MULTISPECIES MEMOIR: SELF, GENRE, AND SPECIES JUSTICE IN CONTEMPORARY CULTURE

by

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A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Environmental Studies Program
and the Division of Graduate Studies of the University of Oregon
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

June 2022

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Title: Multispecies Memoir: Self, Genre, and Species Justice in Contemporary Culture

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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Doctor of Philosophy

Environmental Studies Program

June 2022

Title: Multispecies Memoir: Self, Genre, and Species Justice in Contemporary Culture

Liberal humanism articulates an individual, rational, autonomous, universal, and singularly human subject that possesses various rights and freedoms. Although the imagined subject at the heart of liberal humanist philosophy has improved the material and social conditions of many, this dissertation diagnoses the liberal subject and the feelings and experiences of isolation it produces as the root cause of multiple social and environmental injustices. *Multispecies Memoir* reimagines three interconnected projects that have played central roles in the production of the liberal human subject and human apartness: narrative, selfhood, and justice. Pursuing modes of living premised upon reciprocal relationships with nonhumans, not the logics of isolation and domination perpetuated by liberal humanism, I study a subgenre of life writing that I call "multispecies memoir." Developing in the late twentieth century, these global narratives theorize selfhood, and literature more broadly, as emerging through relationships with multiple species. I look to the "entangled self" described by multispecies memoirs as fashioning an alternate subject, one that disrupts and dislodges the liberal human figure. In the process, I reimagine justice around an entangled, multispecies self. The modes of multispecies justice developed in this project shift the focus of justice away from serving

an isolated, rights-bearing individual to instead prioritizing the maintenance of reciprocal relationships and the elimination of violence that threatens these relationships.

Multispecies Memoir makes three primary interventions in the environmental humanities: 1) it articulates selves as emerging through multispecies relations; 2) it asserts that justice for marginalized peoples and justice for other species must be pursued together via entangled subjects; 3) it theorizes literature as a multispecies contact zone co-authored and populated by nonhumans. The dissertation is organized around two sections, each of which proposes modes of coexistence that disrupt liberal humanism and its logics of isolation. The first section, "Entangled Knowledges and Practices," studies how contemporary science and care have opened the boundaries of the self to other beings. The second section, "Multispecies Violence and Resistance," examines how violence impacts humans, nonhumans, and their relationships with each other, and it considers how humans and nonhumans have come together to resist such violence.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation underscores the degree to which any piece of writing is a collaborative effort, one that involves multiple people, conversations, places, and species. For so many people, especially those in education and academia, the COVID-19 pandemic exposed the interdependent relationships that make daily life possible. Most of this dissertation was produced amid the loneliness of the pandemic, during a time when it was difficult to connect with those who made the project possible. Perhaps unsurprisingly, then, the writing process was both uncanny and defamiliarizing. I found myself writing about other relationships and entanglements while missing many of my own. I found myself experiencing some of the isolation that I was writing against. In other respects, however, the pandemic brought me closer to many nonhumans as I focused greater attention on gardening and my neighborhood. The experience of writing made it clear, if it was not already, that feelings of isolation and connection define our present moment.

I express my profound thanks and gratitude to Stephanie LeMenager, Stacy Alaimo, Marsha Weisiger, Ursula Heise, and Ryan Jones for your careful attention to, and sustained involvement in, this project. Though it was sometimes challenging to align our schedules, it was a great gift to have all of you together in the same room — whether physical, virtual, or hybrid. I feel very fortunate to have known and worked with each of you over the years. Thank you for being extraordinary mentors, role models, thinkers, and people. You have all left so many marks not only on this project, but on my thinking, teaching, and sense of self.

The Environmental Studies Program and English Department at the University of Oregon have generously supported my ideas, no matter how far afield. In Environmental Studies, I owe special thanks to Mark Carey, Pat McDowell, Nicolae Morar, Barbara Muraca, Kari Norgaard, Jason Schreiner, Emily Scott, and Sarah D. Wald. In English, I give thanks to Lara Bovilsky, Brent Dawson, Anne Laskaya, Paul Peppis, Tres Pyle, Mark Quigley, Gordon Sayre, Harry Wonham, and Mary Wood. Thanks, also, to Hayley Brazier, Bob Craven, Bailey Hilgren, Kyle Keeler, Kate Huber, and Holly Moulton for our many conversations over the years. Much appreciation goes to people who were formerly affiliated with the University of Oregon and have since moved to other institutions, especially April Anson, Gina Filo, Shane Hall, and David Vázquez. Finally, I am appreciative to everyone in the Center for Environmental Futures, the Just Futures Institute, and the Oregon Humanities Center who contributed to such a rich culture around the environmental humanities.

I am grateful to many people across the United States and around the world who have conversed with me about this project. My appreciation especially goes out to Karin Bolender, Sune Borkfelt, Dany Celermajer, Thom van Dooren, Lisa Ottum, Matthias Stephen, Anna Tsing, Harlan Weaver, and Priscilla Ybarra. Mentors at the University of Iowa, particularly Dan Berkowitz, Barbara Eckstein, Claire Fox, Blaine Greteman, John Keller, Ellen Lewin, Mark NeuCollins, Eric Tate, and Doris Witt, showed me how to use my deep love for literature, writing, and engaged research to envision better worlds. The research being done on multispecies justice at the Sydney Environmental Institute (SEI), the Laboratory for Environmental Narrative Strategies (LENS), the Nelson Institute for

Environmental Studies, and the High Meadows Environmental Institute (HMEI) inspires much of my work.

I also wish to express my thanks to the organizations that funded parts of this project or helped shape it. A research grant issued by the Culture and Animals Foundation and The Animals and Society Institute, together with a Provost's Grant for Library Research awarded by Wake Forest University and a Graduate Research Support Fellowship from the Oregon Humanities Center, supported my research on primatology and habituation. Special thanks go to Megan Mulder and the Special Collections staff at Wake Forest University for generously providing access to archival materials during the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding provided by the Division of Graduate Studies and the Environmental Studies Program at the University of Oregon made research in subsequent chapters possible. I am especially grateful for the support provided by Izumi Kyle and Louise Shimmel in Chapter 2. Izumi, your generosity and kindness, not to mention your insights about starlings, shaped much of this chapter. Louise, I remain inspired by the work that you and your colleagues do at the Cascades Raptor Center. Earlier iterations of chapters were presented at conferences for the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE), the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA), and the Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts (SLSA), along with the Environmental Justice in Multispecies Worlds Conference at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the Environmental Studies Seminar Series at the University of Oregon. Thank you to all who listened and asked questions.

My sincerest thanks go to Chris Chester for taking the leap to write such a quirky and wonderful book. Like a birder's "spark bird," the bird responsible for igniting their

passion for birdwatching, *Providence of a Sparrow* was the “spark book” for this project. I have no doubt that there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow.

All the nonhuman species in my life, from my childhood to the present moment, deserve perhaps the greatest thanks. Without you, who am I and what is this project? I hope that in ways both small and large, this work can provide your kin with better lives. We owe it to you and to our ourselves.

Thank you, Oliver, for your gift of breaks, walks, and play. And so many thanks to my parents and closest friends (you know who you are!) for your support and love. Lastly, thank you, Yarasel, for keeping my heart full.

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INTRODUCTION: LIBERAL HUMANISM, MULTISPECIES JUSTICE, AND ENTANGLED SELVES

> What sort of literature remains possible if we relinquish the myth of human apartness? It must be a literature that abandons, or at least questions, what would seem to be literature's most basic foci: character, persona, narrative consciousness. What literature can survive under these conditions?
> Lawrence Buell, *The Environmental Imagination*

> At the same time as they may offer an account of existing relationships, stories can also connect us to others in new ways. Stories are always more than simply descriptive: we live by stories, and so they are inevitably powerful contributors to the shaping of our shared world.
> Thom van Dooren, *Flight Ways*

Spanning the period between the late-twentieth and the early-twenty-first centuries, these epigraphs chronicle a major shift in how literature, narrative, and story have been conceptualized, written, and read. As signposts for ecocriticism and multispecies studies, they mark an important turning point in the broader development of the environmental humanities. Lawrence Buell, a founding figure of ecocriticism who has also shaped the environmental humanities by insisting that environmental crisis is fundamentally a "crisis of the imagination," wonders if a literature that abandons "human apartness" in favor of ecological togetherness could even exist. Little more than a thought experiment, literature predicated on attachment and connection seems an impossibility. Indeed, he doubts that any literature positioning humans as co-participants of the world could "survive" its own writing. Nearly two decades later, however, environmental humanist and field philosopher Thom van Dooren offers a very different view. Understanding stories as intrinsically relational, he argues that they shape how humans see the world and their place among wider collections of nonhuman species. Stories, he observes, not only describe human-nonhuman relationships, they also provide a medium

through which relationships with others become realized.[1] Read together, the two quotations signal a shift in how the categories of human and nonhuman have been conceived in relation to literature. Narratives of human-nonhuman togetherness that were once unimaginable became, in this short period, conceivable and necessary to study. The epigraphs reflect a movement away from thinking literature solely as a humanist project, one that features and concerns only human actors, to instead conceptualizing literature as a multispecies project, one that involves a diverse collection of nonhuman lives held together through their relationships with one another.[2] *Multispecies Memoir: Self, Genre, and Species Justice in Contemporary Culture* describes how this shift occurred in both the literary archive and critical thought, and explores the possibilities that arise from reading literature through multispecies frameworks.

Buell's skepticism and uneasiness reflects the degree to which liberal humanism has declared western literature and culture the exclusive domain of a specific human subject, one that exists apart from the rest of the world. A paradigm arising from Enlightenment philosophy and perpetuated by legal institutions and the state, liberal humanism articulates and reproduces an individual, rational, autonomous, universal, and singularly human subject that possesses various rights and freedoms agreed upon by the

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[1] Elsewhere he writes with the multispecies ethnographer Deborah Bird Rose, "The stories we tell are powerful contributors to the becoming of our shared world." Thom van Dooren and Deborah Bird Rose, "Lively Ethography: Storying Animist Worlds," *Environmental Humanities* 8, no. 1 (2016): 77-94, at p. 89.

[2] This is not to suggest some uniform and complete evolution of ideas, nor is it to conflate the very real differences that separate ecocriticism and multispecies studies. Rather, it helps demonstrate how thinking about narratives in relation to nonhuman species has changed within the wider field of the environmental humanities. Both quotations, to some degree, also bookend the main period studied in this project.

wider populace.[3] While reason, shared rights, and legal systems premised upon principles of equality have benefitted many, the project of liberal humanism has proved catastrophic for those who do not identify with, or refuse to become, its imagined subject. Operating through exclusionary and violent logics, it neglects and others people who hold divergent worldviews or it forces them to adopt its values if they hope to participate in its institutions.[4] In his critique of the normative logics produced by rational thought, queer and trans* theorist Harlan Weaver, for instance, points out that the Enlightenment figure of the "rational man" arose "by denying subjectivity to peoples and deeming them other-than-human, animal, or even subanimal; reducing them to *that*, *what*, or *it*; or even erasing them entirely through genocidal logics."[5] In addition to denying the belief systems of colonized and enslaved peoples, folks with disabilities, women, and children, among other groups, liberal humanism uses anthropocentric logics to justify the systemic exploitation of nonhumans and environments, and their exclusion from the arena of social concern. As environmental sociologist David Schlosberg observes, liberal thought "has always been based on human exceptionalism and separation from the rest of the world," a

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[3] Legal studies scholar Maneesha Deckha argues that three central attributes distinguish liberalism, namely that it operates through legal and state institutions, requires rational deliberation, and pursues the principles of individual freedom and equality. Maneesha Deckha, *Animals as Legal Beings: Contesting Anthropocentric Legal Orders* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2021), 10.

[4] As anthropologist Matthew Wolf-Meyer explains in *Unraveling: Remaking Personhood in a Neurodiverse Age*, "Liberalism is predicated on the individual as an able-bodied, self-transparent, communicating subject. . . . Individuals who are taken as not having these capacities are intrinsically barred from full participation in society." Matthew Wolf-Meyer, *Unraveling: Remaking Personhood in a Neurodiverse Age* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020), 11.

[5] Harlan Weaver, *Bad Dog: Pit Bull Politics and Multispecies Justice* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2021), 18.

belief that "we are distinct — from each other, from nonhuman animals, from the processes that sustain our physical lives."[6] As a result, the doxa of liberal humanism has produced feelings and experiences of isolation. On the one hand, liberal humanism separates humans from the relationships we share with nonhumans, telling us, instead, to embrace human exceptionalism and anthropocentrism at the expense of wider ecologies. On the other hand, such beliefs have produced and enabled the crises of species loss, extinction, and climate change, resulting in mass death and displacement, and the further isolation of human and nonhuman communities. Liberal humanism and the logics, feelings, and experiences of isolation it produces are, therefore, the root causes of multiple social and environmental injustices. Moreover, this dominant way of seeing and being causes significant suffering for humans and nonhumans, especially for the multispecies communities that most depend upon one another to survive and thrive. *Multispecies Memoir* challenges and reimagines three interconnected projects that have played central roles in the production of liberalism and human apartness: narrative, selfhood, and justice. In the following pages, I disrupt liberal humanism and propose modes of living and being premised not upon human isolation, but rather multispecies entanglement.

NARRATIVE, SELFHOOD, JUSTICE

As a vehicle for the dissemination of cultural beliefs and values, narrative has long been used to produce, defend, and promote liberal humanism. From the

[6] David Schlosberg, "Ecological Justice for the Anthropocene," in *Political Animals and Animal Politics*, eds. Marcel Wissenburg and David Schlosberg (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 75.

Enlightenment to the present, authors associated with European cultural traditions have viewed narrative as a means for accessing and demonstrating human intelligence, ingenuity, and exceptionalism. Narratologist David Herman notes that "narrative can . . . be used to shore up, reproduce, and even amplify human-centric understandings of animals and cross-species relationships."[7] Literature, more specifically, has been taken up as a medium for achieving intellectual transcendence, a way to detach from material conditions and explore ideas using reason and rationality. It has become a place where authors and other intellectuals can achieve fantasies of human domination and species erasure. Historically, "great literature" adhered to these attributes and conventions. Some genres — like autobiography — even required liberal humanist philosophy to come into existence. Early figures such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Benjamin Franklin, Frederick Douglass, and Ulysses S. Grant articulated themselves as liberal subjects, self-made individuals driven to success by their rational decisions. With its dependency on Enlightenment logics and reading practices, the field of literary studies has, until recently, promoted and validated an exclusive interest in a select group of human figures and cultures. Whether through the legacies of formalism and structuralism, the enforcement of literary canons, or the use of methodologies that overlook nonhuman lives and entities, the field has understood literature, and its study, to be the domain of a specific kind of human. Although ecocriticism and literary animal studies initially responded to this anthropocentrism, early work tended to describe nonhumans and environments as mirrors or vessels for human culture, not as beings and entities possessing their own importance

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[7] David Herman, *Narratology Beyond the Human: Storytelling and Animal Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 4.

or value. Narrative and the body of research associated with it cannot be disentangled from the logics, values, and identities of liberal humanism.

Such interconnectedness also suggests, however, that any venture to reconceptualize liberal humanism must occur at the level of narrative. By turning to literature written about or with nonhuman species, I consider alternate ways of living, writing, and reading that challenge the liberal humanist traditions outlined above. This project locates a particular connection between liberal thought and life writing narratives, identifying similarities among the imagined subject of liberal humanism and the modern self described in the memoir genre. In the chapters that follow, I take up a subgenre of life writing that I call "multispecies memoir." Emerging during the last decade of the twentieth century, with roots extending back to the 1960s, multispecies memoirs describe reciprocal human-nonhuman relationships that fundamentally alter the boundaries of the author's self to include nonhuman species. The subgenre proposes selfhood as a multispecies endeavor, one that constantly emerges through relationships with nonhumans. In doing so, multispecies memoirs such as J. Drew Lanham's *The Home Place*, Ava Chin's *Eating Wildly*, and Nicole Georges's *Bad Dog* disrupt the liberal humanist subject and its logics of isolation. The dozens of authors considered in this project participate in what multispecies ethnographer Deborah Bird Rose calls a "turning toward," or a "willingness to situate one's self so as to be available to the call of others."[8] Multispecies memoirists express "a willingness toward dialogue, a willingness toward responsibility, a choice for encounter and response, a turning toward rather than a turning

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[8] Deborah Bird Rose, *Wild Dog Dreaming: Love and Extinction* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011), 5.

away."[9] Though it enjoys particular popularity in the United States, this subgenre is a global literature, one that has been shaped by the historical legacies of European empire and, more recently, by the forces of globalization and neoliberalism. As such, I examine multispecies memoirs produced by authors living in the United Kingdom, Scotland, Canada, Norway, Kenya, and Antigua, and by authors with descendants from China, Japan, and Lithuania, to name but a few.

My larger project is to understand literature as a multispecies contact zone, a site that is not only populated by and concerned with nonhumans, but also comes into being through relationships with other species. Writing, as I understand it, is a multispecies practice. For some authors — like Lyanda Lynn Haupt who wrote *Mozart's Starling* with a starling on her hands and head most of the time — the act of writing intimately involves nonhumans, while for others writing is performed among pets, houseplants, books on nonhuman species, or even with a stomach full of food. Thinking about literature as arising through relationships with nonhumans compels literary critics to study how and why other species have been actively erased from authorship, even as they play a constitutive role in literary production. It also asks the literary critic to read relationally, to focus on nonhumans and the wider sets of relationships that bring literature and the act of reading into existence. Narratives are always co-written and co-read. The task of the literary critic, then, is to study how stories are mutually produced and to find methodologies for reading across species boundaries, for reading writing that emerges

[9] Ibid. Serenella Iovino and Serpil Oppermann make a similar point, writing, "It is quite arduous for humans to declare their agentic independence in a hybrid, vibrant, and *living* world." Serenella Iovino and Serpil Oppermann, eds., *Material Ecocriticism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), 3.

through entanglements with others. In the context of global extinction and species loss, such an understanding of literature implies that as humans become "adrift in an increasingly empty world," our collective literature will also change, perhaps in ways that reflect this loss.[10] The narratives studied in this project tell stories of the nonhuman lives who touch our own. These stories show creatures ranging from mountain gorillas to longleaf pines to ravens as intelligent, capable, and equal beings who deserve fair treatment, justice, and care.

