbs would be when we returned home.



Fig. 1.0. Author. Oslo on a sunny day at China Beach on Vancouver Island, circa 2014.)

“The exercise of imagination is dangerous to those who profit from the way things are because it has the power to show that the way things are is not permanent, not universal, not necessary. Having that real though limited power to put established institutions into question, imaginative literature has also the responsibility of power. The storyteller is the truth-teller.” (Le Guin n. pag.)

This is a doggish text. It is unruly, at times undisciplined, occasionally erratic, only loyal to that which it deems worthy, and that which fills it up. In other words, it is a text like Oslo. It is the process of following scents, only to find some productive and others forgotten, to find some delicious and others to be hot garbage (but in a bad way because I’m not a dog). It is incomplete, always, at times overbold while at others entirely uncertain, and is thus a transcription of what I can only call an uneasy love. Uneasy love is something very peculiar, both meant to capture the difficulty of love itself, or more precisely the difficulty of relating, how much effort we must put into that work, always, especially in these fractured, hyper-individualistic times. It also means to call up unease as discomfort, the discomfiting. Where something doesn’t feel right, though maybe you don’t know exactly what that could be, a deep sense in your gut, a crick in your neck, something nagging, and that makes things all the more unstable, though it is this instability that intensifies the moment, the self in and as a body, somehow made more real, more possible by the way the vibrations of uneasy love loosen up the sedimented notions of how to be, and pluck at the barely visible strands of knowing otherwise that yarn around and through us. *Yarn: a long or rambling story, especially one that is implausible.*

The first track is the end of a string. At the far end, a being is moving; a mystery, dropping a hint about itself every so many feet, telling you more about itself until you can almost see it, even before you can come to it. The mystery reveals itself slowly, track by track, giving its genealogy to coax you in. Further on, it will tell you the intimate details of its life and work, until you know the maker of the track like a lifelong friend. (Brown Jr. 1)

Following this strand to its end is a process of parsing this uneasy love, a kind of tracking, which is both literal and figurative, externally in the world, oriented to both military working dogs (MWDs) and civilian dogs, and simultaneously across some other interior landscape.

Cherokee author Thomas King begins his 2003 Massey lectures with an oft-cited, simple truth: “The truth about stories is that that’s all we are” (2). Depending on the stories to which we subscribe, he says, certain paradigms will dominate how we understand ourselves and the world—in the hegemony of the West, this will often find root in narratives of Man, the human, and human’s capacity for “Reason,” and will thus ascribe value and privilege to the world with recourse to capacities for rationalization. The core narratives of a culture will determine how people become oriented to themselves, each other, and the world—perhaps, for example, as individuals in competition with each other (man against man), or in collaboration and ethical relation to each other (creature with creature as/within ecology). Put yet another way, Arthur W. Frank, whose work on disability, illness, and narrative centres the importance of stories, and telling stories, especially for those whom he calls wounded storytellers, puts it in

similarly direct terms: “We tell ourselves stories in order to live” (N. pag.). To reduce this rule of storytelling (and life, living, and meaning-making) to the terms of Western philosophy is to recognize that ontology itself, the so-called study of existence and being, is in fact the study (the theorization and creation) of stories about ourselves as living beings. Which is to say that human understanding of *ontos* (being), requires understanding story and stories, and that the reverse is true as well.

Learning a story, finding meaning in stories shows us what *is*, or as Elizabeth Brulé and Ruth Koleszar-Green say, it is “collective dialogue that affirms that knowledge is created through our individual and collective storytelling” (109). Frank tells us, “[s]tories animate human life; that is their work. Stories work with people, for people, and always stories work on people, affecting what people are able to see as real, as possible, and as worth doing or best avoided” (N. pag.)—in this way, stories literally make truth, are truth. “Stories,” Brulé and Koleszar-Green say, “allow us to engage in critical reflection about who we are and where we have come from” (115). They are the knowledge systems that grant us access to various versions of reality, that teach us how to know a reality. This is, as anthropologists Marisol de la Cadena and Mario Blaser suggest, to understand that “knowledges are worldmaking practices” (6), and our stories are the mechanisms of these knowledges. For Frank, the productive capacity of stories and storytelling is central to being human: “being human, and especially being social, requires the competence to tell and understand stories.

When that competence is diminished, which happens to many people, opportunities for participation in collective life contract.” Lack of narrative literacy and agency, in other words, is a form of social death, which is always already disastrous in its proximity to suffering and literal premature death and extinction (N. pag.). But Frank misses at least two things in his otherwise generative definition. First, our stories don’t simply affect and work on people. They work on nonhuman creatures and entities too, and at a magnitude we can barely comprehend. The story of humans as meat-eaters of a particular sort, for example, results in the death of at least 60 billion land animals annually, and this number is increasing (“The War” 6). This same story results in the deforestation of multiple landscapes, but especially in the Amazon, largely for the production of crops needed to feed cattle and pigs for slaughter (Corbellini Duarte and Stickles n. pag.). Second, Frank’s claims assume that only humans have the capacity to tell stories, and in fact, from his perspective, this is the definitive quality that separates members of the human species from all other species of living beings. But is this wholly anthropocentric understanding of storytelling capacious enough to do justice to either story or life itself (a distinction that I’m not clear about, when we really get to the bottom of things)? Consider DNA, arguably not human in any conventional sense of the word, though human beings are made of and by it. DNA is arguably a kind of text that expresses a nearly infinite set of meaningful combinations of genetic material (as writing does) that in turn produce an outcome (you, me, that dog over there), and if one were so inclined, could be

described as a story. To follow this logic though requires opening up our perspective on story, to begin to take the steps to if not see, then at least try to see, the ways in which our epistemological frames foreclose and constrain the possibility of myriad worlds around us.

The stories we do tell, to return to Frank's recognition of the power (and therefore politics) of stories, whether in the language of ontology or otherwise, are profoundly important. As knowledge systems, they shape how we know worlds, and what we can expect about worlds, what things might be possible, what futures we might imagine, for whom, and perhaps most significantly, those futures and subjects we fail to imagine. As such, learning to read the stories around us, and the forces that give strength and credibility, or the opposite, weaken and undermine various stories, allows us to make sense of, and so resist or mobilize power and new stories. Here I am not just thinking about "reading" as literal comprehension of text, but as the ways in which we interpret the world, its signs, and the narratives that compose the world around us.

Reading, in this way, is seeing the story around, for example, something like *Captain Marvel* (2019), the first Marvel film helmed by a woman, and the twenty-first film in the franchise history (i.e., twenty films featuring dudes came first (Cavna n. pag.)), as a story about the apparent impossibility of women as heroes worthy of their own titles in the broader mainstream cinematic culture of the West—in other words, as a story about gender and patriarchy (Leishman n. pag.). For my part, as a product of my (perhaps too) extensive academic training,

this kind of reading has been significantly enabled by engagement with critical theory, which Dominic La Capra describes as “inquiry into, and interrogation of, basic assumptions in practices and forms of thought” (2). For La Capra, this means digging into under-thought assumptions, which “set limits to inquiry that may remain unexamined, especially when they are embedded in a habitus or what goes without saying.” As such, critical theory “interrogates habitus in order to make it explicit and open it to questioning in ways that may both validate components of it and ready others for change” (2). Practicing critical theory, in this respect, is a form of reading the world, of reading stories, that shows us power, how stories give and take power, and that stories are always political.

Given this political potency of stories, a significant figure that reverberates throughout this project is that of the disimagination machine, which I explain in detail in the third chapter. Suffice to say here that the most salient function of disimagination is as a storytelling machine that serves to delimit the possibilities of other stories, to circumvent alternatives to dominant narratives, to foreclose change and the celebration of difference. This is story made into death machine. The human as Man is one such machine, which spawns and collaborates with many other disimagination machines: whiteness, war, property, and capitalism, for example. These machines often work in tandem, maintaining the current narrative order as a kind of disimagination *regime*, which in turn has material, social, and psychic effects for those who do not fit within these machines’ narrow programmatic definitions, and whose lives will not, and cannot, unfold according

to such narratives. Indeed, these very lives and subjects, who fall outside this hegemonic narrative norm, are necessary to the function of these various machines, as this project argues with respect to dogs in combat and the way they prop up the human both materially and discursively. In other words, disimagination isn't simply a process of failing to imagine certain things, a failure of creation, but is also active in its violence of refusal to imagine alternatives, with such refusal contingent upon the objectification and depersonification of the other.

There are multiple names and ways of seeing the disimagination machine. Cadena and Blaser, for example, interrogate colonial practices of extractivism to show how “[m]any practices allegedly intended to save the planet continue to destroy” (3), and claim credibility through “what John Law has called the one-world world: a world that has granted itself the right to assimilate all other worlds and, by presenting itself as exclusive, cancels possibilities for what lies beyond its limits” (3). The one-world world as a mechanism for extractivism, they add, “continues the practice of terra nullius: it actively creates space for the tangible expansion of the one world by rendering empty the places it occupies and making absent the worlds that make those places” (3). The one-world world is a story, a disimagination machine, which facilitates colonial occupation and destruction. Such is reflected in the settler colonial states currently called Canada and the United States of America. Canada, for example, tells a story of itself as a global leader on climate change (Abedi n. pag.; Syed n. pag.), but under its current

climate policies is well beyond the 1.5 C target set by the International Panel on Climate Change, sitting as one of the worst carbon emitters, on par with China and Russia, according to a study in *nature communications* published last year (Robiou du Pont and Meinshausen 2018). Moreover, all of this atmospheric carbon output and environmental damage arises from the resources violently extracted from stolen Indigenous lands and the historical and what is recognized as an ongoing genocide of Indigenous peoples (National Inquiry 5). In this context, the land and its traditional inhabitants are necessary as the Other by which the state of Canada, the one-world world, secures itself as a land of opportunity and development, i.e., without which it would not be possible. What is especially telling about a powerful story such as this is the degree to which it demands reinforcement such that imagining otherwise becomes normatively impossible and elicits only the most reactionary or perfunctory criticism from those who subscribe to it.

The myopic focus by some critics on the use of the word “genocide” in the recently released report for the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Girls and Women in Canada is exemplary for illustrating this kind of disimagination in action and the degree to which it goes to disavow itself. Rather than honour the evidence laid out by the report, these critics, including the leader of the federal Conservative Party Andrew Scheer, choose to spend their energy on semantics, arguing that genocide is an inappropriate term to use (Tasker n. pag.), even as the authors of the report specifically justified such use according to

the United Nations' 1948 convention on genocide. In other words, for some, then, it is easier and more beneficial to adhere to the apparently smooth functioning (for some) of disimagination than to consider what it might mean for the Canadian state to be an architect of genocide, which once again falls back on certain notions of who can become targets of genocide, namely those who are recognized to be human in the first place.

Jairus Grove's work, coming out of political science and international relations, offers another name and way of knowing the stories of the human. In his examination of geopolitics, he argues that

[t]here is a centuries-long investment in research, development, and deployment of techniques to ensure that survival is only ever a right for some. This right for some, more often than not, is ensured at the expense of the self-determination and continuation of living for the overwhelming majority of the planet's human population. Against the banal appeal to a universal humanity or the equally commonplace and catastrophic insistence on an inevitable clash of civilizations, I prefer the idea of "form of life." Not quite race and more than culture or style, this phrase refers to those ways of being in the world—always lived collectively— without which one would no longer be who or what one is. (2)

For Grove "form of life" isn't inherently dangerous, but is instead a way of understanding the myriad ways beings come to live together, and indeed, as he says, the "interruption of a form of life kills people and frequently cascades into genocides and extinctions" (2). However, form of life becomes dangerous when it becomes geopolitical, which is to say, "a violent pursuit of a form of life at the cost of others" (3). This is form of life as something akin to what Cadena and Blaser know as the "one-world world," both of which, in my terms, are stories-as-

disimagination-machines that so effectively conscript the world around them to their narratives that they become disimagination regimes, seemingly, at least from some perspectives, to be nearly impossible to resist or overthrow. Indeed, for Grove, the “geopolitical project of planet Earth is a violent pursuit of a form of life at the cost of others—full stop” (3). There is no alternative, in other words.

But there are always ways through even within the strictest and most oppressive regimes of disimagination, somewhere, cracks to be seen, green things growing where they aren't supposed to be. You can eat dandelions, you know. This is the thing about story, it cannot ever be wholly under the control of one individual or group because story is social, it is what happens between people; much like power, story isn't owned by anyone, it is a thing exercised, a doing. Tiffany Lethabo King's work, for example, throws a seriously disruptive wrench into the settler colonial disimagination machine—that form of life which would strictly and exclusively pursue the one-world world—rendering starkly visible its violence when she renames settlers as “conquistador-settlers” (xi). Conquistador-settlers, she explains, are those subjects who “established the violent terms of contemporary social relations. Further, the conquistador-settler also mediates Black and Indigenous relations through the nation-state, press, academic discourse, and even leftist politics” (xi). In the terms I'm working with, conquistador-settlers participate in the production and maintenance of particular narratives (e.g., that Indigenous people are not the victims of an ongoing genocide in Canada), and the strength of these narratives in part relies on

disimagination, which for Lethabo King comes down to whiteness because the narratives of whiteness are so all-encompassing in their scope that they sweep up Indigeneity and blackness, as well as further forms of racialization. As she points out, to

become or “ascend” to Whiteness is to enact a self—or self-actualize—in a way that requires the death of others. The position of the conquistador is tethered to the process of “ascending to whiteness,” or becoming human under the terms required by multiple versions of the human that keeps the category an exclusive and privileged site of unfettered self-actualization. (xi-xii)

What’s more, these various disimagination machines are so forceful, so regulatory in their function, that to oppose their narratives comes with great risk—both existential and embodied or material. Consider decolonization. Tuck and Yang argue that it fundamentally requires the returning of the land which the Canadian state and its settler citizens occupy—this means literally overturning ownership (or dissolving notions of ownership as given by the state), thereby inviting the possibility of homelessness or statelessness. But at their worst, these machines and their effects are so totalizing that it becomes almost impossible for some to think beyond them, that one cannot fathom a future without the state, or understand a home without property, or, to return finally to MWDs, a world without wars that demand the lives and bodies of dogs.

It is with these various effects and function of the disimagination machine in mind that I say that this research project, nominally about war and dogs, is at the same time a project about stories, and their limits, and is thus about being.

The details (war and dogs) both are and are not incidental to that one truth, that all we are is stories, and this will become more apparent as the stories I tell here unfold. Moreover, the methodology of this project aims to be reflective of this same claim. This means that I recognize that the site of my text itself is performative, and whatever it performs, however it performs it, it will be asserting and affirming certain ways of being and of being in/as the world, both through what it says, and how it says it. As much as critical scholarship is a form of reading the world, it is also a collaborative form of storytelling, and as such is a form of world-making, of creation, of bringing being into being. I take this task seriously, and I take it as an ethical endeavour, at once situated within the norms and constraints of the structures of the (ableist, cis-hetero-patriarchal) settler-colonial university, but also as well within the larger context of late technocapitalism's creation of a world in permanent crisis, facing the simultaneous rise of a globalized neo-fascism and the catastrophe of anthropogenic climate change. It is this latter context that I most fiercely speak to, i.e., the crisis of climate change, political upheaval, mass migration, and capitalist excess, rather than the structures of academically-oriented control that would constrain my work here. Because, frankly, there's not enough time to capitulate. If the stories I would participate in and imagine are going to have any value at all for today and for whatever futures we might salvage, if this project is to be more than an exercise or task, this larger reality is to what I must open myself. It insists upon it, as do the living beings, the land, the air, and their future, with whom I share this planet.

All this is to say that the stories we tell, how we tell them, and where we tell them from, *literally matters*, and has always mattered at the level where life and death meet. The scale of the stakes has perhaps never been more extreme than they are today, where it's no longer just Black and Indigenous folks facing annihilation (as if this in itself wasn't entirely already enough), but which now includes the possibility of extinction of literally all living beings on this planet. Which is also to say that I take literally King's position that all we are is stories. Moreover, relying on story as methodology for understanding and shaping the world is one step in practicing a kind of anti-colonial scholarship that heeds the work of Indigenous scholars who insist on story and stories as legitimate forms of knowledge, as Brulé and Koleszar-Green, following in the tradition of Indigenous scholars such as King (2003), Kovach (2010), Simpson (2011), and Armstrong (2013), insist upon (112). Indeed, for Leanne Simpson, the power of storytelling is explicitly one of anti-colonial liberation and decolonial futurity. Writing specifically about and within Anishnaabeg context, she tells us that storytelling

is at its core decolonizing, because it is a process of remembering, visioning and creating a just reality where Nishnaabeg live as both *Nishnaabeg* and *people*. Storytelling then becomes a lens through which we can envision our way out of cognitive imperialism, where we can create models and mirrors where none existed, and where we can experience the spaces of freedom and justice. (33, emphasis original)

Stories, then, are for, if not hope exactly, then possibility.

Still, as a settler-scholar it behooves me to acknowledge that a recourse to story as methodology isn't a decolonial solution to the ongoing settler-colonial

state, even when it is respectfully grounded in listening to Indigenous voices, and that care in scholarship of this sort must be paid in figuring my work and positionality. In other words, my participating in shifting norms is a step in a long history and ongoing present of people fighting for decolonization, but remains entirely incomplete. While my focus in this work is on war, militarism, and humanism, and doesn't include the rematriation of land, the overall effort is in the service of shifting the language around how we discuss ideas to make their status as ideas, alongside the material implications of ideas, more legible, and hopefully more anti-colonial in practice. It is an effort to learn to be in what adrienne maree brown calls "right relationship to change" (37). In practice what this looks like is a challenge to scholarship that relies exclusively on strict dialectic style of argument or what too frequently reduces the quixotic patterns of a world of magic and metaphor to a kind of illusion of controlled linearity. Moreover, I joyfully acknowledge the debt owed to King, and all the other Indigenous thinkers mentioned and not mentioned here, one which, as a settler born to what is currently called Canada by the settler colonial state, and Turtle Island by its rightful caretakers, I cannot begin to understand how to repay, except to start by saying thank you for sharing this wisdom, and that I hope my own attempts at storytelling honour the shared truth about what it means, and what it could mean, to be alive and in relation with others today.

Disimagination, War Dogs, and the Lifeboat Problem

If disimagination machines of various sorts operate as the dominant motif of this text, then military working dogs are the prism through which these machines are refracted. It originates with a simple but troubling question: is it ever right to instrumentalize dogs in war? Let me be up front now that the answer to this question isn't straight forward, but at bottom is instead an engagement with and problematization of the famous lifeboat problem, that imagined scenario in which one finds themselves in a boat with a dog and with only enough resources for one of you to survive. Within animal rights theory, it is a question that often sits right at the centre of how animal liberation is conceptualized, especially as developed in Tom Regan's work, where he describes the problem thusly: "There are five survivors: four normal adults and a dog. The boat has room enough only for four. Someone must go or else all will perish. Who should it be" (Regan 324)? In the philosophical context, this is entirely hypothetical, but in the context of combat, the question—who should it be?—is expressed as increased vulnerability to injury and death, and where MWDs are concerned, is normatively answered with their lives. But what does it mean for such dogs to die in combat? And how are we to understand our relationships to them and their deaths? Moreover, what do the narratives we tell ourselves of their deaths tell us about processes of militarization, and can this help us deepen our understanding of war? My research wagers that thinking with war dogs makes legible a site of disimagination exemplified by militarization, and that critically engaging the

operation of militarization, especially as it mobilizes the figure of the war dog, reveals the extent to which war-making is bound up with the production of the figure of the human, or Man. If, as *seems* self-evident, a war dog's life is worth less than a human soldier's life, what are the logics that make such a claim appear so unimpeachably true, and how does this impact how we understand war?

This research began with the discovery of a photo essay in *The Atlantic Online*, a series of images of MWDs in various locations across combat and training zones (Taylor n. pag.). What strange photos, I thought, looking at dogs who were both dogs and soldiers, and also just weapons, I learned later. What does it mean to be a dog in war? What happens to dogs who survive war—where do they go? As it turns out, this really depends what arm of the military a dog works in, and in what war. Depending on any of these factors, they will either have been abandoned, deemed too expensive to return to North America, as thousands of dogs used during the Vietnam war were, or they may be returned to North America, to hopefully live a life of retirement with one of their previous handlers or a well-intentioned family seeking to adopt a war dog, as more and more dogs fighting in contemporary wars in the Middle East are. This of course depends on a number of other factors: have they been deemed safe enough to live a civilian life? After all, they were likely chosen for their role in active duty because they have a high prey-drive, often tailored to viewing humans as prey, meaning they like to or are driven to attack people (Ritland 28), or they may have

canine post-traumatic stress disorder (C-PTSD), making them less than ideal as domestic mates (Dodman n. pag.). Which branch of the military did they serve in? SEAL dogs typically retire to lives of suitable companionship with people who respect and understand canine intelligence and physical needs and capacities, as do other war dogs deemed suitable for domestic life (Frankel 213-225; Ritland 267). But what if they served in the Army? As recently as 2018, according to a report by the U.S. Department of Defense Inspector General, Tactical Explosive Detection Dogs (TEDDs) were not adequately “disposed of” (“DODIG-2018-081”).¹ What it all amounts to, in any situation, is the reality that these dogs are not free, their bodies are not their own, their lives are not their own, and that whichever winds prevail at the time will ultimately determine how they live out the end of their days. Assuming, of course, that they do not die in combat first.²

Humans have a noted and lengthy history of instrumentalizing nonhumans in warfare, in ways spanning from their actual participation in combat as weapons or in defensive tactics, to the use of their bodies as sites for testing weapons and training, as in the so-called wound labs which ended in the 1980s (PETA n. pag.), or live tissue trainings, that use and maim live nonhumans to facilitate trauma treatment education (Chivers 2006; Gala, Goodman, Murphy

¹ The report itself describes disposing in these terms: “conversion for continued military service, transfer to law-enforcement or other government agencies, adoptions to former handlers and persons capable of humanely caring for the dogs, and euthanasia” (i). The wide gamut of what constitutes adequate disposal certainly raises the question of what inadequate disposal includes.

² Determining the number of MWD-deaths has proven nearly impossible with recent a publication even noting significant “limitations” in its data (Miller et. al. 2018).

and Balsam 2012), to the reliance on their social intelligence as a means to mediate the trauma of war both on and off the battlefield (LaFollette, Rodriguez, Ogata & O'Hare 2019). According to historians, evidence suggests that domesticated animals were used in both ancient Egypt and Greece, with the use of horses and elephants dating as far back as 1500 BC ("Animals and War" 6). Horses and their riders, as Louis A. DiMarco notes, have been "a viable military weapons system" for more than three millennia (DiMarco qtd. in "Animals and War" 6), and indeed were significant as such up until WWI, during which there was at least one horse to every three men ("Animals and War" 10). In Mike Ritland's work on the dogs used by Navy SEALs in combat roles, he references ancient art that depicts "dogs being unleashed on Egyptian warriors' enemies" and Greek and Roman accounts of dogs in relation to war (141). Beyond both horses and dogs, many more nonhumans have also been used directly within the theatre of war, including camels, mules, donkeys, buffaloes, and many others in the role of mascot, such as foxes, bears, and tigers ("Animals and War" 7). More recent inclusions have seen the use of more unlikely nonhumans in warfare, such as bees (Kosek 650) and marine mine detecting dolphins (Axtel 205). Dogs though have perhaps been put to the widest array of tasks when it comes to war. These duties, as Hediger suggests, may even out-compete the variability of human roles; the list of tasks—almost comically long—includes being

guards, mine and bomb detectors, messengers, detectors of enemy troops and traps, load bearers carrying ammunition, communication wire, carts full of equipment, food, and other necessities. They have run wiring or messages or equipment through tunnels and across no-man's land. They

have scoured trenches for the rats that learned to live in them, been paratroopers, scented for soldiers hidden underwater (with the United States in Vietnam). They have attacked opposing forces directly, pulling gunners out of their hiding places and the like. (“Animals and War” 11)

It is no short list, though possibly one of the most disturbing assignments occurred in World War II when they were given the role of suicide bombers by the Soviets, who trained the dogs to eat their meals under tanks and then sent them, with explosive charges strapped to their backs, under enemy tanks in search of food before detonating the weapons (11).

Prior to the twentieth century, with its diverse and cruelly inventive uses for these creatures, dogs occupied quite specific and targeted roles during the operations of war. Early dogs of war, as the journalist Rebecca Frankel observes, were likely more involved in the actual killing of humans, rather than saving them as they more commonly do today, and “were notable not for feats of bravery but for the vileness and violence of their use” (104). She and Ritland both cite Christopher Columbus’s notorious use of dogs to terrorize the Indigenous people of Hispaniola, the Taino, who were often disemboweled and killed by dogs (Frankel 104; Ritland 141).³ What’s striking in Frankel’s note about Columbus and his dogs is that she frames his weaponization of dogs as capitalizing on “something more primitive” about dogs, which exists in opposition to the more laudatory contemporary use of working with the “natural intelligence” of dogs, and which in turn serves to suggest that those early colonial uses of dogs, especially

³ The implications of such events are examined in more detail in the second chapter.

when compared to the disciplined nature of contemporary warfare, were somehow more barbaric than what we generally see today. And yet even Benjamin Franklin, a founding father of the ostensibly civilized American state was known to have argued for the use of dogs in defense against Indian raids (Frankel 105), and more recently still, dogs were infamously used in intimidation and humiliation of Iraqi detainees in Abu Ghraib as a form of psychological torture, thus making it unclear exactly where the transition from usage of a dog's so-called 'primitive' talents to reliance on their more sophisticated capacities exactly occurs, historically speaking.

Indeed, as bloody histories of conquest and war have unfolded, dogs have continued to make notable appearances that trouble our sense of who or what can be called civilized. Famously, Napoleon wrote in his memoirs of an encounter with a dog and their dead human compatriot after the Battle of Marengo, saying "I have walked over the battlefield and among the slain, a poodle killed bestowing a last lick upon his dead friend's face. Never had anything on any battlefield caused me a like emotion" (qtd. in Cawthorne 16). In this instance, at a battle of heavy casualty, it is the dog that suggests a kind of civility often cast aside by the brutality of war, acting as a kind of affective mediation of such violence. Although dogs were not used systematically in the U.S. Civil War, there is ample anecdotal history of dogs acting in mascot roles, and various memorials, including statues which depict dogs at the Battle of Gettysburg, for example (Frankel 78; Ritland 142). Such mascot work is once

again deeply suggestive of the affective and mediating work that dogs have performed in the context of war, and that dogs have a long history of telling us who we are or should be in war.

Adding to, or complicating this emotional role of dogs in combat, the twentieth century saw the beginnings of most structured use of dogs in various military roles. In World War I, rather than just occupying the role of morale booster, dogs participated in more strategic and logistical ways; for example, upwards of 75,000 dogs were used in official capacities, including as Red Cross dogs (Frankel 106), who

were trained to find the wounded among the battlefield casualties that lay littered across a no-man's-land. These dogs were trained to go out...to offer the injured what was often some small comfort before the men died. More important, the dogs were sent out to identify the location of the wounded, most often at night, and return with some token—a cap, a helmet, or other identifier—and then lead a handler to the site of the wounded man so that he could be recovered. (Ritland 143)

What is especially notable in Ritland's account of Red Cross dogs is that they simultaneously served strategic purposes—rescue and recovery—but also, much as the mascots of the Civil War did, acted as affective balms in times of immense suffering. This measure of comfort apparently transcended the battlefields, as evidenced by the wide appeal of dogs like Rin Tin Tin, a rescued mascot in WWI, and subsequent film star, and Stubby, a pit bull mascot that was smuggled by an American soldier overseas in 1917, and who went on to be quite famous in the U.S. As Ritland puts it, circa WWII, the “American public clearly liked the idea of dogs serving with our troops” (146). Even so, the military was less keen on the

use of dogs, and as became a pattern with the military, the use of canines in military endeavors was drawn down at the end of the war, only to need to be revisited in subsequent conflicts.

The instrumental scope of military working dogs began to shift in World War II as a result of the bombing of Pearl Harbor. After the attack, Arlene Erlanger, a New York socialite and dog breeder, felt dogs needed to be involved in the war effort, and resulted in the launching of the Dogs for Defense (DFD) program in 1942 (Frankel 108; Hutton 2). Prior to these events, the only dogs used by the military in WWII were sled dogs in Alaska (Allon and Barrett 2015), but Erlanger felt that “the dog game must play its part in the thing” (Hutton 2). The DFD “brought together professional and amateur trainers and breeders as well as private individuals who wanted to support the cause of utilizing dogs to a greater extent than ever before as a part of the American military” (Ritland 148). What was unique about the DFD program, especially as compared to how dogs are sourced for combat today, is that rather than coming from breeders, the dogs used were donated by the public—totaling 20,000 would-be canine soldiers within two years. Some of these same dogs, as Allon and Barrett note, endured some of the most horrific conditions on the battlefield. For example, the dogs of 4th and 5th Marine War Dog Platoons were used at the battles on the island of Peleliu, battles as strategically useless as they were horrifically brutal, where, because the ground was composed of solid coral rather than soil, the more than 10,000

dead were left to rot at the surface while the feet of the dogs were shredded by this same jagged, impenetrable surface (Allon and Barrett 142).

Such structural disregard for the well-being of dogs is likely no surprise in the context of war, where, as Judith Butler points out, even human lives sometimes only register as “numbers” (xxii). But this violence became much more obvious during later wars, especially in the case of Vietnam. There dogs were “engaged in four main activities during that conflict: scouting, tracking, water detection, and sentry work” (Ritland 155). As Ritland notes, “Vietnam presented a new challenge to American fighting forces. The guerrilla nature of the warfare, the denseness of the jungle, the scattered site villages all contributed to the notion that the Vietcong were especially elusive. In order to combat this, new tactics needed to be employed” and thus Combat Tracker Teams (CCT) were developed, which were composed of “dog, handler, a team leader, a visual tracker, a radiotelephone operator, and a cover man” (157). These teams were utilized both in the pursuit of human targets and to find explosives, and while they were thus important in the context of guerrilla warfare (Frankel 111), they “didn’t receive a great deal of publicity or acclaim,” and much as early iterations of war dog units, were disbanded post-conflict by 1970 (Ritland 158). The particular tragedy of dogs in Vietnam was that because the American military reduced them to equipment (rather than living creatures), and that said equipment was perceived to be too costly to return stateside at the end of the war, as many as five thousand dogs were abandoned in Asia between 1964-75 (158). The so-

called “reality of warfare” meant that handlers were ordered to “either set their dogs loose to fend for themselves or turn them over to the South Vietnamese army,” which as Ritland observes, would have been painfully akin to abandoning a teammate (159), or, as Hediger frames it, would have “had difficult consequences for both the dogs and humans in question” given the intimate bonds they shared (“Dogs of War” 64). Indeed, the very thing that made CCTs effective—the shared intimacy of learning to communicate with and trust each other—made this abandonment doubly cruel.

After every conflict in the twentieth century in which dogs were used, including the Gulf War (1990-1991), a similar cycle unfolded: initially there would be doubt about the usefulness of dogs, then they would be identified as assets, hurriedly trained and verified in the field, then deployed in combat, before “essentially dismantling the programs and forgetting much” of what was learned once it was no longer felt to be needed (Ritland 159). But as Ritland indicates, much like the response by the DFD in WWII, an attack on American soil on September 11, 2001, was an abrupt reminder of the potential military value of canine soldiers as the U.S. prepared itself to enter another theatre of war (159). (Though by then, dogs were no longer abandoned overseas post-combat, as President Clinton had signed a bill into law, known as Robby’s Law, “allowing military dogs to be adopted at the end of their service” (“Dogs of War” 12).)

These later wars, in particular the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, and now Syria, are the wars from which most of my archival sources are drawn. This

mixed archive includes the aforementioned photojournalism (Taylor 2014; Ferguson 2014), work by a foreign affairs journalist (Frankel 2014), mainstream media representations (Paterniti 2014), documentary films (*Canine Soldiers* 2017; *Glory Hounds* 2013; *Always Faithful* 2012,) and memoirs from soldiers (Ritland 2013), and they all capture images or narrative of highly mediatized and ongoing wars. Significantly, they also centre the lives of war dogs—whose political import surfaces again and again—whether in narratives around the dog Cairo, who was part of the SEAL team who killed Osama Bin Laden (Callahan n. pag.), or more recently with Trump’s celebration of an unnamed dog injured in a raid which resulted in the death of ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in October, 2019. (Vazquez, Cohen, and Liptak n. pag.). Working through this archive has meant tracking the problems war dogs present to us to arrive at a number of insights about the nature of dogs in combat, the nature of what it means to be human in relation to nonhumans, or Man in relation to his dehumanized other, and the nature of war itself.

This tracking has resulted in five main chapters which serve to examine and complicate the questions raised by engaging with representations of war dogs. The first chapter is most tightly oriented to this archive and outlines a theory of war that positions thinking about war as necessarily determined by what war *does*, rather than what it *is*. Here I make the claim that war is a radically disruptive process that destabilizes the Eurowestern idea of the human, or Man. In other words, it undoes the logic of our late capitalist, hyper-militarized historical

moment, in which, as Sylvia Wynter argues, no part of the world has gone untouched by the ideologies that give credibility and sustain what she calls the overrepresentation of Man, which she says “enables the interests, reality, and well-being of the empirical human world to continue to be imperatively subordinated to those of the now globally hegemonic ethnoclass of ‘Man’” (262). The response to such destabilization comes in part in the form of militarization, a kind of ontological fix-it strategy to resolve the conflict that arises from the recognition that wars fought in the name of Man are inherently unjust and untenable. As tools of militarization, representations of military working dogs, I argue, are especially useful in their capacity to recuperate Man from the ontological destruction consequent to war, and this largely has to do with the figure of the dog and its connections to the domestic with its attachments to what it means to be human, and how being human is done in particular ways and settings alongside the dog.

In the second chapter, the scope of this research expands beyond conflict overseas and traditional warfare to think about the way both various kinds of war and definitive forms of militarization shape what it means to live in the settler colonial security states of Canada and the U.S. for both humans and nonhumans alike. In large part, this chapter—very much an expression of tracking ideas—has been a process of recognizing that tangling with militarization, especially as it relates to my claim about war’s disruption of the ontology of Man doesn’t simply occur “over there,” or at a distance, but is in fact occurring within the settler

colonial states of Canada and the United States. This is to acknowledge, as Inwood and Bonds do, “that theorizations of U.S. militarism [and thus militarization] must be connected to the spatialities of white supremacy and grounded in the U.S. imperial settler state” (522), or as Bird and Short note that today’s sense of crisis is multiplicitous and lacking “in isomorphism, as increasingly no single crisis can be seen to function independently of others” (1). In the context of weaponizing dogs, this means, on the one hand, to centre questions of race and racialization, and the role dogs play in these processes, while also recalling that dogs themselves are not just tools or figures, but living beings subject to, even conscripted by, the very states waging war against various groups of humans. What ties these disparate sites of conflict together, i.e., combat overseas and the white supremacist militarized setting of settler colonial police states is once again the figure of Man as that which ostensibly justifies everything from police brutality and use of lethal force to torture at Guantanamo Bay. By thinking through the parallel usage of the figure of the weaponized dog in such contexts I argue alongside Wadiwel that war extends beyond the realm of human targets to include war against nonhumans, and that racializing and speciating assemblages, or those discourses and structures that differentiate between species and groups, come to a head in an assemblage of whiteness that takes cruelty, i.e., the capacity for and performance of cruelty, as a mark of its absolute sovereignty, even as this sovereignty is ironically defined

by a kind of intensified relation to vulnerability, a vulnerability which it finds utterly contemptible.

In the third chapter, I examine in detail the nature of sacrifice of dogs in war as a function of the disimagination machine. Here, compulsory humanism, or the highly regulated enforcement of the boundary between a certain kind of human and all others, is taken as an expression of disimagination that finds traction in the operation of what Giorgio Agamben calls the anthropological machine. Agamben is careful in his work to delineate a highly specific notion of sacrifice as being core to the workings of the anthropological machine, and through examination of war dogs, I show how an alternate form of sacrifice is in play, which I name sacrifice-as-sacrifice, and trace to Man's propensity for reducing nonhuman animals to property, which in turn serves to reinforce the human as such. Sacrifice-as-sacrifice, as I show, is in fact a performance of the kind of ownership and property-holding that the human necessitates for its function.

