ANIMAL, ABOLITION, PROPERTY

ANIMAL, ABOLITION, PROPERTY: ANIMAL OPPRESSION AND RACIAL CAPITALISM

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

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McMaster PhD. (2024), Hamilton, Ontario (English and Cultural Studies)

TITLE: Animal, Abolition, Property: Animal Oppression and Racial Capitalism

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SUPERVISOR: Dr. Amber Dean

NUMBER OF PAGES: x, 212

Lay Abstract

This dissertation explores two concepts of abolition. The first, animal abolition, maintains that the proper way to do justice to animals is to critique and abolish their status as property. The second, Black radical abolition, shares a focus on property as a form of exploitation and oppression but is focused on the way the state and markets enforce relations of systemic inequality across the board. Instead of trying to identify representative texts from these political traditions and read them together I use the figure of policing as central to a theoretical account of animal life under capitalism, specifically in societies shaped by white supremacy and in societies shaped by the ownership of animals. By doing this, I hope to demonstrate the deep imbrication of race (specifically Blackness) and animal life as well as the centrality of policing to constructing and managing forms of life under capitalism.

Abstract

This project brings together concerns over the property-status of animals found in animal studies and animal liberation politics with the movement to abolish prisons and the police that animates Black radical politics. These two strains of thought approach the question of the human in different ways but converge on the necessity of challenging our dominant conceptions of the human as a property-owning subject. Drawing on these two trenchant critiques of property, *Animal, Abolition, Property* develops an abolitionist politics committed to anti-anthropocentric critique by developing a theory of animal exploitation that sees such exploitation as central to the histories and presents of *racial* capitalism. The project thinks together a Marxist emphasis on capitalism with a focus on the policing of life found in biopolitical critique. It further enables a way to think beyond Blackness and animality as measures for the other's abjection and instead stages a dialogue through a critique of the property-form.

The project reads the intertwined histories of animal exploitation and racial capitalism from the formation of capitalism as periodized by Marxist historiography within a history of capital's drive to accumulate animal life ranging from the colonial fur trade to contemporary modes of extracting value from animal life. I draw on the resources of both animal studies and Black Marxist thought to stage this account of capitalism and explore the limits of Marxist theory. The project further thinks about policing as an expansive concept that runs through capitalism's history and ensures the ability of a given social formation to reproduce itself. The project reads the liberal politics of recognition and suffering and then of pandemic management as political thematics that stitch together questions over racialization, the human, animality, capital accumulation, and violence. It ultimately concludes with thinking about alternatives to the present that engage the promise of multispecies democracy.

Acknowledgements

I could not have completed this dissertation without funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

No theoretical work can exist without a supporting infrastructure of labour and care from funding to colleagues to friends utterly uninvolved with the actual work but who provided emotional support throughout the process.

My supervisor, Amber Dean, carefully read each and commented on each chapter and the manuscript, improving it at every stage. Susie O'Brien who served as first reader on this project asked probing and insightful questions that left me challenged and inspired. Thank you to Tracy McDonald who contributed her expertise in animal studies and made sure I was being appropriately courageous making these arguments.

Thank you to several current and former faculty members in English and Cultural Studies at McMaster including Nadine Attewell, Sarah Brophy, David Clark, Chandrima Chakraborty, Ronald Cummings, Melinda Gough, Don Goellnicht (whose wit I miss more and more the crazier this world gets), Peter Walmsley, Lorraine York, and Gena Zuroski. Your insight and support sustained me in numerous known and unknown ways through this process.

If it is not yet a maxim it should be that one's PhD experience is only as good as one's cohort and I'm fortunate to have benefitted from the support and friendship of my colleagues. A major note of thanks to the PhDream Team: Emma Croll-Baehre, Marta Croll-Baehre, and Kaitlin Rothberger. Your support has meant the world to me right from that first day of the MA. Thank you too to Maddi Chan, Kirsten Feldner, as well as Chelsey Lush, Steph Rico, Linzey Corridon,

Angela May, and everyone else with whom I interacted in ECS. I want to thank Jess Rauchberg as well for her friendship and support.

An expansive note of thanks to the English Department and Philosophy Department at Queen's University for inspiring, frustrating, and encouraging me in equal measure. Thank you to everyone at the Bader International Study Centre from 2014-2015 for a year I carry with me to this day. I would like to especially thank Sheridan Carr for her support through what is now a decade-long friendship. Thank you to Peter Lowe for giving me my first serious encouragement to pursue English as an academic discipline.

My friends outside graduate school have kept me grounded and shown me love beyond anything I could have imagined. Thank you to Evelyna Ekoko-Kay for your courage and your poetry. Thank you to Sofie Vlaad for your near-constant excitement at my work and for being a generous and thoughtful interlocutor on subjects ranging from Spinoza to Batman. Thank you to Kat Driscoll for demonstrating the pursuit of the high and lowbrow with equal rigor and enthusiasm. Thank you to Dael Hawk for your plainspoken care and compassion. Thank you to Vic Passalent for your friendship and being my brother in arms at trivia. Thank you to Jordan Santelli and Alisha Krishna for being lifelong friends. Thank you to Hal Peshdary and Ellery Fuliere, my other mom and dad, for your support, questions, and love. If I have forgotten anyone, it is entirely due to my negligence and not the gratitude I have for your presence in my life.

My partner Ossian MacEachern has been my biggest cheerleader and critic, not to mention assurance that I've eaten and more than once provided crucial tech support. I am beyond glad to have them in my life. This doctoral degree is partly theirs. They probably edited these very acknowledgements. I write this in the knowledge that any thanks I could give would be woefully insufficient.

Thank you to my father Peter Selby for his unflinching intellectual courage and to my mother Rita Selby for teaching me the value of hard work and for her justly conditional love which prevented me from being complacent. Thank you to my sister Simryn Selby for being the older sibling in maturity if not in age. Thank you to Harry Selby for encouraging my love of reading and knowledge, thank you to Mary Selby for making the world a little brighter. I miss you both terribly. If I have limited my thanks to only a few family members it is only because I have been lucky enough to grow up in a loving extended family that has always offered their support in numerous ways.

This project has benefited immensely from being presented to different audiences at conferences over the past few years. Thank you to all the audiences, organizers, and panel chairs for your hard work and insights.

Finally, thank you to the rioters who burned down the Third Precinct, every line of what follows is a tribute to that courage and beauty. And thank you to everyone in the struggle for justice in Palestine against Israel’s genocide and apartheid.

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Declaration of Academic Achievement

The author of this thesis is the sole contributor.

Introduction: Animal, Abolition, Property

On May 30th, 2020, then-U.S. President Donald Trump threatened Black Lives Matter protesters with "vicious dogs" and "ominous weapons."[1] Such a threat came on the heels of militant protest and revolt against the killing of George Floyd five days prior, an event that definitively shattered any illusions that the COVID-19 pandemic had ushered in anything like a common condition of life across the globe. The reference to "vicious dogs" recalls a history of dogs being used against Black Civil Rights protesters or, in a more contemporary register, the use of police dogs against Black protesters in Ferguson in 2015.[2] The spectre of the dog then was invoked as a threat to those who would disrupt the racial order of things, one that takes white supremacy as its *raison d'etre* and marshals state violence to protect property against the always-already racialized figure of the mob. My project thinks through these intersections: of the dog, the animal in close proximity to the tacitly or explicitly racialized, the police and the protection of property, and finally the animal as enmeshed within the intersections of anti-Black racism, state violence, and the system of private property instated by capitalism. The project unites two senses of abolition: one drawn from the Black radical tradition focused on policing and prisons and the other focused on abolishing property in animals. Such a unification involves a broader process of thinking through constellation of race, species, policing, and capitalist appropriation of resources and capacities.

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[1] Alexander Panetta, "'Vicious Dogs' and 'Ominous Weapons': The Politics behind Trump's Latest Protest Threats," *CBC*, May 30, 2020, https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/trump-politics-protests-1.5591527.
[2] Adam Serwer, "Here's How Ferguson Police Use Dogs On Town Residents," *Buzzfeed News*, March 4, 2015, https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/adamserwer/heres-how-ferguson-police-use-dogs-on-town-residents.

My study investigates the connections between animal exploitation, racial capitalism, the carceral system, and racialized property regimes in the Anglophone Global North from the rise of capitalism to the present. The project takes as its starting point dual understandings of abolition; one which seems indifferent to property in animals and the other which sets itself as primarily focused on animal liberation. My broad claim is that what unites these two conceptions of abolition is a focus on a radical rethinking of property and ownership that itself unfolds onto a related interrogation of value, recognition, relation, and political freedom, given the centrality of property ownership to the cultures and relations of production during the historical periods and in the geographical areas under discussion. Instead of trying to define and interpret distinct abolitionist traditions and then read texts from those traditions together, the project constructs a theoretical account of animal life under racial capitalism and within a system of order and ideology contingent on policing, where the dominant relationship to animal life is one of ownership.

The animal— insofar as what is animal is excluded from the protections of liberal humanism subtended by racial capitalism—is available for ownership and so placed within a tangled mix of law and rights played out over the course of political struggle. The associations with animality, the condition of being animal, render the associated populations outside the bounds of the human subject subtended by racial capitalism and thereby available for ownership. The animal refers to both the colloquially understood term for non-human animate life defined in contradistinction to humans, plants, and inanimate matter but also to a specific subject position in relation to the interconnected institutions of the human, the state, and capitalism, the contours of which will be mapped in the following pages. The processes of animalization and humanization are differential processes of having protection from the capitalist racial state or being available

for ownership and exploitation. The relation between ownability and animality will be developed further in the first two chapters devoted to an autonomist Marxism and the processes of accumulation but what such a relation brings into view is the performative nature of animality and humanity and the attachment of those signs to particular bodies within societies structured by the institution of property.

This introduction focuses largely on thinking about abolition in different senses within the struggle over property; the question of what constitutes the animal especially as thought about by the various projects called animal studies (including ones like Derrida's that challenge the very idea of something called the animal), and property as a structuring institution that shapes life. I start with abolition as it is the framework that brings together the two sides of my inquiry: one, the links between racial capitalism and animal exploitation and two, the structuring role of property in relation to freedom, relation, and recognition. The role of property is central here since it is the property-form that both instantiates and limits demands for justice, representation, and the right to life in relation to the biopolitical order of things contingent upon the placement of forms of life in proximity to or distance from normative whiteness. The project is focused on abolition as a broad political response that has as its central aim the question of property as connected to the operations of fostering and eliminating life, subtending political representation and emancipation, and forging intimacies between human and non-human animals.

Abolition

The question of abolition is a live question in our present conjuncture. The promise and spectre of abolition, microcosmically demonstrated in fleeting moments on the streets, have

captured the imagination of radicals.[3] The energy and focus of this abolitionist movement centers around the abolition of the police and the carceral system and so the abolition of the system of racialized terror that both engender. The following pages represent something of a response to this energy and revival of abolitionist thought. It is difficult today to, as Kropotkin puts it, perceive oneself as "living on the eve of great events" given the world-historical ascendance of global capitalism and the long defeat of liberation projects.[4] However, the moments captured in the George Floyd Rebellions brought to mind the possibility of remaking the world anew in the defeat of the police at the heart of empire. Witnessing the burning of the Third Precinct, I felt what labour activist and organizer of the Egyptian Arab Spring protests Ibrahim described when he wrote: "the police ran; what a moment of liberation."[5]

And indeed, as one left-wing commentator put it, "the character of these uprisings has been less like protests and more like rebellions, with tens of thousands of people taking to the streets, blocking highways, and burning and destroying police cars along with other symbols of economic and racial oppression."[6] The militant character of these rebellions was especially striking in a context of defeat and depoliticization that tends to prioritize peaceful protest over more militant forms of dissent within the world-systemic center of capitalist power. What the people lacked in a tradition of revolt, they gained from "this little war with the police," demonstrating that it is possible to, at least temporarily, defeat a heavily armed police force and

[3] See Mariame Kaba, *We Do This 'til We Free Us: Abolitionist Organizing and Transforming Justice*, Abolitionist Papers (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2021); Derecka Purnell, *Becoming Abolitionists: Police, Protests, and the Pursuit of Freedom* (New York: Astra House, 2021); Marc Lamont Hill, *We Still Here: Pandemic, Policing, Protest, and Possibility*, ed. Frank Barat (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2020).
[4] Peter Kropotkin, "The Coming Revolution," *Freedom: A Journal of Anarchistic Socialism* 1, no. 1 (1886); qtd in Rodrigo Guimaraes Nunes, *Neither Vertical Nor Horizontal: A Theory of Organization* (Brooklyn: Verso Books, 2021) 90, n21.
[5] Ibrahim quoted in Philip Marfleet, *Egypt: Contested Revolution* (London: Pluto Press, 2016), 4.
[6] Haley Pessin, "The Movement for Black Lives Is Different This Time," *New Politics*, July 4, 2020, https://newpol.org/the-movement-for-black-lives-is-different-this-time/.

state apparatus that enacts heavy repression.[7] The surprise that many of us (activists) including myself felt at the militancy of these demonstrations, in a way, should have come as no surprise at all. The abolitionist moment of 2020 was presaged by a long tradition of revolt against the police and racial state and more specifically the "historic fight to abolish the Atlantic trade in African flesh and to end plantation slavery across the Americas."[8] Nevertheless, the demand to abolish the police gained a renewed urgency and was taken up by formerly depoliticized people who felt the police baton on their heads, choked on tear gas, felt the sting of pepper spray in their eyes, or were otherwise brutalized even during 'peaceful' demonstrations.

As these rebellions were unfolding, I was reading for my comprehensive examinations, immersed in both animal studies and Black critical theory, and began to wonder not just about the connections between these areas of critical theory but more specifically about how abolition might be theorized via bringing together Blackness and animality through the specific critique of property. It may seem odd to be thinking about animals at a time like this, for animals to be my concern, and yet I was pulled to the limits of the human as I saw pleas for recognition met with violence to protect property. What exists beyond the limits of that which is interpellated by the hail of the human? What political possibilities exist beyond a discourse of recognition and granting of rights? To what extent does the human sit at the centre of a range of exclusions, inclusions, and intimacies with the racialized, especially Blackness? These are hardly new questions, much less new questions to critical theory.[9] The institution of the carceral state and

[7] Friedrich Engels, "Engels to J.P. Becker In Geneva," 1884, https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1884/letters/84_02_14.htm.
[8] Rinaldo Walcott, *On Property* (Windsor, Ontario: Biblioasis, 2021), 14.
[9] See, for example, Bénédicte Boisseron, *Afro-Dog: Blackness and the Animal Question* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018); Joshua Bennett, *Being Property Once Myself: Blackness and the End of Man* (Harvard University Press, 2020); Glen Sean Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*, Indigenous Americas (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014). For one prominent lineage

policing are thus central here since policing and the carceral system creates distinctions between life worthy and unworthy of protection based on histories of racialization, the disciplining of labour, and the management of populations.

Following the abolition of New World slavery, the contemporary abolitionist struggle is directed against policing and prisons "towards the unfinished business of the first abolition movement that ended enslavement" where policing and prisons name more than just specific institutions and so are also "all the other means through which Black people are confined." Ultimately, abolition is a communist politics, one that takes seriously the idea of "collective ownership of all the earth's resources" and a reworking of what "communism is and means" for Black people.[10] It is this spirit of the George Floyd Rebellions, this history that reasserted itself in the wake of the crisis of the pandemic that this project and my thinking seek to be in alignment with, even though I'm working on the question of the animal. The question of the animal is a central one to conceptualizing and enacting abolition. The animal exists at the nexus of discourses and institutions of ownership, confinement, and value as well as relation, recognition, and freedom, as such posing the animal as a question within the institutions of the state and capital means calling into question the naturalization of ownership and confinement.

I want to explore the question of the animal by placing it within the project of developing an abolitionist political theory that is committed to anti-anthropocentric critique. The focus on property provides a ground for dilation given the structuring relationship to being owned that exists for both animality and Blackness. Within animal studies, the particular intervention is a

exploring the formation of the Human as a colonial project see Sylvia Wynter, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation--An Argument," *CR: The New Centennial Review* 3, no. 3 (2003): 257–337, https://doi.org/10.1353/ncr.2004.0015.

[10] Rinaldo Walcott, *On Property*, 87.

deepening of attention paid to other forms of alterity by thinking about the field in relation to anti-racist social movements. Before attending to these questions, it is worth clarifying what abolition is and its particular critique. Such an account is especially necessary given the distortions of what abolition means by those who have various kinds of investments in the carceral state and the socio-economic arrangements in which that state exists.

Reflecting on the days following the George Floyd Uprising, Charmaine Chua writes, "Seemingly overnight, everyone had become a prison or police abolitionist."[11] Such an "overnight" conversion was startling to witness and brought into view political possibilities which would have been unthinkable even just a few years ago as part of the cycles of protest, repression, and incorporation that have marked struggles against police violence. The conversion is something like poetic license to name the resurgence and popularity of abolishing the police and other apparatuses of the carceral state within the specific conjuncture of this 'round' of struggle against the police. More broadly, increased precarity brought about by the pandemic and exacerbated by policies of upward redistribution sparked a widespread rebellion against police violence and policing itself for its role in "dispossession, gentrification, and the protection of private property interests."[12] The project of abolition "identifies specific institutions (such as the police or the prison) and traces out their constitutive practices and ways of thinking, marking these practices and epistemes as the *objects* to be dismantled and transformed. It names these institutions as themselves *problems* to be confronted, even when they do not *appear* as problems."[13] This project follows attempts to think about abolition as political critique that takes

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[11] Charmaine Chua, "Abolition Is A Constant Struggle: Five Lessons from Minneapolis," *Theory & Event* 23, no. 4 (2020): 127.
[12] Chua, 128.
[13] Andrew Dilts, "Crisis, Critique, and Abolition," in *A Time for Critique*, ed. Bernard E. Harcourt and Didier Fassen, New Directions in Critical Theory (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019), 233. Emphasis in the original.

as its object the property-form and critically interrogates dominant and normative conceptions of ownership, value, relation, recognition, and freedom. Animal exploitation is an important application of this critique since animal ownership naturalizes the property-relation writ large within contexts of formal juridical equality between subjects where animals can be used in a variety of ways such as for labour that it is not permitted to do to humans. So, an abolitionist critique both can and ought to care about animal exploitation since it is a site in which ownership and the violence therein is thoroughly naturalized within the liberal state. As we will see in Chapters One and Two, animal oppression is also closely connected to the forms of exploitation and differentiation that mark racial capitalism as a whole system.

Abolition as a political philosophy is premised on the critique of the property-form. As Rinaldo Walcott notes, “abolishing the entire carceral system is only a waystation on the long road toward abolishing property and installing new social and economic relations that will allow us to live better together.”[14] As Derecka Purnell puts it, “the abolition of the prison industrial complex is the minimum for healthy lives that we all deserve to live.”[15] Similarly, Mariame Kaba describes the abolition of the prison industrial complex as “a vision of a restructured society where we have everything we need: food, shelter, education, health, art, beauty, clean water, and more things that are foundational to our personal community safety.”[16] The positive program of abolition functions as a communistic critique of property from which its other political investments (the abolition of policing and prisons) flow. Communistic here refers to the centrality of abolition to Black Marxist thought through the critique of the carceral state and the property logics on which that state functions and which it reproduces. It further recalls the spectre of

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[14] Rinaldo Walcott, *On Property*, 88.
[15] Purnell, *Becoming Abolitionists*, 265.
[16] Kaba, *We Do This ’til We Free Us*, 2.

communism, a figure of radical destabilization that "the great powers" have allied themselves to excise.[17] Indeed, abolition "bring(s) to the front" the question of property, which Marx and Engels name as the task of communists in orientating the communist movement toward social struggles.[18]

Beyond prison and police abolition, property destruction and the cessation of the flow of commodities has also captured the radical imagination, as exemplified by certain groups in the climate justice and Indigenous liberation movements.[19] And the work of police and prison abolition emerging from the fight against colonial slavery has been taken up by queer and trans political theory and activism as well.[20] The fight for reproductive justice is also a struggle against policing and prisons since it is police and imprisonment (in addition to state surveillance) that will be used against those accessing abortions and other forms of reproductive health in places where this is illegal, especially given the expansion of surveillance and carceral systems over the past four decades.[21]

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[17] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Communist Manifesto,* accessed January 7, 2022, https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/ch01.htm. The destruction of property as a tactic of political struggle provokes tremendous anxiety, for example, in the incredibly bad faith reviews of Vicky Osterweil's *In Defense of Looting* see Bret Stephens, "Unwitting Progressives for Trump," *The New York Times*, September 1, 2020, sec. Opinion, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/31/opinion/trump-biden-protests.html; Graeme Wood "There Is No Defense of Looting," accessed May 18, 2022, https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/09/there-no-defense-looting/615925/. We might also see abolition as akin to what Marx's famous identification of communism as "the real movement which abolishes the present state of things" in *The German Ideology.*

[18] Marx and Engels, *Communist Manifesto,* accessed August 12, 2022, https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/ch04.htm.

[19] See Jessie Kindig, ed., *Property Will Cost Us the Earth: Direct Action and the Future of the Global Climate Movement* (New York: Verso Books, 2022).

[20] See Eric A. Stanley and Nat Smith, eds., *Captive Genders: Trans Embodiment and the Prison Industrial Complex* (Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2011).

[21] Jia Tolentino, "We're Not Going Back to the Time Before Roe. We're Going Somewhere Worse," *The New Yorker*, June 24, 2022, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2022/07/04/we-are-not-going-back-to-the-time-before-roe-we-are-going-somewhere-worse. Tolentino correctly points out that given the fact miscarriage and abortion are often clinically indistinguishable from one another, there will be an interest in forms of surveillance that can differentiate or which appears to differentiate. Dahlia Lithwick, writing in *Slate,* makes similar arguments while also noting the weaponization of personhood to advance draconian punishments against people who obtain

All of these political phenomena touch on questions of policing as well as property, value, and freedom enmeshed within wider struggles over the fight for life itself —that is, the means of life that are part of but exceed the means of production, consumption, and capture. These struggles centre the question of what kinds of lives and futures are possible and desirable within the present historical conditions. The struggles over life, the boundaries of the human, and modes of inhabitation and belonging on a shared planet, ultimately confront capitalism not as simply a force of economic organization but, as Sam Durrant writes, "a *deanimating* force that turns souls into things and as a *falsely animating* force that turns things into fetishised commodities."[22] Capitalism then is both an economic process of exploitation but also a biopolitical one in so far as the question of life itself and the conditions of livability form capitalist productive relations and the operations of statecraft that further modes of making live, killing, and letting die through organized abandonment. As my language suggests here, my project makes use of biopolitical critique to engage the question of the animal and mechanisms of racialization. In *History of Sexuality*, Volume One*,* Foucault argues for a fundamental shift in how we understand contemporary forms of power. Foucault's conception of power, termed biopower, is "the set of mechanisms through which the basic biological features of the human species became the object of a political strategy, of a general strategy of power...starting from the eighteenth century, modern Western societies took on board the fundamental biological fact that human beings are a species."[23] I see it as a theoretical oversight that Foucault does not apply this insight to animal

abortions, use drugs while pregnant or miscarry. See Dahlia Lithwick, "We're Not Going Back to 'Before Roe,'" *Slate*, December 8, 2021, https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2021/12/not-going-back-to-before-roe-religion.html.

[22] Sam Durrant, "Critical Spirits: New Animism As Historical Materialism," *New Formations* 104, no. 104 (December 1, 2021): 52, https://doi.org/10.3898/NEWF:104-105.03.2021. Emphasis in the original. I am indebted to Dr. Durrant for his questions in this direction in his role as a moderator at ACLALS in 2022 where I presented ideas from Chapters One and Two from this dissertation project.

[23] Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-78*, ed. Michel Senellart, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Picador, 2009), 16.

life, which underwent a similar transformation in terms of technoscientific experimentation, classification systems, and the emergence of the mass production of meat.

Similarly, Foucault's biopolitical theorizing tends to not be interested in race except as a kind of secondary characteristic imposed upon a universal humanity. This project also responds to recent theorizations of biopolitics that extend it to the problem of the colour line. Summarizing this work, Puar notes that there has been a recent shift to correcting Foucault's inattention to enslavement and colonization.[24] In terms of animal studies, Dinesh Joseph Wadiwel's critical project in *The War Against Animals* is to apply biopolitical critique to animal exploitation.[25] While Wadiwel draws on Foucault's conception of biopolitics and Mbemebe's extension into necropolitics to think about animal exploitation and metaphysical distinctions between humans and animals, I think Puar's contribution to biopolitical critique, maiming, captures a form of power over life outside life and death that captures animal life under property regimes within capitalism. As she writes, maiming is "a status unto itself, a status that triangulates the hierarchies of living and dying that are standardly deployed in theorizations of biopolitics."[26] I think this status that is outside the binary of death and life defines practices like the confinement of animals and debilitation of their lively capacities. Indeed, Puar's focus in introducing maiming is to think about not just the control of life itself but the capacities of resistance.[27] The first chapter will deal more fully with the question of resistance outside of anthropocentric norms and ways of seeing; for now, I simply want to note that technologies of confinement not only control lively capacities but also the capacity to resist the conversion into property.

[24] Jasbir K. Puar, *The Right to Maim: Debility, Capacity, Disability*, Anima (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017), 137.
[25] Dinesh Wadiwel, *The War against Animals* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 66.
[26] Puar, *The Right to Maim*, 137.
[27] Puar, 135.

The conversion and animation of commodities is enmeshed within a further logic and apparatus of ownership under the form of property. The conversion of life into property is a key mode of operation for global capitalism and so an abolitionist political theory must critically interrogate the form, content, and results of this conversion. There are many possible avenues given the proliferation of struggles over life and livability that have emerged in recent decades and have always been a part of the struggle against accumulation and dispossession in the resistance to patriarchy, colonialism, and enslavement as well as the modalities of statecraft including the border and carceral systems of confinement and surveillance. The protection of the system of property relies on intertwined logics of policing a class society, racialization, and as I hope to make clear, an investment in anthropocentrism.

The expansive nature of the abolitionist project means that this particular intervention will necessarily be restricted. The reasons for that restriction will hopefully become clear in the text itself, so here I simply want to note some of those elisions, each of which could be and demands a separate study. This project does not much touch on the struggles for reproductive justice, queer and trans liberation, or Indigenous decolonial projects against the energy regimes of (settler) states and capital. For reasons of space and scope, I cannot much engage with borders as technologies of classification, dispossession, and the consolidation of state-mediated exploitation despite the dismantling of borders being a crucial abolitionist goal. The critique of borders is intimately connected with the recent struggles for police abolition due to police, prisons and borders "operating through a shared logic of immobilization, containing oppressed communities under racial capitalism" as well as the criminalization of migrants being "inescapably structured through the legal trafficking of millions of Africans during the slave trade, the policing and regulation of Blackness as constitutive of white supremacy and racial capitalism, and the anti-

Black production of vagrancy and alienness within the nation-state."[28] Nor can the project much engage with the War on Terror as a structuring condition for the expansion of racialized surveillance and policing as well as far-right nationalisms despite this too being a focus of abolitionist theory and praxis.[29]

Indigenous thought would seem a natural place of alliance with this project, yet it does not much feature in the following pages. The reason for this omission is two-fold: the first is that an interrogation of property and the categories of historical materialist critique in relation to settler colonialism has already been done by thinkers like Glen Coulthard, Robert Nichols, and Iyko Day. Nichols and Coulthard in particular aim to bring together insights from Indigenous politics and critical theory with Marxism. The second is that such a project would involve a critical interrogation of various Indigenous metaphysical systems that would require its own volume. It would also call for an embeddedness in Indigenous thought and lifeways that I do not have. That said, I am deeply indebted to critical refiguration of theory and Marxist critique from Indigenous thinkers, which informs much of my thinking around human and animal relations and the politics of the common as well as offering an analysis of the settler colonial mode of production that defines capitalism within the settler nation-states. With all that said, the chapters focused most on the development of settler colonial capitalism in the Americas (Chapter Two on primitive accumulation and Chapter Four on pandemics) engage with Indigenous critiques of

[28] Harsha Walia, *Border and Rule: Global Migration, Capitalism, and the Rise of Racist Nationalism* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2021), 5, 28; Iyko Day, *Alien Capital: Asian Racialization and the Logic of Settler Colonial Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 32, https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822374527.

[29] See Nisha Kapoor, *Deport, Deprive, Extradite: 21st Century State Extremism* (London ; New York: Verso, 2018). For the structural and historical connections and continuities between the War on Terror and the police repression of the 2020 rebellions see Spencer Ackerman, *Reign of Terror: How the 9/11 Era Destabilized America and Produced Trump* (New York: Viking, 2021), 316–26. For the homologies between police spending and U.S. foreign policy and military spending see Suzanne Schneider, *The Apocalypse and the End of History: Modern Jihad and the Crisis of Liberalism*, First edition hardback (London ; New York: Verso, 2021), 225–26.

capitalism and colonial statecraft in order to ground these critiques in specific histories of property-formation and the resistance to that formation. I also turn sometimes to Indigenous thought about historical and lived alternatives to the relation to animal life through property. The turn by settler scholars toward Indigenous critical theory is a welcome one, broadly, especially in thinking in a positive sense about relations between humans and non-humans otherwise than in terms of murder and exploitation.[30]

Abolition stands in sharp contrast to reform: broadly, the idea that the worst excesses of police violence can be curbed by gradual changes such as new technology or a more diverse police force and/or carceral apparatus. These strategies tend to focus on exceptional instances of police violence or abuse in prison rather than the everyday violence of policing and prison as strategies of discipline and the management of surplus populations emerging from structures and histories of racial violence. As Purnell puts it, police reforms "are such tyrannical prizes. Winning them feels relieving, never satisfying."[31] The tyrannical prize of reform is that the basic violent architecture of the system remains in place, if in a moderated form. One need only think of the slew of reforms instituted in the wake of the Ferguson and Baltimore uprisings, only to see more Black people subsequently murdered by the state. The question of police abolition is: "if the policing apparatus cannot be corrected, punished, or reformed against its own institutional entitlement to exercise violence more or less at will… then what political responses are available, and toward what ends?"[32] The answer to this question is an expanded conception of freedom and alternative structures of ownership to the ones on offer from liberal capitalist forms of

[30] See Kelly Struthers Montford and Chloë Taylor, eds., *Colonialism and Animality: Anti-Colonial Perspectives in Critical Animal Studies*, Routledge Advances in Critical Diversities (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon ; New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2020)
[31] Purnell, *Becoming Abolitionists*, 67.
[32] Dylan Rodríguez, "Beyond 'Police Brutality': Racist State Violence and the University of California," *American Quarterly* 64, no. 2 (2012): 309, https://doi.org/10.1353/aq.2012.0012.

recognition, community, and belonging. Central to abolitionist organizing is the concept of the non-reformist reform: "those measures that reduce the power of an oppressive system while illuminating the system's inability to solve the crises it creates."[33] Non-reformist reforms are introduced within the existing political system to limit the power of the carceral state. The reforms that tend to be brandished during times of political crisis, when a rebellion has forced a crisis, lead to the proliferation and expansion of the prison. The "roots and sustenance" of contemporary incarceration "are fundamentally located in the American liberal-progressive impulse toward reforming state violence rather than abolishing it."[34] Indeed, the prison itself was a reform. Michel Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* makes the claim that prison reform "is virtually contemporary with the prison itself, it constitutes, as it were, its programme."[35] These reforms arose in the wake of movements against capital and corporal punishment reflecting, as Angela Davis explains, "new intellectual tendencies associated with the Enlightenment, activist interventions by Protestant reformers, and structural transformations associated with the rise of industrial capitalism."[36] It is the latter of these that ground the politics of the abolitionist critique I am interested in developing here, one that uses relation to humanity to mark out categories of value, recognition, and freedom counterposed to "the animal" and dependent upon systems of

[33] Dan Berger, Mariame Kaba, and David Stein, "What Abolitionists Do," Jacobin, accessed June 8, 2022, https://jacobin.com/2017/08/prison-abolition-reform-mass-incarceration. The idea of the non-reformist reform is typically traced back to the socialist thinker André Gorz. See Andre Gorz, "Reform and Revolution," *Socialist Register* 5 (March 17, 1968), https://socialistregister.com/index.php/srv/article/view/5272. For a good overview of Gorz's thinking see "André Gorz's Non-Reformist Reforms Show How We Can Transform the World Today," accessed August 25, 2023, https://jacobin.com/2021/07/andre-gorz-non-reformist-reforms-revolution-political-theory.

[34] Dylan Rodríguez, "Abolition As Praxis Of Human Being: A Foreword," *Harvard Law Review* 132, no. 6 (April 2019): 1602.

[35] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, 2nd Vintage Books ed (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 234.

[36] Angela Y. Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?*, Open Media Book (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2003), 42.

confinement and mechanisms for letting live and making die, especially within the categories of classification central to racial capitalism.

The human in so far as it stands in for the privileged subject of ownership within dominant schemas of value and freedom represents a bulwark against which radical critique strikes, especially given the metonymic formulation of the human with white, heterosexual masculinity, and other forms of material privilege under actually existing capitalism. The human then attains coherence as a "thoroughly exclusionary concept in race and species terms—that it has only ever made sense as a way of marking who does not belong in the inner circle."[37] As Sylvia Wynter puts it, in her pathbreaking deconstruction of the figure of Man, "all our present struggles with respect to race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, struggles over the environment, global warming, severe climate change, the sharply unequal distribution of the earth resources… are all differing facets of the central ethnoclass Man vs. Human struggle."[38]

The Afro-pessimist tradition of Black studies raises similar questions around the human as always-already racially marked and set against Blackness. For thinkers like Frank Wilderson, the exclusion of Blackness enables sociality itself and the constitution of the Human. As Wilderson writes, "Whereas Humans exist on some plane of being and thus can become existentially present through some struggle for, of, or through recognition, Blacks cannot reach this plane."[39] Wilderson's point here is not to mark out Black people as exceptionally oppressed but rather that it "makes little sense to attempt analogy" with other oppressed groups.[40] In

[37] Claire Jean Kim, *Dangerous Crossings: Race, Species, and Nature in a Multicultural Age* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 287.
[38] Wynter, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom," 260–61.
[39] Frank Wilderson III, *Red, White & Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms* (Duke University Press, 2010), 38.
[40] Frank Wilderson III, 38.

particular, he marks out the Middle Passage as converting Africans to Blacks as a position categorically different from other historical atrocities including the Holocaust:

> Jews went into Auschwitz and came out as Jews. Africans went into the ships and came out as Blacks. The former is a Human holocaust; the latter is a Human *and* a metaphysical holocaust. That is why it makes little sense to attempt analogy: the Jews have the Dead (the *Muselmann*) among them; the Dead have the Blacks among them.[41]

In other words, Blackness is an ontological condition without analogy and only made so through what Wilderson calls "the ruse of analogy" that places Blackness within sociality itself where "they [Blacks] have not been since the dawn of Blackness."[42] The Afro-pessimist tradition represents a break with ideas of recognition and coalition that have shaped projects of racial justice especially in the mid-twentieth century. Such a refusal of analogy has led to some clumsy political interventions such as Wilderson denouncing Black and Palestinian solidarity because "anti-Blackness is as important and necessary to the formation of Arab psychic life as it is to the formation of Jewish psychic life."[43] All that being said, as Boisseron notes, the animal is one place where Wilderson analogizes. His critique of Gramscian cultural studies compares the Black as a figure with the cow in the slaughterhouse. Summarizing Wilderson's critique, Boisseron writes that for Wilderson, Blackness is "without analog, *excep*t for the animal."[44] For Boisseron, such a slippage in Wilderson's discourse of non-comparison shows that "the black condition, even when said to be nonanalogizable, implicitly and ineluctably brings us back to the animal comparison."[45] Wilderson sees the cow and 'the Black' as having a homologous relationship to

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[41] Frank Wilderson III, 37.
[42] Frank Wilderson III, 37.
[43] Wilderson qtd. in Noura Erakat and Marc Lamont Hill, "Black-Palestinian Transnational Solidarity: Renewals, Returns, and Practice," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 48, no. 4 (August 1, 2019): 13, https://doi.org/10.1525/jps.2019.48.4.7.
[44] Boisseron, *Afro-Dog,* xviii.
[45] Boisseron, xix.

capital: unlike the worker who is being exploited, the cow is being accumulated and killed just as 'the Black' is a population surplus to capital.[46] Wilderson's 'cow question' read alongside Boisseron's attention to the presence of the animal helps us think about the centrality of property and capital to the Black-animal comparison that haunts capitalist modernity in social formations structured by the colour line and where the dominant relationship to animals is one of ownership. It further enables a reflection on the always-already racialized construct of the Human and its centrality within a social formation structured by property and ownership. This project asks: what would it mean to bring non-human animals into this wider struggle for the abolition of the property-form? And how has their management under capital interacted dialectically with racialization, especially anti-Black racialization, in social formations shaped by the afterlives of enslavement?

Alexis Pauline Gumbs rewrites Wynter's profound challenge to the hegemony of Man, asking: "What if I don't want to recuperate the human and don't believe that humans have a unique ability to write?"[47] In other words, Gumbs wonders about non-human forms of being in the world, eventually thinking with whales as co-strugglers against systems of resource extraction. The reworking of the relationship between Blackness and animality and between Black people and animals has become the focus of recent work in animal studies seeking to trouble easy comparisons and easy disavowals toward something bumpier and messier. As Bénédicte Boisseron puts it, "Instead of ignoring the monkey standing awkwardly next to the black politicians or the black slave yanked to the table of animal rights activists, the goal is precisely to bring attention to their mutual addressability and expose a system that compulsively

[46] Frank Wilderson, "Gramsci's Black Marx: Whither the Slave in Civil Society?," *Social Identities* 9, no. 2 (June 2003): 233, https://doi.org/10.1080/1350463032000101579.
[47] Alexis Pauline Gumbs, "Being Ocean as Praxis," *Qui Parle* 28, no. 2 (December 1, 2019): 338, https://doi.org/10.1215/10418385-7861848.

conjures up blackness and animality together to measure the value of existence."[48] Ultimately, Boisseron's critical project is to think about the mutual flourishing of Black people and animals in non-oppositional or zero-sum terms. The answer of this project to the question of the identity of that system is capital and property and we will see how such systems operate to yoke together Blackness and animality as conditions of abjection. First, we will need to lay out some groundwork around the so-called question of the animal which has seen an explosion over the last decade or so, in many different and competing currents of thought.

Animal

The field of animal studies is an illusion: it is several fields stacked on top of one another. These include animal studies, critical animal studies, species studies, human-animal studies, animality studies, and (sometimes) posthumanism. The foci of these fields include humane advocacy for animals, the interrogation of species as an organizing technology of biopower, the interconnections between humans and animals, the cultural politics of animality in historical moments, and a radical critique of animal oppression. The big tent of "animal studies" holds "various aesthetic, philosophical, and interdisciplinary questions pertaining to animal representation, human-animal relations and the human/nonhuman binary."[49] Critical animal studies (CAS) names a more radical political emphasis on the animal question and a specific historical and institutional context. As Jodey Castricano and Lauren Corman explain, Critical Animal Studies "was based on the shared commitments of a collection of people in the early 2000s who were working together through the Centre for Animal Liberation Affairs and who

[48] Boisseron, *Afro-Dog,* xx.
[49] Anat Pick and Guinevere Narraway, eds., "Introduction: Intersecting Ecology and Film," in *Screening Nature: Cinema beyond the Human* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013), 16, n3.

explicitly grounded their efforts in animal liberation."[50] CAS tends to reject poststructuralist thought on the animal question, seeing it as apolitical. John Sorenson, for instance, rejects in remarkably polemical terms the "pernicious influence" of thinkers like Derrida and Haraway, grouping them into what he calls "postmodern animal studies."[51] These postmodern animal studies are more appropriately grouped under the heading of poststructuralism under the influence of Jacques Derrida and Donna Haraway but also Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guatarri, and Giorgio Agamben in addition to scholars who never directly or substantively addressed the question of the animal such as Michel Foucault. My own thinking is indebted to the poststructuralist tradition, one that problematizes an easy identification of animals and humans by interrogating the work "the animal" as an abstraction does in constituting the human. That being said, I share the insight of CAS that "the categorization of non-human animals as property and their exploitation for profit is a fundamental component of a global economic structure."[52] Indeed, the point of my project is to think about the role of animals within the global economic structure of capitalism and the global institution of private property while not wanting to settle the question too easily of what it is animals are. The political stakes of this undecidability do not license a political quietism; instead, I remain skeptical of the potential for domination inherent in political recognition.