Selfhood is another site of liberal humanism to be complicated in this study. A constantly shifting set of feelings and understandings informed by personal experience that constitutes how one conceptualizes and imagines their place amid the wider world, the self is central to the construction of the liberal subject and the narrative progression of the memoir genre. This project distinguishes between the "isolated" and "entangled" self, two positions that offer substantially different ways of engaging and navigating the world.[11] The isolated self represents the imagined and idealized subject at the center of liberal humanism: an individual, self-made human who stands apart from everyone else. Such a view of "human beings as individual, isolated, unattached, and unencumbered" misses how humans are interconnected with and interdependent upon others, including nonhuman species, and it produces tremendous suffering for humans and nonhumans

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[10] Nick Jans, *A Wolf Called Romeo* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014), 229.

[11] The point is not to make the isolated and entangled self into caricatures or to establish a false dualism. Rather, I seek to name and explore two very different conceptions of selfhood that influence how humans live with others.

alike.[12] Feminist philosopher Val Plumwood, for example, critiques the "hyperseparated, disembedded self" of liberal humanism, a self premised upon "the individual who stands apart from an alien other and denies his own relationship to and dependency on this other."[13] Noting that this "model of selfhood" primarily benefits elite European men, she argues that the isolated self has long supported hierarchies of "gender, race, class, and species."[14] Performed and legitimized through literature, legal systems, and state institutions, the isolated self severs humans from other beings and entities, and replaces modes of selfhood that do not align with liberal humanism.

One mode under constant threat of erasure by the dominant isolated self is the entangled self, a diverse collection of positions and orientations that acknowledge selfhood as emerging through reciprocal relationships with wider communities of nonhumans and humans. The entangled self exists in stark opposition to the fantasies of detachment and human exceptionalism that undergird liberal humanism. Instead of serving the interests of elites in power, the entangled self is articulated by marginalized and oppressed groups, especially those who depend upon sustained relationships with nonhumans. *Multispecies Memoir* considers how female primatologists, birdkeepers and birdwatchers, colonized gardeners and immigrant foragers, and queer folks who live with pets, among many other groups, have reimagined the boundaries of the self by entering

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[12] Danielle Celermajer et al., "Multispecies Justice: Theories, Challenges, and a Research Agenda for Environmental Politics," *Environmental Politics* 30, no. 1-2 (2021): 119-40, at p. 120.

[13] Val Plumwood, *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* (London: Routledge, 1993), 152, 142.

[14] Ibid., 142, 152.

into sustained, reciprocal relationships with nonhuman species. For some, the entangled self is an inherited belief validated through lived experience, while for others it is acquired through transformational encounters with nonhumans. Writing about this latter group, Donna Haraway explains, "Kin making requires taking the risk of becoming-with new kinds of person-making, generative and experimental categories of kindred, other sorts of 'we', other sorts of 'selves', and unexpected kinds of sympoietic, symchthonic human and nonhuman critters."[15] Influenced by recent work in autobiography studies that theorizes selfhood as a relational endeavor, this project examines how contemporary memoirs expand the boundaries of the self in ways that help humans and nonhumans live better together.[16] Multispecies memoirs understand the self not as an isolated, bounded entity, but rather as an entangled endeavor always arising through relationships with multiple species. As such, this project demonstrates that to be human is to be in relationship with others. Humans cannot speak of the "I" without also speaking of "we."

Scholars from a range of disciplines have taken up projects to redefine the borders of the self, especially in connection to the environment and nonhumans. Drawing upon the tradition of US nature writing, particularly the literature of Henry David Thoreau, one line of thought has proposed abandoning the self altogether. Buell, for instance, argues that in addition to relinquishing material goods and nineteenth-century conveniences, Thoreau engages in "self-relinquishment," the "suspension of ego to the point of feeling the environment to be at least as worthy of attention as oneself and of experiencing

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[15] Donna Haraway, "Staying with the Trouble for Multispecies Environmental Justice," *Dialogues in Human Geography* 8, no. 1 (2018): 102-05, at p. 102.

[16] Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 86-88.

oneself as situated among many interacting presences."[17] In *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*, a modern rewriting of *Walden*, Annie Dillard describes a similar phenomenon when she loses "self-awareness" during long periods of observation and can no longer separate herself from the woods and creek behind her house.[18] Additionally, David Haskell, in *The Songs of Trees*, describes what he calls "unselfing," or the act of leaving the self behind as one experiences nature.[19] For these authors and intellectuals, nature that exists independent of humans can only be accessed when one leaves behind an awareness of the self. Other scholars have sought to reimagine selfhood by moving beyond the figure of the human. Cultural anthropologist Eduardo Kohn describes a transcendent and "distributed" self occurring among the Runa of Ecuador, one that positions humans among a wider "ecology of selves" constituted by the nonhuman actors who co-create the forest.[20] In this "anthropology beyond the human," Kohn describes a community of selves that move past the categories of human and nonhuman. Literary critic Marco Caracciolo makes a similar argument in his study of nonhumans within "we-narratives." He argues that Paul Harding's novel *Tinkers* and Richard Powers's environmental epic *The Overstory* move beyond "the human I" to imagine, instead, wider assemblages that

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[17] Lawrence Buell, *The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of American Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 178.

[18] Annie Dillard, *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* (New York: Harper & Row 1974; New York: HarperPerennial, 1988), 198.

[19] David Haskell, *The Songs of Trees: Stories from Nature's Great Connectors* (New York: Viking, 2017), 149-51.

[20] Eduardo Kohn, *How Forests Think: Toward an Anthropology beyond the Human* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 145, 83.

depart from the human.[21] Herman has also written about what he calls "selfhood beyond the human," an attempt by authors to move beyond an understanding of the self as strictly human.[22] Such approaches assume not only that "the human" is a single, universal category, but also that critics need to move "beyond" this inherently problematic entity. Like Haraway who expresses significant doubt about projects that assume the label of "posthumanism," I understand humanness as a species and historical condition that continuously emerges through multispecies relationships.[23] Addressing environmental crisis should not be about escaping this category; rather it should be about finding and adopting ways to live well with the beings who make human lives possible.

Rejecting moves to abandon the self or to dismantle selfhood by going "beyond" the human figure, my project aligns itself instead with feminist approaches that theorize selfhood as a relational endeavor. The "material memoir" discussed by environmental humanist Stacy Alaimo is an allied project, for example. Material memoirs, Alaimo argues, describe the self as a material entity composed of, and shaped by, toxins. Made legible through scientific and medical knowledge, the "substantial self" underscores the transcorporeal movement of toxins across environments and bodies, and it demonstrates the difficulty of pursuing environmental justice at these sites.[24] Plumwood's "ecological

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[21] Marco Caracciolo, "We-Narrative and the Challenges of Nonhuman Collectives," *Style* 54, no. 1 (2020): 86-97, at p. 94.

[22] Herman, *Narratology Beyond the Human*, 33.

[23] Donna J. Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 17.

[24] Stacy Alaimo, *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010).

self" describes a similar interconnectedness of self and environment.[25] A "relational account" of selfhood that supports the flourishing of humans and nonhumans, the ecological self demonstrates that "My welfare or satisfaction may be essentially connected to the thriving of a particular set of ecosystems, to the welfare of particular animals or plants (and ultimately if more distantly to the thriving of global nature), just as much as to the thriving of human kin."[26] Like the "substantial" and "ecological" self, the entangled self articulated by multispecies memoirs emphasizes that selfhood and the human figure emerge through relationships with wider environments. My project departs from these earlier approaches, however, by focusing on how an expanded sense of self proposes alternate modes of justice. This study asks: How does the entangled self transform the project of justice and the liberal humanist subject at its center?

Justice, then, is the third bastion of liberal humanism that this project critiques and reimagines. Modern systems of justice have depended upon and perpetuated the core values of liberal humanism, while liberal humanist philosophy has viewed justice as a necessary institution for implementing and upholding its basic tenets. Critiques of justice have, since the 1980s, largely focused on the liberal humanist subject at the heart of juridical systems: a rational, universal, and individual human endowed with rights and protected under law. Feminist care theorists were quick to reject justice as a fundamentally flawed and exclusionary endeavor, proposing systems built through care

[25] Plumwood, *Feminism*, 142.

[26] Ibid., 153, 151.

instead.[27] Subsequent work by philosophers Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen proposed a capabilities approach to justice that asked whether, and to what degree, someone can accomplish their life goals and achieve their own version of well-being.[28] As Schlosberg argues in *Defining Environmental Justice*, the capabilities approach not only moved away from the distributive justice paradigm established by John Rawls that focused on the equal distribution of goods and materials, it also enabled scholars to consider nonhuman beings as potential benefactors of justice.[29] Building upon capability theory, Schlosberg proposed "ecological justice," a move to "include aspects of nature itself as participants in a larger community of justice."[30] More recently, legal studies scholars and political theorists have challenged the anthropocentrism of rights, property, and personhood in modern legal and juridical systems. Cary Wolfe, for example, has critiqued rights-based approaches for privileging human positions, calling them "far too blunt an instrument" to remove nonhuman animals from mass suffering.[31] Maneesha

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[27] See Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982). This receives more substantial treatment in Chapter 2, "Avian Care: Conflict, Justice, and the Quotidian."

[28] See Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen, eds., *The Quality of Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); Martha Nussbaum, *Frontiers of Justice: Disability, Nationality, Species Membership* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006); Amartya Sen, "Rights and Capabilities," in *Morality and Objectivity*, ed. Ted Honderich (London: Routledge, 1985).

[29] David Schlosberg, *Defining Environmental Justice: Theories, Movements, and Nature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). See also Schlosberg, "Ecological Justice."

[30] Schlosberg, *Defining Environmental Justice*, 117.

[31] Cary Wolfe, "'Life' and 'the Living', Law and Norm" in *Animals, Biopolitics, Law: Lively Legalities*, ed. Irus Braverman (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2016), xv. See also Cary Wolfe, *Before the Law: Humans and Other Animals in a Biopolitical Frame* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013).

Deckha and Irus Braverman have observed that nonhumans can only participate in the justice system if they are endowed with personhood and therefore recognized as rights-bearing subjects, or if they are owned as property.[32] Although rights and personhood have brought nonhuman species into the operations of justice and have provided some protections, they continue to center a liberal human subject while marginalizing nonhumans. These frameworks require that "the subject of justice always takes the form of the person" and that "beings other than humans must always be represented by, and rely on, the accurate translation of humans."[33] Moreover, in the limited occasions when nonhumans achieve legal standing, courts must account for legal precedence, including its long history of institutionalized anthropocentrism, before issuing a verdict.[34] As these critiques suggest, developing inclusive modes of justice requires rethinking the liberal humanist subject altogether.

This project looks to the entangled self articulated by multispecies memoirs as an alternate subject of justice, one that disrupts and dislodges the liberal human. In doing so, I seek to transform justice into an endeavor that supports human and nonhuman lives. "To conceive of justice to nature, ecological justice," write urban planners Nicholas Low

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[32] Deckha, *Animals as Legal Beings*; Irus Braverman, "Lively Legalities," in *Animals, Biopolitics, Law: Lively Legalities*, ed. Irus Braverman (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2016).

[33] Celermajer at al., "Multispecies Justice," 131.

[34] For a recent example of how legal precedence impedes efforts to argue for personhood and rights, see the habeas corpus case of Happy, an Asian elephant confined at the Bronx Zoo. Lawrence Wright, "The Elephant in the Courtroom," *The New Yorker*, Feb. 28, 2022, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2022/03/07/the-elephant-in-the-courtroom. See also Chapter 3, "Multispecies Violence: Colonialism, Anthropocentric Legal Orders, and the Erasure of Entangled Selves."

and Brendan Gleeson, "it is necessary to reconceive of the basis of justice in the way we think of our 'self' and thus how we define our interests and moral values."[35] Rethinking justice around an entangled, multispecies self shifts the focus of justice away from serving an isolated individual to instead prioritizing the maintenance of reciprocal relationships and the elimination of violence that threatens these relationships.

Multispecies Memoir intervenes within the growing field of what might be called "multispecies justice studies," a coalition of approaches seeking the participation of nonhumans within justice frameworks. Joining scholars such as Danielle Celermajer, Sophie Chao, Thom van Dooren, Donna Haraway, Ursula Heise, Claire Jean Kim, David Pellow, David Schlosberg, Harlan Weaver, Kyle Whyte, and Christine Winter, I pursue cohabitation as the central problem and project of our time. The approaches to multispecies justice imagined and explored here reject the dualism that separates social justice concerns from species conservation and animal welfare issues, a division that feminist theorist Lori Gruen has called a "zero-sum" logic since it depends on prioritizing the needs of another in ways that overlook interdependence and contribute to mutual suffering.[36] As a group of feminist ecowarriors puts it, "Too often, environmental and social justice concerns are pitted against each other. Scholars and activists in one sector too frequently dismiss the others' problems as 'beside the point,' as if it were impossible

[35] Nicholas Low and Brendan Gleeson, *Justice, Society and Nature: An Exploration of Political Ecology* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 133.

[36] For a recent discussion, see Lori Gruen, interview by Laura Perry, "The Future of Animal Studies: A Conversation with Lori Gruen," *Edge Effects*, Aug. 27, 2019, https://edgeeffects.net/lori-gruen/.

to combine both concerns."[37] To give but one recent example, officials overseeing great ape sanctuaries across the African continent felt it was wrong to offer a COVID-19 vaccine to endangered primate occupants before humans could receive their own separate shot.[38] Such logic missed how vulnerabilities are shared, in this case between endangered primates unable to practice social distancing and humans repeatedly overlooked in the global rush to make vaccines available. This study proposes that justice for oppressed groups of humans can only be achieved by pursuing justice for the vulnerable nonhumans who make their lives possible, and vice versa. Doing this work requires pursuing what literary critic and environmental humanist Ursula Heise calls "more-than-human diplomacy," an attentiveness to "cultural differences," especially divergent understandings of justice, and "species differences," including the unique lifeways of species and the needs of specific populations.[39]

As such, I engage multiple approaches to multispecies justice, what I refer to as "modes of multispecies justice." The multispecies memoirs discussed in each chapter demonstrate that there is no single way to go about doing this work, nor should there be. "[W]hile all humans are bound up in ecological relationships inside a multispecies

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[37] Janelle Baker et al., "The Snarled Lines of Justice: Women Ecowarriors Map a New History of the Anthropocene," *Orion*, Nov. 19, 2020, https://orionmagazine.org/article/the-snarled-lines-of-justice/.

[38] Alex Viveros, "U.S. Chimp Sanctuary is Poised to Give its Primates a COVID-19 Vaccine—Will Others Follow Its Lead?," *Science*, Aug. 13, 2021, https://www.science.org/content/article/us-chimp-sanctuary-poised-give-its-primates-covid-19-vaccine-will-others-follow-its.

[39] Ursula K. Heise, *Imagining Extinction: The Cultural Meanings of Endangered Species* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 199.

world," van Dooren explains, "we are not all entangled in the same ways."[40] These diverse relationships produce different ideas about what constitutes justice, with each requiring careful attention and study. The following detailed readings move away from distributive models of justice, including the frameworks of equality and equity, to instead focus on recognition, capabilities theory, and procedural justice as central projects of multispecies justice. Chapter 1, for instance, studies how female primatologists came to recognize nonhuman primates as participants in the production of scientific knowledge in ways that disrupted the boundaries of the isolated self and encouraged species advocacy. Chapters 2 and 4 ask how birdkeepers and queer pet keepers create spaces, routines, and openings for nonhumans to realize their full range of capabilities and to act in ways that best support their species-specific needs. Chapter 3 considers procedural justice, critiquing the fairness of anti-foraging laws and court hearings on wildlife poaching that legitimize violence and sever human-nonhuman relationships. Often operating via extrajudicial means, the modes of multispecies justice considered in this project rarely locate themselves within juridical systems and thought. It may, therefore, strike some readers as unusual to think about the provision of appropriate spaces for birds or the interlocutor role assumed by nonhuman primates in scientific research as kinds of justice. I argue, however, that thinking justice more expansively as the refusal of human isolation and the pursuit of non-violent relationships is vital work in producing more livable worlds.

[40] Thom van Dooren, *Flight Ways: Life and Loss at the Edge of Extinction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 57.