Building on sacrifice-as-sacrifice, in the fourth chapter I trace the relationship between the spectacle of war and how humans feel about this spectacle, to a militarized aesthetics of care that serves to recuperate the violence of war as something, if not explicitly positive, then at least no longer existentially threatening. Moreover, I argue that a militarized aesthetics of care, in which human soldiers are seen to be humanized by the intimacy of the relations they share with war dogs, serves to obscure the carceral logics of using dogs in

war, which takes shape as a form of benevolent carcerality. In closing this chapter, I show how what Lauren Berlant calls “cruel optimism” operates as central to the smooth functioning of benevolent carcerality, though cruel optimism mutates when imbricated with dogs, and increases the violence inherent to such an affective structure.

Not to be left only with the grim reality that the power of the various disimagination machines explored up until this point in the project portends, the fifth chapter offers something of a shift in its exploration of the radical imagination, and a return to tracking. The most speculative of all the chapters, following Kelly Oliver’s work, here I table a distinction between giving attention to what is recognizable and witnessing that which is unrecognizable and suggest that witnessing requires radical imagination as a means to resist the hegemonic forces of the one-world world, or geopolitics as enforcement of one form of life to the exclusion of all others, or the disimagination efforts of militarization or conquistador-settlers and settler colonialism. It is through and with dogs, I suggest, that we can, and already do, practice one form of radical imagination, and if we allow them to take the lead, so to speak, we might sniff out a way through.

The penultimate section concludes by aiming to concisely articulate the overarching themes of the dissertation as a whole, but in a way that seeks to honour the life of dogs rather than reinforce human mastery. Finally, in thinking about Oslo, the dog who sat with me through so much of this work, I close with a

PhD Thesis – Shandell Houlden; McMaster University – English & Cultural Studies

brief meditation on the nature of canine death, and the possibilities offered by telling different stories about these deaths and how we grieve them.

Chapter I: War, Dogs, and Militarization

1.1 Things as They Really Are

In the closing pages of *War Dogs*, Rebecca Frankel's account of the lives of military working dogs and their American handlers, she makes a bold claim about the nature of war and canine life. She suggests that when "we talk about war dogs, we are not simply talking about war, and we are not merely talking about dogs" (228). Dogs, she says, "are a connective thread," and as such, by proxy "can become the thread of war's experience, a link between us or a mirror by which we are more easily able to see things as they really are" (228). It's a striking moment in an already striking book, a moment that demands careful attention, particularly given the conviction with which it is delivered. How is it that dogs come to be positioned and understood thusly, and with such certainty? What is it about war dogs, those dogs that today work with human companions in active combat zones around the world, that would suggest that we could actually *simply* talk about war's experience, especially given the complex and conflicted legacy of thinking about war? As Nick Caddick notes, within critical war scholarship, it's well received that the "experience of war resists understanding, at least as far as the traditional academic understanding of 'understanding' goes (Caddick, Cooper, and Smith 2017)" and engaging Kenneth MacLeish's work on ethnography and war, he further suggests that "[t]he difficulties [of understanding war] are complicated further by a politics of knowledge about war and war experience, which insists that only those who have been to war know what it is

like and are qualified to comment on it” (2). So, what is it about dogs themselves that suggest we could ever *simply* talk about these things? In other words, what kind of story is Frankel telling about humans, canines, and war? More complexly, what stories need to be in place before these creatures, about whom we might “merely talk,” can be seen to enable a view into “things as they really are”? To work towards an answer to these questions requires attention to the different ways life, be it canine, human, or something else entirely, is shaped by and mobilized towards what we take to be, or are given to be, the way things *really are*, especially during times of war.

Such work means attending to the biopolitics of such figurings, or the way power differently positions lives and normalizes certain realities, and to consider what regimes of meaning and interpretation need to be in place to sustain this positioning. Biopolitics, in its earliest iteration, tells a story of power as a direct function of the management of life, or the power to “*foster* life,” as Michel Foucault describes, and an indirect function of the disallowal of life to the point of indifferent death. This formulation of power is a transition, Foucault notes, from the previous form of power as tied directly to a sovereign’s “right to *take* life or *let* live” (“History” 138). As the story has shifted and biopolitical theory has evolved, however, disallowal of life is now understood to be inadequate to understanding the full scope of the exercise of power, and taking life (both in the forms of killing and murdering) has indeed once again become central to understanding power’s operation. No longer can it be claimed that, as Foucault once suggested, “[p]ower

literally ignores death” (“Society” 48), but rather, as Patricia Lopez and Katheryn Gillespie argue, death is in fact a technology of power (8). Achille Mbembe articulates something similar: “To exercise sovereignty is to exercise control of mortality and to define life as the deployment and manifestation of power” (12), or as he says elsewhere, that it is the “power and the capacity to dictate who may live and who must die” (152). This is, as Neel Ahuja names it, a “dialectics of biopower and necropower together” that recognizes that “violences including torture are deeply linked to life-optimizing processes elsewhere in a biopolitical formation” (143).

Where might this be more evident than in the context of war, where the insistence on the distinction between life and death operate at its very premise, and where war’s purpose, according to Elaine Scarry, is an effort to “to out-injure the other side” (90), thereby determining a winner? Where might this political marriage of life and death be more true than in the context of war, which, “like the slaughterhouse, is an especially telling case of biopower and biopolitics because it is so dramatic a method of organizing life, and of intensifying the stakes of power” (“Animals and War” 14)? How much more complex does this question of sovereignty and its limits become when we consider the life of nonhuman animals, such as the dogs that “serve” in combat?

While the stories of power Foucault told never seriously turned toward consideration of nonhuman species and biopolitics, numerous scholars have since engaged his work in provocative ways to reveal the central position of

nonhuman life, both literally and figuratively, within biopolitical processes and subjectivities. In her examination of the historical development of American identity, Colleen Glenney Boggs highlights this tension between the human and the nonhuman, beginning with a careful reading of a moment where, shortly after being elected to office, President Obama introduced the family dog, Bo, to the White House press corps. By reflecting on the juxtaposition of the everydayness of family and dog with the ostensible leader of the free world, Boggs shows how “forms of power as seemingly disparate as state authority and familial intimacy get conjoined and worked out via animal representations” (2). She asks: “What is the cultural and political work of animal representations” (3)? Or, in the parlance of biopolitics, how do representations of nonhuman animals sustain or disrupt particular orders of power? What stories do they call into being and thereby render real? Nicole Shukin pursues similar questions by considering the way “animal signs” figure into projects of national identity and nationalism more generally. She states that

[w]hat makes animal signs unusually potent discursive alibis of power is not only that particularist political ideologies, by ventriloquizing them, appear to speak from the universal and disinterested place of nature. It is also that ‘the animal,’ arguably more than any other signifier by virtue of its singular mimetic capaciousness ... functions as a hinge allowing powerful discourses to flip or vacillate between literal and figurative economies of sense. (“Animal Capital” 5)

In each instance, nonhuman animals, both material and figurative, are recognized as tightly bound up with, even fundamental to, systems of power and identity formation. With this in mind, Frankel’s claims about the connective and revelatory

force of war dogs becomes suspect. What indeed is meant by “the way things really are”? Presumably this is intended as a comment upon the unexpected and nearly incomprehensible realities of war suddenly rendered more accessible, but is it not also accidentally a comment on the status of canine lives in relation to the human lives on the battlefield, about the ways in which exposure to death is distributed unevenly across species lines? In itself, it is a story, a small but exemplary story, ostensibly about the nature of war, but is perhaps more meaningfully about the human-canine relationship. Boggs suggest that by “examining specific representations of animals, abjected as beasts and sentimentalized as pets, [her own] work tests the boundaries of who or what can count as an ‘other’ that we feel ‘for’ and what forms such ‘feeling’ takes in the context of a particular history of subject formation” (6). This project aims for such boundary-testing, but through the lens of understanding boundaries as formations created through stories about dogs, humans, and war.

With these formations in mind, I unfold the narrative arc of this chapter in three stages. First, I offer an intervention into theories of ontologies of war to frame the story of war as fundamentally dependent on another story, that of the Eurowestern understanding of the human. War, at least as far as it is waged by Western states in recent decades, is so often made possible with recourse to the human. For example, the Iraq Resolution, which was the joint resolution passed by the United States Congress in 2002 to authorize the use of force against Iraq, while heavily focused on justifying entering into war with Iraq through claims of

the latter's alleged development of weapons of mass destruction, also cited the need to "remove from power the current Iraqi regime and promote the emergence of a democratic government to replace that regime" and the need to intervene in the "brutal repression" of Iraq's "civilian population" ("Public Law"). In both of these instances, the liberal humanist notion of freedom, of humans having the right to particular freedoms, underpins the justification for the use of force. And yet, in the course of the war in Iraq, the Iraq Body Count project estimates that between 184,089 – 206,793 civilian deaths occurred as of October, 2019 ("Iraq Body Count" n. pag.), thus pointing to a reality in which fighting war to secure the freedom of humans is highly problematic given the degree to which humans, and especially civilians who are meant to be the liberatory subjects of war, are given no choice and are made to unfreely die in this process. In other words, the reliance on the human to justify war is undone by the casualties that war generates, casualties—*people*—who are dehumanized as nothing more than collateral damage, as Judith Butler so rightly critiques (xxii). It is this very dehumanization, I argue, that calls into question not just the logic of Western conflict, but that which resides at its centre, i.e., the figure of the human.

A consequence of war's undoing of the human (and its own justifications) is that for states to continue to wage war such that they might prevent popular resistance to these activities, there needs to be counter-narratives that recover the story of the human during war. The second intervention I make is to show how militarization is an especially potent form of storytelling that functions to

reinvigorate and sustain the story of the human. Militarization, I argue, acts counterintuitively as a buffer against the story that lies at the heart of war: that it is possible, even probable, that there is no such thing as the human, and waging war in the name of the human will always be a process of contradictory self-negation. To deepen this analysis, in my final intervention I examine the case of war dogs to show how dogs and dog stories are instrumentalized in the recreation of the story of humans *as such*, an argument that is very much in keeping with the critique offered by Jacques Derrida that Western philosophy has long instrumentalized animals and animality as a foil for “what is proper to man” (“The Animal” 14), or what Kelly Oliver calls “animal pedagogy,” as the historical and philosophical reliance on nonhumans for our conceptualization of humanity (“Animal Lessons” 13).

1.2 Ontologies of War

This story, for the sake of a beginning, begins with what Etienne Balibar calls philosophy’s “principal object,” which is to say that we must ask a strange question: what is war (367)? Recent work by Tarak Barkawi and Shane Brighton centres this question and insists on theorizing war as irreducible to an objective or process caught up with, or shot through other aspects of society, history, or critique, to instead see it as a specific object of analysis in itself. They argue that when studied as a function of other fields, “what war consists of is taken for granted, usually as the clash of arms,” and consequently is usually “addressed only in and through the terms of a discipline or scholarly project principally

devoted to some other subject” (128). In response to this critical lacuna, they call for a focus on “the ontology of war and its relationship to knowledge about war,” or “those elements of war that shape it as a knowledge problem, which are determinate for the epistemology of war.” In other words, they seek “to say something fundamental about what war is, and about the challenges of knowing about it, and how the two are importantly linked” (134). This fundamental thing, for them, finds shape through Carl von Clausewitz’s theorizing of war as fighting. They argue that “war is defined by fighting or its immanent possibility and—as an historical, existential, issue in the lives of those who seek to understand it—this definitive element resists disinterested analysis, while tending to instrumentalize knowledge about war” (135). For Barkawi and Brighton, then, the ontology of war is inseparable from war epistemology, such that, in a riff on Foucault’s *Power/Knowledge*, it makes most sense to think of war as War/Truth. Citing Emmanuel Levinas, they note that there can be no rational comprehension of politics, no political calculation at all without understanding how “in advance [war’s] shadow falls over the actions of men” (qtd. in Barkway and Brighton 136). As such, the ontology of war-as-fighting operates on two levels: first, “it drives the intellectual instrumentality of truth about—and in—war, through its historicity and immediacy. But second, it also exceeds the terms of that immediacy,” as an excess, or “the capacity of organized violence to be more than kinetic exchange, to be constitutive and generative” (136). In other words, the “ontological structure and the ontological status of war as an event centre on the undoing of certitudes

and ... in the generation of new ones. War consumes, reworks, and produces truths” (139). As Mary Favret observes, this is the simultaneous destructive and creative force of war, a force that both wrecks and produces culture (“Introduction”).

Plainly, War/Truth fits precisely within Foucault’s framing of truth as “a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements” (“Power/Knowledge” 133). He elaborates, “‘Truth’ is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it” (133). In Barkawi and Brighton’s ontology, the system of power in which truth circulates and in turn reinforces is war itself. War/Truth, they argue, “is creative, less a product of the generative powers of war, it is a primary site for their realization. To function, War/Truth requires the production and imposition of retrospective certitudes on the contingencies of war” (140). Similarly, Balibar asserts that “a war is, perhaps more than any other event, a situation which does not allow us the possibility of being neutral (or rather, with respect to which “neutrality” itself is a judgment and a position)” (366).

While War/Truth, as Barkawi and Brighton mobilize it is useful for its centering of knowledge, as an ontological concept it is constrained by its foundational over-reliance on Clausewitz’s argument that fighting is the definitive characteristic of war. As Astrid H.M. Nordin and Dan Öberg point out, under this framework, war is necessarily always characterized by *someone*, an opponent,

for fighting without an opposition is not fighting. Yet by bringing Judith Butler's suggestion to "think of ontology as a normative injunction" to bear upon Jean Baudrillard's notion of war as the processing of warfare rather than conflict between enemies. Per their reading, various "recent conceptual interventions in military thought" seek to "perfect" the operations of war, "in which all means and capabilities are interconnected in ways that aim to create a seamless economy of violence. This in turn indicates that the subject of warfare dissolves into operationalised repetition" (400). The repetition, ie., the processing of war, becomes war itself and thus they show that there are times when an ontology of war does not rely on an enemy, and insisting upon an antagonist has us read war in a normative register (398). For them, not only does turning to Butler here enable a complication of war's ontologies, it calls us to consider how exactly to understand normativization more generally. What does normativity (ontological and otherwise) do? How does it work? Here I want to suggest that key to the function of normativity is a constraining form of storytelling, i.e., that normativity works by insisting upon and reinforcing particular narratives, particular stories, and by circumventing the imagining of alternate narratives or possibilities. Important to Nordin and Öberg's view on war's ontology, though, is that they don't wholesale deny an ontology of war-as-fighting, but rather they argue "that we benefit from thinking war through the notion of plural 'ontologies' as it keeps open the question of what underlying principles relate to war and warfare" (398). This is to further complicate where, when, and how we understand war to be.

Indeed, the plurality of war's ontologies expands when we examine the impact of various nonhuman actors on military outcomes and processes, as Caroline Holmqvist does with her work on drones. Through the drone, and the human drone operator, she outlines the complex relationships between technology and experience, and the discursive and the material in war, showing that materiality and bodily experience are highly entwined, and that agency in war must be understood as located outside the exclusive purview of the human. Nevertheless, for Holmqvist, the ontology of war always comes back to the ontology of the human in a way that seems to elide the relational aspects of ontology itself; as she says the "ontological assumptions we make about what it means to be human are at the core of all political and ethical positions and interventions—without them we are lost" (552), which I take to indicate a re-centering of the human's experience and embodiment as marker of politics and ethics.

Jairus Grove pursues a related analysis with a new materialist genealogy of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) to show that war isn't strictly a process managed by humans, but is also significantly impacted by the agency and activity of IEDs, which he says aren't things but a "condition of possibility present in almost all of contemporary life" and are the "weaponization of the throbbing refuse, commerce, surplus, violence, rage, instant communication, population density, and accelerating innovation of contemporary global life" (336). In effect, both analyses de-centre the human as the sole driver of war by showing how

objects (drones, screens, IEDs) refigure warfare as relational processes that include nonhuman actors, and thus call into question the strict categories alive/not alive, subject/object, and those that act compared to those that are acted upon. Moreover, when we account for nonhuman agency within the processes of war, what figures as knowledge and knowing shifts as things like pressure-plates and algorithms produce a kind of knowledgeable response on behalf of the devices they connect with and mobilize. This is also true of war dogs, whose significantly higher degree of scent perception (an especially canine kind of knowledge) is what allows them to detect IEDs where human perception fails. What all of these ontological articulations point to is a mechanism of war hitherto unidentified, especially in ahistorical theories of war: while war's ontologies may indeed be all or any of these things—ontologies of fighting, processing, or posthumanist ontologies—they each reflect a potentially catastrophic upset to a particular hegemony of power, i.e., the human. In other words, what all of these varied ontologies of war share is rooted in what war today *does*, which is that it radically and violently disrupts normative ontology itself, where normative ontology finds purchase in the figure of the human. To be clear, this is the operation and effects of war not on people, places, and things who do not necessarily subscribe to liberal humanist notions of what the human is, but rather these effects apply to those that do share that view, namely the Eurowestern states and the citizenries of the Global North.

What does it mean to disrupt the figure of the human in these contexts? What is upended in this process? The “human” is first and foremost a legacy of the Enlightenment, what Cary Wolfe describes as the “Cartesian subject of the cogito, the Kantian ‘community of reasonable beings,’ or, in more sociological terms, the subject as citizen, rights-holder, property-owner, and so on” (Wolfe qtd. in Braidotti 1). Braidotti builds upon this definition when she states:

At the start of it all there is He: the classical ideal of ‘Man’, formulated first by Protagoras as ‘the measure of all things’, later renewed in the Italian Renaissance as a universal model... An ideal of bodily perfection which... doubles up as a set of mental, discursive and spiritual values. Together they uphold a specific view of what is ‘human’ about humanity. Moreover, they assert with unshakable certainty of the almost boundless capacity of humans to pursue their individual and collective perfectibility. (13)

From Greek thought onward, the Western image of the human has, for the most part, been typified by the white male body which condenses “a doctrine that combines the biological, discursive and moral expansion of human capabilities into an idea of teleologically ordained, rational progress” (13). At the core of this ideological evolution of man is his “intrinsically moral powers of human reason” (13), powers which are especially legible through the special status of man’s capacity for speech. Indeed, both Aristotle and Descartes, whose influences remain deeply felt in humanistic discourses today, both emphasize the capacity for speech as uniquely human, as a defining mark of reason itself, and as the qualifying characteristic of the subject and political citizen. Here, the subject and subjectivity are

equated with consciousness, universal rationality, and self-regulating ethical behavior, whereas Otherness is defined as its negative and specular counterpart. In so far as difference spells inferiority, it acquires both essentialist and lethal connotations for people who get branded as 'others.' They are the sexualized, racialized, and naturalized others, who are reduced to the less than human status of disposable bodies. (15)

The human's others, according to this paradigm, lack the capacity for reason and speech, and as non-subjects, occupy a socio-political underclass (when they can be said to occupy anything at all). In this regard, the human acts as a "normative convention," that is "highly regulatory and hence instrumental to practices of exclusion and discrimination" (26).

When war disrupts these conventions, the justifications for war itself become tenuous. We see this in the way that today's wars fought by the West disrupt narratives that distribute species difference according to normative historico-cultural hierarchies that always situate the human (or at least some variation of the human) at the top, such as when dogs are used to terrorize prisoners in Abu Ghraib, for example. In other words, the story of the human, what it means to be human, as normatively understood in the West, is undone by the ontological violence perpetrated in war. This perhaps seems counterintuitive, and that the reverse would be true, that war in fact reinforces ontological norms by dividing enemy from compatriot, killable from not. But such a position belies the chaos of war and reduces it to black and white morality, and as history shows, war is endlessly complicated by moral ambiguity. Understood thusly, war reveals then not only the contested (and contestable) nature of ontologies

(stories) of the human, but also the constructed nature of the epistemologies (how to read those stories) that arise out of and alongside this figure. This is to say that at every turn, the effects of war, one way or another, destabilize what we take to be human: the human soldier dehumanized by the trauma of killing and threat to life, the human prisoner dehumanized by torture practices enacted in state-operated prisons, the human enemy dehumanized as target, what counts as having human-like capacity in determining war's outcomes, and so on. Moreover, in destabilizing this figure of the human, war destabilizes what we take to be knowledge, tied as the human is to knowing, and war to the unknowable and unimaginable.

Both Holmqvist and Grove, as with Nordin and Öberg, and Barkawi and Brighton, emphasize the difficult knot of war and knowledge to consider, as Holmqvist puts it, "*how* war ought to be studied" (536, emphasis original). Thinking about war requires thinking about *how* we think about war, and more broadly still, how the figure of the human shapes the process of what we call thinking. Strikingly, even as both Holmqvist and Grove turn towards more expansive ontologies of war, neither moves far beyond the human and the machinic, an oversight which belies a certain humanism even as it destabilizes the centrality of human agency in war. This is especially curious given Grove's otherwise excellent work on the IED, which fails to attend to the main strategic role of the nonhuman in combatting IEDs, namely war dogs. Not once in his paper do dogs make an appearance, though the use of dogs in combat arguably

is, and continues to be, the most effective means to reduce IED-related casualties and fatalities (Frankel 113, 118), and as Grove remarks, IEDs themselves have “changed the course of two major wars” (333). Further yet, it is not as though there is a shortage of cultural material representing the lives of war dogs, making them obscure or difficult to notice. Moreover, as both Ritland and Frankel note, no machine technology has yet come close to providing the wide range of benefits and skills that dogs provide in field operations. Why might it be that dogs remain so overlooked in this critical scholarship? What forces are at play that counter war’s ontological disruption, i.e., war’s undoing of our normative stories about man, while simultaneously preventing recognition of the lives of these creatures? How might they be related? What I want to suggest here is that even in the most provocative theorizing of war’s ontologies, without excavating the stories that serve as the conceptual ground for the human, i.e., stories about species difference, critical war scholarship will remain inherently anthropocentric even as it aims to make space for other possibilities. Moreover, by focusing on dogs, the pervasive power of militarization as a story that upholds the figure of the human in the face of war’s destructiveness becomes more readily legible.

1.3 Militarization

But what exactly do I mean by militarization? Consider that we live in a time of “unconditional War on Terror” (“Security Bonds” 178). On its face, this latter claim isn’t anything but obvious: under the Trump presidency, for example, defense spending in the US has been approved at \$700 billion for 2018, and

\$716 billion for 2019. As a person born in the early 1980's, the US has been in one major war or another for almost half of my life, and involved in conflict of some sort throughout that time, and anyone born after 2001 has lived their entire life with the US engaged in major wars. As Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri argue, this is “the general condition” where, though “there may be a cessation of hostilities at times and in certain places... lethal violence is present as a constant potentiality, ready always and everywhere to erupt” (4). War, the apparent necessity of war, has become such a rote notion that it's difficult to think otherwise, to imagine a world without armed conflict, without the need for armed conflict, and without the need for massive standing armies and weapons stockpiles. While it may *feel* normal, even natural to live in this world, there is nothing inherently natural about it. The apparent inevitability and necessity of a world where “war is the organizing the principal” is the very effect of war itself given shape through militarization, and in turn, of living in and with a thoroughly militarized culture (Hardt and Negri 12).

Larry May and Emily Crookston point out that since “ancient Greek times, nearly every major philosopher has had something to say about war,” observing that the reasons for this likely have to do with the fact that “war tends to color every part of one's experience,” and that given the violence of war, its justification becomes an ethical imperative (1). In other words, they highlight a reality in which the presence of war cannot be ignored, must be explained, and made meaningful. But what about when it seems easy, even effortless, to ignore war?

For those of us not directly affiliated with the military or combat, war today doesn't *seem* to colour our every experience—rather it lies like a shadow in the background of the day to day, mostly unobtrusive, observed only in passing on our Twitter feeds or in brief flashes of catastrophic images on the evening news, images obscured amongst the cortisol-releasing chaos of all the other early 21st century environmental, social, and political catastrophes. Taken altogether it becomes a kind of white noise; it is perhaps no surprise then that fog as a trope has a history in the understanding of war, going most famously back to Clausewitz's description of the uncertainty of military operations where "three quarters of the factors on which action is based are wrapped in a fog of greater or lesser uncertainty" (101). For Clausewitz, the fog of war was meant in large part to describe the contingency of literal battles rather than some essential metaphor for understanding the nature of war (Kiesling 86). But in today's world of total war, the metaphor of fog arguably holds weight and extends beyond the boundaries of conventional warfare, with its sentiment captured well by what Favret calls "wartime," a condition felt by those who bear witness to war at a distance, not as soldiers or generals at arms, but as consumers of war's manifold representations. "Wartime" stands for the ways "war becomes part of the barely registered substance of our everyday, an experience inextricable from sitting at home on an evening, recalling absent friends, staring at a fire, gazing out a window" ("Introduction" n. pag.). She goes on: modern "wartime refers first to the experience of those living through, but not in a war" ("Introduction" n. pag.).

Perhaps more challenging still, are the ways in which today living through war apparently fought at a distance in fact appears in many respects to reflect an absence of war altogether, much as a fog obscures the landscape we would observe from that window. Indeed, the removed sense of war can at times make it feel as though we are living with peace, which as Foucault cannily observes, is in fact a kind of coding of an ongoing and perpetual war at the foundation of Western society (“Society” 50).

All this to say, war entirely visible as the general condition, in many respects, and from certain privileged vantage points, has disappeared. It has been made so banal as to become a part of everyday life, and this is entirely the objective of processes of militarization. Michael Mann defines militarism as a “set of attitudes and social practices which regards war and the preparation for war as a normal and desirable social activity” (35), and as Cynthia Enloe describes, when “any person—or institution or community—embraces militarism it is thus embracing particular value assertions about what is good, right, proper and about what is bad, wrong, improper” (219). Catherine Lutz complicates Mann’s definition to suggest that militarization is a “discursive process, involving a shift in general societal beliefs and values in ways necessary to legitimate the use of force, the organization of large standing armies and their leaders, and the higher taxes or tributes used to pay for them” (320). In other words, militarization, as a function of War/Truth, is not just a set of attitudes or social practices concerning war but is in fact the mobilization of thought and practice towards particular

ends— “a sociopolitical process” (Enloe 219), a shift, a verb rather than a noun. Dynamic, not static, a kind of story as bringing into being rather than story as object or thing, defined by a need to constantly accommodate itself to changing realities and resistance. This shift then biases our tendencies and assumptions about war and the need for war.

War/Truth, war as truth-making, war as instrumentalized knowledge of war, is managed through the iterative processes of militarization. In its discursive form, one of its mechanisms is in what Butler calls framing. “The frame,” as she explains, “does not simply exhibit reality, but actively participates in a strategy of containment, selectively producing and enforcing what will count as reality. It tries to do this, and its efforts are a powerful wager” (xiii). Thorough militarization contains, delimits, and shapes both the possibilities and impossibilities of a world without war—the “reality” of militarization is the concretized tautology in which war is always a possibility and thus always needs to be prepared for and guarded against. This tautology reflects the power of this story, and the wager is this: in this reality, there is no future without war. More: “war is a fact of life” as recent head of the unironically named Operation Inherent Resolve (the US military intervention against the Islamic State) Lt. Gen. Stephen Townsend said in late 2017 (Malsin n. pag.). And so, in a quick discursive slippage, life and war are framed as one and the same.

Beyond the work of equating life with war, militarization also effaces the violent and destructive consequences of war, where indiscriminate destruction is

reframed more palatably as simply aggression, for example. Discussing Trump's "total authorization" (Shane III n. pag.) of the US military's strength, Lt. Gen. Townsend stated that Trump's position "has freed us up a bit to prosecute the war in a more aggressive manner," only to go on to acknowledge that such aggression, as he puts it, costs civilian life (Malsin n. pag.). This is to say that when not effaced, the violence of war (deemed merely as aggression, or more positively, as a decisive show of force) is reframed around necessity. Another "fact of war," he says, is that "civilians are hurt and killed" before reminding us that the military, the US, doesn't "take any pleasure in that"—an easy recuperation of the grim, grim because unpleasurable, necessity of war (Malsin n. pag.). Such violence then, is nothing less than the cost of a particular and necessary kind of freedom, a fact of a certain kind of life, or the geopolitical order which Grove so keenly critiques. But unquestionably this violence is unjustifiable and untenable from the perspective of the "necessary war" discourse's own humanist standards. When has it ever been morally justified to kill civilians, as in the US drone bombing of the Syrian towns of Mansourah and Tabqa on July 1-4, 2017, in which 84 civilians, 30 of whom were children, were killed while either at a market or a school (Solvang n. pag.)? Regardless of the alleged presence of a handful of enemy combatants in these locations, under what logics could the specific targeting of civilian sites ever be seen as anything other than a war crime? Or how to justify the reported 9,000-10,000 civilians killed in Mosul, Iraq in 2017 during the fight with the Islamic State (IS) ("AP: Death toll in Mosul" n.

pag.)? More to my point, how thoroughly militarized, i.e., how deeply internalized does the project of war and the stories we tell about it have to be for a citizenry to not find such war crimes a total disavowal of what it means to be human?

1.4 The Role of Dogs in Militarization Stories

Understanding how we arrive as virtually passive observers of war crimes means deeply understanding War/Truth as the relationship between war and militarization of everyday life. If war, with its unattenuated capacity to undo normative ontologies, is perhaps the force of species disruption *par excellence*, it requires some mechanism to recuperate normalcy in order to sustain itself, which is exactly what militarization serves to do. Militarization, in this framework, is a story that reinforces species hierarchy and hierarchies of life and dictates the rules for the management of that hierarchy as the defense of war demands prioritizing certain lives, places, things, and ways of being, over others. With this in mind, we can begin to ask pointed questions about the civilian or public experience of war by considering the effects of militarization as a discursive process on our perception of war and the way it metes out death and of destruction. How exactly does militarization make it difficult to read representations of war in ways that challenge the normative narratives of war?

Since the Napoleonic wars, as numerous scholars have noted, the majority of Western civilization experiences war not as active participants, but as spectators and consumers of war stories, or what Favret describes as the

“experience of war mediated” (“Introduction” n. pag.). In other words, today, “there is no war, then, without representation, no sophisticated weaponry without psychological mystification” (Virilio 8). Sharon Sliwinski goes so far as to say that one “can no longer talk about war without talking about the presentation of war” (89). The connection today between war and representation is definitive. Warfare, in this sense, “heralds the militarization of discursive experience in general” (Mieszkowski 9) and defines our perceptual limits. War, “invades thought itself,” Favret notes, “threatening to become the very ground of thinking, understood in ways that make it—like the everyday—familiar and routine, easy to overlook” (“Introduction”). The fear and the danger for the thinker of and in such a deranged reality is, as Mieszkowski points out, that this thinking in turn is corrupted by the object of study, situated as it is within the now discursive field of warfare (18), a point driven home by the notion of War/Truth. In other words, in having militarization define our perceptual limits, i.e., what we deem possible, we become incapable of thinking toward something beyond war. And yet, this problematic is not irresolvable: “to challenge war in terms that are not entirely its own, we must conceive of ourselves as both less and more than onlookers to the greatest horror show on earth” (19). We must find a way to recall that what we know of war is less than the material reality of war, of the battlefield, and of the violence found there, and simultaneously, we have a responsibility to understand ourselves as more than just removed, passive receivers of given narratives of war. Butler similarly argues that our “responsibility to resist war depends in part

on how we resist” the conscription of war stories (xiv). This is to say that we must foreground the regimes of meaning and interpretive lenses we bring to bear upon our consumption of so-called war stories if we are to prevent the naturalization of such narratives. Doing this work requires attending to those narratives that do become so naturalized as to seem sacrosanct: for example, that certain lives are ultimately worth more or less in the context of combat. And this is where the forgotten war dog enters, jaunty step, head held high, friend to man.

Early in her text, Frankel reflects on the experience of stumbling across an image of U.S. Marines and their war dogs, stating that she was “struck by the unfamiliar sense of contentment radiating from [them]... These young men looked tranquil, happy; the dogs were all but grinning. It evoked a sweet pang of home, if a makeshift barracks in the middle of a war zone could be called home” (4). This viewing experience is recognizable to me. Take for example an image (e.g. see *fig. 1.1*) from a curated collection of war dog images in *The Atlantic Online*. Captured at Camp Leatherneck in Afghanistan, the image shows a soldier, Lance Cpl. Jeremy D. Angenend, looking at his dog Fito, who in turn stares into the camera. Lance Cpl. Angenend, with the hint of a smile on his face, has his arms around Fito, whose bright tongue lolls pleasantly from his mouth. Fito, we are told, “never has a bad day,” and that together they have fun (Taylor n. pag.). This dog, like the dogs Frankel describes, is all but grinning. As a lover of dogs, my response is one of immediate affection and a deep sense of familiarity with everything from the meaning of a dog’s tongue displayed thusly

(often a product of an exuberant romp), to the feel of a large dog's chest and shoulders between my arms. My experience with other dogs, and with viewing images of myself together with dogs, interpolates the above photo. It almost can't be helped; the intimacy I've shared with canine friends is always with me, always a series of embodied memories recalled instantaneously, even prior to any



Fig. 1.1 USMC/Sgt. Megan Sindelar. Photograph of Lance Cpl. Jeremy D. Angenend and Fito at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan. Alan Taylor. Image 4. "Afghanistan: Dogs of War." The Atlantic, 3 June 2014.
<https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2014/06/afghanistan-dogs-of-war/100750/>

thinking about what the picture is showing me. Moreover, I now assume something about Lnc. Cpl. Angenend—that he loves a dog, and that a *dog loves him*. Fito acts as a kind of character reference. Much like Bo with President Obama, reflected in such images is the marriage of extreme power to the

pleasures of familial or domestic power. It is in this marriage, one we feel first, I want to suggest, that we come to accept a particular version of the way things really are, and that the figure of the dog, at the centre of these two forms of power, inhibits our capacity to see beyond the normalization of such narratives towards more complex operations of power. This is to say that dogs, to draw on Shukin, have “material and metaphorical currency,” and that this currency, in the context of the above photo, comes at the cost of both species, human and canine, becoming militarized (“Animal Capital” 5). In all of this, the background of a military camp in a war zone nearly disappears as the dog, and the emotional response the dog elicits become central to the viewing experience, and in doing so, act as a discursive alibi for the excessive power of the U.S. Military. The fact that Fito acts as the tip of the spear, as Navy SEAL and war dog trainer Mike Ritland describes the role of MWDs, and is therefore potentially first to be subject to a violent and untimely death, also disappears (178). In other words, because of our sense of what dogs are to us, we lose sight of the context, at least initially, and when the context reemerges it is coloured by our immediate feelings for the dogs themselves. Boggs argues that representations of nonhumans mark a “complex site where the construction of subjectivity occurs by affective means and pedagogical methods that hinge on the literal relationship to animals and on their figurative representation” (2). In the case of war dog representations, our affective relationship to literal dogs becomes the pedagogical method itself, in which our feelings for dogs teach us how to feel about the images, and by

extension, war and war's participants. In this respect, representations of war dogs tell us something about militarization: that it is deeply anthropocentric in the first place. It seems obvious to say so and yet the image of Fito with his happy companion, and the narrative proposed by Frankel, belie this reality.