What is missing or perhaps elided in these polemical differentiations is a broader question about the relationship between theory and practice or theory and activism as it is worked out through the academy and particular points of emphasis within a given discourse. Such a tension

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[50] Jodey Castricano and Lauren Corman, eds., *Animal Subjects 2.0* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016), 3.
[51] John Sorenson, "Introduction: Thinking the Unthinkable," in *Critical Animal Studies: Thinking the Unthinkable* (Toronto, Canada: Canadian Scholars, 2014), xix.
[52] John Sorenson, "Introduction: Thinking the Unthinkable," in *Critical Animal Studies: Thinking the Unthinkable* (Toronto, Canada: Canadian Scholars, 2014), xxi.

bespeaks both the difficulty of animal studies in general, given the complicated relationship to recognition and representation required, *and* the difficulty of engaging the dialectic of theory and activism. Feminist scholarship has been attentive to this difficulty, critically interrogating a tendency to see practice as the Other of theoretical production, valorized and not subject to critical reflection.[53] And indeed, such attention to the experience and interrogation of this dialectic can be crucial for thinking better about relationships to alterity across lines of historically and politically consolidated difference.[54] Such a valorization of practice and activism shies away from harder questions around the long legacies of the yoking together of Blackness and animality within the long rhythms of capitalism and statecraft. While the self-understanding of critical animal studies might be said to emerge in contradistinction to the political moderation of animal ethics or animal rights, I follow Calarco in not placing too much weight on terminology since "transformative potential regarding animal issues can be found in various approaches to animal studies and even in discourses that are not explicitly radical."[55]

The specific orientation toward animal studies in this project is less about trying to map the field so much as make use of the theoretical tools of animal studies for understanding capitalism and statecraft especially in relation to systems of property ownership as those systems

[53] Pauline B. Bart et al., "In Sisterhood? Women's Studies and Activism," *Women's Studies Quarterly* 27, no. 3/4 (1999): 257–67; Catherine M. Orr, "Challenging the 'Academic/Real World' Divide," in *Teaching Feminist Activism: Strategies from the Field*, ed. Nancy A. Naples and Karen Bojar (New York: Routledge, 2002), 36–54. Worth thinking about in light of the difficulties engaging with the theory and practice dialectic is the fraught relation between theory and activism or the difficulties of activist scholarship as done within the university which works as an engine of capital accumulation, labour stratification and in complicity with the carceral state and institutionalized anthropocentrism. For a several reflections on these challenges see Julia Sudbury and Margo Okazawa-Rey, eds., *Activist Scholarship: Antiracism, Feminism, and Social Change* (Boulder: Paradigm Publ, 2009). For some further reflections on the university through abolitionist critique see Abbie Boggs Schwartz-Weinstein Eli Meyerhoff, Nick Mitchell, Zach, "Abolitionist University Studies: An Invitation," Viewpoint Magazine, January 19, 2022, https://viewpointmag.com/2022/01/19/abolitionist-university-studies-an-invitation/.
[54] Catherine M. Orr, "Challenging the 'Academic/Real World' Divide," 53.
[55] Matthew Calarco, *Thinking through Animals: Identity, Difference, Indistinction* (Stanford, California: Stanford, an imprint of Stanford University Press, 2015), 2.

have been informed by and shape white normativity. As such, animals are both central and marginal in this study; central in that I will be arguing for the importance of considering animal life in critical studies of capital, racialization, and statecraft but marginal in that I am not trying to mark out animals as exemplary subjects of politics or political intervention. By this I mean, a care for animals over and above other subjects of politics is not the goal of the present study; rather, I hope to argue for their importance as a specific relational subject to property. As such, I take a certain distance from questions of how humans might relate to animals or from detailing animal oppression in order to think about the species-line and formation of *animality* as constructed by capital accumulation and the institution of property. I believe such a move requires a skepticism about rigid binaries between humans and animals both in terms of capacities but also in terms of relative 'privilege' vis-à-vis socioeconomic and political existence insofar as certain kinds of animal life can be valued over certain kinds of human life along the grain of racialized difference.

This is why I think animality is a helpful analytic: it detaches the position of 'the animal' qua social category from specific animal life qua taxonomical or biological category (though such divisions are themselves constructs) to lay bare the *political* work animal as a position does when thinking about social formations structured by the institution of property. The making of distinctions through the carceral state and policing will form a minor theme throughout the project, hinging on animal and human as categories with specific relationships to and articulations with whiteness and property. As Mel Y. Chen puts it, the statement " 'someone treated me like a dog' is one of liberal humanism's fictions: some dogs are treated quite well, and many humans suffer in conditions of profound indignity."[56] Such a differential relationship

[56] Mel Y. Chen, *Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect*, Perverse Modernities (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012), 89.

despite the abjected *position* of the animal suggests a distinction between the animal as specific position and particular subject where the position is "supported and legitimated by…states in a transnational system of…capital" from which an anthropocentric superiority flows.[57] My claim then is that the animal is a particular position in relation to capital and ownership that is related to but ultimately distinct from what might be called "actual animals." At the same time, my project is attentive to systems of confinement that work to convert actual animals in their fleshy materiality into commodities and resources for human consumption. I understand a commitment to animal liberation as informing a left-politics, though one sometimes separate from other progressive causes and contributing to its own marginalization due to 'race-blind' or else just racist policies and intellectual perspectives. However, a concern for animals does not need to be isolated from the rest of the left. In her critical retrospective of ecofeminism, Greta Gaard notes that the ecofeminism of the 1970s to 1990s thought together "the linked oppressions of gender, ecology, race, species, and nation."[58] Gaard further claims that much of the work happening now in fields such as animal studies takes ideas from ecofeminism. In a related register, Susan Fraiman has criticized how the canonization of male philosophers, especially Derrida, erases the contribution of ecofeminists to animal studies and cleaves off animal studies from more 'politicized' fields like gender and sexuality studies (as well as critical race studies).[59]_At stake in these claims about the erasure of politically committed scholarship is a broader question of the political commitments and objects of animal studies and theory itself and the status of normative critique within the academy.

[57] Chen, 89.
[58] Greta Gaard, "Ecofeminism Revisited: Rejecting Essentialism and Re-Placing Species in a Material Feminist Environmentalism," *Feminist Formations* 23, no. 2 (2011): 28, https://doi.org/10.1353/ff.2011.0017.
[59] Susan Fraiman, "Pussy Panic versus Liking Animals: Tracking Gender in Animal Studies," *Critical Inquiry* 39, no. 1 (September 2012): 92, https://doi.org/10.1086/668051.

Conjuncturally, the more recent politicization of the animal question emerges from an awareness of climate change and the Covid-19 pandemic with philosophers Alice Crary and Lori Gruen recently writing that "practices that harm animals are embedded in institutions that also systematically harm socially vulnerable human beings."[60] That is, the practices that comprise a social totality and render vulnerable certain lives do not stop at the species line and in fact use that line as a technology of power. Crary and Gruen end their essay by calling for animal ethicists to embrace "ecofeminism and ecological Marxism" in order to "see that, far from being incidental…the terrible treatment of animals and the oppression of human outgroups are structurally and systematically conjoined."[61] Extending this call, the argument of this dissertation project is that Black critical theory and Black Marxism is also necessary for thinking the systems and structures of oppression impacting animals and "human outgroups" in Gruen and Crary's terms. We find ourselves here pressing up against the limits of animal ethics, even a deconstructive ethics, where an attempt is made to "recognize and extend care to others while acknowledging that we may not know what the best form of care is for an other whom we cannot presume to know."[62] While the deconstructive project at work is one worth keeping in view, a focus on the economic and political arrangements cut through the ethical antimonies by putting forth analyses that seek to eliminate confinement and death for humans and non-humans alike. The focus on abolition emerging from the Black radical tradition as an expansive critique of property aims to refocus these ethical debates by recentering capitalist exploitation and the critique of commodity and property. Refocusing on the critique of property sharpens the deconstructive project by placing it within a specific context of political intervention and within

[60] Alice Crary and Lori Gruen, "The Animal Crisis Is a Human Crisis," *Boston Review*, accessed August 10, 2022, https://bostonreview.net/articles/the-animal-crisis-is-a-human-crisis/.
[61] Alice Crary and Lori Gruen.
[62] Kari Weil, *Thinking Animals: Why Animal Studies Now?* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 16.

the material history of accumulation and property formation as well as the forms of recognition and capture central to liberal-bourgeois statecraft, especially within formations shaped by *racial* capitalism.

The recent works by Benedicte Boisseron (2018) and Zakiyyah Iman Jackson (2020) "engage with 'animality' as a relation of embodied existence and representation that configures ideas about both social difference and the human relationship to the natural world."[63] The critical thrust of these interventions has been to think against the paradigm of dehumanization for understanding racism since within this paradigm, "advocating … inclusion within the human, reif[ies] the conceit of liberal humanism's transcendence of race."[64] We can also see an attempt by these scholars to formulate alternative genealogies of the critique of humanism, ones that take as their starting point the anti-colonial theories of the twentieth century rather than philosophers in the imperial core in the same period, building on the critique of the human in Black feminist thought.[65] These works, placing themselves within literary and cultural theory, act as something of a response (Boisseron most directly) to books like Marjorie Speigel's *The Dreaded Comparison,* a touchstone for contemporary animal activism. Speigel stages several textual and visual comparisons between animality and enslavement. Her argument is that comparing the "suffering of animals to that of blacks… is offensive only to the speciesist: one who has embraced the false notion of what animals are like."[66] For Boisseron and other thinkers working in the bumpy intersections of Black studies and animal studies, this text represents the elision of

[63] Neel Ahuja, "The Analogy of Race and Species in Animal Studies," *Prism* 18, no. 1 (March 1, 2021): 250, https://doi.org/10.1215/25783491-8922265.
[64] Ahuja, 251.
[65] Zakiyyah Iman Jackson, "Animal: New Directions in the Theorization of Race and Posthumanism," ed. Kalpana Rahita Seshadri, Michael Lundblad, and Mel Y. Chen, *Feminist Studies* 39, no. 3 (2013): 669–85.
[66] Marjorie Spiegel, *The Dreaded Comparison: Human and Animal Slavery*, Rev. and expanded ed (New York, NY: Mirror Books, 1996), 30.

Blackness as a mode of shoring up claims of justice for animals.[67] Taking up Spiegel's comparison, even if departing from her problematic, leads Alexander Weheliye to complain that "the (not so) dreaded comparison between human and animal slavery is brandished about in the field of animal studies and how black liberation struggles serve as both the positive and negative foil for making a case for the sentience and therefore emancipation of nonhuman beings" and "how carelessly—and often defensively—this comparative analogy was brandished about in this area of inquiry."[68] In the popular imagination, the juxtaposition of animal exploitation and Black slavery (as well as the Holocaust) is largely demonstrated by the work of PETA and similar groups and tends to provoke outrage and generate controversy. Kalpana Rahita Seshadri argues that such controversies are about "the deep gulf between the political commitment to social justice (achieving equality, dignity, respect) and the philosophical inquiry into life and living (problems of identity, propriety, death)."[69] I think this is a problem more generally of the encounter between political theories of race and theories of animality in particular since questions of identity, being, and distinction come together forcefully not in connection but often in collision with one another. The goal then is to think otherwise than comparison or rethink contemporary metaphors of intersection toward something bumpier and messier. What optics come into view if messiness, singularity and/or multiplicity, and rupture are privileged over easy intersection? My claim is that an abolitionist optic comes into view; one motivated by a fundamental challenge to property, capital, and the carceral state. This abolitionist optic challenges the zero-sum logic that easily compares Black and animal oppression and argues over concern for one over the other.

[67] Boisseron, *Afro-Dog*, 20.
[68] Alexander G. Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 10.
[69] Kalpana Seshadri, *HumAnimal: Race, Law, Language*, Posthumanities 21 (Minneapolis ; London: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), 3.

Instead, an abolitionist optic is informed by mutual freedom. Such a mutual freedom is dependent on the abolition of property; the abolition of property enables mutual freedom to be realized. Che Gossett emphasizes how thinkers in Black studies challenge the instrumentalization of Black suffering and history to legitimate their claims for animal liberation, where "blackness remains the absent presence of much animal studies and animal liberation discourse – which speaks to how blackness functions as 'the raw material' of theory and knowledge production."[70]

In Zakiyyah Jackson's *Becoming Human* she argues that animal studies and other related fields, "are slowly advancing the thesis that human-animal binarism is the original and foundational difference upon which discourses of human difference including, or even especially, racialization were erected."[71] For Jackson and much of the recent work in Black studies that engages the related but distinct questions of the human and the animal, Blackness is a central component of understanding the human and animal distinction since, as Mel Chen argues, "African slaves first bore the epistemological weight of animalization" as a racialization of pre-capitalist systems of difference that emerged co-extensively with the rise of (racial) capitalism.[72] My own claim is that Blackness and animality emerged together as relations of ownability and commodities under conditions of racial capitalism and the taking of territory that defined capital's birth and history.

Che Gossett points out, "Black thinkers were always already considering the question of the animal because of the ways in which Blackness was situated in a relation of objectification to

[70] Che Gosset, "Blackness, Animality, and the Unsovereign," Verso, accessed April 17, 2023, https://www.versobooks.com/en-ca/blogs/news/2228-che-gossett-blackness-animality-and-the-unsovereign.
[71] Zakiyyah Iman Jackson, *Becoming Human: Matter and Meaning in an Antiblack World*, Sexual Cultures (New York: New York University Press, 2020), 10.
[72] Chen, *Animacies*, 111.

the animal."[73] Such a relation of objectification should be understood as part and parcel of the development and reproduction of capitalism given the way market relations yoked Black people and animals together, which generated forms of concern for animal life in Black thought. Lindgren Johnson argues, "African Americans… were *animal agents* long before animal rights or even animal welfare movements existed in the United States, and their perspectives are essential to understanding the full scope of thinking on both human and animal liberation. Recorded in ledgers alongside animals, sold and 'bred' as domesticated 'livestock,' hunted like wild animals, and stripped, as animals are, of rights to bodily integrity, it actually makes sense (as counterintuitive as this may initially seem) that they became animal agents."[74] That is, while Blackness and animality are not equivalent conditions, the forces and technologies of their creation were shared as part and parcel of the formation and reproduction of capitalism, and this was recognized in the Black radical tradition. Frederick Douglass, for instance, connected his own condition as enslaved to the plight of horses and oxen and imagined a community of non-exploitative relation between humans and animals.[75] Joshua Bennett argues, such proximities to animals from Black writers "can be found throughout the African American literary tradition. That is, rather than triumphalist rhetoric that would eschew the nonhuman altogether, what we often find instead are authors who envision the Animal as a source of unfettered possibility" toward a mode of abolishing the anti-blackness that undergirds the human and animal distinction within capitalist modernity.[76]

[73] Che Gosset, "Blackness, Animality, and the Unsovereign."
[74] Lindgren Johnson, *Race Matters, Animal Matters: Fugitive Humanism in African America, 1840-1930* (New York: Routledge, 2018), 18.
[75] Bennett, *Being Property Once Myself*, 3.
[76] Bennett, 3–4.

In thinking about the relationship between Blackness and animality, it is important to clarify the relationship between Blackness and Black people and animals and animality. The former distinction is crucial in Black studies to specify the theoretical project of Black critique without a reproduction of a cultural or biological essentialism. For Weheliye, it is essential to "disarticulate blackness from black people, since not doing so accepts too easily race as a given natural and/or cultural phenomenon rather than an assemblage of forces that must continuously re/produce black subjects as nonhuman."[77] The production of the human through the sorting of life into dialectical proximity with whiteness is crucial here in that it indexes the close intimacy between Blackness and animality. The distinction between animals and animality is less well-trod territory given the lumping together of various theoretical and political projects under the banner of animal studies or critical animal studies. Lundblad has done the most work to think about these distinctions, arguing that the emphasis of animality studies is "more on the discursive construction of animalities in relation to human cultural politics, rather than representations of nonhuman animals with more of an emphasis on improving the relationships and interactions between human and nonhuman animals."[78] A focus on animality can also be differentiated from posthumanism, as he writes elsewhere:

> One of the primary differences I see between animality studies [his own project] and Wolfe's posthumanism . . . is the prioritization of politics [in animality studies] over philosophy, of historicized cultural studies over an emphasis on aesthetic form, with animality studies focusing more on discourse analysis within the framework of theoretical advocacy against a wide range of exploitative practices, even if it cannot proceed with that analysis from a transcendent observational position.[79]

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[77] Alexander G. Weheliye, "After Man," *American Literary History* 20, no. 1/2 (2008): 333, n2.
[78] Michael Lundblad, "Introduction: The End of the Animal – Literary and Cultural Animalities," in *Animalities: Literary and Cultural Studies beyond the Human*, ed. Lundblad, Michael (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd, 2017), 11.
[79] Michael Lundblad, *The Birth of a Jungle: Animality in Progressive-Era U.S. Literature and Culture* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 15.

Such a differentiation maps on well to the distance that this project takes from a theoretical posthumanism in that my project is situated within the history of capitalism and bourgeois statecraft and focused on the way animality attaches itself to particular subject positions. I understand animality and Blackness as naming discursive constructions that map unevenly onto actual beings and are constructed by related but distinct assemblages of forces that produce the non-human in relation to the operations of capital and the state. These operations are grounded in a particular history of and relationship to the property-form, viz., the history of enslavement and capital accumulation. Attending to the distinction between Blackness and Back people and animals and animality is part of a broader project to defamiliarize a biological essentialism and epistemic certainty around identity as such. There is an important political component to such differentiations in that identification does not determine relationships to power and to capital, necessarily. Theoretically, I focus on Black studies and critique because as Weheliye argues, the object of Black studies is the human itself, rather than simply this or that marginal identity.[80] If Blackness structures the human, is imbricated within the formation of the Human, then what about the animal? The role of the animal in relation to Blackness will be one of the central foci of the present study, building on the work of Boisseron, Jackson, and other scholars who have found animal studies compelling yet frustrating for its relative lack of attention to racialization and lack of attention to struggles for liberation by racialized subjects.

Critical Theory and Marxist Politics

The present study is, self-consciously, a work of critical theory. However, what that means is far from self-evident. The non-obviousness of the designation signals not just the

[80] Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus*, 19.

tensions highlighted above between animal studies and animal liberation politics but also the proliferation of discourses that could be considered critical theory. The standard definition comes from Max Horkheimer and the Frankfurt School where the function of critical theory is to "liberate *human beings* from the circumstances that enslave them."[81] The contribution of Frankfurt School to critical theory was "that it undertook the effort to identify the new and developing conditions of the political in the 20th century by bringing together a range of concepts and theories: Marxism and psychoanalysis most notably, but also tenets from sociology, political theory, and philosophy, intellectual fields to which the Frankfurt School gave a vibrancy that by mid-century they had begun to lack, largely because they had begun to be codified and institutionalised."[82] As Robert Nichols notes, due to this broad focus "the methods and interpretive languages of Critical Theory have expanded and proliferated to take account of a much wider range of social pathologies (and their corresponding resistance movements)" than Horkheimer and the Frankfurt School set as their areas of focus.[83] The self-reflexive and historical mode of critique allows for an expansion into new forms of the political as well as that to which critical theorists of 20th century Europe were not attentive. The broad focus of critical theory in its various iterations makes it the ideal orientation for my work here given the spanning of this project across disciplines, historical periods, and theoretical traditions. Despite the historical promiscuity of this thesis, I want to keep alive the centrality of history. Expressing her frustration with the looseness of "the afterlife of slavery" in the contemporary academy, Hazel Carby notes that "it has now assumed an autonomous existence, which no longer requires us to

[81] James Bohman, "Critical Theory," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Spring 2021 (Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2021), https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2021/entries/critical-theory/. Emphasis added.
[82] Imre Szeman, "Towards a Critical Theory of Energy," in *Energy Humanities. Current State and Future Directions*, ed. Matúš Mišík and Nada Kujundžić (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2021), 23–37.
[83] Robert Nichols, *Theft Is Property! Dispossession & Critical Theory*, Radical Américas (Durham: Duke University Press, 2020), 10.

understand that the ways in which 'race' comes to acquire meaning are contingent on particular times, places, cultures and economies."[84] Further, the word 'afterlife,' while helpfully pointing to the structural legacies of enslavement, "also grants an immortality to racial logic; the term connotes a world without end, and even as a supernatural quality that stretches back to the Curse of Ham."[85] To combat this tendency, I emphasize the importance of a materialist account of race, capital, and species. The bold claim at the heart of this project is that the animal has a history. Animality and animal life are contingent on historical shifts in the organization of state and capital, the victories and defeats of political struggle, and changing scientific discourse. In making this claim, I want to do something different than an empirical and historical recounting of the status of animals through, say, the prism of domestication; rather, I want to think about the condition of animal life as being grounded in a specific history of capital accumulation and reproduction. Much like critical studies of race, gender, and sexuality, I want to think about animality here as being part of the history of capital and property-formation and so part of the condition of modernity, instated by the intimacies of four continents linked through the development of a capitalist world-system.[86] Relatedly, by saying animality has a history, my claim is that animals exist in a relation of struggle to their confinement, their control, and their death. It is worth posing the question of whether animality is merely synonymous with modes of domination and violence or whether modes of being exist that exceed domination. In answering this question, I see the construction of the cage, the slaughterhouse, and the factory farm all factor into this relation of struggle as emerging in response to resistance. I understand that resistance located beyond intentional action toward a simple will toward freedom from

[84] Hazel V. Carby, "We Must Burn Them," *London Review of Books*, May 26, 2022, https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v44/n10/hazel-v.-carby/we-must-burn-them.
[85] Carby.
[86] Lisa Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 1–41.

confinement. Rather than privileging exclusively struggles for resistance or confinement, I see the relationship between resistance and confinement as dialectical where the cage, the slaughterhouse, and factory farm as well as the prison emerge in response to resistance.

The construction of species and forms of governance of the non-human operate according to specific historical logics and, most importantly, in response to resistance waged by the oppressed. As C.L.R. James puts it, with always unsurpassed directness, "[t]he only place where Negroes did not revolt is in the pages of capitalist historians."[87] The centrality of critical theory to this project is to challenge the absence of revolt from conventional historical accounts of subjects excluded from the purview of the human. In a gesture of defamiliarity to a dominant ideology of the oppressed as victims, James argues that it is "not strange that the Negroes revolted. It would have been strange if they had not."[88] The historical methodology that interests me here is one that, as Purnell puts it, "did not start with cops, but with freedom."[89] The body of the dissertation will discuss specific freedom struggles and technologies of control brought about by resistance. It is this historiographical commitment that informs my selection and emphasis on histories of abolition, workers' struggles and animal liberation from the perspective of struggle, where technologies of control, confinement, discipline, labour-extraction, and labour management grow in response to and transmute in accordance with the struggles of the oppressed. The "contingencies of the class struggle" shaped the organization of policing, prisons, labour management and statecraft as well as the management of non-human animals essential to

[87] C.L.R. James, "Revolution and the Negro," *Spring Magazine*, February 24, 2021, https://springmag.ca/c-l-r-james-revolution-and-the-negro.
[88] CLR James.
[89] Purnell, *Becoming Abolitionists*, 56.

capitalist production and reproduction.[90] Importantly, the shaping of modes of organization of state and capital by political struggle does not *necessarily* lead to more progressive outcomes or proceed along determinable lines of prediction. As Ulrich Brand and Markuss Wissen put it, "the many struggles for socio-economic improvements have often *resulted* in extending and consolidating the imperial mode of living and only rarely led to economic and social forms based on solidarity and without ecologically destructive effects."[91] While Brand and Wissen do not devote a place in their analysis to animals, it is true that forms of historical political struggle have not changed or have made worse the condition of animal life. In a similar fashion, anti-Black racism has often transmuted rather than been abolished because the system of ownership remains in place even beyond formal legal structures. What I am interested in here is the *materiality of the spectre* as it manifests in control over the Black body and the animal body but also in how that control has shifted in response to forms of struggle, even if the results have not been liberatory. The spectre is a rhetorical figure used to think about that which lingers, haunts, and remains present even in formal absence. In this case, it is the material effects of a system of oppression and domination manifesting in enslavement and mass killing that brought capitalist modernity into being. In thinking about the role of animals in capital accumulation, I join a broader project in Marxist critical theory that seeks to expand Marx's remarks on primitive accumulation. The process described under the heading of primitive accumulation is the way capital seeks profitability in negative relation to the wage, i.e., through reserves of intermittently exploitable

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[90] Sidney L. Harring, *Policing a Class Society: The Experience of American Cities, 1865-1915*, Crime, Law, and Deviance Series (New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press, 1983), 17. Timothy Mitchell, though not in those terms, makes a similar argument about the shift from coal to oil being a response to strikes and sabotage from coal miners. Timothy Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil* (London: Verso, 2013), 42.

[91] Ulrich Brand and Markus Wissen, *The Imperial Mode of Living: Everyday Life and the Ecological Crisis of Capitalism*, trans. Zachary Murphy-King (London ; New York: Verso, 2021), 70. The 'imperial mode of living' is Brand and Wissen's terms for the conditions of everyday life subtended by imperialism and ecological destruction and sits at the centre of several contemporary interlocking crises: ecological crisis and the crisis in social reproduction, as well as racism, patriarchy, and homophobia.

subjects, not necessarily reducible to the human in biology or law. The renewed interest in Marxist thought following the 2008 financial crisis spurred a return to primitive accumulation to think about a range of social formations that construct and differentiate labouring subjects. I understand the political project of these interventions as an attempt to bridge the gap between a Marxism that cleaved off class from other forms of oppression and a wave of identity-based social movements that have largely ignored the structuring mechanisms of capital. Such a bridging involved, much like with a political animal studies, recovering under-studied strains in Marxist thought such as from Marxist feminists and Black Marxists as well as a Marxism more attentive to the dialectical relation between class contradiction and social categories of difference. Within animal studies, I think the scattered turn towards Marxist political economy emerges from a frustration with the limitations of animal rights discourse and its inability to think animal suffering within a global system of domination.

The most sustained taking up of Marx's political economy in relation to the animal question is Nicole Shukin's *Animal Capital* which seeks to "rectify a critical blind spot in Marxist and post-Marxist theory around the nodal role of animals, ideologically and materially, in the reproduction of capital's hegemony."[92] That is, the centrality of animals to capitalism as a whole, beyond just regimes of direct ownership and the generation of economic value. As Chapter One will make clear, extending Marxist theory beyond the human does more than extend political recognition of non-human animals based on a Marxist ethics, but rather brings to the surface questions central to historical materialism itself about the subject of anti-capitalist resistance, histories of capitalist development, and labour extraction along with a range of other

[92] Nicole Shukin, *Animal Capital: Rendering Life in Biopolitical Times*, Posthumanities 6 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 7.

problems and questions. The questions and interventions posed by animality attain a centrality for a materialist politics given that, as Althusser puts it, to be a materialist is to avoid telling oneself any stories.[93] And animals are what we have most told ourselves stories about, especially under conditions of alienation and estrangement from actually existing animals.

Most of this project will investigate systems of control, confinement, and discipline since they are not well understood in their operations on animal life, especially in conjunction with the property form. What abolition contests, at the level of history and historiography, is "the liberal assumption that either the carceral state or carceral power is an inevitable and permanent part of the social formation."[94] Instead, by placing the carceral state within the parentheses of history, abolitionist thought reveals its contingent and historically determined role within systems of political and economic power. I understand freedom and resistance *alongside* systems of control, confinement, and discipline as dialectically interacting within the structures of capitalism and statecraft as well as the struggle of systemically oppressed groups.

The nineteenth century saw the triple births of the abolitionist movement, the worker's movement, and the animal rights movement. In the early part of the century, as historian Jason Hribal argues, "animal rights had become an *active term*."[95] While not explicitly discussed by Hribal, the nineteenth century also saw an explosion of movements to abolish slavery plus the movement for worker's rights. These triple movements overlapped, were in tension with one another, were ignorant of one another but represent together the victories and defeats in the struggle against the nascent forms of global capitalism from the sixteenth and seventeenth

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[93] See Wal Suchting, "Althusser's Late Thinking About Materialism," *Historical Materialism* 12, no. 1 (2004): 59, n134. Suchting gives an overview of this idea recurring in Althusser's work.
[94] Rodríguez, "Abolition As Praxis Of Human Being: A Foreword," 1577.
[95] Jason Hribal, "'Animals Are Part of the Working Class': A Challenge to Labor History," *Labor History* 44, no. 4 (November 2003): 452, https://doi.org/10.1080/0023656032000170069.

centuries that continue to the present. Importantly for the purposes of developing an abolitionist political theory, policing crystallized in the nineteenth century, especially "the radical expansion of racialized slavery in the US South and the need to quell slave rebellions; and the rapid growth of a large unruly urban working class in northern cities undergoing capitalist industrialization, whom factory owners needed to discipline and punish."[96] Policing (as well as prisons) form a kind of historical through-line of this project from efforts to ensure labour discipline and extract surplus value in early modern forms of criminalization to the emergence of a carceral apparatus to discipline the Black body and reproduce its status as property. My claim alongside this is that control over animal life from the 16th to the 19th centuries and into the present similarly forms an historical through-line that further intersects with forms of extraction, labour, and discipline essential to the formation and reproduction of capital, including forms of confinement. That is, policing and disciplining animals formed a nexus of systems of domination crucial to capitalist modernity from the processes of capital accumulation in the early modern period to mass industrialization in the nineteenth century to the present. Both of these continuities refract the control over the racialized that formed the genesis of modern policing, given the intimacies between the techniques of colonial domination abroad and the techniques of police at home in the U.S.., U.K., and Canada.

Property

The question of property is central to my project because of its particular relationship to both animality and Blackness and thus anthropocentrism and whiteness. The emergence of racialization interacted with the concept of property to, as Cheryl Harris argues, "establish and

[96] brian bean, "The Socialist Case Against the Police," Rampant Magazine, March 11, 2020, https://rampantmag.com/2020/03/the-socialist-case-against-the-police/.

maintain racial and economic subordination."[97] For Harris, race and property "were thus conflated by establishing a form of property contingent on race - only Blacks were subjugated as slaves and treated as property."[98] Race and property thus became analogues for one another and shaped through one another, used as a means of shaping and controlling regimes of labour and as a weapon in class struggle. The question of ownership and what becomes ownable under particular regimes of accumulation allows us to see how whiteness encounters Blackness "through a negative biopolitics oriented toward the management of capital and the ongoing depletion (and depreciation) of the lives of people whose bodies and labors were essential to its accumulation."[99] That is, ownability as a structuring mechanism of race and capital accumulation played a major role in capitalist development and the transmutations of the property-form along the colour line. My project does not give a singular definition of property but instead thinks about regimes of ownership and the accumulation of capital with a specific interest in animal ownership as a set of institutions and ideologies that are central to the formation and reproduction of racial capitalism and racial regimes of ownership.

The major concern throughout this project is thinking the problem of property inflected through the colour line and the species line. Property is understood here not just as ownership but, as Margaret Davies writes, "individuals *and* communities: how they are formed, how they live together, and how they use their resources. On this understanding, property brings into play an entire social order."[100] More specifically, I am interested in the way that property has been and continues to be central to racial formation and its intersection with species. The primary feature

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[97] Cheryl I. Harris, "Whiteness as Property," *Harvard Law Review* 106, no. 8 (1993): 1716, https://doi.org/10.2307/1341787.
[98] Harris, 1716.
[99] Nikhil Pal Singh, "The Whiteness of Police," *American Quarterly* 66, no. 4 (2014): 1093.
[100] Margaret Davies, *Property: Meanings, Histories, Theories* (London: Routledge-Cavendish, 2007), 2. Emphasis in the original.

that typifies a contemporary racial regime of ownership, that is, places where enslavement and/or settler colonialism formed a major part of its economic development, "is the articulation of a commodity form of real property" in conjunction with a global process of differentiation.[101] That is, the form of property relations that exist under capitalism came to define regimes of racialization and instated those regimes as a means of labour extraction. As Brenna Bhandar puts it, we cannot "understand the emergence of modern concepts of race without understanding their imbrication with modern ideologies of ownership and property logic, as is the case vice versa."[102] Despite Bhandar's incisive identification of natural science and taxonomical systems as central to the capitalist property form and systems of racialization, she does not think about the intimacies between property formation, racial classification, and the management of animal life within the capitalist world-system. Julie Livingston and Jasbir Puar draw on similar critical accounts of taxonomy to argue that biological taxonomy "is a historical product, founded upon and through early modern and modern racial, class, and gendered politics."[103] The question here which I would add: what does adding animal life do to our understandings of property and its formation? I believe the animal abolitionist tradition provides some provisional answers to this question.

The animal abolitionist tradition of thought begins from the idea that seeing animals as property has been the primary stumbling block to projects of animal liberation. For Gary Francione, perhaps the loudest voice of the abolitionist position, making good on our claims to take animal interests seriously involves granting animals "the right not to be treated as our

[101] Brenna Bhandar, *Colonial Lives of Property: Law, Land, and Racial Regimes of Ownership*, Global and Insurgent Legalities (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018), 6.
[102] Bhandar, 105.
[103] Julie Livingston and Jasbir K. Puar, "Interspecies," *Social Text* 29, no. 1 (106) (March 1, 2011): 7, https://doi.org/10.1215/01642472-1210237.

property."[104] On this understanding, the non-abolitionist positions, whether welfarism or broad protectionism, fail to grant meaningful rights through the lack of challenge to the property-status of animals. The balancing of interests between humans and animals is always unbalanced since "there is always a conflict between the interests of property owners who want to use their property and the interests of animal property" given that those uses involve exploitation or (mass) killing.[105] More concretely, the welfarist position in legal practice "explicitly exempt[s] most forms of institutionalized property use, which account for the largest number of animals that we use, namely, scientific experiments, agriculture, and hunting."[106] Ultimately, Francione sees the abolition of "animal slavery" as "required by any moral theory that purports to treat animal interests as morally significant."[107] The problem posed by animal abolition is not a question of treatment (how we treat animals), but "*that* we use animals for human purposes at all."[108] The shift from treatment to use is also a shift from instances to structures. Rather than examining particular instances of cruel treatment, we can think of the institutionalized practices of *use* that have come to define interspecies interactions and so the whole apparatus that sustains animal exploitation and other forms of quotidian, 'slow' violence.[109] Francione argues that "animal rights…are extremely difficult to achieve within a system in which animals are regarded as property."[110] Summarizing Francione's critical project, Wadiwel writes that the "key to Francione's discussion of animals as property is the idea that the property status of animals

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[104] Gary Lawrence Francione, *Animals as Persons: Essays on the Abolition of Animal Exploitation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 25.
[105] Francione, 38.
[106] Francione, 39.
[107] Francione, 62.
[108] Francione, 10.
[109] Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Harvard University Press, 2011).
[110] Gary Francione, *Animals Property and the Law* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995), 14.

proscribes the limits of animal rights within a juridical frame."[111] That is, property status acts as a hard political limit to the protection of animals and animal justice claims.

While Francione relies on a discourse of rights, the reliance on the discourse of rights is worth taking seriously here and subjecting to critical interrogation. To what extent is the discourse of rights also a proscribing of animal justice to what can be recognized as a political claim within an anthropocentric political system? That is, animal rights as a specific political project is itself limited by property formation because rights have been the historical and legal mode of recognizing and reproducing modes of ownership, including of the individual subject. In short, my project is to extract the insight of the centrality of property to animal justice and reject a reliance on political rights as a means of creating multispecies justice. As Cary Wolfe argues, for the philosophical traditions that undergird animal rights, "the animal other matters only insofar as it mirrors, in a diminished way, the *human* form that is the 'source' of recognizing animals as bodies that have sensations, feel pain, and so on."[112] The animal is thus represented as equivalent to the human and granted rights on that basis, which broadly proscribes the limits of co-existence to a discourse of equivalence and capacity. Critical Animal Studies rightly maintains that "animal exploitation has reached its apex under global capitalism, and that it cannot be addressed outside of a critique of capitalism."[113] This historical and political claim represents a fundamental insight of Critical Animal Studies and one worth keeping in view even when talking about cultural forms, modes of relation and the politics of representation and recognition.

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[111] Wadiwel, *The War against Animals*, 149.
[112] Cary Wolfe, *Animal Rites: American Culture, the Discourse of Species, and Posthumanist Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 53.
[113] Sorenson, "Introduction: Thinking the Unthinkable."

Animal abolition is sets itself against forms of welfare that seek to regulate the treatment of animals while still permitting their use in broader social and economic life. Roughly, we can think of welfare measures as something of a reformist approach.[114] While Francione has not embraced critical animal studies and/or posthumanism, I agree with Maneesha Deckha that "a CAS posthumanist approach to thinking about the welfare-abolition debate clearly favours Francione's side."[115] One goal of this project is to sharpen abolitionist critique by running it along the whetstone of more radical critiques of property from Marxism and Black critical theory. The sharpening I have in mind expands the insight that the relevant question of justice for animals hinges on the property-form to function as a mode of anti-capitalist critique. For example, as Deckha asks, what legal form should replace property status? Should it be personhood "or another status rooted in vulnerability and embodiment?"[116] That is, does personhood reify a discourse of individualism that subtends anthropocentrism and the imaginary of property? Answering in the positive, what form of belonging and recognition should structure relations with non-human animals? If animal rights require a politics of recognition, then what should those politics become, given the limits of recognition in confronting animal capital? I do not think this means abandoning representation (if we even could!) for some kind of transparent access to practice that would liberate us from the endless interplay of language itself. The question of language is quite self-evidently important, not the least because language is one of those capacities often denied to the animal from within an anthropocentric discourse. And so, representation must be a crucial part of the project, mapping on to the questions over identity,

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[114] Robert Garner, *The Political Theory of Animal Rights*, Perspectives on Democratization (Manchester ; New York : New York: Manchester University Press ; Distributed exclusively in the USA by Palgrave, 2005).
[115] Maneesha Deckha, "Critical Animals Studies and the Property Debate in Animal Law," in *Animal Subjects 2.0*, ed. Jodey Castricano and Lauren Corman (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016), 49.
[116] Maneesha Deckha, 75.

sameness, and difference "that have embroiled academic theory over the past quarter-century."[117] Who is speaking and who speaks for whom take a certain centrality in the animal question since it is on the basis of these questions that different kinds of political claims are made.

While the question of recognition will be more fully elaborated in Chapter Three, I argue that the property-relation is central to thinking questions of recognition, representation, and alterity. That is, property not just as forms of material possession and structures of ownership but also as forms of affective life and recognition, which are subtended by material structures that act as a kind of stage on which dramas of recognition play. The limited recognition afforded to those excluded from the purview of the human operates according to a logic of ownership that can be extended and rescinded within discourses of normalization. If subjectivity is imagined as a kind of possession, then it can be taken away and granted within a particular discursive frame and as the result of political struggle in various spheres. While thinking about these processes in terms of property might seem strange, what I am describing is the way state-forms are forced to recognize minority populations and incorporate political demands into the *polis* while still maintaining their essential structure. Coulthard, summarizing Fanon's critique of Hegel, writes:

> Fanon argued that, in *actual* contexts of domination (such as colonialism), not only are the terms of recognition usually determined by and in the interests of the master (the colonizing state and society), but also over time slave populations (the colonized) tend to develop what he called "psycho-affective" attachments to these master-sanctioned forms of recognition, and that this attachment is essential in maintaining the economic and political structure of master/slave (colonizer/colonized) relations themselves.[118]

What my own account argues is that such a politics of recognition operates according to a dialectical logic of appropriation and dispossession and that such a dialectical logic maps well on

[117] Weil, *Thinking Animals*, 5.
[118] Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 2014, 26.

to the dual structures of animality and Blackness. In particular, the dialectic of appropriation and dispossession is subtended by regimes of ownership that exist alongside racialization as a sorting mechanism for human-ness. In short, a politics of recognition contingent on the recognition of a minority subject by the liberal state is a problem precisely because it reproduces a relation of ownership, even if that ownership is not juridically enshrined in the terms of property. The notion of property extending beyond legal ownership is also central to Chapter Four, where I think about immunity as a form of property within state discourses of pandemic management and the cultivation of 'herd immunity.' If abolition means something more than a mere reorganization of the relations of ownership then an abolitionist political theory must have an expanded sense of property beyond legal relation which means also thinking about forms of the self-other relation including immunity and recognition. The 'case study' that makes up the fourth chapter, pandemics, takes yet another orientation toward the problem of property; it draws on the expanded sense of property as existing beyond legal relations of direct ownership. Here, however, I focus on the way immunity becomes rendered as property and how such ideologies of ownership intersect with pandemic management by states and capital and the broad relation between pandemic speculation/management and the species line.

We cannot take law at face value given the construction of law through the *dicta* of class society and thus shot through with other forms of structural oppression. Going beyond legal definitions of property and possession means subjecting the juridical frame of property to critical interrogation. The law itself plays a central role in the reproduction and definition of ownership and is wielded by the carceral state. In Chapter Three, I explore the carceral imaginaries of animal justice projects and their reliance on a system of criminalization and punishment that exist within a foundational history of anti-Black racism and racial regimes of protection for privileged subjects.

Theorizing political violence and violence writ large is essential to the project since as Karl Steel argues, "the human is an effect rather than a cause of its domination of animals" and so is a performative category that achieves its salience through domination.[119] I read Steel's argument here in tandem with Weheliye's claim that political violence "plays a crucial part in the baroque techniques of modern humanity, since it simultaneously serves to create not- quite-humans in specific acts of violence and supplies the symbolic source material for racialization."[120] I understand violence as being grounded by property in that ownability permits the quotidian violence of animal life and racialization and being itself part of property-formation, i.e., property emerges through the violence of accumulation. In Chapter Three, we will think about the construction of the Human understood as white subtended by the fungibility of the racialized body in pain. To rethink the status of the body in pain as the basis on which to make political claims is to rethink the broader apparatus of political recognition around injury, suffering, and the role of state in responding to that pain.