Multispecies Memoir works at the nexus of autobiography studies, multispecies studies, and environmental and ecological justice studies to develop interdisciplinary modes of analysis that relocate narrative, selfhood, and justice from their exclusionary positions crafted by liberal humanism and, instead, consider their circulation among wider collections of species. Individual chapters engage feminist science studies, feminist care theory, colonial discourse analysis and lively legalities, and queer theory, respectively. In addition, each chapter considers the genealogies, roots, and appendages of multispecies studies and what I call, more broadly, the "multispecies turn" occurring within the environmental humanities. In Chapter 1, for example, I argue that feminist science studies, with its interest in reconciling epistemological and ontological approaches, is a precursor of multispecies studies. Subsequent chapters chart the influence of feminist care theory, violence studies, and queer theory on the multispecies turn. In addition to expanding the reaches of multispecies studies, I understand this work as drawing out and clarifying several theoretical projects that play key roles in multispecies research. Though most of the discussion consists of literary analysis, I include interviews, archival materials, and photographs that provide crucial accompanying information and offer additional lenses for studying the intersections of narrative, self, and justice. *Multispecies Memoir* makes three primary interventions in the environmental humanities: 1) it articulates selves as emerging through multispecies relations and, by doing so, positions individuals and cultures among the wider collections of beings who bring us into existence; 2) it asserts that justice for marginalized peoples and justice for other species must be pursued together via entangled subjects; 3) it theorizes literature as a contact zone co-authored and populated by multiple beings.

Chapter Outline

Multispecies Memoir is organized around two sections, each of which proposes modes of coexistence that disrupt liberal humanism and its logics of isolation. The first section, "Entangled Knowledges and Practices," studies how contemporary science and care have opened the boundaries of the self to other beings. This section understands primatology and avian care as structures that provide some of the knowledges, feelings, and experiences needed to reconsider selfhood and to extend concern to nonhuman species, in this case primates and birds. Chapter 1, "The Science of Knowing Others: Species, Researchers, and Entangled Selves," examines the ways female primatologists have written about habituation, the process by which wild animals grow accustomed to the presence of field researchers. Drawing upon feminist science studies, I argue that late-twentieth-century primatologists such as Jane Goodall, Dian Fossey, and Shirley Strum viewed research subjects as agential co-participants in scientific knowledge making to such an extent that they came to know these primates as constitutive of their selves. They practiced what I call, following Haraway, "habituated knowledges," or the epistemic practices that emerge through habituation and position the primatologist's sense of self as coextensive with their study subjects. Dependent upon long-term connections and trust, this research made important interventions not only within the biological sciences, but also the broader cultures of the US, Canada, UK, and Europe. People were asked to acknowledge and confront the intelligence of nonhumans as they simultaneously pursued less violent ways of coming into sustained contact with other species. Chapter 2, "Avian Care: Conflict, Justice, and the Quotidian," considers how modes of care arising through relations with birds expand the limits of selfhood and transform justice into a project of

multispecies reciprocity and interdependence. Turning to feminist care theory to read J. Drew Lanham's *The Home Place*, Irene Pepperberg's *Alex & Me*, and Helen Macdonald's *H is for Hawk*, among other memoirs, I demonstrate that the reciprocal work of humans and birds in giving and receiving care, especially amid the conflicts that emerge from daily life and marginalized identity positions, produces entangled selves. I expand the notion of avian care to encompass activities that are co-produced and often overlooked, including what I call "food care," "spatial care," "vocal-aural care," and "sexual care." By way of conclusion, I study how modes of care discussed by Black birdwatchers assert the indispensability of their bodies and the bodies of birds, and how care activities in bird rehabilitation centers mutually support birds with disabilities and their wildlife rehabilitators. Collectively, these two chapters demonstrate that attentiveness to the lives of others, whether through primate habituation or bird care, can support the rethinking of justice and lead to the improved treatment of humans and nonhumans.

The second section, "Multispecies Violence and Resistance," examines how violence impacts humans, nonhumans, and their relationships with each other, and it considers how humans and nonhumans have joined one another to resist such violence. Chapter 3, "Multispecies Violence: Colonialism, Anthropocentric Legal Orders, and the Erasure of Entangled Selves," studies how British colonialism and modern law systematically impose the singular self while denying interdependent communities of humans and nonhumans the ability to stand before the law. Wangari Maathai's *Unbowed*, Jamaica Kincaid's *My Garden (Book)*, Janisse Ray's *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*, Ava Chin's *Eating Wildly*, and Nick Jans's *A Wolf Called Romeo* describe how colonial

and legal institutions inflict multispecies violence through extractive, possessive, and anthropocentric logics. As this chapter envisions it, multispecies justice provides a framework for addressing and expunging the operations of violence that reach across species borders to injure wider ecological communities and the selves that emerge amid these ecologies. Chapter 4, “Resisting With: The Anti-Normativity of Queers and Pets,” draws upon queer theory to examine how lesbian, gay, and bisexual memoirists have personally identified with their pets. I argue that authors such as Eileen Myles, Lars Eighner, Mark Doty, and Nicole Georges support transgressive behaviors of dogs and cats to collectively defy the heteronormativity associated with pet ownership and domesticity. Naming such collaborative acts “resisting with,” I contend that multispecies resistance can help people and species fight more effectively for our common worlds. The entangled self asks these authors to imagine resistance as a shared set of actions that establish just outcomes for multiple beings affected by multispecies violence.

ENTANGLED KNOWLEDGES AND PRACTICES

CHAPTER I

THE SCIENCE OF KNOWING OTHERS: SPECIES, RESEARCHERS, AND ENTANGLED SELVES

"The question between animals and humans here is,
Who are you? and so, Who are we?"
Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet*

"'Others' are never very far from 'us'."
Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*

"We must stop being scared of our biology and find
new ways to think about our constitutive
entanglement in multispecies worlds."
Thom van Dooren, *Flight Ways*

"If baboons (and dolphins and lions and many other species) are capable
of relating to one another as individuals, this implies that they are also
capable of relating to us that way. . . . This means that our world
is replete with nonhuman beings with whom each of us could
potentially form personal relationships, each with a unique flavor
stemming not just from the characteristics of the two species we
represent but also from the unique attributes of each individual."
Barbara Smuts, *Sex and Friendship in Baboons*

On the same day that the United States declared a national emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) sounded a warning about the vulnerability of wild great apes to the novel coronavirus. The March 13, 2020 statement directed primatologists, animal behavior researchers, site managers, and tourism operators to minimize visitations of great apes, carefully monitor the health of essential staff, stay at least seven meters away from all nonhuman primates, and follow globally recommended sanitation procedures.[1] Three

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[1] "Great apes, COVID-19 and the SAR CoV-2," *International Union for the Conservation of Nature*, March 13, 2020, http://www.internationalprimatologicalsociety.org/docs/Final%20-%20SARS%20CoV-2%20and%20Great%20Apes%20Joint%20Communique%2016-05-20.pdf.

days later, the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund announced that the Karisoke Research Center in Rwanda would implement additional precautionary measures, tracking mountain gorillas from 100 meters away and halting "all other ongoing research activities."[2] Similar distancing and sanitation practices were implemented among orangutan researchers in Sumatra the following week, and the Gombe Stream Research Centre soon followed with their own protective measures which included halting most research activities.[3] Understanding that the likelihood of transmission and infection was quite high given the ease by which apes and other primates contract respiratory diseases from humans, including polio, the common cold, and tuberculosis, international conservation and research programs responded quickly out of an abundance of caution to protect endangered gorillas, orangutans, and chimpanzees from the novel virus.[4] As the three western lowland gorillas at the San Diego Zoo Safari Park who contracted COVID-19 from an asymptomatic employee in January 2021 demonstrated, great apes can contract the virus from humans.[5] By attempting to preserve remaining wild primate populations,

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[2] Tara Stoinsky, "Fossey Fund Response to the Novel Coronavirus," *The Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International*, March 16, 2020, https://gorillafund.org/fossey-fund-response-to-the-novel-coronavirus/; Liz Kimbrough, "Keeping gorillas safe amid COVID-19 concerns," *Mongabay*, March 24, 2020, https://news.mongabay.com/2020/03/keeping-gorillas-safe-amid-covid-19-concerns/.

[3] Hanna Smit, "Reacting to COVID-19: How JGI is responding," *The Jane Goodall Institute of Canada*, https://janegoodall.ca/our-stories/reacting-to-covid-19/; Donna Lu, "Jane Goodall: We must protect chimps from being exposed to Covid-19," *NewScientist*, April 22, 2020, https://www.newscientist.com/article/2241391-jane-goodall-we-must-protect-chimps-from-being-exposed-to-covid-19/.

[4] "Great apes, COVID-19 and the SAR CoV-2."

[5] "Gorilla Troop at the San Diego Zoo Safari Park Test Positive for COVID-19: The Great Apes Continue to be Observed Closely by the San Diego Zoo Global Veterinary

great ape programs sought to preserve the future research agendas of many scientists and their funding institutions, and the profitable tourism industry developed in postcolonial nations to support fragile economies and vulnerable creatures.[6]

Exposure to COVID-19 looked very different for primates trapped in laboratories across the United States, China, and parts of Europe, however. Here, primates — and animals such as transgenic mice, guinea pigs, hamsters, and ferrets — were deliberately infected with the coronavirus in preparation for their role as vaccine test subjects. Because of their genetic and physiological similarities to humans, primates were the most desirable "animal models" for lab studies.[7] Early in their coronavirus coverage, *The New York Times* reported that monkeys were the "most likely to replicate how the disease progresses in humans."[8] Barry Rockx, a virologist at the University of Texas, told *Scientific American* that primates remained "the gold standard when it comes to testing vaccines and therapeutics," and predicted that they would play a central role in developing a widely available vaccine.[9] In experiments that recalled the long history of

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Team," *San Diego Zoo*, January 11, 2021, https://zoo.sandiegozoo.org/pressroom/news-releases/gorilla-troop-san-diego-zoo-safari-park-test-positive-covid-19.

[6] Malavika Vyawahare, "National parks in Africa shutter over COVID-19 threat to great apes," *Mongabay*, March 26, 2020, https://news.mongabay.com/2020/03/national-parks-in-africa-shutter-over-covid-19-threat-to-great-apes/.

[7] Lindsey Carnett, "Texas Biomed: Larger Primates Best Model in COVID-19 Vaccine Study," *The Rivard Report*, June 2, 2020, https://therivardreport.com/texas-biomed-larger-primates-best-model-in-covid-19-vaccine-study/.

[8] James Gorman, "These Lab Animals Will Help Fight Coronavirus," *The New York Times*, March 14, 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/14/science/animals-coronavirus-vaccine.html.

[9] Simon Makin, "From Hamsters to Baboons: The Animals Helping Scientists Understand the Coronavirus," *Scientific American*, May 14, 2020,

violence, pain, and suffering experienced by primates laboring as sacrificial analogs for humans during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, scientists at the University of Oxford and Sinovac Biotech Ltd. in China "dripped the coronavirus directly into the . . . noses or windpipes" of lab monkeys and observed the symptoms that developed.[10] In a similar study, the Texas Biomedical Research Institute injected baboons, macaques, and marmosets with the live virus, then "scanned the primates' lungs, took rectal swabs, measured oral fluids, and took tissue samples from the animals in order to study the virus's effects."[11] They determined that rhesus macaques — the same species that psychologist Harry Harlow at the University of Wisconsin-Madison subjected to horrific tests of social isolation during the 1960s and 70s in order to understand the development of maternal and social relationships — exhibited a similar progression of symptoms to humans and should, therefore, become the preferred test subjects in vaccine trials.[12] Based on such findings, captive rhesus macaques were used to trial the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, the first COVID-19 vaccines approved by the Food and Drug

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https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/from-hamsters-to-baboons-the-animals-helping-scientists-understand-the-coronavirus/.

[10] Lauren Neergaard, "Monkeys, ferrets offer needed clues in COVID-19 vaccine race," *AP News*, June 2, 2020, https://apnews.com/76420d460b0ab82ef843e680903c7017.

[11] Carnett, "Texas Biomed."

[12] Ibid.; Meg Oliver, "Monkey trials show promising COVID-19 vaccine results," *CBS News*, May 20, 2020, https://www.cbsnews.com/news/coronavirus-monkey-trials-harvard-medical-school-promising-vaccine-results/; "Protecting great apes from Covid-19," *The Economist*, May 16, 2020, https://www.economist.com/science-and-technology/2020/05/16/protecting-great-apes-from-covid-19.

Administration for emergency use in the United States.[13] As these examples make evident, the news coverage and scientific literature avoided addressing the suffering associated with trialing coronavirus vaccines on animals. Stanley Perlman, a microbiologist at the University of Iowa known for developing a popular transgenic lab mouse, attempted to defend animal experimentation by dismissing claims to suffering altogether. He told *The New York Times*: "Most of them [the animals tested], don't care at all that they're being infected [with the novel coronavirus]."[14] While it seems unlikely that Perlman's views on COVID-19 experimentation were shared by the majority of virologists and epidemiologists, his statement aimed to distance scientists from animal suffering.[15]

As biotech companies, scientific institutions, and other centers of power and knowledge sought disposable research subjects capable of being silenced during vaccine trials, some researchers went as far to suggest that formerly colonized peoples be recruited. In early April 2020, French doctors Jean-Paul Mira and Camille Locht

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[13] "Pfizer and BioNTech Announce Data from Preclinical Studies of mRNA-Based Vaccine Candidate Against COVID-19," *Pfizer*, September 9, 2020, https://www.pfizer.com/news/press-release/press-release-detail/pfizer-and-biontech-announce-data-preclinical-studies-mrna; Denise Grady, "Moderna Vaccine Test in Monkeys Shows Promise," *The New York Times*, July 28, 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/28/health/coronavirus-moderna-vaccine-monkeys.html.

[14] Gorman, "These Lab Animals Will Help Fight Coronavirus."

[15] The feminist science studies practitioner Donna Haraway argues that the dismissal of animal suffering in laboratory science is patriarchal and unethical. Perlman's outrageous claim that animals "don't care at all" that they are being infected with live coronavirus serves to silence animal research subjects and permit the ongoing practices of lab testing. Donna J. Haraway, "Sharing Suffering: Instrumental Relations between Laboratory Animals and Their People," in *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 69-94.

proposed that COVID-19 vaccines be trialed among Africans before being distributed on other continents. In a television interview Mira said, "[S]hould we not do this study [of COVID-19 vaccines] in Africa where there are no masks, no treatment or intensive care, a little bit like it's been done for certain AIDS studies, where among prostitutes, we try things, because we know that they are highly exposed and don't protect themselves?"[16] Locht then agreed with the statement. A number of African sports stars, medical professionals, and journalists quickly denounced the shocking neocolonial and racist proposition. Writing for the digital publication *Quartz Africa*, Musa Okwonga observed that "the violation of the lives of Africans for the scientific benefit of white Westerners" has been a centuries-old project tied to colonization.[17] Indeed, in Mira and Locht's scheme, a generalized, racialized, and unhygienic Africa would become the viral testing ground that ensured the continued safety and dominance of affluent northerners. By proposing the deliberate exposure of people living on the African continent to COVID-19, Mira and Locht implicitly drew comparisons between the disposability of black African bodies and the bodies of rhesus macaques, baboons, and marmosets subjected to harm in laboratories.

Like all scientific practice and knowledge, the science of COVID-19 (including vaccination development, testing, and experimentation) is a science that draws

[16] Rebecca Rosman, "Racism row as French doctors suggest virus vaccine test in Africa," *AlJazeera*, April 4, 2020, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/04/racism-row-french-doctors-suggest-virus-vaccine-test-africa-200404054304466.html.

[17] Musa Okwonga, "The French doctors who wanted to test vaccines on Africans and Western medicine's dark history," *Quartz Africa*, April 10, 2020, https://qz.com/africa/1836272/french-doctors-say-test-covid-19-vaccine-on-africans-spark-fury/.

boundaries around categories of life. This is a world in which conservationists, primatologists, and animal behavior scientists went to great lengths to protect wild great apes in Rwanda, Tanzania, and Sumatra from exposure to COVID-19 while rhesus macaques, baboons, and marmosets living damaged lives in US, Chinese, and European laboratories were injected with the live virus. This is also a world in which affluent northerners fantasized about using their knowledge, financial resources, and equipment on African bodies to develop a vaccine safe and effective enough to benefit their constituencies. The science that emerged in response to the global pandemic, in other words, proposed that some forms of life and life forms matter more than others. While the science of COVID-19 drew lines around life in ways that extended unjust histories of colonization, conservation, and animal testing, it also redrew some boundaries, especially the limits of the self, in unexpected ways. As a virus that likely moved from bats to another carrier species — perhaps the pangolin, the world's most trafficked mammal — and then to humans near Wuhan, China, COVID-19 is classified as a zoonosis, a disease that moves from nonhuman animals to humans.[18] Public awareness of the novel

[18] Jane Goodall, "COVID-19 Should Make Us Rethink Our Destructive Relationship with the Natural World," *Slate*, April 6, 2020, https://slate.com/technology/2020/04/jane-goodall-coronavirus-species.html; Thom van Dooren, "Pangolins and Pandemics: The Real Source of this Crisis is Human, Not Animal," *New Matilda*, March 22, 2020, https://newmatilda.com/2020/03/22/pangolins-and-pandemics-the-real-source-of-this-crisis-is-human-not-animal/; David Quammen, "We Made the Coronavirus Epidemic," *The New York Times*, January 28, 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/28/opinion/coronavirus-china.html?smtyp=cur&smid=tw-nytopinion; John Vidal, "'Tip of the iceberg': is our destruction of nature responsible for Covid-19?," *The Guardian*, March 18, 2020, https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/mar/18/tip-of-the-iceberg-is-our-destruction-of-nature-responsible-for-covid-19-aoe; Smriti Mallapaty, "Animal source of the coronavirus continues to elude scientists," *Nature*, May 18, 2020, https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-01449-8.

coronavirus's ability to move between nonhuman animals and humans (and vice versa) complicated humanist and western medical notions of the human subject as separate from other species and environments. Arguing that zoonoses "challenge the anthropocentric conception of the subject or the self," Genese Sodikoff describes the interconnected, trans-corporeal, and zoonotic self as a vector of "viral subjectivity."[19] Recognizing the permeability of viral subjects can also, however, encourage some individuals to shore up their beliefs in the bounded, disconnected self, as Donald Trump's claim to taking the anti-malarial drug hydroxychloroquine, zinc supplements, and the antibiotic azithromycin to protect himself from COVID-19 prominently demonstrated.[20] Among its many impacts on this world, the COVID-19 pandemic revealed the degree to which science, species, and selfhood entangle one another.