1.5 What is a Dog?

But what is it about dogs that they don't just enable a viewer to take for granted the meaning of such images, but even insist that they be read in these overdetermined ways? In other words, what is it about dogs that make it difficult to think such images otherwise? By what means do they work upon us in the name of militarization? If we want to know what war dogs "do," so to speak, we must understand as best as possible, what they "are." This is to say that how we read and engage representations of war dogs is a function of our broader relationship to dogs in the present historical moment in North America. In recent years a small, but growing, and theoretically rich body of scholarly work—"dog writing"—has pursued this question, even though dogs might be deemed to be so unexceptional as to be seen almost as unworthy of research ("Companion Species" 3). As Alice Kuzniar points out in her moving text *Melancholia's Dog*, there is a presupposition that the study of dogs carries with it an air of the trivial, and is perhaps "unfit for serious scholarly investigation" (1)—if Derrida can find fascination and intellectual challenge with his very real pussycat, the same cannot be said for those of us and our very real dogs ("The Animal" 4). Indeed, dogs may be seen as iconic, as Philip Howell notes, but they are also taken to be

“mundane and in many ways beneath notice” (11). In other words, the study of dogs is perhaps better left to the many volumes of lay literature on the subject, which a quick scan of titles reveals no shortage: from texts on how to train or breed dogs (Monks of New Skete 2011), to texts on the importance of dogs in our lives today (Frydenborg 2017; Grogan 2009; McConnell 2009) and the specifics of dog subjectivity (Horowitz 2009), to the more specialized works such as Susan Orlean’s cultural history and biography of famous film dog Rin Tin Tin, to Frankel’s work and the proliferation in recent years of related volumes on dogs in war zones (Goldsmith 2017; Montalvan 2011; Rogak 2011), the catalogue proliferates. If dogs were once perceived to be so banal as to be uninteresting to serious scholarship, the appetite for canine literature in broader culture has in recent years seen an explosion (Huff 128). This difference in attitudes between lay and scholarly thinking is perhaps best explained as a symptom of a critical myopia in which our dense proximity to dogs reduces our curiosity about them to being frivolous rather than being a concern with the broader social and historical factors that sustain our intimacy with these objectively strange creatures. And yet there is no denying the popular appeal of books about dogs, many of which land on prestigious bestseller lists, such as both Horowitz’s (2009) and Warren’s (2013) books on canine perception (“Best sellers: Animals n. pag.”). But what is it that we hunger for when we wish to learn more about dogs? Are we interested in ourselves, our relationships with canines, in understanding what dogs themselves actually are? Yet the question, a call back to Balibar—what is a dog?—seems

absurd. Asking about the nature of war is a question for the ages, but asking about the nature of dogs is something else entirely. Isn't it an obvious thing, what dogs are? The ordinariness of our four-legged companions, here at our feet, or out in the field or the street, walking amiably at our side, the pleasurable everydayness of our interactions with them. They are our family, our best friends, our reliable mates in life and labour. But it is this familiarity that suggests a more difficult possibility, the possibility that embedded as dogs are in our lives, and we in theirs, we have no idea what it is they actually desire, what they are capable of, what matters to them, or even if wondering what matters to them is something relevant to their way of being in the world. What is a dog?

The very "fact" of dog as a species remains in question. While many believe dogs to be undeniably descended from wolves, as Raymond and Lorna Coppinger's research on street dogs attests to, the evolution is not so plainly clear. Dogs, Alan Beck notes, are an "animal that entered the world at different times and probably from different routes and now lives in many ecological niches, both human developed and wild and natural" ("Preface" n. pag.), thus suggesting the complexity of their surprisingly mysterious history (and more broadly the complexity of evolutionary history itself). Turning to archeological science offers no concrete answers as the data is itself in wide disagreement: "[r]ecent scientific papers have concluded that the divergence [of dogs from wolves] occurred 130,000 years ago or 30,000 years ago or 15,000 years ago" ("What is a Dog?" n. pag.). This scientific uncertainty is in keeping with the cultural uncertainty of

what Philip Howell calls “the dog question” (2), as it was framed in the nineteenth century. As Howell argues in his critical history of the rise of the domestic dog in Britain, “it was only in the nineteenth century that the dog began to be ‘domesticated’ in this modern sense [as a creature of the home], and only ever incompletely, provisionally, or perhaps better still, proleptically” (11). This prolepsis continues today in any reductive assumption that we actually know what a dog is, that they are indeed static, knowable things, something or someone self-evidently found, say, at the end of a leash or the foot of the bed. Which is all to say that what we take to be a dog is historically contingent and entirely relational, much as the human is, or ought to be. (And perhaps more to the point, what becomes clear through this confusion is the constructed nature of species-category itself.) This human-canine relationality is, as Donna Haraway notes, a reciprocal form of companionship between the fluctuating categories of human and nonhuman. She reminds us:

There cannot be just one companion species; there have to be at least two to make one. It is in the syntax; it is in the flesh. Dogs are about the inescapable, contradictory story of relationships—co-constitutive relationships in which none of the partners pre-exist the relating, and the relating is never done once and for all. (“Companion Species” 12)

At the heart of her thinking, and of much dog writing, is acknowledgment of the ways in which subjectivity shapes and is shaped by its others, or as Wadiwel observes, that subjectivity is about the ways humans and animals interact and share space, and out of these interactions negotiate their ethical relationships (“The War” 205). Dogs are uniquely situated for us to think through these ethical

relationships given our long history of intimacy with them, but especially as the role has come to be more closely associated with the domestic. Howell's work calls attention to this history, particularly during its changing status in the Victorian era, in which dogs—how we know them, what we know them to be—are understood as an ongoing question, a question that acknowledges the “invented” nature of dogs themselves (3). He notes that this invention was “at the same time a material and imagined geography of domestication” (3). Rosemary Marangoly George suggests that the domestic functions as “a regulative norm that continually refigures families, homes, and belonging” (90). Central to this particular conception of home are ideals of what being middle-class looks like in a post-Enlightenment world both curious about, and more detached from nature than ever before (Power “Domestication” 373). This is to say, as Emma Power remarks, that middle-class “moralities of home are a key organizing principle” in the relationships between dogs and human (373), or, the “home is more than a back-drop for these relations, but is a key space through which they are negotiated” (“Furry Families” 538). In this vein, the home, and domestication as a literal bringing into the home, as Howell notes about the Victorians and their dogs, operate as technologies of power that inscribe particular structures of power (e.g., master and pet) while disciplining bodies in set ways. In other words, where dogs are concerned this regulatory norm is reflected in the degree to which the dog fits into the norms of the household, and subsequently marks the household as properly domestic. Consequently, these same processes act as

signifiers themselves of what the domestic ought to look like: in the context of the home, “a disciplined dog is part of the performance of respectable middle-class identities” and “dogs are produced as ‘domestic’ bodies” where “domestication is an ongoing relation that takes place through rather than simply around canine bodies” (Power “Domestication” 371). In re-imagining specific material canine bodies, we create family and home, while we humans also become domesticated, or as Peter Sloterdijk succinctly puts it: “With domesticity the relationship between men and animals changed. With the taming of men by their houses the age of pets began as well” (Sloterdijk qtd. in Howell 10).

But this taming and domestication isn’t static. Ideals of home are fluid and contestable, as home is “both material and imaginative *and* a set of meanings/emotions” (Blunt and Dowling 22). Home is both the domestic space we occupy, the beings we share it with, and also how that space and those beings make us feel. It is an ongoing story about how and where we live, and with whom. Howell recalls the influential ideas of Gaston Bachelard and Witold Rybczynski when he suggests that home “conjures up feelings of comfort, privacy, intimacy, security, and belonging, these being associated with families and familiarity” (13). As dogs become associated with the home, they become simultaneously familiar and familial. This is perhaps even more true today than in the nineteenth century, given widespread pet-keeping across post-industrial contexts. H.J. Nast notes, since the 1990s, a shift in the positions of dogs in these areas “from considering pets (especially dogs) as a species apart, to a

reconsideration of pets (especially dogs) as profoundly appropriate objects of human affection and love” (894). Such a shift is reflected in how people identify their dogs (and pets) and further reinscribes their central position within the domestic: “88 percent of pet owners in Australia (Franklin 2006), 83 percent in Canada (Ipsos-Reid 2001) and 49 per cent in the USA (American Veterinary Medical Association 2007) describe their pets” as family (Power “Furry Families” 536). It is unsurprising then that handlers of MWDs refer to themselves as a dog’s “mom” or “dad” (Frankel 57)—language echoed by the handlers in the Animal Planet documentary *Glory Hounds*—even as handlers insist upon the distinction between pets and working dogs (Frankel 54). For the purposes of militarization, what’s especially potent about dogs though is that as they have come to be thoroughly associated with the home, that association hasn’t remained localized to literal home spaces. Dogs as figures of the home are mobile, thereby making it possible to see something of the home in images of soldiers and dogs in active combat zones that have little else to say about the domestic. As figures of the home then, the story of war is re-imagined with their presence, and emotions of home—comfort, intimacy, security, etc.—help determine a civilian’s feeling of war as something more familiar, less alien, less threatening, thereby shifting our perception of and relationship to war itself. The domestic anchor is the mechanism by which dogs are made to serve as a militarizing force, a force that connects war to home in a move that would stabilize the ontological disturbances war inherently creates.

What's also significant here in the domesticating stories perpetuated by militarization is that representations of dogs not only serve to domesticate war (i.e., bring home to the warfront), but they also bring war *into* the home in a way that seemingly renders war docile by effacing the violence perpetuated in armed conflict, and through associating war with the pleasures of home and family. The below image (e.g. see *fig. 1.2*) typifies this process, with a representation of a



Fig. 1.2. Adam Ferguson. Photograph of Kimberley with her new family in Texas. Michael Paterniti. "The Dogs of War." National Geographic, June 2014. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/2014/06/dogs-war-soldiers-military-afghanistan/>

familiar domestic scene: in the fenced backyard of an off-white rancher-style home three young girls, all dressed alike in pink plaid, amuse themselves in the activities of children. The shot is composed such that the two older girls (both of

whom appear to be four or five years old), are on either edge of the photo, with the youngest, a toddler, crawling away from the viewer in the foreground. Positioned like this they form a triangle for the viewer's gaze, one punctuated by the presence of a large orangey-brown dog, Kimberley, whose pink tongue dangles from her mouth. Although none of the four figures are interacting directly, taken together, dog and all, they are readily recognizable as part of a whole that makes up a quintessential family in a typical North American home setting. And yet that typicality belies something much stranger about the image. Although the dog appears as unremarkable as any dog one might see on the street, she is actually a retired MWD, one of those highly weaponized dogs that participates in combat operations in places like Afghanistan and Iraq. On the one hand, what we observe is an interspecies family enjoying the pleasures of their backyard together, and on the other we have a remnant of war, an MWD—at once reducible to a weapon, a tool of combat, and somehow simultaneously a family pet⁴—amidst the highly feminized and normative domestic space of the yard. What's more, the publication venue of the image itself is a significant site of domestic pedagogy, located as it is in the cover story on war dogs in a 2017 issue of *National Geographic*, which is perhaps the preeminent site of what Tamar Y. Rothenberg calls “popular geography” (234).

⁴ In the parlance of biopolitics, Ryan Hediger calls this transitory positioning of MWDs “category mobility,” which once again underscores the fallibility of biopolitical processes that attempt to stabilize subjects in particular and narrow ways, and raises the question of what stories are being disrupted or reified, and what power is being exercised and by whom, when those stabilizations fail (or are made to fail) (“Dogs of War”).

As a platform for popular education, *National Geographic*, originating in 1888, has a long history of involvement in the domestic; in their cultural history of the magazine, Catherine Lutz and Jane Collins discuss the pervasiveness of the yellow-framed journal, the wonder associated with the arrival of each issue into their childhood homes (xi), and how for its many readers (and now, viewers),⁵ it has been a force that has influenced a Western view of the world that separates the West from the Other. While the work of Lutz and Collins focuses on how the magazine shaped (and arguably continues to shape) perceptions of the exoticized other, the concomitant implications of such processes are that the reader becomes naturalized as the norm, all while within the context of the domestic space. Understanding the above image means considering the difference between how we are being asked to understand it by its context, i.e., a long history of pedagogical journalism occurring primarily in the space of the home, and what it's actually doing, how it's actually working upon us. It means taking up the dog question in a way that centres the life of the dog, Kimberley—no doubt something like Kimmy, Kims, or Kimberbear to her family—a life always in relation to the lives (human and otherwise) around them, a life embedded in and shaping the domestic, a life perhaps produced in the name of war—but always in surplus, in excess of war's mandate—and the militarizing stories surrounding it.

⁵ In 2014 *National Geographic* magazine had a global circulation of 6.7 million and *National Geographic Channel* was available in 437 million households globally that same year (Farhi n. pag.).

1.6 Conclusion

The risks inherent to the uncritical circulation of representations of MWDs are manifold, given their service as tools of militarization. Laura Wexler, writing about the use of domestic photographs in 19th century U.S. imperialist wars, argues that “[f]ar from merely recording a world already made,” such images “helped to promulgate the violent disjunctions that supported the late-nineteenth-century, U.S. imperial construct” (7). Indeed, then, as now, she notes that “[u]nder certain conditions of political domination, ordinary-looking family photographs can be highly manipulative weapons” (3), and that, echoing the likes of Butler, Mieskowski, Virilio, and Sliwinski, our “very eyesight has been pressed into service as a mode of social control” (5). While images of war dogs are not necessarily ordinary looking in the same respect as the domestic photographs Wexler examines, the relationship between dogs and domesticity is clear, and thus work in a similar fashion to make images of war seem ordinary. This is to say that the particular danger embedded in war dog representations is exactly the thing that Frankel articulates, that somehow by virtue of our knowledge of dogs, we somehow know what it means to be in war, even in the face of “an oft-repeated ‘ineffable’ and ‘unknowable’ quality to embodied war experiences which makes communicating them seem like ‘a complex, grueling, and sometimes even quasi-mystical endeavour’ (Dyvik 2016a, 57)” (Caddick 2). There is, in other words, a familiarizing and domesticating effect on war that takes place through these images, an effect which seems to make war far less threatening, and far

more comprehensible. Wexler states that working with historical domestic photographs grounded in U.S. imperialism “has taught [her], most fundamentally, that if we do not interfere with certain of the stories about gender, race, and nation that the repertoire of nineteenth-century family photography still evokes, their destructive aspect will continue on unchecked” (Wexler 8). The same can be said about interfering with the stories about species, and in particular humans and dogs, evoked by contemporary representations of war dogs. If we permit such stories to circulate unchecked, our capacity to resist war will be fundamentally weakened by a profound and—for far too many— comforting anthropocentrism.

Chapter II: The Racist Dogs of War

2.1 Race in Critical and Human-Animal Studies



(Fig. 2.1. AP Photo/Lefteris Pitarakis. A German soldier's dog bites at the sleeve of an Afghan man outside a stadium in Kabul on February 15, 2002. Alan Taylor. Image 9. "Afghanistan: Dogs of War." *The Atlantic*, 3 June 2014. <https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2014/06/afghanistan-dogs-of-war/100750>

In the above image (e.g. see fig. 2.1), taken from a photo collection from *The Atlantic Online*, a white German soldier attempts to restrain a military working dog as they bite and aggressively pull at the sleeve of a distressed and recoiling Afghan man. Shot at a football game in Kabul on February 15, 2002, the

image captures the chaos outside the stadium, where crowds of people sought to get into the event though it had already reached capacity. It also captures and reflects back a long history of the weaponization of canine life by white people against racialized people, a history replete with a kind of cruelty that simultaneously transcends and reinforces species divides. In my previous chapter, I examined the ways in which the salutary effects of association with canine life serves the ends of militarization through a kind of re-enchantment of war as a field of domestic pleasure, and which I pursue further in the fourth chapter through the analytic of a militarized aesthetics of care. In this section I examine how dogs are conscripted to processes of whiteness and racialization in a way that serves the narratives of militarization, while recognizing that militarization doesn't just refer to the military, but also to militarized security forces in settler colonial states, and that at its worst celebrates obscene forms of cruelty, and at its most banal, renders this cruelty illegible at multiple sites of difference. This also builds on my earlier references to the weaponization of dogs used specifically in the service of structures of white supremacy (e.g. the military) against racialized people, such as in the case of inmates in Abu Ghraib, as well as the dogs used by the Spanish colonial invaders against the Taino people, which I noted briefly in my introduction.

The legacy of this latter example, much like the historical example of the use of dogs in controlling enslaved people in the United States, continues to unfold today: in 2015, guard dogs were weaponized against Indigenous

protesters at Standing Rock, and it is well known that police dogs remain used in excess in the violent police management of Black people. Central in both instances, and instances like these, is that the lives and bodies of dogs are inseparable with systems of violent constraint and control that target both Black and Indigenous people, as well as and nonhuman animals. But this nexus of nonhuman and human life often serves to reinforce certain forms of anthropocentrism, given that the marginalization and oppression of nonhuman lives is often deprioritized as less urgent, or remains under-thought in light of the not insignificant marginalization and oppression of racialized humans. And it's perhaps a legitimate question to ask why one should care about the dogs in such circumstances, when racialized people, Black and Indigenous especially, are being violently dehumanized to the point of disposability and premature death. It is a question that I work to answer again and again throughout this dissertation, one which needs to be continuously accounted for lest the death and suffering of anyone becomes trivialized or tokenized. And this question is especially pointed given that historically, the overlapping fields of critical animal studies (CAS), with its heavy focus on animal liberation or abolition, and human-animal studies (HAS) with its more critical and cultural theoretical orientation, have received justified criticism for their lack of serious attention to the questions of race and colonization, and even for pushing a view that focus on racial inequality is somehow less salient or less urgent than focus on nonhuman oppression.

From the perspective of Black feminism, Alexander Weheliye, for example, takes targeted issue with analysis that compares the oppression of human slaves to animal slaves, noting the incommensurability of these two categories of oppression. He insists that much

post-1960's critical theorizing either assumes that black subjects have been fully assimilated into the human qua Man or continues to relegate the thought of nonwhite subjects to the ground of ethnographic specificity, yet as Aimé Césaire has so rightfully observed, "The West has never been further from being able to live a true humanism—a humanism made to the measure of the world". (11)

In other words, there remains much work to be done at the level of the human, and this remains his exclusive focus. Claire Jean Kim suggests that resistance to attention to the animal in critical race studies stems, at least in part, from the fact that "such comparisons have enabled extreme violence" (24), and as Bénédicte Boisseron indicates, "comparing human and animal suffering carries the risk of trivializing the human condition" (xi). Cree scholar Billy-Ray Belcourt also provides a relevant critique from the perspective of Indigenous thought. He reminds researchers in CAS, especially those who aim for "total liberation," that such efforts to expand the scope of rights to include nonhuman animals are always already taking place on stolen Indigenous lands and usually via inherently colonial systems of thought which renders them fundamentally unethical in the first place. He notes that this "theoretical absence" of anti-colonial emphasis "is thus a form of colonial violence wherein indigeneity is invisibilized, wherein the Indigenous body is re-made into a site of modern impossibility to make possible

the re-shaping of animal bodies as settler-colonial imaginaries” (2). It’s a potent critique leveled against a field that too often becomes abstracted from the literal spaces in which it takes place and upon which it works, namely settler colonial and historically (and presently) imperial states, and the academic institutions operating therein. While the starting points for both Weheliye and Belcourt are entirely distinct (which is to say they are not arguing about or for the same things), what both scholars share in common is something of a warning that neither race nor colonialism can be excised from discussions of animality, and that these same discussions must pay careful attention to not just the knowledge being produced, but also the sites and effects of such knowledge.

Fortunately, in recent years, scholars working at the intersection of critical race and human-animal studies have begun navigating these difficult questions of race and colonization in order to articulate and make legible the ways in which structures of power that constrain the lives of black, Indigenous, and people of colour (BIPOC), and the life of animalized animals, are made to overlap and diverge. For example, Boisseron’s work on dog life and histories of slavery takes pains to show the specificities of relationships rather than make comparisons between humans and animals. “Instead of ignoring the monkey standing awkwardly next to the black politicians or the black slave yanked to the table of animal rights activists,” she says, “the goal is precisely to bring attention to their mutual addressability and expose a system that compulsively conjures up blackness and animality together to measure the value of existence” (xx). Colin

Dayan's critical readings of historical slave laws have a shared purpose, where for example, she argues that animals and slaves, as "forms of unfreedom," depend upon "inexact but nevertheless effective parallelism" ("The Law is a White Dog" 7). Deconstructing just such parallelism, Kim's work relies on the concept of "borderlands" to

suggest an imaginative space where both liminal humans and the most human-like animals are located—testimony to both humans' powerful drive to distinguish themselves hierarchically from other humans and animals and their failure to do so in any permanently successful way. It is a space wrought by power but illustrative of power's indeterminacy. (25)

Working in the field of carceral geographies, Karen M. Morin articulates something similar in her examination of the trans-species logics of carcerality. Her work aims to show that "the distinctions between 'the human' and 'the animal' themselves are made through encounters with carceral spaces" (8). Further, she notes that though examining both humans (most often racialized humans) in tandem with nonhuman animals in these contexts is fraught, not least because processes of racializing rely so heavily upon processes of animalization (a process in itself which "subjugates both certain humans and certain nonhumans into hierarchies of worthiness and value" (8)), robust understanding of carceral logic insists upon dissection of the ways in which human and nonhuman life overlap and diverge. What the work of these scholars underscores then is the value of bringing questions of race together with questions of animality, and indeed that thinking through both may be wholly necessary to the task of interrogating power in either case.

In his plenary address at the 2019 European Summer School on Interspecies Relationality, Robert McKay was emphatic in the suggestion that this direction for human-animal studies is long overdue. His work, which takes as its starting point a call for HAS scholars to pay attention to Alice Walker's fiction as an avenue into these overlapping systems of oppression, reflects the importance of foregrounding the innovative analytics of Black (and more generally, racialized) thought, and for at least two reasons. The first is the ethical urgency which attends understanding oppression as situated across and oriented towards persons and bodies of all sorts, in ways that speak to and against each other, as already mentioned. Which is to say that understanding the ways in which, for example, the oppression of racialized humans is predicated or contingent upon the oppression of nonhuman animals, or vice versa, facilitates a more nuanced understanding of both power and ethics across race and species divides. The second reason is tied to the politics of citation. Black feminist geographer Katherine McKittrick argues that citation isn't just about tracing method and legitimizing argument, but also operates "as learning, as counsel, as sharing. Citations are moments of learning. Citations are not descriptions" (37). In her view, citation is a site by which radical imaginaries of liberation can be worked out and practiced. For Sara Ahmed, citation "is how we acknowledge our debt to those who came before; those who helped us find our way when the way was obscured because deviated from the paths we were told to follow" ("Living a Feminist" 15-16). A politics of citation is a means to pay attention to, and honour,

who we would tell stories with and alongside. Listening carefully when a scholar such as Weheliye pushes back against white feminist approaches to CAS and HAS, and then working from (with, and alongside) this critique, is exactly citation as learning, counsel, and sharing, citation that takes its interlocutors seriously while simultaneously self-reflecting on its own limitations. While McKay's talk didn't explicitly address the need to decentre whiteness in the citational practices of HAS, instead stating that the field has "preferred to ignore race, rather than trade on it" (15), implicit in thinking with Walker and scholars such as Weheliye and Hortense Spillers, especially within the context of a field which until very recently was so thoroughly dominated by white scholarship, is an understanding that scholarship that relies exclusively on white perspectives reinforces white supremacy in the academy and vastly overestimates its own capacity to address the experiences of racialized people. Moreover, given the insights gained through examining race and animality simultaneously, it would seem that HAS can in fact *only* adequately address questions of justice for animals while in direct dialogue with the work of BIPOC writers.

With these calls to action in mind, in the next section, I draw on Weheliye's work, as well as McKay's reading of his work, to return to MWDs as a way to think about the intersections of species and race in the battlespace of war. Building upon the humanizing work I argue war dogs do in my earlier chapter, what I'm particularly interested in here is clearly articulating the way militarization is always a part of whiteness, and in the ways dogs, in the context of war, are

deployed in such a way that affirms for white subjects as much what they are, as what they are not, which as Frank B. Wilderson, in conversation with Saidiya Hartman indicates, is how whites (and presumably whiteness) “gain coherence” (Hartman and Wilderson 187), or as Lethabo King translates, “the Black must be rendered nonhuman for White subjects to know their own humanity” (18). To focus on the way war dogs (and dogs more generally) serve in the reification of whiteness I am taking seriously Kim TallBear’s somewhat cheeky assertion for white people to study themselves and the White Problem (e.g. see *fig. 2.2*). In

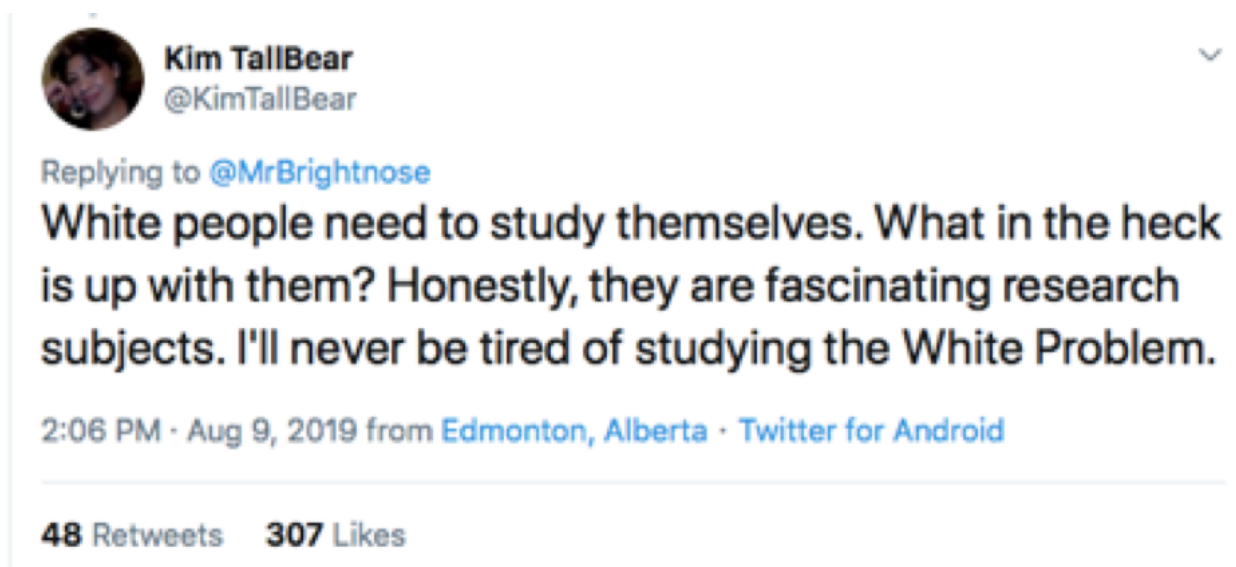


Fig. 2.2. Image of Tweet by Kim TallBear. August 9, 2019.
<https://twitter.com/kimtallbear/status/1159933919942234112>

similar consideration of the so-called White Problem, Robin DiAngelo’s *White Fragility* examines the ways in which the resistance of white people (especially white liberals) to addressing their own racist attitudes is performed through an apparent emotional incapacity to handle such a possibility, i.e., the possibility that they are in fact racist, which is, per the narrative, followed by “white tears.”

DiAngelo says that she sees “whiteness studies,” (a gentler name than The White Problem Studies!) “as white scholars responding to [scholars of color] saying ‘Stop looking at us, because, in fact, you are our problem’” (Jackson n. pag.).

DiAngelo is quoted here in a short-form essay in *Slate* by black scholar Lauren Michelle Jackson, who is, if not quite critical of, then is at least ambivalent about, DiAngelo’s position, as Jackson reads it as arising in part out of DiAngelo’s lack of serious engagement with Black thought in her own work. Jackson states that she is “hard-pressed to imagine an accurate account of our world that doesn’t include the rigor of those who analyze blackness as dutifully as DiAngelo attends to whiteness,” and notes that if “DiAngelo willfully permits an absence here, it is one her core audience permits as well” (N. pag.). As Jackson elaborates, quoting DiAngelo further, to

address whiteness properly, white people must “turn towards and away” from whiteness, “turning towards their role and responsibility in these histories of racism” as they “turn away from themselves, and towards others.” Right now we are stuck in the first turn, moving ever so slowly, head craned in the mirror, enthralled by ourselves, enthralled by whiteness. (N. pag.)

In other words, studying the White Problem means engaging Black thought if it is to be a full account of the thing it is, if it is to turn away from itself and towards others. Moreover, relying on white scholars to do this work performs a kind of intellectual white fragility, one might reason, in which this kind of auto-critique assumes of itself the complete capacity to do the work necessary to not just unpack whiteness, but to dismantle whiteness from the inside. And again, the

same can be said about the dominance of white thinkers in CAS and HAS.

Indeed, the limits of such thinking, as I will show, become especially visible when taking up the animal question, and the rest of this chapter will begin to uncover what war dogs, with their weird status as translators and manufacturers of who is and is not seen to be human tell us about the operation of white supremacy, especially when examined through the insights offered by critical Black scholarship. In doing so, the aim is to further insight into the ways systems of oppression serve to reinforce each other, particularly in the always over-determined context of war.

2.2 Racializing Assemblages and the Possibility of (Animal) Flesh

In *Habeas Viscus*, Weheliye offers a critique of the normative deployment of biopolitical thought as developed through the likes of Foucault and Agamben. He argues that the significant problem in thinking power and the management of life as they do is made by the presentation of the biopolitical as a neutral and fundamental system, which is to say as a system of thinking power that can be similarly applied to the management of life, all life, irrespective of race and without recourse to race. *Homo sacer*, or bare life, for example, is understood as a figure that could be applied to anybody to understand that person's political status (or lack thereof). This universalism thereby seems to give biopolitics, as conceived by Agamben and Foucault, a structural primacy for thinking through

the political everywhere (and thus conveniently offering a way to think about power through white scholars). Weheliye spells it out clearly:

Bare life and biopolitics discourse not only misconstrues how profoundly race and racism shape the modern idea of the human, it also overlooks or perfunctorily writes off theorizations of race, subjection, and humanity found in black and ethnic studies, allowing bare life and biopolitics discourse to imagine an indivisible biological substance anterior to racialization.

Or, as McKay interprets vis-à-vis Wynter's insight into the West's imperialist construction of a particular kind of human as generic and normal (Wynter 266), "racist humanism's fundamental exclusionary gesture [of power] is to situate a white supremacist ideal of Man as the *generic* human" always in relation to blackness, and the biopolitical tradition fails to adequately account for this (McKay 14). In other words, the movement of power vis-à-vis the naming of what is or isn't human is itself always already a product of race, or the racializing assemblages that give shape to race, and especially Blackness, rather than the other way around. Racializing assemblages, Weheliye explains, are

ongoing sets of political relations that require, through constant perpetuation via institutions, discourses, practices, desires, infrastructures, languages, technologies, sciences, economies, dreams, and cultural artifacts, the barring of non-white subjects from the category of the human as it is performed in the modern west. (3)

Blackness arises as one such assemblage, perhaps the racializing assemblage *par excellence*, and "designates a changing system of unequal power structures that apportion and delimit which humans can lay claim to full human status and which humans cannot" (3). Something similar can be said about Indigeneity in

settler colonial structures, where Indigenous bodies are re-made as a kind of impossibility in another racializing assemblage, as Belcourt indicates occurs in settler colonial animal liberation imaginaries. The two forms of racialization, historically, are different in their relation to the human, or Man, in that Blackness, per Wilderson, is the thing that whiteness uses to define itself against as the absolutely abject, whereas Indigenous racialization is a process of bringing Indigenous bodies into varying degrees of proximity with whiteness. This is to say that what brings these two forms of different racializations together is their function as (the generic, i.e., white) Man's need for an other, an outside, which "requires the death of Indigenous and Black people. For the human to continue to evolve as an unfettered form of self-actualizing (and expanding) form of Whiteness, Black and Indigenous people must die or be transformed into lesser forms of humanity—and, in some cases, become nonhuman altogether" (Lethabo King 20-21). In other words, biopolitics is inherently about race, and death—spiritual, cultural, and material or literal—is always a requirement of racialization where whiteness figures.

What Weheliye does next though, and what makes his intervention more than just a critique of biopolitics, is to consider what might remain, if not exactly beyond the reach of these assemblages, then not entirely captured by them. Blackness, he wagers, is not reducible to its very abjection. He does this first by grounding his insights in the innovative work of Black feminist scholarship, with particular attention to Hortense Spillers' concept of the flesh, which she

formulates as existing in distinction from the body, the body of the slave,

especially the enslaved woman. On the one hand, “flesh” signals

how violent political domination activates a fleshly surplus that simultaneously sustains and disfigures said brutality, and, on the other hand, to reclaim the atrocity of flesh as a pivotal arena for the politics emanating from different traditions of the oppressed. The flesh, rather than displacing bare life... excavates the social (after)life of these categories: it represents the racializing assemblages of subjection that can never annihilate the lines of flight, freedom dreams, practices of liberation, and possibilities of other worlds. (2)

Flesh here is something that exists not just as the stratum of subjugation, the somatic field of the body through and on which power is exercised, but also marks out those moments that slip through the grasp of total control; it “insists on the importance of miniscule movements, glimmers of hope, scraps of food, the interrupted dreams of freedom found in those spaces deemed devoid of full human life” (Bradley 12).

This excess or irreducibility of flesh to race calls to mind a lengthier quote from the cited interview between Wilderson and Hartman; Wilderson says

I'm not saying that in this space of negation, which is blackness, there is no life. We have tremendous life. But this life is not analogous to those touchstones of cohesion that hold civil society together. In fact, the trajectory of our life (within our terrain of civil death) is bound up in claiming—sometimes individually, sometimes collectively—the violence which Fanon writes about in *The Wretched of the Earth*, that trajectory which, as he says, is ‘a splinter to the heart of the world’ and ‘puts the settler out of the picture’. (187)

Understood in Wilderson’s terms of claiming the violence Black life withstands and is forced to endure, flesh avoids becoming something metaphysical while

remaining clear about its materiality as *both* discursive and literal, i.e. as more than just figurative or symbolic, and more than just some kind of biological substance. Lethabo King's recent work elegantly models this, when immediately within the early pages of her text, we are oriented through an experience of her own bodily fleshiness as a black woman learning about the suffering of Indigenous people in ongoing processes of genocide, which she describes thusly:

Something about listening to this Anishinaabe woman's story, with its unfamiliar contours, brought into sharp relief the grooves, dips, depressions, and crevices that I had never paid attention to all of the times I had run my fingertips over the familiar skin of my own narrative of slavery... then I began to know something new. As she spoke, I paid attention to the depth of the grooves, took the time to pursue the strange feeling of each rough cut that had been etched over time. A particular line between my eyebrows took on a new curve and depth. Running my finger over it, I found that I could poke clear through its threshold into new regions of 'my slavery.' On the face of my Blackness, I could feel a new clammy and terrorizing caver whose depths swallowed the length of my finger. (ix)

Lethabo King bears the story of her own flesh and brings it into conversation with the flesh of another through their story, in a way that makes flesh itself both subject to history and histories of racism, but also something more—something communal, shared, something always in relation to the flesh of others. Flesh here exists in the making-flesh of her (and her ancestors') narrative, in the folds of her skin, a line between her eyebrows, and subsequently all the expressions and ways of relation that such flesh enables. And yet, to return to the question of the animal, while this expansive conceptualization of flesh immediately grounds itself in the first place in the experience of being a body subject to violence, in

Weheliye's estimation, the flesh of Blackness is not comparable to the bodies or embodiment of nonhuman animals, even if CAS/HAS would have it so.

Nonhuman animals, it would seem, exist somewhere outside, beyond, other to the other, with no potential to impact or participate in the political.

The perspective taken by Weheliye here is a common enough one, even a trope almost, in critical race scholarship that seeks to categorically delimit the production of race from the production of species, such that too often the constructed nature of animals and animality is left uncritiqued, taken as is, and is thereby naturalized. Obviously, I take issue with this perspective, and will develop a critique accordingly, but I do so with a certain amount of uneasiness, always uneasiness. Lethabo King mobilizes her own scholarship, which investigates the parallels, relationships, and divergences between Black and Indigenous experience in processes of enslavement, genocide, and colonization, through the figure of the Black Shoals. For her, the Black Shoals is a methodological orientation that would de-centre whiteness and that posits that "Black thought, Black study, Black aesthetics, and Black expression function as a shoal that interrupts the course and momentum of the flow of critical theories about genocide, slavery, and humanity in the Western Hemisphere" (xv). In other words, through it, her partial aim is to slow "the momentum of White settler colonial studies and, for that matter, continental theory as a form of conceptual and analytical common sense" (32). As a white woman, sitting with the work of the Black Shoals, and Black thought more generally, is important work to do, but I

am aware that there will always be the risk that I just simply won't get it, that I will move too fast, and that I subsequently will misrepresent the ideas I'm negotiating, possibly even to the extent that I in effect occupy or instrumentalize them in a way that reinforces whiteness. This becomes increasingly possible, I'd wager, when examining the relationship between race and animality, given the fraught and violent history of whiteness in relation to both. It's with this in mind that I say that as I proceed with a critique of Weheliye, I take it as a starting point rather than an end point, a site through which a fuller view into whiteness and the operations of whiteness can be seen and critiqued; this is, as Weheliye provokes, a way to think through and toward slave owners, rather than slaves, as the "final frontier of speciesism," so to speak (10).