I join Matthew Calarco's efforts in thinking about the question of the animal outside the bounds of legal protection and recognition. As he writes, "much of animal rights discourse labors under the tacit (and contentious) assumption that the fundamental channels of change regarding animals are to be found in existing legal and political institutions."[121] My hope is that this project can rethink those existing institutions and imagine new ones otherwise than property and the carceral state. As we will explore in Chapter Three, the dominant strains of animal rights politics have relied on the instruments of carcerality as subtending ideas of justice. In order to situate the

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[119] Karl Steel, *How to Make a Human: Animals and Violence in the Middle Ages*, Interventions: New Studies in Medieval Culture (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2011), 19.
[120] Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus*, 28.
[121] Matthew Calarco, *Zoographies: The Question of the Animal from Heidegger to Derrida* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 7.

carceral state and animal life within a broader context, the first two chapters are devoted to the fraught relationships between Marxism and concern for animal life with the first chapter engaging historical materialist points of emphasis such as surplus populations and (un)free labour while the second chapter focuses on accumulation and criminalization as especially relevant to racialization and anthropocentrism in bourgeois societies, i.e. where capitalism defines the dominant mode and relations of production. The fourth and final chapter builds on the concerns raised in the previous chapters around the carceral state and the actuarial imaginary of suffering under liberal democracies to think about the biopolitics of pandemics and the forms of politics that emerge from taking seriously the species line in relation to pandemic management, the discourse of immunity, and a democratic biopolitics. The shift to viruses may seem incongruous with the rest of the chapters focusing on animals. After all, there is not, to my knowledge, a movement for virus rights nor a care for viruses equivalent to a family dog. However, viruses destabilize ideas of the human and confront us (humans) with the radical alterity of non-human life and being. The animal is also a key figure in thinking about the politics of pandemics since pandemic management also requires marking out key ways that animals may or may not interact with humans within a system wherein many animals are converted into property and commodity, exemplified currently in relation to bird flu. The virus and the pandemic require forms of management contingent upon pre-existing social and economic arrangement based on the historical outcomes of political struggle. Under capitalist social relations, entitlements to health require purchase gained through value generation for capitalism.[122] The reinforcement of the norms of productivity and health as well as the boundaries of interactions with animals require,

[122] See Beatrice Adler-Bolton and Artie Vierkant, *Health Communism* (London : New York: Verso, 2022).

under capitalism, the carceral state and as such policing comes to form a crucial component of reproducing a certain conception of health.

I want to capture in this project something like the spirit of the rebellions by which it was inspired: alternately bold and unsure, audacious, and searching, and motivated by utopian dreaming while painfully attentive to historical and political conjunctures and long histories of dispossession, confinement, and death against which such rebellions take place. In contrast to other works in literary theory that presume a self-evident structure of reception, I offer the following reflections on form as a mode of teaching the reader how to engage with this project. While we will largely be within the realm of recent critical theory and cultural studies, the spirit is a spirit of movement. The right to opacity against a politics of recognition and identification is also a will to be unwieldy. In broad terms, the first two chapters set the theoretical and historical ground for the second two which act as extended examples or case studies. However, rather than set out a theoretical perspective and then 'read' my case studies, what is carried over is a set of concerns circling around the broad theme of property and the development of an abolitionist political theory that recognizes no species borders in its liberatory concerns. In the spirit of rebellion, the project makes several bold claims about the links between race, animality, and property while also posing questions both for further research *and* for new social and political circumstances to emerge that may dictate new questions that have yet to be posed, built on new moments of rupture. Theory is a speculative genre, but it is constrained by the weight of history, understood here as the struggles against capitalism and the management over life. The structure of the project aims to reflect these dual projects of theory: at once imagining new worlds and social arrangements *and* being attentive to the limits of that imagination.

Within each chapter, I zoom in and out of animality as a focus based on the requirements of the argument. That is, given the range of subject matter under discussion and the sheer scope of the intervention, animals are both the focus and adjacent to the focus of several lines of inquiry. One reason for this is a demonstration of the centrality of the animal question to questions of anti-capitalist and anti-racist critique as well as problems central to social and political theory more broadly. The other reason concerns the recent turn to considering racialization as key to formations of the borders of the human and its constitutive outsides as a necessary project for critical theory. That is, by keeping animality ubiquitous, I hope to show the importance of the animal question for critical interrogations of property, value, and freedom. In a similar way to how studies of sexuality, gender, or race come to unfold on to themes other than their object of study and social and political questions that impact thinking beyond identarian formations, my hope is to push forward an animal studies that can think about property, value, and freedom with animals as the central but not exclusive analytical focus. Black studies informs the project in that it marks out Blackness as an analytical category. This project supplements this work by focusing on the legacies of theorizing racial capitalism and the material history of property as it has articulated with Blackness.

The project is inspired by the animal abolitionist claim that a stumbling block to justice for animals is property but takes such an insight much further in so far as a challenge to animals as property is nothing other than a total revaluation of ownership as well as recognition, life, and freedom. Beyond changes to lifestyle such as veganism or some other practices of that nature, such an abolition requires rethinking everything about property and capitalist relations of production on which private property rests. To do so is also to think about the state as engaging in projects of class rule and subject to long histories of resistance to that class rule since the force

of the state underwrites proper norms of what might be called species hegemony, i.e. the use of the species line and animalization to designate populations unworthy of protection and life.

Chapter One: Marxism, Racial Capitalism, and the Question of the Animal

Property is a problem.[1] Property is a background. Property is both a problem and a background given that it structures life under capitalist modernity and only becomes a perceptible problem in periods of intense crisis such as natural disaster, pandemic, and war when property is destroyed or stolen. By background, I mean a condition of contemporary life that exists as the natural order of things, just the way things are, etc.; in other words, the idea that things are owned and that such modes of private ownership are a fundamental good upon which the prosperity of the capitalist nation-state rests. The problem emerges from periods when such ownership is thrown radically into question and when such norms of ownership are revealed as a means of class stratification and harsh discipline enacted against those who do not own property. In that way, we can see the contemporary movement to abolish police and prisons as a response to the cruelty of property relations and the agents who enforce those relations. The goal of abolitionist theory and praxis is to render problematic what is generally viewed as ambient, legitimated, and reproduced by the established terms of order. As such, crises in the system of property ownership are opportunities for abolitionist political theory and activism to seize upon in rethinking and prefiguratively enacting modes of living outside of ownership regimes and the tyranny of property.

Historically, the logic of private property structured the relations of domination and ownership in capitalist slavery as well as relations of and structures of expropriation and the laws and norms of ownership transmit and transmute along lines of difference within a social

[1] Rinaldo Walcott, *On Property: Policing, Prisons, and the Call for Abolition* (Windsor: Biblioasis, 2021).

formation. This chapter will explore co-implication of property with race and species. I will also argue that a critical focus on property brings together struggles for Black liberation and the abolition of animals as property through its histories and structures of subjection.

The histories and structures of property open onto larger questions of value, relation, recognition, and freedom that run through this dissertation. An interrogation of race and species also opens onto larger questions of inherited categories under the aegis of modernity and its critique, understood here as a multi-layered genesis of racial formations and the hegemony of capital. As addressed in the Introduction, the question of property is more than just a question of "individuals exercising control over external things and (therefore) over others. Rather, property concerns individuals *and* communities: how they are formed, how they live together, and how they use their resources. On this understanding, property brings into play an entire social order."[2] The entire social order in focus here is racialized governance and governance of the non-human through the idiom of property within the context of Western liberalism, wherein property extends "to ideologies of the self, social interactions with others, concepts of law, and social concepts of gender roles and race relations."[3] I add to this account by thinking the particular role of non-human animals and the discourse of species in shaping property within the tradition of Western liberalism. In this chapter, I engage Marxism as a tradition of thought most attentive to the structuring role of private property and with the potential to address the dilation between race and species, even if it has not yet done so in any sustained way. As the intellectual and political tradition with the keenest and most enduring critique of property, any abolitionist theory worth its salt must settle its accounts with the bleeding edges and central canons of Marxism. The

[2] Davies, *Property*, 2.
[3] Davies, 2.

theoretical arc of the chapter is both specific and broad; specific in its interventions into Marxist critique that focuses on a subject other than the wage-labourer, and broad in its dilations with the questions of space, surplus, movement, varieties of labour-extraction and the management over life that typifies biocapitalism.

The term "biocapitalism" is developed by Donna Haraway as a speculative gesture that a Marx of today would write. Haraway argues that Marx would "have to examine a tripartite structure: use value, exchange value, and encounter value, without the problematic solace of human exceptionalism."[4] The contribution I make to Haraway's inclusion of non-human life within the commodity-form is the way racialization and coloniality are generators of value.[5] Ultimately, the centrality of biocapital in regimes of private property and ideological formations of ownership suggest the potential to think together the reduction of life to the commodity and the property-form with racialization as part and parcel of disciplining resistant labourers and managing surplus populations who have been excluded from the labour market. I argue in this chapter for an expanded conception of the proletarian as connected to specific dynamics of biological control run through structuring norms of race and species. If we understand non-human animals as coerced into labouring conditions that take advantage of their biological capacities, and as resisting attempts at labour and weaponization, then a space opens beyond the solace of human exceptionalism toward a new understanding of the proletariat. The proletarian position stands in then not just for a specific relation to the production process but for forms of

[4] Donna Jeanne Haraway, *When Species Meet*, Posthumanities 3 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 46.
[5] Nikhil Singh uses the term biocapitalism with reference to the reproduction of slave status in the seventeenth century. I suspect Singh is riffing on biopolitics here and is not in dialogue with Haraway on this point though the convergences are suggestive. Nikhil Pal Singh, *Race and America's Long War* (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2017), 78. Singh's political project is to rework Marx to take seriously enslavement as a key element of capitalism.

life without reserves in situations of unfreedom. Such a position does not just read animals into the history of working-class struggle it also enables a reconceptualization of the disciplining of life as such under capitalism.

Marx, Marxism, and the Animal Question

At the same time as the emergence of Critical Animal Studies in the 1990s, a set of heterodox Marxist thinkers attempted to use Marxist theories of exploitation and alienation to theorize the conditions of animal life, seeking to correct both a Marxism that was inattentive to the question of the animal and ecology and also a discourse of animal rights that risked, as Barbara Noske put it, "redefining animals in terms of Western human law systems such as those pertaining to property, obligations, compensation and so forth."[6] Similarly, Ted Benton in his monograph *Natural Relations* seeks to build a dialogue between Marxism and animal advocacy by engaging in a critique of Tom Regan's liberal-individualist rights based analysis.[7] In Chapter Three we will explore more fully the critique of rights, but for now I simply wish to note the attempts to grapple with animal oppression from inside Marxist critique. Marx's own remarks on animals are scattered and ambivalent and so never even come close to establishing a general theory of animal exploitation or see it as a concern for the working-class movement. As Marco Marurizi notes, in the context and history of Marx and Engels' writing, "the protection of animals in England was often characterised by bourgeois contempt against the savageness of the lower classes" by the major institutions of animal protection and welfare.[8] Maurizi also points out Engels' sarcastic contempt directed toward vegetarians and anti-vivisectionists and the

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[6] Barbara Noske, *Beyond Boundaries: Humans and Animals* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1997), xiii.
[7] Ted Benton, *Natural Relations: Ecology, Animal Rights, and Social Justice* (London ; New York: Verso, 1993).
[8] Marco Maurizi, *Beyond Nature: Animal Liberation, Marxism, and Critical Theory* (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 102.

general silence from both Marx and Engels about meat production as anything more than a class stratified practice to which, ultimately, the working class should have access.[9] On a theoretical level, both Marx and Engels take up a certain kind of evolutionary developmentalism in thinking about the passage of humanity's development. For example, Engels participated in the metaphysical tradition of separating animals from humans, with Engels distinguishing between natural tools and the human hand in his *Dialectics of Nature*.[10] And in Marx's *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts,* Marx takes on the broad human and animal distinction prevalent in Western metaphysics, yoking the distinction between humans and animals together with a distinction between fully developed and undeveloped humanity.[11]

With all that said, I want to insist upon a distinction between the remarks of the Marxist writers, including Marx himself, and Marxist theory as a systematic account of class struggle, economic structures, and political formations that exists in excess of a singular author. Like any social theory, Marxist thought has fractured along multiple lines of contention and distinction. Given the complex histories of the animal rights movements, its own fractures and fissures, and the existence of such a movement in a world stratified by class and race (among other lines of difference) it makes sense that Marxism of various kinds has had different opinions and analyses of animal rights and liberation. Marxism in so far as it gives an account of capitalist production,

[9] Maurizi, 103.
[10] Elisabeth de Fontenay, *Without Offending Humans: A Critique of Animal Rights*, trans. Will Bishop, Posthumanities 24 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), 48. Amir sketches an alternative to the inheritance of anthropocentric categories of natural science from Engels himself in Engels' charming apology to the platypus that takes the form of an argument against the total coincidence between concepts and reality. Indeed, Engels seems to directly interrogate inherited concepts of species that would render the platypus a fabrication. See Fahim Amir, *Being & Swine the End of Nature (as We Knew It)*, trans. Geoffrey C. Howes and Corvin Russell (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2021), 21–22.
[11] Benton, *Natural Relations*, 34–35.

development, and bourgeois property is an important theoretical resource for thinking about animal exploitation, racial capitalism, and the carceral state.

Marxist thought, then, has had a lot to say about animals especially given the predominance of Marxism as a theory embraced by social movements and the explicit inspiration taken by animal liberation movements from other social movements, including feminism and Black liberation. As Alasdair Cochrane notes:

> various forms of Marxist thought do have something explicit to say about the way in which political communities should be governed…some of these theories are fiercely antagonistic to calls for greater protection of animals, while others have used Marxist resources in attempt to propose quite robust forms of justice for animals.[12]

The presumption made by this chapter is that Marxist critique does contain important resources to think about animality, when read through analyses of racialization as a mode of sorting life and labour. In some ways, what follows is a sort of response to Cochrane's call for "theorists with Marxist sympathies" to "drop some of the anthropocentricism of historical materialism, recognise the continuities between humans and animals, and take the idea of justice for animals more seriously."[13] I propose to do this by analyzing the subjection of animals through the property-form and revising some conceptual touchstones of Marxist critique in light of abolitionist theorizations of capitalist property. Marxist thought gives property a specific history, demarcating the institution of property along epochs, and so by implied extension animal use and treatment along those epochs and transfigurations. In the nineteenth century, the right to property

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[12] Alasdair Cochrane, *An Introduction to Animals and Political Theory*, The Palgrave Macmillan Animal Ethics Series (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 95. Cochrane also references the normative commitments of Marxism despite some Marxist protestations otherwise. Such a subject is beyond the scope of my dissertation. Cochrane's account of Marxist philosophy of history is also incredibly 'stagist' and teleological, a position subject to a range of debate to vast to enter here.
[13] Cochrane, 101.

signalled "the right to private appropriation of the means of production and the dispossession of the worker, not only from his land or his tools, but his own personhood, which he was then forced to sell at market."[14] That is, the right to property specifically signalled the structure that grounds and legitimates the conversion of life and labour into commodities, arising after enslavement and settler colonial dispossession had enriched industrial capitalism and secured the full entrenchment of animals as commodities as a result of the enclosure of common lands, as Jason Hribal points out.[15]

In examining the structural and historical imbrications of Blackness, animality and property, I depart from thinkers like Katherine Perlo who seek to formulate a Marxism "that locates in the animal dimension an emphasis on the sympathetic moral 'ought' of Marxism rather than the historical-materialist 'is'."[16] In fact, my aim is to demonstrate how the 'animal dimension', especially when read alongside Black Marxist critique, opens up reconsiderations of the commodity, the property-form as well as concepts of value and freedom all central to a historical materialist project that sees the struggles of the oppressed and the reorganizations of state and capital in response to those struggles as central to historical shifts and political epochs. That is, by reading a concern for animals into Marxist thought I am not primarily concerned with questions of ethics, what Perlo in the passage above, calls the "moral ought of Marxism" instead my argument is that key dimensions of Marxist social and historical analysis are elucidated and

[14] Daniel Bensaïd, *The Dispossessed: Karl Marx's Debates on Wood Theft and the Right of the Poor*, trans. Robert Nichols (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2021), 28–29.
[15] Hribal, "'Animals Are Part of the Working Class,'" 435.
[16] Katherine Perlo, "Marxism and the Underdog," *Society & Animals* 10, no. 3 (January 1, 2002): 304, https://doi.org/10.1163/156853002320770092. I elaborate my departure from this approach to Marxist critique and Marxian analysis in the third chapter. I also find Perlo's praise of Orwell completely bizarre as well as her identification of libertarian socialism with animal ethics supposedly embodied in Orwell's literary project. See Perlo, 309–10. For an examination of how Marxist thought could be shaped to support animal rights see David Sztybel, "Marxism and Animal Rights," *Ethics and the Environment* 2, no. 2 (1997): 169–85.

elaborated upon through the animal question thought in tandem with Black Marxist critique, i.e., the "historical-materialist is." The central project of this chapter will be to think with and through theorizations of animal exploitation, commodification, and capitalism alongside Black reworkings of Marxist critique. The hope is that such a connection can bring together the Black radical tradition with animal studies as they specifically dilate on resistance to the property-form and related but distinct logics of appropriation and commodification.

Before elucidating this argument, it is useful here to pause and draw out the relationship between property and commodity, as these terms are intimately connected but importantly distinct, especially when it comes to animals under capitalism. The other thread of analysis here is developing an understanding of the forms of unfree labour that have been and continue to be essential to capitalist production and reproduction. The category of unfree labour is an expansive one mobilized for various purposes to meet different requirements of the capitalist system. It also enables us to see the enslaved and the animal as inhabiting related but distinct orientations to capitalist labour requirements. That is, while it would be a rhetorical overreach and theoretical error to see animals as slaves— let alone 'new slaves'— the necessity of both enslaved and animal labour to capitalism takes place without contract and the pretense of 'freedom' that comes from selling one's labour power— a classical category of Marxist critique. As Sidney Mintz notes, Marx did seek to place the slave within capitalism but never developed a systemic theoretical account of the place of the Atlantic trade within the capitalist world system.[17] My hope is to extend this project in dialogue with the critique of racial capitalism through the questions and problems of animal studies.

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[17] Sidney W. Mintz, "Was the Plantation Slave a Proletarian?," *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 2, no. 1 (1978): 83–85.

The commodity, for Marx, has a dyadic structure: use-value and exchange-value. The former can be understood as the "physical properties of the commodity, and has no existence apart from the latter" and functions as the "material bearers of exchange value."[18] The use-value is the "plain, homely, natural form" of the commodity.[19] The exchange-value is a relation of equivalence between two objects by which the commodity is made equivalent with other objects.[20] Simply, the commodity is a thing that can be bought and sold through the medium of exchange known as money which conceals the real source of value: labour. As Marx puts it, programmatically, "as exchange value, all commodities are merely definite quantities of *congealed labour time.*"[21] These terms ultimately name types of relations and social formations that are the result of those relations. As Haraway puts it, "Marx always understood that use and exchange value were names for relationships; that was precisely the insight that led beneath the layer of appearances of market equivalences into the messy domain of extraction, accumulation, and human exploitation."[22] The property-form, in a very limited sense, is that which upholds the status of particular things as commodities by guaranteeing that such a thing can be owned and exchanged through money. In sum, the commodity is an object of exchange, the process of which is legitimated and reproduced by and through the property-form. Much of my argument from here will challenge and revise Marx's conceptual categories but remain indebted to their fundamental analytical coordinates.

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[18] Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, trans. Ben Fowkes, V. 1: Penguin Classics (London ; New York, N.Y: Penguin Books in association with New Left Review, 1981), 126.
[19] Karl Marx, 138.
[20] Karl Marx, 126-7.
[21] Karl Marx, 130.
[22] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 45.

Racial Capitalism, Classification, and Species

Racial capitalism as an analytic captures the way racialization refracts capitalism and the ultimate historical unity of racism and capitalism through regimes of control and difference. In their recent book, Destin Jenkins and Justin Leroy explain that "racial capitalism is the process by which the key dynamics of capitalism—accumulation/dispossession, credit/debt, production/surplus, capitalist/worker, developed/underdeveloped, contract/coercion, and others—become articulated through race. In other words, capital has not historically accumulated without previously existing relations of racial inequality."[23] What I add here is a two-fold intervention: one, to argue for the centrality of animal exploitation and death to the "key dynamics of capitalism" and two, to see the exploitation of non-human animals as twinned with racialization such that it is impossible to properly think one without the other. If "racial capitalism marks a historical intimacy among the slave trade, enslavement, and colonialism that often goes unacknowledged, but also captures the way slavery epitomized a racialized system of valuation and extraction that continues to this day," as Jenkins and Leroy argue, then my contention is that an attention to the formation of species difference serves as a way to think the formation of the human within the dynamics of capital and racial formation within a structuring totality.[24] In fact, my aim is to demonstrate how the 'animal dimension', especially when read alongside Black Marxist critique, opens up reconsiderations of the commodity, the property-form as well as concepts of value and freedom all central to a historical materialist project that sees the struggles of the oppressed and the reorganizations of state and capital in response to those struggles as central to historical shifts and political epochs. In sum, I argue for an autonomist

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[23] Destin Jenkins and Justin Leroy, eds., *Histories of Racial Capitalism*, Columbia Studies in the History of U.S. Capitalism (New York: Columbia University Press, 2021), 3.
[24] Jenkins and Leroy, 11.

Marxism drawn from political struggle and attentive to the key role of criminalization and policing in the operations of capitalist reproduction.

We start then with an understanding of capitalism not from the factory but from the plantation and the accumulation by dispossession that shaped settler colonialism and the genesis of capitalism. The turning of Marx's analytic coordinates along different lines of historiographical emphasis forms a crucial contribution of racial capitalism as an analytic. The historiography of capitalism within liberal modernity and some strands of Marxist thought imagine capitalism as centred on the category of free wage labour. However, as Heide Gerstenberger has argued, the history of capitalism "does not support the assumption that the full legal and political autonomy of laborers is a fundamental requirement for capitalist forms of exploitation."[25] The history of capitalism and the question of slavery supports Blackburn's argument that "slavery was not overthrown for economic reasons but where it became politically untenable."[26] The shift in narrative emphasis allows us to see the abolitionist struggle as ending slavery rather than seeing slavery's abolition as a predetermined outgrowth of laws of capitalist development. For Marx, coercion served as a "midwife" to violence, replaced by market forces. Slavery, in this reading, was replaced by free wage labour after the 'stage' typically designated as 'primitive' or 'originary' accumulation. However, as Glen Coulthard and others have noted, "the escalating onslaught of violent, state-orchestrated enclosures following neoliberalism's

[25] Heide Gerstenberger, "The Political Economy of Capitalist Labor," Viewpoint Magazine, September 2, 2014, https://viewpointmag.com/2014/09/02/the-political-economy-of-capitalist-labor/. For a reflection on the forms and genres of freedom from slavery and representations of its thwarting see Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents*, 43–71.

[26] Robin Blackburn, *The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848* (London ; New York: Verso, 1988), 520. For an examination of how industrial capitalism challenged plantation based economies while not eliminating slavery see Day, *Alien Capital*, 30. Abolition was also not a predetermined outgrowth of republican ideals from the French Revolution. "Although the abolition of slavery was the only possible logical outcome of the ideal of universal freedom, it did not come about through the revolutionary ideas of the French; it came about through the actions of the slaves themselves." See Susan Buck-Morss, "Hegel and Haiti," *Critical Inquiry* 26, no. 4 (2000): 833.

ascent to hegemony has unmistakably demonstrated the *persistent* role that unconcealed, violent dispossession continues to play in the reproduction of colonial and capitalist social relations in both the domestic and global contexts."[27] In the second chapter, we will think more about the specific modes of accumulation that shape the current racialized and anthropocentric order but for now it is sufficient to note that accumulation is a constant feature of the reproduction of capitalism and that such a feature has its historical basis in the Atlantic slave trade and settler colonial capitalism.

The processes of policing and criminalization have their historical basis in the plantation. Thus, we can look to the struggle of the formerly enslaved in the Americas as staging questions of struggle against direct political domination and the abstract coercion of the market, which their stolen labour had partly constituted. The struggle of ex-slaves had a dual character: "public and collective repudiations of the personal sovereignty on which their masters' and mistresses' rights to command human property had rested. At the same time, they [ex-slaves] challenged emergent claims that subjection to landowners' management and to the discipline of an abstract market constituted freedom."[28] As Julie Saville explains, challenges "to the evolving character of wage labor issued not only from an urban Northern labor movement but also from former slaves little inclined to accept such terms of wage employment as the fulfillment of emancipation."[29]

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[27] Glen Sean Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*, Indigenous Americas (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 9. As Coulthard notes, such insights have not been confined to Indigenous critique of Marx, but it is in Indigenous political struggle that they find their strongest historical refutation. I understand these convergences as underscoring the centrality of analyses of colonialism and slavery to analyses of capitalism. For an analysis of Marx that troubles the accusation of 'stagism' see Massimiliano Tomba, "Historical Temporalities of Capital: An Anti-Historicist Perspective," *Historical Materialism* 17, no. 4 (January 1, 2009): 44–65, https://doi.org/10.1163/146544609X12537556703115.
[28] Julie Saville, *The Work of Reconstruction: From Slave to Wage Laborer in South Carolina, 1860-1870* (Cambridge ; New York, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 2. Patterson notes that Marx identifies a similar dynamic in post-emancipation Jamaica. See Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1982), 2.
[29] Saville, *The Work of Reconstruction*, 4.

The struggle of former slaves was against the plantation and its continuation beyond legal emancipation. As Rinaldo Walcott argues, the plantation "isn't…a thing of the past; rather the plantation persists as a largely unseen superstructure shaping modern life…and many of its practices, attitudes, and assumptions, even if some of these have been, over time, transformed."[30] Katherine McKittrick, on whose work Walcott's argument draws, explains that "in agriculture, banking, and mining, in trade and tourism and across other colonial and postcolonial spaces—the prison, the city, the resort—a plantation logic characteristic of (but not identical to) slavery emerges in the present both ideologically and materially."[31] The plantation is a site of capital accumulation and possession of property that undergirds varied institutions of modernity. The 'plantation town' is a historical-material manifestation of the intimacies between plantations and racialized urban space.[32] By extending the arguments of Walcott and McKittrick into animal studies, I aim to suggest that the forms of racial capitalism and regimes of ownership within the plantation also defines interspecies relations. I am not arguing that non-human animals are subject to identical technologies of extraction, discipline, and surveillance but rather that equivalent technologies persist and are reproduced by capitalist production and regimes of ownership. The shadow of the plantation lingers over Blackness as the spectre of being movable chattel, "imperfectly free or, more precisely, 'imperfect property'; they are like stray animals, essentially defined by the fact that they once had owners."[33] The status of being pre-owned continues through a logic of possession that exceeds ownership "and so it also became authority

[30] Walcott, *On Property*, 21.
[31] Katherine McKittrick, "Plantation Futures," *Small Axe* 17, no. 3 (2013): 4.
[32] McKittrick, 8. For a reflection on racialized spatial (informal) segregation see Walcott, *On Property*, 24, 29-32. The lack of freedom of movement for both Black people and dogs was enshrined within the U.S. legal system in *Plessy v.. Ferguson* and *Sentell v. New Orleans.* See Boisseron, *Afro-Dog*, 51–53.
[33] Boisseron, *Afro-Dog*, 132. For a historical example see Roediger's analysis of the Dred Scott decision David R. Roediger, *How Race Survived US History: From Settlement and Slavery to the Eclipse of Post-Racialism*, Paperback edition (London ; New York: Verso, 2019), 77.

invested in white people to direct all inferiors."[34] The historical and theoretical claim that undergirds these forms of possession and ownership is that "modern property laws emerged along with and through colonial modes of appropriation."[35] What I argue here is that race and species form mutually reinforcing categories used to determine the objects and subjects of property under particular formations. The subsequent chapters address the role of policing and prisons, indeed carcerality as such, in enforcing the distinctions between objects and subjects of property.

I take inspiration from Brenna Bhandar's argument that "the commodity logic of abstraction that underlies modern forms of private property shares conceptual similarities with the taxonomization and deracination of human life based on racial categorizations, the early traces of which are evident in the work of natural historians such as Linnaeus."[36] The logic of the property-form emerges out of and exists in homology with modern taxonomy in natural history, speaking to the structural intimacies between commodity, species, and race. If the commodity logic of abstraction that subtends private property shares a conceptual intimacy with taxonomy, then species must find itself in intimate encounter with abstraction and racial categorizations. As Che Gossett points out, Black studies prefigures the focus of animal studies on the human/animal binary since Blackness is situated in relation to animality by an exclusion from the human.[37] Such a situatedness is determined by a relation to property historically exemplified in the

[34] Walcott, *On Property*, 22.
[35] Brenna Bhandar, *Colonial Lives of Property: Law, Land, and Racial Regimes of Ownership*, Global and Insurgent Legalities (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018), 3.
[36] Bhandar, 8. For an engagement with Linnaeus's taxonomy and his formulation of the category of *homo sapiens* see Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, trans. Kevin Attell (Stanford: Stanford University Pres, 2004), 23–27.
[37] Che Gosset, "Blackness, Animality, and the Unsovereign."

weighting of Black people and animals together under enslavement as commodities and labourers for sale.

Animal studies has largely not focused on capitalism as an organizing technology of both species hierarchy and species difference, and much less has it focused on *racial* capitalism. Marxism has not offered much to the theorization of animal life, tending to "plod along behind" liberal answers to the animal question that see animals as property to be managed or passive victims to be liberated through a discourse of rights or personhood.[38] The 'ruthless critique' and the 'royal road to science' seem to stop short of thinking anthropocentrism and life beyond the bounds of the human. The critique of capitalism in its specific relation to animal life is present but marginal within animal studies (though not marginal in Critical Animal Studies, see the Introduction), which is more focused on philosophical and literary representations of animal life. For example, Derrida writes in passing on the profound biopolitical control exerted by capitalist markets on animals over the last two centuries. For Derrida, 'traditional' uses of animals "have been turned upside down by the joint developments of zoological, ethological, biological and genetic forms of *knowledge,* which remain inseparable from *techniques* of intervention *into* their object, from the transformation of the actual object, and from the milieu and world of their object, namely, the living animal."[39] Derrida goes on to locate this transformation within specific practices central to capitalism that subtend human well-being. He writes:

This has occurred by means of farming and regimentalization at a demographic level unknown in the past, by means of genetic experimentation, the industrialization of what can be called the production for consumption of animal meat, artificial insemination on a massive scale, more and more audacious manipulations of the genome, the reduction of the animal not only to production

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[38] Amir, *Being & Swine the End of Nature (as We Knew It)*, 2021, 18–19.

[39] Jacques Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, ed. Marie-Louise Mallet, trans. David Wills (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 25. Emphasis in the original.

and overactive reproduction… of meat for consumption, but also all sorts of other end products.[40]

While Derrida notes the uses of animals by capitalism, he does not give us a way to theorize them, with the bulk of his intervention being the marginalization of animals in anti-humanist theory and philosophy. In fact, after this remarkable account of animal use by biocapital, Derrida writes that such phenomena are "too well known; we have no need to take it further."[41] The "it" Derrida refers to here is the use of animals by capitalism as a total system of rendering them into commodities for consumption and as elements of the production process in technoscience as well as the shoring up of human well-being.

Such a "production for consumption" sits at the heart of the history of industrial production as Nicole Shukin demonstrates in her reworking of the history of Fordism. Fordism as a system of mass production came to typify commodity production, class recomposition and labour discipline in the 20th century; Shukin's project is to rethink Fordism in order to develop "counterhegemonic genealogies for animal subjects lavishly accorded mythological and rhetorical existence yet strictly denied historical being."[42] The standard account of Fordism's genesis is the birth of the assembly line in 1913 at Highland Park factory in Dearborn. What these routine and perhaps symptomatic accounts leave out "is the fact that Ford modeled Highland Park's auto assembly line on moving lines that had been operating at least since the 1850s in the vertical abattoirs of Cincinnati and Chicago, with deadly efficiency and to deadly effect."[43] For Shukin, rewriting the conventional history of Fordism is in service of challenging

[40] Derrida, 25.
[41] Derrida, 25.
[42] Nicole Shukin, *Animal Capital*, 92.
[43] Nicole Shukin, 87.

the idealist treatments of animality by "theorizing the ways that animal life gets culturally and carnally rendered as capital at specific historical junctures."[44] In addition to the process of rendering as capital, animals are rendered as *property* — that is, as objects of ownership— entangled within relations of production and force that support that ownership.

Non-human animals under capitalism are enmeshed within the strange familiarity of being "a resource, a piece of property, a commodity."[45] The making of animals into property, and indeed life itself into property, is central to capitalist development and reproduction. What happens, however, when the commodity or piece of property has a sentience that must be controlled. In his work on elephants in colonial Burma, the historian Jonathan Saha reworks what Marx calls 'constant capital' or means of production that cannot produce surplus value by themselves.[46] Nevertheless, elephants are lively capital, Haraway's term for "animate actors whose value was based upon their behaviours and capacities as living beings."[47] For Saha, the elephants as lively capital in dialogue with Marx's notion of constant capital means that "elephants can be considered both living (valued for their agential capacities) and dead (demanding the labour of others to produce value). In other words, working elephants can be thought of as undead capital."[48] This revision to Marxist thought speaks to the need to think differently about non-human life and labour within capitalist production and reproduction. The attention to lively commodities in recent Marxist thought provides a fruitful point of departure

[44] Nicole Shukin, 7.
[45] Rosemary-Claire Collard, *Animal Traffic: Lively Capital in the Global Exotic Pet Trade* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 2020), 8.
[46] Jonathan Saha, "Colonizing Elephants: Animal Agency, Undead Capital and Imperial Science in British Burma," *BJHS Themes* 2 (2017): 174, https://doi.org/10.1017/bjt.2017.6.
[47] Saha, "Colonizing Elephants," 2017.
[48] Saha. We might read 'undead' here as the spectral presence of the animal in modernity, as Akira Lippit argues. See Akira Mizuta Lippit, *Electric Animal: Toward a Rhetoric of Wildlife* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 1. Though I depart from its "profoundly idealizing" problematic as it "allows capital to largely go missing as motive force and mediating material history." See Nicole Shukin, *Animal Capital*, 13.

for the intervention of this project. As Rosemary Collard and Jessica Dempsey explain, lively commodities are "commodities whose capitalist value is derived from their *status as living beings*."[49] That is, the extent to which lively commodities are valuable as commodities is dependent on their status as being alive at the moment of exchange and encounter. Such a reworking of encounter value provides a sympathetic criticism of Haraway, where encounter permits not ethical mutuality but instead "can license exploitation, possessiveness, and invasiveness in the name of love and curiousity (sic)."[50] Liveliness then is a species of value under capitalism that can be exchanged through market relations and further spur particular kinds of affect such as wonder or love themselves subtended by market relations and the property-form. The lively commodity is a fruitful way to think about animals under capitalism since it captures the economic structures that operate on animal life and the ideologies of ownership that mark out relations between humans and non-humans in situations where the dominant relationship to animal life is one of ownership.

The category of the commodity is also central to critical analyses of enslavement, property and the rendering of living beings into things. As Saidiya Hartman puts it, "impossible to fathom was that all this death had been incidental to the acquisition of profit and to the rise of capitalism...Death was simply part of the workings of the trade."[51] The 'workings of the trade' entailed the conversion of life into property and within modes of biopolitical control. Importantly, the conversion of life into property did not necessarily put to death but might

[49] Rosemary-Claire Collard and Jessica Dempsey, "Life for Sale? The Politics of Lively Commodities," *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 45, no. 11 (November 1, 2013): 2684, https://doi.org/10.1068/a45692.
[50] Collard and Dempsey, 2689.
[51] Saidiya V. Hartman, *Lose Your Mother: A Journey along the Atlantic Slave Route*, 1. paperback edition (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2008), 31.

instead harness capacities for labour and genres of affective relation. Ultimately, this chapter offers biocapitalism as a central concept to the study of the intersections between animal life, the policing and valuation of Blackness, and racial capitalism.

Unfree Labour

The rest of the chapter engages forms of unfree labour and 'resources' that are central to the formation and reproduction of capitalism with a particular attention to the "animal dimension" of those forms and resources in order to think about the centrality of control over life to capitalist production and the homology of species and race in situations of formal, liberal freedom. Unfree labour continues to be essential to the reproduction of capitalism. The archive of enslavement challenges the myth of freedom as synonymous with capitalism. Institutions of freedom such as liberal states following abolitionist struggles perpetuated the dialectical progression of enslavement. In his critique of Hegel, Orlando Patterson writes that "the master, in order to make slavery workable" had to "provide an opportunity for the negation of slavery."[52] The central role of manumission was used to institutionalize slave systems where the struggle between slave and master "became transformed from a personal into an institutional dialectic, in which slavery…stood opposite to and required manumission as an essential precondition."[53] In other words, freedom in the form of a process like manumission serves as the negation to slavery but not the negation of the slave system. We can thus call into question the separation between slavery and freedom.

[52] Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 101. Patterson's critique of Hegel hinges on Hegel's identification of the slave as a worker and Hegel's structure of recognition. See Patterson, 97–101.
[53] Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 101.

The shift here from considering free labour as the *locus classicus* of labour under capitalism is also one that emphasizes political struggle as a key part of seeing capitalism as a political-economic system. The challenge to the free wage labourer as the center of capitalism's production process or the main bearers of its exploitation has focused on other forms of labour such as indentured labour and enslavement. In the transition from enslavement toward indentured labour throughout the Atlantic world, "the category of 'freedom' was central to the development of what we could call a modern racial governmentality in which a political, economic, and social hierarchy ranging from "free" to "unfree" was deployed in the management of the diverse labors of metropolitan and colonized peoples; this racial governmentality managed and divided through the liberal myth of inclusive freedom that simultaneously disavowed settler appropriation and symbolized freedom as the introduction of free labor and the abolition of slavery."[54] In other words, narratives of freedom worked to reproduce rather than to challenge racial governmentality precisely through ideologies of freely chosen wage labour. I am interested here in the persistence of unfree labour following the formal abolition of enslavement relying specifically on the wage relation as both instrument of freedom under the market and continuation of conditions of domination and unfreedom. All of these forms of domination circle around the question of property and its particular historical transmutations during the rise and continuation of capitalist production. We shall see in the next chapter the specific modes of accumulation that served as the transcendental conditions for capitalist hegemony, but for now it is sufficient to note the use of the property-form in policing and controlling labour and reproducing forms of political domination to ensure the smooth operations of that labour force. The freedom at work here is itself a construction of those smooth operations enforced by

[54] Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents*, 24.

policing and the carceral system. The subjects outside of wage labour and/or subject to forms of organized abandonment make up the surplus populations on which profitability and the established ideological order depend.

The capitalist mode of production "relies on and reproduces the exploitability, disposability, and symbolic extraterritoriality of a surplus alien labor force."[55] The alien labour force, historically manifested by Black enslavement renders racialized labour outside the bounds of full humanity while taking advantage of the capacities to labour. In a post-emancipation context, "African Americans became an *undisposable* alien labor population, which accounts for the intensity through which subsequent generations of African Americans have been subject to a logic of exclusion where the only means of disposal is death."[56] Or, as Frank Wilderson puts it, Black people "are meant to be warehoused and die."[57]

The figure of the alien as essential to the capitalist colonial mode of production suggests the necessity of the non-human to thinking labour and property within capitalist social formations. The populations outside the ambit of man form a surplus, at once both essential and disposable to the production process and the ideological forms that legitimate and reproduce that production process. The question of surplus is essential to Marxist theories of exploitation and oppression since capital 'puts to work' surpluses of land and labour among other resources. In this way, we can see the connections between an historical materialist project analyzing capitalist production and ideology as intimately connected to the policing of the borders and boundaries of the human. Animal studies, then, ought to further explore such an intimacy given the centrality

[55] Day, *Alien Capital*, 24.
[56] Day, 29.
[57] Wilderson, "Gramsci's Black Marx," 238.

of animal life to the production process *and* to forms of ideological legitimation that aids in reproducing the rules of order crucial to capitalist production, reproduction, and accumulation.

From an abolitionist perspective, the prison emerged to manage surplus populations produced by capitalism. These populations under capitalist modes of production have been the racialized.[58] Surplus populations, as Roderick Ferguson puts it, are both "superfluous and indispensable, surplus populations fulfill *and* exceed the demands of capital."[59] In Marx's terms, the surplus population is "a mass of human material, always ready for exploitation by capital in the interests of capital's own changing valorization requirements."[60] The rendering of surplus populations as idle through restructuring and the criminalization of that idleness leads to increased rates of imprisonment along the fault lines of racialization.[61] As part of carceral expansion, the state rounded up "persons who corresponded demographically to those squeezed out of restructured labor markets", i.e. the racialized in the wake of neoliberalism.[62] More broadly, surplus refers to idle resources that have not been put to work in other ways and typically can refer to land, capital and labour.[63] Surplus *labour and populations* are designated as waste if they cannot be put to work to serve a particular need of the production process. These populations, in a different lexicon, inhabit the space of "Man's human others" who "*naturally* occupy dead and dying regions" as they "are cast as the jobless underclasses whose members are made to function as our 'waste products' in our contemporary global world" even as they serve

[58] Roderick A. Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique*, Critical American Studies Series (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 15. Such a racialization exists in tandem with the appropriation of labour and land that typified the genesis of capitalism existing historically as settler colonialism and enslavement.
[59] Ferguson, 15.
[60] Karl Marx, *Capital*, 784.
[61] Ruth Wilson Gilmore, *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).
[62] Gilmore, 114.
[63] Gilmore, 88.

as spectres for carceral and/or humanitarian interventions as well as a ‘flexible’ labour force.[64] In thinking about this history with the resurgence of the struggle to abolish the police, we should note the central role played by police in ‘supplying’ this forced labour.[65] Surplus populations then are “a collective of those who fall outside of the normative principles for which state policies are designed, as well as those who are excluded from the attendant entitlements of capital.”[66] A focus on surplus populations brings into view subjects of capitalist productive relations outside the normative waged worker and so at the intersection of exploitation and oppression. Importantly, the surplus population is a dynamic category based on changing relations of technological innovation and inter-capitalist competition and so populations may be pushed out of the traditional labour market through broader structural forces.