This chapter charts some of the connections between science, species, and selfhood that have been in play since the 1960s. As a science that writes autobiographical stories of humankind through the study and interpretation of primate behavior, field primatology has inhabited overlapping sites of knowledge production for decades. Primatology demonstrates how scientists, together with research subjects, have rewritten

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[19] Genese Marie Sodikoff, "Multispecies Epidemiology and the Viral Subject," in *The Routledge Companion to the Environmental Humanities*, ed. Ursula K. Heise, Jon Christensen, and Michelle Niemann (New York: Routledge, 2017), 112-19, at p. 113. For more on trans-corporeality see Stacy Alaimo, *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010).

[20] Caitlyn Oprysko, "Trump says he's taking hydroxychloroquine, despite scientists' concerns," *Politico*, May 18, 2020, https://www.politico.com/news/2020/05/18/trump-says-hes-taking-unproven-anti-malarial-drug-265546; Teresa G. Carvalho, "Donald Trump is taking hydroxychloroquine to ward off COVID-19," *The Conversation*, May 21, 2020, https://theconversation.com/donald-trump-is-taking-hydroxychloroquine-to-ward-off-covid-19-is-that-wise-139031.

science and selfhood as mutually entangled practices. Bringing together feminist science studies and multispecies studies to consider how primatology is a cooperative and multispecies practice, I examine the ways several prominent female primatologists wrote about habituation — the process by which wild animals grow accustomed to the presence of field researchers — as a personal practice. Reading autobiographical accounts of the conditioning process leads me to develop the concept of "habituated knowledges," or the mutually produced modes of knowledge that emerge over time through repeated encounters with other species. I argue that primatologists have viewed research subjects as agential co-participants in scientific knowledge production to such an extent they considered these primates a constitutive part of their selves.

The Entanglements of Multispecies Studies and Feminist Science Studies

As the COVID-19 pandemic and speculations about its wildlife origins indicated, western science has shaped how humans come to know and experience other species. Tasked with understanding the physiology, evolution, behavior, and genetics of the world's species, scientists working in the fields of biology, conservation, ecology, and animal behavior generate new knowledges about and ways of relating to a diversity of life forms. Always practiced within the operations of culture and personhood, the labor and knowledges of species science have shaped both broader publics and participating researchers.[21] Popular science magazines, television and film documentaries, and, most recently, social media and publishing companies have provided platforms for scientists to

[21] I use the term "species science" instead of "biological," "life," or "natural" science to call attention to the entangled roles of species in the doings and knowledges of science. The term "species science" centers and renders visible species participation.

reflect upon their own experiences with living beings.[22] These narratives often describe science, especially field research, as a shared practice involving the voluntary or coerced cooperation of multiple species. Cooperation, as discussed in this chapter, describes an ongoing process that brings the researcher and research subjects together in ways that co-configure those involved and the knowledges they produce. Understanding species science as a shared and cooperative practice can, in turn, transform the scientist into a multispecies figure, an individual whose very identity as a scientist is always emerging through their relations with other species. Drawing from magazine articles, television specials, popular science monographs, and multispecies memoirs, this chapter examines how several behavioral scientists and biologists have described science as a multispecies practice that rewrites the boundaries of their selves. As a mode of encounter that structures how humans come to know and be with other species, science is always a *relational* and *cooperative* practice, one that is dependent upon other species and is constantly remaking the researcher in the process.

To understand how science and selfhood are relational and cooperative practices inseparable from one another and involving other species, this chapter draws upon multispecies studies and feminist science studies.[23] Taken together, these critical orientations bring attention to how science depends upon species to construct knowledge

[22] Some examples include *National Geographic*, *Scientific American*, *Discover*, *NOVA*, *Nature*, *Facebook*, *Twitter*, Penguin Press, Simon & Schuster, HarperCollins, and Alfred A. Knopf. This wide array of publishers has allowed scientists to produce multiple narratives that reach large and varied audiences.

[23] I recognize in using these field titles that a wide array of perspectives, methodologies, values, and goals are encompassed under the broad headings of "multispecies studies" and "feminist science studies." My interests and positions within these fields will soon become clear.

claims and further its own goals, and how scientific knowledge and practice always emerge through relational contexts. Despite their shared interests, however, multispecies studies and feminist science studies have spoken past one another. Seeking to inhabit and disrupt this critical lacuna, the following discussion considers how the two fields can work together. The chapter performs what Donna Haraway and Karen Barad call a diffractive analysis, reading multispecies studies and feminist science studies *through* one another to blur boundaries of separation and to dwell with patterns of divergence in the goal of creating more just science.[24] As the chapter makes clear, this is at once a recovery project that locates and reclaims the significant contributions made by feminist science studies to forms of multispecies thought *and* a revisionary project that uses feminist critiques of science to reshape multispecies approaches.

Telling an Alternate Genealogy

Joining other interdisciplinary approaches that shun the strictures of traditional academic disciplines by coalescing under the term "studies," multispecies studies describes a collection of approaches that understand all beings and things — including diverse groups of humans — as constantly emerging through multiple encounters,

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[24] An optical metaphor, diffraction resists the ungrounded transcendence of reflection and its fetishism of the similar. See Donna Haraway, "The Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others," in *Cultural Studies*, ed. Lawrence Grossberg, Cory Nelson, and Paula Treichler (New York: Routledge, 1992), 295-337; Donna Haraway, *Modest_Witness@Second_Millenium.FemaleMan_Meets_OncoMouse: Feminism and Technoscience* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 16, 34, 268; Karen Barad, "Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter," *Signs* 28, no. 3 (2003): 801-31; Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007); Karen Barad, "Invertebrate Visions: Diffractions of the Brittlestar," in *The Multispecies Salon*, ed. Eben Kirksey (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 221-41, at p. 230, 234.

contacts, and relations with other entities.[25] As Thom van Dooren, Eben Kirksey, and Ursula Münster put it, multispecies approaches examine "the multitudes of lively agents that bring one another into being through entangled relations."[26] By attending to processes of "becoming with," to use Haraway's productive phrase, multispecies approaches seek to blur the boundaries and categories that separate humankind from other species while still maintaining an appreciation for the differences that distinguish kinds.[27] Multispecies studies, therefore, makes ontological claims about how multiple worlds actually work, and it seeks to foster respect, appreciation, and attentiveness for diverse forms of life and life forms.[28] While the term "multispecies" has been used by marine biologists and fishery scientists since the 1970s to denote habitats occupied by

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[25] The term "species" is broadly used in multispecies studies to denote differences between kinds. Thom van Dooren, Eben Kirksey, and Ursula Münster, "Multispecies Studies: Cultivating Arts of Attentiveness," *Environmental Humanities* 8, no. 1 (2016): 1-23, at p. 5.

[26] van Dooren et al. "Multispecies Studies," 3.

[27] See Donna Haraway, "The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness," in *Manifestly Haraway* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016), 91-198; Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 4. As Barad remarks, "Differentiating is not about othering/separating. It is about making connections and commitments." Barad, "Invertebrate Visions," 234. For discussions on difference and kinds in multispecies approaches, see Deborah Bird Rose and Thom van Dooren, "Encountering a More-Than-Human World: Ethos and the Arts of Witness," in *The Routledge Companion to the Environmental Humanities*, ed. Ursula K. Heise, Jon Christensen, and Michelle Niemann (New York: Routledge, 2017), 120-28; Ursula K. Heise, "Biodiversity, Environmental Justice, and Multispecies Communities," in *Imagining Extinction: The Cultural Meanings of Endangered Species* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016), 162-201.

[28] van Dooren et. al, "Multispecies Studies"; Anna Tsing, "Arts of Noticing," in *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 17-26; Anna Tsing, "Arts of Inclusion, or How to Love a Mushroom," *Mānoa* 22, no. 2 (2010): 191-203.

several species, it did not come into its current usage until the 2003 publication of Haraway's *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness* when she used terms such as "multispecies futures," "multispecies conservation," and "multispecies kin" to describe worlds in which multiple species coexist.[29] Haraway continued to develop the concept in *When Species Meet* (2008), coining the phrase "multispecies flourishing" to describe the mutual benefits that arise among groups of species.[30] Inspired by Haraway's cohabited worlds, the 2008 publication of Stefan Helmreich's *Alien Ocean: Anthropological Voyages in Microbial Seas* and Eben Kirksey's art exhibit "The Multispecies Salon" at the 2008, 2010, and 2012 meetings of the American Anthropological Association inaugurated the anthropological field of multispecies ethnography.[31] In 2016, the journal *Environmental Humanities* published a

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[29] For examples of early uses of "multispecies" in marine biology and fishery sciences, see Martin A. Buzas, "Spatial Homogeneity: Statistical Analyses of Unispecies and Multispecies Populations of Foraminifera," *Ecology* 51, no. 5 (1970): 874-79; Y.A. Tang, "Evaluation of Balance Between Fishes and Available Fish Foods in Multispecies Fish Culture Ponds in Taiwan," *Transactions of the American Fisheries Society* 99, no. 4 (1970): 708-18. Haraway, "The Companion Species Manifesto," 154, 171, 187.

[30] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 90.

[31] Multispecies ethnographers study "how 'the human' has been formed and transformed amid encounters with multiple species of plants, animals, fungi, and microbes." Eben Kirksey, Craig Schuetze, and Stefan Helmreich, "Introduction," in *The Multispecies Salon*, ed. Eben Kirksey (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 1-24, at p. 1-2. See also S. Eben Kirksey and Stefan Helmreich, "The Emergence of Multispecies Ethnography," *Cultural Anthropology* 24, no. 4 (2010): 545-76; Laura A. Ogden, Billy Hall, and Kimiko Tanita, "Animals, Plants, People, and Things: A Review of Multispecies Ethnography," *Environment and Society: Advances in Research* 4 (2013): 5-24. Some important monographs participating in multispecies ethnography include Thom van Dooren, *Flight Ways: Life and Loss at the Edge of Extinction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014); Anna Tsing, *Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015); Eben Kirksey, *Emergent Ecologies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015).

special edition that brought together the existing genealogies and approaches to multispecies thought under the single umbrella of multispecies studies.[32] Today, environmental studies, environmental humanities, and related fields in the social sciences are experiencing what might be called a "multispecies turn" as evidenced by the rapidly growing use of "multispecies" in articles, monographs, conference presentations, and institutional research initiatives since 2016.[33]

As careful readers may have already detected, many of the guiding concepts, terms, and theories that animate the multispecies turn have their roots directly or indirectly in feminist science studies yet are rarely cited in such a way that credits or even acknowledges their origins. Feminist science studies approaches are quite varied, but they all, to some degree, use insights from feminist theory to critique science as singularly objective, distant, universal, ahistorical, generalized, masculine, value-free, and isolated. Science, according to feminist science studies, must rearticulate its methodologies, its goals, and its practitioners in order to become inclusive and to make accurate claims about the world. Emerging in the 1970s, early feminist critiques sought to make more space for women in science and used contemporary histories to argue that science is

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[32] See van Dooren et al. "Multispecies Studies." For genealogies that consider a wider set of practices associated with, but not directly employing, the concept of multispecies, see Heise, "Biodiversity, Environmental Justice, and Multispecies Communities"; Kirksey et al., "Introduction"; Kirksey and Helmreich, "The Emergence of Multispecies Ethnography."

[33] The Sydney Environment Institute at the University of Sydney and the Nelson Institute at the University of Wisconsin-Madison launched research initiatives in 2019 and 2020 focusing on multispecies research. For many, it seems that the term has become closely associated with posthumanist approaches that seek to decenter and disrupt various substantiations of "the human."

socially constructed.[34] In the 1980s and 90s, scholars practicing feminist standpoint theory, feminist epistemology, and feminist philosophy of science focused attention on science's pervasive androcentrism and questioned whether or not science could or even should be a feminist practice.[35] By the early 2000s, new strains of feminist science studies emerged, including postcolonial feminist science studies, which seeks to better understand the sciences of Indigenous peoples and how western science disproportionately harms colonized women, and several articulations of new materialist and posthumanist theory.[36] The most important and far-reaching insights for multispecies

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[34] For overviews of this period, see Evelyn Fox Keller, "Feminism and Science," *Signs* 7, no. 3 (1982); 589-602; Evelyn Fox Keller, *Reflections on Gender and Science* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

[35] For varied discussions of feminist standpoint theory, see Sandra Harding, *The Science Question in Feminism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986); Patricia Hill Collins, "Learning from the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought," *Social Problems* 33, no. 6 (1986): S14-S32; Sandra Harding, "'Strong Objectivity': A Response to the New Objectivity Question," *Synthese* 104, no. 3 (1995): 331-49; Nancy C.M. Hartsock, *The Feminist Standpoint Revisited & Other Essays* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998); Alison Wylie, "Why Standpoint Matters," in *Science and Other Cultures: Issues in Philosophies of Science and Technology*, ed. Robert Figueroa and Sandra Harding (New York: Routledge, 2003), 26-48; Sandra Harding, "Introduction: Standpoint Theory as a Site of Political Philosophic, and Scientific Debate," in *The Feminist Standpoint Theory Reader*, ed. Sandra Harding (New York: Routledge, 2004), 1-15. For feminist epistemological positions, see Hartsock, *The Feminist Standpoint Revisited & Other Essays*; Lorraine Code, *Theoretical Spaces: Essays on Gendered Locations* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Harding, *The Science Question in Feminism*; Harding, "'Strong Objectivity'"; Harding, "Introduction: Standpoint Theory." For positions on the feminist philosophy of science, see Helen Longino, "Can There Be a Feminist Science?," *Hypatia* 2, no. 3 (1987): 51-64; Helen Longino, *Science as Social Knowledge: Values and Objectivity in Scientific Inquiry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

[36] Sandra Harding, *Science and Social Inequality: Feminist and Postcolonial Issues* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006); Sandra Harding, "Introduction: Beyond Postcolonial Theory: Two Undertheorized Perspectives on Science and Technology," in *The Postcolonial Science and Technology Studies Reader*, ed. Sandra Harding (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 1-31; Suman Seth, "Putting knowledge in its place:

studies arose through debates over objectivism (science as a knowledge system that produces accounts of the real) and subjectivism (science as historically contingent and part of social and cultural contexts). Haraway's situated knowledges, Sandra Harding's strong objectivity, and Barad's agential realism intervened in productive ways to collectively rewrite science as an embedded, emergent, and cooperative practice negotiated among multiple participants.[37] This, in turn, effectively laid the groundwork for theories of becoming and entanglement that are now central to multispecies approaches.

The founding document of multispecies studies demonstrates the degree to which feminist science studies has made multispecies thought possible and the extent to which it has been unacknowledged and elided. In their introduction to multispecies studies, van Dooren, Kirksey, and Münster cite individuals and concepts belonging to feminist science studies without acknowledging their original contexts or histories. Terms that are now keywords for multispecies studies — particularly "entanglement" and "becoming"

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science, colonialism, and the postcolonial," *Postcolonial Studies* 12, no. 4 (2009): 373-88. For new materialist and posthumanist approaches that draw from feminist science studies, see Stacy Alaimo and Susan Hekman, eds., *Material Feminisms* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008); Alaimo, *Bodily Natures*; Angela Willey, "A World of Materialisms: Postcolonial Feminist Science Studies and the New Natural," *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 41, no. 6 (2016): 991-1014.

[37] Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," *Feminist Studies* 14, no. 3 (1988): 575-99; Harding "'Strong Objectivity'"; Karen Barad, "Meeting the Universe Halfway: Realism and Social Constructionivism without Contradiction," in *Feminism, Science, and the Philosophy of Science*, ed. Lynn Hankinson Nelson and Jack Nelson (Dordrecht: Kluwer Press, 1996), 161-94; Karen Barad, "Agential Realism: Feminist Interventions in Understanding Scientific Practices," in *The Science Studies Reader*, ed. Mario Biagioli (New York: Routledge, 1998), 1-11; Barad, "Posthumanist Performativity"; Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*.

— are indirectly attributed to Barad and Haraway, respectively, but their development and use in feminist science studies go unacknowledged.[38] In an especially striking example, the authors develop the phrase "passionate immersion" to describe the researcher's embedded position as part of multispecies communities. Instead of "pretend[ing] to stand apart and aloof from subjects of study," multispecies researchers who practice passionate immersion recognize that "there is no space outside of the action from which to gain absolute or universal knowledge" and therefore consciously position themselves in the fray of ongoing knowledge production.[39] The understanding that knowledge is never universal and is always mutually constructed through situated practices comes directly from feminist science studies and yet the field receives no mention.[40] A similar move occurs when the authors discuss worlding:

> Refusing the choice between unreconstructed realism and an easy relativism—between a singular world 'out there' awaiting description and an idealist free-for-all—the notion of worlding insists on the coconstitution, the material-semiotic

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[38] "Entanglement" and "becoming" are used throughout the article (along with references to Barad and Haraway), but their historical and present uses are not addressed. See van Dooren et al., "Multispecies Studies."

[39] Ibid., 10, 15. van Dooren further develops this concept with his term "situated pluralism" in *The Wake of Crows*, which he attributes to Haraway's "situated knowledges." Thom van Dooren, *The Wake of Crows: Living and Dying in Shared Worlds* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019), 33, 55-56.