So what of the possibility of animal flesh then? Weheliye emphasizes the Black specificity of flesh, but McKay offers an alternative reading of the materiality of flesh. He says that

the inevitable indistinguishability between the human animal and the nonhuman animal—not in general (as in the objection to allegory) but specifically at the material stratum of flesh and its vulnerability to violence at which Weheliye levels his discussion—means this: if his argument is that the ideas of 'flesh' and of 'blackness' are produced by a racializing assemblage that animalizes the black as flesh, then it is not clear how 'animality' is not *also* thereby produced. (17)

It's not entirely clear to me that Weheliye argues that flesh is specifically or exclusively a product of animalization, so much as it is a process of dehumanization (which is not exactly the same thing), and thus the critique merits a closer look.

Putting aside animalization for the moment, if we are given to understand that flesh inheres within bodies, then some version of flesh, call it animal flesh, necessarily in some way must speak to the lived experience of nonhuman animals and may prove useful in understanding the operation of power. This is especially true if flesh is to find meaning in bodily vulnerability and the sociality which potentially arises out of that. Thinking with Spillers, Bradley notes that “the flesh crucially marks a violent erasure of black subjecthood, and how racialization moves by way of the trajectory of devalued subjecthood, repeatedly mapped through bodily subjection” (12). Flesh is specifically Black given its ties to the erasure of Black subjecthood, but that doesn’t mean that we can’t simultaneously imagine animal flesh as something different from and adjacent to Black flesh, given the way violence against nonhuman animal bodies devalues nonhuman subjecthood, and how this violence too is mapped through bodily subjection. Bradley adds that “black flesh indexes the body’s libidinal energies and an erotic potential that remains unseen” (12), and given the extreme constraints placed on nonhuman animals, a similar unseen potential may exist there in animal flesh as well. To suggest otherwise is to land in the dangerous territories of naming nonhuman embodiment as something less than human embodiment, perhaps by virtue of some lack they have (a Cartesian animal-as-machines logic springs to mind), or worse yet, some exception of the human species. This would require the isolation of human embodiment from nonhuman animal embodiment by dint of, what, access to language or symbolic order? Specific orientation to death? A

careful misreading of what reason is? Pick your poison, it will all amount to the same ideological structuring of difference that requires for its boundary-making naming the other as such (which is to say “other,” rather than simply different), and which similarly facilitates the ordering of human bodies. Wynter, as Lethabo King reminds us, “urges a disruption of the very order that creates a norm and, inevitably, an ‘Other,’” and “that we continue to revise what it means to be human and keep the human an open question that can never be resolved in advance” (17), and though Wynter herself might not take this perspective up, where might we find more regulated orders than at the site of the nonhuman animal body?

Indeed, McKay observes that if such a thing as a racializing assemblage can be said to exist and operate as Weheliye outlines, then what must follow is also a *speciating assemblage* (21). In his work on Walker, McKay is clear to remark that this isn’t to render null “differences between this or that being of whatever kind. Rather, the notion of commuting multiple differences in order to code species existence as meaning a substantial and essential difference in kind—especially in terms of one symptom such as language use—begs the complex interrelationality of the power involved” (21). In turn, this means that we must carefully articulate not just the similarities between Black and animal flesh, but also the differences, where the two diverge. Black flesh, as Bradley notes, is generative for “its capacity to persist as a site for staging a retrieval, a recovery and a reclamation of a certain worth and dignity that has been lost” (14). Abjection, the total othering of Black subjecthood and embodiment “becomes the

condition for the absolute abasement of blackness” and thus “animates black flesh as a special site of material recovery” (14). If we are to follow this with animal flesh, to read this kind of retrieval and recovery of a lost dignity, the limits of the comparison begin to become legible. This isn’t to say that nonhuman animals lack dignity or seek some kind of refuge, but what that dignity looks like, what it means to them, the kinds of sociality that a nonhuman animal might seek particularly in the face of suffering, are not always readily graspable by members of different species (namely humans). Which is to say that if we want to think the generative potential of animal flesh, this will have to come down to opening up to the specific ways in which different species would orient their lives to each other and within broader ecologies, i.e., how they specifically find or make meaning of being alive even in the face of suffering, abjection, and annihilation. What arises out of such an opening then is the wild proliferation of animal flesh as animal *fleshes*, meaning that a significant difference between Black flesh and animal flesh is an irreducible multiplicity that only seems to coalesce in what we would misname if we relied upon the singular animal flesh.

By bringing forth speciating assemblages, acknowledging the place of animal flesh, and placing these in conversation with racializing assemblages and Black flesh, we are better able to understand the complicated mechanisms and avenues through which power categorizes, reifies, celebrates, debilitates, and disposes of various forms of life. With this theoretical framework outlined above, in the following section I take up Weheliye and McKay to think through the

relationship between speciating assemblages and whiteness in the context of militarized settings beyond the borders of conventional war. How, I ask, are dogs mechanisms of racializing assemblages and to what extent does this occur through obscuring their own position within speciating assemblages? In what ways does the fleshly surplus of canine life serve to reinforce whiteness in its weaponization against racialized bodies?

2.3 Speciating Assemblages

In the white supremacist, settler colonial disciplinary context that marks many aspects of the current historical moment, the *possibility* of racist dogs rears its head such that we might forget about the dogs as such in the first place. How do we think about Nazi dogs, or the dogs at Abu Ghraib or Standing Rock? Can we understand them as racist, and if so, what might this tell us about the nature of racism itself? According to Ghassan Hage,

it is good enough to call 'racist' any bundle of practices which aim at problematizing, excluding, marginalizing, discriminating against, rendering insecure, exploiting, criminalizing, and terrorizing and harbouring exterminatory fantasies against an identity group of people imagined as sharing a common and inheritable determining feature. ("Introduction" n. pag.)

It's a valuable definition which seeks to orient how we understand racism as fundamentally about the material effects, the practices and effects of harm caused by racism. But the nonhuman animal complicates this definition in provocative ways; a first glance suggests that if dogs can be trained to target people racialized in particular ways (a question which in itself remains open,

though evidence suggests it to be likely), such as in the case of Black or brown people, then yes, they can be racist. But further analysis asks us to consider how intention and imagination work in dogs, with both concepts being so central to Hage's definition. As he indicates, there must be an aim toward particular ends, and that aim is anchored in imagining shared traits across a group of people, which, if possible, remains unverifiable in dogs. And yet, arguably dogs are in fact made to behave in astonishingly racist ways, whether as soldiers or guard dogs, as tools of torture, or other extensions of human violence.

As an aside, though the U.S. Military has entertained efforts in the past to train working dogs to essentially be racist, their work proved unsuccessful. In WWII, William A. Pestre started a program to try to train dogs to "attack Japanese positions" based on a racist understanding of scent, but the program, for obvious reasons, failed (Ritland 150-151). However, contrasting with this failure, Boisseron suggests that dogs were trained by white slaveholders to perform a kind of racism by targeting aggression towards black people, and that today dogs have been trained by militarized police forces to target Black people in places like Ferguson. It's certainly within the realm of possibility that the dogs in such instances may have been trained via visual cues (i.e., orientation to people with dark skin), and Boisseron's work makes a compelling case for this, but whether that amounts to racism on the part of dogs is unclear, especially if we are to draw on Hage's definition and the question of intention and imagination. But this is another reason why Weheliye's racializing assemblage, with its profound

explanatory power, is so valuable for understanding the operations of racism. As a kind of node in racializing assemblages, dogs have become technologies of racism (and thus power), and the acuity and efficacies of them as such, as we have seen, is both material and discursive, thus rendering the question of the possibility of their own racism moot. Returning to the image I open this chapter with makes this evident—the targeting of a non-white civilian by a white soldier through the material aggression of a barely restrained dog serves to discursively reinforce a racial divide between how the two men in the image are perceived, and this reading is perhaps especially (maybe even only) true in the West or from the perspective of whiteness, where dogs, as creatures of the domestic space, are understood in very particular ways.

But if that reading can be said to reflect back to us and work in the service of a racializing assemblage, where might we see the operation of a speciating assemblage at play? Consider Amy Goodman and Denis Moynihan’s journalism on the use of dogs at Standing Rock by pipeline security. In their reporting, they set a somewhat pastoral scene by describing a “beautiful, sunny day,” only to have it interrupted by the arrival of bulldozers intent on cutting up the disputed land. A significant contingent of Water Protectors arrived, including men on horses, and the bulldozers withdrew. Then came the dogs (e.g. *see fig. 2.3*):

the security guards attempted to repel the land defenders, unleashing at least half a dozen vicious dogs, who bit both people and horses. One dog had blood dripping from its mouth and nose. Undeterred, the dog’s handler continued to push the dog into the crowd. The guards pepper-sprayed the protesters, punched and tackled them. Vicious dogs like mastiffs have been used to attack indigenous peoples in the Americas since the time of

Christopher Columbus and the Spanish conquistadors who followed him.
In the end, the violent Dakota Access guards were forced back. (Goodman
and Moynihan n. pag.)

Dogs here, twice characterized as vicious, described as dripping with blood, make a frightful image, made all the more horrific by the reference to Columbus. The image of the bloody dog underscores this terror—a quick view of the dog referenced by Goodman and Moynihan indicates little of the horror, but closer inspection reveals two important things: the first is the blood visible on the dog's snout, tongue, and lower lip—Is it human blood or horse blood? In what ways would this difference matter?—and the second, unmentioned by the reporters, is the prong collar worn by the dog as a device to exert obedience through piercing the flesh of their neck when they pull too hard on their leash. We are taken by Goodman and Moynihan to understand that this dog is an extension of the violence of the oil company, perhaps an expression of corporate and state fascistic impulse, but we are not for an instant to consider the dogs themselves as anything other than the most barbaric of weapons, i.e., as reduced to a threat, brimming with potential targeted violence. The dog no longer exists as a dog but as metonym for state and corporate control, and in becoming so is a product of a speciating assemblage in which the life of the dog is so dismissible as to go entirely unnoted as a life, as anything more than a tool.

The question about framing the dogs thusly again isn't so much about why it matters, but in what ways it matters, which allows us to see both the human victims of such brutality without overlooking the fact that weaponizing dogs is

something done *to* dogs as well as humans, i.e., there are other sentient creatures here in this conflict who may or may not also be being victimized or



Fig. 2.3. Image is a still, featuring a black police dog with blood on their snout, taken from footage from Democracy Now's coverage of the 2016 Standing Rock protests. Amy Goodman. "Standoff at Standing Rock: Even Attack Dogs Can't Stop the Native American Resistance." truthdig, 9 September 2016. <https://www.truthdig.com/articles/standoff-at-standing-rock-even-attack-dogs-cant-stop-the-native-american-resistance/>

abused. This isn't to dismiss racialized violence, or hierarchize different suffering by any means, but again, as with scholars like Kim and Boisseron, to make legible the ways in which interspecies and racialized violences are both distinct *and* related as mutually reinforcing systems of oppressions. As Boggs notes about the image of the dog snarling at the detainee in Abu Ghraib (e.g. see *fig. 2.4*), "it demonstrates how animals can be instrumentalized to enact state

violence and to produce animality. The detainee is not only animalized but hyperanimalized in contrast to the guard dog” (73). She adds that the dog “takes



Fig. 2.4. American Army Sgt. Michael J. Smith, a dog handler, intimidates a kneeling detainee of Abu Ghraib prison. Sgt. Smith was found guilty in 2006 of six of thirteen counts of abusing prisoners. Photograph courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

on an intermediary position: he simultaneously serves the purpose of abjecting the detainee and calls attention to the process by which such abjection occurs” (74). Similar to the dog in the image at the Standing Rock protests (e.g. see *fig* 2.3), and as with the dog biting the Afghan man in the first image (e.g. see *fig*. 2.1), to some extent the above dog disappears behind its function as weapon—here both literal and discursive—which serves to bolster the force of the weapon itself. This is, in effect, what Boisseron calls “becoming against” (48), which is

meant to take “into account the extreme closeness and the belligerent nature of the antagonistic physical contact, while ‘becoming’ suggests that the dog and the slave [or protestor, or detainee] are mutually shaped by the construction of themselves as inherently violent beings” (48-49). This becoming against always serves a particular end, and in the context of war and militarization, whether as war in the Middle East or war against racialized citizens of a state such as the U.S. or Canada, the end to which these assemblages are oriented arguably returns over and over again to certain claims and practices of whiteness and white supremacy.

2.4 Assemblages of Whiteness: Architectures of Disavowal

If racializing assemblages are ongoing sets of political relations, per Weheliye, that use discourses, practices, and desires (for example), to bar “non-white subjects from the category of the human as it is performed in the modern west” (3), what are the related or inverse mechanisms that construct the relationship between white subjects as humans? In other words, if racializing assemblages always serve to produce and regulate the non-white subject as less-than-human, can it be said that assemblages of whiteness operate simultaneously, and if so, what are the markers of these operations? Where and how can they be understood to be occurring? Here I am considering whiteness as an “identity which exists only in so far as other racialized identities” exist (Garner 2), but more importantly, following Ahmed, much like war, this is

whiteness *as process*, rather than “ontological given,” and “as that which has been received, or become given, over time” (150). As she suggests, “[w]hiteness could be described as an ongoing and unfinished history, which orientates bodies in specific directions, affecting how they ‘take up’ space” (“Phenomenology” 150). What mechanisms operate in this orientation, and to return to canine life, to what extent do these mechanisms as assemblages of whiteness rely on speciating assemblages to bolster their claim to the title of human?

To answers these questions, and to close this chapter, I now turn to thinking through the relationship between whiteness, cruelty, and what I’m calling architectures of disavowal. For my purposes, cruelty at its most basic can be understood as taking pleasure in harm against others or as being complacent about harm against others such that harm continues unabated; cruelty can be a product of intent or indifference. What interests me though is what sits at the nexus of animal and human cruelty, and whose shape we can apprehend through the specific ways in which racism enacted through dogs serves to normalize such cruelty as an unremarkable quality of whiteness, and to normalize whiteness as powerful enough to disregard and even take pleasure in the suffering of its others. I was tipped off to this connection between cruelty and whiteness by a Twitter thread (e.g., see *fig. 2.5*) from @ztsamudzi (user Zoé Samudzi, a PhD Candidate at UC San Francisco), from July 2, 2019. Samudzi, tweeting in response to House of Representatives member Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez’s

(@AOC) tweet linking to the harrowing *Propublica* report on the secret racist and



Fig. 2.5. Image of Twitter thread by Zoé Samudzi, July 1, 2019.
<https://twitter.com/ztsamudzi/status/1145820355795156992>

misogynist Customs & Border Protection Agency (CPBA) Facebook group (Thompson 2019), reminds her readers and followers that the cruelty of such racist carceral structures is fundamental, that whiteness itself is a structure which “allows for the comfortable compartmentalization of racial brutality and care for their dogs and families and country” (e.g., see *fig. 2.5*). In other words, cruelty isn’t a problematic by-product or an unexpected moment of deviance but may be in fact central to whiteness and white supremacy in particular. In this reading of the participation by CPB agents in this Facebook group, cruelty is both social and pleasurable, and the nature of that pleasure is either obscured by, or bound up with, care for dogs, family, and country. That dogs appear next to such profound signifiers as family and country is no accident, as the previous chapter’s emphasis on the relationship between dogs and ideals of domesticity makes clear. Indeed, what any assemblage requires for operation are mechanisms and filters by which self and other, inside and outside, are divided, and cruelty, and the stories of shock and enthusiast participation around cruelty, are *both* part of an assemblage of whiteness in which dogs figure. While cruelty itself operates in two different registers (active and passive), both are a function of power, and perhaps most interestingly, both seek to disavow vulnerability. In the next chapter I draw on Wadiwel’s reading of Derrida and (and against) Locke when it comes to thinking through the operation of power as a function or mechanism of sovereignty. There I mostly focus on Locke’s theory of property, but here I take

up Wadiwel's reading of Derrida, to make sense of my claim about cruelty, whiteness, and vulnerability.

In the latter half of Wadiwel's piece on property and sovereignty, he undertakes an analysis of Derrida's final lectures, *The Beast and the Sovereign Volume Two*. In these lectures, Derrida outlines a theory of sovereignty predicated on force, or a "superiority that arrives through conquest, rather than a superiority that is ontologically given" ("The Will" 158). Unlike many of his philosophical predecessors, Derrida doesn't understand the sovereignty of the human as granted by virtue of some special status inherent only to members of the human species, but as "contingent upon a victory in war, where sovereignty is the outcome of contestation. And this victory," as Wadiwel notes, "like the swirling tussle of the sea, is arbitrary" (159). Consequently, for Derrida,

what is revealed is merely a violence that is common to all living beings, but is claimed by humans as their very own. In owning this violence, in claiming it as rational, in naming and categorizing what is not human, in creating a world that is open to human transformation as property, humans declare themselves historical, and therefore above and not belonging to the state of nature. (159)

This is a violence as prime mover for a certain kind of sovereignty, in the case here, that of the human (Man), but one which I'm arguing gains traction through the sovereignty which whiteness seeks to afford itself. The problem with sovereignty determined in this way, as a winning of a war, is that its arbitrariness always haunts its grip on power as it is always already subject to its own logic of domination through force, which is to say that the vulnerability of the other over

whom this sovereignty claims dominion is simultaneous a vulnerability at its own core. This sovereignty then, is always an anxious, fragile thing with its own vulnerability in need of abjection. In order to actually abject this vulnerability, and thus to manage this anxiety, the mechanics of sovereignty's operation must first be disavowed in order for it to be naturalized as reasonable and right. Indeed, such disavowal is necessary (and highly regulated) because the arbitrary nature of sovereignty through force, unless denied or hidden by disavowal, reflects back a fundamental truth about itself, i.e., that it is entirely contingent and thus permanently vulnerable, indeed that vulnerability is its very condition of possibility. To return here to racializing and speciating assemblages, and assemblages of whiteness, is to begin to understand in part how this disavowal works, which is always ongoing, always guarded, an architecture of disavowal that is always crumbling, and always in need of repair.

So again, an architecture of disavowal works to obscure the fragility of sovereignty claimed through forceful dominion and is especially visible in the operation of whiteness as a kind of sovereignty. Assemblages of whiteness draw on the effects of speciating and racializing assemblages, and one way in which they do so is through the normalization of racialized cruelty that leverages dogs as humanizing through positive association with whiteness, or as dehumanizing through negative association with racialized people. This is, in short, the obscuring of racialized brutality by a tenderness towards dogs—it is no accident, for example, that the Nazi party was famously positively associated with dogs

and passed many animal protection laws (Arluke and Sax 1992), and images of Hitler with his dog Blondi were used as propaganda (e.g. see *fig. 2.6*) (Dowd



Fig. 2.6. Photograph of Adolf Hitler with his German Shepherd dog Blondi. Photograph courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

n.pag.). Consequently Boisseron’s “becoming against,” which positions dogs contra racialized subjects, has in white subjectivity and whiteness a third factor marking its manufacturing of difference. To return here to the question of the fragility of sovereignty, the particular benefit to whiteness of racialized cruelty is found in what it at least initially appears to suggest about itself, which is that of having total power as reflected in the power to take pleasure in another’s

suffering or to completely ignore it altogether. While this might, at first glance, appear to be the opposite of disavowal, that it is in fact a recognition of vulnerability, but only insofar as it figures in the other, the opposite is closer to the truth. This is because cruelty itself is always bound up with dehumanization, or the process of making another person other enough that they no longer merit the protections of the law or social contract. Such was the logic behind the Bush administration's legalese that named members of the Taliban and al-Qaeda as "enemy combatants," rather than prisoners of war, and therefore not covered by Geneva Convention protections" (Hooks and Mosher 1627). But once again, inherent to this operation of power is the truth that if even a single person can be dehumanized, especially by force of law, anyone can be subject to that same dehumanization. So, such racializing assemblages in turn rely on speciating assemblages in order to efface this truth, as in the way that reliance on proximity to dogs helps render cruelty banal, and thus figuring it as an expression of absolute power. In doing so, dogs act as a keystone within an architecture of disavowal, which is to say that whiteness doesn't simply *allow* for the compartmentalization of racialized brutality and care for dogs, as Samudzi observes, but in fact *requires* both to occur simultaneously. And yet ironically, the reliance on dogs is the very thing that undoes this architecture because dogs themselves are not in fact intrinsically beholden to any particular group of humans: the same dog which can become one's truest companion, under the right circumstances can become one's enemy, with the reverse probably being

even more true. This is the radical alterity which nonhuman life brings to bear upon the political order, which has to contend with the “[w]holly other,” and for whom, as Derrida suggests, “I do not as yet feel I am justified or qualified to call it my fell, even less my brother” (“The Animal” 12). It is the very reason why dogs do not quite fit into Hage’s definition of racism, even if they themselves are made to operate as technologies of racism.

Whether in the context of war, or the context of weaponizing dogs against racialized people, and especially Black and Indigenous people in settler colonial states, canine life serves militarizing narratives that always begin with fragile claims to sovereignty. When we begin to pay attention to how dogs are positioned, and especially through noticing the ways by which they themselves are made to participate in everything from cruelty to domestic pleasure, these claims begin to crumble, and the complex nature of how militarizing narratives, whether specifically attached to whiteness or not, becomes far more unstable. In the following chapter I continue this analysis to further understand the ways by which dogs are made to serve in these narratives, with a turn towards a deeper consideration of what it means for the dogs themselves.

Chapter III: The Disimagination of Man

3.1 Human Scent and its Detection⁶

Of all the many moving images that I have encountered in my exploration of war dogs, one in particular lingers with me. Drawn from a 2014 online *National Geographic* collections of images of military working dogs, the shot is one of few that displays the dead body of a dog (e.g. see *fig. 3.1*). In the image, two men cross a tarmac as they walk towards the camera, one in the foreground, the other in the mid-ground. Behind them sprawl the arid mountains of Afghanistan, those oddly familiar washed out not-quite blues of dusty horizon, the strangely recognizable greys and beiges of a Middle Eastern desertscape. The very air of the image looks hot, as we all somehow know it to be. The man in front, Staff Sgt. Thomas, carries the body of Dimont, a dog killed by an improvised explosive device (IED) while on patrol in Kandahar. Dimont, whom I know almost nothing about, is wrapped in blood-stained canvas and what appears to be a thermal blanket of the kind often given by first responders to trauma victims. The caption tells us that Dimont's death, this dog's death, spared the lives of nearby (human)

⁶ This title is taken from a 1993 Central Intelligence Agency article of the same name that considers the mechanics and biology of how dogs detect human scent (e.g., what is it they are smelling, under what conditions does the odour disappear?) (Tebrech n. pag.). The overall aim of such research, apparently, is to build a better dog for the purposes of tracking humans. The article closes with the following vision of canine surveillance capability: "Our mechanical dog, when he is born, should be much more unobtrusive than his natural ancestor, should be able to tell us just whom he has smelled, and should maintain a reliable permanent record of his visitors."



Fig. 3.1. Adam Ferguson. Photograph of Staff Sgt. Thomas Sager carrying the body of Dimont, a war dog killed on patrol. Michael Paterniti. "The Dogs of War." National Geographic, June 2014. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/2014/06/dogs-war-soldiers-military-afghanistan/>

soldiers. For the viewer, Staff Sgt. Thomas's face is hard to endure, lined as it is with obvious grief and pain. As if the elements of this image are not already enough to send a mind reeling, there is more. Behind Staff Sgt. Thomas, in full fatigues, walks Major Hux, who remarks on Dimont's death as being "*like* losing a teammate," (Ferguson, emphasis mine). What does it mean for this dog, likely born and bred for war, as many MWDs are, to be captured in this image? To be seen dead in the arms of a fellow (human) soldier, to be seen and yet hidden, wrapped as they are in a makeshift pall, this soldier of a war not of their making, ostensibly not of their comprehension, and yet the very purpose and cause of

their own life and death? What does it mean for this dog's death to not be seen as the loss of a teammate, but only *like* the loss of a teammate and how does the normative unfolding of power enable such an understanding of canine death?

The above image acts as the central object through which this chapter thinks and continues the work of the first chapter. Drawing from that chapter's argument that war is usefully understood not as a *thing*, but as a disruptive de-humanizing ontological process always already in excess of itself, I continue to show how war dogs effectively serve to obscure this disruption through the storytelling mobilized as and through the apparatuses of militarization. Moreover, I expand upon my earlier claim that militarization is grounded in the tautological story of the need to always prepare for war in case of war, to show how a significant component of this story relies on what I call compulsory humanism. Compulsory humanism, as I'm using it here, is indebted to Adrienne Rich's (1980) critique of compulsory heterosexuality as a totalizing regulation of sexuality that insists that heterosexuality is the only viable, "normal" sexuality, and that any alternative is a form of deviance. Similarly, compulsory humanism regulates the way in which biological members of the human species behave and come to be identified as being properly human. As outlined in my previous chapter, what is properly human takes its foundation in the white, cis-hetero,⁷ able-bodied male as the locus of reason and moral judgment. Compulsory

⁷ In including heterosexuality within its regime of value, compulsory humanism envelops compulsory heterosexuality as one of its means of control and expression.

humanism is given weight and credibility on the one hand through liberalism's juridical discourses of human rights and freedoms, and on the other hand through the exclusion and abjection of those others who, by virtue of a perceived incompatibility with the hegemonic human figure, the "dysselected" as Sylvia Wynter calls them, are denied those same rights and freedoms (267). What's more, in the context of militarization, compulsory humanism sits at the nexus of the anthropological machine and the disimagination machine. Or perhaps it is more accurate to say that, when thinking through compulsory humanism, what becomes apparent is that the anthropological machine is itself a kind of disimagination machine—possibly the disimagination *par excellence*.

The chapter will unfold by first explaining the operation of the disimagination machine, before demonstrating how it works in another context of war and canine life, through a reading of Levinas and Derrida, and the infamous story of Bobby, the dog whose presence left such a lasting impression on Levinas while he was a prisoner of war in WWII. I use Levinas as an illustration of the degree to which compulsory humanism limits one's capacity to imagine the world differently. Finally, I offer a critique of the anthropological machine, to outline the particular mechanisms whereby dogs, as humanizing elements, serve to reinforce particular aspects of what it means to be human, namely through the question of property and sacrifice of property.

3.2 The Disimagination Machine

What precisely is the work of the anthropological and disimagination machines?⁸ Giroux's work on neoliberalism deploys the concept of the disimagination machine to outline an emergent politics of disimagination, "in which stories, images, institutions, discourses, and other modes of representation are undermining our capacity to bear witness to a different and critical sense of remembering, agency, ethics, and collective resistance" (27). For Giroux, this machine is "both a set of cultural apparatuses—extending from schools and mainstream media to the new sites of screen culture—and a public pedagogy that functions primarily to short-circuit the ability of individuals to think critically, imagine the unimaginable, and engage in thoughtful and critical dialogue" (27). This definition, and the one to which my own thinking hews most closely, loses some of the resonances of Didi-Huberman's use of the term, detached as Giroux's framing is from the term's specific origins in Nazi agendas during the Holocaust. For Didi-Huberman, the disimagination machine fundamentally targets processes of memory and remembrance, anchored as such things are to the aims and proper execution of what the Nazis deemed the 'Final Solution.' Famously, and horrifically, for the Nazis, to kill Jewish people wasn't enough. Rather, total obliteration was the aim of the regime's murderous policies—to

⁸ While not within the purview of this research, it would likely be worthwhile to compare the way "immunization" and the "immunitary" function in political theory to tease out the extent to which they function similarly to the disimagination machine as outlined by Giroux.

“obliterate the victim’s psyche, their language, their being, their remains, the tools of their obliteration, and even the archives, the memory of this obliteration” (2).⁹

In working with a concept like the disimagination machine, it would be remiss to overlook its origins, the extreme violence of an explicit intention to render something like the Shoah not actually unimaginable but literally unimagined—that is to say, so obscured as to become invisible, to become utterly effaced. It is at the heart of what the disimagination machine does; it is the targeted cruelty and calculated *why* of the disimagination machine. It is power’s attempt at rendering suffering undone. This unimaginable is not literally unimaginable, though many have argued otherwise. Indeed, to paraphrase Didi-Huberman: It happened, so it was imagined. At its worst, the disimagination machine is that which denies this trauma or attempts to efface it, as in the case of the Nazis. This extreme form of disimagination is in part what makes the events in April, 2017, in Douma, Syria so disturbing. According to medics and other witnesses on the ground, contra the United Nations prohibition against the use of chemical weapons in war, chemical warfare was used against Syrian civilians thought to be in proximity with rebel forces. Beyond the use of chemical weaponry, what bridges this event with Nazi atrocity is that both Syrian and

⁹ Notably, the Holocaust isn’t the only site of this specific kind of disimagination, though it is perhaps the least subtle form. Settler colonialism, for example, requires a similar kind of disimagination, given historical (and arguably ongoing) intentions by settler states to erase Indigeneity and Indigenous people by “killing the Indian within,” through both literal death and the violent erasure of Indigenous identity, as seen in the residential school policies of the 19th and 20th century in which Indigenous languages, names, and other cultural practices were forbidden.

Russian officials have denied the reported use of such weaponry, and have allegedly made it very difficult for the UN-backed Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to verify either way (Deutsch n. pag.). Moreover, speaking on condition of anonymity, members of the White Helmets, the organization of volunteers working to protect and help civilians in this war, and who witnessed to this atrocity, have indicated that intimidation has been used against them and their families should they testify to what they witnessed (Wintour n. pag.) Such efforts are the efforts to efface an event, to obscure its having happened in a way that any evidence of it can never exceed its location in space and time, such that bearing witness to it is rendered impossible.

What Giroux's, Didi-Huberman's, and my own thinking share in common in our use of the disimagination machine is a sense that foreclosing thinking alternate possibilities, and scrubbing truth and memory from the events of reality, is fundamentally a form of epistemological violence, a violence against imagination itself. Militarization as disimagination is a kind of disenfranchisement of knowing, where to think otherwise, a world without war, without the need for war, becomes nigh unimaginable, to the extent that the real possibility of something akin to peace becomes, if not nearly beyond the realm of possibility, then dismissable as naive, soft, and feminized, and therefore irrational (Warren and Cady 7). Carol Cohn writes about this at length in her discussion of the technostrategic reasoning of defense intellectuals working alongside, and within the U.S. Military. There she describes how cultural norms force a reliance on

defense language jargon, thus circumscribing certain notions as ludicrous, even rendering them “physically impossible” to express, given that the requisite language does not permit “certain questions to be asked or certain values to be expressed” (708). For example, use of the word “peace” in such contexts brands “oneself as a soft-headed activist instead of an expert, a professional to be taken seriously” (708). The language itself then serves disimagination, which is not necessarily the specific prevention of literally bearing witness, but rather provides a regime of interpretation that indicates precisely how to bear witness to events; it tells us the right way to understand things. This disenfranchisement works on us, on our capacity to imagine and know otherwise, through its attachment to the human, where to call into question the story militarization tells us, i.e., that we need war, is to call into question the legitimacy of the human and all that the human represents in liberal political economy.

This is the (in)famous story told by then President George W. Bush in his announcement of the War on Terror in 2001, when he told the world that every “nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime” (“Address to a Joint Session” n. pag.). If Americans, presumably in this context, are understood to be human (for what else would they be?), and terrorists are something else altogether, something normatively dehumanized (Steuter and Wills 8), then to be against Americans and the U.S. war effort is in

effect to be against humans. Which is to say that militarization tells us that if you do not support these wars, then you do not support what it means to be human, you do not value those things which Bush so clearly articulated terrorist enemies hate: freedom of religion, of speech, to vote and assemble and disagree with each other (“Address to a Joint Session” n. pag.), the very things that make one human. The risk in turn, which Bush also clearly articulated, is that you yourself will be on the receiving end of this dehumanization, that you will be seen as a terrorist yourself. In other words, in such instances, the militarized disimagination machine is one and the same with the anthropological machine, where militarization addresses a subject by appealing to an ideal of the human that in turn reifies and normalizes the addressee as human.

3.3 The Disimagination Machine at Work in the Animal Question: Bobby and Levinas

In the surreal and brief text “The Name of a Dog, or Natural Rights” Levinas recounts a story about his time in Camp 1492, the labour camp he was forced to endure as a prisoner of war at the hands of the Nazis. There, “for a few short weeks, before the sentinels chased him away, a wandering dog entered [their] lives” (153). According to Levinas, this dog, who comes to be given the name Bobby, sees these prisoners in a way that none of their captors do: “For him, there was no doubt that we were men” (153). Much has been made of Bobby and the opening for the nonhuman into the Levinasian ethical project, even as Levinas himself resisted such a possibility. Yet the question remains:

what does it mean that for Bobby, Levinas and his fellow prisoners were men? If Levinas cannot reconcile his own efforts for a radical ethics beyond the human with a nonhuman creature whose gaze and treatment of the prisoners somehow undoes their own dehumanization at the hands of the Nazis, what are we to take away from this? I'm much less interested in pulling apart the gaps in logic that follow from the discrepancies in the story told by Levinas, but instead see it as an opportunity to reflect on the ways that disimagination in the form of compulsory humanism operates even where we perhaps least expect it to. What's more, I suspect that what the story of Bobby shows is that in the particular context of war, that space of radically destabilized ontologies, the grip of compulsory humanism intensifies.

In *The Animal that Therefore I Am*, Derrida devotes a significant amount of time to thinking through Levinas, Bobby, and more broadly, the ethical project Levinas tables with the figure of the face. What Derrida takes pains to make clear is that though Levinas seeks something beyond (or before) the human as the ground of ethics, such as with an ethics of the subject as host, as hostage, his framework remains inexorably human. Perhaps this is actually self-evident given that Levinas relies on the figure of the face as the fundamental expression of the ethical relation. Even if the face is meant to represent something other than a literal human face, as a figure it arguably gains its rhetorical power in large part because it *is* a face and not something else: a breath or a mouth, a song, a collection of gestures, or something entirely beyond or before any kind of

embodiment. The face, in other words, “remains first of all a fraternal and human face” (Derrida 106), which we always already recognize because what other kind of face is there? For Levinas, Derrida observes that the “animal has no face, he does not have the naked face that looks at me to the extent of my forgetting the color of its eyes” (107). Here Derrida quotes Levinas, who insists that the animal face is only discoverable after the human face (108); subsequently any ethics that might respond to the alterity of the nonhuman is always secondary to a human ethics, thereby rendering Levinas’ ethics anthropocentric from the ground up.

While the human as whole, autonomous, self-regulating individual might disappear, even in its radical constitution through inter-subjectivity, there is still some version of the human at its centre. Querying this anthropocentrism, Derrida asks:

If I am responsible for the other, and before the other, and in place of the other, on behalf of the other, isn’t the animal more other still, more radically other, if I might put it that way, than the other in whom I recognize my brother, than the other in whom I identify my fellow or my neighbor? If I have a duty [devoir] “something owed before any debt, before any right” toward the other, wouldn’t it then also be toward the animal, which is still more other than the other human, my brother or my neighbor? In fact, no. (107)

In fact, no. Yet this ‘no’ isn’t final or as totalizing as one might expect. As Derrida explains, there are openings in the fence for the animal to enter into ethical relevance in the work of Levinas. He remarks that when Levinas is asked to explain the animal face, Levinas “replies that he would very much like to respond, that no doubt he should, but he can’t. He is incapable of it” (108). By answering

thusly, Derrida argues that Levinas complicates his ethics in interesting ways.

Indeed, in something of a twist, the effect here, as Derrida observes, is to undo the certainty of the entire project:

In responding that he can't respond, Levinas says, "Here I am"; he responds, but by admitting that he can't respond to the question of knowing what a face is... he can thus no longer answer for his whole discourse on the face. For declaring that he doesn't know where the right to be called "face" begins means confessing that one doesn't know at bottom what a face is, what the word means, what governs its usage, and that that amounts, as a result, to calling into question the whole legitimacy of the discourse and ethics of the "face" of the other... (109)

Put simply, in saying that he should respond, but that he can't, Derrida suggests that Levinas perhaps unintentionally reveals the fragility of the face, the unthought aspects of what it is, and isn't, and what it can and can't mean.

Calarco suggests a kind of recovering of this fragility with an "ethics of universal consideration" which would "entail being ethically attentive and open to the possibility that anything might take on a face" (73), which I think fairly neatly radically expands the scope of what Levinas offers with his ethics.

But there are several loose threads here that neither Derrida, nor Calarco, really follow, and which I think can help us more deeply understand Levinas, and perhaps in turn respond generously to him and his work. This will be to ask us to take literally the position of Levinas, that he can't respond, and consider what might be in play to prevent the possibility of response. What if we contextualize his answer more robustly than is offered already above? As predicated on something more than just a theory, as more than just philosophy in dialogue?