Extending our scope to non-human animals, the pigeon underwent a similar process in the twentieth century where technological innovation replaced several functions of the pigeon to social life and economic production. As Amir explains, under modernized agriculture “there was no longer any economically productive place for pigeons in highly industrialized regions of the world,” thus the transformation of the pigeon from symbol of bourgeois status to pest that can be and often is exterminated.[67] With the shifting valorization requirements of capital based on technological development, the pigeon “became the outcast of urban wildlife, whose aggressive

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[64] McKittrick, “Plantation Futures,” 7. Emphasis in the original. For waste as a mode of accumulation see Ali Kadri, “Development Under the Threat of War in the Arab World,” Viewpoint Magazine, February 1, 2018, https://viewpointmag.com/2018/02/01/development-threat-war-arab-world/. The system of patronage that developed during enslavement came to shape the “infrastructures, practices, and processes of politics during the post-Emancipation period and within postcolonial nation-states.” See Deborah A. Thomas, *Political Life in the Wake of the Plantation: Sovereignty, Witnessing, Repair* (Duke University Press, 2019), 10, https://doi.org/10.1215/9781478007449. Thomas’ theorization of garrison politics draws on theorizing racializing assemblages in the afterlives of slavery.

[65] Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*, (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2021), 110.

[66] Beatrice Adler-Bolton and Artie Vierkant, *Health Communism*, 4.

[67] Amir, *Being & Swine the End of Nature (as We Knew It)*, 2021, 26.

guano threatens to corrode national cultural monuments, and who doesn't belong anywhere. It conforms neither to conventional notions of wild beauty nor to the husbandry of servile livestock."[68] While pigeons are not *racially oppressed,* the tools of racial capitalism as analytic become central in thinking about the shifting place of the pigeon within spaces of accumulation in addition to broader questions about animal labour, in particular the way animals used as property or labour are valued under capitalist relations of production.

The political philosophers Will Kymlicka and Sue Donaldson identify a category of animal that they term liminal animals. Liminal animals trouble the wild/domestic binary and refer to "the vast numbers of wild animals who live amongst us, even in the heart of the city" that exist neither as "wilderness animals" nor "domesticated animals."[69] These animals tend to reside within cities and are often subject to what Kymlicka and Donaldson incredibly call "our periodic bursts of ethnic cleansing" as well as a kind of erasure from our standard views of space.[70] For instance, consider the long war on the rat in New York City, represented as a struggle to take back the city from foreign invaders, with mayor Eric Adams in particular gleefully delighting in the killing of rats.[71] In the identification of these "wars" against liminal animals as ethnic cleansing, Kymlicka and Donaldson yoke together animal life with racial and ethnic alterity, specifically as conceived of as threats to the smooth operation of urban life and its established

[68] Amir, 35.
[69] Sue Donaldson and Will Kymlicka, *Zoopolis: A Political Theory of Animal Rights* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2011), 210.. For a fascinating case study on a 'liminal animal' perhaps the only species that is commonly seen as one see Daniel Heath Justice, *Raccoon* (London: Reaktion Press, 2021). The category of liminal animals is an historically fluid one, and included pigs and dogs in nineteenth century Manhattan, McNeur uses the term "half-wild" to capture the free roaming dogs and pigs on city streets. See Catherine McNeur, *Taming Manhattan: Environmental Battles in the Antebellum City*, *Taming Manhattan* (Harvard University Press, 2014), 10, https://doi.org/10.4159/harvard.9780674735989.
[70] Donaldson and Kymlicka, *Zoopolis*, 211.
[71] Emily Olson, "New York Vows to Fight Rats on Their Home Turf: Curbside Garbage Piles," *NPR*, October 20, 2022, sec. National, https://www.npr.org/2022/10/20/1130150756/new-york-rats-trash-rule-mayor-eric-adams.

hierarchies of race, class, and the occupation of space. The pigeon was once a lively commodity performing valuable labour or existed as a consumable good but now has been cast out of being valuable and are so designated as surplus that must be eliminated if it cannot be put to work.

Cities are a site of conflict across classes and other markers of difference including species, as we saw with the pigeon. Liminal animals inhabit cities alternately as resources or vermin depending on the shifting needs of capitalism's modes of valuation, labour requirements, and technological innovations in different historical epochs. The racoon for instance once was prized for its fur with the trade in racoon pelt being a luxury item and is now commonly seen as a pest in major urban centres such as Toronto.[72]

The antebellum period in the U.S. saw a similar political struggle over the right to the city, as David Harvey put it.[73] Pigs were a regular feature of life among working class ethnic neighbourhoods in New York, for example, used for both subsistence and the earning of extra income through sale to butchers. In 1821, as part of a broader strategy of control over urban space, run through racist and classist discourses of hygiene, pigs were to be rounded up and served as food at the poorhouses. The attempts to round-up the pigs met with militant working class resistance in what were called "hog riots" that liberated the pigs from confinement.[74] For the New York bourgeoisie, the phrase "swinish multitude" drawn from Edmund Burke's conservative treatise about the 'dangers' of the lower classes gaining political power, referred to

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[72] See Justice, *Raccoon*.
[73] David Harvey, "The Right to the City," *New Left Review*, no. 53 (October 2008).
[74] Amir, *Being & Swine the End of Nature (as We Knew It)*, 2021, 44–45. The proceeding account of pigs in nineteenth century New York is also drawn from Amir. See also Catherine McNeur, *Taming Manhattan: Environmental Battles in the Antebellum City* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), 6–45. McNeur's identification of a "de facto urban commons" (7) can be read as part of a longer history of control over the commons broadly and the reappearance of the commons throughout history, as detailed in the previous chapter. The 1832 outbreak of cholera giving the city a pretext for the destruction of the commons through pignapping shares space with the use of Covid measures to intensify biopolitical control and surveillance of the marginalized.

both the actual pigs and the "the Irish immigrants and African Americans who owned them."[75] Elite responses to pig owners identified all the pig-owners as chimney sweeps, a profession typically associated with Black people, thereby emphasizing the unity of contempt for the poor in efforts to control liminal animals.[76] As mentioned in the Introduction, policing as broad modality of governance and repression connects a vast array of social struggles, including those over human-animal relationships. Policing as a mode of enforcing labour discipline, association, (racial) hierarchy, and human-animal relationships for the requirements of capitalism stitches together this project's emphasis on the carceral system and the emphasis of this chapter on the management of populations for capitalism's shifting valorization requirements.

Criminalization and Biocapital

Criminalization of both humans and animals works to render them as exploitable forms of labour since as civilly dead, the prisoner is not entitled to political enfranchisement and democratic rights. In the first instance, modes of criminalization are enforced by carceral institutions supported by state-forms in accordance with the needs and demands of capitalist production and accumulation. As Stuart Schrader argues in his review of Sidney Harring's *Policing a Class Society,* the alleged criminality of European ethnic minority groups "would be erased as they became white, in contrast to that of Black people."[77] The becoming of whiteness

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[75] McNeur, *Taming Manhattan*, 24–25. On the racialized position of the Irish in antebellum America see Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 2008). For the racialized management of Ireland as an English colony see Bhandar, *Colonial Lives of Property*, 2018, 39–47. For a fascinating analysis of Burke's 'swinish multitude' remark situating it within English Jacobinism and the Smithfield Market see Stephen F. Eisenman, "The Real 'Swinish Multitude,'" *Critical Inquiry* 42, no. 2 (2016): 339–73.

[76] McNeur, *Taming Manhattan*, 32–33. Across the Atlantic, the pig was castigated as disobedient in its lack of submission to human authority by natural historians. See Harriet Ritvo, *The Animal Estate: The English and Other Creatures in the Victorian Age* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1987), 21.

[77] Stuart Schrader, "Review of Sidney L. Harring, Policing a Class Society: The Experience of American Cities, 1865–1915, Second Edition (Chicago: Haymarket, 2017) (Part Three)," *Legal Form* (blog), January 21, 2018, https://legalform.blog/2018/01/21/review-of-sidney-l-harring-policing-a-class-society-the-experience-of-american-cities-1865-1915-second-edition-chicago-haymarket-2017-part-three-stuart-schrader/.

and so racialization as a relational structure emerges in close intimacy with the forms of policing of behaviour and the fabrication of a class order that impacted the minutiae of daily life, including relationships between humans and animals. The work of criminalization and the formation of a racialized discourse around criminality contingent on shifting valorization requirements represents a power over life that capital harnesses to generate value: what I have termed biocapital.

Such operations of biocapital bring together the reduction of life to the commodity and the property-form with racialization as part and parcel both of disciplining resistant labourers and managing surplus populations who have been excluded from the labour market. What I want to argue for, then, is an expanded conception of the proletarian as connected to specific dynamics of biological control run through structuring norms of race and species. If we understand non-human animals as coerced into labouring conditions that take advantage of their biological capacities such as in the factory farm and laboratory, and as resisting attempts at labour and weaponization (such as police dogs, of which more to follow), then a space opens up beyond the solace of human exceptionalism toward a new understanding of the proletariat. In particular, I am concerned with the harnessing of animals' labour to the operations of the carceral state.

The use of animals in policing, especially dogs and horses, might be understood as an example of the proletariat under biocapitalism. I am thinking here, for example, of Foucault's identification of dressage as a disciplinary technique and set of interventions in constructing the knowable and controllable body. Importantly for our purposes dressage is a practice of horse training focused on regulating "the very movements of the horse's body in adherence to specific,

normalized rules and standards."[78] The body of the horse becomes useful as it becomes obedient to the specific interventions used toward discipline and control. The use of horses in policing, then, is the weaponization of the obedient body in the service of further discipline, an inter-species interaction of coerced antagonism. Biocapitalism (as analytic) brings together training techniques like dressage with the deployment of police power as a mode of biopolitical governance.

The police dog has become a potent symbol of racial terror in the 21st century struggles against policing, recalling the earlier uses of police dogs against civil rights protestors in the 1960s. One of the first images to be circulated emerging from the Ferguson protests in 2015 were "snarling dogs policing a crowd of predominantly black (sic) residents."[79] As Boisseron writes, the "post-Ferguson era has brought back to consciousness a racial prism that many wished had died in 'post-racial America' after Obama's first inauguration in 2009; viewed through this prism, race and dogs insidiously intersect in tales of violence" with such intersections being visited upon the criminalized and Black body.[80]

Historically, the police dog emerged in the United States in the context of enforcing racial segregation and protests against that segregation, with advocates for police dogs taking inspiration from the uses of dogs in the protection of property.[81] We can see the use of dogs in the colonization of the Americas as a means of subsuming surpluses into capitalist modes of order and valuation through discipling resistance. Ultimately, police dogs "were to help fabricate

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[78] Natalie Corinne Hansen, "Dressage: Training the Equine Body," in *Foucault and Animals*, ed. Matthew Churlew and Dinesh Joseph Wadiwel (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 136.
[79] Tyler Wall, "'For the Very Existence of Civilization': The Police Dog and Racial Terror," *American Quarterly* 68, no. 4 (2016): 861, https://doi.org/10.1353/aq.2016.0070.
[80] Boisseron, *Afro-Dog*, 38.
[81] Wall, "'For the Very Existence of Civilization,'" 864–65.

the color line by…policing the spaces of accumulation and white property."[82] Such modes of fabrication exist as an aspect of the policing of the colour line and racial capitalism through racial terror, as scholar Sarah E. Johnson explains.[83] What interests me here is the harnessing of the dogs' capacities imagined as a primal force of violence that is at once completely outside legal rights and protections but also a precision tool for the protection of property. That is, the police dog functions as 'animal' in the context of being outside the law but in that outside becomes a tool for the enforcement of a law of racial hierarchy in relation to private property and capital accumulation. The dog then has certain lively capacities and positions within a semiotic system as non-human that are harnessed by the carceral state in service to capital accumulation and labour discipline. Notably, the police dog was introduced as part of the professionalization of policing in the 20th century, speaking to the expansion over the power of life that typified reform to the carceral state.[84] So, we can say that the police dog is a kind of technology of reform enacted through training. The police horse works in a similar way, existing at once as animal and so outside the bounds of formal democratic rights and as a technology of policing, enhancing, and extending the capacities for discipline beyond the human capacities of an officer and their putative boundedness by law and regulation. The use of animals in policing then at once belies and reinforces the liberal social order of formal equality with violence being concentrated in the state apparatuses. The animal then is figured as a mode of latent violence within the liberal capitalist social order as it is entangled with the policing and maintenance of boundaries essential to that order.

[82] Wall, 875.
[83] Sara E. Johnson, "'You Should Give Them Blacks to Eat': Waging Inter-American Wars of Torture and Terror," *American Quarterly* 61, no. 1 (March 2009): 65–92.
[84] Wall, "'For the Very Existence of Civilization,'" 864.

The claim is not that the animals are racist or performing a police function *per se* but rather that dogs and horses exist as components of life-sorting operations so part of the process of racialization subtended by forms of ownership and degrees of humanity that at once valorize the life of the dog over the Black person in certain contexts and simultaneously harm the dog. What Boisseron and Wall (to a lesser extent) make clear are "the ways in which interspecies and racialized violences are both distinct *and* related as mutually reinforcing systems of oppressions."[85] Police violence renders such entanglements especially vividly since what is brought into view is the operation of the racializing assemblage and a defence of property that is part and parcel of policing in social formations with formal equality but divided by the colour line.

Resistance and the Politics of Slaughter

Much of this chapter has looked at systems of exploitation and death for humans and non-human animals as part of the violence that comprises what is identified as civilization by the powers-that-be. I want to consider now a particular *species* of resistance that goes beyond a standard Marxist political theory of seizing the means of production. Just as the previous sections have rethought some fundamental aspect of Marxist theory, this section uncovers underground strains of Marxist thinking and organizing in relation to the practices and goals of political struggle, ones less concerned with bringing productive relations under worker control and more interested in abolishing those relations as such. I return to the slaughterhouse to engage the limits of seizing the means of production as a political teleology. As we saw with Shukin, the slaughterhouse paved the way for mass industrial production, being an important (if disavowed)

[85] Shandell Houlden, "Gone to the War Dogs: An Analysis of Human-Canine Relationality in Twenty-First Century Conflict and War" (Hamilton, McMaster University, 2019), 95.

part of the prehistory of Fordism. As Fahim Amir notes, the history of slaughterhouses "reveals them to be a laboratory for industrial modernity. They are a part of those epoch-making processes that converted living time into working time."[86] In other words, the slaughterhouse set the stage for the conditions of exploitation, death, and revolt that came to typify the control over life itself by the tools and practices of mass industrial capitalism. The question then is: "Who would want to 'appropriate' or 'take over' such a brutal factory? Sabotage or exodus were more obvious reactions," as Amir notes.[87] The history of worker's struggle that Amir draws on emerges from the brutal working conditions performed by Southern Italian labourers in the factories of Turin and other Northern Italian cities. Black workers in Detroit faced similar questions about the contours and ultimate goals of class struggle and so also developed a form of autonomist Marxism.[88] The super-exploitation of the racialized led to the formation of new ways of conceiving the relation between life and labour and imagining political strategies not restricted to taking over the machines of industrial capitalism but to destroying them. Unlike other industries which may produce objects of use-value after the abolition of the property-form and exchange value, the slaughterhouse is nothing but a space of exploitation for humans and a geography of mass death for animals. In this way, there is no social good to be gained from a socialist slaughterhouse, and so the means of engagement are sabotage rather than a shifting regime of ownership. The shift from control to sabotage is not political nihilism but instead a clear-eyed view of the disconnection between valuation and production, captured in the formulations of bullshit jobs and batshit jobs, where the occupations are alternately useless or

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[86] Fahim Amir, *Being & Swine the End of Nature (as We Knew It)*, trans. Geoffrey C. Howes and Corvin Russell (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2021), 82.
[87] Amir, *Being & Swine the End of Nature (as We Knew It)*, 2021, 83.
[88] Nicola Pizzolato, "The American Worker and the Forze Nuove: Turin and Detroit at the Twilight of Fordism," *Viewpoint Magazine*, September 25, 2013, https://viewpointmag.com/2013/09/25/the-american-worker-and-the-forze-nuove-turin-and-detroit-at-the-twilight-of-fordism/.

harmful.[89] In a similar fashion, work done within the spaces of carcerality such as police and prisons does not generate value and instead works as means of control and discipline in reproducing the established rules of a class-stratified and racialized order. Isometrically, policing is called on to control the bodies of animals when they become unruly and resist the technologies of their death, as Timothy Pachirat narrates.[90] Just as the police dog or horse is weaponized, so too do unruly animals who attempt to escape from being in service to capital become disciplined by the state and capital.

The escape of animals from conditions of confinement and death but also labour exploitation is well recorded, as Hribal notes. He writes:

> These acts could be maliciously violent in form. Horses 'bucked.' Cattle 'charged.' Cows 'kicked.' Pigs 'bit'. Chickens 'pecked'—all with the *recognized* intent that is recognized by the employers themselves, to harm or kill the employers. Or it could be nonviolent in form, such as refusing to work or, at least, work hard.[91]

These forms of resistance, even without recourse to the language of intention, speak to the formation of something like a shared resistance to labour discipline and death. These forms of resistance might be located otherwise than under a rubric of intentionality and instead "as something that bodies do—an unpredictability which results from gaps or contradictions in power, from mistakes of implementation."[92] The capture of bodily capacities goes beyond the slaughterhouse and into policing and operations of carcerality, given the long history of animals being weaponized against populations designated as threat to public order, capital, and/or the

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[89] David Graeber, *Bullshit Jobs: A Theory* (London: Allen Lane, an imprint of Penguin Books, 2018).
[90] Timothy Pachirat, *Every Twelve Seconds: Industrialized Slaughter and the Politics of Sight*, *Every Twelve Seconds* (Yale University Press, 2011).
[91] Hribal, "'Animals Are Part of the Working Class,'" 449. Emphasis in the original. See also Jonathan Saha, "Colonizing Elephants: Animal Agency, Undead Capital and Imperial Science in British Burma," *BJHS Themes* 2 (2017): 169–89, https://doi.org/10.1017/bjt.2017.6.
[92] Amir, *Being & Swine the End of Nature (as We Knew It)*, 2021, 79. Amir is quoting the scholar Markus Kurth on animals escaping the slaughterhouse.

state.[93] In line with the previous sections that expand the purview of what is conventionally imagined as the labouring subject under capitalism, the animals resisting machinery extracting labour and life form a crucial part of this autonomist coalition of workers.

The Proletariat and Biocapitalism

Marx draws the term proletariat from the term in Roman law referring to propertyless people who served the state through having children; in other words, bodies used for their biological capacity without political enfranchisement. At its most forceful, the identification of the labouring subjects with proletarian or proletariat speaks to the violence inherent in both proletarianization and labour extraction more broadly. The proletariat, in its most literal translation, are those "without reserves."[94] The propertyless in all senses, divested as subjects of ownership, can only be objects. The abjected subjects Marx and Marxism take as the locus of history and politics are united in their disparateness by being without reserve, only having their living capacities available for exploitation and death. An *a priori* establishing of who or what travels under the sign "proletarian" is less important than this structural and historical unity. The retention of such a unity is essential for the critique of property made manifest in expressive and discursive challenges to regimes of ownership and so sits at the heart of this inquiry, from which its other commitments and investments flow.

That said, far from recuperating an unreconstructed Marxism, I hope to have demonstrated a certain fidelity to the analytical coordinates and questions of Marxism while

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[93] For this history see Michael Swistara, "Mutual Liberation: The Use and Abuse of Non–Human Animals by the Carceral State and the Shared Roots of Oppression," *University of Miami Race & Social Justice Law Review* 12, no. 2 (2022).
[94] Singh, *Race and America's Long War*, 81.

departing strongly from dogmatic assumptions that have plagued Marxist thought around race and species and contributed to the silencing of their interaction. I sought to demonstrate how centering race and species can intervene in various aspects of Marxist thought and as part and parcel of immanent engagements with Marxism that seek to push it beyond economic reductionism and teleology towards an account of the control over life and labour beyond the confines of human exceptionalism or anthropocentric erasure. How did structures of racialization and species come to emerge? What shifts in history led toward the relationships with animals and racial formations that have come to define modernity? The answer to these questions lies in an historical exploration of the genesis and development of Atlantic capitalism. While this chapter engaged Marxist theory more broadly, the subsequent one zeroes in on histories and theories of accumulation as they specifically relate to animal life.

Chapter Two: Racial Capitalism and Animal Accumulation

The spirit of this chapter is animated by Deborah Thomas' heart-ravishing question: "What does it mean to be human— politically— in the wake of the plantation?"[1] That is, what does it mean to have once been property and still be conditioned by that assumptive logic? What does the human as a political idea mean in the wake of the plantation? The wake, as Christina Sharpe has theorized, troubles standard temporalities of slavery and freedom as well as the affective and material structures underlying these concepts.[2] While this project is not much interested in weighing humanism vs. anti-humanism, as such definitions and concepts will be developed in political struggle, the open question here is whether the human qua political category is worth reworking.[3] How do our assessments of anti-humanist projects in critical theory change if slavery and its afterlives come to bear on the construction of the human that such critique sees as its object? We can expand this question by considering how actually existing non-humans and those excluded from the discourse of the human have been rendered as property within liberal capitalist modernity, as indeed such a process inaugurated the formation of modernity itself. In other words, the Atlantic slave trade, the expropriation of the peasantry, settler colonialism, and the intensification of animal subjection under capitalism all represent the interlocking births in blood and dirt of modernity. Here I am interested in thinking about the

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[1] Deborah A. Thomas, *Political Life in the Wake of the Plantation: Sovereignty, Witnessing, Repair* (Duke University Press, 2019), 1. The term heart-ravishing is Philip Sidney's, specifically his term "heart-ravishing knowledge" that prompts ethical action. I am indebted in this reference to David Clark. See David L. Clark, "'Can the University Stand for Peace?': Omar Khadr, Higher Education, and the Question of Hospitality," *CR: The New Centennial Review* 18, no. 2 (2018): 283, 336, https://doi.org/10.14321/crnewcentrevi.18.2.0283.
[2] Christina Elizabeth Sharpe, *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016).
[3] This project is not much interested in elaborating the concept of humanism and thinking about humanism otherwise than liberalism. For recent work in cultural studies on this problem see Kandice Chuh, *The Difference Aesthetics Makes: On the Humanities "after Man"* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019).

naturalization of ownership that exists in common imaginings of non-human animals and Black subjects. That is, dilating between these two trenchant critiques of the property form and structures of ownership and the governance of the non-human allows us to think about the structural and potentially historical continuities in rendering forms of life as property through regimes of racialization and animal exploitation and accumulation. My own intervention here is to yoke the critique of standard accounts of accumulation regarding enslavement and racialization to a critique of anthropocentrism.

This chapter challenges the idea that only humans faced disruptions to their modes of life because of the formation of capitalism, arguing that non-human animals did as well. What follows is less an assertion about the origin of species difference under capitalism and more a suggestion that historians of capitalism might think beyond the boundaries of the human when exploring modes of accumulation. While precapitalist social formations were by no means a prelapsarian mode of life for animals (or humans), the sheer scale of industrialized slaughter and the use of animals speaks to the need to rethink the historiographical presumptions and silences of the animal rights movement, especially the animal abolitionists who focus on the property-status of animals and thus should be acutely attentive to the changing modes of property-formation. Whereas Marx was concerned with primitive accumulation "from the viewpoint of the waged male proletariat and the development of commodity production", I am interested in the forms of labour that existed and exist outside that particular subject-form, thinking about the conversion of animal life into property under capitalism as a way to call into question previous assumptions made by scholars of the transition to capitalism.[4] Continuing the broad concerns of

[4] Silvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation* (New York: Autonomedia, 2004), 12.

the project, I also am attentive to the role of policing in the process of accumulation since it was through police power that the transition to capitalism was effected. Ultimately, the carceral state represents a continuation of the logics of accumulation into the present. The conversion of life into property as a biocapitalist and biopolitical imperative forms a central concern of the project as a whole and the chapter in specific. I further explore the role of repressive apparatuses in producing the distinctions between property and owner and a discourse of *ownability*.

My argument then is that the accumulation of animals should be seen as part of the broader emergence of capitalism, much like enslavement and colonialism. In thinking about the close ties between race, capital and species, it is instructive to consider the ambiguous etymological shifts of the word 'stock' in the eighteenth and nineteenth century which referred to "cargo that is inanimate, slaves that become property like any other, and animal livestock."[5] I understand this ambiguity as underscoring the way property brings together the non-human animal and the enslaved through the rendering of both as able to be owned. The chapter is interested in the production of distinctions through law and violence in the production of categories of owner and owned and how such categories persist even after the formal end of enslavement through the operations of policing and the accumulation of capital. The 'animal in general' that for Derrida was a form of violence through generalization and essentialism is produced through various kinds of policing predicated on the protection and reproduction of property under capitalism. This move is in line with a broader theoretical gesture of this project toward combining a post-structuralist emphasis on animal representation with the material conditions and histories of animal exploitation.

[5] Bhandar, *Colonial Lives of Property*, 2018, 102.

Modern property laws came through the process of proletarianization and primitive accumulation. These transformations of labour and space were contingent on the transformation from "landed property" under feudalism to "absolute property" wherein "all the tolerated 'rights' that the peasantry had acquired or preserved…were now rejected", as Foucault argues in strikingly Marxian terms.[6] The 'rejection' of these rights by the bourgeoisie was enforced by means of criminalization and terror. Importantly, such forms of terror were contingent on an historical shift towards dominium in the form of absolute property. Summarizing Marx's remarks on primitive accumulation, Robert Nichols explains:

> capitalism does not emerge from the struggle of the masses to achieve the honor of contracting themselves into the services of their new employers. Rather, it is born of a protracted battle in which artificial, 'extra-economic' state violence was employed to separate immediate producers forcibly from their relatively unmediated access to the primary means of production (i.e., common lands) so that they might be compelled to sell their labor under deeply asymmetrical conditions, effectively contracting into their own exploitation.[7]

In the absence of clear historical points of reference, we might imagine the shifting of control over animals from the commons to industrial agriculture and later industrial forms of slaughter. To what extent might the shaping of property as absolute have contributed to or been prefigured by governance of the non-human? If Fordist production first found its articulation in the disassembly of animals, did the process of accumulation that created the modern proletarian first find its articulation in a shifting management of animals? Put another way, I am interested in the figure of the animal as a discursive structure where ownership is presumed and on which structures of ownership are enacted. This is less an historical claim than a way of seeing

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[6] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, 2nd Vintage Books ed (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 85. See also Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*, Nachdr. (Boston, Mass: Beacon Press, 2003), 40–42.

[7] Nichols, *Theft Is Property! Dispossession & Critical Theory*, 61–62.

animalization as necessary to the production of ownability and the reproduction of the distinction between owner and owned that in racial capitalist social formations is connected to systems of racialized chattel slavery and land dispossession.

The prevailing notion of ownership as dominion over a thing has never truly "shed its history as a primary technique of subjugation over the bodies of black people that facilitated massive amounts of capital accumulation by white plantation owners" in the formation of the United States and other colonial outposts, as Brenna Bhandar argues.[8] The history of these structures of ownership draws on a lineage of thought in Western political theory wherein, as Nichols explains, "there is a tight relation between rights and property, between *ius* and *dominium*. So close is this association that the two are often spoken of as if virtually synonymous."[9] In the subsequent chapter, this association will be examined by looking at structures of recognition and redress through empathy and suffering. The world of capitalist modernity was constructed partially from two major forces: the Transatlantic slave trade and the shift to absolute property as the dominant mode of ownership, with animals as part and parcel of expropriation. These dual processes involved constructing life as property and building new modes of discursive and material capture to reify the property-form. Through these regimes of control as well as the sorting of value through racialization, needs for labour and resources were fulfilled. Such isometric connections might be mobilized as a mode of dialectical confrontation with the structures and histories of the conversion of life into property that lingers over the

[8] Bhandar, *Colonial Lives of Property*, 2018, 20–21. The notion of ownership as absolute control descended from Roman property law and thus laws over slaveholding. See Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 31.
[9] Nichols, *Theft Is Property! Dispossession & Critical Theory*, 122. And in some historical moments are entirely synonymous such as the right to vote being tethered to property ownership. In a contemporary register, the lack of possession of real estate in the form of home ownership leaves populations subject to eviction and/or the displacing of homeless encampments as we have seen in many major cities over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.

contemporary forms of anti-Black racism and animal life, even within a discourse of humanitarian care.

Jason Hribal untangles what the term "live stock" conceals in its common usage. In contrast to the passive voice that comes to speak of live stock as a natural fact, "there is an *active* history here—one of expropriation, exploitation, and resistance."[10] The conversion of life into property marks out a key moment in the development of capitalism and forms a central operation of racialization. The fact of animals being property and resources for production is so ingrained that to imagine otherwise is to push back against centuries of ideological reification. And yet, animals haunt our imaginations of what ownership is and means, given the attempt to grapple with these questions in cultural forms ranging from the art movie to popular horror fiction. For example, the horror film *Nope* engages with our exploitation of animals in the production of cinema.[11] To imagine animality having a history is to imagine otherwise than practices and ideological forms governing modes and norms of ownership. Drawing on Herbert Marcuse's project for social theory, Avery Gordon uses haunting to think about the "historical alternatives which haunt the established society as subversive tendencies and forces."[12] The particular manifestation of haunting here is the being-otherwise of animal life and a world not conditioned by the violence of property-formation. The restoration of an active history to living stock is the restoration of a set of practices otherwise than calcified habits of ownership and an imaginary conditioned by possession.

[10] Hribal, "'Animals Are Part of the Working Class,'" 436.
[11] *Nope* (Universal Pictures, 2022).
[12] Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*, New University of Minnesota Press ed (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), xviii.

Since this project is a work of abolitionist theory, it is indebted to a particular kind of refusal to be untroubled at the quotidian experiences that serve as metonyms for the capitalist world system and global colour line. As Gordon puts it, "being or becoming unavailable for servitude takes a certain amount of time and trouble and one reason why is that, among other things, being or becoming unavailable for servitude involves cultivating an indifference, an ability to be in-difference to the system's own benefits and its own technologies of improvement."[13] The cultivation of such an indifference by abolitionists involves thinking differently about our relations to property and narrating a different history of animal exploitation that refuses an air of compulsive inevitability. I understand indifference as a political project, a divestment from the violence that constitutes the human and its attendant racial logics.[14] The violence of the human is one predicated upon a particular relation of ownership to the non-human. Such a relationship is predicated upon long processes of expropriation and accumulation.

One of the distinctive features of capitalism is that it maintains nominally free subjects that contract themselves into their own exploitation since "they lack an analysis of how this context of choice was established in the first place or a vision of how it might be replaced by another."[15] Given the reliance of capitalism on naturalization of its own contingency, to be haunted by historical alternatives is nothing less than an entrance into anti-capitalist critique. The critical project of thinking accumulation as both foundation and process of coercion brings into view the presence of violence against an historical erasure of that violence. While willing

[13] Avery F. Gordon, "Some Thoughts on Haunting and Futurity," *Borderlands* 10, no. 2 (October 1, 2011): 8, http://go.gale.com/ps/i.do?p=AONE&sw=w&issn=14470810&v=2.1&it=r&id=GALE%7CA276187005&sid=googleScholar&linkaccess=abs.
[14] For a project aligned with my own thinking here see Naisargi N. Davé, *Indifference: On the Praxis of Interspecies Being* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2023).
[15] Nichols, *Theft Is Property! Dispossession & Critical Theory*, 63.

subjugation is importantly different from enslavement, enslavement exist in dialectical relation with the free exchange of labour, as we saw in Chapter One.

What is contested then is the erasure of expropriation itself, which Marx maintained had already occurred by the nineteenth century, and so the "given" nature of such an expropriation. As Linebaugh and Rediker write:

> Expropriation itself…is treated as a given: the field is *there* before the plowing starts; the city is *there* before the laborer begins the working day. Likewise for long distance trade: the port is *there* before the ship sets sail from it; the plantation is *there* before the slave cultivates its land. The commodities of commerce seem to transport themselves. Finally, reproduction is assumed to be the transhistorical function of the family.[16]

We could add: the meat is *there* on the shelf of the grocery store; the slaughterhouse is *there* on the periphery of the city. The factory farm is *there* before the worker enters or before the animal enters. What I hope to recover then is the profound contingency of these forms of exploitation, violence, and death within a longer history and larger system of global accumulation that typifies capitalism. This chapter both historicizes the ownership of animals and places animals as central to the history of capitalism, especially in the Global North. For example, the fur trade was a key driver of economic prosperity in the settler colonies of North America that enriched London and Amsterdam, centres of the capitalist world system. In the terms of this project, this means understanding that making animals like beaver into commodities was essential for settler enrichment. This is not to say that animals must be the primary focus of theories of accumulation but rather that animals were central to capital accumulation and development. The accumulation of animals, then, is part of the shifts in regimes of labour, relations to land, and the circulation of commodities that typified the transition to capitalism and the emergence of colonialism. The

[16] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 42. Emphasis in the original.

power of European capitalism was powered by the seizure of land and control over the sea, and animals were crucial resources in powering capitalism globally and especially within Atlantic capital. The trade in beaver pelts provided the impetus for exploration and territorial expansion, eventually resulting in the monopoly of the Hudson's Bay Company in what is now Canada.[17] As we saw in Chapter One, the production of animal capital through the slaughterhouse presaged the organization and production of assembly lines, the trade in beaver pelts, the fishing of cod, and the creation of the capitalist whaling industry, all intertwined with broader operations of accumulation: what I call *animal accumulation*. The making of animals into commodities is part and parcel of broader capitalist development, colonial expansion, and the trade in African slaves that birthed and enriched the modern West. In addition to the seizure of land and enslavement, animal accumulation then represents a qualitative shift from pre-capitalist social formations reliant on the construction and reproduction of species hegemony, building on earlier forms of distinguishing and defining the human. While animals were valued under pre-capitalist productive relations, the sheer scale and expansion of exploitation and extraction points to a shift toward a specificity of animal exploitation under capitalism *and* the history of capital accumulation being shaped by the capture of animal life. In the previous chapter, I expanded on theorizations of biocapitalism to think about the way capitalism valuates lively capacities as commodities and weapons of the repressive state apparatus; here, I am interested in the preconditions for that utilization, viz., the making of animals into commodities or agents of repression.

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[17] Leila Philip, *Beaverland: How One Weird Rodent Made America*, First Edition (New York: Twelve, 2022), 54.

Accumulation

In Marx, the concept of primitive accumulation is used to critique a political economy that "cannot account for the *origins* of the capital relation" instead relying on the very values that came to define the capital relation, i.e. free wage labour, to explain the origins of such a relation.[18] The process of primitive accumulation is posited as "an accumulation which is not the result of the capitalist mode of production but its point of departure."[19] The liberal political economists like Adam Smith do imagine an accumulation prior to capitalism, and for them it is a kind of moral fable; Marx compares it to the role of original sin in Christian theology.[20] Instead Marx argues that the actual history of accumulation is a process where "conquest, enslavement, robbery, murder, in short, force, play the greatest part."[21] Primitive accumulation is conventionally narrated as the "brutal process of separating people from their means of providing for themselves" which "provided a basis for capitalist development."[22] As Perelman puts it, primitive accumulation "cut through traditional lifeways like scissors," undermining the ability of people to provide for themselves and relying on coercion to discourage people from finding modes of living outside of market dependency.[23] The world-historical upshot of this cutting was a break from older modes of life toward dependence on markets and toward capitalist expansion.[24] These two processes are typically called dispossession to refer to the cutting

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[18] Nichols, *Theft Is Property! Dispossession & Critical Theory*, 57.
[19] Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, trans. Ben Fowkes, V. 1: Penguin Classics (London ; New York, N.Y: Penguin Books in association with New Left Review, 1981), 873.
[20] Karl Marx, 873.
[21] Karl Marx, 874.
[22] Michael Perelman, *The Invention of Capitalism: Classical Political Economy and the Secret History of Primitive Accumulation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 13. As Marx puts it, "primitive accumulation, therefore, is nothing else than the historical process of divorcing producers from the means of production." See Karl Marx, *Capital*, 875.
[23] Perelman, *The Invention of Capitalism*, 14.
[24] See Robert Brenner, "Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe," *Past & Present*, no. 70 (1976): 30–75.

through traditional lifeways and relations to land, and proletarianization to refer to the creation of a class of labourers who were forced to enter into the market and sell their labour-power. The great advantage of this account is its systematic theoretical and historical challenge to capitalism and private property emerging spontaneously through bartering and/or as the *telos* of history itself. By contrast, the revival of Roman property law in land "was a product of the early modern epoch" underwritten by increasingly centralized absolutist States in Western Europe.[25] The absolutist monarchies of Western Europe "accomplished certain partial functions in the *primitive accumulation* necessary for the eventual triumph of the capitalist mode of production itself" from a waning feudalism.[26] The main thrust of this argument is that the "class and property relationships in the sixteenth century English countryside represented a significant break with previous modes of accumulation and domination," ultimately resulting in widespread dependency on market relations.

The above approach to the history of capitalism "discounts contemporaneous modes of economic expansion, particularly slavery and the slave trade."[27] These contemporaneous forms of economic expansion produced new modes of controlling life, especially the reproduction and heritability of slave status across generations. The relation between enslavement and capitalism is a complicated one both historically and analytically. That said, this project echoes Black Panther Party founder Huey P. Newton in arguing that "this country [the United States] became very rich upon slavery and that slavery is capitalism in the extreme."[28] In fact, the two systems of

[25] Perry Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State* (London: NLB, 1977), 26-28. The absolutist states contained at once a fundamental feudal structure at functioned to supress the peasantry but was also determined by the asecdance of an urban bourgeoisie that would shape the contours of state power during this period. As Anderson puts it, "Absolutist bureaucracy both registered the rise of mercantile capital, and arrested it" (34).
[26] Perry Anderson, 40. See also Perry Anderson, 420–31.
[27] Singh, *Race and America's Long War*, 76.
[28] Philip Sheldon Foner, ed., *Black Panthers Speak* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2014), 51.

enslavement and wage labour were intimately related, with capitalism producing and sustaining a particular form of slavery. Robin Blackburn explains this point further, arguing that the kind of slavery that "prevailed in the Americas in the eighteenth century should not be seen as a relic of the Ancient or Medieval world…The slaves of the New World were economic property and the main motive for slaveholding was economic exploitation; to this end at least nine-tenths of American slaves were put to commodity production."[29] The production of commodities through this form of enslavement became one of the driving engines of capitalism. We should read Blackburn's claim together with Patterson's argument that while the Transatlantic trade grew out of the Iberian and Saharan slave systems early on, "the demand for slaves in the New World outgrew the capacity of these two ancient slave-trading systems."[30] That is, slavery expanded with the rise of capitalism rather than declined. As David Brion Davis puts it, "the Negro slave…found his life regimented in a highly organized system that was geared to maximum production for a market economy."[31] Within the slave economies of the American South and the Caribbean, then, we see a large-scale proletariat, organized within a highly regimented system of production. Despite Marx noting the *presence* of colonial plunder and enslavement to capitalist accumulation, he is inattentive to the analytical problem of "how racial, ethnic, and gender hierarchies are retained as a mechanism of labor discipline and surplus appropriation" including the political process of alleging to render such distinctions "anachronistic in the long run" through narratives of universal equality and freedom.[32]

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[29] Blackburn, *The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848*, 7. See also Roediger, *How Race Survived US History*, 67–69.
[30] Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 159–60.
[31] David Brion. Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), 60. Davis carefully works through the continuities and differences between the Transatlantic slave trade and other slave systems, alighting on a continuity in the conversion of persons into things. My departure from Davis is one of emphasizing the distinctive nature of that conversion within capitalist market economies and states.
[32] Singh, *Race and America's Long War*, 84.

Accumulation as a broader analytic has been the focus of recent Marxist critique, especially in modes that push the limits of orthodox Marxist philosophies of history. Marx takes as his "classic form" of accumulation the "enclosure of the commons" that took place in seventeenth century England and, as Nichols notes, Marx relegates this process to "the pre-history of capital."[33] Marx framed primitive accumulation within a specific historical juncture but as we saw in Chapter One, Indigenous critique has noted the persistence of the process of accumulation to capitalism in different epochs. That is, different periods of capitalist development have been inaugurated through reproducing modes of dispossession and by ensuring modes of expansion against resistant subjects. The abolitionist critique of policing and prisons is a critique of the enforcement of dispossession with abolitionist theorizing and activity guiding "the worldwide movements to abolish slavery and captivity, colonialism, imprisonment, militarism, foreign debt bondage, and to abolish the capitalist world order known today as globalization or neo-liberalism."[34] In order to think about accumulation otherwise than as an historical stage, David Harvey substitutes the term primitive accumulation with the term "accumulation by dispossession."[35] He continues by arguing that the features of primitive accumulation identified by Marx "have remained powerfully present within capitalism's historical geography up until now."[36] In particular, the struggle over the private appropriation of natural resources and the suppression of Indigenous lifeways are powerful anti-capitalist struggles that have reignited in recent years. And importantly the systems of credit and debt that characterized early modes of accumulation have come to play an even larger role now; as Harvey argues, "we have to look at the speculative raiding carried out by hedge funds and other major

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[33] Karl Marx, *Capital*, 928; qtd. in Nichols, *Theft Is Property! Dispossession & Critical Theory*, 63.
[34] Gordon, "Some Thoughts on Haunting and Futurity," 8.
[35] David Harvey, *The New Imperialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 144.
[36] Harvey, 145.

institutions of finance capital as the cutting edge of accumulation by dispossession in recent times."[37] Accumulation by dispossession qua analytic thus allows an expanded temporal and ontological account of capitalism's drive toward expansion and appropriation.