[40] In a footnote, the authors do reference Haraway's situated knowledges to explain how "ways of knowing are never innocent—never simply the reporting of an 'external reality'—but, rather, are situated, embodied, and historical practices." van Dooren et al., "Multispecies Studies," 12. They also mention how scholars like Haraway have been "attentive to historical contexts and the complex ways in which scientific practices and knowledges are shaped by politics, gender, and the positionality of the observer." Ibid., 7. The larger body of work from which Haraway's ideas emerged is not mentioned, however.

> interplay, that shapes what is. There is a particular variety of realism—what Karen Barad has called an 'agential realism'—at play here. . . . From this perspective, any absolute division between epistemology and ontology breaks down as worlds emerge and are continually reshaped through dynamic intra-actions.[41]

Worlding, a concept coined by Haraway in *Modest_Witness* and further developed by Barad in *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, emerged in feminist science studies as a way to capture the ongoing dynamism and relationality that continually makes and remakes multiple worlds.[42] The term has been productively used within multispecies studies to describe the process by which multiple species bring one another into being; however, as the above example illustrates, it has been decoupled from its original context.[43]

The active forgetting of feminist science studies has even occurred in field-defining monographs that directly engage questions of science. For example, Helmreich, drawing upon Haraway, discusses what he calls the "cyborg submarine" in *Alien Ocean*, noting that submersible underwater vehicles carrying mostly male scientists blur distinctions "between inside and outside, artifice and environment."[44] His analysis of the boundary disruptions caused by technoscience and the gendered practices of deep-sea microbiology are clearly indebted to feminist science studies. This attribution is never

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[41] Ibid., 12.

[42] Haraway, *Modest_Witness*, 113; Barad, *Meeting the University Halfway*, 392.

[43] See van Dooren et al., "Multispecies Studies"; van Dooren, *The Wake of Crows*.

[44] Stefan Helmreich, *Alien Ocean: Anthropological Voyages in Microbial Seas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 214.

made, however. Instead, Helmreich distances his argument from feminist science studies, at one point introducing Haraway as a "historian of biology."[45] Eben Kirksey's *Emergent Ecologies* also performs analyses strikingly similar to feminist science studies that go unattributed. In the chapter "Xenoecologies," for example, Kirksey identifies connections between female reproduction, *Xenopus* frogs as test subjects, global disease, and biological science. Despite training with Haraway as a graduate student, Kirksey does not mention how feminist science studies made such a multifaceted consideration possible. Similarly, in her discussion of how matsutake science becomes "translated" to fit national agendas and narratives in the western United States and Japan, Anna Tsing offers a complex analysis beholden to feminist science approaches. In *Mushroom at the End of the World*, she describes how matsutake science in Japan promotes human disturbance in forests, and engages site-specific and descriptive practices that consider matsutakes in relation to other species. Matsutake science in the United States, on the other hand, seeks to limit forest disturbance by humans and control mushroom growth through scientific and industrial forms of management implemented by the Forest Service.[46] In her refusal to decouple science from national politics, her critique of the universalizing and reductionist science practiced by the US Forest Service, and her praise of the ongoing, emergent, and descriptive practices of Japanese matsutake scientists, Tsing describes how science operates through national contexts to produce forms of knowledge that satisfy different imaginaries, narratives, and agendas. Such an analysis was made possible by feminist science studies, and yet the field's contributions went unrecognized.

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[45] Ibid., 10.

[46] Tsing, *Mushroom at the End of the World*, 217-23.

In articulating the field's defining interests, methodologies, and goals, multispecies studies has relied upon the boundary-disrupting and relational practices developed by feminist science studies. Some key concepts — such as Susan Leigh Star's question "Cui bono?" and Christine Cuomo's "flourishing" — have been credited as developing from feminist philosophy and theory; however, the feminist history of these terms has never been explored in relation to the project of multispecies studies.[47] van Dooren, who has been deeply influenced by Val Plumwood and Deborah Bird Rose, also moved to credit feminist thought for its role in establishing his version of multispecies ethics. While his remarks in *The Wake of Crows* have significant implications for the history of multispecies studies and his own discussion of multispecies ethics, they are cursory and hidden in an endnote.

> It is undoubtedly the case that much, indeed the vast majority, of the key work on this kind of ethics [i.e. multispecies ethics] is emerging out of or drawing substantially on feminist thought. In particular, this seems to be the case because of a long tradition of feminist ethical thought that emphasizes the value of multiplicity and diversity, the need to engage with situated complexity, the entanglement of the material and the semiotic, the interwoven and mutually

[47] "Cui bono?" and "flourishing" entered the lexicon of multispecies studies through Haraway. For her original engagement with "Cui bono?," see Haraway, *Modest_Witness*, 113. For her original engagement with "flourishing," see Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto*, 95, 145. For the citation practices of subsequent publications in multispecies studies, see van Dooren et al. "Multispecies Studies," 16; Kirksey and Helmreich, "The Emergence of Multispecies Ethnography," 546; Kirksey et al., "Introduction: Tactics of Multispecies Ethnography," 4; Franklin Ginn, Uli Beisel, and Maan Barua, "Flourishing with Awkward Creatures: Togetherness, Vulnerability, Killing," *Environmental Humanities* 4 (2014): 113-23, at p. 114.

reinforcing nature of modes of oppression, and the material and practical nature of ethics (not in addition but as a mode of inquiry).[48]

Despite their significance for van Dooren's argument, these observations have gone unrecognized throughout the rest of his book and the broader matrix of multispecies thought.

Why, then, is it necessary to confront the politics of citation and recognize the formative — and ongoing — role of feminist thought, and feminist science studies in particular, to multispecies projects? Most obviously, acknowledging the contributions of feminist science studies and considering how the two fields work together corrects previous genealogies. There is a tendency for "new" academic fields to distance themselves from their historical precursors as they seek critical legitimacy. To some degree, multispecies studies may have avoided explicit associations with feminist science studies in order to achieve its own institutional authority. As the field develops in the future, however, this avoidance must be exchanged for the willingness to forge connections across modes of thought. Rewriting the genealogy of multispecies studies may also expose and address androcentric bias within the field. Whether intentional or not, the absent presence of feminist science studies and feminist thought more broadly points to an internalization of androcentrism. Sustained engagement with feminist science studies must render the multispecies turn inhospitable to such harmful views. There is a need, therefore, to tell an alternate genealogy of multispecies studies, one that focuses on the contributions of feminist science studies and is held alongside the field's existing

[48] van Dooren, *The Wake of Crows*, 222.

histories.[49] As the two figures who influenced multispecies thought to such a degree that they brought the field into being, Haraway and, to a lesser extent, Barad are the interlocuters of this retelling. In using disciplinary histories to bring feminist science studies and multispecies studies together, the goal is to not only recover a critical genealogy but also identify ways in which the two fields can converse about species science.

Since the mid-1980s, Haraway's scholarship has sought to understand how boundaries are constructed, maintained, and disrupted in the modern worlds of technoscience. Boundaries are made real through cultural and material processes, and they have political, social, and ecological ramifications. As the cyborg, OncoMouse, and companion species have made clear, dwelling with the figures who/that disrupt the boundaries separating nature from culture and male from female can tell a great deal about the operations of power. For Haraway, feminism provides a way to inhabit, understand, and delight in the always-gendered disruptions of technoscience.[50] Haraway's early work on cyborgs and situated knowledges in the mid-1980s established the critical landscapes that would become central not only for her own scholarship, but also for feminist science studies and, much later, multispecies studies. With the

[49] As Haraway makes abundantly clear across her oeuvre, single origin stories have the tendency of displacing the histories of marginalized groups, especially those told by women, colonized peoples, and people of color. Multiple origin stories must always be told and held in tension together.

[50] She describes *A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century* as "an argument for *pleasure* in the confusion of boundaries and for *responsibility* in their construction." Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century," in *Manifestly Haraway* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016), 5-90, at p. 7.

publication of *A Cyborg Manifesto*, the cyborg became Haraway's model for understanding and inhabiting the boundary crossings of technoscience. Situated knowledges, in turn, offered a way to dwell alongside the messiness of cyborgian disruption, a way to actively resist (techno)science's androcentric myths of transcendence, bifurcation of subject and object, and detached universalism.[51] Taken together, the cyborg and situated knowledges provided a powerful feminist apparatus for confusing and subverting dominant categories of knowledge production and for disrupting uneven operations of power.

While boundary-crossing animal figures were implicated in Haraway's prior readings of technoscience, they became explicitly foregrounded in *Primate Visions* and *Modest_Witness*. Here, the great apes studied by field primatologists and the transgenic OncoMice used in laboratories figure as "both us and not-us," as not-quite-human analogs that have been used by science to tell us about ourselves.[52] As such, great apes and OncoMice "occupy the border zones" of nature and culture that are constantly being redrawn by science.[53] In advocating for scientific practices that are situated (not isolated from sociopolitical life), context-specific (not transcendent), and localized (not universal), Haraway rewrote the agency of animals in scientific practice. She explains, "When biology is practiced as a radically situational discourse and animals are experienced/constructed as active, non-unitary subjects in complex relation to each other

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[51] Haraway, "Situated Knowledges."

[52] Haraway, *Modest_Witness*, 82.

[53] Donna Haraway, *Primate Visions: Gender, Race, and Nature in the World of Modern Science* (New York: Routledge, 1989), 1.

and to writers and observers, the gaps between discourses on nature and culture seem very narrow indeed."[54] In other words, practicing biological science — or any science dealing with species, for that matter — as situational recasts the animal or species under consideration as an active, relational agent constantly co-constructing the science being done. By eliminating detachment, universalism, and transcendence, situated knowledge practices "require that the object of knowledge be pictured as an actor and agent, not as a screen or a ground or a resource."[55] Haraway, in effect, repositions animals and other species as active co-participants engaging in the practices of science. To be a "modest witness," therefore, is to recognize the mutually reinforcing situatedness that makes scientific inquiry possible.

The understanding that species and other research apparatuses actively co-create the knowledges and practices of science opens up the broader possibility that multiple entities are constantly encountering one another in a range of contexts, and that through these encounters, they bring one another into being. It should be no surprise that the three monographs responsible for creating this sea-change in understanding our many mutable worlds — Haraway's *The Companion Species Manifesto* and *When Species Meet*, and Barad's *Meeting the Universe Halfway* — play prominent, if not central, roles in most work engaging multispecies thought. Although *The Companion Species Manifesto* has received far less attention in multispecies studies than Haraway's later, more authoritative *When Species Meet*, the manifesto-style essay began making use of the term "multispecies" to describe collective existence premised on ways of "living well together

[54] Ibid., 375.

[55] Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 592.

with the host of species with whom human beings emerge on this planet at every scale of time, body, and space."[56] Conceding that companion species, particularly dogs, "might be better guides through the thickets of technobiopolitics" than cyborgs, Haraway studies what she calls the "co-constitutive relationships" that have made the inherited histories and sciences of canine domestication, breeding, and training possible.[57] In a move that simultaneously draws from her earlier observations regarding the co-construction of science, echoes Barad's posthumanist performativity and intra-action, and anticipates her more fully formed concept of "becoming with," Haraway argues that partners in relationships are always emerging through their encounters with one another. They cannot, therefore, preexist the relating.[58] This idea, as argued earlier, has become a guiding concept for multispecies studies, yet its roots lie in feminist critiques of science's claims to detachment, transcendence, and universalism.

Collectively, *Meeting the Universe Halfway* and *When Species Meet* refined the theory of becoming discussed above and established the conditions that made the emergence of multispecies studies possible. Heavily influenced by Haraway's oeuvre, Barad's monograph united her ideas from earlier publications under the framework of agential realism, an "epistemological-ontological-ethical framework" that embraces the snarl of knowing, being, and ethics, and resists the divisions of human and nonhuman,

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[56] Haraway, "The Companion Species Manifesto," 116.

[57] Ibid., 102, 103-04.

[58] Ibid., 98.

material and discursive, and nature and culture.[59] She argues that the entanglements of bodies, practices, and ways of being are responsible for co-creating our many shared worlds. Central to entanglement is the always-ongoing process of intra-action, or the way in which entities emerge through their relatings. As Barad explains in the opening preface, "This book is about entanglements. To be entangled is not simply to be intertwined with another, as in the joining of separate entities, but to lack an independent, self-contained existence. Existence is not an individual affair. Individuals do not pre-exist their interactions; rather, individuals emerge through and as part of their entangled intra-relating."[60] Developed through Barad's feminist reading of Bohrian quantum physics, the conjoined concepts of entanglement and intra-action have become central to multispecies studies. In fact, entanglement is now synonymous with multispecies approaches and may be more often associated with multispecies studies than feminist science studies.[61] Fully bringing these conversations into the realm of species, Haraway's *When Species Meet* explicitly connects the grounded feminist theories of entanglement and co-becoming to

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[59] Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, 26. Some of Haraway's most influential concepts for Barad include "apparatuses," "figures," and "diffraction." See Haraway "The Promises of Monsters"; Haraway, *Modest_Witness*, 11, 13, 16, 22.

[60] Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, ix.

[61] For examples where Barad has been written out of the conversation and where the term has been directly associated with multispecies scholarship, see Donna Houston et al. "Make kin, not cities! Multispecies entanglements and 'becoming-world' in planning theory," *Planning Theory* 17, no. 2 (2018): 190-212; Mara Gennaro, "Love Stories, or, Multispecies Ethnography, Comparative Literature, and their Entanglements," *ACLA State of the Discipline Report*, 2015, https://stateofthediscipline.acla.org/entry/love-stories-or-multispecies-ethnography-comparative-literature-and-their-entanglements. For other examples in the founding documents of multispecies studies, see Kirksey and Helmreich, "The Emergence of Multispecies Ethnography"; van Dooren et al., "Multispecies Studies"; Kirksey et al., "Introduction: Tactics of Multispecies Ethnography."

species thinking. Developing her ideas from *A Companion Species Manifesto*, Haraway draws upon her earlier work and Barad's agential realism to argue that all species, beings, and things emerge through entangled processes of "becoming with" others.[62] She uses the term "multispecies" throughout her book, arguing that to think and act from an entangled position requires practicing an ethics of cohabitation that considers how humans can live well with inherited histories and relationships.[63] Science practiced with species, she argues, must perform such an ethics.[64]

As central figures of feminist science studies and guiding, although not-quite-fully claimed, figures of multispecies studies, Haraway and Barad render visible the historical connections between the fields to the point where multispecies studies is perhaps best understood as a critical offshoot of feminist science studies. The point of this critical retelling is not to erase important distinctions such as methodological and historical divergences, but rather to position feminist science studies at the center of multispecies research in order to rectify the field's erasure of feminist thought and to identify common projects that make use of *both* feminist critiques of science and multispecies perspectives. Several projects shared by feminist science studies and multispecies studies have significant and far-reaching effects not only for this chapter, but also for a wide range of fields. First, boundary transgression — particularly of borders that separate humans and other species from complex entanglements — is

[62] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 4, 165, 208.

[63] This is the same ethics that van Dooren discusses as being influenced by feminist thought. Ibid., 134.

[64] Ibid., 69-94.

embraced in all its forms. Unsettling dominant ways of knowing and being requires embracing figures, practices, and methodologies that at once render boundaries and their processes of construction visible while also confusing these divisions. This work seeks to create alternate worlds supportive of multiple species and positions. Second, humans, species, and material entities are always collectively emerging through ongoing relational practices with one another. Humans, in other words, come into being through their relations and encounters with other species, and species come into being through their relations with one another and humans. Mutual entanglement is a disruptive and radical form of boundary transgression. Finally, attending to boundary disruptions and entangled processes of co-becoming has significant repercussions for understandings of species science. Species are inescapably bound up in scientific practice and in the development of scientific knowledge. As beings who practice their own forms of agency that either support or resist experimental designs, species shape the processes of science to varying degrees. Species science is a multispecies practice requiring either voluntary or forced cooperation. Rather than viewing science as *about* species, science is practiced *with*, *through*, and even *by* species.

Taken together, these allied projects raise evocative questions about species, science, and selfhood. Namely, if species co-construct scientific inquiry and knowledge, how do they shape the researcher, their practices, and their sense of self? How have scientists who are aware of their entanglements with research subjects spoken and written about their multispecies senses of self in popular texts? And how do these narratives rewrite the memoir by rewriting science, and vice versa? These questions guide and animate the rest of the chapter. Using the projects shared by multispecies studies and

feminist science studies identified above, the following section examines an array of texts produced by field primatologists to understand how species science rearticulates the personal as collective. Beginning with female field primatologists and their writings about wild primate habituation, the supposed neutral and impersonal position of the objective scientist is discarded and replaced with the feminist and multispecies understanding that science, life writing, and selfhood are, at once, collective activities emerging through entangled, intra-active practices with other species.

PRIMATOLOGY AND HABITUATED KNOWLEDGES

Primatology, to a degree unparalleled by other sciences, uses animal research subjects to reflect upon what it means to be human. The gendered, raced, classed, abled, and sexed entity known as "the human" is constructed through a science that makes sense of nonhuman primate behavior. The categories and experiences of humankind, in other words, emerge through scientific interpretations of the lives of other species. Primatology, therefore, may best be understood as an autobiographical practice articulated at the species level, an attempt to write the histories, behaviors, and actions that define a generalized humankind. Far from independent constructions, however, the species autobiographies written by primatologists can only come into existence through a host of nonhuman primates tasked with providing ample behavioral and physiological data as study subjects. Despite their attempts at purification, the autobiographies of humankind produced by primatology are *multispecies* narratives through and through. In their search for the origins of "man," society, marriage, war, male dominance, aggression, language, toolmaking, heterosexuality, and the nuclear family, the autobiographical narratives of white, western primatology have also participated in what Haraway calls "a

syntax of patriarchy."[65] Partly as a reaction to the discipline's patriarchal roots and oppressive androcentrism, female field scientists including Jane Goodall, Dian Fossey, Shirley Strum, Linda Fedigan, Barbara Smuts, Sarah Blaffer Hrdy, and Biruté Galdikas collectively rewrote primatology's research interests, methodologies, and autobiographical narratives.[66] Among their most important and lasting contributions has been the understanding that the field researcher's sense of self, positionality, and science are always being shaped by the ongoing, mutual relations established with primate research subjects.[67] Through their revisionary work, field primatology became a relational and cooperative practice that remade the boundaries of science, species, and selfhood.