Consider that the ethical project Levinas develops primarily begins formation after

his time as a Jewish prisoner of war, after the end of WWII, a conflict in which, by virtue of his position as a Jewish man, he was a target of one of the most outrageously dehumanizing regimes in history, a result of which, no doubt, many people he knew died, and in which members of his Lithuanian family did in fact die (Bergo n. pag.). If, as I have suggested, war radically destabilizes ontologies of the human, and one response to this destabilization is a form of compulsory humanism, is it possible that in some instances, the effects are such that a person, in this case Levinas, *literally cannot respond*? That one possible effect of the trauma of war is, for some, a truncating of imagination, at least where the perceived boundary between the animal and the human is concerned?

Derrida names Levinas' confessed inability to respond humility, and I agree humility is part of Levinas' response (or inability to respond), and that this is formed by a fundamental attachment to the face as always already human, but there is more. It is distinctly possible that given the circumstances (i.e., war) that the risks that come with thinking beyond the human and towards ethical responsibility to something like an animal face, outweigh the risk of being unable to answer for his own ethical project, particularly as someone who has experienced such profound dehumanization, such excessively anti-ethical circumstances.¹⁰ This would be then, a powerful example of war and trauma as disimagination machines, operating to such an extent that answering the question

¹⁰ This same risk is arguably attached to thinking through questions of race, animality, and slavery, as I explore in my second chapter.

at hand literally becomes impossible. They are akin to the salting of earth, where the possibility for imagination is no longer tenable.

But let's return now to Bobby. After spending time scratching open a place for animals to peer into the work of Levinas, Derrida reminds us that even in the "hymn to Bobby" there are numerous limits to what Levinas suggests is owed to the animal there (116). Though Bobby comes and affirms the humanity of the prisoners, even where the Nazi guards rendered them "sub-human, a gang of apes" and "beings entrapped in their species" (Levinas 152), he remains some *other* other, i.e., not the Other to which Levinas owes so much (everything in fact), just "the last Kantian in Nazi Germany without the brain to universalize maxims and drives" (Levinas 153). Strange that, when this little dog served to so profoundly bear witness to the humanity of the prisoners. Strange that, as Derrida says,

this allegorical dog [both Bobby and not Bobby] that becomes witness to the dignity of man is an other without alterity, without *logos*, without ethics, without the power to universalize maxims. It can witness to us only for us, being too other to be our brother or neighbor, not enough other to be the wholly other... (117).

As David Clark explains, simultaneously "welcomed, regulated, and expelled, Bobby traces and retraces the oppositional limits that configure the human and the animal" for Levinas (70). Bobby is not enough "to subvert the traditional subject by making it a subject-host or hostage of the other" and as an animal, "remains for Levinas what it will have been for the whole Cartesian-type tradition: a machine that doesn't speak, that doesn't have access to sense" ("The Animal"

117). The language of machine invites the question of the machine itself, bringing us back to, once again, thinking about the disimagination machine, and its expression in the anthropological machine.

3.4 The Anthropological Machine Meets Speciating Assemblages

In my earlier chapter I draw on Weheliye and McKay to provide a framework for thinking through power as negotiated by race and species. The thought of Agamben, as Weheliye notes, is limited in its capacity to explain and critique race, especially given its reliance on the state of exception as deracinated from questions of race. Others have argued something similar with regards to Agamben and species, with Calarco's work perhaps being especially cogent on this topic.¹¹ In this section, while bearing the critique by the likes of Weheliye and Calarco in mind, I begin with the anthropological machine as a foothold into thinking about the specific relation of military working dogs and their handlers. Part of the appeal of working with the anthropological machine is the neatness that it appears to afford us when thinking through power, a kind of methodological tidiness. But this tidiness also marks the precise limits of sensibility, and reflects back the problem of the animal as a political figure in itself, which the anthropological machine, at least as far as Agamben has it, fails to make sense of.

¹¹ See especially Chapter Three, "Jamming the Anthropological Machine: Agamben" of *Zoographies* (2008).

The anthropological machine, then, is the figure through which Agamben articulates his understanding of the operation of biopolitics, and this figure is intimately connected to the state and the law. Beginning from Foucault's observation that power today is characterized by biopolitics, or the power of the sovereign to manage "life," through the capacity to make live or let die ("History" 138), Agamben argues that such a formulation of power has been with us not just since the advent of modernity, but is in fact latent within the origins of the political operations of power itself. Drawing on Aristotle's *Politics*, Agamben argues that the distinction between what the Greeks understood as *zoe*—natural life—and that of *bios*—the political and institutional forms that life is compelled to assume—reveals this biopolitical relationship at the foundation of sovereign power in the form of the law, and the capacity to suspend the law. For Agamben, what is important here is to understand that the distinction between the categories of *zoe* and *bios* does not arrive spontaneously; rather, the distinction is *performative*, i.e., it is *iteratively enacted* and both calls into being and maintains a certain reality, in this case, that which is "properly" human. As an ostensibly human-making "anthropological machine," the performance and re-inscription of these boundaries is not value-neutral but has dire consequences for those deemed not human enough (and therefore disposable), i.e., for those reduced to bare life. When operationalized through militarization, these boundaries become strictly enforced such that, as already indicated earlier, imagining otherwise is quarantined, lest one become contaminated. What I'm

suggesting here is that another term for thinking this quarantine is compulsory humanism, a mode of thinking insisted upon by the state. Significantly, Agamben's interest in disrupting the anthropological machine lies not in attention to the specific ways the life of the not-human-enough (with inclusion of the not-human-at-all) is created and managed under the auspices of modern biopolitics, but rather in biopolitics as a process whereby humans shore up themselves by animalizing others—other humans. That is, for Agamben, the anthropological machine produces what is properly human, but only insofar as it can be differentially mapped onto members of the human species, which is to say that *zoe* is indeed human, if not “properly” human. (This is where the disimagination machine that works through according special status to members of the human species leaves its mark on Agamben.) While undoubtedly the disavowal or dysselection of members of the human species is centrally important to understanding the operation of power, both within and beyond armed conflict, such understanding is incomplete without simultaneous attention paid to nonhuman life as a factor in the management and production of life, and economies of life, more generally. Without this attention, Agamben's thinking fails to achieve the nuance of work like Boisseron or McKay, and in missing this he in fact perniciously reinscribes the very effects of the machine he would like to disrupt (Calarco “Giorgio Agamben” 175) by reinforcing the mechanisms that enable exception as the “zone of indistinction” that he seeks to critique (“The Open” 37).

Further examination of how this interspecies state of exception operates reveals distinct implications for nonhuman life, and in the case of this study, war dogs. Agamben articulates the difference between *bios* and *zoe* as mediated by the figure of “*homo sacer*,” or the bare life that resides in the state of exception. The structure of this exception is double: “*homo sacer*” is “situated at the intersection of a capacity to be killed and yet not sacrificed, outside both human and divine law” (“Homo Sacer” 73). What must be carefully parsed here is that though the bare life produced by this state of exception is synonymous with the term “sacred life,” as Agamben argues, this form of sacred is unrelated to sacrifice as a process of consecration or celebration:

What defines the status of *homo sacer* is . . . the particular character of the double exclusion into which he is taken and the violence to which he finds himself exposed. This violence—the unsanctionable killing that, in his case, anyone may commit—is classifiable neither as sacrifice nor as homicide, neither as the execution of a condemnation to death nor as sacrilege. (“Homo Sacer” 82)

This banishment of sacred life is “the sovereign *nomos* that conditions every rule, the originary spatialization that governs and makes possible every localization and every territorialization” (“Homo Sacer” 111). In other words, in the production of a double exclusion from sacrifice and from law in the form of a ban, sovereign power both exercises and produces itself. As such, for Agamben, “the production of bare life is the originary activity of sovereignty” (“Homo Sacer” 83). Central to this logic of sovereignty is the power and mechanics of the ban. As Agamben indicates, “what the ban holds together is precisely bare life and sovereign

power” (“Homo Sacer” 109), i.e., the ban is simultaneously a process of “attraction and repulsion that ties together the two poles of the sovereign exception: bare life and power, *homo sacer* and the sovereign” (“Homo Sacer” 110-111). At the heart of sovereignty, according to Agamben, is not a question of sacrifice but, in the form of the ban, disavowal in the form of making another killable, something radically different than sacrifice (as Agamben’s own work on the anthropology and etymology of sacrifice shows).¹²

Yet as Ian Baucom argues, this disavowal in the form of the ban does not fully explain the political operation of power. In his reading of Goya’s *The Disasters of War*, Baucom demonstrates through the figure of *homo inimicus* that the ban is but one way power manages itself and life. Indeed, in the figure of *homo inimicus* we see the operation of power that is not about disavowal or sacrifice but instead reflects a violently aggressive need to *exterminate* particular lives as being inimical or entirely opposed to the very possibility of the sovereign state. What’s more, it is not enough to simply terminate the life of *homo inimicus* but to render it totally unrecognizable as life because within *homo inimicus* resides the so-called “unjust” enemy, or that enemy who is beyond obligation and entirely outside the law to the extent that the law *as law* appears to become vulnerable in their presence (Baucom 179). What Baucom’s argument reveals then is that *homo sacer* cannot account for all forms of politics, and that while *homo sacer* may be one figure in the movement of the political, there are other

¹² See pages 71-80 in *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (1998).

figures that serve to complicate what we understand as the political, and where we understand it to be taking place. Both racializing and speciating assemblages make this multiplicity especially legible, which becomes clear through examination of the role of property in the production of Man, sovereignty, and the operation of the political.

3.5 Man and His Property

In a recent article examining a number of parallels between the strange bedfellows of John Locke and Jacques Derrida, Wadiwel draws out a tension that exists in greater or lesser degrees in both philosophers, as they orient to the question of the sovereign as man, man as sovereign. At the centre of this sovereignty, per Wadiwel's reading, is property. "Locke's theory of property," he says, "is arguably a foundational perspective in liberal enlightenment philosophy, and underpins key rights conceptualizations, including the right to bodily integrity" ("The Will" 149), which he concludes based on a passage from Locke which states, "Man has a *Property* in his own *Person*. This no Body has any Right to but himself. The *Labour* of his Body, and the *Work* of his Hands, we may say, are properly his" (287-8; bk. 2, §27). None of this marks an especially new intervention, but always interested in structures that underpin (and obscure) human and animal conflict, what Wadiwel does next is to elucidate the connections between violence and sovereignty in significant ways. As he notes, for Locke, "sovereignty follows property right, and not the other way around"

(“The Will” 150), and that property is a product of the transformative effects of work: “the individual expands their being—both what their being is and what they possess—through a gradual transformation of the world around them” (“The Will” 149). This expanding transformation is “driven by a desire for self-preservation” (152). Per Locke, this self-preservation isn’t strictly the aim of humans. As Wadiwel explains further, the “‘victory’ that emerges as a property right in animals is precisely the result of the *contest* between the self-preservation desire of humans and that of other animals,” because of course animals seek to preserve themselves as well (152). This contest, as Wadiwel has it, is in fact a *conflict* between humans and animals, or “a kind of war” which “appears to found the property relation in Locke” (153).¹³ Thinking back to Agamben, when this war is the functional core of property relations, and property relations are the grounds for sovereignty, politics cannot be understood as reducible to the state of exception.

No doubt, the state of exception is in play as a mechanism for political practice, a means by which political subjects and political subjectivity *reinforces* (rather than institutes) themselves as such, but the origins of politics are more complex than that one mechanism, as Weheliye’s work emphasizes. Indeed, with urgency, he tells us that we

are in dire need of alternatives to the legal conception of personhood that dominates our world, and, in addition, to not lose sight of what remains

¹³ War against animals functions as the major motif of much of Wadiwel’s work, including his monograph of the same name, which extensively builds upon his arguments here.

outside the law, what the law cannot capture, what it cannot magically transform into the fantastic form of property ownership. (81)

What would such a personhood entail? Who would it include, one wonders. For Wadiwel at least, we must open ourselves to nonhumans here. The current “political order,” he tells us, “requires the conquest of the non-human to sustain a human freedom from the absolute equality of nature; the human social and political order is the victory prize” (155). This human social and political order, then, the one defined through property and given teeth by the law that Wehiliye seeks to challenge, necessarily must become accountable to life as more than the pursuit of self-preservation. In other words, we must undertake an orientation to the state of nature (Locke’s absolute equality of nature) as the original exception rather than the result of exception. This is the exception of vulnerability, shared precariousness, the possibility of responsibility to and for life, i.e., the exception of flesh itself. And indeed, we might revisit Calarco here, with his ethics of universal consideration, as a way to refigure exception further, such that exception is in fact a kind of radical vulnerability, one which both obligates us and to which we are obligated, and thus calls for, even insists upon, different relations than those of conquest or individualistic self-preservation.

3.6 Sacrifice-as-sacrifice

Returning now to the image this chapter opens with proves useful for orienting in this swamp of political theory: there we have Dimont, covered in a shroud, borne in the arms of a soldier, as though to an altar. The image is almost

biblical in appearances, emphatic in its demand that we make sense of the possibility of sacrifice, of animal sacrifice, of what it means to be sacrificed to and for war. What better place to start then with Agamben, who if we resist the temptation to kick him and his biopolitical luggage (eg., bare life, the anthropological machine, and *homo sacer*) to the curb, might prove useful to further examine sacrifice, and specifically sacrifice as it operates in the production (or more accurately, the reinforcement) of the sovereignty of Man. But to be clear, this is an examination of sacrifice *as sacrifice*, rather than as disavowal, as a means to shed light on the formation of Man in the context of war, militarization, and the war dog. In the first place, this demands clarifying the relationship between the kind of sacrifice I'm interested in and Agamben's sacrifice-as-disavowal. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines "avowal" simply as to "own or acknowledge (a person) as one's own." Its negative form then, is a refusal to own or acknowledge, as well as a refusal to take "responsibility for, or approbation of." (The limits of Agamben's thought are once again visible here, as in the case of *homo inimicus*, disavowal does not adequately represent the force of relations between this figure and the state.) If ownership is inherent to avowal, disavowal means to disown or repudiate. This is to say that disavowal is as much to do with a refusal to be responsible for as it is a denial of any relation. To disavow something or someone then, is to terminate a relationship, or perhaps more complexly, to *deny* any relation to the entity in question; it is to say, 'this has nothing to do with me and I have nothing to do with it.' Which is of course entirely

ironic, the inclusion of the exclusion as Agamben would say: the very structure of disavowal is one which reinforces a subject who denies a relation to the entity in question. What's more, in this denial, the sovereign renders life killable rather than subject to the crime of murder, which would merit the application of the law's justice. As Agamben has it, this is in fact the originary move of a biopolitical order, of sovereignty's rule over life.

But while Agamben's thinking focuses on this disavowal through the form of the ban, what remains unexplained is whether or not there is an operation of sacrifice-as-sacrifice, as something that takes shape otherwise than as a ban, and to determine if and how this kind of sacrifice plays a role in the production of the sovereignty of Man. Beginning from the structure of disavowal, in which a subject denies the relation between another, the contours of sacrifice-as-sacrifice as it impacts war dogs become visible through an inversion of this dynamic of denial of ownership, in which in place of denial is a profound acknowledgment by the subject (the handler) of the object (the war dog). Such an acknowledgement is tied up to the very things that are its condition of possibility, i.e., dogs as property. For example, if the work of a body's hands upon something produce property, and therefore sovereignty in the face of undifferentiated nature, war dogs serve as ideal examples of this. To become a war dog, a dog must be worked upon; they must be trained rigorously. From a very young age, they must literally have hands laid upon them at regular intervals, particularly around their teeth and feet (Ritland 62), so that they become accustomed to being handled. In

this way, their use-value increases—for example, an injured dog during combat must be able to tolerate the invasive hands of a veterinary medic—and thus, with capacities such as these trained into them, as property they become more valuable, and ostensibly, the trainer or handler who works with them, increases their own sovereignty in the form of dominion over them. Dimont, the dog in the image, is a poignant representation of this process of sovereignty, not the least marker of which, as just explained, is that they were trained into usefulness for war. There is also the question of survival and self-preservation as it pertains to property, and thus to war dogs. Wadiwel explains:

The right to property is relational and arrives through conquest; freedom to enjoy property is gained by actively denying others their own right of enjoyment. ... In the case of animals, this acquisition of property occurs through violent contestation, and property itself becomes a means to contain this right of conquest and alienate the spoils of victory. This is a tussle that lays claim to bodies, that grapples and appropriates bodies in an active scene of conflict or “chase.” A life-and-death struggle for self-preservation. (155)

Wadiwel is writing firstly in the context of Locke’s example of the hunt (i.e., the chase) as the site of conflict, and conversion to property, which is inherently a “life-and-death struggle for self-preservation.” This struggle though is literalized in specific and charged ways in the combat zone, where a dog’s enjoyment is entirely managed by the humans surrounding them, and their life is always ready to be handed over to violent death in favour of the survival of the human handler. Life-and-death indeed, the body of Dimont rests in the arms of Staff Sgt. Thomas, a testament to the very structures that institute property as self-preservation.

All this to say that where Agamben is clear to emphasize *homo sacer's* specifically non-sacrificial sacrificial status as a *form of disavowal*, in which a life can be killed but not murdered, war dogs reflect a different structure of sacrifice. In the context of a battlespace, sacrifice of a dog is a relation of possession—for all intents and purposes, the human (or the military) owns the dog—and this dog's death is understood as sacrifice because of the loss of something valued, a valued possession even. In part this is because the notion that a dog might sacrifice their self to death is, if not meaningless, than highly dubious, given that we cannot verify a dog's orientation or awareness of their own death (which isn't to say that I'm suggesting that they don't know what death is, but that we cannot verify the specific meaning of this knowing one way or another). Instead, it is the handler and the humans involved with the dog who make of the dog a sacrifice. As such, it is not through the structure of disavowal that the human becomes Man, but through the structure of ownership: the human becomes Man as one who possesses property that he may in turn sacrifice. Whatever the secondary purposes and material ends of sacrifice (i.e., to what or to whom one sacrifices someone or something, the fact of death), underlying the very structure of sacrifice-as-sacrifice is a relationship between a *subject who sacrifices* and an *object (or entity) sacrificed*. In this respect, the object sacrificed comes to be understood as sacrifice-as-sacrifice when it represents something given up or given over. In other words, sacrifice-as-sacrifice is fundamentally a relation of possession; there is an economy to it whereby sacrifice can only be understood

as a sacrifice when it costs something to the one who does the sacrificing, which is completely different than the relation of sacrifice-as-disavowal. Sacrifice-as-sacrifice is only made possible by virtue of ownership, which returns us once again to Man, and the processes whereby Man institutes himself as such.¹⁴ Moreover, by framing war dog subject-position through sacrifice-as-sacrifice, rather than disavowal (*homo sacer*) or violent elimination (*homo inimicus*) a new political category emerges: *zoe sacer*, which gathers into itself the operations of exclusion that inevitably structure *homo sacer*, but also includes sacrifice-as-sacrifice, where the sacrificial object comes into political nonbeing through the process of becoming property.

Understood in the context of redirecting sacrifice, as I've done above, Agamben's work shows itself to be a few steps behind both Wadiwel and Weheliye. Sacrifice-as-sacrifice begins with property and is therefore an element of both speciating and racializing assemblages, given the implicit connection it shares with slave ownership (both human and otherwise), and the putative ownership of bodies. Boisseron triangulates this relationship between property, slavery, and subjectivity precisely when she asks, "to what extent is dehumanization precisely, and inextricably, tied to the question of ownership—

¹⁴ I'm leaving open the possibility for other forms and meanings of sacrifice and am distinctly speaking to sacrifice in the context of militarization and contemporary Western wars. This does not mean that the logic I'm examining doesn't apply elsewhere, rather, that I'm not making sweeping claims about sacrifice across cultures. For example, sacrifice, and especially self-sacrifice, may be understood as a function of responsibility to, rather than ownership of, in other contexts.

not only being owned as an animal but also owning an animal” (xxiv)? In other words, she asks, to what extent is possession a humanizing process for the one who possesses? The context of contemporary war is instructive for measuring this. War dogs as property and sacrifice reflect a formation of sovereignty with Man at its apex, and thus support a militarizing apparatus which seeks to obscure the deleterious ontological effects of war itself. By centring the manipulation and management of nonhuman life, militarization doubles down on its broader aims (e.g., the perpetuation and normalization of war) by safeguarding the very idea of the human, or more accurately, Man, as possessor, victor, conqueror, you name it. Indeed, as Wadiwel explains, Locke’s “will for self-preservation,” that notion at the foundation of Western political economy, makes of humans conquerors, whose victory over the wills of others “arrives with the mark of rationality, as a logic that emerges through the practice of conquest.” As a direct result, human superiority “arrives as an auto-legitimizing gesture” (155), and arguably militarization seeks to make of war the master signifier of this gesture. In other words, the humanizing extent of possession is so broad in its scope that it can, in effect, legitimize even the most illegitimate claims to both sovereignty and righteousness brought about by the violence of war, such that these same processes themselves are seen as rational. And even as war risks undoing Man, in the field where one seeks to conquer, a certain credibility and legitimizing effect beckons, suggesting that war itself is a process in a constant state of change, oscillating between what it destroys and what it seeks to recover or

reinforce. Though of course this is entirely illusory, a story unravelling at the seams, as the interminable projects of contemporary war show us, and reveal that conquest is always imperfect and incomplete, thus proving such a possibility to be but a mirage.

Chapter IV: Epistemic Violence and Military Working Dogs

4.1 A Shift in the Wind: The Intolerable Spectacle

In a widely cited interview between Jacques Derrida and Elisabeth Roudinesco, speaking about the atrocities of industrialized animal agriculture, Derrida states that he believes “that the spectacle man creates for himself in his treatment of animals will become intolerable” (“For What Tomorrow” 71). In tying the viability of man’s sense of self to the manufacturing of a horrendous spectacle of violence against nonhumans, Derrida draws a direct line between the visual—what and how we see—to the human sense of self as human, especially in relation to the images of nonhumans. To his position I would add that it’s not just that we create a spectacle *for* ourselves; we also create spectacles *of* ourselves, positioned as we are as the agents of the violence itself, further complicating our relationship to such images (and perhaps images more generally). From this angle then, what concerns us, oddly, is not necessarily the suffering of the brutalized nonhumans we see in such images, but in an echo of the Kantian position that cruelty to animals conditions us for cruelty to humans, what matters instead is the risk of existential suffering we as humans experience in learning that we are capable of such violence. And while it’s not fair to say that cows on the killing floor should be reduced to a problem of the fragility of the human ego, I think it *is* fair to say that Derrida is on to something with regards to the motivating power of our own self-perception and how it affects who (and what) we imagine

ourselves to be. Importantly, this same motivation isn't limited to violence perpetrated solely against nonhumans, but in fact extends outward to violences of varied location, logic, and target—including, and perhaps especially, the myriad violence of modern warfare. At stake in understanding spectacle and images according to my extension of Derrida's logic, whether they be specifically about animals, about war, or about the two together, is an acknowledgement that the degree to which we can tolerate violence, whether through denial, disavowal, or obfuscation, comes down to how it makes us *feel* about ourselves and what we think it reflects or doesn't reflect about ourselves. This is to say that how we apprehend such images—first in the way they make us feel, and second how we respond to that feeling—and then that feeling's relationship to the frame with which we surround those images, says much about the strange paradox of the simultaneous fragility and resilience of the idea of the human itself.

Orienting analysis of images through feeling isn't a new way of reading photography or film, though it hasn't always been in fashion to do so.¹⁵ “That we feel photography,” Elspeth H. Brown and Thy Phu argue, “can hardly be doubted” (1), and understanding feeling allows three significant advantages for engaging images: First, attending to the operation of feeling “allows us to focus on practices of viewing” (7). For the work here, those practices include the formats

¹⁵ In the introduction to their edited collection *Feeling Photography*, Brown and Phu especially make note of the contributions of Susan Sontag and Roland Barthes to thinking about photography and feeling (see pages 2-5), while simultaneously noting the importance of work that “thinks” photography, and the hand this has played in legitimating photography as a field of study.

through which we interact with the images, namely popular magazines, and news or documentary films typically watched at home. Second, they suggest that paying attention to feeling allows accounting for and engaging the analytic categories oriented to “marginalized subjects such as women, queer subjects, and racialized groups, who are conspicuously excluded in approaches [to photography] that focus on thinking,” and to which I would add nonhuman subjects (7). They suggest that in by expanding the analytic scope thusly, the “rubric of feeling promises to link the older photographic criticism’s attention to power and historical materialism with new questions concerning racial formation, colonialism, postindustrial economies, gender, and queer counterpublics” (7-8). And again, feeling similarly includes a way into comprehending how visual representations of nonhumans serve in the formation of the distinct category of the human. The last advantage they name is that feeling itself isn’t in fact a “new analytic approach,” but that “it has long been central to the history and theory of photography, in both the production and viewing of images” (8), which is to say that feeling is, and has always been, central to how images are understood. This latter point is especially true when the subject of images are in fact nonhuman, as the expanding scholarly work on cuteness shows.

I want to first elaborate on Brown and Phu’s first point about practices of viewing as they relate to critical engagement of photography, before returning to feeling in the subsequent section. If, as I’ve claimed earlier, militarization is a form of disimagination, war photography will be a site through which we can see

this disimagination operationalized, though it's worth noting that the violence of militarized disimagination is enacted simultaneously across multiple registers: in the material (e.g., the actual destruction of evidence of war), in the discursive (e.g., the policy and legal frameworks used to enact war and justify or obscure its atrocities, such as in Donald Trump's recent turn to forgive war atrocities committed by American soldiers (Schmitt, Haberman and Benner n.p.)), and the affective (e.g., in the form of what feelings about war are celebrated, and what are disavowed). But it is this latter register that I'm especially interested in for a number of reasons, the first of which includes my earlier query of Derrida and the spectacle of the human, i.e., how we feel about ourselves (rather than how we think about ourselves) will mark a limit to sustaining our sense of ourselves as human. Secondly, feeling is also of particular value when thinking about interspecies relationality and power operations given that feeling arguably marks a primary mode of relationality between human and nonhumans, as shaped by our significantly non-linguistic ways of being together, which Kuzniar examines closely in her chapter titled "Muteness." It is there that she suggests that the nonhuman's, and especially the dog's lack of access to words, engenders a specific form of relation grounded in something other than language. She notes that her fascination with the whippets with whom she lives is "amplified by their silence, untranslatability, and detachment. The intimacy between us is even enhanced by their silence, for with the failure of words, I encounter instead the loveliness of their bodies and mien, the thereness of their secretive being" (28).

Which is to say, how it feels to be with them in their embodied being. Lastly, our practices of viewing MWDs are profoundly shaped by the militarized culture in which we are embedded and participate.

The feelings we experience when viewing images of dogs at war are not simply feelings that arise out of nowhere: contemporary militarization provides the parameters for naming and making sense of those feelings. Indeed, militarized affect, as Butler notes, works on our senses to position us in particular ways. She suggests that “the senses are part of any recruitment effort” of war (xii), and that critically engaging this is to consider the “epistemological position to which we are recruited when we watch or listen to war reports” (xii). Militarized affect, as I’m laying it out here, is both an expression and mechanism of compulsory humanism, simultaneously generating and reinforcing our interpretation of our feelings, and therefore the work done by the images, of war dogs, up to and including images of injured or dead war dogs, which might otherwise reflect the intolerable spectacle man makes of himself in times of war. As I aim to show, in many respects, images of violence and trauma against dogs act as a kind of corrective to the intolerable spectacle, especially when they reflect the intimacy of the relationship between MWDs and their handlers, people whose treatment of nonhumans ostensibly serves not as unacceptable reminders of a capacity for violence and brutality, but as expressions of some of man’s most noble and storied qualities, such as the capacity for tenderness, care, and loyalty. Within the context out of which these images arise, i.e., the otherwise dehumanizing

battlespace of war, these images become all the more powerful as signifiers of the goodness of humanity directly in proportion to that context. Indeed, central to understanding the work of these images is understanding this context and how this context in turn frames such images. This is to say that I'm both interested in the context of war itself, but as importantly for most people—for civilians—who experience war at a distance, I'm concerned with the way that war permeates the Western cultural and political imaginary today. Arguably, the normative cultural understanding of war oscillates between war as dehumanizing, destructive, and nationalistic, and war as a site of heroism, opportunity, and patriotism. If on the one hand, we go to war in the name of killing and death, on the other, we go in the name of life, a particular form of life.

4.2 Militarized Aesthetics of Care

What images of humans and war dogs tap into then is a specific cultural site at which militarization shapes our relationship to nonhuman life, specifically canine life, and in turn, what this relationship does for the human sense of (a certain kind of) human self in the face of the intolerable violence of war, i.e., when the human is no longer just a human (as if they ever could be), but some kind of warhuman. Making sense of these photos requires understanding the aesthetic cues common throughout the images: How do they make us feel? Why do they make us feel that way? How are we expected to read these images and to what end? What leads us to read them normatively? What kind of counter-reading can

we bring to them? It is my position that the primary experience of feeling found in these images is made meaningful through what Josephine Donovan calls an aesthetics of care. Drawing on Martin Buber, Donovan defines aesthetics of care as beginning firstly by acknowledging “an ‘I-thou’ relationship, in which the natural world and its multivarious creatures are recognized as subjects who have stories of their own” (73).¹⁶ She states that such “subjects are qualitatively particularized, embedded in specific locales,” and that knowledge of “these subjects’ ways of being requires experiential attentiveness to their unique shapes, expressions, and patterns, as well as to their contextual habitats.” Further, “aesthetics in this construction requires emotional interaction with living entities” (73).

But under the regime of militarization, which serves to reinforce the dominance of Man, an aesthetics of care becomes a force of disimagination, in which what Wadiwel calls “epistemic violence” operates to obscure the problem of both war and anthroparchy that defines the lives of MWDs. In the context of the conflict between humans and nonhumans more generally, Wadiwel explains violence can be said to occur at the epistemic level, when

the categories of human and animal, superior and inferior, are constantly rearticulated, silencing the possibility of any response from “the animal” to our onslaught, and systematically rendering the event of violence as natural, friendly, humane or as a non event. Epistemic violence participates in the sublimation of violence as non violence; as such it

¹⁶A particular appeal of starting from this point, with this definition, is its reliance on stories being at the core of subjectivity. This is, when it comes down to it, perhaps *the* motif of my work, all the work I have done here and elsewhere. I have long teased my husband, a geographer, that geographers think everything always comes back to “space.” He recently pointed out to me that literary scholars think everything is “story.” Three years of my own research reduced to a quick table-reversal. But he wasn’t wrong.

produces the possibility of a “structural violence.” Epistemic violence frames personal and structural violence in such a way as to naturalise our war as a form of legitimised sovereignty, through the hierarchisation of difference. We believe it is our right, “whether we like it or not,” to decide whether to kill and to make suffer. And through these knowledge systems animals are framed, they can only be understood, as willing participants in this violence; it is as if, to paraphrase Spivak, “the animals actually want to die.” (“The War” 36)

A militarized aesthetics of care, for example, legitimizes sovereignty in the form of the qualities explored in the images below (eg., parent-child relations, grief, intimacy etc.), and in doing so, exactly naturalizes the species hierarchy mandated by the use of dogs in combat. Indeed, one could go so far as to say that no one really likes to sacrifice dogs (it must in fact be unpleasurable for it to do the ontological work it needs to do under regimes of militarization), but that it is a necessary responsibility of being a human who serves to secure the rights and lives of other humans.

Within the framework of a militarized aesthetics of care, images of war dogs are made to perform profound service to Man: first, in a militarizing capacity, they rewrite the typically destabilizing ontological effects of war such that the contextual violence against nonhumans in fact reaffirms the figure of the human as good and noble even in the face of bald instrumentalization of life, and second, through the reflection of an ostensible structure of mutual care, they simultaneously obscure the questionable ethics of instrumentalizing nonhuman life in conflict. Consequently, rather than a negative spectacle created for himself, the intrinsic violence against canine life that finds form in the war dog constitutes

a kind of spectacular balm, smoothing over the dis-figuring consequences normally associated with war. As Wadiwel puts it, “[e]pistemic violence allows us to name these relations, almost without a moment of self-reflection, under the guise of “friendship”” (“The War” 220). Moreover, instead of adhering to the trope of war images that mobilize populations to resist war (a different kind of intolerable spectacle), images in which war dogs are being cared for serve biopolitical double duty: on the one hand, they reflect a kind of human exceptionalism in which the human’s capacity for care is made all the more potent as it extends across species boundaries—thereby assuring the rightness of human sovereignty, and on the other, they normalize a species hierarchy in which dogs occupy a more fully exposed state of vulnerability than humans, given their combat roles as IED-detection instruments.

When we examine photos of war dogs, it’s evident that the humans interacting with these creatures model intimate knowledge of their canine companions. Take for example this image (e.g. see *fig. 4.1*), in which a war dog is being given water from a bottle by a human soldier. The water runs down the side of their mouth as an eager tongue reaches for more. Even in this shot, with the human mostly outside the frame, only the hand holding the bottle visible, and our attention wholly given over to the dog, there is an implied knowledge that this dog needs water at this moment, and that this dog trusts the handler enough to take water from their hand. It can’t be overlooked either that drinking from a bottle recalls the relationship of a parent and an infant, further codifying the intimacy



Fig. 4.1. USMC/Sgt. Pete Thibodeau. Photograph of military working dog drinking water from a bottle in Farah province, Afghanistan. Alan Taylor. Image 8. "Afghanistan: Dogs of War." The Atlantic, 3 June 2014. <https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2014/06/afghanistan-dogs-of-war/100750/>

shared between these two creatures, and thus affirming in a performative way the naming practice of handlers who call themselves a dog's mom or dad (Frankel 57). The effect of such an image is twofold: first, we understand the role of the dog as dog, a nonhuman, a dependent, an other. But notably the dog both is and isn't the subject of the photo because even though the human in the image is mostly outside the frame, the dog makes it evident through their relationship to the human that the being beyond the shot is indeed a human subject. One who provides and takes care, which is the second effect.

In this next image (e.g. see *fig. 4.2*), we see "U.S. Marine dog handler Sgt. Mark Behl, left, of the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Force K9 unit, and another



Fig. 4.2. AP Photo/Brennan Linsley. Military working dog Drak being cared for after a bomb attack in Helmand, Afghanistan, September 8, 2011. Alan Taylor. Image 21. "Afghanistan: Dogs of War." *The Atlantic*, 3 June 2014. <https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2014/06/afghanistan-dogs-of-war/100750/>

Marine, perform first aid" on of Drak, who had been injured in the line of duty.

Drak is wearing a metal muzzle and his blood is smeared on his legs as well as the dusty ground on which all three of them sit. The caption for this image indicates that Drak was wounded in a bomb attack in Helmand province on September 8, 2011, as was his handler, who isn't pictured. The final note in the caption indicates that several civilians were also killed in the attack, a detail that is easily passed over in the face of the bloodied, muzzled dog and the two kneeling men intently assessing his injuries. But who were the people that died? What were they doing that day? How were their families and communities impacted?

The biopolitical processes of dehumanizing and (re)humanizing are complicated and made legible if we pay careful attention and begin to ask the right questions, a point which Boggs makes in her discussion of the images of prisoners from Abu Ghraib. As Boggs' work on this deeply problematic complex of human-nonhuman subjectifications shows, de/humanizing processes do not limit themselves to members of the human species, and nonhumans themselves are intimately caught up in this work. Speaking of the infamous image (e.g. see *fig. 4.3*) of white American soldier Lynndie England looming over a stripped Muslim prisoner, one end of a leash around his neck, the other in her hand, Boggs notes that the "difficulties of reading this image stem from the stakes of this encounter: the image is working out the differentiations between subjects and nonsubjects that underlie the symbolic order and its concomitant forms of representation" (70). She asks, are we to take the man to be like a dog, to be a dog, or something else? What are the stakes of being a dog and of being a human in this context, where for England a dog signifies some things, and where for the imprisoned Muslim man, something else altogether? What are the stakes suggested by an image that features an injured MWD, as the one above with Drak, and only briefly mentions the lives of local civilians lost in the same incident? Here, the difficulty Boggs is describing is to do with the ontological opacities of subjectivity. She reminds us that the

animal is not excluded from the social and political order but, on the contrary, is the nexus where forms of violent and affective power as well as positions of subjectification and abjection are worked out. Animal

representations mark the limit of the subject and reveal the mechanisms of its functioning. (73)



Fig. 4.3. Lyndie England torturing a naked detainee at Abu Ghraib by leashing his neck as he is made to lie on the floor. Photograph courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

In both of the examples above, the animal representations (whether the nonhuman Drak, or the animalized human detainee) tell us about the effects that each has on the other. If animal representations mark the limit of the subject, this limit gains traction by virtue of its proximity (and therefore value) to those who are most irrefutably human, namely the white human soldiers. What we are told about those lives that are positioned an apparently adequate distance from this version of the human is that they are open for abuse, denigration, torture, and unremarkable death.