The Marxist tradition has tended to view colonialism and enslavement as parenthetical to accumulation, taking their central points of reference from the enclosures of the commons in England. I share with Robert Nichols the need to see these two forms of accumulation "as analytically distinct yet practically intertwined."[38] That is, in practice these two forms of accumulation were part of the same process, but analytically colonialism and enslavement require specific analytical tools. I want to make this claim for the role of animal life in this process as well, using the critical tools of animal studies to excavate the circumstance of non-human animals within periods of accumulation. That is, I do not wish to collapse the rise of animal capital into settler colonialism and enslavement, but rather think about the accumulation of animals as analytically distinct but practically intertwined in so far as animal accumulation was a central part of the transition to capitalism. Animal life signifies differently contingent upon the need of capital's valorization requirements as well as the histories of resistance within a given community. The intervention of contemporary readers of Marx in thinking about primitive accumulation is "acknowledging its gendered, racialised and environmental foundations and formations."[39] Non-human animals should also factor in to rethinking accumulation beyond economic reductionism. The question now is what would it mean to read accumulation into the appropriation of animal life by the market and the state? That is, what role did animals play as

[37] Harvey, 147.

[38] Nichols, *Theft Is Property! Dispossession & Critical Theory*, 54.

[39] Jonathan Saha, "Accumulations and Cascades: Burmese Elephants and the Ecological Impact of British Imperialism," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, April 13, 2022, 4, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440122000044.

objects of appropriation? What did emergent capitalism and colonialism make 'of' animals as resources and as labour? And, most importantly, how did such a process of appropriation set the stage for contemporary capitalism?

Possessive Individualism and Accumulation

If the spirit of this chapter is animated by the problems and questions of Black studies thinking about the human-animal distinction and the critique of racial capitalism, then the diacritical opposite is the political philosophy of Locke. For Locke, property is fundamental to the construction of the human. Locke stages a dialectic between individuality and property wherein property is the guarantor of political rights and subjectivity, just as rights and subjects or life and liberty are yoked together with property. Balibar describes this project as "creating an absolute convertibility between a discourse on the *liberation of the individual* from every form of 'subjection' or 'slavery' and a discourse on the *power of appropriation* of this very same individual, so that he can identify himself consciously with the property which is his *raison d'être*."[40] That is, property is subjectivity, and legitimate claims to enfranchisement and freedom are subtended by appropriation. While Locke did counterpose freedom to the tyrannies of slavery, Locke's denunciation of slavery, as Susan Buck-Morss explains, "was not a protest against the enslavement of black Africans on New World plantations, least of all in colonies that were British. Rather, slavery was a metaphor for legal tyranny, as it was used generally in British parliamentary debates on constitutional theory."[41] The liberty Locke has in mind is "the

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[40] Etienne Balibar, "'Possessive Individualism'Reversed: From Locke to Derrida," *Constellations* 9, no. 3 (September 2002): 304, https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8675.00284.
[41] Buck-Morss, "Hegel and Haiti," 826. Locke writes, "Slavery is so vile and miserable an estate of man, and so directly opposite to the generous temper and courage of our nation, that it is hardly to be conceived that an 'Englishman,' much less a 'gentleman,' should plead for it." See John Locke, *Two Treatises on Civil Government* (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1884), 77.

protection of private property" including slaves who were property by law.[42] I follow Wadiwel's innovative reading of Lockean theories of property wherein the owning of animals is at the heart "of the property right itself, and underpin[s] 'man's' earthly dominion and securitisation of self as a 'superior' being."[43] One account of this appropriation is a theological dominion wherein God gives man the right of use and dominion over the non- human animals. This view is essentially a kind of naturalized anthropocentrism inflected through religious authority, and it is not Locke's. Instead, it is "a conflict between humans and animals, a kind of war" that "appears to found the property relation in Locke."[44] What is given by the divine to man in this account is not direct dominion but rationality constructed against the mere instincts of the non-human and so serves as a kind of victory of conquest over both the external non-human and the instinctual within the human itself, as per Lockean epistemology where ideas emerge through experience rather than being given.[45] Locke's theory of property centres animal ownership and the ideological mechanisms of ownership and appropriation that came to shape Atlantic capitalism. Wadiwel's larger project is reading anthropocentric domination as a variety of sovereignty and indeed the ur-example of sovereign right.[46] Extending Wadiwel's critique of Locke, we might ask where Locke obtained his ideas of the human and non-human. My claim is that such ideas emerged already racialized as part of a longer history of racialization inaugurated by colonial encounter. What I hope to stage in this detour into Locke and Wadiwel is the theorization of the emergence of the property-form as the major operation of accumulation. Accumulation marks out a process by which animal life is converted into property that also brought into being the

[42] Buck-Morss, "Hegel and Haiti," 827.
[43] Dinesh Wadiwel, *The War against Animals* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 147.
[44] Wadiwel, 152.
[45] Wadiwel, 155.
[46] Wadiwel, 223–73.

categories of racial difference that shaped the modalities through which racial formations are lived and through which such boundaries are policed. The process of accumulation is also relevant to the larger project of this dissertation in so far as it denaturalizes the history of property from a *telos* already latent in pre-capitalist social formations toward specific histories of dispossession and the formation of unequal relations as part and parcel of a broad relationship to the means of production and so the unequal fostering of life based on property ownership. Accumulation in the colonies differentiated labour based on categories of socially produced difference and availability for ownership that was expressed in racial terms; as Rosa Luxembourg puts it, accumulation in non-European countries "assumes the form of colonial policy."[47]

Locke was a shareholder in the Royal African Company and involved in the crafting of colonial policy in the Americas during the rise of Atlantic capitalism.[48] Earlier in the seventeenth century, Shakespeare presented in *The Tempest* the conspiracy of Caliban, Trinculo and Stephano as essentially monstrous, contributing to an "evolving ruling class view of popular rebellion," as Linebaugh and Rediker explain.[49] Caliban in particular represents a potential point of convergence for animal studies and Black studies given the intimacy of his racialized otherness with his inhuman appearance and designation. The collective word 'animal' appears only a few times in the works of Shakespeare and almost always refers to falling out of a standard or ideal humanity inflected with norms of class, gender and ability, as Laurie Shannon argues.[50] Zakiyyah Jackson, reading Shannon's observations, explains that philosophers of race

[47] Rosa Luxemburg, *The Accumulation of Capital*, Routledge Classics (London ; New York: Routledge, 2003), 349.
[48] Buck-Morss, "Hegel and Haiti," 826; Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture*, 118.
[49] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 29. Shakespeare also personally invested in English colonialism through investing in the Virginia Company. See Linebaugh and Rediker, 14.
[50] Laurie Shannon, "The Eight Animals in Shakespeare; Or, before the Human," *PMLA* 124, no. 2 (2009): 474.

and Caribbeanist critics have also located in Shakespeare, and in Caliban in particular, "the incipience of modern racialization."[51] For Jackson, it is not simply that Caliban is rendered as an animal, "but rather that figures like Caliban are constitutive to 'the animal' as a general term."[52] That is, the racialized figure of Caliban produced through colonial encounter constitutes what is human and non-human. The animal in general, here echoing Derrida, is conditioned by racialization and the norms of classification determined by and refracted through the process of colonial encounter within the rise of Atlantic capitalism and thus the Atlantic slave trade. The notions of ownership and property premised on animal ownership, as Wadiwel sees in Locke, are premised on forms of racial classification. Property and in particular regimes and subjectivities of ownership through sovereign reason are contingent upon the intimacies between race, species and capital. Indeed, the resistance to the animal in general from within animal studies ought to be expanded to include the broader classification of life under norms of ownership and possession as well as the structures of power that enforce and reproduce those norms.

Animal Accumulation

In her beautiful and lyrical book, *Fathoms: The World In the Whale,* Rebecca Giggs narrates human-whale relationships. As she explains, "by the early 1600s, whaling had become a commercial concern. Whales were undergoing a categorical migration from stranded serendipity and fearsome prey to being a for-profit commodity."[53] When viewed in this way, the destruction of traditional human lifeways comes together with reliance on the market, since traditional modes of relating to non-human animals like whales shifted into a for-profit system that itself

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[51] Jackson, *Becoming Human*, 13.
[52] Jackson, 13.
[53] Rebecca Giggs, *Fathoms: The World in the Whale* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2021), 34.

changed the modes of valuation of whales. Giggs further explains how whaling set the stage for the development of industrial capitalism and commercial society. The whaling industry thus becomes part of the broader system of the production of animal capital like the slaughterhouse discussed earlier. The oil from whale blubber and thus whaling itself "was the context that coaxed industrial manufacturing and commerce into its modern shape—whale oil initiated automation; sped up repetitive task-based workflow and expanded the working week; it preconditioned the transformation of the natural environment by numerous enterprises driven to faster and more thorough manufacturing schedules."[54] While not explored by Giggs, these uses of whales formed key dynamics of capitalism including the structure of work in industrial production, the regimentalization of the working day, and resource extraction.[55] The focus on an ecological Marxism and socioecological regimes of accumulation in recent years could be expanded with an attention to the massive industry that was whaling and its key role in the early history of what we have come to understand as capitalism. For the purposes of this project, we can see the transformation of whales into commodities and the use of whale's biological materials as resources as central to the development of capitalism. A century earlier, the Newfoundland fisheries became a central aspect of European, especially Dutch, commodity production, enriching the Dutch state and providing it an economic basis for prosperity. According to Ian Angus, these fisheries were the first factories for the mass production of commodities.[56] What these historical case studies suggest then is the centrality of animal commodification to capitalist development as such, with animals not just becoming valuable

[54] Giggs, 39.
[55] See Philip Armstrong's reading of *Moby-Dick* for the economic and cultural position of the whale and whaling in mid-nineteenth century America. Philip Armstrong, *What Animals Mean in the Fiction of Modernity* (London: Routledge, 2008), 99–134.
[56] Ian Angus, "The Fishing Revolution and the Origins of Capitalism," *Monthly Review*, March 1, 2023, https://monthlyreview.org/2023/03/01/the-fishing-revolution-and-the-origins-of-capitalism/.

commodities but also spurring on other developments that would come to define capitalist modernity: the factory, energy regimes, global trade under European hegemony, and settler resource colonies.

The expropriation and privatization of the commons impacted the land itself, with the proliferation of sheds, pens, enclosures, and walls. As Hribal explains, "the cattle, cows, geese, horses, and pigs were fenced into, not out of, specific areas."[57] These rendered animals into consumable resources for the ruling class or as compelled to exercise their labour-power. In this way, we can see a metonymic refraction of the whole formation of private property in the conversion of animal life to property. As Linebaugh and Rediker put it, when "the English took possession of lands overseas, they did so by building fences and hedges, the markers of enclosure and private property."[58] These fences and hedges as well as other markers of private property reshaped the land, labour, and also the relatively free movement of animal life in precapitalist social formations. In England, the draining of the fens was a key aspect of expropriation with traditional economies and lifeways being converted into land for capitalist development. The draining of some of the lands in Somerset paved the way for its conversion into "a capitalist economy of sheep-raising."[59] What these examples speak to is the crucial role that animal agriculture played as part of the process of accumulation that set the stage for Atlantic capitalism. The destruction of traditional lifeways and the appropriation of life relied on the capture of animals and its rapid expansion into an industry. The violent coercion of human

[57] Hribal, "'Animals Are Part of the Working Class,'" 435.
[58] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 44.
[59] Linebaugh and Rediker, 44.

life through hangings, imprisonment, and arrest isometrically reflect the violence done to animals as consumable resources and unfree labour.

The birth of animal as a discursive figure coincided with the regime of modern racialization and the expansion of capitalism, as well as inaugurating a new episteme of classification predicated on the rise of the commodity-form. We can theorize how the rise of the commodity-form and its dialectical refractions of property changed both the relationships between human and non-human animals and the discursive framing of those relationships; that is, the expansion and contraction of what is called man and what is called animal, mapping on to who or what can be owned and who or what does the owning, as it were. The norms of ownership and conversion of animals into property had crystallized in the nineteenth century, divesting animals of capacity and responsibility, exemplified by the waning of putting animals on trial, as Harriet Ritvo explains.[60] The rise of such a divestment, as we have seen, has a longer history that is crucial to the history of capitalist development and expansion.

Historically, in the colonization of the Americas, livestock played a crucial role, both materially in changing the landscape and in ideological terms.[61] The introduction of ungulates to the Americas under the particular ideas of land distribution and animal management imported through and as part of colonial conquest involved "a complexly alien perception of the natural resources and their use; *indeed it involved the formation of a completely new mode of*

[60] Harriet Ritvo, *The Animal Estate: The English and Other Creatures in the Victorian Age* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1987), 2 and *passim*. Ritvo beautifully articulates the way a divestment of capacity twins itself to a discourse of sentimentality, as we will explore in the subsequent chapter. I am interested here in the way becoming-property seems to crystalize sentimental attachment and divestment of capacity.
[61] See Virginia DeJohn Anderson, *Creatures of Empire: How Domestic Animals Transformed Early America*, Oxford University Press pbk (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

production."[62] Such a new mode of production informed the expansion of capitalist markets into the American West and the capture of cattle for commodification, underpinning a rapidly expanding beef industry, as Karen Morin explains.[63] The story Morin narrates regarding the enclosure of bovine lives by "cattle barons" speaks to the carceral technologies used to confine animals, the ultimate use of those technologies for animal commodification, and the recurrence of accumulation as a process of the development of capitalist markets. As she notes, "the Texas longhorns of the emergent beef industry were nearly wild, and thus their capture, movement, and enclosure, by fencing and other means, was an important piece of this historical carceral logic."[64] In thinking the role of enclosure and accumulation of bovine lives, what emerges is a new history of accumulation that requires an attention beyond the human and the policing and enforcement of anthropocentrism. One can imagine a different way of living with the cattle, as Indigenous nations did. By way of an historical example, the destruction of the American bison represents a form of settler colonial dispossession and "the active repudiation of lifeworlds beyond capital."[65] Such a form of dispossession and repudiation was instilled through technologies like barbed wire; a technology that materially enforced hierarchies of life along lines of colonial difference and species with the status of being animal serving as a status opposite to productive life. As Olivier Razac writes in his political history of barbed wire, it "is a device which separates those who will live from those who will die. More precisely, it produces a distinction between those

[62] Elinor G. K. Melville, *A Plague of Sheep: Environmental Consequences of the Conquest of Mexico*, Studies in Environment and History (Cambridge [England] ; New York, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 8. Emphasis added.
[63] Karen M. Morin, "Bovine Lives and the Making of a Nineteenth-Century American Carceral Archipelago," in *Carceral Logics: Human Incarceration and Animal Captivity*, ed. Justin Marceau and Lori Gruen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 261–75, https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108919210.018.
[64] Morin, 267.
[65] Danielle Taschereau Mamers, "Speculative Shit: Bison World-Making and Dung Pat Pluralities," in *Decolonising Animals*, ed. Rick De Vos (Sydney, N.S.W.: Sydney University Press, 2023), 164.

who are allowed to retain their humanity and those reduced to mere bodies."[66] The animal as biopolitical position, referring to actual animals and beings in an abject social position in relation to normative humanity, is created through such processes of enclosure and accumulation. The process of accumulation is also a process of managing a species hegemony, i.e. the relation between humans and animals within a system of value extraction. Barbed wire as cultural-material technology works with and through an animalizing discourse such that "when it is used to enclose people" it calls into question the access to a normative humanity of those people so enclosed such that they are positioned as "beasts" to be "worked or slaughtered."[67] The exclusions enacted through such technologies as barbed wire or the cage and the institutions of ownership implied by confinement, works to separate out the human from the non-human. The enforcement of species hegemony relies then on exclusions from the normative status of the human such that "the political constitution of animals as existing *outside* of 'the human' is a precondition of their formation into commodities, and their subsequent generation of value."[68] These outsides are created and maintained by discourses and structures of ownership and political violence that creates the human.

My understanding of accumulation here builds on Nicole Shukin's interventions into thinking about accumulation as "splitting subsistence producers off from their own protein sources rendering them reliant on a globalized food industry."[69] For her, primitive accumulation "extends beyond the proletarianization of humans…to the enclosure of the reproductive labors and lives of chickens and other species."[70] Even more crucially, such a process involves not just

[66] Olivier Razac, *Barbed Wire: A Political History*, trans. Jonathan Kneight (New York: New Press, 2002), 85.
[67] Razac, 89.
[68] Collard and Dempsey, "Life for Sale?," 2692.
[69] Nicole Shukin, *Animal Capital*, 214.
[70] Nicole Shukin, 214.

the "enclosure of animals as food sources; it involves splitting apart relationships and knowledge forged out of the everyday living together of humans and animals and segregating them into separate populations who live and die for abstract capital rather than for and with one another."[71] This severing of relationships between humans and animals (and indeed their very foundation as categories) can be read as part of the emergence of private appropriation and capital accumulation.

I also want to foreground the role of racialization as isometrically linked to similar questions of ownership, labour, and extraction that defined the appropriation of animal life through processes of expropriation, dispossession, and enclosure. To what extent did the management of animals as a specific resource emerge as part of the general historical processes of separating producers from their means of production? To what extent did such a system of management set the prototype for systems of accounting necessary to the expansion of financial capital and manufacture? I ask these questions thinking about the foundational role of management over life to early philosophers of private property and the broad growth of commercial relation in the early modern period alongside the racialization of labour and its imbrication with techniques of accounting and management. The subsequent section explores the foundational role of racialization as biopolitical governance and the deployment of the human as a technique of labour discipline and differentiation along ideological and historical fault lines. I explore these questions and themes with an emphasis on policing as constructing a capitalist social formation and drawing distinctions between life worthy of punishment or protection.

[71] Nicole Shukin, 214.

Policing, Race, Enslavement, and Accumulation

Marx in his own theorizations of accumulation emphasizes the emergence of capitalism as lived by those subject to the imposing of market relations and the severing of traditional lifeways: "The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement, and entombment in mines of the indigenous population of that continent, the beginnings of the conquest and plunder of India, and the conversion of Africa into a preserve for the commercial hunting of black-skins are all things which characterize the dawn of the era of capitalist production. These idyllic proceedings are chief moments of primitive accumulation."[72] Notable here is Marx's suggestion of a world-system of capitalist development, an awareness of race in its development, and a reliance on visceral, animalized imagery to lend his arguments rhetorical force. Particularly relevant here is "the conversion of Africa" into a commercial hunting preserve that bespeaks a wider associational matrix between Blackness and animality and the conversion of life into property, especially the accumulation of the body as property.

As already noted, Marx and major parts of the Marxist tradition were ambivalent on the key role of enslavement as part of accumulation and the dynamics of capitalism, with the general inheritance of this ambivalence being a bifurcation between the direct violence of primitive accumulation and the abstract compulsion of the market during industrial capitalism. However, outside of his sketches on accumulation at the end of *Capital,* Marx staged the relation between accumulation and the compulsion of the market on very different grounds. While at the end of *Capital* Marx saw a contradiction between wage labour and enslavement, in his earlier work according to Gopal Balakrishnan "he [Marx] assumed that American slavery was an integral part

[72] Karl Marx, *Capital*, 915.

of the world system of bourgeois society that was based on wage slavery."[73] As Balakrishnan further explains, the two forms of slavery "had risen together and would fall the same way" ultimately making an argument that calls for an emancipatory politics premised on the abolition of racialized difference.[74] The political importance of the claim that the enslavement of Africans and wage labour are bound together exists in tandem with Marx's reflections on primitive accumulation that were a demonstration to European workers "that they could not escape the rule of capital, the loss of independent means of support, by going to America, because the great primitive accumulation of capital that had established the rule of capital in England would happen there too."[75] Indeed such dynamics intensified since the control over all aspects of a worker's life that typifies capitalism "experienced its first great success on the cotton plantations of the American South."[76] And as part of a world-system, enslavement and expropriation of Indigenous lands "fueled by European capital, combined to feed raw materials relentlessly into Europe's core industry" thereby linking the European and American proletariat including enslaved labour.[77] The role of extra-economic coercion is thus essential to the accumulation of capital and the construction of a labour force in both the enclosure of common lands in Europe and in the colonization of the Americas.

Policing played and continues to play a central role in the accumulation of capital. The 'guarantee' of submission to labour discipline and the compulsion of the market is underwritten by policing and the whole carceral apparatus. Carrying on the analysis of unfree labour as central

[73] Gopal Balakrishnan, "The Abolitionist—II," *New Left Review*, no. 91 (February 2015): 92. As Beckert writes,
[74] Balakrishnan, 92.
[75] Balakrishnan, 93.
[76] Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History*, 1. ed (New York: Vintage Books, 2015), 115.
[77] Beckert, 133. See also Brian Williams and Jayson Maurice Porter, "Cotton, Whiteness, and Other Poisons," *Environmental Humanities* 14, no. 3 (November 1, 2022): 499–521, https://doi.org/10.1215/22011919-9962827. Wiliams and Porter are more sensitive than Beckert to the mechanisms of racialization as they relate to the ascendancy of cotton as a monoculture.

to capitalism from the previous chapter, this chapter also challenges foundational assumptions in Marxist scholarship that “under capitalist social relations, *direct* political force is not necessary for the maintenance of economic exploitation.”[78] A critical study of police places it at the centre of capitalism and “exposes the ubiquitous use of force in capitalist societies, which ranges from visible interventions to preserve order to minute acts supporting capital accumulation and the routine reproduction of social relations.”[79] Thus, not only do the police underwrite market relations of putative freedom but also “this very power is central to the constitution of wage labor.”[80] Policing shifts and changes from its early history during the rise of absolutism and collapse of serfdom in the early modern period, to a science of government in the bourgeois republican formations of the eighteenth century and to an order of liberal-imperialist security in the nineteenth. Across these shifts, “the disciplining of the poor and the production of wage labor” form the structural imperative of police power.[81] A critical account of police power goes beyond noting the militarization of policing toward thinking through its structural imbrications with state, capital, and racialization. Policing “is first and foremost a weapon of the state in the constitution of a capitalist order.”[82] The constitution of such an order rest on a dialectic between direct coercion and legitimation, ultimately reinforced with violence.[83] It further relies on the ability of power to draw and fabricate distinction and difference according to historically (partially) determined lines of decision. This is an important function of policing, and we can see the law-making functions of the police during situations of political protest and revolt

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[78] Michael Heinrich, *An Introduction to the Three Volumes of Karl Marx’s Capital*, trans. Alexander Locascio (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2012), 205. Emphasis in the original.
[79] Guillermina Seri, “‘The Dream of State Power’: Accumulation, Coercion, Police.,” *Social Justice* 47, no. 3–4 (September 22, 2021): 36.
[80] Mark Neocleous, “‘Original, Absolute, Indefeasible’: Or, What We Talk about When We Talk about Police Power,” *Social Justice* 47, no. 3–4 (September 22, 2021): 14.
[81] Seri, “The Dream of State Power,” 41. See also Neocleous, “"Original, Absolute, Indefeasible",” 21.
[82] Neocleous, “Original, Absolute, Indefeasible,” 13.
[83] Harring, *Policing a Class Society*, 254–55.

manifesting in forms of discretionary power, for instance, when to make an arrest and who to target even if the same law is being broken in different moments or by different people. Police power, then, is “inherent in sovereignty and is itself the most comprehensive branch of sovereignty” given its penetration into all aspects of life and the established rules of order, with the police function existing beyond merely law enforcement towards social policy and control.[84] I am interested here in thinking about the work of policing in making distinctions that serve the ultimate aim of fabricating a capitalist order.[85] Policing works to make distinctions between those subjects worthy of state protection and life itself, and those subjects that require violent and/or lethal modes and forms of disciplinary intervention. My claim is that such a drawing of distinctions maps onto and takes a kind of structural inspiration from the human/animal distinction, which in turn is shot through with the biopolitical organizations of the colour line as a guarantor of security, privacy, and liberal freedom, or not. The property-status of animals and their centrality to capitalist production continues to be isometrically linked to the policing of the borders and boundaries between human and non-human in the extraction of labour and value.

Neocleous and other critical theorists of police provide a welcome intervention in challenging the idea of capitalism as operating without direct violence. However, missing from their accounts is a history of North American political development: “its history of settler racial genocide, racial slavery, racial segregation, racial liberalism, and racial revanchism” and how these have shaped policing and the intermingling of race, class, and the fabrication and reproduction of a capitalist order.[86] Taking the post-bellum U.S. South as exemplary, Keeanga-

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[84] Neocleous, “"Original, Absolute, Indefeasible",” 20.
[85] Neocleous, “Original, Absolute, Indefeasible,” 20.
[86] Stuart Schrader, “Review of Sidney L. Harring, Policing a Class Society: The Experience of American Cities, 1865–1915, Second Edition (Chicago: Haymarket, 2017) (Part Three),” *Legal Form* (blog), January 21, 2018,

Yamahtta Taylor argues that the function of police was both the enforcement of racial hierarchies through discriminatory law and also "to provide a regular labor force to replace the labor that had been disrupted by slavery's end."[87] The "central mechanism" for post-emancipation involuntary servitude was debt peonage which "defined a new system of involuntary servitude that replaced plantation slavery."[88] The criminalization of movement was also essential to the reproduction of post-emancipation forms of involuntary labour. As Black Marxist Harry Haywood explains, vagrancy laws were used to "obtain forced labor, especially on the plantations" by apprehending unemployed workers as vagrants and giving them "the dubious choice between accepting the employment offered by the planter…or being sentenced to forced labor on the chain gang."[89] We can read Haywood here as ironically using the language of free choice to criticize a system of forced labour during a time of supposed political freedom. The exploitation of Black labour was contingent upon a discourse of criminality and so by the twentieth century "the criminality and inferiority of Black people constituted a type of racial logic and common sense."[90] Importantly, such discourses were not confined to a 'pre-modern' South but instead racialized

https://legalform.blog/2018/01/21/review-of-sidney-l-harring-policing-a-class-society-the-experience-of-american-cities-1865-1915-second-edition-chicago-haymarket-2017-part-three-stuart-schrader/.

[87] Taylor, *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*, 110.

[88] James W. Clarke, *The Lineaments of Wrath: Race, Violent Crime and American Culture.* (London : New York: Routledge, 2017), 8.

[89] Harry Haywood, *Negro Liberation* (New York: International Publishers, 1948), 42. We can see this form of criminalizing vagrancy as a descendant of laws criminalizing 'vagabondage' during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. See Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 18. The connection here should not be understood as completely the same but instead speaks to the necessity of criminalization and unfree labour throughout the history of capitalism. We can also note the use of vagrancy to punish sodomy in the early modern city as well other techniques of managing surplus populations such as impressment, imprisonment and forced labour. See Christopher Chitty, *Sexual Hegemony: Statecraft, Sodomy, and Capital in the Rise of the World System*, Theory Q (Durham: Duke University Press, 2020), 36. See also Neocleous, "Original, Absolute, Indefeasible," 22–25. Neocleous sees vagrancy as central to police power for its role in supplying wage labour and punishing means of subsistence outside market relations as well as the broad discretionary powers afforded to police by the capitalist state.

Criminalization as a means of obtaining slaves can be seen in the expansion of the list of crimes punishable by enslavement in West Africa during the transatlantic slave trade and in early modern Europe a "similar increase in the number of crimes punishable by enslavement in the galleys." See Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 128–29.

[90] Taylor, *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*, 112.

discourses of criminalization cut across both the South and North and crime statistics were "a distinctly modern invention that encapsulated northern and southern ideas about race and crime."[91] In other words, we can understand such an intertwining of race and crime not as a retrograde segregationist discourse but as at the heart of capitalist modernity and the preservation of property. As Robyn Maynard explains, "public associations between Blackness and crime can be traced back to the seventeenth century, in which self-liberated Blacks were portrayed as thieves and criminals."[92] Following the abolition of enslavement, such associations buttressed the political economic racial order and the practices of the police and criminal punishment system. Policing produces the criminal along lines of racial differentiation; as Maynard puts it, "Black people will be *made* into criminals by the very policing strategies that target them."[93] The criminal is a performative category made through operations of criminalization. Importantly, as a method of reading history, abolition zeroes in precisely on the operations of criminalization at creating a surplus labour force. Given the world-historical upshot of criminalization in the neoliberal era, it is necessary to place such operations at the centre of our analysis. The fight against criminalization and so the whole carceral apparatus is a form of than class war lived differently depending on racialization given that in the United States "70 million adults… have a conviction or arrest record that disqualifies them from various forms of public protection, like public housing, and makes it difficult for them to find work, since employers regularly require background checks and refuse to hire people with arrest or criminal records."[94] Such modes of formal and informal exclusion from waged work are paired with the undocumented labour at risk

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[91] Khalil Gibran Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2021), 5.
[92] Robyn Maynard, *Policing Black Lives: State Violence in Canada from Slavery to the Present* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2017), 85.
[93] Maynard, 87.
[94] Kay Gabriel, "Abolition as Method," *Dissent Magazine*, accessed November 21, 2022, https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/abolition-as-method.

of deportation that ultimately creates "pools of cheapened, indentured laborers" that act as modes of deflating working class power through the fragmentation of labour.[95] If such structures of labouring have always existed within capitalist history, then the struggle against criminalization and carcerality is of paramount importance. The struggle against criminalization is at the foundation of resistance to accumulation since it is policing that ultimately guarantees the submission of the worker at varying levels of freedom or else the making of land and animal life available for commodification and value extraction. In the next chapter, I will explore the politics of the mainstream animal rights movement through a liberal recognition and management of suffering and injury, a critique that builds upon the critical engagement with criminalization developed here. Seeing the police as central to human and animal interaction enables a different view of that interaction outside the abstractions of love or else the seeming self-evidence of livestock. The history of policing is the history of capital accumulation given the importance of police to accumulation and the role of that institution in fabricating a capitalist order through violence that dialectically interacts with the compulsion of wage labour and the production of commodities as well as the ideologies of ownership and discipline that define racial capitalism and animal capital.

The animal then has a history that is shaped by the conversion of life into property, both the animal as concept within capitalist modernity and living beings designated animals, and such a history is part of the history of capital accumulation in the formation of Atlantic capitalism and the forms of unfree labour and the appropriation of land that came to define the expansion of

[95] Harsha Walia, "There Is No 'Migrant Crisis,'" Boston Review, accessed November 21, 2022, https://www.bostonreview.net/articles/there-is-no-migrant-crisis/.

capitalism and colonial policy in North America. Criminalization and policing enforce the imperatives of capitalism as well as set the conditions of accumulation. In contrast to theorists of capitalism that imagine capitalism operates through the silent compulsion of the free market, I emphasize the way policing creates a capitalist order of things and draws distinctions between life to be preserved and life to be sacrificed. How then is animal life and Black life recognized for protection in social formations of putative equality? What are the politics of minority protection and the recognition of injury by liberal states? And how does criminalization work to foster certain kinds of protections? These questions will be explored in the subsequent chapter that turns to capture the carceral state more fully and the structural anti-Black racism of policing and prisons as it dovetails with animal capital.

Chapter Three: Suffering and the Critique of Animal Rights

How is injury calculated by states interested in policing difference in regimes of formal universal personhood? And how is injury shaped by a contradiction between ostensible equality and racial hierarchies as well as hierarchies of species and other kinds of difference? Finally, how are such calculations made when the injured party is a non-human animal? These three questions guide the focus of this chapter, building on the centrality of animal life to the development of capitalism. Importantly, this inquiry concerns itself not just with the rights of man as critiqued by Marx in the nineteenth century, or difference-blind liberalism in the argot of political theory, but also a difference-conscious and pluralistic liberalism.[1] Indeed, to think about animal rights today is to think within the language of political recognition conditioned by the intertwined processes of minority recognition and carceral responses to harm. Later in the chapter, I will explore carceral strains in animal justice projects and the recent wave of prison abolitionist critique that has sought to challenge the foundational assumptions and practical politics of those projects. I want to start, however, by thinking about suffering as a form of property, and by thinking about recognition by liberal states as operating through commodity exchange.

The premise of this chapter — namely, that injury exists under liberal capitalism as a form of property as applied to animal politics and recognition —builds on the work of Asma Abbas. For Abbas, the relation "between property and injury in liberalism upholds a possessive individualism of injury, whereby suffering can be owned as individuality insofar as it does not encroach upon the structures of liberal law, politics, and economics that permit certain modes of

[1] Karl Marx, *Early Writings*, trans. Rodney Livingstone and Gregor Benton, The Marx Library (New York: Vintage Books, 1975), 211–41.

individuality and sociality."[2] Suffering under liberalism works much like freedom insofar as it is an entitlement that can be owned by a particular subject or collective such that it reproduces the conditions for the reproduction of the established rules of order. Abbas sees injury as "dead suffering" that nevertheless informs the identity of the injured.[3] This chapter aims to disarticulate suffering from injury, where injury names a calculative and calculatable response to harm and suffering exists as an interruptive force. I understand suffering then as blunted by its domestication into injury under liberal capitalist regimes of recognition and representation. Such actuarial imaginaries condition reformist reforms in so far as they limit what is possible to imagine within predetermined modes of accounting. This chapter offers the idea of communizing suffering understood as a shared non-capacity and collective mode of feeling against expectations of possessive individualism and ownership. It builds on such thinking by centering the role of carceral institutions in producing proper responses to injury in the biopolitical imperative to protect and foster life.

The problem of suffering is a key problem for political thought about non-human animal life. Part of the reason for this focus is the centrality suffering has in Anglo-American animal ethics. There is an obvious reason for this focus in so far as suffering is the space of encounter between humans and animals in situations that tend to provoke ethical revaluation, within the space of the slaughterhouse or the factory farm. Zooming out, suffering more broadly is a central idiom within liberal political thought about the minority subjects that *could* be integrated into regimes of recognition and an expansion of a promise of fundamental equality before the law and other state institutions. The philosopher Jeremy Bentham makes suffering central to his thinking

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[2] Asma Abbas, *Liberalism and Human Suffering: Materialist Reflections on Politics, Ethics, and Aesthetics*, 1st ed (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 29.
[3] Abbas, 121.

about animal welfare and the philosophical system of utilitarianism, centered on pleasure and pain as the central coordinates of ethics and moral philosophy. For Bentham, the question is not one of the capacity for non-human animals to reason or communicate but "can they suffer?"[4] The citation of Bentham has become "almost sine qua non in animal rights rhetoric."[5] The question, in the idiom of Anglo-American moral philosophy, can be translated as an argument: given that an animal is sentient, "the animal's interests and particularly interests in not suffering must be given appropriate consideration."[6] The adoption of Bentham's ideas, at least tacitly, is known as the animal welfare position, enacted through laws requiring humane treatment. The practical upshot of the animal welfare position is that animal welfare laws "allow us to use animals but require that we balance human and nonhuman interests in order to ascertain whether animal suffering is justified."[7] Bentham is clearly focused on humane treatment rather than a cessation of animal exploitation; perhaps, as Francione argues, "because he mistakenly believed that the principle of equal consideration could be applied to animals even if they are property."[8] And it is this lack of thinking about the property-form that distinguishes Bentham's ultimately welfarist project from an abolitionist position.

Kelly Oliver points out, "the discourse of rights developed in relation to owning animals and the land on which to keep them."[9] While Oliver does not take a specific position on animal

[4] Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, ed. J. H. Burns and H. L. A. Hart, The Collected Works (London: Athlone P, 1970), 282–83.
[5] Boisseron, *Afro-Dog*, 17.
[6] Boisseron, 17. As Alasdair Cochrane notes, Bentham's question, despite its contemporary importance, "was a mere footnote, and not comprehensive theory" (31). See Alasdair Cochrane, *An Introduction to Animals and Political Theory*, The Palgrave Macmillan Animal Ethics Series (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 31. But what I am interested in is less Bentham's argument per se and more its reception as the default way of conceiving injury to non-human animals within law and state-forms from the nineteenth century to the present.
[7] Francione, *Animals as Persons*, 6.
[8] Francione, 45.
[9] Kelly Oliver, *Animal Lessons: How They Teach Us to Be Human* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 37.

abolition, the idea that rights to regulate treatment developed from owning animals maps onto a broad abolitionist critique of welfare measures and its maintenance of property structures. While Francione is sympathetic to a rights-based framework, I think this is a limitation rather than an affordance of his reliance on a liberal-idealist conception of rights as opposed to an examination of their historical consolidation in relation to the development of capital and the bourgeois liberal state. The key insight of the abolitionist position, as we saw in the introduction, is that structures of ownership limit the possibilities of justice and act as the stumbling block to projects of animal liberation. If the discourse of rights developed through ownership, then an abolitionist challenge to that ownership needs to rethink the status of rights; the critique of rights works not to deny rights to animals but instead to rethink the property status that supports those rights. We will see how such a rethinking of property status includes a renewal of the idea of the commons against forms of enclosure and privatization, building on the analytic of primitive accumulation developed in the previous chapter.

The guiding premise of this chapter is that suffering under liberalism is a kind of property. And indeed, suffering replicates the property-form through a structure and relation of ownership. Suffering is the particular purview and rightful entitlement of particular subjects subtended by histories of violence and dispossession, mapping on to the white possessive individual imagined as male, the one who both is *prima facie* presumed to suffer when he claims to, and who is also imagined to have the capacity to 'recognize' suffering in others. The intimacy between ownership and injury is essential here since it is precisely through such dual capacities that subjectivity itself is constituted. Suffering and injury unite the political and economic aspects of liberal capitalism- the subject of rights is at the same time the subject that owns, that is in possession of the capacity to own.

I understand recognition as an extension of possession in that ownership of suffering is restricted to property owners *and* that such a political form is internalized by those who fall outside of that ownership in material terms. That is, the disenfranchised internalize the equation of injury and property for political claims-making, as Wendy Brown notably argues.[10] Extending Brown's argument, such an equation also shapes advocacy for populations such as animals who have no discernible political voice within institutions of political recognition such as the court, and it is this equation between injury and ownership that has shaped the dominant trends in animal rights activism. Since such an equation exists within the broader matrix of anti-Black racism and carcerality, this trend in animal rights activism also relies on tacitly white supremacist discourses of crime and punishment. The reliance of animal advocacy on the carceral state will be the focus of a later section of the chapter.

Under regimes of liberal capitalism, Asma Abbas argues, "institutions of injury and property are inextricably bound to each other ... A self that is owned and capable of being injured, and an injury that is possessed, together make possible a subject who can own his identity, rights, and interests— each of which sustain his potential to own, injure, and be injured."[11] The conception of suffering as property is in line with the broader problematic of this dissertation, thinking the property-form as a specific target of non-anthropocentric critique, and helps to bring attention to the affective pedagogies and structures of feeling that typify circulations of affect under capitalism.[12] I understand as modes of living in relation to the affects generated by forms of ownership, relation, and recognition.[13]

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[10] Wendy Brown, "Wounded Attachments," *Political Theory* 21, no. 3 (1993): 390–410.
[11] Abbas, *Liberalism and Human Suffering*, 29.
[12] Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, Marxist Introductions (Oxford [Eng.]: Oxford University Press, 1977), 132–33; Lauren Gail Berlant, *Cruel Optimism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 15.
[13] Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, 128–36.

The other, related intervention made by this chapter is to revive suffering as a problem beyond a political framework of rights based on an ontology of equivalence. It is this political ontology that Oliver summarizes in noting the explosion of philosophical debates over the status of animals, where "most philosophers discussing animals today still do so in terms of animal suffering or animal intelligence, which in turn lead to discussions of animal rights or animal welfare. Most of these discussions revolve around the ways in which animals are…like us and therefore should…be treated like us."[14] While animal rights projects ostensibly seek to challenge the hegemony of the human, the human remains "the rubric for consideration" wherein animals "are to be brought under the aegis of legal protection and rights by way, ironically, of a more firmly entrenched humanism."[15] Endeavours that are premised on equivalence to an imagined human subject "reproduce the philosophical and juridical machine thanks to which the exploitation of animal material for food, work, experimentation, etc., has been practiced."[16] The politics of recognition at work here presume that political emancipation can be attained through a reform of the juridical machine and thus according to its logic and metaphysical presumptions. Importantly, such strategies reproduce the property-form whether through imagining suffering as a kind of property or using ownership as a legitimation mechanism for the making of animal rights claims.

I understand such affective responses and actuarial imaginaries to be part of a structure of feeling common across states of formal juridical equality that nevertheless exist in the afterlives of profound inequality that reproduces in relation to the imperatives of capital accumulation and production. The accounting for suffering is done through the recognition of the other within pre-

[14] Oliver, *Animal Lessons*, 25.
[15] Johnson, *Race Matters, Animal Matters*, 8.
[16] Jacques Derrida and Elisabeth Roudinesco, *For What Tomorrow: A Dialogue*, trans. Jeff Fort, Cultural Memory in the Present (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2004), 65.

existing frames subtended by the property form. I am influenced by a Marxist cultural studies that seeks to read affective responses that are produced by relations of production as those relations are navigated by differentially positioned subjects. In this case, the suffering of animals and its recognition and remedies rely on a discourse of ownability that thrums through injury and redress of animal life under capitalism.