Many, if not the majority, of these new understandings became clear to primatologists during the long and challenging initial periods of field research when they sought to establish familiarity and even trust with wild primate populations. Primatologists refer to the extended period of acquaintance before rigorous data

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[65] Haraway, *Primate Visions*, 165. This discussion does not engage Japanese primatology which has different origins, research practices, and narratives. Instead, I focus on the primatologies developed in the United States and the United Kingdom.

[66] This point will become clear in the subsequent analysis. For now, see Haraway, *Primate Visions*; Shirley C. Strum and Linda M. Fedigan, "Changing Views of Primate Society: A Situated North American Perspective," in *Primate Encounters: Models of Science, Gender, and Society*, eds. Shirley C. Strum and Linda M. Fedigan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 3-49; Evelyn Fox Keller, "Women, Gender, and Science: Some Parallels between Primatology and Developmental Biology," in *Primate Encounters: Models of Science, Gender, and Society*, eds. Shirley C. Strum and Linda M. Fedigan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 382-97.

[67] When I use the term "positionality," I am referring not only to the material and discursive positions that one occupies during a specific moment in time, but also how one navigates these positions.

collection can begin as habituation. Typically, habituation is deemed successful when the researcher becomes convinced — through a primate group's behaviors or hormone samples — that they are being ignored by the group under observation and can, therefore, record data that reflect the group's daily activity patterns as they would appear without the researcher's presence.[68] As a way of knowing and coming to be with other species in the multispecies contact zones of modern behavioral science, habituation makes it apparent that species play co-constitutive roles in scientific knowledge- and world-making processes. Moreover, because it requires sustained close contact and the development of what some primatologists have called mutual trust, habituation is a process that remakes the scientist's sense of self.[69] Rather than understanding selfhood as operating independently from the species being studied, the primatologists considered in this section view their senses of self and identities as developing through the relations and scientific practices they share with research subjects.

This section studies how Goodall, Fossey, Strum, Smuts, and Galdikas, in particular, have written and spoken about habituation as a cooperative, multispecies practice that altered their senses of self. As some of today's best-known scientists, these

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[68] Caroline E.G. Tutin and Michel Fernandez, "Responses of wild chimpanzees and gorillas to the arrival of primatologists: behaviour observed during habituation," in *Primate Responses to Environmental Change*, ed. Hilary O. Box (New York: Chapman and Hall, 1991), 187-97, at p. 187.

[69] For considerations of trust, see Shirley Strum, "Life with the Pumphouse Gang: New Insights into Baboon Behavior," *National Geographic*, May 1975, 672-91, at p. 678; Jane Goodall, *Through a Window: My Thirty Years with the Chimpanzees of Gombe* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1990), 219, 243; Dian Fossey, *Gorillas in the Mist* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1983), 12; Sy Montgomery, *Walking with the Great Apes: Jane Goodall, Dian Fossey, Biruté Galdikas* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1991), xvi.

primatologists have influenced people's behaviors toward and relationships with other species. Through dozens of *National Geographic* television specials and magazine articles, public lectures, and popular books produced from the early 1960s to the mid-1990s, these behavioral scientists transformed habituation into the preferred method of encountering and coming to know animals not only in field research, but also in the everyday lives of broader publics. Indeed, the ability to perform habituation without the need of specialized training and expensive equipment has allowed the technique to be widely adopted and practiced.[70] Despite the concept's widespread use, however, habituation has been undertheorized within the sciences and the circumscribed operations of popular culture. In what follows, I propose habituation as a keyword for the environmental humanities, one that opens inquiry into the lives of other species and fosters what van Dooren, Kirksey, and Münster call "arts of attentiveness."[71] Attending to the feminist and multispecies knowledge-making practices that emerge through encountering other primates in the field leads me to develop what I call "habituated knowledges," or the grounded knowledges and their attendant actions brought about through patterns of habituation that expand the limits of the scientist's self. Through the following account, primatology's narrative archives can be productively read as a precursor of later multispecies memoirs.

[70] Wildlife living in places that range from people's backyards to national parks have grown accustomed to the presence of people. As I argue in the chapter's final section, the ecotourism industry now relies upon predictable encounters with wild creatures in order to maintain safety and turn a profit.

[71] van Dooren et al., "Multispecies Studies," 16-17.

Habituation

Habituation, as practiced by field primatologists, developed within the larger context of animal experimentation during the twentieth century. The concept emerged in the first decade of the 1900s when animal physiologists began studying the diminishment of physical responses to repeated external stimuli. The reactions of feline and canine test subjects to repeated clicking noises and "electrical stimulation" were found to decrease over the length of exposure.[72] By studying how a laboratory subject's body responded to a range of stimulants, physiologists developed increasingly complex models to explain the reduction or complete loss of physical responses. While the first primatologists to write about habituation did not acknowledge the contributions made by animal physiologists, they implicitly drew upon physiological theories of diminished response over time in their development of primate habituation.[73] Clarence Ray Carpenter is credited as the first primatologist to develop the contemporary practice of habituation when he sought to accustom a group of howler monkeys on Barro Colorado Island in Panama to his continued presence over several months in the early 1930s.[74] "If an observer remains near howlers for a long period of time, daily for a month or more," he

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[72] Richard F. Thompson, "Habituation: A History," *Neurobiology of Learning and Memory* 92, no. 2 (2009): 127-134, at p. 128.

[73] Lys Alcayna-Stevens, "Habituating field scientists," *Social Studies of Science* 46, no. 6 (2016): 833-53, at p. 833-34; Elizabeth A. Williamson and Anna T.C. Feistner, "Habituating primates: processes, techniques, variables and ethics," in *Field Laboratory Methods in Primatology: A Practical Guide*, eds. Joanna M. Setchell and Debora J. Curtis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 33-49, at p. 33.

[74] Michele L. Goldsmith, "Habituating Primates for Field Study: Ethical Considerations for African Great Apes," in *Biological Anthropology and Ethics: From Repatriation to Genetic Identity*, ed. Trudy R. Turner (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005), 49-64, at p. 50.

noticed, "they become somewhat neutrally conditioned or adapted to him, and react minimally when he is present. They may be said to behave almost normally while being observed even though an observer is very near them."[75] Attempting to "observe the activity of howlers as it would have occurred had there been no observer present," Carpenter practiced what he called, using the dry language of detached science, "direct observation following neutral conditioning of the animals to the observer."[76] By regularly following a group of howler monkeys over an extended period of time, Carpenter learned that he could become a "neutral" presence among the group which, in turn, allowed him to observe "normal" howler monkey behavior. He articulated, in other words, the central practices of primate habituation. In moving from physiology to primatology, the concept underwent several crucial transformations. Freed from the laboratory and its attendant regimes of clinical experimentation, habituation moved into the field to mingle with wild groups of primates. Also, no longer a collection of physiological observations and theories, habituation became a powerful method for learning about primates who share ancestry, DNA, and worlds with humans.[77]

By the 1950s and 60s, habituation had become a methodological standard for field primatology. Most often described as "the acceptance by wild animals of a human observer as a neutral element in their environment," habituation allowed researchers to

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[75] C. R. Carpenter, *A Field Study of the Behavior and Social Relations of Howling Monkeys* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1934), 23.

[76] Ibid., 22, 23.

[77] For more on habituation as a method, see Alcayna-Stevens, "Habituating field scientists," 834.

come into close proximity with primates.[78] This, in turn, enabled them to accurately identify individuals for longer-term studies and observe primate behaviors with great detail.[79] George Schaller, a primatologist who helped standardize habituation techniques in his influential study of mountain gorillas, remarked that his attempts to "advance, sit, and remain in full view of the animals . . . over a period of days and weeks" led the gorillas to remain "relatively unaffected" by his presence and eventually yielded "unbiased data."[80] While primates could grow familiar to the presence of researchers through provisioning (i.e. establishing feeding stations) or, to a lesser degree, the use of camouflaged blinds, the gradual process of locating and following animals until close observation could be regularly achieved became the preferred standard because it allowed for more reliable and longer-term data collection.[81] For many researchers, the length of the process varied depending on the species and group being studied, and also on the behavioral and physiological parameters established to determine successful habituation.[82] It was generally understood, however, that all wild primates responded in

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[78] Tutin and Fernandez, "Responses of wild chimpanzees," 187.

[79] Goldsmith, "Habituating Primates for Field Study," 50.

[80] George B. Schaller, *The Mountain Gorilla: Ecology and Behavior* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1963), 22.

[81] Tutin and Fernandez, "Responses to Wild Chimpanzees," 187-88. Schaller opted for habituation over provisioning and blinds for these reasons. See Schaller, *The Mountain Gorilla*, 22-23.

[82] Williamson and Feistner, "Habituating primates," 34; Thomas M. Butynski, "Africa's Great Apes," in *Great Apes & Humans: The Ethics of Coexistence*, eds. Benjamin B. Beck et al. (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001), 3-56, at p. 36; Katherine T. Hanson and Erin P. Riley, "Beyond Neutrality: the Human-Primate Interface During the Habituation Process," *International Journal of Primatology* 39 (2018): 852-77, at p. 870-71.

predictable behavioral patterns. Research subjects first sought to avoid the scientists by fleeing, then, after persistent approaches, became aggressive and threatening toward their pursuers, then grew curious about the new individuals in their lives, and eventually, it was believed, became indifferent to researcher presence.[83]

In addition to providing access to the daily workings of primate lives, habituation became a standard, widespread practice among field primatologists because it allowed for the accurate collection of detailed information without the need to kill the research animals. Following their naturalist precursors, male primatologists during the first half of the twentieth century — including Carpenter — shot primates in order to study their health and physiology. It was not uncommon for these men to kill animals during safaris in Africa or research trips in Central and South America when they were "collecting" infants for zoos in Europe and the US.[84] Habituation offered an alternate, life-affirming method of study, one that became increasingly necessary during the 1950s and 60s as most primate species living in equatorial regions became endangered due to the intersecting violence of habitat loss, wildlife trade, wars, and industrial resource extraction.[85] Viewing primates through binoculars, not the sights of a gun, followed the broader adoption of conservation practices occurring in recently liberated countries,

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[83] Diane M. Doran-Sheehy et al., "Habituation of Western Gorillas: The Process and Factors that Influence It," *American Journal of Primatology* 69 (2007): 1354-69; Tutin and Fernandez, "Responses to Wild Chimpanzees."

[84] Haraway, *Primate Visions*, 24, 31, 41.

[85] Colin A. Chapman, Michael J. Lawes, and Harriet A. C. Eeley, "What hope for African primate diversity?," *African Journal of Ecology* 44, no. 2 (2006): 116-33; Heise, "Biodiversity, Environmental Justice, and Multispecies Communities."

especially those in equatorial Africa.[86] As colonial game parks became converted into wildlife sanctuaries, so, too, were the practices of primatology.[87]

Most treatments of habituation in the primatology and animal behavior literature begin by emphasizing the need for the researcher to maintain "neutrality" among their research subjects. Fedigan, for example, defines habituation as "Repeated neutral contact until the animal loses its fear of [the] researcher."[88] Similarly, Elizabeth Williamson and Anna Feistner describe the process as "Repeated neutral contacts between primates and humans [that] can lead to a reduction in fear, and ultimately to the ignoring of an observer."[89] Neutrality, therefore, designates the intended actions of the researcher toward their study subjects and also an achieved behavioral effect that is eventually earned. In other words, the researcher must remain neutral toward the primates being

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[86] See Mahesh Rangarajan, "Parks, Politics and History: Conservation Dilemmas in Africa," *Conservation & Society* 1, no. 1 (2003): 77-98; Reuben M. Matheka, "Decolonisation and Wildlife Conservation in Kenya, 1958-58," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 36, no. 4 (2008): 615-39.

[87] For a history of game reserves in South Africa, see Jane Carruthers, *The Kruger National Park: A Social and Political History* (Durban, South Africa: University of Natal Press, 1995); Rob Nixon, "Stranger in the Eco-Village: Race, Tourism, and Environmental Time," in *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (2011; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 175-98. The contemporary practices of field primatology developed within the contexts of postcolonial liberation in Africa, Southeast Asia, and Central and South America, and also within the contexts of institutional power in the US and UK. For a succinct history of the field, see Strum and Fedigan, "Changing Views of Primate Society."

[88] Linda Marie Fedigan, "Ethical Issues Faced by Field Primatologists: Asking the Relevant Questions," *American Journal of Primatology* 72 (2010): 754-71, at p. 758.

[89] Williamson and Feistner, "Habituating primates," 33. They also note, "The key to success [in achieving habituation] is persistent, regular and frequent neutral contact with the same individuals." Ibid., 46. For additional discussions of neutrality in habituation, see Alcayna-Stevens, "Habituating field scientists," 834; Hanson and Riley, "Beyond Neutrality."

studied by not intervening in their daily behaviors, and they also earn a neutral position in the primate group once they are ignored. Although the actions and behaviors that Carpenter called "neutral conditioning" are said to be applied to the primate population under observation through "neutral contacts," only the researcher in this model practices neutrality toward others and becomes a neutral subject. Even worse, however, the use of such a concept suggests that the researcher can stand apart from those they study. Haraway exposes the myth of such a position when she says, "Ignoring social cues is far from neutral social behavior."[90] As it will soon become clear, the neutrality of habituation is both impossible to achieve and it closes off the relational potential shared among the scientist and the species studied.

Additionally, the few critical discussions generally dismiss habituation as a benign, temporary project that must be completed before the real science of primatology can begin. Until the last decade, habituation was viewed as a harmless procedure that could have very few, if any, ill effects on research subjects.[91] As Fedigan puts it, "The

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[90] Donna Haraway, "Encounters with Companion Species: Entangling Dogs, Baboons, Philosophers, and Biologists," *Configurations* 14, no. 1-2 (2006): 97-114, at p. 108. See also Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 24.

[91] Recent research produced from the vantage of feminist ethics has illuminated several ways primates are harmed by the persistent presence of scientists. As Williamson and Feistner observe, the costs are "borne largely by the animals themselves." Williamson and Feistner, "Habituating primates," 34. Some of the many costs of habituation include increased stress levels which cause infertility, brain damage, and weakened immune systems; greater vulnerability to poachers who primates might see as friendly; the introduction of harmful diseases, as seen with the COVID-19 pandemic; increased risk of inbreeding; and increased risk of primates wandering onto agricultural and urban lands where they are not welcome. Goldsmith, "Habituating Primates for Field Study," 52-54; Butynski, "Africa's Great Apes," 36-37; Fedigan, "Ethical Issues," 760; Williamson and Feistner, "Habituating primates," 45-46. Some studies still claim, however, that observers can have no influence on the behavior of the primates they observe. For a recent defense of habituation, see Crofoot et al., "Does watching a monkey change its behaviour?

most fundamental, pervasive and seemingly harmless method in the ethologist's repertoire is that of quietly following the study subjects as they travel through their home range."[92] A seemingly "neutral" process that can be applied to all primate groups without concern, habituation is widely used as a necessary step toward data collection. Like setting up camp or donning protective laboratory gear, behavioral conditioning is a routine activity that must be completed in order to begin practicing science. As Caroline Tutin and Michel Fernandez explain, "The process is rarely described, as it is commonly regarded as a means to an end; namely the progression to a state that allows the natural behaviour of a species to be observed and documented."[93] Largely viewed as a means to accomplish the end goal of knowledge creation, habituation has been given little critical interest. While accustoming primates to one's presence has become viewed as an inevitable process that will eventually happen, it is not uncommon for attempts to habituate chimpanzees and lowland gorillas to fail and for research plans to cease.[94] Examples like these illustrate that habituation requires the cooperation of the group being studied and that this process is far from inevitable. Reinforcing the view of habituation as an achievable end goal, the process is usually understood to be complete once an appropriate number of regular contacts have been made over an extended period of time. Phrases such as "Once the apes are habituated" and "Knowing when your primate is

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Quantifying observer effects in habituated wild primates using automated radiotelemetry," *Animal Behaviour* 80 (2010): 475-80.

[92] Fedigan, "Ethical Issues," 760.

[93] Tutin and Fernandez, "Responses to Wild Chimpanzees," 187.

[94] See, for example, ibid., 187-88; Doran-Sheehy et al., "Habituation of Western Gorillas," 1355.

habituated" are common throughout the primatology literature.[95] Claims like these, however, often sit uncomfortably alongside arguments that habituation is "an ongoing process" or "a process without end."[96] At once viewed as an achievable end and an always-ongoing process, familiarizing primates with human researchers points to the incongruencies inherent within these activities.