But there is a second difficulty that arises in relation to such images, and especially the image of the tortured detainee, which returns us to Derrida's spectacle. The Abu Ghraib images sparked outrage and condemnation in the media and the public when they were released almost fifteen years ago ("Iraq prison 'abuse'"; Hooks and Mosher 2005). The undeniable realization that American soldiers were guilty of illegal forms of torture—as opposed to the "necessary" forms of legal torture (though Hooks and Mosher argue that torture such as what occurred at Abu Ghraib was in fact condoned and institutionalized by the Bush administration (1628))—reflected back an image of the human, ostensibly so central to the broader operations of war (and peace) in places such as Iraq and Aghanistan, that proved to be a myth. In other words, this difficulty is about the great shame that these images make one feel, that the spectacle itself is intolerable by virtue of association with culprits of such heinous actions. Which is in part, once again, why images of MWDs have such forceful affective reverberations for processes of militarization. In the image that follows (e.g. see *fig. 4.4*) from the one of Drak bleeding on the ground, we now see Drak being carried on a stretcher, a bloodied tourniquet on his hind leg, with a number of human soldiers carrying him. It can be easy to continue to overlook the caption of the previous image in this sequence, the lost lives of civilians. The composition of the image reinforces this forgetting with the familiarity of it all: the image of a single wounded soldier being carried by their compatriots is common enough to be a visual trope of war, dating back to some of the earliest photographs of war,



Fig. 4.4. USMC/Cpl. Logan W. Pierce. Military working dog Drak is carried on stretcher with multiple Marines supporting him. Sgt. Mark Behl rests his hand on Drak's neck. Alan Taylor. Image 22. "Afghanistan: Dogs of War." The Atlantic, 3 June 2014. <https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2014/06/afghanistan-dogs-of-war/100750>

including from the U.S Civil War, whose archive contains no shortage of striking images of wounded or dead human soldiers on stretchers (e.g. see *fig. 4.5*). In placing a dog in this iconic position, it is easy to make an equivalence between the care for humans and the care for dogs, even as war dogs themselves function as the frontline in explosive detection in wars that have seen IEDs function as one of the most powerful and deadly tactics employed by enemy combatants, even in wars that have seen dogs become targets of ransom because of their effectiveness in counterinsurgency operations (Frankel 3, 20). In



Fig. 4.5. William F. Browne. U.S. Ambulance Corps field training, c. 1861-1865. Courtesy Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3a28605/>

other words, even as war dogs appear in some ways to be equals, their very strategic value comes at the price of extreme vulnerability in the name of human safety. Nevertheless, it's easy to forget such a reality, and strangely dogs themselves, and the way we think and feel about dogs, make this forgetting even easier. Dogs, those creatures of the domestic, of the family, of service, are seen to represent such wholesome ideas that the context for their suffering—combat and exposure to bombs—dissolves into the background to be conveniently

replaced with the serious business of admiring and loving the dog, the one who is a good boy, and the best friend. What's more, this militarized aesthetics of care obscures the carceral logics that underpin these relationships in the context of war, which I explore below through the concept of benevolent carcerality, which turns on the epistemic violence of a militarized aesthetics of care, and is thus a much less obvious expression of carcerality than more familiar forms of incarceration, such as the imprisonment of humans.

4.3 Benevolent Carcerality

A boy and his dog. Facing a medium-sized black dog, a soldier dressed in fatigues squats down to embrace and kiss the head of his four-legged companion (e.g. *see fig. 4.6*). The pair stand in front of a mud wall on rough dry ground of dirt, marking the landscape as the Afghanistan known by most civilians in the West through similar representations in media. The image, as so many images of soldiers with dogs are, feels at once intimate and deeply familiar, and gazing at it is a pleasurable experience, particularly when compared to the experience of examining other kinds of images of wartime. In other words, it too is emblematic of a militarized aesthetics of care. By unpacking the implications of a militarized aesthetics of care, we don't only arrive at a critique of the use of nonhumans in combat, a critique which emphasizes the ontological benefits derived from their usage, but we also begin to see the carceral nature of the dominant forms of human and nonhuman relations, both within and beyond war.



Fig. 4.6. USMC/Cpl. Reece Lodder. Photograph of Marine Cpl. Kyle Click with MWD Windy on February 27, 2012. Image 27. “Afghanistan: Dogs of War.” The Atlantic, 3 June 2014. <https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2014/06/afghanistan-dogs-of-war/100750/>

This is to take up the “carceral” as Karen M. Morin does in her work on nonhuman incarceration, as representing

the myriad ways in which persons could be confined by other means, such as in spaces of detention for immigrants and refugees, as well as those ‘trans-carceral’ spaces touched by the prison and security state apparatus outside of the formally carceral, that spill over into everyday life in myriad ways. (5)

Carcerality, in this sense, extends beyond literal prisons to encompass broad systems of control especially vis-à-vis the militarized security state, and for Morin also includes “spaces of nonhuman captivity, confinement, and enclosure alongside that of the human” (6) (which I actually already find implicit in the first definition’s use of the term “persons” as opposed to “humans”). Where Morin

works includes carceral sites such as zoo cages, slaughterhouses, and animal laboratories, I want to expand the view of how we understand carcerality, particularly as it pertains to nonhumans to include what we might call benevolent incarceration. Working through the lens of benevolent incarceration is a pointed way of drawing an analytic parallel (though not an equivalency) between incarcerated humans and incarcerated nonhumans, as Morin's work does, but marks a paternalistic form of care as its starting point, rather than imprisonment, cruelty, or even torture, for example.

To be clear, my analytic focus is primarily oriented here towards dogs. The case of war dogs is in many ways profoundly different than that of incarcerated and enslaved humans, a point which I drive home further in the chapter on racist dogs, but there are powerful parallels in the way incarcerated lives across species are managed and animalized, that point to larger questions of the violence of biopolitics and sovereignty. Again, thinking about the relationship between incarcerated subjects, human and otherwise, is an avenue in to thinking about the ways systems of oppression overlap and reinforce each other, or to acknowledge as Morin puts simply, that they are connected processes, which the images from Abu Ghraib show as well (5). It is through this process that we can more fully grapple with epistemic violence, the limits of ethics, and the slippery ways by which critique is diverted away from larger structures of power so that that which spans species difference, such as relative similarities within economies of death, remains normatively foreclosed to thought. Which is to say

that while working dogs and incarcerated humans might seem to have little in common, as Morin observes, comparing the incarceration of nonhuman and human bodies helps us to understand the structural similarities that render bodies in general subject to incarceration, and to demonstrate how carceral logics extend *beyond* the human body (7). It is also a way to examine how and where incarceration becomes so normalized as to become invisible, as Lori Gruen discusses in her work on captivity (2). Lastly, and significantly, thinking through benevolent forms of incarceration also serves as a way to crack open the invisibility and normalization of forms of confinement and control, and thus to make legible the violence at hand. Indeed, Wadiwel argues that if “violence can be smoothed in such a way that it does not appear as violence, then the process of converting an animate sentient being into a ‘thing’ is complete, and resistance and war become hidden under a veneer of peaceability” (“The War” 13). By figuring MWDs as subject to benevolent carcerality, the smoothing of violence becomes more fricative, and the veneer of peaceability begins to crack.

In order to generate this friction and to see MWDs as something more than just things (e.g., tools, weapons) to be used in war, i.e., to make legible the epistemic violence the comprises and compromises their subjectivity, then we must examine the possibility of violence in the most unlikely of places and the most unlikely of ways. Moreover, the trans-species focus of benevolent carcerality means comprehending epistemic violence as a function of the biopolitics that shape the management of life and distribution of death and

vulnerability across the human-animal divide. It's in this way that we can more fully account for how normative power operates, and importantly, where it may be disrupted. This return to the biopolitical, reminds us too, that in "the biopolitics of war, animals are interpreted according to the exigency of the moment. But the actual lives of animals, their bodies, their desires, and their suffering... are something else" ("Animals and War" 18), which, as many scholars have noted, means acknowledging that biopower does not limit its reach to the human, and often exercises exceptional brutality in relation to nonhumans (and those deemed not human enough). To date, most of the scholarship interrogating incarceration of nonhumans focuses on the abject spaces of zoos, labs, and slaughterhouses, as with both Morin and Gruen's work, though Morin does engage the question of animal labor "within the Prison-, Agricultural-, and Medical Industrial Complexes" as forms of carcerality (97). But here, with my focus on MWDs, I am interested in nonhumans that do not obviously appear as abject, that do not appear to suffer under conditions of captivity and containment, and in fact often seem to thrive, at least at first glance. And I am interested in the strange proposition of thinking otherwise—that in the context of war a dog's life could be worth more than that of a human. It's almost obscenely unthinkable really; there are few of us who would choose the life of a dog over that of a human, and yet it is this *certainty* which compels me to consider how the terms—dog, human, death—are regulated. This is to take up with Jairus Grove, who insists we must tarry with the unthinkable, though he states it perhaps in less inviting terms. He tells us,

[i]n the face of it all, one celebrates useless thinking, useless scholarship, and useless forms of life at the very moment we are told to throw them all under the bus in the name of survival at all costs. This is a logic referred to lately as hope and it is as cruel as it is anxiety inducing. Hope is a form of extortion. (“Savage Ecology” 25)

Thinking about MWDs is, in this respect, is nothing if not a form of useless scholarship—indeed we almost quite literally throw dogs under the bus (or tank) in the name of survival at all costs, and thinking about them otherwise, i.e. as deserving better, seems almost perverse given the circumstances. And yet.

It’s my claim that a form of benevolent carcerality structures the usage of war dogs, and that an aesthetics of care, typically understood as an aesthetics of profound ethics, is mobilized to emphasize benevolence while obscuring the carceral nature of the MWD-handler relationship, and thus legitimizes this usage. This then, is a form of epistemic violence. Benevolent carcerality seen this way appears to make legible the unique, individual dog, while maintaining norms that circumscribe a dog’s social position as nothing more than a dog. To be nothing more than a dog is to be nonhuman, less than human, animalized, and means bearing the risk and vulnerability that comes with being a party to that category. This means asking how such dogs complicate what and where we know incarceration to be? Benevolent carcerality is a somewhat counterintuitive concept (a concept verging on the useless, if you look at it from some angles), and even more so when applied to canine life, as carcerality itself seems the sort of process that could only ever be an obvious form of oppression. But Morin’s

work explicitly makes space for epistemic violence, and its impact on subjectivity.

She reminds us that

violence takes many forms in the prison but nonetheless may not be experienced as such – and indeed may be experienced rather as somehow ‘normal’ and even subjectively beneficial and comforting. Thus, we must use caution when considering the nature of subjectivity itself for prisoners and animals in a diversity of carceral settings, recognizing that the embodied experience of the carceral is always a relative or relational one rather than an absolute one. (12)

Further, she provokes us to “focus on carceral logic as the logic of domination itself, shaping our social and political relations in order to naturalize domination and fix inclusions, exclusions, and disposabilities of certain bodies in the process” (12). Which is to say that the logics of carcerality, benevolent or otherwise, are in themselves relative (e.g., what appears as oppressively carceral in one instance may not be so in another), and that the relational structuring of carcerality means that it will impact subjectivities in various ways. By turning towards questions of domination, we can take a more expansive perspective of carcerality.

Still, this expanded definition isn’t even strictly necessary for thinking about the specificities of benevolent carcerality. For example, scholarship that examines early historical forms of carcerality is a helpful starting point, as it’s there we see the foundation for further permutations of carcerality, up to and including various versions we see today, while simultaneously revealing the historical reach of the biopolitical management of enslaved bodies. In his research on benevolent carcerality in early Christian theological work on Roman and Greek slavery, Chris de Wet suggests a fundamental relationship between

carcerality and slavery—that the latter is circumscribed by the former. He refers to carcerality as a “constant” “state of durance, a symbolic imprisonment that manifests itself in many ways,” both forcibly restrictive and apparently benign or benevolent. This imprisonment is maintained through carceral mechanisms,

those technologies that actually intensify the enslaved state of the unfree. In its most basic sense, a carceral mechanism could be something that physically imprisoned or bound a slave. Some slaves were physically locked up, chained, wore slave collars, and had their movement limited to certain spaces within the household and society. (18)

Such mechanisms can be summarized as mechanisms of control and containment, which in particular are oriented towards bodies, their needs and vulnerabilities, their literal materiality as entities that necessarily occupy and interact with space somewhere. But he further notes that “there are some mechanisms of carcerality that are more difficult to identify,” such as “reward, kinship, social mobility, manumission, and freed status” (18), and that these rewards are tied to processes of subjectivication and the acknowledgement of the humanity of slaves. “Emphasizing the humanity of slaves may seem good,” he adds, “yet its carceral dynamics are extremely oppressive” (18). Here he cites Saidiya Hartman who tells us that “the barbarism of slavery did not express itself singularly in the constitution of the slave as object but also in forms of subjectivity and circumscribed humanity imputed to the enslaved” (Hartman qtd. in DeWet 18), and this imputed humanity “in fact intensified the suffering of slaves” with “new avenues for oppression, such as threats to partners and children, sexual regulation, and deprivation of food” (DeWet 19). Dehumanization isn’t the only

tool of enslavement, but troublingly, so is humanization, which is then weaponized against the humanized enslaved individual. While the targeting of one's humanity is perhaps not especially helpful in thinking about positive carceral mechanisms as they apply to dogs, subjectification certainly is, given that canine subjectivity is central to effective bomb detection (i.e., dogs have to be thoroughly bonded with their handlers in order to be successful MWDs). Subjectification, the ascribing of subjectivity to an individual, also opens the door for thinking about whether or not we might consider MWDs to embody a complex form of slavery that includes more than just the use of negative carceral mechanisms, such as the confinement of kennels and fenced yards, and apparatuses of domination such as leashes, muzzles, and collars, for example.

In centering processes of subjectification and the attendant forms of positive carcerality that follow from it, to varying degrees, what both Hartman and DeWet are speaking to is the manipulation of what Lauren Berlant calls "cruel optimism." Berlant indicates that a "relation of cruel optimism exists when something you desire is actually an obstacle to your flourishing" (1). Furthermore, such relations "become cruel only when the object that draws your attachment actively impedes the aim that brought you to it initially" (1). Optimism, Berlant tells us is "the force that moves you out of yourself and into the world in order to bring closer the satisfying *something* that you cannot generate on your own but sense in the wake of a person, a way of life, an object, project, concept, or scheme," and thus "all attachment is optimistic" (1-2). With respect to enslaved individuals,

the stakes of cruel optimism are somewhat different, given the coercive nature of positive mechanisms of carcerality—“the force that brings you out of yourself” both is and isn’t optimistic. This is because, as an affective structure, according to Berlant, optimistic attachment “involves a sustaining inclination to return to the scene of a fantasy that enables you to expect that *this* time, nearness to this thing will help you or a world to become different in just the right way” (2). But for the enslaved individual, this “becoming different in just the right way” may in fact not even exist on the horizon of possibility. Rather, what is salient here is the fact of the attachment in the first place, which is to say, an enslaved individual’s humanity, or if you will, their subjectivity as their capacity to attach in the first place, is the very thing weaponized against them and for which they do not have a choice. In other words, when one’s agency is circumscribed by processes of control and confinement, what one might optimistically attach to is either delimited or deformed by the confinement itself, and can in fact be leveraged against you as a further access point of control, as a form of coercive power. As such, the manipulation of cruel optimism as a positive technique of carcerality is a site where we see the operation of the biopolitical and the thanatopolitical functioning in conjunction with each other, where the enslaved individual’s very possibility of subjectivity is brought to bear upon both their willingness to comply and perhaps even their capacity to resist. Hartman reminds us that the “subjectivication of the slave body was just as oppressive as its objectification—both sustained the slave economy”—i.e., without the manipulation of the

enslaved individual's desires and capacity for desire, the slave economy, and incarceration more generally, would become functionally much more difficult for slaveholders due to a reduced capacity for coercion and therefore compliance (Hartman qtd. DeWet 19).

In the case of MWDs, a version of cruel optimism as a positive mechanism of carcerality is immediately made apparent by the context of war. I think it's fair to speculate based on their behaviour that what MWDs desire, or at least what gives them pleasure, is the bond they share with their handlers, as well as the opportunity to play and learn (Frankel 57-62; Ritland 61, 67, 218). Indeed, the effectiveness of bomb detection teams is predicated on this bond with the dogs and which makes possible deep knowledge of their needs: a tired dog, a thirsty dog, a distracted dog, may miss the trace scents of explosives buried in the ground and thus fail at their life-and-death task. The training is so rigorous as to require a 95% proficiency rate, which is to say that 95% of the time, the handler-dog team will need to successfully detect explosives handler of bomb-detecting dogs. To achieve such proficiency requires a handler to have deep knowledge about the subtlest changes in a dog's behaviour. As one soldier describes it in the film *Always Faithful*, "[i]t's extremely important to know everything about that dog. I could have a blindfold on and tell you when [the dog] was on odour because I could just hear his nose change just by the way he was smelling." This intimacy and deep knowledge are in turn the very things that ultimately risk the flourishing of both dogs and humans, given that such desires are

instrumentalized in the process of readying the dogs for combat and thus possible injury or death.

Hediger is quick to remind us that animals “rarely, if ever, chose to enter human war. They are often forced into an engagement that they cannot possibly understand in advance, and they rarely stand to gain much by their involvement” (“Animals and War” 17). Still, there are significant differences from the subjectification of otherwise dehumanized human beings. For example, the subjectivity of dogs isn’t straightforwardly used *against* them as a form of control (as it would be against incarcerated humans, where for example, the threat of violence against one’s kin might be used to leverage compliance). In fact, coercive teaching techniques are fairly forbidden, as is anything deemed excessively aggressive in training (Ritland 86-88). Moreover, a dog’s lack of understanding of the terms of engagement (i.e., that MWDs cannot know what war means), alongside Berlant’s orientation toward expectation and fantasy as components of cruel optimism, begin to mark a limit to how complete cruel optimism as a framework for understanding the benevolent incarceration of MWDs could be, even as I’m complicating it above. This is largely because I’m unwilling to wager that dogs experience this kind of fantasy—the fantasy of becoming different in just the right way—which seems impossible to verify. But the questions of return and nearness do seem relevant if the shared intimacy of dogs and their handlers is any indicator. In fact, it is this intimacy that reminds us that optimism is indeed cruel. Berlant marks this optimism as cruel “insofar as the

very pleasures of being inside a relation have become sustaining regardless of the content of the relation, such that a person or a world finds itself bound to a situation of profound threat that is, at the same time, profoundly confirming” (2). In the case of MWDs, the situation of profound threat is remarkably clear, even if the precise manipulations and effects of subjectivity and attachment are not.

What cannot go unmentioned here too is that this cruel optimism isn’t exclusively experienced by dogs, and that there are various forms and expressions of unfreedom here, that include the human handlers who themselves must bond with the dogs, dogs who in turn may die, and whom they have no legal claim of kinship over, given the status of the dogs as property of the military. Knowing how to read and communicate with a dog is paramount to the dog’s performing well, and this knowledge develops over the course of an intense and intimate relationship between human handler and dog. Which is a good reminder that both nonhumans and humans alike do not always freely participate in war. Hediger tells us that “animals in war often resemble human soldiers, who may be conscripted or effectively forced into war by poverty and the like. Such cases, then, indicate how a system of biopolitics overrides individual agency and choice, be it of animals or of humans” (“Animals and War” 17). His position echoes Morin’s, whose focus on the carceral calls us to understand the ways in which ontologically, humans and nonhumans are made together at these sites of suffering and oppression, i.e., that they are both imbricated in speciating and racializing assemblages. It is her claim that “carceral sites and institutions

reinforce understandings and perceptions of the ontological status and identity of the animality of beings, and in turn the process of animalization itself subjugates both certain human and certain nonhumans into hierarchies of worthiness and value” (15). This is true both in states of war and carcerality, once again with varying degrees and kinds of unfreedom experienced by those under management and control of these systems.

Importantly, then, this is to recognize that within the broader context of the carceral logics Morin outlines, carcerality and the use of benevolent forms of carcerality are not necessarily tied to criminality, though benevolent logics can be used to justify criminalizing and incarcerating people, as Judah Schept’s work on expanding incarceration and the constraints of habitus on the seemingly progressive Left shows. In Schept’s examination, even amidst progressive calls to end mass incarceration, support can be found for expansion of prisons under the guise of incarcerating people in less crowded, apparently more humane ways, or as spaces of “therapeutic justice, rehabilitation and treatment, and education” (7). Instead of this form of benevolence, what I’m talking about is a less obvious relationship between carcerality and suffering, somewhat similar to what Andrew Woolford describes in his work on residential schools. For Woolford,

benevolence and destruction are understood not as pure opposites but as potentially related terms, since perceived acts of benevolence, guided by an absolute moral certainty, can be experienced by the targets of such benevolence as painful and destructive. (2)

A salient difference between residential school survivors and both dogs and enslaved people, however, is that the former group were not *a/ways* incarcerated in explicitly instrumental ways, though instrumentalization certainly occurred, especially in the form of medical and nutritional experiments, for example, as in the case of “two separate long-term studies that went so far as to include controlled experiments conducted, apparently without the subjects’ informed consent or knowledge, on malnourished Aboriginal populations in Northern Manitoba and, later, in six Indian residential schools” (Mosby 148). What is shared in all of these instances is that for those in positions of power, domination and control are sometimes framed through benevolence as a form of moral rectitude, even where instrumentalization is central to incarceration: humans and dogs are thought to be treated well, and in the case of residential schools, beyond the perceived benefits of assimilation that functioned as the racist core purpose of the schools, even medical experimentation was sometimes framed as an intervention into “the so-called ‘Indian Problems’ of susceptibility to disease and economic dependency” (Mosby 148). But for those under domination, the experience of incarceration, whatever the intention, clearly is ultimately that of destruction and pain, even if in the course of that domination there may be degrees of something akin to occasional pleasure and apparent agency or autonomy. A significant resultant singular danger, DeWet warns, “is that these positive carceral mechanisms may lead some to romanticize certain aspects of ancient slavery,” and that these “‘positive’ mechanism[s] of carcerality” are, once

again, the very things that facilitate the sustainability of slave economies, both human and otherwise as the case of war dogs shows (18). In other words, given the apparent benefits of things such as kinship and social mobility, benevolent carcerality can become a form of carcerality that can be leveraged to maintain states of unfreedom, to justify histories of slavery, and even to efface the violence of these histories, such as in the recent Texas social studies textbooks that, as one critic describes, suggest that slavery “was bad, but it had some good aspects too” (Finger n. pag.). Benevolent carcerality also serves to justify the maintenance of current slave economies, as in the case of MWDs.

Where might this be more true than in the life of the war dog, whose very efficacy as a bomb detector is grounded in exploiting and shaping the desire and pleasure they experience in the chase and on the hunt—the so called “good aspects,” even while outside the wire the life of a dog is structurally worth less than that of a human, no matter the relationship to their handler? From birth most MWDs today have their every lived moment thoroughly managed according to a logic of control and domination in line with military agendas. They are bred, raised, and trained in preparation for combat duty before heading to the frontlines. Though this training and work is often intense, by all accounts successful MWDs appear to take great pleasure in it, and the trainers and handlers that work with the dogs hold them in the highest regard. Abuse and cruelty in any conventional sense of the words are not typically tolerated. Great lengths are taken to protect and armour these dogs while in combat, and those

that survive often retire with their handlers to the familiar lives of domesticity. And yet as de facto bomb detectors, extreme exposure to violence is built into the very purpose of MWDs, they are living canine shields for human bodies. Thought this way, the MWD typifies the relation of cruel optimism, as well as benevolent carcerality, in hyper-literal and visceral ways. And yet much of this remains utterly obscured by a militarized aesthetics of care.

And so I return once again (again and again) to this chapter's initial image, the image of Dimont, dead in the arms of a human, as a stark example of an aesthetics of care that makes painfully legible the weaponization of this love and the final logical outcome of benevolent carcerality. Here, the militarization of this aesthetics becomes especially intelligible through a captured moment of mourning, twisting Judith Butler's work on grievability, which focuses on the way that particular (human) lives are made *ungrievable* as a function of power. In her work, to be considered grievable is to count and to be seen. But war dogs complicate this equation. As this images show, they are indeed grievable, but the performance of mourning them occurs under a regime of militarized anthronormativity where the necessity of their deaths is never questioned. Dimont's death, in other words, is made sensible by an economy of death that will always orient canine life towards risk and vulnerability over and above the risks and vulnerabilities to humans. Lopez and Gillespie's work on economies of death that include nonhumans, concerns itself not just with "the act of violence and killing ... but also the act of making this violence mundane," with "the work of

making these acts of killing mundane is central to the process of ‘making killable.’” As with Butler’s work on grievability, war dogs twist this logic as their deaths are anything but mundane, celebrated and mourned as they, and which we see so bluntly in the expression of grief on Staff Sgt. Thomas’s face. This grief in turn serves to assert the human handler as a deeply caring individual, sensitive to the lives of other creatures while simultaneously suggesting the possibility of significant otherness. Moreover, to return to the previous chapter’s thesis of sacrifice-as-sacrifice, this same grief further secures the position of the human, Man, given the degree to which feelings of loss, as sincerely as they may be felt, are a product of the sacrifice of the dog as property. By constructing the human soldier as this deeply feeling individual, one sympathetic to the life of a dog, a certain recuperative work is done that mitigates the dehumanizing violence of war and its otherwise gruesome reality.

To be explicit, if the violence of war more typically makes an intolerable spectacle of man, images like this invert this dynamic of intolerability. Instead of the horror of war, even, and *especially* in his grief for the nonhuman, we see the nobility and generosity of the spirit of man. We are told: this is companion species at its most raw and real, where humans and dogs are brothers-in-arms, and the effect is to both produce and sanctify humanizing narratives of war. In a way, it makes us feel good, (but “feeling good is anathema to social change” (Jackson n. pag.)). But this is militarized grief, grief defined by, even constituted through the parameters of the militarized disimagination machine, and what’s important to

take away from such images, I think, is to remember the operations of power here: the fact of the dead dog, a dog who was born and bred for combat, who is listed in military equipment manifests as equipment and not personnel, and whose death, odd as it is for equipment to die, is always seen as a necessary sacrifice during war, the least of all possible evils. We are never, not for one moment, to consider the possibility that the death of the dog is negotiable or unnecessary. This life, Dimont, this dog, is a painful but necessary sacrifice. Indeed, in its very sacrificial nature, the war dog, Dimont, serves, again and again, to constitute the so-called *bios* of the human, even, especially, when such a wager—the question of the human and humanity itself—would fragment in the violence of war.

And then there was Oslo. When I first met the dog who became Oslo, he was being cared for by a rescue organization in the West Kootenays. He, along with two siblings, and another two other puppies, were being kept on land near Nelson, BC; the dogs had an expansive grass area to frolic within, protected by a chain link fence, as well as a quite large shed-like structure for their housing. The land itself was situated in a large field and surrounded by the cedar forest typical of the area.

Choosing a dog (or any companion animal), is a strange and exciting task. How will you decide which one to adopt? What if you pick the wrong one? Who is the best, the cutest? (Like most young creatures, puppies, as a rule, are cute, and so selecting for this trait is unlikely to prove helpful.)¹⁷ Most importantly, who is the best for you? (Because your dog will be a reflection of you, who you are both as a person and as a dog owner, the differences between the two being less significant than you might imagine.) Such questions are strange, no doubt, obscuring as they do, the nearly totalizing power relations that shape them, in the rapturous affect of new love. It is a given, that as the human, I will make the decision that will separate a dog from their littermates, and start them on a journey significantly determined by my life: my home, my food, my rhythms (mostly, even if Donna Haraway has something else to say about that). They will

¹⁷ Central to “cute,” Sianne Ngai notes, is an “oscillation between domination and passivity, or cruelty and tenderness” (108), which is perhaps never more obvious than in the process of adopting a dog. For more on the politics of cute, see Dale, John Paul, Joyce Goggin, and Julia Leyda (Eds.) *The Aesthetics and Affects of Cuteness*. London: Routledge, 2016.

have some say—if I ignore their rhythms too long I'll probably come home to shit on the floor or ruined shoes—but this will be well within the scope of my control. Still, when I was looking for 'the one,' awareness of this fucked up dynamic, and critiques of power were far from my mind (and development as a thinker), so all I knew was to somehow determine the right one, and then we'd be set.

So how do you choose? The dog who became Oslo had a brother, built just like him, but golden tan in colour, with white markings. Their sister looked more like the dog who became Oslo, black and white, with blobs of tan here and there. The dog who became Oslo's unique markings were a white foreleg that looked a bit like he was wearing a sock that contrasted with his black body; he had a very long black tail, and a white star (which eventually became a single white hair as he grew) on his black forehead. Cute! All of them were beautiful dogs, because all dogs, even the ugliest dogs, are beautiful. What brought me to the dog who became Oslo was this: on the day I first visited him, some people rode along the tree line on their horses. All four of the other dogs in the pen ran to the fence and barked their little puppy heads off, but not the dog who became Oslo. That dog ran back to the doghouse, stood in the doorway, and once secure, proceeded to bark his little puppy head off.

Chapter V: Radical Imagination

I have long believed and still believe that, if only one could understand imagination, one would understand a great deal both about perception, and about pleasure and other values. I have also come very strongly to believe that it is the cultivation of imagination should be the chief aim of education, and in which our present systems of education most conspicuously fail, where they do fail.
(Warnock 9)

5.1 Feminist Dog Writing

Given the marginal positions of dogs, even those held up as heroes, it is perhaps no surprise that some of the most interesting human thinking of canine life and embodiment has come from women and those others who don't quite fit the ideal of Man. Collected loosely here as what Haraway calls "dog writing," i.e., "a branch of feminist theory" ("Companion Species" 3), such work emphasizes ethics, and often makes itself legible through writing which evokes a queer relationality, transgressing as it does heteronormative human relating and relations. Haraway tables her interpretation of thinking with dogs through subjectivity as "companion species," which is meant less to indicate a particular form of organization than to insist upon an ongoing "becoming with," or a process of learning to pay attention, which reflects a kind of species interdependence and co-constitution which generates its own forms of ethical ties and exchanges ("Companion Species" 16). As a concept, companion species has had much resonance across the work of many thinkers, becoming a generative kind of short

hand for thinking about expansive forms of relations and relationality.¹⁸ No doubt, part of the appeal of such a frame is in its apparent subversion of the over-representation of Man, which serves as the foundation for so much injustice everywhere.

But it must be remarked that even at the site of the ethical exchange suggested by Haraway, the terms of power are not always adequately addressed, or are addressed in such a way as to reinforce anthropocentrism, often making an ethics of companion species intentionally or not an ethics of and for the human subject, always prior to the nonhuman or canine subject. For example, Haraway suggests that “feminist inquiry is about understanding how things work, who is in the action, what might be possible, and how worldly actors might somehow be accountable to and love each other less violently” (“Companion Species” 7). In her reading this specifically includes nonhuman actors. Power is perhaps implied in this accounting, yet it remains non-explicit. Why would that be? Is not inquiring about how things work necessarily about understanding who benefits from those processes in question? Does

¹⁸ Since Haraway’s development of the concept of “companion species,” the term has circulated widely as a generative shorthand for thinking about interspecies relationality, and indeed often figures in research on dogs (see for example: Kuzniar 2006; McHugh 2012). Notably, the term has also been expanded beyond canine life to include a wide array of beings, including mushrooms (Tsing 2017), elephants (Lorimer 2010), grizzly bears (Metcalf 2008) and nonbeings including data (Lupton 2016). In spite of its varied use (or perhaps because of it) it is certainly not without its critics though, as the work of thinkers such as Wadiwel and Spanning make clear, and which is common enough for scholars more closely associated with CAS than other fields. For such scholars, the notion of companion species risks failing to actually attend to the lived oppressions of the nonhuman halves of the companion species pairings, a position which my own research similarly claims.

“understanding how things work” not call us to give attention to power in the most nuanced of ways? Much of Haraway’s theoretical vocabulary rhetorically works to obfuscate the question of power, to reduce violence to something of an inconvenient by-product of the relationship humans impose upon nonhumans, even as it ostensibly celebrates giving attention as a form of ethics.

Consider “significant otherness,” which she indicates is a form of relationality only available through emergent practices, i.e., “in vulnerable, on-the-ground work that cobbles together non-harmonious agencies and ways of living that are accountable both to their disparate inherited histories and to their barely possible but absolutely necessary joint futures” (“Companion Species” 7). Such an on-the-ground approach works in some ways to suggest that if we are on the ground together, it’s all a wash when it comes to power, that being accountable to histories and joint futures is somehow equally possible and equitably enacted in significant otherness. But how do we remain accountable to the dog destroyed by a roadside bomb in a combat zone entirely not of their making or even ken? What’s almost shocking about Haraway’s logic is how forgivingly it maps onto the normative use of dogs in combat, where the work of the human-canine pairing, as Shukin puts it, is “wholly sympathetic to the idea of human-animal flourishing” (“Security Bonds” 192). Handler and dog, who intimately share their lives, are almost archetypically companion species given their co-constituting relationship to survival in the face of violence, i.e., both human and dog are necessary to make it through the perils of combat fought with the obscured but visceral threat

that is an IED. In such a context, it seems almost obscene to uncritically rely on Haraway's happy reading of companion species, and yet her enthusiasm for dog training as a collaborative and joyful interspecies endeavour quite readily translates itself onto the training required to produce effective MWDs, given the degree to which obedience, attunement to each other, and thus collaboration, are necessary for effective bomb detection.

But at what point does training dogs become a problem of power? If not in dog competition, which is "in the first instance a military exercise" ("Security Bonds" 192), then in police and surveillance work, where dogs become weaponized against racialized protestors, such as in the Standing Rock protests? Or perhaps it was a problem of power when "Nazi dogs" were used to terrorize Jewish prisoners in concentration camps, even though those dogs performed on command the duties they were lovingly trained to do (Tindol 108)? Or perhaps it's a problem of power only in combat where in the line of duty dogs are exposed to extreme violence and even become targets of terrorist bounties (Frankel 18)? In other words, whose futures are accounted for when even "the softest, cuddly handlers" know that "you kill the fucking dog" if it means saving the human soldier's life (Frankel 67)? Where is the line between what Haraway calls the "significantly unfree"—those nonhuman animals, such as lab mice, who she suggests we might work respectfully and collaboratively with even as they face suffering not of their own making or for their own ends—and an irrefutable and ultimately brutal form of anthroparchy ("When Species Meet" 72)?

Less evasive in her understanding of power, though also complicit with anthropocentrism, Vicki Hearne makes no compunction about orienting the relationship between the human and the working dog as always beginning with the human in command (86), even as she argues that “training is a discipline in which one learns more and more about a certain steadiness of gaze, a willingness to keep looking, that dismantles the false figures, grammars, logic and syntax of Outsiderness, or Otherness, in order to build true ones” (79). This is to say that Hearne understands human-canine relations as being a site of shared opening to difference, and yet it still asserts a boundary, a kind of containment around the meaning of this Otherness. The key turn in Hearne’s thought here rests on the binary between true and false. Under this formulation, through training’s knowing eye, authenticity about self and Other are ostensibly revealed. Dogs, positioned as animals in service of humans, serve not just on the hunt or in work, but as ciphers for decoding a truer self, a more authentic humanity. Even here in this feminist tradition of thinking about dogs, much as with the apparatuses of militarization, canine life serves the function of simultaneously creating the human while making the human known to their self. To be fair to Hearne, she doesn’t suggest some kind of salvific force at play in the human-canine relationship—the terms of human dominion and anthroparchy are quite up front in her work, but danger still remains in her suggestions that training enables access to Otherness. This is for two reasons. First, as with Haraway, Hearne’s account of human-canine relation in the form of training to some extent obscures

power relations, and secondly, and perhaps more importantly, it romanticizes these power dynamics in a way that says it is in fact doing the opposite from what it suggests it is doing.