Lauren Berlant reminds us of the long tradition in cultural Marxism of thinking through "affect as key to reading the historical present" and having a "long tradition of interlacing descriptions of the present across relationships of ownership and control, the reproduction of labor value, and varieties of subjected position with the affective components of labor-related subjectivity."[17] I add to this tradition by thinking about the feelings generated by encounters with lively commodities and the resources marshalled by the repressive state apparatus to protect such life and punish those who threaten that life, whether externally or internally. Given that racial form structures the key coordinates of capitalism and its relations of production, such a project involves thinking about racialized systems of punishment that are contingent upon an anti-Black racism and discourse of criminality attached to Blackness within a white imaginary.

Another crucial resource from Marxist theory is thinking about the kinds of affective and moral responses 'spontaneously' engendered within particular modes of production. That is, as Christopher Chitty notes, Marx "sought to distance himself from the moralism of his day in order to grasp the political significance of the destructive forces unleashed by capitalist development."[18] What Chitty identifies in Marx is a challenge to the genre of scandal and its

[17] Berlant, *Cruel Optimism*, 64. Critical histories of colonialism have also noted "how power shaped the production of sentiment and vice versa." See Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 12.
[18] Christopher Chitty, *Sexual Hegemony: Statecraft, Sodomy, and Capital in the Rise of the World System*, Theory Q (Durham: Duke University Press, 2020), 26.

provocation of particular kinds of moral responses. Instead, Marx places reports on factory conditions within a wider systemic frame in order to think about capitalist production as a mode of defamiliarization and as a structure in which lives are lived. In place of the scandalous exception, Marx worked to demonstrate the history and operations of capitalist production. If the genre of scandal or moral affront cultivates particular affects, then a rethinking of those responses would also be a rethinking of particular affective modes and generic forms. If a scandalized response is part of the problem, or incepted within the very *schema* of capitalist reproduction, then what kind of ethical orientation toward suffering is necessary to challenge such an incorporation? The modes of incorporation of suffering through scandalized responses to the body in pain or testimonies of harm rely on a politics of recognition that reproduces the property-form whether through a state that relies on private property or a view of suffering as privately experienced. The modes of statecraft that rely on private property themselves produce and reproduce ideologies of individualism and rely on political apparatuses to legitimate those modes of experience. My claim is also that a shift in the organization of political and economic life, under new modes and relations of production, is a shift (partly) in the collective modes of feeling within a given social formation.[19] The contemporary struggles over racialized modes of feeling or unfeeling reflect the idea that political struggle is partly *affective,* in that it is partly fought out over questions of what modes of public feeling are appropriate to a given phenomenon.

Recognition, Personhood, and the Commodity

The persistence of the property-form in relations of recognition bears a structural homology to what Marx identifies as the structure of exchange between commodities, and so the

[19] This argument resonates with Williams' thinking about affect within a given social formation Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, 128–36.

process whereby a commodity accrues value. As Wadiwel points out, Marx "transposes the process of commodification onto the problem of relations 'between men.'"[20] For Marx, "a man first sees and recognises himself in another man."[21] Wadiwel takes this stray remark in Marx and asks who is the subject of equivalence through which man recognizes himself. Peter and Paul, Marx's example names, are both masculine and within the terrain of racialized Judeo-Christian imagery; as such, would Peter recognize himself through "Mary," "Dinesh," or "Sushila"? And, for our purposes, Peter recognizes Paul as human and thus himself as human through the tacit exclusion of the animal and the "species-specific 'dignity' of the human" that "secures and grounds the value that arises in this economy."[22] In other words, the schema of recognition imposes a form of valuation through recognition of equivalence mediated by regulated ideals of the normative subject. The schema of recognition, in its mirroring of the structure of exchange value, also hinges on concepts of ownership and property-formation. That is, recognition as reduction to the self is a mode of enacting ownership. The spectacular relation is explicitly demonstrated in instances of injury, especially if that injury is enacted by the powerful against the marginalized. As a positive program, bell hooks calls on Black subjects to reject a politics of recognition contingent on the legitimacy of the white gaze and so reject "colonizing responses to determine our legitimacy."[23]

Black critical theory has long posed these questions of recognition and alterity, perhaps most famously in Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*. In that text Fanon recounts a scene for

[20] Dinesh Joseph Wadiwel, "'Like One Who Is Bringing His Own Hide to Market': Marx, Irigaray, Derrida and Animal Commodification," *Angelaki* 21, no. 2 (April 2, 2016): 67, https://doi.org/10.1080/0969725X.2016.1182725.
[21] Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, trans. Ben Fowkes, V. 1: Penguin Classics (London ; New York, N.Y: Penguin Books in association with New Left Review, 1981), 144, n19.
[22] Wadiwel, "'Like One Who Is Bringing His Own Hide to Market,'" 68.
[23] bell hooks, *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics* (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2015), 22.

racialized interpellation where he finds that he is an "object in the midst of other objects."[24] In other words, Fanon as a Black subject lacks a face in the Levinasian sense within a racialized order of recognition. Boisseron connects this lack of a face to the inability to blush that naturalists like Darwin and Alexander Von Humboldt identify in both animals and Black people.[25] The imagined lack of capacity to blush suggests, for Boisseron, an imagined lack of self-consciousness. As she concludes, "if the human face is deemed *always already* white, it is because the white is the one who expects to speak. But more importantly, the human face is white because it is the one exposed, the one that blushes."[26] In other words, these relations of recognition are always-already conditioned by histories of racialization and property as well as their persistence and reproduction.

Recognition as an inclusion of the other in terms of the self "will always efface the absolute other" since this dynamic "remains within the domain of intersubjectivity."[27] A subject recognizes another subject as like them and includes this other within its gaze of recognition. Thus, given the normative position of anthropocentrism, "it is always another *human subject* that is recognized in and through discursive deliberation."[28] The subject of rights and recognition is always positioned as human since it mirrors the normative ideals of the recognizer; thus it is also white, heterosexual, able-bodied and male.[29] Both Marx and Fanon are reworking Hegelian theories of subject formation which posit that subjectivity is formed by a relation of recognition.

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[24] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (London: Pluto Press, 2008), 82.
[25] Boisseron, *Afro-Dog*, 166.
[26] Boisseron, 166.
[27] Pheng Cheah and Suzanne Guerlac, eds., *Derrida and the Time of the Political* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009), 19.
[28] Cheah and Guerlac, 20.
[29] Wendy Brown, *States of Injury*, *States of Injury* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 52–76; Alexander G. Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 76.

As Hegel puts it in the *Phenomenology,* "A self-conscious being exists in and for itself in and through its existing thus for another self-conscious being: it exists only as a being that's *recognized*."[30] That is, one becomes a subject by intersubjective relations of recognition. So, for Hegelian theory relations of recognition produce the subject. There is also a normative dimension to Hegel's theory, what Hegel sees as "the intersubjective conditions required for the *realization of human freedom*."[31]

These modes of recognition ultimately, for Hegel, ought to move beyond the asymmetric relations of power, rather than inverting the dynamic of the master and slave. This more systemic dimension of the critique seems to get lost when transposed onto multiculturalist or other state modes of recognition that take the state and conditions of labour for granted. Drawing on the idea of reform counterposed to abolition that was fleshed out in the introduction, these liberal modes of recognition act as reforms against misrecognition as opposed to rethinking the asymmetric forms of power that mark the relation of recognition within the material conditions of ownership.

Stephen Best and Saidiya Hartman lay out a similar critique of individual rights as they frame discussions of reparations, challenging not only the structure but the temporality of liberal forms of redress:

> The paradigm of individual rights presents African Americans with particular obstacles. First, this paradigm's standard of accountability renders all claims for black reparations null and void, as the victims and perpetrators of slavery have been long dead. Second, the focus on the individual in liberal legal formulas for remedy makes difficult an account of group oppression and structural inequalities. Third, and finally, the focus on identifiable victims and perpetrators foregrounds the law's indifference to tangled and complicated webs of causation.[32]

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[30] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Peter Fuss and John Dobbins (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2019), 91. Emphasis in the original.
[31] Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 2014, 28. Emphasis in the original.
[32] Stephen Best and Saidiya Hartman, "Fugitive Justice," *Representations* 92, no. 1 (2005): 8, https://doi.org/10.1525/rep.2005.92.1.1; see also Saidiya V. Hartman, *Lose Your Mother: A Journey along the Atlantic Slave Route*, 1. paperback edition (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2008), 166–68.

Crucially, the solution here is not a shift to the recognition of personhood for both the racialized and the non-human since, as Weheliye puts it, "the benefits accrued through the juridical acknowledgment of racialized subjects as fully human often exacts a steep entry price, because inclusion hinges on accepting the codification of personhood as property."[33] That is, the equation of personhood as an ownership structure is central to forms of inclusion and recognition that in turn legitimate the performative recognition of what the recognizer already recognizes. The inclusion of the other is structurally determined by this legitimation. The desire for the voices of 'others' "whether in hearing their voices, forcing them to speak, or speaking for them, is indulged as long as it completes 'my' knowledge, 'my' picture, or 'my' sense of justice."[34] In what way does the recent legal trend of granting personhood to animals reify this ownership structure and serve as the incorporation of a more fundamental and more radical demand? Drawing on queer of-colour critiques, which "profoundly question nationalist and identarian modes of political organization and craft alternative understandings of subjectivity, collectivity, and power," I aim to think about animal exploitation and killing outside the frame of a politics of recognition defined by pre-existing relations of recognition structured by anthropocentric differentials in power.[35]

The subaltern speaks through the mechanisms of pre-determined redress based on the norms and power of the state. These norms, as Best and Hartman point out, focus on the individual to the neglect of the structural and focus on a specific and identifiable victim and

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[33] Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus*, 77.
[34] Abbas, *Liberalism and Human Suffering*, 12. Megan Boler makes a similar claim in her critique of Martha Nussbaum call for a poetic justice that encounters alterity through literature. See Megan Boler, "The Risks of Empathy: Interrogating Multiculturalism's Gaze," *Cultural Studies* 11, no. 2 (May 1997): 257, https://doi.org/10.1080/09502389700490141.
[35] Grace Kyungwon Hong and Roderick A. Ferguson, "Introduction," in *Strange Affinities: The Gender and Sexual Politics of Comparative Racialization*, ed. Roderick A. Ferguson and Grace Kyungwon Hong (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 2.

perpetrator not to mention the standard carceral responses available to a state defined by policing and prisons. Within animal rights politics and Black reparations, the state stages responses that involve the granting of pre-established norms of recognition and redress. For example, citizenship gets called upon as a mode of inclusion to inaugurate a formal equality with forms of punishment to police the 'remnants' of earlier inequality whether through hate crime legislation in the case of anti-Black racism or anti-cruelty legislation as a mode of protection for non-human animals. Such responses to harm shore up entrenched structures of power and ultimately the property regime through a legitimation of the individual subject of ownership.

Animal Rights, Anti-Blackness, and the Carceral State

In his blistering critique of Will Kymlicka and Sue Donaldson's arguments for animal citizenship, Cree scholar Billy-Ray Belcourt points out that such a process "re-makes animals as subjects of neoliberalism (i.e., as objects of speciesism within political economies of violence) into neoliberal subjects (i.e., as bodies that interpellate neoliberalism as a political mechanism)."[36] That is, animals get called upon to reproduce the (neo)liberal state within specific modes of recognition and such a hailing is imagined by Donaldson and Kymlicka as the ultimate result of animal rights politics. Belcourt notes that Kymlicka and Donaldson propose a kind of criminal justice reform to better protect animals which "resultantly substitutes forms of economic and/or speciesist violence (i.e., animal abuse) for the racialized violence of the prison industrial complex as a settler-colonial mechanism."[37] These two lines of critique converge in so far as the animal *qua* political subject that can be injured and demands redress attains that redress through the carceral system and so subtended by the operations of racial capitalism and statecraft. The

[36] Belcourt, "Animal Bodies, Colonial Subjects," 6.
[37] Belcourt, 7.

turn toward an interrogation of this naturalization has become the focus of animal studies scholars, particularly those attentive to enslavement and its afterlives in the prison system. These two lines of critique converge in so far as the animal *qua* political subject that can be injured and demands redress attains that redress through the carceral system and so such a mode of redress is ultimately based on the operations of racial capitalism and statecraft. The turn toward an interrogation of this naturalization has become the focus of animal studies scholars (cited below), particularly those attentive to enslavement and its afterlives in the prison system.

Prior to this wave of theorizing that brings together the abolition of the carceral state with a concern for animal life, the carceral state was simply a natural fact of life within the political universe of animal protection and animal law. Indeed, organizations devoted to animal protection like the Animal Legal Defense Fund acknowledge that the United States is facing a "crisis" in mass incarceration which they acknowledge contributes to "biases based on race" but nevertheless maintain that "*incarceration has a valid place* as one of several justice system tools for addressing animal cruelty."[38] The ALDF supports this position by rehearsing the typical apologia for prisons. The legal scholar Justin Marceau notes how "abuse an animal—go to jail" is a representative slogan of this tendency in animal law.[39] The 'jail' as a metonym for the carceral state is posited as the desirable and natural state for people who do harm to animals broadly defined. Marceau notes that such a movement would criminalize someone who neglected their dog due to illness or other relatively minor actions resulting in the 'offender' being imprisoned and placed on an abuse registry.[40] The animal ultimately is legally protected through "the

[38] Kelly Struthers Montford and Eva Kasprzycka, "The 'carceral Enjoyments' of Animal Protection," in *Building Abolition: Decarceration and Social Justice*, ed. Kelly Struthers Montford and Chloë Taylor, Penal Abolition and Transformative Justice Series (London ; New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2021), 241.
[39] Justin Marceau, *Beyond Cages: Animal Law and Criminal Punishment* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 2.
[40] Marceau, 274.

continued subjugation of blackness—now enacted by the prison system rather than the institution of slavery."[41] Such modes of animal protection also naturalize the operations of the broader production of animal capital as they are directed towards protecting companion animals from sensationalized instances of abuse but leave out animals in industrial agriculture that are also abused and slaughtered. The *Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture Act (PACT)* passed in the U.S. is a central example of this kind of legislation and legislative ideology "represents a Western trend of prioritizing the strength of criminal cases at the expense of saving the vast majority of animals from violent abuse."[42] As Struthers-Montford and Kasprzycka note PACT marks out exceptions for animals who threaten property and does not apply to people who slaughter animals or who use animals in scientific experimentation, itself a central site of the production of animal capital.

The mode of redress requires for the recognizing subject a language through which that injury is articulated and mediated by law as that force which legitimates the property-form and so ownership in situations of formal equality with the possibility of redress through mechanisms of statecraft. These mechanisms of statecraft require ownership in relation to non-human others. It is for this reason that social contract style approaches to the animal question remain insufficient to the project of animal liberation and certainly abolition of the property-form. The challenge to ownership as dominion over animals has been challenged by scholars drawing from social contract theory, with Vicki Hearne distinguishing between ownership as total dominion and ownership as ethical relation. As she writes, "do not understand my own words when I say I own the dog and can therefore do as I please with her" drawing a distinction between ownership and

[41] Kelly Struthers Montford and Eva Kasprzycka, "The 'carceral Enjoyments' of Animal Protection," 227.
[42] Kelly Struthers Montford and Eva Kasprzycka, 229.

dominion over the life of the dog.[43] While I am sympathetic to the idea of rethinking ownership, I wonder the extent to which such an approach naturalizes property in animals and so reduplicates the essential logic of the property-form. As Hearne argues in terms of political recognition, her dog cannot "speak to or of the state" and so "the only way a dog's rights are protected…is by way of an appeal to the owner's property rights in the dog."[44] As Cary Wolfe argues, the practical upshot of this argument is a wish that "all owners will be good ones."[45] It is thus dependent on an idealization of that human and animal relationship *and* an idealization of property *qua* institution and mode of relation. It is further dependent on carceral forms of protection of property. Since the institution of property within racialized social formations closely articulates and determines categories of belonging and rights along racial lines such a naturalization of property acts as covertly racist. The animal is owned and summoned through that ownership as elevated above the racialized criminal. I understand the protection of the animal *qua* property of a particular kind (the pet) as an elevation of its status over the socially dead and racially marked body. At the same time, some animals are seen as property to be killed for consumption such as livestock. My point here is that both of these modes of ownership exist on a continuum rather than entirely separate and that this continuum is subtended by the property-form and reproduced by differential responses to suffering, i.e. which animals are imagined to have an ethical considerability that shifts politico-economic structures and which are not.

Thus far, this chapter has thought about the containment of suffering under liberal capitalism and the politics of recognition that work within such a containment, as well as the carceral responses that exist as central to animal justice projects under the liberal state that work

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[43] Qtd in. Wolfe, *Animal Rites*, 49.
[44] Wolfe, 49.
[45] Wolfe, 49.

through a politics of recognition contingent on the domestication of suffering into discourses of pain and harm. I now want to turn to the question of animal speech and what it means for animals to be given a voice. While poststructuralist thinking on animal capacities has generally been skeptical of the animal voice in light of a radical interrogation of subjectivity within poststructuralist thought, I place such an interrogation in a wider debate about the politics of recognition and representation along the grain of racial hierarchies that have typified modes of representation in the liberal state. In thinking about these representations of recognition as speaking to animal politics and racial politics, I alight upon Kafka's story, "A Report to An Academy," in particular its theoretical reception in literary animal studies, and Ursula Le Guin's story, "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas," in staging ethical responses to the suffering of an animalized other. From there, I explore the politics of sympathy and empathy, reading them in the context of political struggle, and then conclude by developing the idea of communizing suffering.

The (Speaking) Subject of Animal Rights

Derrida's engagement with Lacan rests on a deconstruction of the binary Lacan installs between reaction and response that breaks down along species lines, or, even more precisely, across the constructed binary of the human in general and the animal in general. Giving the example of bees, Lacan argues that when bees "appear to 'respond' to a 'message' they do not *respond* but *react;* they merely obey a fixed program, whereas the human subject responds to the other, to the question from or of the other."[46] Derrida's strategy of critique is not to totally collapse this binary but instead to question whether reaction and response can be so easily

[46] Jacques Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, ed. Marie-Louise Mallet, trans. David Wills (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 123. Emphasis in the original.

disarticulated from one another, especially as Lacan himself conceives of language as a structure that exceeds utterance so the speaking subject already does not have full and transparent access to language as such whether that subject is human or animal.[47] We can add to Derrida's question by seeing its structural homology with the divestment of capacity from the racialized. The way "animal instincts" are understood to be at once both spontaneous and unchanging in response to external stimuli shows how a deconstruction of the reaction/response binary functions as a component of Black critique in challenging the forms of unimpressibility and animatedness imputed to the Black body with its close associations to animality. The instinct *qua* concept as conventionally understood is both spontaneous (reaction without deliberation) and unchanging (in the sense of instinctual behaviour) and maps on to a divestment of capacity to deliberate that is imputed to the Black body in a dialectical relation to animality.[48] As Ngai notes, "the affective ideologeme of animatedness foregrounds the degree to which emotional qualities seem especially prone to sliding into *corporeal* qualities where the African-American subject is concerned, reinforcing the notion of race as a truth located…in the always obvious, highly visible body," yoking together psychic life and corporeal situatedness as a divestment of full participation in history and political deliberation.[49] The emotional qualities read into the body of the marginalized are both imputed to particular subjects and become the imagined psychic lives of those subjects. Blackness is then a missing term in the post-anthropocentric discourses that Derrida critiques for their symptomatic anthropocentrism. The animal that can merely react rather than respond is set within a discursive context premised on antiblackness and anxieties produced by colonialism, enslavement, and the global travels of racialization. What is missing from this type of critique,

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[47] Derrida, 125.
[48] On the rethinking of instinct see Brian Massumi, *What Animals Teach Us about Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 13.
[49] Sianne Ngai, *Ugly Feelings* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2004), 95.

and as such that which divests the animal, is an interrogation of how "the question of the animal bears on hierarchies of humanity."[50] By considering the way the human is always-already bound up with racialization we can shift in emphasis from how Lacan's theorizations of animal life are in seeming contradiction with his overarching views on language, being and subjectivity to the historical implication of those contradictions in a historical process of racialization. Such a gesture extends Derrida's critical project of calling into question whether the subject of Enlightenment Man is in full possession of those capacities to an exploration of the hierarchies of humanity and how those hierarchies function in relation to norms of capacity. The standard list of denials of capacities to animals, a list "necessarily without limit" also provokes the question of "whether what calls itself human has the right to attribute to man, which means therefore to attribute to himself, what he refuses the animal, and whether he can ever possess the *pure, rigorous, indivisible* concept, as such, of that attribution."[51] For Derrida, suffering thought of not as a capacity but as a non-capacity, reading it against its dominant reception in philosophy; for Derrida it is "a possibility without power" and an impetus toward "thinking the finitude that we share with animals" thereby sharing "the anguish of this vulnerability and the vulnerability of this anguish."[52] Reading Derrida's deconstructive critique with the concerns of a critical theory of racialization moves from the negative project of calling into question the properties of man to a project of developing modes of shared vulnerability beyond a discourse of management. The focus on vulnerability in political thought about animals could be sharpened with an attention to racialization and the divestment of capacity from the racialized by showing the interaction of that divestment with the exclusions engendered by the property form. The question then is how to

[50] Jackson, *Becoming Human*, 16.
[51] Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, 2008, 135.
[52] Derrida, 28.

represent suffering beyond the speaking subject as the normative basis for justice claims. That is, if Derrida's project is not to give speech to animals but rather to question the ease with which man claims speech, then it is worth considering what possibilities for narration exist without the singular speaking subject as the sole maker of claims.

Kafka's short story, "Report to an Academy," dramatizes these dilemmas of recognition and witnessing. The giver of testimony in this story is Red Peter: an ape. Crucially, Red Peter is an ape turned human who cannot recall or speak about his former life as an ape. Kari Weil reads this as a critique of assimilationism since it is a process that "gives voice only by destroying the self that would speak."[53] Ultimately, Weil reads this critique of assimilation in Kafka's story through the concerns of trauma studies connecting it to a similar set of concerns across feminist and postcolonial theory regarding the question of "how to understand and give voice to others or to experiences that seem impervious to our means of understanding; how to attend to difference without appropriating or distorting it; how to hear and acknowledge what it may not be possible to say."[54] I want to emphasize differently the extent to which Kafka's story relies on a certain critique of giving voice to the racialized, particularly the Black subject, and the reliance of such a giving voice to forms of accumulation that have underwritten representational schemas of animal recognition and the liberal state itself.

While Kafka's central project seems to be focused on language and the limits of representation, such representational schemas are subtended by forms of capture and ownership by which Red Peter comes to the academy, i.e. the institutional space of being recognized. In the story we learn that Red Peter was captured from Africa and shipped to Europe, clearly mirroring

[53] Weil, *Thinking Animals*, 5.
[54] Weil, 7.

the capture of Africans in the Transatlantic slave trade. Summarizing Winthrop Jordan, Claire Jean Kim notes that the association between Africans and apes descends from the early 16th century when British explorers 'discovered' apes and Africans at the same time. As she points out, the comparison between "negroes" and apes depended upon the "ongoing imaginative construction of the ape" within naturalist discourse.[55] Reading this history dialectically, we might say that conceptions of the ape and the African came to reinforce one another subtended by colonial forms of exploration and the accumulation of land and labour that typified the slave trade. I am not saying that Red Peter is meant necessarily to stand in for enslaved Africans but rather arguing that the drama of speech and recognition that unfolds as the central thematic component of the story depend on such associations determined by accumulation. I understand "associations determined by accumulation" as marking out the way capital determines cultural relations and understandings of the proximity between enslavement of Africans and the accumulation of animals within a history of capital accumulation. We have departed somewhat from the problematic of suffering, though Red Peter's constitutive failure to speak draws attention to the question of suffering within the limits of language and representation. I want to expand the discussion here by thinking through sympathy and empathy as responses to suffering and their articulation with the politics of recognition I have been defining here and with the property form.

Sentimentality, Race, and the Property Form

The responses to suffering within the bourgeois aesthetic sensorium imagine a relation of two points: the one who suffers and the other who recognizes this suffering and extends the

[55] Kim, *Dangerous Crossings*, 36.

appropriate response. The responses to suffering within a liberal aesthetic sensorium and through procedures of recognition install a "distance of domination" wherein the one not suffering can extend his sympathetic response to the one suffering because the identity of the suffering being remains fungible, open to the interpretation of the spectator. Fungibility here means something more than passivity; instead, it names the exchange of commodities for one another, a kind of equality of market relations and the commodity form, where beings are rendered substitutable for one another. The being suffering is imagined as passive, in terms of the rhetoric of objects and patients in contrast to subjects and agents that form the so-called proper subjects of political theory and moral philosophy, i.e., the ones who can act politically and ethically in contrast to those who lack the capacity for reason and deliberation and so are deemed either objects or moral patients.[56] It is a discourse of management that can come to define the framing of moral patients. The issue here is not with sympathetic modes of identification but rather whose feelings are made legible through a proximity with white humanity.

It will likely not surprise the reader to read that such a dynamic of domination maps on to existing hierarchies of race and species, as well as gender, orientation, and ability. The racialization of feeling is explicitly articulated in popular anti-racist discourse, with mimetic phrases such as "white feelings" or "white women's tears", as Xine Yao has argued.[57] What these mimetic phrases capture is that "white feelings produce and maintain structures of dominance" and that dependence upon "white feelings as the catalyst for social change reinscribes the world that enables their power."[58] The target of Yao and others' critique here is a kind of white

[56] Paola Cavalieri, *The Death of the Animal: A Dialogue* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 1–41. "Moral patients" is a term in analytic moral philosophy designating beings who are the objects of moral reflection as opposed to its subjects.
[57] Xine Yao, *Disaffected: The Cultural Politics of Unfeeling in Nineteenth-Century America*, Perverse Modernities (Durham: Duke University Press, 2021), 1.
[58] Yao, 2.

solipsism, including both reactionary weaponizations of feeling against Black people and political activism but also 'sympathetic' gestures of feeling.[59] The marking of feeling along racial lines also marks a differentiation along lines of property ownership and species hierarchy. The circulation of sentiment around the suffering body becomes a reproduction of the very structure that subtends that suffering. These moral responses or responses of "white feeling" serve as gestures of *depoliticization* as they 'empty' the discursive field of structural, historical and material relations of domination. The cause of the suffering is obscured behind these learned structures of feeling. By emphasizing structures of feeling, I do not want to claim that such gestures are mere political or rhetorical evasions; instead, they are mediations of a mode of life refracted through and shaped by the colour line and the property form. Appending white to structures of feeling is less a polemical gesture (valuable as those may be) and more of an exploration of particular affects, modes of propriety, and perceptual habits deployed within an historically structured perceptual field. In using the term 'white feelings' I understand it as a category of affect that is conditioned by racialization and dependent upon that racialization.

The problem of suffering as political category is thus how to think against the relation of sympathy toward a different kind of relation attentive to relations of power and domination. As Susan Sontag puts it, it becomes necessary "[t]o set aside sympathy we extend to others beset by war and murderous politics for a reflection on how our privileges are located on the same map as their suffering and may...be linked to their suffering, as the wealth of some may imply the destitution of others."[60] Extending Sontag, we might ask about the susceptibility of both

[59] See Asad Haider, "White Purity," Viewpoint Magazine, January 6, 2017, https://viewpointmag.com/2017/01/06/white-purity/. While Haider is interested in a critique of contemporary identity politics, I emphasize differently the ways whiteness tautologically refers back to itself as the measure of 'proper' response in situations of suffering and injury.
[60] Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, 1st ed (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003), 102–3.

sympathy and empathy to racialization, wherein sympathy refers to recognizing the pain of an other and empathy is a form of incepting that pain into the recognizing subject. That is, how and why do these forms of relation yoke closely to the colour line? The rhetorical link between suffering and wealth is suggestive and points to not just the distribution of suffering according to economic status, but also the way the attribution or recognition of suffering functions as property, monopolized by certain subjects and not others, in the way a natural resource can become property while exceeding the form thereof. Perhaps racialization and sympathy suggest one another in modes of production and consumption inflected by the partition of lives across a spectrum of humanity; in the absence of substantive equality, what is left are affective gestures that can work as either challenge or regime legitimation. That is, in moments where structures of power sort life into humans and non-humans and liminal spaces between those poles, the way the structure is lived is by trying to identify across those lines, especially given the liberal impulse toward a recognizable and knowable singular subject.

The particular critique of empathy that I sketch here takes as a primary locus of concern the "untheorized gap between empathy and acting on another's behalf."[61] The gap here echoes Elaine Scarry's questions regarding the political implications of bodily pain's inexpressibility, especially: "How is it that one person can be in the presence of another person in pain and not know it—not know it to the point where he himself inflicts it, and goes on inflicting it?"[62] For Scarry, representation is crucial for political attention. For example, she writes, tongue-in-cheek:

> if property (as well as the ways in which property can be jeopardized) were easier to describe than bodily disability (as well as the ways in which a disabled person can be jeopardized), then one would not be astonished to discover that a society had developed sophisticated procedures for

[61] Boler, "The Risks of Empathy," 255.
[62] Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*, First issued as paperback, Oxford Paperbacks (New York, NY: Oxford Univ. Press, 1987), 12.

protecting 'property rights' long before it had succeeded in formulating the concept of 'the rights of the handicapped.'[63]

In fact, the structure of the rights to protect property provides the material form of the rights of the disabled. That is, it is precisely the protection of property that 'protects' the subject and serves as avenues for redress. These avenues require a recognizability that is foreclosed to alterity because recognizability looks for what it already sees. In recognizing the body in pain without a critique of the frame of recognition the political upshot will be a reproduction of the status quo. The sensational text and the realist depiction qua representational strategies "often function with the assumption that context is not necessary, that the image says it all."[64] Far from "saying it all," the image of the body in pain empties the process of contextualization and so political response to the broader material conditions of the suffering. The image or video of police violence against the Black body may spur some to protest, lead to a political quiescence, or to a justification of the violence typically through the discourse of criminality. In line with the critique of reform, the decontextualized Black body in pain can also be used to shore up reform measures based on 'exceptional' instances of police violence, ignoring the everyday violence of policing itself. Scholars like Sherene Razack and Saidiya Hartman argue that the appropriation of Black suffering is based upon the Black body as fungible, such that it can be used as a unit to exchange for white humanity's ethical response to exceptional violence.[65] For example, if George Floyd had lived it is likely that he would have been sitting in prison subjected to a slow death rather than the brief one he ultimately experienced. I am not saying one is 'better' — that would be a monstrous moral calculation — instead my point is that the spectacle of police violence, that

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[63] Scarry, 12.

[64] Ann Cvetkovich, *Mixed Feelings: Feminism, Mass Culture, and Victorian Sensationalism* (New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press, 1992), 172.

[65] Sherene H. Razack, "Stealing the Pain of Others: Reflections on Canadian Humanitarian Responses," *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies* 29, no. 4 (August 28, 2007): 378, https://doi.org/10.1080/10714410701454198.

is police violence *qua* spectacle, can be channeled into support of the *status quo ante* of racial capitalism and the carceral state. The reorientation of politics that follows from this skepticism around the spectacle and the singular event requires a critical reevaluation of sympathy, empathy, suffering and identification and the relation to the spectacle of the body in pain along lines of hierarchized difference between the wounded marginalized body and the privileged observer.

These interlocking questions of sympathy, empathy, suffering, identification, and property are demonstrated in Ursula K. Le Guin's short story, "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas." In this story, the citizens of the fictional *polis* of Omelas are truly and substantively happy. Le Guin conceived of the story as a fictional engagement with William James' essay, "The Moral Philosopher and the Moral Life," which posits a challenge to literary utopias based on the sacrifice of one "lost soul" to forms of suffering on which those utopias are radically dependent.[66] As the narrator of the story describes the circumstances of the townspeople, "They were not naïve and happy children…They were mature, intelligent, passionate adults whose lives were not wretched."[67] In other words, the citizens of Omelas have the capacity for deliberation and are therefore aware of their substantive happiness being contingent upon the suffering of a child.

Elizabeth Povinelli's extending reading of the story engages the idea of identification and complicity. She writes that the ethical imperative of Le Guin's story is "not to put oneself in the child's place, nor is it to experience the anxiety of potentially being put in her place. Le Guin's fiction rejects this ethics of liberal empathy."[68] The child being beaten is not something that may

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[66] Ursula K. Le Guin, "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas," in *The Wind's Twelve Quarters: Short Stories*, 1st ed (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), 275–76.
[67] Le Guin, 178.
[68] Elizabeth A. Povinelli, *Economies of Abandonment: Social Belonging and Endurance in Late Liberalism* (Durham [N.C.]: Duke University Press, 2011), 4.

happen to you or that may even have the potential of happening to you; instead, it is the condition for the eudaimonia of Omelas as a polis in a substantive sense. What Povinelli reads as the ethical imperative of the story, then, is the knowledge that "your own life is already in her broom closet, and as a result, either you must create a new organization of enfleshment by compromising on the goods to which you have grown accustomed (and grown accustomed to thinking of as 'yours' including the health of your body) or admit that the current organization of enfleshment is more important to you than her suffering."[69] The point of comparison with animality is almost too obvious to be worth detailing given the dependence of human life and identity on the sacrifice of animality.[70] Richard Bulliet, for instance, locates the rationalizations common to the continued exploitation and killing of those animals deemed useful to humans, usually contingent on the sovereign right to life that Bulliet sees in terms of the slaveowner's right to take the life of those they have enslaved.[71] The citizens of Omelas are beneficiaries of a system of violence and domination, but are not strictly guilty of anything precisely because they have not violated any law, nor could there be any law to address this brand of suffering, since it is precisely the suffering of the child on which the functioning of Omelas as a social formation depends. However, there might be laws that guarantee the welfare of the child, i.e., a question of how the child is treated, but not a question of abolishing the broom closet outright. The categories of perpetrator and bystander are confounded since each Omelas resident is both.[72]

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[69] Povinelli, 4. Enfleshment" is Povinelli's term for a shared body beyond simile or metaphoric relation.
[70] Oliver, *Animal Lessons*, 1–25.
[71] Richard W. Bulliet, *Hunters, Herders, and Hamburgers: The Past and Future of Human-Animal Relationships* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 20.
[72] On troubling these categories see Michael Rothberg, *The Implicated Subject: Beyond Victims and Perpetrators*, Cultural Memory in the Present (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2019); Bruce Robbins, *The Beneficiary* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017).

While the last two sections have looked at scenes of recognition and modes of relating to alterity as a form of capture through a liberal politics of sympathy, empathy, or sentimentality, this next section thinks about modes of feeling otherwise through different political arrangements.

The Commons, Maroons and Empathy as Political Struggle

A resistance to managing vulnerability and to its governance within state-forms premised on value extraction suggests the need to think and enact new political forms and concepts from those forms. As Silvia Federici points out in her reflections on the commons, the idea of the commons as an alternative social form today emerges in part out of an awareness of "the danger of living in a world in which we no longer have access to seas, trees, animals, and our fellow beings except through the cash-nexus."[73] The danger of the totalizing function of the cash-nexus necessitates a mode of resistance attentive to the metaphysics of presence and mediation of recognition through the commodity-form and the naturalization of the possessive individual. The *communization* of suffering is predicated on a revival of the commons and a rethinking of community expressly connected to a politics of suffering otherwise than private experience and relations of passive pity. The possibility of the commons is contingent on a refusal to "base our life, our reproduction on the suffering of others, unless we refuse to see ourselves as separate from them."[74] Problematically, Federici renders the commons as a project to be revived rather than one already enacted within pre-colonial Indigenous ways of knowing and lifeways. An attention to non-European communal forms might open up ways of knowing and feeling outside the structures and norms of ownership and possession. The commons of feeling also means

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[73] Silvia Federici, *Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction, and Feminist Struggle* (Oakland, CA : Brooklyn, NY : London: PM Press ; Common Notions : Autonomedia ; Turnaround [distributor], 2012), 139.
[74] Federici, 145.

understanding identity formation outside property. In other words, as Bhandar asks, "is it possible to conceive of identity outside the relations of ownership in which it remains embedded?"[75] These commons must necessarily be shared with non-human animals since it is anthropocentricism that underlies the very idea of private possession twinned with the racial logics of property *tout court,* because full participation in ownership requires the subject to be recognized as fully human within a given logic of race and species recognition. My argument here is that Bhandar's question can be answered in the affirmative with a focus on the critique of anthropocentrism.

The commons as a particular political form requires a rethinking of community in a different idiom than that with which it has conventionally been thought. The danger here is in attempting a deconstruction of community, we "leap to the opposite point of view, that of absolute individualism"; instead, I share Etienne Balibar's concern with preserving "the possibility of a retreat and a dissidence, even a resistance and thus of a refoundation."[76] That is, I aim to think against received ideas of the common good as they are articulated through the framings of the state and instead refound commonality along radically different lines. My claim here is that the abolition of learned structures and pedagogies of feeling, the teaching and learning of affect around suffering, is one aspect of the commons as a political form and its resurgence offers a promise of radically different arrangements of the world. The resurgence of the commons can be glimpsed in forms of political organizing like the camps formed in protests of pipelines through colonized land, however, such an example is beyond the scope of my inquiry here.

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[75] Bhandar, *Colonial Lives of Property*, 2018, 178.
[76] Étienne Balibar, *We, the People of Europe? Reflections on Transnational Citizenship*, trans. James Swenson, Translation/Transnation (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004), 51.

The expropriation of the commons formed a crucial basis for the emergence of Atlantic capitalism and thus the world we inhabit today, providing the material substrate of capitalist patriarchy and the Transatlantic slave trade, in addition to settler colonialism.[77] Linebaugh and Rediker refer to how this process formed the newly made working class through the "labors of expropriation" that included "the clear-cutting of woods, the draining of marshes, the reclamation of fens, and the hedging of the arable field— in sum, the obliteration of the communing *habitus*."[78] The plantation was made possible by such labours through colonial possession. This colonial possession involved "building fences and hedges, the markers of enclosure and private property."[79] As we saw in Chapter Two, the enclosure of common lands also changed man's relation to animals, given the way capitalism has shaped and changed relations between humans and non-humans.

Linebaugh and Rediker reference an anonymous ditty that sums up capitalism's use of animals, the environment and the legal apparatus through which these uses are reproduced as legitimate:

> The law locks up the man or woman
> Who steals the goose from the common
> But lets the greater villain loose
> Who steals the common from the goose.[80]

To contest the stealing of the common from the goose is not to suggest some idyllic return of pre-capitalist forms of peace but rather to suggest new forms of belonging. Commenting on this poem, Linebaugh writes that the "charm of the lines arises from the crime against the goose, as if

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[77] See Kyle Whyte, "Settler Colonialism, Ecology, and Environmental Injustice," *Environment and Society* 9, no. 1 (January 1, 2018): 125–45, https://doi.org/10.3167/ares.2018.090109.
[78] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 43.
[79] Linebaugh and Rediker, 44.
[80] Linebaugh and Rediker, 335.

it were a sound bite from the Animal Liberation Front."[81] In line with the warp and weft of Linebaugh's project, he reads the "key term" of the poem as 'the common' but I want to suggest that the stealing of the common from the goose yokes together a broader process of enclosure of animal life as traced in the previous chapter, viz. the accumulation of animal life and its fencing off into agricultural resource. The political project I suggest here then unites the "sound bite" of the Animal Liberation Front *with* a broader resistance to the process of enclosure that centrally includes feeling otherwise against the ownership of animals.

Reading Kant's "Perpetual Peace," Oliver suggests that the communal possessions Kant sees as part of universal hospitality "are *fruits* of the earth that belong to everyone" and she suggests from this that such a vision also has us question whether belonging can function "not as property but as inhabitants of a shared planet."[82] Importantly, such a rethinking of belonging has precedents in Indigenous cultures such as the Dish with One Spoon treaty that governs relations between the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee.[83] However, such arrangements may need to be rethought given that we do not want to claim that animals belong to everyone for forms of consumption. What might this interrogation of belonging yield in terms of rethinking suffering or other affective states as being held 'in common'? Such thinking takes us beyond inclusion into the overdetermination of Man as the sole category of political freedom and the coordinates from which that freedom is mapped and narrated.