Read collectively, the typical approaches to behavioral conditioning view these actions as strictly linear and unidirectional. Habituation is a set of controlled actions and behaviors directed toward groups of primates in a systematic fashion by human researchers.[97] In this model, the scientists are fully in control of the process, and the primates studied simply go along with the project in predictable ways. Habituation is understood to be a one-way process: scientists are responsible for habituating primate groups. This dominant view of encountering other species has not been shared by all primatologists, however. A radically different picture emerges through the popular narratives of Goodall, Fossey, Strum, Smuts, and Galdikas, one that describes habituation as a *cooperative*, *emergent*, *situated*, *ongoing*, and *multispecies* process negotiated among the practicing scientist and the primates under observation. Drawing upon a collection of views that align with feminist science studies and multispecies perspectives, these authors

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[95] Butynski, "Africa's Great Apes," 36; Williamson and Feistner, "Habituating primates," 39. See also Doran-Sheehy et al., "Habituation of Western Gorillas," 1355; Alcayna-Stevens, "Habituating field scientists," 835; Hanson and Riley, "Beyond Neutrality," 853.

[96] Williamson and Feistner, "Habituating primates," 40; Alcayna-Stevens, "Habituating field scientists," 847.

[97] Goldsmith, "Habituating Primates for Field Study"; Alcayna-Stevens, "Habituating field scientists," 835.

critique habituation as unidirectional, anthropocentric, neutral, removed, and complete. At the same time, they propose that this process rewrites the primatologist's sense of self.

Habituated Knowledges and Selfhood

In a satisfying historical twist, the primatologists best known today for writing about habituation are all women, not the men who developed and standardized the concept. Since the 1970s and 80s when female scientists began redefining the discipline, primatology has sought to eliminate its pervasive androcentrism and establish what Fedigan calls an "atmosphere of intellectual goodwill toward women and toward feminist issues."[98] Developing in a post-WWII research environment flush with federal funding, behavioral field primatology sought to bring together ethology's focus on wild animal instincts and anthropology's focus on the evolutionary development of humankind.[99] Guiding figures such as Sherwood Washburn argued that detailed studies of the behaviors, habits, and lives of nonhuman primates can offer insights into the evolution of human behaviors.[100] The pursuit of knowledge about humankind was, however, always a search for the origins of the modern, superior, western, white "man" and a justification for the privileged, dominant position of this "man" in the home, workplace, and environment.[101] Led by male researchers, primatology of the 1950s and much of the 60s

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[98] Strum and Fedigan, *Primate Encounters*, 47.

[99] Haraway, *Primate Visions*, 120-21; Stuart A. Altmann and Jeanne Altmann, "The Transformation of Behaviour Field Studies," in *Essays in Animal Behaviour: Celebrating 50 Years of Animal Behaviour*, eds. Jeffrey R. Lucas and Leigh W. Simmons (Burlington: Elsevier Academic Press, 2006), 57-79.

[100] Strum and Fedigan, *Primate Encounters*, 5.

[101] Haraway, *Primate Visions*, 10, 145-47, 151.

focused on male dominance and aggression as the defining features of primate societies. Early studies followed a handful of large, combative males over a few weeks or months, determining that adult males are not only group leaders but are also responsible for ensuring a group's success.[102] With primatology's androcentrism on full display, it is not surprising that the first women could only enter the discipline with the approval, financial support, and intellectual backing of a prominent male scientist responsible for telling the twentieth century's most potent story of the origins of "man." During the late 1950s and 60s, the Kenyan-born archaeologist Louis Leakey mentored, and romantically and sexually pursued, a group of women who would come to be known as "the Trimates."[103] Leakey selected Goodall, Fossey, and Galdikas to begin long-term studies of chimpanzees, gorillas, and orangutans in the hopes that their research would yield new insights into hominid toolmaking and aggression. Participating in the syntax of patriarchy, Leakey believed that young, untrained women — with their "mind[s] uncluttered and unbiased by theory" — made ideal field primatologists.[104] As Galdikas

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[102] Females, infants, and adolescents were largely ignored unless they came into a male's sphere of influence. Strum and Fedigan, *Primate Encounters*, 5.

[103] The Trimates never addressed Leakey's romantic and sexual advances in their public writings. However, shortly after meeting Leakey in 1957, Goodall wrote in a letter, "Old Louis really is infantile in his infatuation and is suggesting the most impossible things. I have absolutely no intention of getting involved with him in the ways he suggests." Jane Goodall, *Africa in My Blood: An Autobiography in Letters, The Early Years*, ed. Dale Peterson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000), 118. Fossey had a different relationship with Leakey, one where she accepted his gifts and love letters. Montgomery, *Walking with the Great Apes*, 86-87.

[104] Jane van Lawick-Goodall, *In the Shadow of Man* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1971), 6. See also Barbara Jampel, dir., *Among the Wild Chimpanzees* (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 1985), DVD; Haraway, *Primate Visions*, 151; Montgomery, *Walking with the Great Apes*, 71.

explains, "He staunchly believed that women made better observers than men. Women were more perceptive, he claimed, and better able to see details that at the time might seem unimportant. . . . Women were also more patient. Finally, he claimed, women did not excite aggressive tendencies in male primates the way men did, however unintentionally. Men, he conceded, made better camp managers."[105] At times embracing and at other times rejecting Leakey's sexist and essentialist beliefs, the Trimates entered a strongly gendered relationship under Leakey's tutelage. Leakey was at once a rejected husband and an accepted patriarch; they referred to him as "Fairy Foster Father" and even called him their "spiritual father."[106] At once Leakey's daughters and love interests, the Trimates — and other women involved in field primatology — were also viewed as mothers who, it was argued, intuitively knew how to care for and understand nonhuman primates, the infantilized versions of humankind.[107] Caught up in the gendered world of

[105] Biruté M.F. Galdikas, *Reflections of Eden: My Years with the Orangutans of Borneo* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1995), 49. Goodall repeated this claim at a joint talk for The Leakey Foundation. Biruté Galdikas, Dian Fossey, and Jane Goodall, "Man & Ape" (lecture, The Leakey Foundation, May 2, 1981), box 48, folder 3, Harold T.P. Hayes Papers (hereafter cited as HHP), Special Collections, Z. Smith Reynolds Library, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem. See also Jane Goodall, interview by Krista Tippett, illustrated by Diana Ejaita, *Orion: People and Nature*, Autumn 2020, 72-81, at p. 80.

[106] Jane Goodall, *Africa in My Blood*, 195; Galdikas, *Reflections of Eden*, 62, 385. Leakey's parents were Christian missionaries and he remained deeply religious throughout his life. "Spiritual father" carried religious and disciplinary indebtedness.

[107] For discussions of female primatologists being viewed as mothers, see Haraway, *Primate Visions*, 145, 149; Brian E. Noble, "Politics, Gender, and Worldly Primatology: The Goodall-Fossey Nexus," in *Primate Encounters: Models of Science, Gender, and Society*, eds. Shirley C. Strum and Linda M. Fedigan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 436-62, at p. 441. Galdikas embraced a mothering role, portraying herself as a mother to orphaned orangutan infants throughout her book. See Galdikas, *Reflections of Eden*.

primatology, female scientists faced significant hostility by male colleagues and commentators who viewed them as interlopers in a discipline designed by and for men. In one infamous instance of hatred and vitriol, the journalist Harold T.P. Hayes published an article in *Life* magazine denouncing Fossey as "a scientist who stopped caring about science" and excoriating her research as anthropomorphic "*anti*-science."[108]

In spite of the tremendous challenges faced by women who sought to carry out fieldwork with primates, these researchers rewrote the field, launched primatology into the public spotlight, and eventually became some of the most well-known and recognizable scientists of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. With their speaking events, public writing, authoritative scholarly work, and appearances on national television, Goodall, Fossey, and Galdikas — and Strum and Smuts, to a lesser extent — attracted significant attention among fellow primatologists and broader publics. While their professional training varied, they all studied with the field's founding figures, began fieldwork either before or during their graduate programs, and became publicly known early in their research.[109] Goodall's success at Gombe Stream, in particular, laid the

[108] Harold T.P. Hayes, "The Dark Romance of Dian Fossey: Caring for Gorillas More than People Was Fatal," *Life*, November 1986, 64-70, at p. 65. This article became the starting point for the 1988 film *Gorillas in the Mist* starring Sigourney Weaver and also his later book *The Dark Romance of Dian Fossey*. Hayes's article was published two years after Fossey's death. For more on the critiques against Fossey, see Noble, "Politics, Gender, and Worldly Primatology," 453-54; Camilla de la Bédoyère, *No One Loved Gorillas More: Dian Fossey Letters from the Mist* (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2005), at p. 141.

[109] Goodall and Fossey trained with Robert Hinde at Cambridge University; Galdikas trained at UCLA; Strum trained with Washburn at UC Berkeley; and Smuts trained at Stanford University. Goodall began studying chimpanzees in the Gombe Stream Reserve (later named the Gombe Stream National Park) in 1960; Fossey started her studies of mountain gorillas at the Karisoke Research Center in 1967; Galdikas began her research with orangutans in the Tanjung Puting Reserve (which also later became a park) in 1971;

groundwork for subsequent female primatologists. Breaking from previous fieldwork conventions which stipulated that the researcher spend a few weeks to a few months observing a primate group, Goodall argued that long-term, intergenerational data about the lives of chimpanzees was needed in order to adequately understand their behaviors and complex societies. She spent over two and a half decades studying the chimps of Gombe, and, with sixty years of uninterrupted data, her work has become the longest-running animal behavior study. Goodall also broke from primatology's obsession with dominant male primates, instead working to identify and understand each individual chimpanzee, including adult females, adolescents, and infants. In a controversial practice, she assigned names to each chimp and followed individuals for several hours or, in some cases, several days to collect personalized data. She argued that all individuals must be studied if primatologists were to produce detailed knowledge about primate societies. Goodall's practices cannot be described as "feminist," but they do reveal a sharply divergent perspective about the aims and practices of field research. Attempting to reproduce Goodall's success, many female primatologists followed her lead. By the mid-1970s, her practices had become commonplace and led to a major shift in theorizing social competition and reproductive success. Influenced by sociobiological theory and feminist movements, Strum and Smuts demonstrated that female primates — olive baboons, in their case — were responsible for choosing male reproductive partners and that females, with their role as family caretakers and their strong friendship bonds,

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Strum started studying olive baboons in Gilgil, Kenya, in 1972; and Smuts began her research also with olive baboons in Kenya in 1976.

formed the core, stable units of primate groups which ultimately determined success.[110] In this critical rewriting, females and their associated social units became the central interests of primatology. The reconsideration of social bonds, reproductive success, and group structure marked a turning point in the field. As Haraway remarks, women have been "more authoritative in field primatology whatever their numbers" since the mid-1970s.[111]

Part of their success — and part of their colleagues' envy and frustration — came from their willingness to write public-facing texts and appear in glossy photographs, prime-time television specials, and documentary films. As the sociologist Amanda Rees notes, "primatologists have . . . consistently been more willing than members of other disciplines to provide accounts of their lives and work in magazines, books, and TV documentaries."[112] The "popularization of science" was in full swing during the 1960s, 70s, and 80s as the baby boomers grew up, publications targeted more niche segments of the population, and journalists began taking an increased interest in science.[113] With the

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[110] Shirley C. Strum, *Almost Human* (New York: Random House, 1987); Barbara B. Smuts, *Sex and Friendship in Baboons* (New York: Aldine Publishing Company, 1985); Strum and Fedigan, *Primate Encounters*, 18; Erika Lorraine Milam, "Making Males Aggressive and Females Coy: Gender Across the Animal-Human Boundary," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 37, no. 4 (2012): 935-59, at p. 949; Keller, "Feminism and Science," 591-92.

[111] Haraway, *Primate Visions*, 293.

[112] Amanda Rees, "Reflections on the Field: Primatology, Popular Science and the Politics of Personhood," *Social Studies of Science*, 37, no. 6 (2007): 881-907, at p. 883.

[113] Bruce V. Lewenstein, "Was There Really a Popular Science 'Boom'?," *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 12, no. 2 (1987): 29-41; Roger Cooter and Stephen Pumfrey, "Separate Spheres and Public Places: Reflections on the History of Science Popularization and Science in Popular Culture," *History of Science* 32, no. 3 (1994): 237-67.

organization's long history of participatory engagement, The National Geographic Society produced television specials, glossy magazines, and professional monographs that had, as one critic put it, "an enormous circulation effect."[114] The Society also provided grants for primatology research, funding the work of Goodall, Fossey, Galdikas, and Strum for many years. In exchange, these scientists wrote articles for the *National Geographic* magazine, hosted board members and company photographers, and starred in *National Geographic* TV specials.[115] Their stories about exploration, adventure, scientific discovery, and animal behavior captivated millions of readers and viewers.[116] As Haraway observes, *National Geographic* "made Fossey, Galdikas, and above all, Jane Goodall, into household figures."[117] Research subjects such as David Greybeard, Flo, and Digit became household names, as well. Book publishers noticed the popularity of these narratives and were quick to offer contracts for longer and more up-to-date retellings. Houghton Mifflin, Random House, and Little, Brown and Company all made lucrative book deals with the scientists.

The contributions made by Goodall, Fossey, Strum, Smuts, and Galdikas to the popularization of science exposed the degree to which discourses of femininity, colonization, and environmentalism have been written into primatology. Indeed, part of

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[114] Noble, "Politics, Gender, and Worldly Primatology," 460; Haraway, *Primate Visions*, 157-58.

[115] Every publication explicitly thanks The National Geographic Society for providing research funds.

[116] Goodall's first *National Geographic* magazine article appeared in 1963 with three million copies printed. Goodall, *Africa in My Blood*, 196.

[117] Haraway, *Primate Visions*, 158.

their public success came from their ability to translate the science of primatology in such a way that it became legible to popular audiences in the United States. As Tsing observes, scientific practices and knowledges are always being "translated" to serve the interests and goals of dominant narratives.[118] In Goodall's first *National Geographic* television special, for example, she is shown as a practicing scientist who makes unprecedented discoveries, and yet she is also constantly referred to and marked as a young "girl" who has not attained her professional degree and, even more importantly, has not yet married.[119] In the eyes of most readers and viewers, she only acquired maturity and professionalism once she married *National Geographic* photographer Hugo van Lawick the following year.[120] Strum had similar experiences while writing her first article for the magazine. In one particularly shocking moment, the male editors asked for fewer photographs of the troop of baboons nicknamed the Pumphouse Gang and more photographs with her in the frame because they found her "attractive."[121] For many readers, viewers, and editors of *National Geographic*, the worth of these women was in their ability to translate their science into patriarchal expectations of femininity, not in their ability to practice strong science. Likewise, research environments were also

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[118] Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World*, 217-18.

[119] Marshall Flaum, dir., *Miss Goodall and the Wild Chimpanzees* (Washington, D.C.: The National Geographic Society, 1965), DVD.

[120] See her subsequent *National Geographic* article: Jane van Lawick-Goodall, "New Discoveries Among Africa's Chimpanzees," *National Geographic*, December 1965. With her new name and title as Baroness Jane van Lawick-Goodall, she opens the article by describing her return to Gombe with Hugo shortly after their wedding. Much to their joy as a recently married couple, Flo the chimpanzee had given birth to a new baby. The baby chimp became part of Goodall's nuclear family.

[121] Haraway, *Primate Visions*, 159-60.

translated to fit the imaginaries of readers and viewers. The Trimates frequently referred to Gombe, Karisoke, and the Tanjung Puting Reserve as the Garden of Eden and as untouched wilderness. Attempting some literary flair, Goodall writes that the forests of Gombe "surely, have changed little since Christ walked the hills of Jerusalem."[122] Galdikas describes the rainforests of Borneo as "our Garden of Eden," the "isolated and pristine" place "where our ancestors evolved."[123] Similarly, Fossey calls the Parc National des Volcans a "wet wilderness."[124] Despite video footage and extensive descriptions of camp activity that demonstrate otherwise, they all describe themselves as working "alone" in their study areas.[125] In the *National Geographic* article "My Life Among the Wild Chimpanzees," Goodall is photographed washing her hair alone in one of Gombe's many streams. Calling attention to the lack of pollution in such a remote place, the caption describes the water as "pure enough to drink."[126] The environmental

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[122] Goodall, *Through a Window*, 241.

[123] Galdikas, *Reflections of Eden*, 6, vii. In a 1981 talk at The Leakey Foundation, Galdikas even called the orangutans of Sumatra "gardener[s] in the Garden of Eden." Galdikas, Fossey, and Goodall, "Man & Ape," HHP.

[124] Fossey, *Gorillas in the Mist*, x. Fossey's fieldnotes tell a very different story, describing her research area as overrun by herds of grazing cows. In one humorous note from her first season of fieldwork, she interrupts her observations of a mountain gorilla group to mention that "[a] single cow gives a prolonged wail from below as if in pain." Dian Fossey, "Fossey's Notes on Gorilla Research Project," box 37, folder 13, 234, HHP.

[125] Flaum, *Miss Goodall and the Wild Chimpanzees*; Jeff Myrow and David Saxon, dir., *Monkeys, Apes, and Man* (Washington, D.C.: The National Geographic Society, 1971), DVD; Robert M. Campbell and Robert M. Young, dir., *Search for the Great Apes* (Washington, D.C.: The National Geographic Society, 1976); Jampel, *Among the Wild Chimpanzees*.

[126] Jane Goodall, "My Life Among Wild Chimpanzees," *National Geographic*, August 1963, 284-85.

discourse present in these narratives coupled primatology's search for human origins with the biblical origin story of Eden while supporting dominant views that wild animals can only be found in wilderness untouched by humans. At the same time, it engaged colonial and neocolonial conservation practices that have physically and imaginatively removed Indigenous peoples from lands in order to create parks and research sites, and it evoked images of a "wild Africa" distant enough from the United States that it remained unpolluted by modern activities.[127] Unsurprisingly, much of this research was funded by multinational petroleum corporations wreaking havoc in the equatorial countries where wilderness was believed to still exist. The National Geographic Society received large contributions from Gulf Oil, and Exxon directly funded Smuts's baboon research.[128] As these examples illustrate, the popularization of primatology required ongoing translation to make science "readable" by public spheres.