Reingard Spannring's work on human-horse relations is helpful here for illuminating how much effort, and indeed unlearning must occur in order to even begin to experience the alterity of the Other. In her work, she takes as her starting point a relationship with a horse, Freja, with whom she did field research. The aim of Spannring's ethnographic work is to undo the anthropocentric assumptions structuring something like the Harawayian notions of "becoming with" by exploring relating that doesn't rely on training (i.e., a master), and instead follows Freja's interests as a horse and a subject in herself. This means, for example, making space for Freja to lead the two of them through the fields and woods at her leisure, without interrupting her desires, and to thus learn about what those desires actually may be. Spannring calls this "providing affiliative-cognitive space for mutual becoming" (N. pag.),¹⁹ a deterritorializing process which is by no means straight forward, especially for the human who has internalized norms of controlling and constraining nonhumans. Specifically, Spannring makes a distinction between response and reaction—that cognitive behaviour is one of response, something more closely centered in interest, subjectivity, and desire, whereas reaction is in relation to targeted stimuli (i.e.,

¹⁹ As I didn't have access to the published version of Spannring's paper, I used a version provided by Spannring herself which is why the references lack page numbers. The published version, however, is cited in the Bibliography.

reaction is the mechanism of training in order to achieve particular results and modify behaviour). Reaction, and therefore training, in these terms, do not enable knowing the Other, as the Other cannot even know their self under such circumstances.

What's further problematic about making claims about authentic knowing of the Other as Hearne does is that working and dwelling with the alterity of dogs does not necessarily destabilize anthropocentric norms or the status brought about by alterity—a dog's radically different orientation to odour, for example, can in fact be instrumentalized in the course of training and extracting labour from them. An intimate relationship with a dog (or anyone for that matter) doesn't somehow implicitly excise it from the logics and constraints of the anthropocentric, militarized, capitalist systems in which it is embedded, and to suggest this is the case is profoundly self-serving (and self-denying, which Berlant's work on cruel optimism, which I explore in Chapter Four makes abundantly clear). But it does not have to be so: being radically open to the otherness of dogs can disrupt the supremacy of the human in surprising ways, much as Spanring articulates; "a willingness to keep looking" does not resolve itself where the dog ends and the human begins. Indeed, as other feminist dog writers show, it is possible to attend to the on-the-ground work of significant otherness in ways that foreground the power differential between humans and dogs and in so doing attempt to be more fully responsible to it. This means, as Haraway helpfully puts, recalling that "dogs are fleshly material-semiotic

presences” and that “they are not here just to think with. They are here to live with” (“Companion Species” 5). The irony of course is that Haraway herself forgets the fleshiness of dogs when she prioritizes humans and human practices above dogs and their ways of being, once again suggesting that recalling the lives and the livingness of dogs doesn’t automatically enact or support these things, thus rendering significant otherness as she understands it dubious as a form of ethical relationality. What this also means is that the willingness to keep looking, and the looking itself, are always situated within a particular history of power and biopolitics, and thus require vigilant attention to reductive ideas about dogs, as well as the overdetermined affective life shared between humans and dogs.

Fortunately, the refusal to render dogs statically knowable is approached (in greater and lesser degrees) through other feminist dog writing. Notably, this approach of refusal lays in quite stark contrast to the legacy of humanist philosophy that has typically rendered nonhuman life as readily understood (especially as the foil to the human) and perhaps worse, as unworthy of philosophical investigation altogether. Which is to say, this isn’t work that comes out of a reliance on a tradition of Cartesian dualism and the notion that nonhumans are simply machines (more machines), or that they simply perish rather than experience their own deaths, as Heidegger would have it (267). Rather, this dog writing models a willingness to carefully tarry with the mystery of dogs and dog-ness, and in doing so to risk the ontological security and authority

of the human through attention to the complex and permeable relationships that those who call themselves human share with such creatures.

Alice Kuzniar, for example, explicitly declares a “wish to call into question this divide” between human and animal “via the animal with which the human has the closest contact, namely, the dog,” and that she wants “to probe the interstices where, in trying to distinguish himself from the dog or, the opposite, to extol the dog’s uniqueness among species, man actually confuses boundaries” (5-6). Kuzniar’s thought enacts a profound and beautiful attention to the subtleties of dog life and offers a methodological model where attention *to* the bodily vis-à-vis attention situated *within* a body as a site of feeling is method itself, method as exploratory, as iterative practice rather than prescriptive procedure. This is a methodology that doesn’t take dogs as an *object* of study, but instead emphasizes the collaborative nature of the human-canine relationship, dogs as co-researchers if you will. Such a methodology echoes Anat Pick’s work, in which the emphasis on the creature and creaturely marks a kind of poetics of the creature, centred on “a living body—material, temporal, and vulnerable” (5). Notably, this body is not exclusively human. As Pick says, conceptually and practically,

reading through a creaturely prism consigns culture to contexts that are not exclusively human, contexts beyond an anthropocentric perspective. It recognizes in culture more than the clichéd expression of the ‘human condition’ but an expression of something *inhuman* as well: the permutations of necessity and materiality that condition and shape human life. (5)

With its focus on the inhuman contingencies of vulnerable, mortal lives, creaturely poetics affords the space to take seriously “canine philosophy” and “canine philosophers” as Ross Chambers calls those thinkers who think *with* and *like* dogs. These scholars, whether explicitly or not, query whether humans are “so very different from dogs that may have learned a few tricks, including that of speech,” noting that like dogs, we too are a “baffling coexistence of nature and culture, of the animal and the nonanimal, an odd mongrelization that makes *Homo sapiens* a very dubious species indeed” (Chambers 158).

This style of reading, alert as it is to the creaturely, is a methodological practice of attention, and seems accurate for describing what Dayan performs in her text *With Dogs at the Edge of Life*, which she indicates asks us to feel and experience, not only to think (“By Way of Beginning” n. pag.). Giving attention as a kind of dwelling-with is not just about reasoned observation; in other words, dogs are not simply sites of thinking and living with (as if this would be simple to begin with), but being with dogs is a wandering with shared feeling and takes time and space, and room for breath. Her work models the fluidity and theoretical uncertainty of the shared intimacy between dogs—with their “momentous incomprehensibility”—and humans, and she states that she has “long tried to invoke, even if tentatively, the seepage between entities assumed to be distinct, whether dead or living, animate or inanimate, commonplace or extraordinary” (N. pag.). For Dayan, it is the in-between, “the interstitial, a poise or suspension between opposites” which is most significant, an invocation of “the oscillation

between the categories that bind (“Preface” n. pag.). In these instances, the maintenance of the distinction between dog and human is not nearly as important as the forces that position both dog and human together as disposable forms of life. In particular, she argues that dogs

are captive in the yoke of care and cruelty that defines our status as humans. They are property and persons, both *res nullius*, or no one’s thing, and valuable possession. Our contradictions, inconstancy, and greed continue to make large groups of persons, whether human or nonhuman, expendable. And nowhere is that indignity as clear as in our relationship with dogs. Nowhere do we experience so fully the alternating closeness and disregard of those who master—those whose rituals of disposal undergird and sustain the soft, closeted lives of the privileged. (“Like a Dog” n. pag.)

Here then, is the attention to power lacking in someone like Haraway, complicated further by Dayan’s attention to race in relation to dogs, in which she sees some striking parallels between the disposability of dogs and black lives.

She notes that

the management of what is deemed refuse distinguishes between the free and the bound, the familiar and the strange, the privileged and the stigmatized. Let us think for a moment about the unreal rationality of a racism that depends for its power on the conceptual force of the superfluous. To be disposable is not having the capacity to be dispossessed—to be nothing more than dispensable stuff. (“By Way of Beginning” n. pag.)

In comparing and connecting the lives of dogs and racialized bodies, Dayan is explicit in her blurring of the subject position of dogs: they are both property and persons, and this has material consequences for them, especially for those dogs owned and loved by black men (“By Way of Beginning” n. pag.). Inverting Carla

Freccero's observations about incarcerated humans becoming-dog, in which the "carceral performative works to transform the prisoner into pure animal embodiment" (185) and thus enables "a subsumption of human selfhood in becoming-dog" (183), and to the side of Allon and Barrett's becoming-Marine, where the actions of a dog, and the context in which they occur, namely live combat, enable a dog to be perceived as a soldier, the disposability of dogs as objects is a further example of the ways one's status as a subject or as an object is never totally certain, something that dogs more generally make visible.

Similarly focused on the dynamic of interspecies kinship, Kuzniar takes a different trajectory in her attention to attention by framing the human-canine relationship through the language of psychoanalysis. She argues that the dog is exemplary "among living creatures to investigate interspecial commonalities" given their adaptation to human companionship. She says that

because of its [sic] need for human direction and because of our emotive sharing with it [sic], the dog is best suited as a test case to explore the philosophical, ethical, and imaginary connections and impasses between the self and other, between the human and animal world. (3)

It's worth noting that even here, in Kuzniar's careful attention to the otherness of the dog, we see manifest the anthropocentrism of the human, the sneaky way that even in our best efforts, our efforts put forth in the best of faith, that the dog is still, in their way, subject to the human in their apparent need for our direction. (Compulsory humanism, much like whiteness and racism, is not so easy to overcome, no dog simply shaking the water off their coat.) Perhaps less obvious

but more problematic still is the way that by framing the human-canine relationship through psychoanalysis, Kuzniar imposes a given theoretical framework, foreclosing the possibility of understanding the relationship non-anthropocentrically. Once again, in many ways this is work more about the things dogs reveal about us than it is about dogs themselves and risks instrumentalizing dogs rather than being with dogs, and even as it brings us to the edge of giving attention, it turns back into itself, rather than outward to what and whom exists beyond the human.

5.2. Recognition and Witnessing

“How can you look an animal in the face?” (“The Animal” 7)

If feminist dog writing makes sense of human-canine kinship through a sense that attention is central to ethical relationality with the Other, the role of recognition—that one can understand what one is experiencing—seems to become something of a fulcrum for the difference between an anthropocentric and post-anthropocentric orientation. Haraway and Hearne’s attention, for example, is grounded in recognizing the behaviour of dogs according to a logic of human utility. In contrast, Kuzniar and Pick flirt with, or attempt to engage in something less readily anchored in the strictly human, while fully on the other side, Spannring proceeds towards post-anthropocentrism by making space for that which she cannot yet recognize in Freja’s behaviour. If we are to take Spannring’s efforts seriously, what might they offer with respect to subjectivity, knowledge, and the relationship between the two? Thinking through the problem

of recognition, particularly as it relates to trauma and the recognition of trauma, Kelly Oliver posits that relying on *recognition* in these latter contexts is problematic because it potentially reinscribes normative constructions of what both subjectivity and trauma are. Recognition in this framing is a process of meaning-making that maps onto things (moments, experiences, behaviour, ideas, ways of being) that one can already make sense of, which is to say that it is always already a kind of process of narcissistic familiarization, rather than defamiliarization. (There is an obvious parallel here to colonization, the claiming or territorializing of something or someone, that the conquistador-settler, for example, doesn't simply make and know himself through the claiming of land, but through an affirmation of recognizable difference between himself and another subject, and the subsequent claims about what those differences signify.)

Put simply, recognition is inadequate for confronting that which remains unrecognizable. Furthermore, reliance on recognition, which as Oliver argues is so central to the ethical philosophies course through and from the Levinasian tradition, including those of both Derrida and Butler, means that “the other is usually either the one who confers recognition... or the one on whom we confer recognition... but in all cases an object for the subject” (6). For her, this is a fundamental problem. “Objectifying undermines subjectivity,” she says, and “to put it simply, objects are not subjects” (7). Her answer to this problem of recognition is to turn toward witnessing, which “relies on address and response”

(2). For her, ethical responsibility takes shape in the ability to respond.

Subjectivity, she tells us

is the result of the process of witnessing. Witnessing is not only the basis for othered subjectivity; witnessing is also the basis for all subjectivity; and oppression and subordination work to destroy the possibility of witnessing and thereby undermine subjectivity. (7)

The possibility of witnessing is grounded in the capacity to be addressed and to respond, and it is the interaction of the two, in other words, that enables subjectivity. The possibility of witnessing than is a state of openness and to be denied response is to be reduced to an object which would, in theory, have no desire, capacity, or need to respond. This is precisely that which Spanning explores with Freja.

We can think this conception of witnessing (witness as opening, witnessing as response and address) in relation to epistemology, or as onto-epistemology. For example, by reducing worlds (i.e., the complex manifestation and interaction of myriad subjectivities, non-subjectivities, ecologies, and materialities) to a recognizable single world (as in the one-world world) witnessing itself is constrained, bringing with it the consequence of reduced subjectivities and ethical possibility. In other words, where the proliferation of reality around us is only permitted to manifest in one way (the way of reason, of human domination, of a world made explainable, and therefore meaningful, through reason, logic, physics, and not ghosts, or ancestors, or earth beings, or

forest spirits, or magic, for example), there will be less opportunity for life in its myriad expressions. Cadena and Blaser tell us that

[i]nasmuch as knowledges are world-making practices, they tend to make the worlds they know. The seeming redundancy of this phrase...emphasizes that the knowledge practices we (modern scholars) have at our disposal are, in turn, conditioned to reinstate themselves. A consequence of this feature is that it may perform epistemic and ontological invalidations. (6)

Cadena and Blaser are concerned with the ways “scholarly knowledge performs itself” and renders “itself and its objects intelligible” (6). Underpinning the logic of scholarly knowledge is an incapacity to fully (or at least more complexly, more robustly, more richly) account for the phenomena that such knowledge seeks to understand. How can we be in ethical relation to something whose existence we don’t just deny, but cannot even begin to conceive?

To take seriously a move beyond reductive approaches to knowledge production then is to entangle with the possibilities outlined by what Blaser and de la Cadena explore with the notion of the pluriverse, which is drawn from Zapatista thought. Their translation from the “Fourth Declaration of the Lacandón Jungle” of the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN) begins: “Many words are walked in the world. Many worlds are made. Many worlds make us” (EZLN qtd. in Blaser and de la Cadena 1), which they see as an “invitation to reworlding possibilities” (4). In the pluriverse, worlds proliferate, “even if they do not satisfy our demand (the demand of modern epistemology) to prove their reality (as they do not leave historical evidence, let alone scientific)” (4). In the

pluriverse then, it's not just the humans who bear witness; it's not just humans telling stories or being borne forth by story. Jairus Grove suggests something similar when he proposes that we might think about scholarly knowledge work differently. He says

artists of all sorts, scholars included, can refuse to allow this “severely limited and reactionary mode condition all of our writing.” We can instead employ the tricks of other aesthetic genres and conceptual speculation to expand the sensory capabilities to see the world beyond consensus reality. In this sense, theory can be a kind of dark magic, a destroyer of worlds, an art of sensual experience. We can craft concepts like spells. We can conjure ideas from the virtual in hopes of altering the experience of reality. What comes after that is beyond our control. (19)

When we open ourselves to the opening of subjectivity and knowledge production to the nonhuman and to the pluriverse, when we release our illusions of control (in so far as we are aware of them), we create space for radical forms of, and calls to kinship which, while perhaps failing to fit into normative regimes of thought and practice (scholarly or otherwise), attend to subjectivity and thus ethical relationality beyond the human. This means doing the harrowing work of giving over to that which might lie beyond the constraints of recognition, and in turn facing the dissolution of what we understand about our own subjectivity as ethically constituted and obligated beings.

5.3 Witnessing & Radical Imagination

All of this is an argument for thinking through not just a relational way of being, but also a move towards a method of knowledge-making that centres

witnessing. Practicing witnessing is practicing attention to that which is unrecognizable. In other words, it is a of practicing attending to, of dwelling with, which means it is always necessarily relational. I cannot overemphasize the distinction between witnessing as practicing attention *without* recognition, compared to practicing attention with recognition, which is not witnessing. Military working dogs and their handlers show, for example, that giving attention isn't a guarantee of ethical relationality; indeed, for giving attention to take us into something other than hegemonic forms of relationality, recognition needs to be radically de-centred within the process of giving attention. But how to do so? What witnessing fundamentally requires is a willingness to entertain the inconceivable, and one way to do so is through what I'm calling radical imagination. At an operational level, Ariella Azoulay suggests that imagination is the capacity to mentally generate images in response to and alongside our "contemplating gaze" or our sense perception. Imagination, she says, "enables us to create an image on the basis of something that is not accessible to the senses" (4). For most of us, war is not directly accessible to our senses. We do not hear the rhythmic beat of helicopter blades overhead, the staccato blast of gunfire in the street. We do not taste chlorine gas as it dissolves our lungs. We do not smell smoke and blood mixed with the day's fresh baked bread in the aftermath of a drone bombing, nor feel the pangs of hunger that attend inhabiting a city under siege. And yet, we might imagine these things in relation to their representation—the words on this page, a striking photograph—and our memory of relevant

experiences. In other words, as she states, we “are not the sole source of our own imaginative capacities” as the “imagination is always shot through with splinters of images that have their source in the outside world and in other people” (4). In other words, it is relational.

For Azoulay, there are different forms of imagination that occur between the political and the civil, and our creative and radical imaginations might be sparked in frictional moments, but most of the time, they “are subsumed within existing economies of exchange without our even being aware of their imagined status” (4). But the point Azoulay is driving home is that though we have the capacity for radical creative imagination, where “creative” points directly to the possibility of creation itself, such as the creation of new futurities or alternative ways of being, more often than not, this capacity, these imaginings, these images, to return to Butler, are folded into already established, i.e., normative, frames of meaning. In other words, there are structures, discourses, stories in play that impact both our capacity to imagine and our capacity to act on our imagination, which is to say that where there is imagination, as a relational process, it is constrained by the forces of disimagination, which I’ve explored extensively up until this point in the text.

Azoulay’s theory is a common enough approach to imagination, which seems to minimally require a mind and stimuli, and thus that mind is its condition of its possibility. But such an understanding overlooks the need to reckon with the problem of mind itself, a certain kind of mind, and without doing so relies too

heavily on individualized notions of the mind as a function of a particular kind of subjectivity or subject. Which is to say that while Azoulay's definition is useful as a starting point, by framing imagination as a capacity in relation to mind, it lacks imagination, and we are left to work with a particular kind of structure in which a particular kind of subject, i.e., an enacting subject with a mind that does something through its capacity to do said thing pre-exists the possibility of imagination in the first place. In other words, this is framing imagination as something we do, and one consequence of thinking imagination this way, as being a thing constructed with these component parts, is that it reifies particular subjects and reinforces ways of understanding subjectivity as such. Consequently, it limits itself to imagining the already recognizable, which is in itself no longer oriented toward the radical.

I'm not sure that it's entirely escapable, this problem of mind as it relates to imagination, but within the CAS and HAS traditions the turn toward thinking the sympathetic imagination in relation to nonhumans has some potential. For example, Barbara Hardy Beierl's interpretation of the sympathetic imagination, which is a particularly literary version of imagination, suggests that it is "the extent to which we can think ourselves into the being of another" through a "reader's emotional identification with literary characters" (213). It is that capacity that allows us to empathetically experience the experience of others and has the potential to produce a psychological shift that may alter behavior (216). This possibility is famously explored through in J.M. Coetzee's novel *The Lives of*

Animals, in which Elizabeth Costello the ambivalent, poet-philosopher at the narrative's centre states that "there is no limit to the extent to which we can think ourselves into the being of another," and that fiction aids in this enterprise (35). Importantly, Costello doesn't limit what counts as a being to the human species, and instead insists on considering nonhuman experience and thus suggests a way of thinking and seeing a world (or worlds) that no longer simply hold the human at its ethical centre. It becomes, as Rosi Braidotti suggests of posthumanist thought more generally, a means to displace "the notion of species hierarchy and of a single, common standard for 'Man' as the measure of all things." "In the ontological gap thus opened," she continues, "other species come galloping in" (67).

Notably, this form of imagination is particularly feminist, grounded in a "faith in the creative powers of the imagination" which is "an integral part of feminists' appraisal of lived embodied experience and the bodily roots of subjectivity" (Braidotti 191), and thus sits comfortably with the feminist dog writing explored above. Indeed, what feminist dog writing, and the interspecies kinship it seeks to articulate, come down to, is a profound reliance on imagination. Which is to say that in order to be open to the possibility of the other's response, we have to imagine it as possible in the first place. Eugene Thacker argues that the "world is increasingly unthinkable—a world of planetary disasters, emerging pandemics, tectonic shifts, strange weather, oil-drenched seascapes, and the furtive, always-looming threat of extinction" (1). His work carries with this unthinkability through

examination of non-philosophical language, namely the genres of horror, and he suggests that given the increasing difficulty of understanding our world we are confronted by “an absolute limit to our ability to adequately understand the world at all” (1). But it’s not so much a new problem, or an increasing problem, but has been the artificial reality of the human as Man all along: that much of what exists out there beyond the ways of seeing and knowing the one-world world remains foreclosed because of an incapacity, an unwillingness to imagine it otherwise, even as the intimate relationship many humans in the West share with dogs, for example, to some degree requires a leap of faith, an imaginative engagement with what those dogs are, do, can do, dislike, and desire.

Imagine you are a dog. An odour catches in your nose, there is a whole series of worlds there, you inhale in short bursts, exhale long, and repeat, as you begin to process the odour’s possible source. Over here, no, over here, yes, yes, yes, no, over here, yes, closer. And so on. Tracking, following an odour, a thought, we weave in and out of its concentration, testing where it becomes strong, and where it becomes weak, looping back and forth, picking it up, dropping it again, always as it manifests in relation to all manner of other odours, sensations and ideas, this thing, not that thing, over here, not there. Tracking. We are navigating the scent cone (e.g. see *fig. 5.1*); we are thinking about the way text performs ethics, and how text can come to perform affect and relationality.

This isn't the *what* of knowledge-making, but the *how*, which is very much innately ethical. Tracking. I am thinking in part, about Eve Sedgwick's effort to think "other than dualistically," the difficulty of doing so while still remaining beholden linear logic (1). To follow, and to be in pursuit of something, something there at the origin of the cone perhaps, something rich I hope, though I can't be

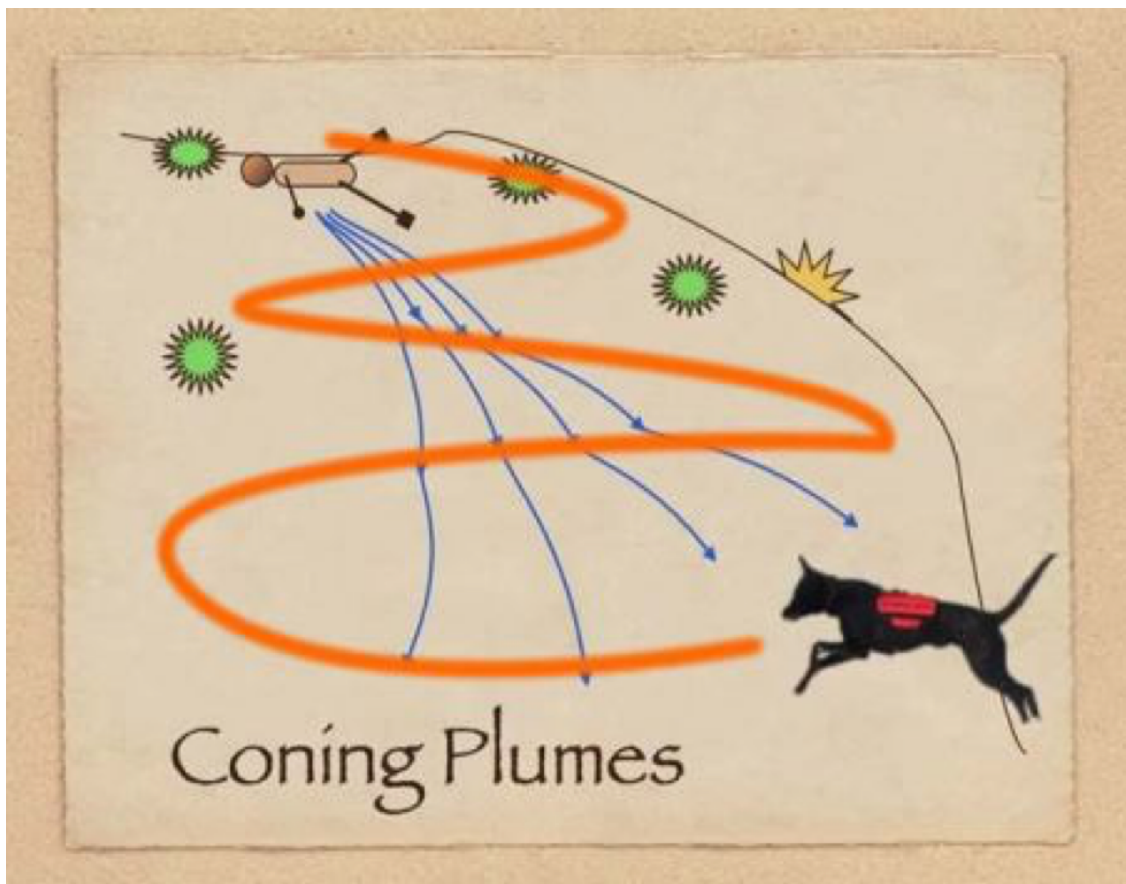


Fig. 5.1. Jen Pennington. The above image is a diagram of how a dog works a scent cone, moving in and out of odour, the dog delimits the cone by where the scent no longer occurs, narrowing their movement until they arrive at the source. *Hound and the Found: Raising a Search and Rescue Dog*.

<https://houndandthefound.wordpress.com/2012/02/22/how-scent-and-airflow-works/>

certain in the following that it will be or what it even is. It may be that I actually am the dog, I am the dog, I am the dog, and that the reader or audience the handler,

or that the reverse is true, you are the dog, though this distinction may not entirely matter, or only matters in certain ways at certain times, given the co-shaping that goes on between me and the text, you and the text, and us all together.

And we read, we read what we track, our tracking simultaneously our writing— a methodological romp ought to be *read* as open to reader and writer (of this text) alternating positions with respect to knowledge production. Hearne on reading:

Most tracking-dog handlers use the phrase I used when I said that Old Bill was a difficult dog to “read,” in order to focus awareness on the handler’s active participation in the conversation of tracking. It may seem misguided or misleading to couple “reading” and “conversation,” perhaps because of the way books and newspapers, taken in isolation, can seem to be passively isolated, somewhat in the way tracking harnesses do. But a picture of a person alone perusing a book is not a picture of a person alone; the book, like the tracking harness and the visual signals the dog sends, is a rhetorical connective, a metonymy. Reading a dog is no more a matter of one-way knowledge than listening is, as in, “She’s a good listener.” In this context the word “reading” is a word for a particular kind of conversation, a working conversation, that produces or invokes the knowledge of the conversation. (85-86)

Tracking, the back and forth slippage of subjectivity that comes with co-constituting knowledge. When I am “on to something,” it is a sensory thing, a hunch, a feeling: e.g., “I feel like we are missing something here about this theory;” “this framework doesn’t sit right with me.” I am witnessing something that I cannot yet recognize, but it is there, signaling to me. From there, back and forth we (the text read, the text written, you-the-reader/writer, me-the-reader/writer)

track until we find the source of this feeling, or at least find a way to, if not to name it, then continue to bear witness to it.

Conclusion: What is Sacred

I have a feeling, a sense that there exists great danger (not just for dogs, or animals, but for all of us) in writing about nonhumans in a way that performs knowledge such that human mastery, i.e., a specific notion of reason, is the goal over and above everything else. The danger, in part, is in doing the precise thing that militarizing stories about dogs do, which is make some of us more human or less human while making of dogs objects. The danger, in other words, is that I will participate in the reproduction of the disimagination machine. An effort to avoid doing this has meant engaging canine life in such a way as to have bearing on the production of knowledge, to take canine life as an object of study, but also to understand canine life as being a participant in this knowledge, that, for example, Oslo has been (and if my difficulty in writing about him stays with me, always will be) my co-researcher, that he may in fact be closer to the primary investigator here than I could ever hope to be. This then, consequently, is a question of ethics and methodology (it seems to always come back to that, the doing) that asks of me how to do the work of talking and thinking about both war and dogs in a critical way without fundamentally (or at least exclusively) instrumentalizing or reducing dogs, as strictly objects of analysis, analysis that in the long run, would confirm mastery of the subject (in both senses of the word), thereby affirming a certain kind of humanness, a certain status, a certain claim to rights and power.

Countering disimagination is this: bodies, embodiment, kinship and intimacy, that there are specific qualities usually attached to it: respect, joy, and grief. It's human-canine sensuality and sense experience: the knowing gaze shared between soldier and dog, the deep expressiveness of the head bunt, in which a dog presses their head into the thighs of a human, and the mutual pleasure found in the movement of a hand through fur, for example. A soldier in the documentary film *Canine Soldiers* remarks about the dog he works with that when they need to bond, they just sleep together in a shared bed. This is queer sensuality, interspecies form of the erotic, which, paraphrasing Audre Lorde, are sensations *with* feeling (54). Kinship: shared feeling serves to deregulate the perceived boundaries between both species and individual, marking an undoing of self as contained, perhaps most readily explained through thinking about touch, that sense, which Merleau-Ponty reminds us is simultaneously giving and receiving: "I can feel myself touched as well and at the same time as touching" (142). The marriage of a kind of co-tactility and bodily perception (the kinesthetic), with subjectivity (here understood through feeling, which is also embodiment), while honouring the kinship of human-canine relationships as intrasubjectivity rather than simply intersubjectivity. And responsibility to that shared feeling, too. Potawatomi scholar Kyle Powys White tells us "responsibilities are like urgently felt motivators of relationships tying together rather diverse living, non-living, and spiritual beings" (N. pag.). He adds that they "are systematic: you can never speak of 'a' responsibility in isolation.

Responsibilities arise in part from a profound respect for the differences of all these beings within webs of relationships” (N. pag.).

Oslo was a dog that never walked a straight line in his life, if it could be helped. He was a digger, a sniffer, a wanderer. Oh, how he was a wanderer. Once, when we lived in a house near the woods, he stayed his one and only night away from home. That morning, he hadn't yet returned, and I left for work with dread. When I came home, his thick black body was lying in the driveway in the hot sun. Hot terror rose over me as I pulled up, certain he'd been hit by a car and dumped there, but as I approached him, he lifted his head, his tail a slow thump kicking up dust, almost too exhausted to move, a night in the wilderness a pleasure resulting in complete fatigue. Later that day he vomited what could only be described as a small organ, not his own, but the rotten find of dog gone bushwild, maybe a deer kidney, I don't know. It was revolting, but it didn't matter, because he came back, we were together.

Please bear with me, because perhaps all of this must always remain as beginning in a space of uncertainty, both as its location, but also its movement, always beginning, which is also a space of possibility, the very space of interspecies meeting. It is the space where we must endure the undecidable (“The Gift of Death” 70). Thus, this work is an attempt to bear witness to the life of Oslo, to the life of dogs, and to the life of dogs used in combat operations. We bear witness, bear with me. This is an offering of gratitude. At the same time, it is a soft kind of reckoning with power in myriad forms: the powers of war, the

powers of human supremacy, the powers of rationalism that appear to fuel both of those things. This reckoning means that I have been called to write in less predictable ways than I have been able to anticipate: rhetoric and dialectical thinking will not reflect what it has meant to share life with a dog, though they cannot be entirely cast aside either. And I am wary of the possibility that adhering to particular scholarly norms will reduce the work of thinking about war dogs to an analytic exercise that remains detached from the reality of nonhuman subjectivity (and the complexity of subjectivity more generally). It is not an easy fit, in much the same way that sharing one's life with a dog is not always an easy fit. But we make the uneasy love works because it's important. Here, what is sacred is not that which might be sacrificed, but that which dissolves our sense of closure as limited, self-regulated subjects, our own entitlement to or interest in anything like Man.

Here too, located in that very place, is Oslo, a shepherd-mix, with the coarse, medium-length hair of dogs of those breeds. His shedding was something to reckon with, especially in the spring, when the winter tempests of rain and snow transitioned to tempests of discarded clumps of fur. On numerous occasions, while walking barefoot through my home, I would be seized by a sudden sharp pain in either the ball or heel of my foot. Upon close inspection, I would find a long hair embedded like a needle into the thick skin there, just waiting for extraction with tweezers. Haraway talks about the genetic mixing, the "potent transfections" ("When Species Meet" 15) of herself and her canine

companion Cayenne, describing their relating as “forbidden conversation” and “oral intercourse” (16). She notes that they “make each other up, in the flesh” (15). Oslo, was quite literally in my flesh, but this fleshy co-making, the “significantly other to each other” is everywhere in our relating to dogs, not just in my feet. I’ve made the claim that war, as waged by the West today, manifests the disruption of ontology as figured by the human, or more accurately, by Man, and that militarization is the effort to restore and repair this disruption, and I want to suggest that we would do well to dwell with, to bear witness to the undoing of self that gives shape to human-canine relationship and finds form in the strangest of places, like the hair penetrating our heels. Rather than allow the force of such a thing to be harnessed in the service of militarization, as a tool to reinforce the supremacy of Man, it is through understanding our responsibilities to each other where we might find opening into resisting militarization and an end to war.

Given bones, Oslo sometimes gnawed at them, sometimes buried them in the yard, always returning from his secret spot with a smudge of brown dirt on his nose. He both found and lost treasures, he chewed sticks into splinters until his gums bled, he wrestled, though it usually got out of hand quite quickly because he was such a big meaty thing. He rolled in rotten fish, perhaps most notoriously on the day my partner and I were married on the beach, resulting in me interrupting the ceremony to curse him out, something I’ve yet to live down. “Excuse me a moment,” I said to the officiant, before proceeding to swear as only a woman with proper working-class roots, where working class means truck

driving and construction, can. When we moved to Jordan River, a settlement on unceded Pacheedaht territory, Oslo daily visited all of our neighbours, made his friends, doing his rounds. He was loving and loved, he brought us together, as perhaps was his responsibility. He was a provocation for a better way of living, a richer, more generous kind of kinship, and he always came home, and in doing so, helped make home wide and expansive.

Coda: Arrival at Death

Through it all, there are the dogs. Dogs like Dimont, killed in an explosion of an IED. Or Theo, who died of a heart attack—what we'd call a broken heart in humans who die from grief—shortly after his handler Lance Corporal Tasker died in combat (Norton-Taylor n. pag.). Or the 92 MWDs working with American soldiers in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom from 2001-2013 (Miller et al. 467). Their deaths are celebrated; they are mourned; they are memorialized,²⁰ while their fellow canine compatriots continue their work under circumstances that differ very little from the ones that resulted in these deaths. It is no doubt difficult to think towards the likelihood that until wars of these nature, or more likely war in general, ceases, that dogs will be absolved of their duties in combat. They do, after all, significantly prevent the deaths of humans. And even after all of this work here I have difficulty myself, thinking that it should be any other way—I can't deny that I would choose the life of my son or husband, or sister if I had one, over a dog. If we are going to continue to pursue the dubious agendas of war, then we are going to need dogs in combat roles. But that's just it then, isn't it? That under such conditions we will always have to consider and realize these lifeboat scenarios that reduce individuals to survival strategies, and that some individuals will always rank lower than others, which as Cathryn Bailey

²⁰ The U.S. Postal Service recently announced a "forever" stamp featuring military working dogs, which are meant to "honor the nation's brave and loyal canines" (Stripes 2019).

shows isn't just about animality, but also comes down to questions of race and gender (130).

And here it is: after all these years of researching war dogs, I don't have any kind of way to answer for this in relation to dogs, because this isn't just a hypothetical ethical exercise, except to say that the unthinkability of the thing is in itself useful in so far as it is a provocation for us to imagine different futures, to tell different stories. LeGuin reminds us that

the important thing is not to offer any specific hope of betterment but, by offering an imagined but persuasive alternative reality, to dislodge my mind, and so the reader's mind, from the lazy, timorous habit of thinking that the way we live now is the only way people can live. It is that inertia that allows the institutions of injustice to continue unquestioned. (N. pag.)