The contingency of structures of feeling on material conditions and historical dynamics forms the central project of this chapter and the dissertation more broadly. The affect-in-common

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[81] Peter Linebaugh, *Stop, Thief! The Commons, Enclosures and Resistance* (Oakland: PM, 2014), 1.
[82] Kelly Oliver, *Animal Lessons: How They Teach Us to Be Human* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 48.
[83] Darren Scott Thomas, "Applying One Dish, One Spoon as an Indigenous Research Methodology," *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples* 18, no. 1 (2022): 84–93.

might refer to a form of entanglement as opposed to the separation typical of liberal structures of redress, the co-implication of my life with an other that cannot be recognized or identified *a priori.* What would it mean to think abolition in relation to structures of feeling? I do not think this can be done entirely or even mostly through voluntary decision, but instead through the practice of building a world that rests on different arrangements of political and economic power and in political forms that call into question the prevalence of ownership as a governing notion and structuring mechanism. The active relation of this remaking is a rethinking of the relation between self and alterity. Perhaps one response to rethinking a relation to alterity is simply the difficulty of empathy. The novelist and critic Mandy-Suzanne Wong puts it plainly when she writes: "It's difficult to know what empathy is beyond that empathy is difficult. Empathy is a struggle."[84] In contrast to a liberal ethics of identification that presumes the ease and self-evidence of empathy, empathy as struggle makes it into a political problem. Indeed, reading struggle beyond Wong's implied meaning here, empathy is a political struggle. The denial of empathy's difficulty is part and parcel of Heidegger's abyssal separation between humans and animals, as Kelly Oliver argues. In the terms of Heidegger's analysis, "humans' ability to be together is dependent on the inability of animals to be with us."[85] The feeling (or not feeling) of the human other's pain is produced by the inability of cross-species identification. The question of property is central here. A relation otherwise than ownership, the "thinking anew about the meaning of justice and freedom require of us nothing less than radical acts of imagining how we might relate to and use things we usually expect to own."[86] The history of abolition remains central to the rethinking and refiguring different relationships to ownership. The history of

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[84] Mandy-Suzanne Wong, *Listen, We All Bleed* (Moorhead: New Rivers Press, 2021), 2.
[85] Oliver, *Animal Lessons*, 206.
[86] Bhandar, *Colonial Lives of Property*, 2018, 200.

marronage is an example of imagining alternative practices of possession outside the property form as it involved enslaved people fleeing their owners and engaging in communal forms of life from within the system of appropriation. While the bulk of this chapter relies on a critique of recognition, I follow Fanon and Coulthard in thinking about relations of recognition as important resources for flourishing against the capitalist state wherein the colonized "must …struggle to work through their alienation/subjection against the objectifying gaze and assimilative lure of colonial recognition."[87] This working against the lure of colonial recognition comes through practices of self-organization and self-recognition and so through practices of life-making and collectivity outside the boundaries of the liberal state and its reliance on the institutions and imaginaries of the property form.

The word 'maroon' comes from the Spanish term *cimmarrones* meaning 'wild' or 'feral.'[88] These communities in the Americas were comprised primarily of previously enslaved Africans but also were multiracial and multiethnic in character bringing together "the experiences of peasant rebels, demobilized soldiers, dispossessed smallholders, unemployed workers, and others from several nations and cultures, including the Carib, Cuna, and Mosquito Indians."[89] In other words, the practice of marronage was a separation from and a rebellion against capitalism and enslavement from its inception and so opposed the early and ongoing instantiations of private property. The 'ferality' imputed to these communities by the Spanish and other imperial powers speaks to their distance from norms of 'proper' humanity- people who held property. The 'feral' construction of maroon communities further speaks to, as Boisseron points out addressing slavery more broadly, the "cyno-racial assimilation" of Blackness and dogs. Setting enslavement and

[87] Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 2014, 43.
[88] Purnell, *Becoming Abolitionists*, 107.
[89] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 158.

resistance as continuous with twentieth century instances of Black resistance and protest, she writes: "What brings the dog, the slave, and the civil rights protestor together under the same 'ferocious' stigma is their common claim to freedom, perceived ultimately as a feral claim."[90] These alternative lifeways produced "a set of interdependent relationships with other maroons, animals, and the earth."[91] No doubt from these arrangements, new structures of feeling were generated in communities disidentified from ownership and private property. I am interested here in how these structures of feeling might have been shared just as communal resources were shared. As historian Sylviane Diouf explains, the landscape of maroons was a "space of movement, independence, and reinvention where new types of lives were created and evolved; where networks were built and solidified, and where solidarity expressed itself in concrete ways that rendered the maroons' alternative way of life possible."[92] In Chapter One, I engaged in an immanent critique of Marxist theory for its lack of attention to Black history and political struggle. Returning to this idea, structures of feeling focus on the materiality of affect generated within particular socio-economic arrangements and modes of production. How do the contours of this term change if it is applied to maroon communities? What is brought into view, I suggest, is an historical example of counter-hegemonic structures of feeling, and more fundamentally, a revising of what it means to possess outside the rhetoric and structuring presence of ownership. The affective commons finds its historical sustenance in examples like the commons or the

[90] Boisseron, *Afro-Dog*, 51.
[91] Purnell, *Becoming Abolitionists*, 108.
[92] Sylviane A Diouf, *Slavery's Exiles: The Story of the American Maroons* (New York: New York University Press, 2014), 11.

maroon communities. The 'feral' claim of empathy beyond recognition and *a priori* identification is generated out of political community rather than state avenues of redress.[93]

The promise of abolition and its unfinished struggle is a historical connection with the enslaved as well as the displaced, the dispossessed and the stateless, and an invitation to "understand that we share their aspirations and defeats, which isn't to say that we are owed what they were due but rather to acknowledge that they accompany our every effort to fight against domination, to abolish the color line, and to imagine a free territory, a new commons. The enslaved knew that freedom had to be taken; it was not the kind of thing that could be given to you."[94] I would add to Hartman's argument here that the new commons must also be a place that lets go of the hierarchal species distinction and any illusions about the human or animal as unitary phenomena. A substantive challenge to the politics of recognition is ultimately one grounded in the promise of abolition and the imagining of a new commons and a recognition that freedom is a struggle as opposed to what can be granted by the state. The fight against the police and the carceral state is also a fight regarding the very nature of what it is to be free and the limits of a political freedom achieved through recognition in situations of asymmetrical relations of power.

This chapter has explored a range of subjects and lines of argument that intersect with the question of recognition under relationships of ostensible equality that is conditioned by the

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[93] For a similar argument see Samera Esmeir, "On Making Dehumanization Possible," *PMLA* 121, no. 5 (2006): 1545. Esmeir calls for the "forging of concrete alliances with human beings who await not our recognition but our participation in their struggles." Importantly, the status of humanity is not exclusive to humans but is extended to nonhumans as well. Humanity is thus a performative political category for Esmeir rather than a biological or moral given. That said, Esmeir does not interrogate the construction of animality or species as a mode of juridical colonial classification.
[94] Hartman, *Lose Your Mother*, 169.

property-form and the way emotional responses to injury are made legible based on proximity to a normative white humanity. I started by thinking about the politics of recognition, injury, and personhood from within Marxism and Black critical theory, I then moved to a critical engagement with animal protection legislation as legitimating the anti-Black carceral system. I examined the presumption of the speaking subject of animal rights and dramas of recognition and identification of animalized others, ultimately thinking about these scenes of recognition as determined by capital accumulation. Finally, I theorized modes of living otherwise than discourses and arrangements of ownership. The following chapter continues the development of an expansive theory of abolition, drawing on human and non-human modes of entanglement through the interspecies politics of pandemics that inflect with Black radical abolitionist responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and its wider conjuncture. The COVID-19 pandemic and pandemics at large are political situations and sites of intervention where pain and harm are differently mobilized and recognized based on pre-existing relations of inequality that in the context of capitalism themselves rely on a longer history of accumulation and dispossession. The question of whose suffering is recognized and legitimated by existing political mechanisms is the point of connection between this chapter and the subsequent one.

Chapter Four: Blackness, Animality, and Abolition in Pandemic Times

The North American colonies were prone to outbreaks of yellow fever due to the proliferation of sugar plantations in the eighteenth century. These outbreaks bring together my concerns throughout this project: the non-human having a history and that history being yoked together with the enslaved through the property-form and commodification. Two factors that cannot be separated from one another led to these outbreaks. The first was the increase of the slave trade and the transport of infected slaves and mosquito larvae from Africa predominantly. The second was the practice of deforestation to make space for sugar plantations, which reduced the number of birds and other animals that might have eaten the mosquitos.[1] The history of pandemics and epidemics from the emergence of Atlantic capitalism to the present is closely tied up with the animal question, anthropocentrism, and racial capitalism.

The Covid-19 pandemic serves as a vantage point to further explore these entanglements as they exist and as they are coming into being. These entanglements come into being against and with the background of political interventions into the capitalist market. These are not, as one might imagine, interventions to support people during a time of high unemployment and immiseration. Instead, as Robert Brenner puts it in the U.S. context, "the bipartisan political establishment and its leading policymakers have come to the stark conclusion, consciously or unconsciously, that the only way that they can assure the reproduction of the non-financial and financial corporations, their top managers and shareholders—and indeed top leaders of the major parties, closely connected with them—is to intervene politically in the asset markets and

[1] Mark Harrison, *Contagion: How Commerce Has Spread Disease* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 20, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/mcmu/detail.action?docID=3421048.

throughout the whole economy, so as to underwrite the upward re-distribution of wealth to them by directly political means."[2] In other words, the political intervention made is a protection of elite profit-making through direct elite political intervention. While Brenner is directly addressing the U.S. context, similar forms of upward redistribution of wealth have taken place across the globe without anything close to sufficient pandemic relief. As Grace Blakeley puts it (largely addressing the U.K.), the results of the "corona crash": "will be the concentration of economic and political power in the hands of a tiny oligarchy" and, absent a strong political challenge to such a concentration, we will be left "to watch as democracy is finally consumed by capitalism."[3] While Brenner, Blakeley and other political economists have argued for understanding post-Covid recovery as a new stage of capitalism, I take this exploration further to examine how the pandemic has shaped the governance of life as inflected through race and species and how such a governance interacts with the problem of property and the carceral state in situations of putative, formal equality and where the dominant relationship to animal life is one of ownership.

Beyond the upward redistribution of resources, attempts to mitigate the spread of the virus have been halted by the interests of capital, blunting the potentialities of public health measures. In his reading of factory legislation, Marx notes that public health prescribes certain regulations around workspace and yet cannot implement those regulations. As he writes: "The health officers, the industrial inquiry commissioners, the factory inspectors, all repeat…that it is both necessary for the workers to have 500 cubic feet, and impossible to impose this rule on capital. They are, in reality, declaring that consumption and other pulmonary diseases of the

[2] Robert Brenner, "Escalating Plunder," *New Left Review* 123 (May/June 2020.): 18.
[3] Grace Blakeley, *The Corona Crash: How the Pandemic Will Change Capitalism* (London New York: Verso, 2020), xvi-xvii.

workers are conditions necessary to the existence of capital."[4] Today, we can say that Covid-19 and other "diseases of the workers" are necessary to the existence of capital. The contradiction between public health measures and the "existence of capital" has become a feature of pandemic discourse surrounding Covid; less explored is the mutual dependence of the biopolitical state on the existence of capital in shoring up accumulation and governance of life. I introduce the idea of interspecies politics as a form of politics that acknowledges the central entanglements of humans and non-humans as co-resistors to a regime of necropolitical ownership.

I am interested in thinking these transformations and forms of upward redistribution as they demonstrate how "capitalism articulates with other power structures, from racism, colonialism, and nationalism to anthropocentrism, to shape global trends and local lived experiences."[5] The articulation of capitalism with anthropocentrism and both with racism has been thrown into sharp relief by the panics during the COVID pandemic surrounding the racialized other and non-humans as well as the movements to challenge "the state sanctioned exploitation and/or extralegal production and exploitation of group-differentiated vulnerability to premature death."[6] Premature death might come at the hands of the police, the demands of wage labour during a pandemic, and/or fascist movements who have used the pandemic as fodder for recruiting and rallying, building on earlier forms of organizing against immigration. The idea of racism as a public health crisis or underlying health condition has become a necessary refrain given the overrepresentation of the racialized in 'essential' occupations.[7] As Walcott argues,

[4] Karl Marx, *Capital*, 612.
[5] Elizabeth Lunstrum et al., "More-Than-Human and Deeply Human Perspectives on COVID-19," *Antipode* 53, no. 5 (2021): 1519, https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12730.
[6] Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*, 28.
[7] Panagiotis Sotiris, "Thinking Beyond the Lockdown: On the Possibility of a Democratic Biopolitics," *Historical Materialism* 28, no. 3 (September 29, 2020): 8, https://doi.org/10.1163/1569206X-12342803.

"Black life and its ongoing existence sit at the conjunctural moment of COVID-19 and the ongoing state violence that has marked it globally since transatlantic slavery and the colonization of the Americas."[8] In terms of anthropocentrism, the culling of disease carriers is a common historical feature of pandemic response even as non-human animals are used as test subjects for vaccines. Further, if we consider anthropocentrism beyond just exclusion of animals toward human exceptionalism then viruses confound easy boundaries and hierarchies of life among 'human,' 'animal,' and inanimate object.[9] In the Introduction, I mapped debates around animals and animality as objects of study under the banner of animal studies; the virus presses on these very categories to deepen an engagement with the management of non-human life raised in the previous chapter. That chapter dealt primarily with the management of animal suffering and the politics of recognition and representation. In this chapter, I am interested in how racial capitalism and the carceral state use viruses and speculation about pandemics to police life and shape the imperatives of accumulation as well as to biopolitically differentiate populations based on their racialized imagined 'resistance' to viruses. I start with thinking about the centrality of management of pandemics and viral outbreaks themselves to the capitalist world system and then move to the politics of immunity and conclude by mapping what it means to live with the virus, as we are enjoined to do whether implicitly or explicitly.

Pandemics, Statecraft, and the Accumulation of Capital

The management of pandemics is at the heart of the capitalist world-system and central to its formation. As Alberto Toscano reminds us, "the nexus between the alienation of our political

[8] Rinaldo Walcott, "Nothing New Here to See: How COVID-19 and State Violence Converge on Black Life," *TOPIA: Canadian Journal of Cultural Studies* 41, no. 1 (2020): 159.
[9] Lunstrum et al., "More-Than-Human and Deeply Human Perspectives on COVID-19," 1512.

will to a sovereign and the latter's capacity to preserve the life and health of its subjects, especially in the face of epidemics and plagues, is at the very origins of modern Western political thought—which, for better and very much for worse continues to shape our common sense."[10] Foucault locates the individualizing and normalizing functions of the modern state in the shift from the leper colony to the plague town as a mode of dealing with infections.[11] For Foucault, the "political dream" of the plague is "the rather marvelous moment when political power is exercised to the full."[12] Thus, the plague state becomes prototypical for the state itself and the modes of accumulation for which it acts as a facilitator by force and debt. As Frank Snowden explains, "plague regulations…marked a vast extension of state power into spheres of human life that had never before been subject to political authority," and thus the campaigns against plague "marked a moment in the emergence of absolutism, and more generally, it promoted an accretion of the power and legitimation of the modern state."[13] A critical virus studies brings together accounts of the genesis of early modern states and the European world system with concerns in critical theory over the world-shaping power of non-human life. The questions of governance over life and death, the city as essential to accumulation, and the battles over urban space that mark the history of capitalism would be complicated and deepened by considering the role of the plague and other diseases in other periods of accumulation. As Shukin argues, Foucault did focus on epidemics in relation to the biopolitical state but neglected "to address a significant discrepancy in the operations of biopower…insofar as colonial populations were often

[10] Alberto Toscano, "The State of the Pandemic," *Historical Materialism* 28, no. 4 (November 20, 2020): 6, https://doi.org/10.1163/1569206X-12342804.
[11] Michel Foucault, *Abnormal: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1974 - 1975*, trans. Graham Burchell, 1. Picador ed (New York: Picador, 2003), 43–49.
[12] Foucault, 47.
[13] Frank M. Snowden, *Epidemics and Society: From the Black Death to the Present*, Open Yale Courses Series (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019), 81–82.

deliberately exposed to epidemics…that were being successfully managed in…Europe."[14] The discrepancy Shukin notes is an essential one to understanding the role of racialization and the colonial relation in understanding the operations of pandemics within a specific history of capital accumulation and property formation and eventually the discourse of immunity that will take on a racialized character within racial capitalism and have important investments in anthropocentrism in social formations where the dominant relationship to animal life is one of ownership. These claims will be further developed in later sections; for now, I simply want to trace some of the colonial history of epidemics and their articulation within a capitalist world system. This same capitalist world system is contingent upon the accumulation of animal capital as well as colonialism and enslavement, as detailed in Chapter Two.

Smallpox in the Americas originated with the arrival of Columbus and likely contributed to the decimation of Mesoamerican Indigenous populations in the early 1500s and then later was the likely cause of the destruction of Iroquois villages in what is now Montreal and Quebec City.[15] More broadly, smallpox spreads in crowded spaces provided by the historical shifts in living inaugurated by capitalism such as "urbanization, congested housing, crowded workplaces, and warfare."[16] As Frank Snowden explains, "Western European cities during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries provided such conditions in abundance under the pressures of industrial development, mass migration to cities, laissez-faire capitalism, warfare, and colonization."[17] The virus then spreads and articulates with the forms of population management common to capitalist development, closely connected to the paths of the capitalist world-system through colonialism

[14] Nicole Shukin, *Animal Capital*, 183.
[15] Baijayanta Mukhopadhyay, *Country of Poxes: Three Germs and the Taking of Territory* (Halifax ; Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing, 2022), 93.
[16] Snowden, *Epidemics and Society*, 90.
[17] Snowden, 90. For the role of smallpox in colonization in the Americas see Snowden, 101–4.

and the slave trade. All these paths hinge on particular transformations of the property-form to private property and the (at times genocidal) elimination of other modes of relating to the world. In situating viruses and the control of viruses as tools of capital and statecraft, my hope is to understand such a history as a complex interaction of historical forces, social structures and interactions with non-human life that has shaped the contemporary world and continues to do so under our Covid-19 conjuncture. In the Introduction, I sketched out my differences with an animal studies mostly focused on animal advocacy to move us toward an animal studies more concerned with the construction of the animal as such and in relation to specific modes of ownerships and regimes of property. This chapter takes a different form of non-humanity, the virus, to think about capital and statecraft along the grain of racialized modes of governance and biopolitical control. That said, animals are still an essential part of this story in that the species line is essential to pandemic management and human and animal contact is an empirical reality of pandemic spread. Such an empirical reality, however, requires thinking about situations where humans and animals are forced into confinement or else humans are forced into proximity with one another as a form of production and labour discipline such as in the slaughterhouse. In sum: the proto-field I am developing here of critical virus studies would bring together concerns over the slippery categorizations of non-human life, taxonomic bleeds that confound easy separation, with historical-materialist investigations into the role of viruses in shaping contemporary political and economic formations. From such a dual focus, as we have seen, the role of the non-human (or perhaps the para-human?) comes into view as history and world-making. For example, a different kind of investigation, one that would entail another volume, might splice

world-systems theory into medical histories of epidemic disease.[18] My focus is different as I am interested in the contemporary pandemic and its inflections with and refractions through animality, Blackness, and abolition as well as the accumulation of capital. While anti-Asian racism is beyond the scope of the present study, I would be remiss not to mention the attacks on Asians based on anti-Chinese xenophobia stoked by right-wing politicians, itself drawing on a specific history of racial formation, labour formation, and global capitalism.

Methodological Reflections

Before engaging the questions around the intersection of Blackness, animality, and abolition, I want to think a bit about the methodology of this chapter in so far as it tries to capture an unfolding moment and an unfolding moment that has presently (as of 2022) been denied as unfolding. One tragedy of COVID-19 might be the turn towards the state by those on the political left as a mode of security and source of information and authority away from critiques of the state, as a failure of imagination for what Paula Treichler calls "an epidemiology of signification" (a sort of paired concept to her more frequently cited '*epidemic* of signification').[19] The tragedy of this turn is thrown into even sharper relief in the 'post-pandemic' world given the sustained delusion that 'Covid-19 is over and we can all go back to normal.' I place that phrase and 'post-pandemic' in quotations to mark out their iterative and mimetic quality (and their

[18] For instance one might consult Arrighi's work in tandem with histories of epidemic disease see Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century: Money, Power, and the Origins of Our Times* (London ; New York: Verso, 1994). As Frank Snowden explains, the fact that "Italian cities were the first in Europe to be ravaged by plague was no coincidence: their early devastation reflected the geographical vulnerability of Italy's position at the centre of Mediterranean trade." See Snowden, *Epidemics and Society*, 36.
[19] Paula A. Treichler, *How to Have Theory in an Epidemic: Cultural Chronicles of AIDS* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), 39.

mimetic affective appeal), to demonstrate their pervasiveness and their function as naturalizing phrases and broad depoliticized significations of the pandemic within mainstream reporting.

The central focus of this chapter is two-fold: the first focal point is the species line as a technology of power in the pandemic, drawing on and extending critical theorizations of pandemic speculation. The second focal point will be thinking about the resurgence of an abolitionist movement focusing in on this conjuncture. The focus of this chapter departs slightly from the previous given its address to an event for which there is little theoretical precedent and that is being experienced at the time of writing, which started roughly two years from the 2020 lockdowns. We might recall Lenin's postscript to *State and Revolution* where he writes that his monograph has been interrupted by the October Revolution: "[I]t is more pleasant and useful to go through the 'experience of revolution' than to write about it."[20] The unfinished nature of this text exists in a far more pessimistic register but is as constitutively incomplete by the terms of its particular critique. That is, in trying to think about an event as it unfolds, I find myself pressed up against the sheer force of the movement of contemporary events in a period still too young for history.

In his essay "Portrait of a Materialist Philosopher," Louis Althusser presents us with a striking image: the materialist philosopher "always catches a moving train."[21] By this, Althusser intends that the materialist philosophical project has neither predetermined origin nor end and that they intervene within the ongoing-ness of a given social formation: its politics, its ideology, its class stratification and the cultural forms through which it makes itself legible. In this way, I

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[20] V.I. Lenin, "Postscript to The State and Revolution," accessed April 8, 2022, https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1917/staterev/postscpt.htm.
[21] Louis Althusser, *Philosophy of the Encounter: Later Writings, 1978-87*, ed. François Matheron and Olivier Corpet, trans. G.M. Goshgarian (London ; New York: Verso, 2006), 290.

find myself running to catch the train of understanding COVID-19 within its material formations and ideological figurations. Of course, the train has departed from a station and travels along tracks with a particular history. Indeed, the train is an evocative image for thinking about the intersections of race, labour, and capital given the central role of the railway in colonization and industrial production. It is instructive to read Althusser's train alongside Arundathi Roy's identification of the tragedy of COVID-19 as "the wreckage of a train that has been careening down the track for years."[22] A reading of the wreckage then suggests something about the intertwined histories of race, labour, and the ideological forms of the capitalist world system articulated with and through the construction of the human and so the non-human other, whether as 'recognizable' animal or virus that limns the boundaries between life and death.

Pandemic Speculation and Animal Life

Nicole Shukin's theorization of pandemic speculation provides a helpful lens from which to begin thinking the animal question in a pandemic. Pandemic speculation is premised on the interconnected world of global capitalism and a displacement of the symptoms of capitalism onto those deemed to be living improperly with animals. In Shukin's terms, pandemic speculation "can be seen as a civilizing project that works…to correct ethnic others' unhygienic intimacy with animals in an era of globalization."[23] Thus, the animal and the racialized are yoked together as the imagined site of disease and as a form of ideological displacement of the operations of global capitalism. Avian influenza, while blamed on the figure of the ignorant villager, in fact is a product of global livestock production essential to capitalist production and reproduction.[24]

[22] Arundhati Roy:, "The Pandemic Is a Portal," *Financial Times*, April 3, 2020, https://www.ft.com/content/10d8f5e8-74eb-11ea-95fe-fcd274e920ca.
[23] Nicole Shukin, *Animal Capital*, 211.
[24] Nicole Shukin, 212.

What is produced through this form of speculation are "effects of a cultural discourse of pandemic that produces and protects its own material contradictions" i.e., the operations of capitalism breeding the very conditions that instantiate pandemics.[25] Importantly for our purposes, pandemic speculation is part of a larger process of what Shukin terms biomobility, which creates "new discourses and technologies seeking to secure human health through the segregation of human and animal life and finding in the specter of the pandemic a universal rationale for institutionalizing speciesism on a hitherto unprecedented scale."[26] Pandemic speculation thus places animals at the center of disease spread and seeks to cordon off humans from other animals. The pandemic occasions thinking about the species line and the weaponization of that divide to secure the reproduction and expansion of capital ideologically and materially.

One way we can see these processes play out is in the reporting of recent research in the development of more accurate rapid tests for COVID. These tests would allow for testing, diagnosis and prescription to all take place in the same visit to a healthcare provider.[27] This same test is also being developed for use on animals to identify outbreaks on farms and thus used primarily as a mode of regulating livestock production. In essence, this new test does prevent the animals from being killed off because they are infected but preserves their "right to die" through the broad system of livestock production and their conversion into food and other forms of animal capital. We can see in this example then a collapsing of the species line and its retrenchment in the same operation executed for the benefit of capital. The collapse is giving

[25] Nicole Shukin, 183.
[26] Nicole Shukin, 184.
[27] "Rapid, Reliable Test for COVID and Other Infections Moves toward Marketplace," accessed January 25, 2023, https://brighterworld.mcmaster.ca/articles/rapid-reliable-test-for-covid-and-other-infections-moves-toward-marketplace/.

care to animals from Covid-19 through testing, a life preserving or at least disease preventing mechanism that exist in a more precise mode than culling. The subject of concern here is the human who may catch Covid not the animal who may have Covid. Thus, such a collapse of the species line is dialectically predicated on the retrenchment of the species line since ultimately the animals die in 'service' to livestock production and so meet their eventual fate as commodities on the market. What subtends this dialectic is nothing less than our central theme of property since it is the right to own and use animals that enables both the preservation of life and the putting to death in service of commodity production. What opens out here, then, and in the analytical frame we have been developing is the use of pandemic speculation through the species line and the conversion of life into property as a result of that speculation. That is, the preservation of life through precision interventions into animal health relies on the speculative gesture of imagining the animals at once as sites of disease and important resources for human well-being and societal well-being.

Whereas Shukin is broadly concerned with the isometric connections between animal and capital, I emphasize differently the forms of politics that emerge if the species line is seriously thought in relation to modes of upward redistribution and statecraft during an actually existing pandemic. By actually existing, I mean the pandemic as it is lived and managed in the durative present. I consider how an abolitionist politics has emerged and might continue to reproduce itself through a rethinking of anthropocentrism as articulated with capital and the property-form. In thinking about the question of disease and capital during a pandemic, the figure of immunity represents a terrain of ideological and political struggle, as its naturalization serves as a mode of legitimization for biopolitical forms of abandonment to the market. That being said, I do not wish to draw a complete separation between pandemic speculation and actually existing

pandemics, as pandemic management has been a feature of statecraft long before Covid-19 and speculation emerges from material conditions even in unprecedented situations.[28] The next section gives some historical precedent to the management of pandemics through the thick ideological figure of immunity within racial capitalism.

Immunity, Immunocapital, and Racial Capitalism

In her study of 19th century New Orleans and the constant presence of yellow fever, the historian Kathryn Olivarius uses the term immunocapital to capture the way white people (especially men) in New Orleans would use spurious claims of immunity against yellow fever to accrue material advantages and to claim legitimacy of the whole antebellum social order based on the labour regime of enslavement. She writes, "as immunity for whites became so closely linked with the concepts of citizenship and legitimacy, slavery inverted this logic for blacks, with the white elite colluding to award black people a kind of negative immunocapital: for the longer they could survive to make wealth for their masters, the more it made sense to enslave them. The professed belief in slave immunity emphasized black people's statelessness, movability, and malleability—at once sub- and superhuman, incapable of living in freedom."[29] In other words, enslavement was legitimated through immunity just as enfranchisement for white people was based on claims of having immunity. As Olivarius puts it, "Black people could…possess immunity but not immunocapital, an expedient feint of logic that whites used to enrich themselves and reinforce their social and political dominance over blacks."[30] The structure of immunocapital was present not just in New Orleans but across hierarchical forms of

[28] Nicole Shukin, *Animal Capital*, 186.
[29] Kathryn Olivarius, "Immunity, Capital, and Power in Antebellum New Orleans," *The American Historical Review* 124, no. 2 (April 1, 2019): 454, https://doi.org/10.1093/ahr/rhz176.
[30] Olivarius, 429.

differentiation mobilized by capital and statecraft, marking out immunity as essential for a critical virus studies and so an understanding of the biopolitics of the epidemic.[31] Given that immunity was mobilized along racial lines and to accrue capital and so as a part of actually existing racial capitalism, it is important to denaturalize and historicize the very idea of immunity and think about it through questions of power and difference. Importantly, the immune system as a construction relies on the logics of property and value that typify capitalist modes of appropriation.

Donna Haraway theorizes the immune system as "a map drawn to guide recognition and misrecognition of self and other in the dialectics of Western biopolitics. That is, the immune system is a plan for meaningful action to construct and maintain the boundaries for what may count as self and other in the crucial realms of the normal and the pathological."[32] The immune system and the discourse of immunity do not work as mere exclusion but instead as "partial incorporation" through practices of the factory farm and pharmacological research on animal test subjects; thus, "we might say that we ingest flesh as our immunisation against a contamination by a broader community that might include non-human animals as recognised constituents, and more than mere food or bodies to be experimented upon."[33] The operation of partial incorporation can also be understood as a disavowed relation of dependence since animals are

[31] Olivarius, 431. Olivarius helpfully brings our attention to the uses of disease acclimation in the Virginia Plantation as Edmund Morgan mentions in passing. Mukhopadhyay looks at vaccine resistance in the disenfranchised Francophone population in Quebec as a case study to understand how access to immunity "was profoundly shaped by sociopolitical contexts." And that public health was an arm of the state and so of police power, as I will discuss later in the chapter. See Mukhopadhyay, *Country of Poxes*, 90–91.

[32] Donna Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 204. Haraway's broader intervention here is thinking about scientific discourse as 'culture' bringing life sciences together with social theory.

[33] Wadiwel, *The War against Animals*, 140. See also Rosemary Collard's contribution to the *Antipode* roundtable on more than human theory and Covid-19. Lunstrum et al., "More-Than-Human and Deeply Human Perspectives on COVID-19," 1515–17. Collard goes further and talks about the possibility of seeing laboratory animals as workers, thinking the question within social reproduction theory.

central to the operations of capital and the efforts at 'depopulation' work to secure this dependence without the risk of transmitting disease.[34]

While the immune system seems eternal it is, in its biological iteration, an invention of the late nineteenth century, as is the idea of organisms defending themselves against external threats.[35] The work of immunity as biological paradigm is that it "thoroughly naturalizes the military model as the basis for organismic function. As if materializing the disciplinary investment in the natural body, the immunological framework establishes war—at the level of cells and molecules—as the condition of life itself."[36] Biological immunity is thus birthed with the brood of contemporary biopolitics, imperial expansion, nationalism as well as the animal rights movement, the worker's movement and abolition. As Ed Cohen puts it, immunity "incarnates ideas about human being culled from modern politics, economics, law, philosophy, and science, which then belatedly achieve scientific status" which biomedical conceptions of immunity ideologically inoculate as natural.[37] These conceptions naturalize a possessive individualism "precisely by legitimating the idea that because your body is your property, then you obviously must defend it if it's being attacked…But also, it presupposes that the disease dynamic is one of attack and defense at the level of the individual."[38] Thus the property-form and property in the body become the dominant conceptions for pandemic management, as we have seen in the focus on individual behaviour even if it has been articulated in putatively collective

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[34] Nicole Shukin, *Animal Capital*, 223.
[35] Ed Cohen, *A Body Worth Defending: Immunity, Biopolitics, and the Apotheosis of the Modern Body* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009), 3.
[36] Cohen, 20.
[37] Cohen, 8.
[38] Ed Cohen, Megan Boler, and Elizabeth Davis, "The Biopolitics of Pandemics: Interview with Ed Cohen," *Cultural Studies* 36, no. 3 (May 4, 2022): 397, https://doi.org/10.1080/09502386.2022.2041682. Cohen also explains that *demos* has a specific history, namely, the name given to divisions in 6th century Athens that replaced groupings based on blood relation with groupings based on habitation.

terms. The interpellation of the singular subject and personal health and responsibility naturalizes both the specific ideological framing of immunity as personal security but also a more general conception of the subject as an actor on the market protecting their property (their body) as one might protect a particular asset that generates value.

Crucially, for contemporary biomedicine the immune system is not conceived as a hard border but instead as a kind of network enacting a series of cuts. The naturalization of immunity as a network or assemblage works to naturalize the differentiation of the fostering and disallowing of life chances crucially contingent on a racial differentiation. Simply, "the immune system does not so much recognize an already-formed self in opposition to outside threats. Instead, it repeatedly re-creates the borders of the body through the constant cuts it makes across the microbiome."[39] The question is thus less one of abjection than of partial incorporation through management of the immune system's ecological balance in interspecies relation. This should give us pause in cognizing relational ontologies as necessarily unconditionally open to alterity. In fact, it might be through such incorporations framed in terms of ecology that borders function, including ones that shore up the borders central to the contemporary forever war. To note this shift from hard border to shifting assemblage governing interspecies relations is not to render obsolete immunity as defense; instead, "it recasts immunity as a productive rather than a negative activity, affirming the self as both self-constituting and self-defending (self-constituting because self-defending, self-defending because self-constituting)."[40]

Derrida's notion of autoimmunity or the autoimmunitary gesture is helpful for thinking about the dynamic between the self and alterity installed by the paradigm of immunity. In

[39] Neel Ahuja, *Bioinsecurities: Disease Interventions, Empire, and the Government of Species* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 12.
[40] Cohen, *A Body Worth Defending*, 26.

Derrida's words, "an autoimmunitary process is that strange behaviour where a living being, in quasi-*suicidal* fashion, 'itself' works to destroy its own protection, to immunize itself *against* its 'own' immunity."[41] The attempts at protection function as repressive gestures that legitimate further violence and repression. As Derrida puts it, "repression in both its psychoanalytical sense and political sense…ends up producing, reproducing, and regenerating the very thing it seeks to disarm."[42] While Derrida is responding to the U.S. response to the 9/11 attacks, the question of immunity and autoimmunity takes on a unique resonance given the reliance of the contemporary state on punitive measures and forms of abandonment dialectically contingent on the 'natural' immunity of certain subjects or the cultivation of 'herd immunity' locking into a cycle of repression followed by proliferation. The formulation of immunitary paradigm as defence and as war conforms precisely to what Derrida calls "the autoimmune topology" which dictates that "democracy be *sent off* elsewhere, that it be excluded or rejected, expelled under the pretext of protecting it on the inside by expelling…the domestic enemies of democracy."[43] The virus becomes the domestic enemy that legitimates the autoimmune operation to suspend democracy through the lockdown; however, these forms of repression conceal the operations of global capitalism. Extending Derrida, we might say that the autoimmunitary gesture here is the suicide of liberal democracy in service to capital. It is perhaps these autoimmune gestures and the concept of the body as territory to be both defended and conscripted that exists upstream from

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[41] Jürgen Habermas, Jacques Derrida, and Giovanna Borradori, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror: Dialogues with Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 94. See also Jacques Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, Meridian (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2005), 39–40.`

[42] Habermas, Derrida, and Borradori, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror*, 99.

[43] Derrida, *Rogues*, 35–36. The health pass might be seen as a contemporary example of such a "sending off" of democracy in service of health security enforced by political repression. See Brendan McQuade and Mark Neocleous, "Beware: Medical Police," *Radical Philosophy*, no. 208 (2020): 6–7.

the war metaphors mobilized with ease by various states dealing with the pandemic.[44] In the context of Covid, Olivarius notes that "American politicians are arguing that viral immunity could be mobilized for economic benefit."[45] Olivarius is responding to calls from the American right to build herd immunity as a move to bolster social and economic activity as opposed to the "purely defensive" strategies of mitigation via lockdown.[46] In relation to the discourse of herd immunity, the herd is a collection that must be protected in order to yield some kind of value, in this case an economic one. The universality of illness presumed by the equivalence of one member of the herd to another belies the actual differentiation in impact of the virus on marginalized populations. The herd also suggests a group outside the herd who threatens the safety of the herd and so must be sacrificed.

Sacrifice and Necro-Economics

In Camus' *The Plague* the epidemic does not register as a problem when rats are dying off. And indeed, as Jacqueline Rose points out in her essay on the novel, the other subjects that do not register in the text are Arabs and women.[47] These form the subjects of exclusion from the *polis* whose lives do not precisely count as lives. The question of immunity and its points of inflection with anthropocentrism and the species line are bonded to the question of sacrifice. The subject of sacrifice is seemingly heterogeneous but actually an already missing a social link to

[44] The centrality of war to politics was a theme that preoccupied Foucault in his critique of sovereignty. See Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76*, ed. Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana, trans. David Macey, 1st Picador pbk. ed (New York: Picador, 2003).
[45] Kathryn Olivarius, "The Dangerous History of Immunoprivilege," *The New York Times*, April 12, 2020, sec. Opinion, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/12/opinion/coronavirus-immunity-passports.html.
[46] Douglas A. Perednia, "How 'Chickenpox Parties' Could Turn The Tide Of The Wuhan Virus," The Federalist, March 25, 2020, https://thefederalist.com/2020/03/25/how-medical-chickenpox-parties-could-turn-the-tide-of-the-wuhan-virus/. I'm sorry that academic and personal integrity demands citing The Federalist here, a publication that regularly has featured articles seemingly based on social media posts from random racists. I think even James Madison would be ashamed.
[47] Jacqueline Rose, "Pointing the Finger," *London Review of Books*, May 7, 2020, https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v42/n09/jacqueline-rose/pointing-the-finger.

the community and so the *polis.* As Renee Girard puts it, “sacrificial victims…are invariably distinguishable from the nonsacrificiable beings by one essential characteristic: between these victims and the community a crucial social link is missing, so they can be exposed to violence without fear of reprisal.”[48] As Wadiwel points out, for Girard, animals are the pre-eminent subjects of sacrifice given their ultimate exclusion from the political community.[49] The trope of the animal naming the ideal victim of sacrifice is familiar enough within critical theory, traditionally conceived. For Derrida, for example, his neologism carnophallologocentrism captures the way the animal is sacrificed and consumed to shore up the classical subject of politics.[50] In a similar fashion, for Lyotard, the animal names a being that can be killed without it registering as murder. What is considered by none of these thinkers is that the slave as a materially existing part of a social formation and trope can also serve this function within a social order given the slave as the stranger, alienated from communal bonds.[51] While the work of Derrida and Lyotard tends to hinge on the Shoah as the exemplary form of the sacrifice of animalized humans, enslavement and racialization stand as conditions that enable sacrifice.[52] Returning to COVID-19, the ‘culling’ of animals and the sacrifice of racialized ‘essential’ labour circle one another as twin manifestations of a broader logic of sacrifice from the imperatives of accumulation and reproduction. In the previous chapter, Leguin’s “The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas” brings into view the way those separated from the social order are sacrificed for

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[48] René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), 13. I am deeply indebted here to Wadiwel’s reading of Girard in relation to immunity and the animal question. See Wadiwel, *The War against Animals*, 141–46.
[49] Wadiwel, *The War against Animals*, 143.
[50] Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, 2008, 104. De Fontenay takes issue with Derrida’s lack of specificity in theorizing sacrifice finding in Adorno a materialist distinction between the sacrificial altar, the laboratory and, one assumes, the slaughterhouse. See Fontenay, *Without Offending Humans*, 14–18.
[51] Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 13; Hartman, *Lose Your Mother*, 5.
[52] For an overview of the animal question in relation to the Shoah see David L. Clark, “What Remains to Be Seen: Animal, Atrocity, Witness,” *Yale French Studies*, no. 127 (2015): 143–71.

the reproduction and benefit of that order. Reading Leguin's child in the broom closet through Lyotard, Girard, Derrida, and Povinelli we see the way sacrifice is an operation of capitalism and statecraft especially in conditions of crisis registered as such for example in pandemics. The constitution of a universally threatened humanity brings into being "populations...perceived as compromising its survival and therefore at risk of being socially ghettoized or materially sacrificed."[53]

Pandemic as a condition of life and death brings into view the unity of state and market through the enforcement of market imperatives carried out through the state and its agents in the service of accumulation and the generation of value contingent on marking out certain subjects for life and certain subjects for death. On a structural level too, the market works through the management over life and death even in non-pandemic times. In his critical engagements with Adam Smith, Warren Montag argues for a reading of Smith as a necropolitical thinker. For Smith, since the market is understood as a universal condition of life, it must "at certain precise moments, 'let die.'"[54] That is, to function, certain individuals must be sacrificed, must be made to die in order to establish the equilibrium of the market. The structural demand is thus the offering of sacrifice to the market, "that some must allow themselves to die."[55] What about those who refuse to allow themselves to die? It is the role of the state and police power to compel the necessary dying. As Montag puts it, it "is at this point that the state, which might appear to have no other relation to the market than one of a contemplative acquiescence, is called into action: those who refuse to allow themselves to die must be compelled by force to do so."[56] The state is

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[53] Nicole Shukin, *Animal Capital*, 183.
[54] Warren Montag, "Adam Smith and Death in the Life of the Universal," *Radical Philosophy*, no. 134 (2005): 11.
[55] Warren Montag, 16.
[56] Warren Montag, 16. For the sake of simplicity we have yoked together the state and police power but should keep in mind Walter Benjamin's analysis of the specificity of police violence.

thus the external guarantor of market equilibrium achieved through violence and death-dealing both through direct killing and withdrawal. The exposure of the vulnerable other to death is premised on ensuring the free flow of commerce and the right to profit over and above the right to life, for example through the herd immunity policy. The internalization and reproduction of the property-form underwrites the supremacy of the market as the governing virtue, even through popular politics. In the context of Covid, these necroeconomic operations take on more of a popular character where death and debilitation can be spread by reactionary populist movements in order to ensure the 'normality' of market function.[57] The populations that refuse to allow themselves to die are rendered surplus and so must be made to die either by the state directly or confined into places of disease spread. For example, Black rioters resisting the carceral state and homeless networks reclaiming urban space such as parks resist the forms of death and confinement that render them surplus and make them die.