Dogs, those particular beings, ask us to be willing to witness, to risk ourselves. If, as Cohn tells us, the "old story about war" is one which "starts with war being conceived of as a quintessentially masculine realm," where it is men who decide to go to, and plan war, who fight and die in war, who protect nation and women and children, and who "negotiate the peace, divide the spoils, and share power when war is over" ("Women & Wars" n. pag.), then dogs ask us to remember another false narrative thread of that old story about war—that war is only really about humans, humans going to war, fighting war, and finishing and surviving wars. Hediger suggests "animals can help to defamiliarize the logic of war enough that we may take additional steps away from war in general. Systematic, organized brutality rarely seems both more apparent and less appealing than in the gruesome scenes of war" ("Animals and War" 22), and no doubt, telling the

story of dogs in war, of the violence inflicted upon them, of their deaths, of war as not strictly human, and the uneasy questions this surfaces, is a reminder of to whom else we owe the responsibility of imagining other possibilities.

Have you ever laid your body next to a dog's, felt their quick heartbeat, the simultaneous softness and prickliness of their fur, the weight of their head on your arm or in your lap? Have you ever held the gaze of dog, felt that willingness to meet you where you are, even when you can't do it for yourself? Have you ever been bitten with the shocking brightness of sharp puppy teeth? Have you ever pulled a rotten mouse or bit of found street food out of those same teeth? Have you ever watched a dog dig a hole just for the sake of digging, dirt flying every which way? Have you ever made the decision to hold a friend you've known for more than a decade as they die, to feel their heart beat slow, their final breath? Memories of Oslo call me back into myself. I used to think that my grief was something that happened in response to his death, and maybe at first it was. I realize now though that grief is something far less one-dimensional, and moves in much more complex directions than initially appears. My grief for Oslo isn't a response to absence, but is in fact his return to me, a literal re-appearance in which he reminds me to be soft, to be open. He shows up to undo the walls I construct to stave off feeling, to bring physical sensation back into my body in a way that cannot be ignored. Dogs are magic.

Grief is the deep getting of it, and the deep being gotten by it. Grief is the willingness to be claimed by a story bigger than the one you wish for. So in that sense grief is a willingness to know. That's what it is.
(*"The Meaning of Death"* n. pag.)



Fig. 6.1. Shandell Houlden. Photograph of Oslo in his final days.

One recent morning as I was walking home from dropping my son off at daycare after a frustrating few hours which could only be characterized as a protracted contest of wills, a woman walked by with her dog, a beautiful beast with the flat hanging ears of a hound and the pointed nose of a shepherd. They were big and tall, just as Oslo was. I asked her if I could pet them, and she said

yes, of course. Running my hands through their fur, the friendly joy they shared while out exploring that morning, brought me back to Oslo in an abrupt and confusing burst of grief and joy, completely illegible behind my sunglasses, to my great relief. It's still a wound, a year-and-a-half later. But the story of this grief isn't simply one of response to loss, or of a haunting, but of receiving an unanticipated gift that makes little sense in a world where feeling is threatening, where vulnerability seems dangerous. One story is that it is wildly disorienting. Another is that it is profoundly grounding. After a morning of conflict and disconnection between me and myself, myself and my son, Oslo was there to remind me to feel, his responsibilities still alive to the world.

Stephen Jenkinson suggests that we don't own our own deaths, that our sense of death as "my death" misapprehends the social nature of death, which is in fact something we do for (and with) others.²¹ As those who survive us are the ones left behind, we have a responsibility to them in our death that hegemonic forms of dying in the West do not really enable or encourage, in which we pretend we are not dying, refuse to acknowledge our mortality, or refuse to acknowledge the dying of others, or perhaps only when it is already too late. But dogs, as usual, demand something different from us because their deaths are often literally in and at our hands. We seem to own their deaths in a very tangible

²¹ Jenkinson said this, or something akin to this, in a podcast interview. Unfortunately, I don't know exactly which one (they are numerous), but his book *Die Wise: A Manifesto for Sanity and Soul* (2015) examines in detail his philosophy of death, as does Tim Wilson's film *Griefwalker* (2008) which features an account of Jenkinson's work.

way, as the ones who exchange money for the injection that for so many ends their life (at least in those circumstances not dictated by chance or accident). Moreover, this ownership of their death is fundamental to our relationship from the beginning: I knew that barring my own illness or accident, I would outlive Oslo, and would subsequently likely bear the responsibility of facilitating his death. Such was the compact we made when I tied our lives together. I also knew when I began this project that he would likely not live to see its completion, that the depth and scope of what I might be able to bring to this work would be profoundly shaped by the transformation that his death, and death more generally, calls us to make. Let me tell you about Oslo's death. He would have it so, I think, even as it was a private thing, it wasn't, because what does privacy mean to a dog? You know though, he was always going to die, that is the story that has always been the foundation here. People always tell you that you will know when the time comes, but until that knowledge is grasped, it is fundamentally untrustworthy and unhelpful to hear such things. Still, for us at least, it proved true. In the days before Oslo's death, his hind legs were rapidly weakening to the point where he would stumble, collapse, or be unable to stand at all. I read somewhere once that between the ages of twelve and thirteen, large dogs usually make a surprisingly rapid slide from bright life to sudden elderhood to near incapacity. Abrupt decline into mortality, as it were. This also proved true for us. He could walk, and then he couldn't, and it happened over the course of a week. But he had already recovered from an illness that had nearly ended his life

some months before, and he was underweight, and quiet and frail in a way he had never been before, even though he still carried with him the warmth that almost everyone who knew him cherished. When, in the middle of winter, he walked into the cold water of the knee-deep creek behind our house, I knew. I made the call to the vet and we scheduled the appointment for the next day, as soon as possible, because Oslo told us it was to be so.

On the day of his death, I don't remember how the morning passed. I do remember taking him to a nearby beach, close to the vet, to give him some fresh air and a sniff of the ocean. It was January, so it was wet and grey. He seemed a bit confused, a bit exhausted by the whole thing, and I had to help him walk, half carrying him to and from the car. He was done. We sat in the sand and stones near the water, and struggled. An older couple walking by asked if we needed help, if everything was okay. I gritted back tears and told them no and kind of shrugged, and they both nodded sympathetically. At one point, Oslo and I stood together, him facing me, and he pressed the top of his head into my thighs, that familiar gesture of love, a moment that still remains wildly difficult for me to think about.

We went to the vet. The vet, quiet and calm, explained the procedure. Oslo was sedated, and then with a second injection, some fifteen minutes later, he died.

Bibliography

- Abedi, Maham. "Canada positioned itself as a world leader on climate change—is it?" *Global News*, 26 September 2019. <https://globalnews.ca/news/5948969/canada-climate-change-record-un/>.
- Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998.
- . *The Open: Man and Animal*. Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press, 2004.
- Ahmed, Sara. "A Phenomenology of Whiteness." *Feminist Theory*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2007, pp. 149-168.
- . *Living a Feminist Life*. Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2016.
- Ahuja, Neel. "Abu Zubaydah and the Caterpillar." *Social Text*, vol. 106, no. 29.1, 2011, pp. 127-49.
- Allon, Fiona, and Lindsay Barrett. "That Dog Was Marine! Human-Dog Assemblages in the Pacific War." *Animal Studies Journal*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2015, pp. 126–47.
- Always Faithful*. Directed by Harris Done. Produced by James Moll, The Buffalo Roam, LLC, 2012.
- "AP: Death toll in Mosul 10 times higher than acknowledged." *CBS News*, 20 December 2017. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/ap-mosul-isis-civilian-death-toll-10-times-higher-us-iraq-acknowledge/>.
- Arluke, Arnold and Boria Sax. "Understanding Nazi Animal Protection and the

Holocaust.” *Anthrozoos: A Multidisciplinary Journal of the Interactions of People and Animals*, vol. 5, 1992, pp. 6-31.

Armstrong, H. “Indigenizing the Curriculum: The Importance of Story.” *First Nations Perspectives*, vol. 5, no. 1, 2013, pp. 37-64.

Axtell, Matthew. “Bioacoustical Warfare.” *Minnesota Review*, vol. 73/74, 2009, pp. 205–218.

Azoulay, Ariella Aïsha. *Civil Imagination: A Political Ontology of Photography*. Brooklyn, NY, Verso Books, 2015.

Bailey, Cathryn. “A Man and a Dog in a Lifeboat: Self-Sacrifice, Animals, and the Limits of Ethical Theory.” *Ethics and the Environment*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2009, pp. 129–48.

Balibar, Etienne. “What’s in a War? (Politics as War, War as Politics).” *Ratio Juris*, vol. 21, no. 3, 2008, pp. 265-386.

Barkawi, Tarak, and Shane Brighton. “Powers of War: Fighting, Knowledge, and Critique.” *International Political Sociology*, vol. 5, no. 2, 2011, pp. 126–43.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-5687.2011.00125.x>.

Baucom, Ian. “*The Disasters of War*: On Inimical Life.” *Polygraph*, vol. 18, 2006, pp. 167-190.

Beck, Alan M. “Foreword.” *What Is a Dog?* Kindle ed., Chicago, IL, University of Chicago Press, 2016.

Beierl, Barbara Hardy. “The Sympathetic Imagination and the Human—Animal Bond: Fostering Empathy Through Reading Imaginative Literature.”

Anthrozoös, vol. 21, no. 3, 2008, pp. 213–20.

<https://doi.org/10.2752/175303708X332026>.

Belcourt, Billy-Ray. “Animal Bodies, Colonial Subjects: (Re)Locating Animality in Decolonial Thought.” *Societies*, vol. 5, no. 1, 2015, pp. 1–11.

<https://doi.org/10.3390/soc5010001>.

Bergo, Bettina. “Emmanuel Levinas.” In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edited by Edward N. Zalta, Fall 2019. Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2019.

<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2019/entries/levinas/>.

Berlant, Lauren. *Cruel Optimism*. Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2011.

“Best Sellers: Animals.” *The New York Times*, March 2016.

<https://www.nytimes.com/books/best-sellers/2016/03/12/animals/>.

Bird, Greg and Jonathan Short. “Community, Immunity, and the Proper: an introduction to the political theory of roberto esposito.” *angelaki: journal of the theoretical humanities*, vol. 18, no. 3, 2013, pp. 1-12.

Blunt, Alison, and Robyn Dowling. *Home*. London, UK, Taylor & Francis, 2006.

Boggs, Colleen. *Animalia Americana: Animal Representations and Biopolitical Subjectivity*. Kindle ed., New York, NY, Columbia University Press, 2013.

Boisseron, Bénédicte. *Afro-Dog: Blackness and the Animal Question*. New York, NY, Columbia University Press, 2018.

Bradley, Rizvana. *Corporeal Resurfacings: Faustin Liyekula, Nick Cave and Thornton Dial*. 2013. Duke University, PhD dissertation.

PhD Thesis – Shandell Houlden; McMaster University – English & Cultural Studies

Braidotti, Rosi. *The Posthuman*. Cambridge, UK, Polity, 2013.

Brown, Adrienne M. *Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds*.
Chico, CA, AK Press, 2017.

Brown Jr., Tom. *The Tracker: The True Story of Tom Brown Jr.* New York, NY,
The Berkley Publishing Group, 1986.

Brulé, Elizabeth, and Ruth Koleszar-Green. “Cedar, Tea and Stories: Two
Indigenous Women Scholars Talk About Indigenizing the Academy.”
Cultural and Pedagogical Inquiry, vol. 10, no. 2, 2018.
<https://doi.org/10.18733/cpi29448>.

Bush, George W. “Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American
People.” *The White House*, September, 2001. [https://georgewbush-
whitehouse.archives.gov](https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov).

Butler, Judith. *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* Paperback Edition.
Brooklyn, NY: Verso, 2010.

Cadena, Marisol de la, and Mario Blaser. *A World of Many Worlds*. Durham, NC,
Duke University Press, 2018.

Calarco, Matthew. “Jamming the Anthropological Machine.” *Giorgio Agamben:
Sovereignty and Life*. Edited by Matthew Calarco and Steven DeCaroli.
Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007, pp. 163-179.

———. *Zoographies: The Question of the Animal from Heidegger to Derrida*.
New York, NY, Columbia University Press, 2008.

Callahan, Maureen. “Zero bark thirty.” *New York Post*, 14 April 2013.

<https://nypost.com/2013/04/14/zero-bark-thirty/>.

Canine Soldiers. Directed and produced by Nancy Schiesari, 2017. Co-produced by Kristina Mann, 2017. <http://caninesoldiersfilm.com>.

Cavna, Michael. "Marvel was slow to let a woman be the star. Can 'Captain Marvel' make up for lost time?" *Washington Post*, 9 March 2019.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/arts-entertainment/2019/03/06/marvel-was-slow-let-woman-be-star-can-captain-marvel-make-up-lost-time/>.

Cawthorne, Nigel. *Canine Commandos: The Heroism, Devotion, and Sacrifice of Dogs in War*. Berkeley, CA, Ulysses Press, 2012.

Chivers, C.J. "Tending a Fallen Marine, With Skill, Prayer, and Fury," *The New York Times* 2 November 2006.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/02/world/middleeast/02medic.html>.

Clark, David L. "On Being 'The Last Kantian in Nazi Germany': Dwelling with Animals after Levinas." *Animal Acts: Configuring the Human in Western History*. Edited by Jennifer Ham and Matthew Senior. New York, NY, Routledge, 1997, pp. 165-198.

Clausewitz, Carl von. *On War*. Edited by Michael E. Howard and Peter Paret. Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1976.

Coetzee, J. M. *The Lives of Animals*. Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2016.

Cohn, Carol. "Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals." *Signs*, vol. 12, no. 4, 1987, pp. 687–718.

PhD Thesis – Shandell Houlden; McMaster University – English & Cultural Studies

Coppinger, Raymond, and Lorna Coppinger. *What Is a Dog?* Kindle ed., Chicago, IL, University of Chicago Press, 2016.

Corbellini Duarte, Barbara and Nisha Stickles. “Brazil is the world's largest beef exporter—here's why eating meat is linked to the Amazon fires.” *Business Insider*, 30 August 2019. <https://www.businessinsider.com/meat-consumption-linked-to-the-amazon-fires-2019-8>.

Dale, Joshua Paul, Joyce Goggin, Julia Leyda, Anthony P. McIntyre, and Dina Negra, eds. *The Aesthetics and Affects of Cuteness*, 1st Edition. New York, NY: Routledge.

Dayan, Colin. *The Law Is a White Dog: How Legal Rituals Make and Unmake Persons*. Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2011.

———. *With Dogs at the Edge of Life*. Kindle ed., New York, NY, Columbia University Press, 2016.

Derrida, Jacques. *The Animal That Therefore I Am*. Ed. Marie-Louise Mallet. Trans. David Wills. New York, NY, Fordham University Press, 2008.

———. *The Gift of Death and Literature in Secret*. 2nd ed. Trans. David Wills. Chicago, IL, University of Chicago Press, 2008.

Derrida, Jacques and Elisabeth Roudinesco. *For What Tomorrow: . . . A Dialogue*. Trans. Jeff Fort. Stanford, CA, Stanford UP, 2004.

Deutsch, Anthony. “Russia may have tampered with chemical attack site, U.S.

envoy says.” *Reuters*, 16 April 2018. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-chemicalweapons/russia-may-have-tampered-with-chemical-attack-site-u-s-envoy-says-idUSKBN1HN126>

DiAngelo, Robin. *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*. Boston, MA, Beacon Press, 2018.

Didi-Huberman, Georges. *Images in Spite of All: Four Photographs from Auschwitz*. University of Chicago Press, 2008.

DiMarco, Louis A. *War Horse: A History of the Military Horse and Rider*. Yardley, PA: Westholme Publishing, 2007.

DODIG-2018-081. “The Army’s Tactical Explosive Detection Dog Disposition Process from 2011 to 2014.” *Department of Defense Office of Inspector General*, 1 March 2018.

<https://www.dodig.mil/reports.html/Article/1454772/the-armys-tactical-explosive-detection-dog-disposition-process-from-2011-to-2014/>.

Dodman, Nicholas. “Canine PTSD: Psychological trauma can have far reaching negative effects in dogs.” *Psychology Today*, 25 October 2016.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/dog-days/201610/canine-ptsd>.

Doornbos, Caitlin. “US Postal Service honors military working dogs with new ‘forever’ stamp.” *Stripes*, 31 July 2019.

<https://www.stripes.com/news/us/us-postal-service-honors-military-working-dogs-with-new-forever-stamp-1.592596>.

Dowd, Maureen. “Hitler’s Talking Dogs: Op-Ed.” *The New York Times*, 13 July

2011.

Enloe, Cynthia. *The Curious Feminist: Searching for Women in a New Age of Empire*. Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, 2004.

Farhi, Paul. “National Geographic gives Fox control of media assets in 725 million deal” *Washington Post*, 9 September 2014.

Favret, Mary A. *War at a Distance: Romanticism and the Making of Modern Wartime*. Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2009.

Finger, Bobby. “Here’s How New Texas Public School Textbooks Write About Slavery.” *Jezebel: A Supposedly Feminist Website*. 1 September 2015.

Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*. Vintage Books, 1990.

———. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*. New York, NY, Pantheon Books, 1980.

———. *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975–76*. Edited by Mauro Bertani, Alessandro Fontana and François Ewald. Trans. David Macey. New York, NY, Picador, 1976.

Frank, Arthur W. *Letting Stories Breathe: A Socio-Narratology*. Kindle ed., Chicago, IL, University of Chicago Press, 2010.

Frankel, Rebecca. *War Dogs: Tales of Canine Heroism, History, and Love*. New York, NY, St. Martin’s Publishing Group, 2014.

Freccero, Carla. “Carnivorous Virility, or Becoming-Dog.” *Social Text*, vol. 29, no. 1, 2011, pp. 177-195.

Frydenborg, Kay. *A Dog in the Cave: The Wolves Who Made Us Human*. Boston,

MA, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017.

Gala, Shalin, Justin R. Goodman, Michael P. Murphy, and Marion J. Balsam.

Military Medicine, vol. 177, no. 8, 2012, pp. 907-910.

Garner, Steve. *Whiteness: An Introduction*. London, UK, Routledge, 2007.

George, Rosemary Marangoly. "Domestic." *Keywords for American Cultural*

Studies, Second Edition. Edited by Bruce Burgett and Glenn Hendler.

<https://keywords.nyupress.org/american-cultural-studies/essay/domestic/>.

Glory Hounds. Directed by John Dorsey. Produced by Andrew Stephen, Animal Planet and Ten100, 2013.

Goodman, Amy and Denis Moynihan. "Standoff at Standing Rock: Even Attack

Dogs Can't Stop the Native American Resistance." *Democracy Now!* 8

September 2016. [https://www.democracynow.org/](https://www.democracynow.org/2016/9/8/standoff_at_standing_rock_even_attack)

2016/9/8/standoff_at_standing_rock_even_attack.

Goldsmith, Connie. *Dogs at War: Military Canine Heroes*. Minneapolis,

MN, Twenty-First Century Books, 2017.

Griefwalker. Directed by Tim Wilson, National Film Board of Canada, 2008.

<https://www.nfb.ca/film/griefwalker/>

Grogan, John. *Marley & Me: Life and Love with the World's Worst Dog*. New

York, NY, Harper Collins, 2009.

Grove, Jairus. "An Insurgency of Things: Foray into the World of Improvised

Explosive Devices." *International Political Sociology*, vol. 10, no. 4, 2016,

pp. 332–51. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ips/olw018>.

PhD Thesis – Shandell Houlden; McMaster University – English & Cultural Studies

———. *Savage Ecology: War and Geopolitics at the End of the World*. Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2019.

Gruen, Lori. *The Ethics of Captivity*. Oxford, UK, Oxford University Press, 2014.

Hage, Ghassan. *Is Racism an Environmental Threat?* Kindle ed., Hoboken, NJ, John Wiley & Sons, 2017.

Haraway, Donna Jeanne. *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness*. Chicago, IL, Prickly Paradigm Press, 2007.

———. *When Species Meet*. Minneapolis, MN, University of Minnesota Press, 2013.

Hardt, Michael, and Antonio Negri. *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*. New York, NY, Penguin, 2005.

Hartman, Saidiya V., and Frank B. Wilderson. “The Position of the Unthought.” *Qui Parle*, vol. 13, no. 2, 2003, pp. 183–201.

<https://doi.org/10.1215/quiparle.13.2.183>.

Hearne, Vicki. *Adam’s Task: Calling Animals by Name*. Kindle ed., New York, NY, Skyhorse Publishing Inc., 2007.

Hediger, Ryan. *Animals and War: Studies of Europe and North America*. Boston, MA, Brill, 2012.

———. “Dogs of War: The Biopolitics of Loving and Leaving the U.S. Canine Forces in Vietnam.” *Animal Studies Journal*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2013, pp. 55–73.

Heidegger, Martin. *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude,*

Solitude. Trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker. Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press, 1995.

Holmqvist, Caroline. "Undoing War: War Ontologies and the Materiality of Drone Warfare." *Millennium*, vol. 41, no. 3, 2013, pp. 535–52.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0305829813483350>.

Hooks, Gregory and Clayton Mosher. "Outrages Against Personal Dignity: Rationalizing Abuse and Torture in the War on Terror." *Social Forces*, vol. 83, no. 4, 2005, pp.1627-1646.

Horowitz, Alexandra. *Inside of a Dog: What Dogs See, Smell, and Know*. New York, NY, Simon and Schuster, 2009.

Howell, Philip. *At Home and Astray: The Domestic Dog in Victorian Britain*. Charlottesville, VA, University of Virginia Press, 2015.

Huff, Cynthia. "Framing Canine Memoirs." *a/b: Auto/Biography Studies*, vol. 29, no.1, 2014, pp. 127-148.

Hutton, Robin. *War Animals: The Unsung Heroes of World War II*. New York, NY, Simon and Schuster, 2018.

Inwood, Joshua and Anne Bonds. "Confronting White Supremacy and a Militaristic Pedagogy in the U.S. Settler Colonial State." *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, vol. 106, no. 3, 2016, pp. 521-529.

"Iraq Body Count." *Conflict Casualties Monitor*. Accessed October 25, 2019.
<https://www.iraqbodycount.org>.

Jackson, Lauren Michele. "White Fragility: Robin DiAngelo's Workshop, and the

Idea That Changed How White Progressives Talk about Themselves.”

Slate, 4 September 2019. <https://slate.com/human-interest/2019/09/white-fragility-robin-diangelo-workshop.html>.

Jenkinson, Stephen. *Die Wise: A Manifesto for Sanity and Soul*. Berkeley, CA, North Atlantic Books, 2015.

Jenkinson, Stephen and Ian Mack. “The Meaning of Death: Stephen Jenkinson.” *IAM*, n. d. <https://www.ianmack.com/the-meaning-of-death/> Accessed: Oct. 20, 2019.

Kiesling, Eugenia C. “On War Without the Fog.” *Military Review*, September-October, 2001, pp. 85-87.

Kim, Claire Jean. *Dangerous Crossings: Race, Species, and Nature in a Multicultural Age*. Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, 2015.

King, Thomas. *The Truth About Stories: A Native Narrative*. Toronto, ON, House of Anansi, 2003.

King, Tiffany Lethabo. *The Black Shoals: Offshore Formations of Black and Native Studies*. Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2019.

Kosek, Jake. “Ecologies of Empire: On the New Uses of the Honeybee.” *Cultural Anthropology*, vol. 25, no. 4, November 2010, pp. 650–78.

Kovach, M. *Indigenous methodologies: Characteristics, conversations and context*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2009.

Kuzniar, Alice A. *Melancholia’s Dog: Reflections on Our Animal Kinship*. Chicago, IL, University of Chicago Press, 2006.

PhD Thesis – Shandell Houlden; McMaster University – English & Cultural Studies

LaCapra, Dominick. *Understanding Others: Peoples, Animals, Pasts*. Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 2018.

LaFollette, Megan R., Kerri E. Rodriguez, Niwako Ogata, and Marguerite E.

O’Haire. “Military Veterans and Their PTSD Service Dogs: Associations Between Training Methods, PTSD Severity, Dog Behavior, and the Human-Animal Bond.” *Frontiers in Veterinary Science*, vol. 6, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fvets.2019.00023>.

LeGuin, Ursula K. “A War Without End.” *Verso Blog*, 24 Jan 2018.

<https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/3585-a-war-without-end-by-ursula-k-le-guin>.

Leishman, Rachel. “Men Clearly Fear Women Leading Nerd Films, and ... Good.”

The Mary Sue, 18 February, 2019. <https://www.themarysue.com/men-fear-women-leading-nerd-films/>.

Levinas, Emmanuel. *Difficult Freedom: Essays on Judaism*. Trans. Sean Hand.

Baltimore, MD: The Athlone Press, 1990.

Locke, John. *Two Treatises of Government*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 2009.

Lopez, Patricia J., and Kathryn A. Gillespie. *Economies of Death: Economic*

Logics of Killable Life and Grievable Death. New York, NY, Routledge, 2015.

Lorde, Audre. *Sister Outsider*. New York: Ten Speed Press, 1984.

Lorimer, Jamie. “Elephants as Companion Species: The Lively Biogeographies of

Asian Elephant Conservation in Sri Lanka.” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, vol. 35, no. 4, 2010, pp. 491–506.

Lupton, Deborah. “Digital Companion Species and Eating Data: Implications for Theorising Digital Data–Human Assemblages” *Big Data & Society*, 2016.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2053951715619947>.

Lutz, Catherine. “ Militarization.” *A Companion to the Anthropology of Politics*. Eds. David Nugent and Joan Vincent. New York, NY, Blackwell, 2004.

Lutz, Catherine, and Jane Lou Collins. *Reading National Geographic*. Chicago, IL, University of Chicago Press, 1993.

MacLeish, K. 2016. “Ethnography and the Embodied Life of War-Making.” *Routledge Companion to Military Research Methods*. Edited by A. Williams, K. N. Jenkins, M. Rech, and R. Woodward, London, UK, Routledge, 2016, pp. 219–230.

Malsin, Jared. “Military Under Trump ‘More Aggressive’ in Fight Against ISIS, U.S. Commander Says.” *Time*, 5 September 2017.
<https://time.com/4926525/stephen-townsend-isis-operation-inherent-resolve-mosul/>.

Mann, Michael. “Michael Mann, The Roots and Contradictions of Modern Militarism.” *New Left Review*, vol. 162, 1987.

May, Larry. *War: Essays in Political Philosophy*. Kindle ed., Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Mbembe, Achille. “Necropolitics.” *Foucault in an Age of Terror: Essays on*

- Biopolitics and the Defence of Society*. Edited by Stephen Morton and Stephen Bygrave, London, UK, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, pp. 152–82. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230584334_9.
- Mbembe, J.-A., and Libby Meintjes. “Necropolitics.” *Public Culture*, vol.15, no. 1, 2003, pp. 11–40.
- McConnell, Patricia. *The Other End of the Leash: Why We Do What We Do Around Dogs*. New York, NY, Random House Publishing Group, 2009.
- McKay, Robert. “Species of the Human: Alice Walker’s Vision of Familiarity Across Gender, Race & Species.” Paper presented at the European Summer School on Interspecies Relationality, Kassel University, 2019.
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *The Visible and the Invisible: Followed by Working Notes*. Evanston, IL, Northwestern University Press, 1968.
- Metcalf, Jacob. “Intimacy without Proximity: Encountering Grizzlies as a Companion Species.” *Environmental Philosophy*, vol. 5, no. 2, 2008, pp. 99–128.
- Mieszkowski, Jan. *Watching War*. Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press, 2012.
- Miller, Laura, Gerardo J. Pacheco, Jud C. Janak, Rose C. Grimm, Nicole A. Dierschke, Janice Baker, and Jean A. Orman. “Causes of Death in Military Working Dogs During Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, 2001-2013.” *Military Medicine*, vol. 183, no. 9–10, 2018, pp. e467–74. <https://doi.org/10.1093/milmed/usx235>.
- Montalvan, Luis Carlos. *Until Tuesday: A Wounded Warrior and the Golden*

Retriever Who Saved Him, New York, NY, Hachette Books, 2011.

Morin, Karen M. *Carceral Space, Prisoners and Animals*. Routledge, 2018.

Mosby, Ian. "Administering Colonial Science: Nutrition Research and Human Biomedical Experimentation in Aboriginal Communities and Residential Schools, 1942–1952." *Histoire sociale/Social history*, vol. 46, no. 91, 2013, pp. 145-172.

Nast, H. J. "Critical Pet Studies?" *Antipode*, vol 38, no. 5, 2006, pp. 894-906.

National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, vol. 1a, 2019.

Ngai, Sianne. *Our Aesthetic Categories: Zany, Cute, Interesting*. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2012.

Nordin, Astrid H.M., and Dan Öberg. "Targeting the Ontology of War: From Clausewitz to Baudrillard." *Millennium*, vol. 43, no. 2, 2015, pp. 392–410.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0305829814552435>.

Oliver, Kelly. *Animal Lessons: How They Teach Us to Be Human*. New York, NY, Columbia University Press, 2009.

———. *Witnessing: Beyond Recognition*. Minneapolis, MN, University of Minnesota Press, 2001.

Orlean, Susan. *Rin Tin Tin: The Life and the Legend*. New York, NY, Simon and Schuster, 2012.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). "The Military's War on

Animals.” PETA, n. d. <https://www.peta.org/issues/animals-used-for-experimentation/animals-used-experimentation-factsheets/military-war-animals/>.

Pick, Anat. *Creaturely Poetics: Animality and Vulnerability in Literature and Film*. New York, NY, Columbia University Press, 2011.

Power, Emma. “Furry Families: Making a Human–Dog Family through Home.” *Social & Cultural Geography*, vol. 9, no. 5, 2008, pp. 535–55. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14649360802217790>.

———. “Domestication and the Dog: Embodying Home.” *Area*, vol 44, no. 3, 2012, pp. 371–78.

Public Law 107-243. Oct. 13, 2002. “Authorization for use of military force against Iraq resolution of 2002.”

Regan, Tom. *The Case for Animal Rights*. Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press, 2004.

Ritland, Mike, and Gary Brozek. *Trident K9 Warriors: My Tale from the Training Ground to the Battlefield with Elite Navy SEAL Canines*. New York, NY, St. Martin’s Publishing Group, 2013.

Robiou du Pont, Yann and Malte Meinshausen. “Warming assessment of the bottom-up Paris Agreement emissions pledges.” *nature communications* vol. 9, no. 4810, 2018.

Rogak, Lisa. *The Dogs of War: The Courage, Love, and Loyalty of Military Working Dogs*. New York, NY, Macmillan, 2011.

Rothenberg, Tamar Y. *Presenting America's World: Strategies of Innocence in National Geographic Magazine, 1888-1945*. New York, NY, Routledge, 2016.

Scarry, Elaine. *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*. Oxford, UK, Oxford University Press, 1985.

Schept, Judah. *Progressive Punishment: Job Loss, Jail Growth, and the Neoliberal Logic of Carceral Expansion*. New York, NY, NYU Press, 2015.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky, and Adam Frank. *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*. Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2003.

Shane III, Leo. "Trump: I'm giving the military 'total authorization'." *Military Times*, 13 April 2017. <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/pentagon-congress/2017/04/13/trump-i-m-giving-the-military-total-authorization/>.

Shukin, Nicole. *Animal Capital: Rendering Life in Biopolitical Times*. Minneapolis, MN, University of Minnesota Press, 2009.

———. "Security Bonds: On Feeling Power and the Fiction of an Animal Governmentality." *ESC: English Studies in Canada*, vol. 39, no. 1, 2013, pp. 177–98.

———. "Tense Animals: On Other Species of Pastoral Power." *CR: The New Centennial Review*, vol. 11, no. 2, 2011, pp. 143–67.
<https://doi.org/10.1353/ncr.2012.0003>.

Simpson, Leanne. *Dancing on Our Turtle's Back: Stories of Nishnaabeg Re-*

Creation, Resurgence and a New Emergence. Winnipeg, MA, Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 2011.

Skete, Monks of New. *How to Be Your Dog's Best Friend: A Training Manual for Dog Owners*. New York, NY, Little, Brown and Company, 2001.

Sliwinski, Sharon. "Camera War, Again." *Journal of Visual Culture* vol. 5, no. 1, 2006, 89-93.

Solvang, Ole. "All Feasible Precautions? Civilian Casualties in Anti-ISIS Coalition Airstrikes in Syria." *Human Rights Watch*. 24 September 2017.
<https://www.hrw.org/report/2017/09/24/all-feasible-precautions/civilian-casualties-anti-isis-coalition-airstrikes-syria>.

Spannring, Reingard. "Mutual Becomings? In Search of an Ethical Pedagogic Space in Human-Horse Relationships." *Animals in Environmental Education*. Edited by Teresa Lloro-Bidart and Valerie S. Banschbach. London, UK: Palgrave McMillan, 2019, pp. 79-94.

Steuter, Erin and Deborah Wills. "Discourses of Dehumanization: Enemy Construction and Canadian Media Complicity in the Framing of the War on Terror." *Global Media Journal: Canadian Edition*, vol.2, no.2, 2009, pp. 7-24.

Syed, Fatima. "policies would help increase global warming by 5 C, study finds." *Canada's National Observer*, 29 November 2019.
<https://www.nationalobserver.com/2018/11/29/news/canadas-insufficient-climate-policies-would-help-increase-global-warming-5-c-study>.

Tasker, John Paul. "It is 'its own thing': Andrew Scheer disagrees with Indigenous inquiry's genocide finding." *CBC News*, 20 June 2019.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/scheer-mmiwg-genocide-1.5169000>.

Taylor, Alan. "Afghanistan: Dogs of War." *The Atlantic Online*, 3 June 2014.

Tebrech, Spencer. "Human Scent and Its Detection." 22 September 1993.

Central Intelligence Agency. 8 May 2007.

https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/kent-csi/vol5no2/html/v05i2a04p_0001.htm.

Thacker, Eugene. *In the Dust of This Planet: Horror of Philosophy Vol. 1*.

Alresford, UK: Zero Books, 2010.

Thompson, Ginger. "Revelations About a Secret Facebook Group Spawn Investigation of 70 Current and Former Border Patrol Employees."

ProPublica, 15 July, 2019. <https://www.propublica.org/article/revelations-about-a-secret-facebook-group-spawn-investigation-of-70-current-and-former-border-patrol-employees>.

Tindol, Robert. "The Best Friend of the Murderers: Guard Dogs and the Nazi Holocaust." *Animals and War*. Edited by Ryan Hediger. Boston, MA, Brill, pp. 105-122.

Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt. *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*. Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2017.

Tuck, Eve, and K. Wayne Yang. "Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor."

Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society, vol. 1, no. 1, 2012.

Vazquez, Maegan, Zachary Cohen and Kevin Liptak. "President Trump: ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi is dead." *CNN*, 27 October 2019.
<https://www.cnn.com/2019/10/27/politics/isis-abu-bakr-al-baghdadi-operation-donald-trump/index.html>.

Virilio, Paul. *War and Cinema: The Logistics of Perception*. Brooklyn, NY, Verso, 1989.

Wadiwel, Dinesh. *The War against Animals*. Boston, MA, Brill, 2015.

———. "The Will for Self-Preservation: Locke and Derrida on Dominion, Property and Animals." *Substance*, vol. 43, no. 2, 2014, pp. 148-161.

Warnock, Mary. *Imagination*. Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, 1978.

Warren, Cat. *What the Dog Knows: Scent, Science, and the Amazing Ways Dogs Perceive the World*. New York, NY, Simon and Schuster, 2015.

Warren, Karen J., and Duane L. Cady. "Feminism and Peace: Seeing Connections." *Hypatia*, vol. 9, no. 2, 1994, pp. 4–20.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1527-2001.1994.tb00430.x>.

Weheliye, Alexander G. *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human*. Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2014.

Wet, Chris L. de. *Preaching Bondage: John Chrysostom and the Discourse of Slavery in Early Christianity*. Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, 2015.

PhD Thesis – Shandell Houlden; McMaster University – English & Cultural Studies

Wexler, Laura. *Tender Violence: Domestic Visions in an Age of U.S. Imperialism*.

Chapel Hill, NC, University of North Carolina Press Books, 2000.

White, Kyle Powys. “Conveners of Responsibilities.” *Centre for Humans &*

Nature, n. d. <https://www.humansandnature.org/earth-ethic-kyle-powys-whyte>.

Wintour, Patrick. “‘Obscene masquerade’: Russia criticized over Douma chemical attack denial.” *The Guardian*, 26 April, 2018.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/apr/26/obscene-masquerade-russia-criticised-over-douma-chemical-attack-denial>.

Wynter, Sylvia. “Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom:

Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation--An Argument.”

CR: The New Centennial Review, vol. 3, no. 3, 2003, pp. 257–337.

<https://doi.org/10.1353/ncr.2004.0015>.