The fight against this normality and so normalization of necro-economics and social murder is one of the tasks of the contemporary abolitionist movement: resisting death by market calculation and resisting death by the carceral state. Bound up with these two tasks of resisting death is resisting death by respiratory ailment as it is through the violence of the market and the violence of police and prisons that vulnerable populations are exposed to respiratory ailment and other diseases. The protection of life against organized abandonment is connected to protests against the carceral state as they both challenge socially differentiated vulnerability within racial capitalism. The clear protection of capital and property over life politicized vast sections of the population in connection with and in protection of the most vulnerable, taking up several forms

[57] See Jack Bratich, "'Give Me Liberty or Give Me Covid!': Anti-Lockdown Protests as Necropopulist Downsurgency," *Cultural Studies* 35, no. 2–3 (May 4, 2021): 257–65, https://doi.org/10.1080/09502386.2021.1898016.

such as the mutual aid organization, the tenant union but also the blockade, the eviction defence, and the riot. The combination of ensuring social reproduction beyond the concern of the state *and* resisting the death-dealing operations of the state and capital through militant political activity (with these two forms of activity coming together in the context of riot such as hotels being occupied to house the homeless) represents the fundamental goals and commitments of the contemporary abolitionist movement.[58] The mask bloc, drawing from the anarchist tradition of blocs as voluntary associations toward a common purpose, aims to provide free masks as well as resources for protecting oneself from COVID-19. In a collaborative zine made by several existing mask blocs about how to start one, the authors note that in addition to safety from disease, masks function as a means of countering surveillance by the police. The mask bloc then unites a community concern beyond the state in terms of public health with a focus on challenging policing and surveillance. I want to think in the next section about the formation of this abolitionist movement and moment in relation to the contemporary conjuncture and imagine how such analyses might come to encapsulate interspecies politics: a democratic form that takes seriously the fact of living with non-human animals and thinks seriously about how to do justice to them and also their self-activity as political subjects.

Abolition and Interspecies Politics

The abolitionist moment that confronts us itself has a contemporary history. We can see such a history mapped within the struggles for reform and the insufficiency of those reforms to halt the police in their death-dealing operations along lines of racial and class difference. In

[58] Julia Lurie, "They Built a Utopian Sanctuary in a Minneapolis Hotel. Then They Got Evicted.," *Mother Jones* (blog), accessed December 15, 2023, https://www.motherjones.com/criminal-justice/2020/06/minneapolis-sheraton-george-floyd-protests/.

contrast to reactionary commentary that emphasized pandemic relief as providing the impetus for supposed destruction, I want to think about how the pandemic intensified the conditions for a rebellion against property and received conceptions of value. That is, it is precisely the least supported and most precarious who were and are on the frontlines of this rebellion. The killing of George Floyd over a counterfeit $20 bill during a time of heightened precarity threw into relief the intersections of property, value, freedom, safety, race, and class that racial capitalism weaves together. We can also think about the failure of reformist measures to curb the 'other pandemic' of state violence against Black people. Reform measures can be understood as a time loop: a reform to curb police violence is instituted, hard won, it proves ineffective or not enforced, the same reform is instituted, and the cycle begins again. In saying this, it is not my intention to denigrate the activists who pushed for such reform. The resurgence of abolition is a realization of the futility of the loop and the attempt to move forward toward a different temporality. The abolitionist movement is also an articulation of a freedom otherwise than can be guaranteed in the dialectic between positive and negative freedom within liberal political philosophy. Within this frame, liberty is "the capacity to realize that which is presupposed in the possibility of the subject to be himself- not to be other than himself."[59] In other words, the directionality of liberty, whether from or to, negative or positive, acts within a certain framework constrained within the singular individual. By contrast, the freedom aimed for by this abolitionist movement is the creation of an otherwise and a collective. This freedom is also not necessarily dependent on the existence of the state as the entity necessary to manage suffering and injury, a crucial investment of the modern liberal state as we saw in the previous chapter.

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[59] Roberto Esposito, *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy*, trans. Timothy Campbell, Posthumanities Series, v. 4 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 71.

The contemporary abolitionist movement was born in the throes of the pandemic and sustains itself despite the restrictions placed by COVID-19 — the restrictions selectively applied by the police but also an expanded conception of safety and care that inhibits the kind of assemblies that might have taken place pre-pandemic. And, in an almost transcendental sense, the particular nexus of race, property and value served as the ground for the militant urgency of these uprisings, not to mention the racialized differentiation of vulnerability to COVID-19 and the white bourgeois orientation of the public health guidelines. Much like quarantine measures giving way to the capitalist market, the politics of disease, quarantine, and race can be traced back to a longer history. The 'barracoons' that served as prisons on the Ghana coast for slaves before transport across the Atlantic "became melting pots for a variety of germs from the interior, among them, dysentery, malaria, and smallpox."[60] And importantly, the slave as commodity was in such high demand that "buyers were prepared to risk infection rather than purchase them at greater cost on account of the delays caused by quarantine."[61] Now, without being too hasty, the racialized 'essential worker' represents the differentiated labour force within post-Emancipation regimes of surplus value extraction. The long history of the racialized stratification and differentiation of labour finds its contemporary realization in the being-made-property of Black bodies and capacities. Such histories are the history of property-formation and capital accumulation given the centrality of enslavement and racialized labour extraction to the ascendance of capitalism and the modern state-form not as a subsumption of race to capital but as a realization of their historical and contemporary interdependence.

[60] Harrison, *Contagion*, 18. Work like this in conversation with historians of the Transatlantic slave trade represents another avenue of investigation in line with a critical virus studies.
[61] Harrison, 18.

In a different register, the Black radical tradition offers historical forms of healthcare otherwise than the state. The Black Panther Party's programs of "survival pending revolution" suggest forms of reproduction in opposition to state welfare and abandonment. The Movement for Black Lives Covid-19 demands carry on the spirit of these forms of social reproduction, often criminalized by the racial state. The M4BL platform suggests something of a 'democratic biopolitics' meaning "constant processes of subaltern struggle and confrontation with the limits of contemporary neoliberal states' response to the pandemic, based upon collective militancy, the democratisation of knowledge, and self-organisation."[62] Melinda Cooper notes that in addition to the Black Panther Party's social reproduction programs outside of the state, the 1970s "witnessed a profusion of parastate healthcare experiments" including "sexual health services and recreational drug care."[63] While these programs were enabled in part by federal programs, "the New Left's healthcare movement very quickly outran the strictures of Great Society liberalism generating a plethora of initiatives that had a much more antagonistic relationship to the state."[64] Both the Black Panther programs and the feminist movement of the 1960s and 70s "practiced a similar ethic of disobedience vis-à-vis the state" by challenging the American Medical Association's epistemic authority and performing illegal abortions.[65] In the neoliberal period during the AIDS epidemic, various forms of mobilization against organized abandonment "drew upon feminists' crucial experience in making women's health issues visible to medical bureaucracies."[66] And indeed the politicization of AIDS built upon earlier networks of gay and

[62] Sotiris, "Thinking Beyond the Lockdown," 28. While biopolitics is typically used to talk about state management over life Sotiris convincingly argues that we can see a counter-biopolitics against the sovereign akin to Gramsci's formulation of a counter-hegemony.
[63] Melinda Cooper, *Family Values: Between Neoliberalism and the New Social Conservatism*, First paperback edition, Near Futures (New York: Zone Books, 2019), 181.
[64] Cooper, 181.
[65] Cooper, 182-3.
[66] Chitty, *Sexual Hegemony*, 2020, 146.

lesbian healthcare in the 1970s around sexually transmitted diseases.[67] All told, these movements challenged the disciplinary institutions of the twentieth century, "the mental hospitals, prisons, homes for the disabled, the delinquent and deviant that were responsible for defining and policing notions of sexual and racial variance."[68] These critiques persist in the naming of racism and other oppressions as a public health crisis and the attention to the intersections of political oppression with the impacts from Covid-19 as well as forms of care that reach out beyond the familiar care-objects of kin. During the George Floyd rebellions, health was front and centre in the requests from protest organizers that people wear masks and do their best to maintain social distance. We can see the continuities then of a public healthcare against the state from the 1960s and 70s to today even as public institutions are delegitimatized and defunded outside of carceral spaces. As Soritis argues, "the entire wave of protests following the killing of George Floyd, point to the fact that communities and movements indeed have the collective ability to realise when it is the moment to reclaim public space and move beyond the confines of the lockdown strategy."[69] The choice was not so simply or spontaneously made, as Marc Lamont Hill demonstrates in his painful and beautiful reflections on choosing between attending the demonstrations and risking becoming ill and being unable to see his father in a nursing home. As Hill describes it, "I was left making these very real and human choices that so many Black people were making at the same time."[70] These questions form what Hill powerfully describes as representing the condition of Blackness, "*In what way am I going to resist death today?"*[71] The resistance to death as we saw calls into question the necro-economic and political calculations of

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[67] Cooper, *Family Values*, 183; Jennifer Brier, *Infectious Ideas: U. S. Political Responses to the AIDS Crisis* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 15–19.
[68] Cooper, *Family Values*, 183.
[69] Sotiris, "Thinking Beyond the Lockdown," 18.
[70] Hill, *We Still Here*, 3.
[71] Hill, 3. Emphasis in the original. For a reflection on how the convergence of COVID and state violence produces a conjunctural relation see Walcott, "Nothing New Here to See."

the market. The choice between direct killing by the state and being abandoned to the virus form a dialectic of death-making that typifies Black life, where resisting this death-making marks a line of flight outside the dialectic.

These struggles also characterize the fight over public space that is at the same time a fight against the police. Responding to the complaint that a demonstration against privatization too often becomes a demonstration against police violence, Judith Butler argues that "the seizure of public space from popular sovereignty is precisely the aim of both privatization and police assaults on freedom of assembly."[72] Bringing in Indigenous political theory, we can also see the function of the police to control public space as an extension of settler colonial modes of land appropriation. My question is: what becomes of the animal question in this conjuncture? One answer is offered by Rosemary Collard's notion of a wild-life politics. Given that Collard's focus is on how the exotic animal trade cuts off non-human life from its social reproduction and the literal and ideological enclosure of animals, a wild life is characterized "by openness, possibility, a degree of choice, and self-determination, in which beings are understood to have their own familial, social, and ecological networks, their own lookouts, agendas, and needs."[73] Importantly, Collard is eager is to think these politics separately from narratives and rhetoric of a pristine wilderness that enact a dualistic separation between nature and culture and because these movements and ideals "led to dispossession of local—often racialized—and Indigenous people, who were and in many cases still are prohibited from entering the lands they managed and lived

[72] Judith Butler, *Notes toward a Performative Theory of Assembly* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2015), 174. The other abolitionist concern here is the potential to be criminalized for forms of public assembly. As Butler writes, "every claim we make to the public is haunted by the prison and anticipates the prison" (185).
[73] Collard, *Animal Traffic*, 131.

on."[74] This resistance to the narratives of pristine wilderness and conservation leads Collard to prioritize animals having the opportunity for life-making outside confinement systems. Ultimately, a wild life "is one in which animals engage in their own life-making practices, until they die. There is no guarantee of flourishing, only the conditions of possibility for a degree of creative self-determination and community."[75] A focus on the creative life-making practices of non-human animals is in line with Rinaldo Walcott's rethinking of forms of life beyond the property-form where a "stewardship of the commons would return human beings to our natural place as one species among others."[76] Reading these two volumes together suggests an abolitionist politics at the heart of disrupting the enclosure and confinement of non-human life and resistance to capitalist accumulation. We can see Walcott's focus being broadened by a specific attention to animal capital and Collard's political theory might be widened by an attention to Black abolition as reshaping human and animal relations otherwise than ownership.

An abolitionist project in pandemic times would confront the medical police as an apparatus of control and regulation. In the late eighteenth centuries with the process of capital accumulation well underway through settler colonialism, the slave trade, and the process of proletarianization, police power enforced the established rules of order and also served general administrative functions of statecraft regarding the health of the population "identifying prostitutes (sic) and other people deemed immoral, loose or disorderly, not least because of the

[74] Collard, 129–30.
[75] Collard, 139. In line with my own thinking in the previous chapter, I read in Collard a resistance to sentimental figurations of animal life.
[76] Rinaldo Walcott, *On Property*, 96. Walcott is at least partly drawing on Indigenous communal forms which tend to emphasize the co-participation of animals in creating the world. For an example of this line of thinking see Vanessa Watts, "Indigenous Place-Thought and Agency Amongst Humans and Non Humans (First Woman and Sky Woman Go On a European World Tour!)," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 2, no. 1 (May 4, 2013), https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/view/19145.

infectious diseases that they were said to spread."[77] Importantly, these medical police functions involved the broad management of public health through "measures concerning the proper handling of dogs, the sale of livestock, the keeping of pigs and the removal of manure."[78] A careful reader will note here that all these public health measures and thus the purview of the medical police involve the policing of animals: their waste products, their mobility, and their commercial status as property. We can see here then the use of police power in this era of capitalist development and revolt as a fight over the proper use of animals yoked together with human mobility, speech, and political activity. If an abolitionist political project confronts and calls into question the use of police power, then it must engage with modes of living with other animals otherwise than property and otherwise than through relations of domination and ownership.

At the end of his history of epidemics, Frank Snowden writes, "In the ancient but pertinent wisdom, *salus populi suprema lex*—public health must be the highest law—and it must override the laws of the marketplace."[79] The binary Snowden sets up is concern over the health of the population on the one hand and concern over capitalist profit on the other. Snowden's text articulates a certain vision of a political order that prioritizes public health over the abstract laws of the market. Commenting on this passage, Alberto Toscano notes that the maxim invoked by Snowden "can be interpreted as the need to subordinate the exercise of politics to collective welfare, but it can also legitimate the absolute concentration of power in a sovereign that monopolises the ability to define both what constitutes health, and who the people are (with the

[77] McQuade and Neocleous, "Beware," 4.
[78] McQuade and Neocleous, 4.
[79] Snowden, *Epidemics and Society*, 505.

latter easily mutating into an *ethnos* or race)."[80] That is, while Snowden invokes the maxim to suggest the need for public health to supersede the marketplace, it can easily reduplicate a logic of control and policing. The critique of Snowden's faith in public health and setting that faith against the laws of the marketplace leads to the question: what is health and under what conceptual schema is health defined? Drawing on the work of David Harvey, Berlant points out that health is nothing more than being fit for work.[81] Berlant and Harvey's staging the question of health within the specific context of labour discipline and fitness for capitalist productivity suggests the question: Is there a conception of health outside of policing, surveillance, and capitalist labour? To conclude this chapter, I consider that question alongside Engels' theory of social murder and contemporary abolitionist politics.

Conclusion: Learning To Live With the Virus

What horizons for public health does an interspecies abolitionist political theory bring into view? One is the return to a critique of medical apparatus (built on animal exploitation in the form of testing) and its complicity with capitalist reproduction and neoliberal forms of abandonment. That is, a building of a critique of public health measures that neither simply accepts the dominant narratives and recommendations from the state nor does it simply ignore the virus, pretend it is a conspiracy and so on. Such a critique would rethink what health means under capitalism and seek to challenge such a limited conception of flourishing. Another set of related questions: what does a rebellion bring into view for public health? The seizure of hotels and other spaces for shelter of the most vulnerable provides an important glimpse into a non-punitive vision of health. A reconsideration of what it means to be healthy and exist in a healthy

[80] Toscano, "The State of the Pandemic," 6.
[81] Berlant, *Cruel Optimism*, 95.

way opens up on to interspecies forms of relation by resisting the enclosure of public space that destroys animal habitats.

The refrain in 2022 and 2023 is to 'learn to live with the virus' following the stripping away of pandemic mitigation and protection in the U.S., Canada, and Europe. For capital, learning to live with the virus is learning to produce and reproduce labour. For the proletariat of biocapitalism, learning to live with the virus will likely be necessary given that the conditions in which we live produce new epidemics and work against their elimination. So, learning to live with the virus does become something of a necessity. The unasked question that must now be posed is: what kind of life are we 'learning to live'? That is, if we must live with the virus, what sort of life should be cultivated and so should be struggled for? This project and this chapter raise the question of how to live a livable life and resist the death-making practices of capital and statecraft as they articulate with racism and anthropocentrism through the violence of policing and prisons, resting on the foundation and enforcement of structures of private property. The declaration of health as we have seen in vivid detail over these past four years has meant nothing other than being declared "'fit for work', which is the very thing the police power was instituted for in the first place."[82] The abolition of the medical police requires rethinking living with the virus and forms of life that navigate living in common and an ethics of cohabitation. McQuade and Neocleous offer the idea of the commons and indeed of communism as "the spectre of the commons, of the 'communism' of a non-policed order, of a world beyond police."[83] The world

[82] McQuade and Neocleous, "Beware," 8. For a critical examination on the ideological figures of disease and the work of these figures to legitimate police power see Penelope Ironstone, "COVID-19: An Essay in Keywords," *TOPIA: Canadian Journal of Cultural Studies* 41, no. 1 (2020): 14–16.
[83] McQuade and Neocleous, "Beware," 9.

beyond police would be a world with a radically different relationship to property and to non-human animals.

The COVID-19 pandemic as it currently exists does present some problems for traditional forms of working class organizing and mass mobilization. The ongoing condition of Long Covid has left many too sick to work. The central question then is: "What are the organizational mechanisms and foreseeable igniting sparks, of a mass politics for a time in which many more workers are likely to be thrown out of work by sickness than was the case before 2020?"[84] Ultimately, the efforts to challenge the bioeconomic and necroeconomic calculations of the market act as a challenge to illness being seen from within the labour relation, i.e. as fitness to work. Given the spike in being unfit for work under Long Covid, new political collectivities outside the boundaries of worker, traditionally conceived, will be necessary. As Beatrice Adler-Bolton and Artie Vierkant point out, the production of the valorized figure of the worker, as opposed to the surplus population, emerged in response to the labour shortage in the UK provoked by the mass death of the Black Plague in the 14th century.[85] The state responded by compelling work on threat of criminalization. The link between criminalization and work, the criminalization that compels work is yet another avenue for abolitionist movements to organize against. Under Covid-19, the rendering of the pandemic into a singular event that can be effectively constrained by vaccines and mitigation measures that crucially do not involve the cessation of wage labour or else simply pretend the pandemic is no longer a concern speak to the contemporary relevance of pandemic management as a tool of labour discipline. The various

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[84] Daniel Sarah Karasik, "What Happens If Long COVID Makes More & More People Too Sick to Work?," *Midnight Sun* (blog), January 19, 2023, https://www.midnightsunmag.ca/what-happens-if-long-covid-makes-more-and-more-people-too-sick-to-work/.

[85] Beatrice Adler-Bolton and Artie Vierkant, *Health Communism*, 45.

panics from economic elites about more comfortable working conditions such as working from home or only doing the minimum required for one's job (i.e., quiet quitting) are subtended by the equation of health with fitness for work.

The political collectivities of the mutual aid organizations, the unions, or tenants' associations might mobilize in defence of and in alliance with those who cannot bring their bodies to the demonstration. The homeless encampment as not just shelter but also political collective represents an extension of the tactic of occupation and serves as a strategy people can participate in regardless of their physical capacities. Much of this work has involved combatting the depoliticization of social murder enacted through the pandemic and at large.[86] Engels draws the concept of social murder from the English working class of the nineteenth century industrial centres to talk about the way life is constrained and sometimes ended by the control by capital over the means of production and subsistence.[87] Nate Holdren, expanding on this concept, explains that social murder "creates potential problems that governments must manage, since states too are subject to pressures and tendencies arising from capitalism."[88] One response to the political problems of capitalism is depoliticization which attempts to render "social problems no longer political liabilities" by making them seem like inevitable features of the world, thereby naturalizing death and debilitation in service to capitalism.[89] I think depoliticization is especially

[86] Nate Holdren, "Depoliticizing Social Murder in the COVID-19 Pandemic," Bill of Health, March 21, 2022, https://blog.petrieflom.law.harvard.edu/2022/03/21/depoliticizing-social-murder-covid-pandemic/.
[87] Frederick Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England,* accessed February 3, 2023, https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/condition-working-class/ch04.htm.
[88] Holdren, "Depoliticizing Social Murder in the COVID-19 Pandemic"; Peter Burnham, "Depoliticisation: Economic Crisis and Political Management," *Policy & Politics* 42, no. 2 (April 1, 2014): 189–206, https://doi.org/10.1332/030557312X655954. Holdren is drawing from Burnham's analysis of depoliticization and reading it into the response to Covid by the U.S. state.
[89] Holdren, "Depoliticizing Social Murder in the COVID-19 Pandemic." For thinking about depoliticization as a set of discourses that surrenders the struggle over the arrangement of the world as it is see Asad Haider, "On Depoliticization," Viewpoint Magazine, December 16, 2019, https://viewpointmag.com/2019/12/16/on-depoliticization/.

a feature of liberal democracies since the role of the state is ostensibly to advance the interests of the dominant class but through an ideology of formal equality.

The repoliticization of social murder involves recognizing the limits placed on the state by capital, even on states populated with largely well intentioned and personally benevolent political actors and showing that "another pandemic response is possible, and that our lives depend on fighting for it."[90] My own intervention here is that such a repoliticization involves taking seriously the species line as it generates forms of politics and is a battleground between competing forms of biopolitics: the way we live and under what structures. The animal question then is a central axis upon which the pandemic as a political problem turns and is enmeshed within racial formations dictating subjects marked for flourishing, subjects marked for death fast and slow, and subjects who can take a breath uninterrupted: something of the very meaning of political freedom.

[90] Raia Small, "Why Has the Left Deprioritized COVID?," *Midnight Sun* (blog), September 14, 2022, https://www.midnightsunmag.ca/why-has-the-left-deprioritized-covid/.

Coda

A coda in music theory refers to the concluding passage of a piece of music but also serves as an elaboration on the basic structure of a given piece, indicating that there is more to follow even with the end imminent. This is not and indeed cannot be the last word on the question of the animal, the abolitionist struggle against the police, much less the last word to say on racialization. I intend this coda as an elaboration on the basic and broad themes of the preceding pages applied to political situations and struggles that emerged and developed during the process of writing. It also serves to elaborate on the interspecies politics that I gesture toward at the end of the last chapter and to think about the potential politicizations of the animal question in our present moment.

In the conclusion of *Animal Capital,* Shukin tells us that her projects have been to provoke an antagonism "for cultures of capital" and to "complicate the hope that capital's contradictions might be turned against it, sobering that political optimism."[1] Capitalism may have "a perpetual existence supported by the ability to materially and semiotically recycle its conditions of possibility ad nauseum."[2] In other words, capitalism may continue to reproduce itself even in periods of crisis such as pandemics, wars, genocide, and gain sustenance from those crises. Shukin cites mad cow disease as a phenomenon that exposes "the harrowing tautology of animal capital" though it "is not yet a formulation of political struggle."[3] The book is addressed to "a heterogeneity of protesting subjects struggling to articulate livable alternatives to the present."[4] This heterogeneous collection of subjects is and will be comprised of an

[1] Nicole Shukin, *Animal Capital*, 231.
[2] Nicole Shukin, 231.
[3] Nicole Shukin, 232.
[4] Nicole Shukin, 232.

increasingly precarious population, aware, now more than ever, that they can be deemed 'human animals' and be imprisoned, starved, and/or exterminated with the ideological consent and material support of a global ruling class. Shukin's pessimism gets at the difficulty of what Raymond Williams identifies as the problem of the hegemony and counter-hegemony, which Chitty summarizes as "categorically distinguishing counterhegemonic forces from forms of opposition that may ultimately be absorbed by a specific hegemony—bound by certain specific limits, neutralized, changed or wholly incorporated."[5] In other words, how can we distinguish the forms of political life and cultural practice that legitimately enact a new social order as opposed to forms of opposition that ultimately serve the dominant order, such as the production of a more racially diverse ruling class or diversity training—phenomena that are easy to repudiate during periods of backlash to progress. Any politicization of the animal question will not come exclusively from the standard repertoire of animal rights, especially those reliant on the carceral state as more and more people become conscious of the harms of police and prisons and how they act as a rampart of reaction erected against possibilities for a better world. Instead, politicizations of the animal question will come from facing climate change and the normalization of mass death to reproduce class rule whether through hegemony or mere domination. Mass death is everywhere and what shocks is both the fact of this death *and* its normalization: the ordinariness of the genocide of Palestinians and the normalization of death from COVID. My goal with this project has been to add to the efforts to politicize the animal question and render it as a crucial aspect of abolitionist and anti-capitalist political struggle.

[5] Chitty, *Sexual Hegemony*, 190. See Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, 113–14.

As I Write This

The construction 'as I write this' is used to convey a sense of connection with the politics 'on the ground' and to convey a certain fidelity to an historical moment while recognizing that such a moment will inevitably change after the writing, or even while it is going on but outside the awareness of the writer. Now the 'as I write this' might register a form of biopolitical abandonment as the 'normality' of the world resumes and COVID-19 recedes into the past, a socially and politically produced ending. The right-wing rebellions and forms of counter-insurgency in the form of the "Freedom Convoy" in Ottawa and Jan 6th in Washington D.C. but also the moral panics around progressive education should be understood as more than mere superstition or 'false consciousness.' Writing in a previous era of right-wing backlash (the rise of Thatcherism), Stuart Hall refuses explanations for right wing populism emerging as a trick of ideology or presentation of the working class as dupes. Instead, he argues, "this populism is operating on genuine contradictions, it has a rational and material core. Its success and effectivity do not lie in its capacity to dupe unsuspecting folk but in the way it addresses real problems, real and lived experiences, real contradictions— and yet is able to represent them within a logic of discourse which pulls them systematically into line with the policies and class strategies of the right."[6] Importantly, these class strategies exist through forms of ideological and political struggle contingent on established social forms. The capture of freedom by anti-mask and anti-vaccination groups is one vivid contemporary example. We might see these forms of reaction as responding to a crisis of social reproduction with anti-abortion legislation in the United States working to enable the reproduction of the labour force in the wake of the receding promises of the good life and the mass death caused by COVID-19. As I write this, there is a

[6] Stuart Hall, *The Hard Road to Renewal: Thatcherism and the Crisis of the Left* (New York: Verso, 2021), 56.

profound backlash to the marginal gains of the George Floyd Rebellions and the long, hot summer of 2020 including a broad assault on the teaching of race, on sexual difference, and on transgender identity. Such attacks come under the umbrella of a broader attack on 'woke ideology' that "is animated by a psychosocial fantasy that the loss of patriarchal, heteronormative, and white supremacist social orders is an unbearable one, tantamount to social death and, at times physical danger."[7] All the while the planet warms; as I write this, there is a massive heat wave in Hamilton and across the East Coast of the U.S. The collapse of hegemony does not necessarily portend a more equal and just future; instead, it could be the shift from a plausible argument about advancing global interests to mere domination.[8] The potential collapse of capitalist hegemony and its living on through mere domination and repression is the historical moment to which this project is addressed. I also want to use this space to foreground resistance to the domination and hegemony of the bourgeois state. The position of animals further gives lie to the essential benevolence of the state given its reliance on animal capital, i.e., the killing and confinement of masses of animals.

The riot qua political form did not die with the George Floyd Rebellions. The riot as a tactic of struggle emerges in waves and rhythms, as we saw in response to the shooting of Jacob Blake in Kenosha on August 23rd, 2020 and the response to the verdict in the state killing of Breonna Taylor on March 14th, 2021. Importantly, these struggles took the form of looting and property destruction directing anger against a nexus of racialized state terror and the property-form with which it is intertwined. Indeed, these two struggles against the carceral racial state and

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[7] Judith Butler, *Who's Afraid of Gender?* (Toronto: Knopf Canada, 2024), 110–11.
[8] Richard Beck, "Bidenism Abroad," *New Left Review* 146 (April 2024): 28–29.

racial capitalism are ongoing and have carried forward the spirit of the 2020 rebellions to which this project is indebted.

In the specific context of my investigations here, zoonotic spillover, an interspecies relation of a kind, is primarily driven by deforestation. The current struggles in Atlanta against "Cop City," a police training centre in Atlanta to be built over the DeKalb County Forest, stitch together the concerns of this project. The proposed police training facility would lead to the destruction of the forest thus worsening the effects of climate change and leading to habitat destruction of many amphibians and migratory bird species. As well, the underfunding of the surrounding communities is part and parcel of the "slow violence" inflicted on Black and Latino communities.[9] The land on which Cop City is proposed was the site of the Old Atlanta Prison Farm, a prison with a legacy of brutality and a crystallization of the legacies of criminalization along the fault lines of racialization. The forest was originally inhabited by the Muscogee people who were displaced in the 1830s and parts of the forest were made into a cotton plantation.[10] The struggle against "Cop City" then is a fight that combines environmental justice with a fight to reclaim space from carceral legacies and futures.

One of the material conditions of pandemics like the COVID-19 pandemic is deforestation. As Andreas Malm argues in his characteristically polemical style, "it is the production of commodities that chews up tropical forests."[11] More than the production of commodities, it is the expansion of the carceral state, the guarantee of accumulation and the

[9] Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*.
[10] Palestinian Youth Movement, "FREE PALESTINE. STOP COP CITY.," *The New Inquiry*, February 11, 2024, https://thenewinquiry.com/free-palestine-stop-cop-city/.
[11] Andreas Malm, *Corona, Climate, Chronic Emergency: War Communism in the Twenty-First Century*, First edition paperback (Brooklyn: Verso Books, 2020), 45.

condition of disease spread. The fight against deforestation broadly and the struggle against "Cop City" intertwine concern over the more-than-human world with the abolition of policing and the prison system, and with that a critical interrogation made manifest of the whole system of capitalism and private property. If the 'machine wreckers' of England engaged in "collective bargaining by riot" as Hobsbawm puts it, then we could see the fight to protect the Atlanta forest as pandemic prevention by occupation, a public health not reliant on the state or the logic of the market but instead a renewed idea of the commons and communal forms of life outside the property-form that is centred around the larger project of police abolition and the abolition of property. [12] While Cop City had been proposed before the George Floyd rebellions, "the events of 2020 spurred the Atlanta elite to push harder for its construction. Cop City, it was hoped, would both ameliorate the crisis of police morale and leave Atlanta's police better prepared to contain any future mass uprising."[13] There was also an economic imperative to "reassure potential investors of the city's continued viability as the gentrifying yuppie playground it's been rapidly becoming."[14] Ultimately, Stop Cop City is "both 2020 in miniature and a direct bridge to the mass struggles to come."[15] The tactics of revolt and new forms of repression established at Cop City will be exported around the world whether to crush Indigenous land defense in Turtle Island or to suppress revolt in Palestine. My interest here is *not just* Cop City as a vanguard of coming political struggle and repression but also the ecological focus of that struggle, its attention to non-human life. The interspecies politics I gestured toward at the end of Chapter Four I see the potential for in the struggle to stop Cop City as this struggle brings together an

[12] E. J. Hobsbawm, "The Machine Breakers," *Past & Present* 1, no. 1 (1952): 59, 66.
[13] A.C. Corey, "The Forest and Its Partisans," *N+1*, January 23, 2024, https://www.nplusonemag.com/online-only/online-only/the-forest-and-its-partisans/.
[14] A.C. Corey.
[15] A.C. Corey.

ecological focus with a fight against the production of surplus populations to be imprisoned or killed. These surplus populations include actual animals but also animalized humans. Animal liberation activists should be joining the front lines of these struggles to increase their focus on animal protection beyond the carceral state and stress the centrality of non-human modes of life to political organizing.

Human Animals

Speaking to the importance of the "question of animality," Derrida says that it "represents the limit upon which all the great questions are formed and determined, as well as all the concepts that attempt to delimit what is 'proper to man,' the essence and future of humanity…law, 'human rights,' 'crimes against humanity,' 'genocide,' etc."[16] As I read this passage, I couldn't help but think about Israeli defence minister Yoav Gallant referring to Palestinians as "human animals," at once granting them the capacity of humanity but licensing any sort of 'inhuman' response.[17] Now, as I write this, seven months (as of May 2024) into what has plausibly been called a genocide by human rights and activist groups, it seems Derrida's insight has been vindicated in so far as the animal is summoned to give clearance to collective punishment, human rights violations, and forms of cruelty practiced by individual Israeli soldiers as well as to police discourse about Palestinian resistance and the Israeli response. As we saw in Chapter Four, the animal is a designate for sacrifice to the imperatives of the state and market

[16] Derrida and Roudinesco, *For What Tomorrow*, 62–63.
[17] Sanjana Karanth, "Israeli Defense Minister Announces Siege On Gaza To Fight 'Human Animals,'" *HuffPost*, October 9, 2023, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/israel-defense-minister-human-animals-gaza-palestine_n_6524220ae4b09f4b8d412e0a.

and rests on a history of association with the racialized. We are seeing, then, the result of racialized animalization, visited upon the bodies on Palestinians.

One of the major claims of this project is that animality has a history and that history is deeply embedded within the histories and presents of racial capitalism. The way forward is an alliance between those partisans of animal life who travel under the heading of abolitionists with the Black radical abolitionist tradition grounded in the renewed anti-imperialism represented by the Palestinian freedom struggle. The animal question was posed within a specific history of capitalist accumulation and reproduction and opens up a range of questions about the nature of the property-form, conceptions of value, modes of recognition by the state, and (not least) relations between humans and animals as living and breathing beings sharing a finite world in a finite existence. The second major claim of the project is that the police *qua* institution are the tip of the spear of racial capitalism. I understand policing as the enforcing of distinctions in the service of racial capitalism, between human and non-human as well as life and non-life. In a context of the genocide of the Palestinians, a genocide in the interests of capital accumulation, this means that the police act on the side of the genociders. The police then make human animals in so far as the human animal is a performative political category to designate a form of life that does not have equal status in law or within the liberal sensorium, whose ability to suffer is unrecognized as a substantive political claim and ethical appeal. Throughout the preceding pages, I was interested in the triple dialogue between Marxist theorizations of labour discipline, biopolitical critique of life management, and the critique of the colour line as an organizing technology of humanity, animality, and the worthiness of life under conditions of value extraction. The human animal as rhetorical figure, indeed as rhetorical violence that legitimates the violence of killing, maiming, and starving, stitches together these concerns in so far as human

animals are to be disciplined by the global capitalist system, are placed into systems of confinement, and made not to matter within a racial system of white supremacy.

Drawing connections between the Stop Cop City and Free Palestine movements, the Palestinian Youth Movement— a transnational group of Palestine solidarity activists— write that "Stop Cop City represents one of the conjunctural spear tips for expanding the existing systems of counterinsurgency that span Africa, Asia, and the Arab world," which today "rests atop Gaza, whose rumblings shake the earth upon which we walk."[18] Indeed, the earth upon which we walk is itself shaped by colonization and the formation of agricultural capitalism. The Stop Cop City movement has itself "pivoted seamlessly into an increasing emphasis on Palestinian solidarity, tracing links between the APD and the IDF through the Georgia International Law Enforcement Exchange (GILEE) program and between the 'landback' demand shared by Palestinians and Muskogee activists in the US."[19] As per the concerns of the project and these two movements, the abolition of the police is central, as it is the police that act to repress movements against the settler colonial state and racial capitalism.

In her reading of Rancière, Kristin Ross argues that the police are an expansive concept of normalization. Policing, for Rancière, is ultimately concerned with "constituting what is or is not perceivable, determining what can or cannot be seen, dividing what can be heard from what cannot."[20] The prototypical phrase of the police is then the "move along, there's nothing to see here." What is hidden from view are oppositional if not counter-hegemonic forms of politics that challenge and disrupt the established order of things. We can understand, then, the repression of

[18] Palestinian Youth Movement, "FREE PALESTINE. STOP COP CITY."
[19] A.C. Corey, "The Forest and Its Partisans."
[20] Rancière qtd. in Kristin Ross, *May '68 and Its Afterlives* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 23.

the Palestine solidarity movement and Stop Cop City as wanting to establish a version of the visible that does not draw on the legacies of the long, hot summer of 2020. Ross notes that in the aftermath of May '68 (her central subject) police came to populate the pages of social theory in the work of Althusser as the scene of subject formation and in Foucault's analyses of disciplinary power to cite just two well-known examples.[21] As movements form in opposition to the police, we are seeing policing crop back up as a central institution in the social theory of our conjuncture. My project represents a modest attempt in this direction, to understand how the police function in racial capitalism, specifically where the primary relation to animals is a relation of ownership. The police perform an operation of life, sorting into categories of mattering based on proximity to or distance from normative white humanity. Amid these two protest movements (against the genocide of Palestinians by Israel and against Cop City) in an era of rightwing backlash, the world is getting warmer. This has included the death of billions of animals, in addition to the human toll of increased natural disasters, intense heat, and intense cold. We are now in the grim position of having to navigate heat waves and diminished air quality while protesting a genocide effectively and safely in its eighth month that operates with the complicity of the U.S., U.K., Canada, and the European Union as well as many academic and cultural institutions.

If the making of the human animal is a rhetorical violence, such a violence is itself contingent upon the violence done to vast groups of 'actual animals' through mass slaughter, confinement, and conversion into different types of property. The animal is a category that gains meaning in relation to the capitalist institution of private property, and to rethink this position is to challenge property as such. The challenge to property and to property in animals would be a

[21] Ross, 24.

broad communistic critique of ownership as well as value, relation, recognition, political emancipation, and other social categories that rely on the centrality of ownership. Animals and the animal position are then one example of the operations of discourses and infrastructures of ownership. Criminalization goes hand in hand with these discourses and infrastructures: the criminalized subject is one to whom anything may be done and who is banned from traditional modes of labour and existence in the world. The one being criminalized is the one being animalized, made into a human animal.

In her speech entitled "No Human Animals: On Black Solidarity with Palestine and the Defense of Life," Robyn Maynard repeats the refrain of "no human animals."[22] A refusal not just of complicity with genocide but also a coalitional refusal to normalize state violence. As she writes, "This responsibility weighs heavy on those living in Canada because we are all responsible for what is being done in our name. This is true whether it is here at home, where our taxpayer dollars fund the salaries of the killers of Quilem Registre, Chantel Moore, and Eisha Hudson, and it is true abroad."[23] The killers of the names she mentions—Black and Indigenous people killed by the police in Canada — are named here as part of the same system of global white supremacy that legitimates the killing and maiming of Palestinians. Maynard refuses the human animal as a violent construction, one that is and contains violence against colonized populations. I wonder, however, if the human animal can also represent something different: a relationship to animals that is other than domination. I wonder this not in an abstract way and not in ignorance of what it means to call a human an animal within this current arrangement of the

[22] Robyn Maynard, "No Human Animals: On Black Solidarity with Palestine and the Defense of Life," *Social Text*, November 29, 2023, https://socialtextjournal.org/periscope_article/no-human-animals-on-black-solidarity-with-palestine-and-the-defense-of-life/.
[23] Robyn Maynard.

world, but rather such a wondering emerges from the possibility of a different material relationship to non-human worlds and so a different relationship to ownership as such, under conditions where the dominant relationship to animal life is *not* one of ownership.

Abstraction, Critique, and Multispecies Democracy

The project for reasons of scope and space did not touch very much on the kinds of proximity and intimacy humans and animals currently share except within systems of confinement or else the use of animals as agents of violence by the state. I have not, for instance, much discussed zoos, pets, or encounters in the wild even though I think these too are mediated by capitalism. My thinking going forward into my next project will explore some of these modes of intimacy in situations where the dominant relationship to animal life is one of ownership. This future project will explore the question of sexuality in relation to animal capital, in an attempt to understand and resist the backlash to queer identity expression and civil rights, just as this dissertation was prompted by the violence done to Black people to protect property and the rebellions against that violence.

I have proceeded at a level of abstraction that may be unacceptable to those whose focus on the animal question comes from direct animal advocacy, work that tends to travel under the heading of Critical Animal Studies. I understand such abstraction as crucial to thought itself, in so far as all thought takes place within a specific context and is limited by circumstances beyond its own awareness. To think about animals then outside of history would be to do a certain kind of violence to animals by *placing* them outside of history, a gesture common to anthropocentric thought that, at the same time, I hope to have contested here. If abstraction is a violent process, I do not believe we can simply return to a pure concrete reality, as the abstract and the concrete are

always-already mixed up with one another, articulated together. The shift from an individual ethics to a politics means, I contend, coming to terms with the necessity of abstraction as the precondition for social criticism as such.

The question remains, however, of what it would mean to give animals a say in a multispecies democracy. In Chapter Three, I used Black and Indigenous critical theory to trouble the participation of animal rights activists in the capitalist state, a state predicated upon settler colonialism and the anti-Black carceral system. The alternatives to such a mode of protection that in fact protects neither humans nor animals is one that confronts the contingency of the property-form and the systems of violence that reproduce that form. The question then is what kinds of infrastructures can enable animals to participate. The contention of this study is that such infrastructures must be developed in opposition to the property-form and the carceral state in order to truly be just for both humans and animals. Ultimately, a new conception of the subject of politics must emerge, one that exceeds anthropocentric assumptions *and* the narrow imagination that has so far been the purview of mainstream animal activism reliant on property and the carceral state. It is only after such a break, a true counter-hegemonic rupture, that political freedom for all life on this fragile planet can truly begin to be thought.

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