In their magazine articles, television and film documentaries, and popular books, these five primatologists described how the habituation process is entangled with similar social and identity categories. As Goodall fully understood when she set out to study the chimpanzees of Gombe, conditioning primates to the continual presence of scientists was a necessary step toward conducting multi-year research and identifying individuals. Long-term studies of all group members required primates to be familiar with humans. This process, however, looked different for each researcher. Goodall changed tactics during her first years at Gombe, beginning with attempts to follow the chimpanzee group

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[127] For more on the ways in which western conservation projects have displaced Native peoples, see Mark Dowie, *Conservation Refugees: The Hundred-Year Conflict between Global Conservation and Native Peoples* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2009).

[128] Haraway, *Primate Visions*, 134-35; Smuts, *Sex and Friendship in Baboons*, xvi.

and then provisioning them with bananas. Once the chimps became aggressive at feeding times, she abandoned provisioning altogether and minimized direct contact. She would frequently touch chimpanzees when permitted; however, she stopped this practice to achieve scientific rigor and to ensure her own safety.[129] Goodall arrived at Gombe in mid-July 1960 and she reported early results by mid-September. In a letter to her family she wrote, "They are getting used to us [the research team and Vanne, her mother]. When I was up on my own the other day I heard them in the trees down below & yards away — 15 perhaps. They retired, but only just out of sight. I could hear them moving about in the leaves. 10 minutes later 17 adults, 3 females carrying their babies, filed past — only 20 yards away. They all knew I was there, but didn't care a bit."[130] While these behaviors were a promising start, it took a year until Goodall felt that habituation was well underway. In July 1961, she wrote to her uncle Eric: "Chimps are <u>extremely</u> friendly — I don't mind how far I scramble after them now because I know that there is a very good chance that they will <u>not</u> go away when I eventually reach them."[131] It took yet another year before Goodall could report the following news to her family regarding the chimpanzee David Greybeard: "David G — yes — he has TAKEN BANANAS FROM MY HAND. So gently. No snatching."[132] Her excitement about making close contact with the chimps, especially David Greybeard, is evident in these passages.

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[129] van Lawick-Goodall, *In the Shadow of Man*, 139.

[130] Goodall, *Africa in My Blood*, 160.

[131] Ibid., 184.

[132] Ibid., 220.

Inspired by Goodall's success, Fossey visited Gombe in January 1967 before departing to study mountain gorillas. Working in dense vegetation on the slopes of volcanos, Fossey tracked and made regular contact with several gorilla groups. It took her ten months of consistent, repeated contact before she saw any results. During routine observation, Peanuts, a young male, met Fossey's gaze, an extremely rare act for most primates since making eye contact with another is an intimidation strategy. She interpreted his gaze as one of "inquiry and of acceptance," and cabled Leakey the news: "I'VE FINALLY BEEN ACCEPTED BY A GORILLA."[133] It took another two years until the gorillas entered into close physical proximity and touched her.[134] Galdikas shared these experiences as she navigated the rainforests of Borneo, but the orangutans she followed had vastly different behaviors from the social primates most commonly studied by primatologists. Orangutans are "semisolitary" apes, preferring their own company over engaging with others.[135] Habituation, therefore, cannot proceed as a communal process involving a group of primates, but rather involves approaching and following individuals. Galdikas explains, "orangutans must be habituated one at a time. . . . With each new orangutan I had to start from the beginning."[136] After a visit to Gombe to learn conditioning techniques in 1971, Galdikas began initiating regular contacts with a

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[133] Fossey, *Gorillas in the Mist*, 141. Leakey, it was said, carried this message in his pocket for several years and showed it to anyone who expressed interest. See Galdikas, *Reflections of Eden*, 48.

[134] Fossey, *Gorillas in the Mist*, 141. Unlike Goodall, Fossey permitted and even welcomed close contact with her primate research subjects.

[135] Galdikas developed the term "semisolitary." See Galdikas, *Reflections of Eden*, 25, 243.

[136] Ibid., 252-53.

female orangutan she named Beth. Within just a few days, she noticed a change in Beth's behavior: "[B]y the fifth day Beth seemed slightly less disturbed by my presence. She seemed to be getting used to me!"[137] For some orangutans, such as a large male named "Throat Pouch," it took many months before they stopped fleeing her advances. Strum and Smuts also closely followed their research subjects and reported early success, although they did not have to negotiate densely forested terrain. Conducting fieldwork near Gilgil, Kenya, in the Great Rift Valley, Strum and Smuts pursued two savanna baboon troops by vehicle and on foot. After several months of persistent following in 1972, the Pumphouse troop finally "tolerated" Strum's presence (see Figure 1.2). [138] As she recalls in *Almost Human*, "It had taken months, but it had finally happened: I could wander through the troop at will, seemingly invisible. I could identify each baboon at a glance."[139] Smuts studied an adjacent group known as the Eburru Cliffs troop and had even better success. After just four weeks of following the baboons in 1976, stopping when they directly looked at her, and then following them again, Smuts was able to observe the troop from just five meters away. Within six months she could walk among them.[140] Read collectively, these experiences demonstrate that the gradual process of habituation requires significant patience on the behalf of both the researcher and those being studied. The degree to which success in behavioral conditioning impacted these primatologists also becomes clear. Each researcher recalled specific moments when they

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[137] Ibid., 101.

[138] Strum, "Life with the Pumphouse Gang," 678.

[139] Strum, *Almost Human*, 38.

[140] Smuts, *Sex and Friendship*, 27.

felt less distanced from the primates under study. For Goodall, Fossey, and Galdikas, these moments were marked by feelings of intense joy and excitement.

The habituation process, as discussed by these primatologists, is deeply personal. Encounters with research subjects are described in first person and the actions that occur are described in relation to the speaking narrator. Through habituation, the scientist relentlessly presents their body and behaviors to wild primates who, at first, tend to flee and then gradually grow accustomed to their presence. This requires a significant personal investment on the behalf of the researcher. "Personal," in this context and in the context of feminist and multispecies thought, must not be understood as an exclusionary category, however. Enlightenment intellectuals such as John Locke crafted "the person" as a single, individuated entity who stood alone from all others. Imagining the ideal person as a white, European male, Locke argued that a person must possess "reason and reflection" and, as "a thinking intelligent Being," must be able to "consider it self as itself."[141] Through the logic of Enlightenment rationality, "the person" became the dominant category of social and rights-based discourse. Women, Indigenous peoples, animals, children, people with disabilities, and people of color, to name a few groups, have been excluded from possessing personhood and the privileges afforded by this category. At the same time, "the personal," and the feelings that accompany this designation, have been rejected by androcentric science in the pursuit of universal and transcendent knowledge.[142] As such, Native, postcolonial, multispecies, and feminist

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[141] John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Peter H. Nidditch (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 335.

[142] Keller, *Reflections on Gender and Science*, 9.

scholars have critiqued the concept in ways that have redefined and broadened personhood. Feminists, with their declaration that "the personal is political," have led a particularly thorough reframing that embraces personal standpoints and rejects the category's exclusivity. Within feminist science studies, Evelyn Fox Keller argued for the place of the personal in science. She observed that dominant discourses understand science as an impersonal endeavor, a pursuit for knowledge that does not impact one's personal views and that yields universal, impersonal data.[143] Noting that this view is androcentric and misleading, Keller argued that "science is a deeply personal as well as a social activity."[144] More recently, multispecies studies has drawn from the work of Barad and Haraway to argue that the personal is always a multispecies configuration. As Haraway explains, "To be one is always to *become with* many."[145] For something to be characterized as personal does not mean that it exists independent of others. Instead of understanding the personal as a category of being that applies to a single individual and no one else, it is more useful to understand the term in its broadest sense, as a referent to a (human or nonhuman) person. In this more expansive reading, the personal can exist alongside the collective. One can recognize, in other words, that their life is made possible by multiple species *and* they can recognize their actions as coming from their (multispecies) person, as personal. Habituation is a personal science in all of these ways:

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[143] Ibid., 8-9.

[144] Ibid., 7. By seeking to banish the personal, she concluded, science "contains precisely what it rejects: the vivid traces of a reflected self image." Ibid., 70.

[145] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 4.

it shapes the researcher, produces situated knowledges, and embraces collective existence.

As a personal practice, habituation is entangled with the identity categories of gender and race. Goodall argued that chimpanzees, particularly adolescent males involved in the process of conditioning, were more aggressive toward female researchers at Gombe. "In general," she writes, "chimpanzees are more likely to take liberties with humans of the female sex. Some adolescent males, for instance, clearly attempt to dominate female researchers at the time when they are struggling to dominate females of their own kind."[146] Expanding upon this claim in her memoir *Through a Window*, she describes how Goblin, an aggressive adolescent male, frequently disrupted her observations and used threatening behavior to push her around. All chimps, she concludes, are "by and large, far more respectful of men."[147] Goodall rejects Leakey's claim that "women [do] not excite aggressive tendencies in male primates the way men [do]" and instead suggests that establishing familiarity is a process that men, not women, are better suited to perform.[148] Despite Goodall's protests, women were viewed as the ideal candidates for habituating wild primates. "Typecast" as nature lovers and animal caretakers, female researchers were seen as having greater compatibility with other species.[149] Goodall and Galdikas, for example, were frequently shown in films and

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[146] Jane Goodall, *The Chimpanzees of Gombe: Patterns of Behavior* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), 57.

[147] Goodall, *Through a Window*, 139.

[148] Galdikas, *Reflections of Eden*, 49.

[149] Strum, *Almost Human*, 61. See also Haraway, *Primate Visions*, 149.

photographs or described in texts as going barefoot among their research subjects.[150] Behaving like chimpanzees and orangutans, Goodall and Galdikas walked without shoes to show their affinity with wild primates and nature. In the *National Geographic* television special "Miss Goodall and the Wild Chimpanzees," the narrator, voiced by Orson Welles, calls attention to the similarities that link Goodall to the chimps of Gombe, punning in a scene that shows Goodall playing barefoot with several chimps that she is now on "equal footing" with them because of her habituation efforts.[151] To walk barefoot as a female scientist is to identify with, and become like, wild nature.

Race also structures habituation in defining ways. Goodall invariably refers to herself as a "strange pale-skinned primate," a "strange white ape," and a "white-skinned ape" from the perspective of the Gombe chimps.[152] Galdikas similarly calls herself a "pale-faced primatologist," a "white primate," and a "pale intruder."[153] As white scientists born in the United Kingdom and Canada, Goodall and Galdikas use skin color to signal their lack of belonging among chimps and orangutans, and also among Tanzanians and Indonesians. Here race crosses species boundaries; identifying as white and pale marks a difference in species affiliation. At the same time, however, skin color

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[150] Flaum, *Miss Goodall and the Wild Chimpanzees*; Jampel, *Among the Wild Chimpanzees*; van Lawick-Goodall, "New Discoveries Among Africa's Chimpanzees," 825; van Lawick-Goodall, *In the Shadow of Man*; Campbell and Young, *Search for the Great Apes*; Galdikas, *Reflections of Eden*, 281.

[151] Flaum, *Miss Goodall and the Wild Chimpanzees*.

[152] Goodall, "My Life Among Wild Chimpanzees," 281; van Lawick-Goodall, *In the Shadow of Man*, 61, 72, 268; Goodall, *The Chimpanzees of Gombe*, 2.

[153] Birute Galdikas, "Orangutans: Indonesia's People of the Forest," *National Geographic*, October 1975, 444-473, at p. 448; Galdikas, *Reflections of Eden*, 110, 113.

signals their affiliation with primatology, a science practiced "nearly exclusively by white people," and their membership among white, northern readers.[154] Racial categories have also been used to justify habituation as an activity singularly belonging to white scientists. Fossey and Strum only allowed white researchers to engage in behavioral conditioning, for example. Concerned that mountain gorillas could become too friendly around black Rwandan and Native poachers, Fossey writes, "I remain deeply concerned about having habituated gorillas to human beings. This is one reason I do not habituate them to members of my African staff."[155] Strum cites a similar reason for initially refusing to involve black Kenyan researchers, arguing that the Pumphouse baboons had "many unpleasant experiences around black people."[156] In these examples, exclusionary access to primates is justified by an apparent concern for the safety of research subjects. White scientists are cast as beneficent conservationists whereas local people are portrayed as harmful poachers who threaten animal bodies and the long-term viability of scientific projects.[157] While whiteness was the primary category of racial identification

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[154] Haraway, *Primate Visions*, 7.

[155] Fossey, *Gorillas in the Mist*, 57.

[156] Strum, *Almost Human*, 196.

[157] Although poaching was an utmost concern, especially for Fossey, viewing black individuals as potential threats to the operations of science revealed the degree to which primatologists used racial gatekeeping to control access to primate populations. As the postcolonial ecocritic Rob Nixon explains, "The colonial rescripting of wildlife scarcity as a black problem—which helped rationalize the early twentieth-century creation of national parks [especially in South Africa]—depended on demonizing blacks as barbarous poachers whose relationship to wildlife was one of illegality and threat while depending, conversely, on mythologizing whites as stewards of nature whose conservationist principles evidenced a wider civilizational superiority." Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and The Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University

for primatologists during this period, Goodall, in a particularly disturbing account, expressed her desire to become black like the Tanzanians and chimps living near the shores of Lake Tanganyika. Upon her first evening at Gombe, Goodall became covered in soot while climbing mountain slopes that had recently been burned by a bush fire. "I only stayed out on the mountain about three-quarters of an hour," she recounts, "but when I returned, almost as black as the slopes on which I had been scrambling, I no longer felt an intruder. That night I pulled my camp bed into the open and slept with the stars above me twinkling down through the rustling fronds of a palm tree."[158] Goodall, blackened by soot, stopped feeling like an "intruder" and began to feel, in some respects, like someone habituated to Gombe. Performing a form of minstrelsy, Goodall identifies as African and chimp.[159] To experience the full effect of her imagined racial and species transformation, she even sleeps under the stars in what can be read as a literal and figurative reenactment of dwelling in "the heart of darkness." This romanticized, colonial view demonstrates the extent to which western science is imbricated with racial logics. Habituation cuts across gender and racial categories in ways that reveal the social embeddedness of science.

Engaging the practices, technologies, and politics of seeing, habituation may best be understood as an attempt to view the world from another species' perspective. As a general rule, conditioning primates to a researcher's presence — and vice versa —

Press, 2011), 190. Like colonial South Africans, white scientists from the US and UK participated in, and benefitted from, the policing of wildlife access.

[158] van Lawick-Goodall, *In the Shadow of Man*, 16.

[159] Walking barefoot, as discussed above, can be read as a similar attempt to behave like an African and a chimpanzee.

requires unobstructed visibility. Tutin and Fernandez stress the importance of always being "clearly visible at an acceptable distance."[160] The researcher must be able to see the individual behaviors of study subjects, and the primates being studied must be able to see the researcher. In effect, both parties are always seeing and being seen. Primatology cannot be practiced if these conditions are not met.[161] Emphasizing the importance of visibility, Fossey even called the moments when she met a gorilla group "open contacts."[162] With their central role in habituation, practices of seeing were frequently captured on film, through photographs, and in written texts. Like the microscope which signifies the rigorous production of scientific knowledge, binoculars became a synecdoche for primatology and the scientific act of observation.[163] Goodall was frequently shown peering through, holding, carrying, or wearing binoculars, and Fossey, Strum, and Galdikas all called attention to the importance of binoculars in their popular

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[160] Tutin and Fernandez, "Responses to Wild Chimpanzees," 189. See also Williamson and Feistner, "Habituating primates," 38. Fossey also emphasized how "clear visibility" yielded "excellent" observations throughout her fieldnotes. See Fossey, "Fossey's Notes on Gorilla Research Project," 225, HHP.

[161] If the scientist is hiding and becomes discovered, they could spook the primate group or even suffer physical injury. Schaller adopted habituation to avoid the danger posed by hiding in blinds or dense vegetation. Schaller, *The Mountain Gorilla*, 22. See also van Lawick-Goodall, *In the Shadow of Man*, 58; Flaum, *Miss Goodall and the Wild Chimpanzees*. Perhaps most obviously, if the primate group is not visible, information about their behaviors cannot be recorded.

[162] Fossey, *Gorillas in the Mist*, 11; Dian Fossey, "Outline of Gorilla Research Project — Dian Fossey," box 37, folder 13, HHP.

[163] Many thanks to Marsha Weisiger for pointing out the similarities between binoculars and the microscope.

memoirs.[164] In her first *National Geographic* article, Goodall is photographed sitting on a rock ledge observing a group of chimpanzees across the valley through a pair of black binoculars. Cropped vertically to capture the mountainous landscape, the iconic image shows science in action. As a tool for locating wild primates and a technology that alters the optics of an observer, binoculars signaled careful and detailed scientific observation. They authenticated the production of knowledge in primatology and they translated the practice of looking to broader publics. Watching, observing, and looking became the default positions for readers and viewers to make sense of the primatologist's experience.[165] Indeed, by titling her poem to Dian Fossey "The Observer" and writing that the "gentleness" of mountain gorillas "survives / observation," Adrienne Rich called attention to the optics of primatology.[166] In this context, it is no surprise that *specere*, the Latin root of species, carries what Haraway calls "tones of 'to look' and 'to behold'."[167]

Far from being disconnected or transcendent, observation is a situated practice that opens the primatologist to the worlds and perspectives of other primates. While visual apparatuses such as the colonial gaze have been used to control and dominate marginalized groups, the visual practices of science can alter the positionality of the

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[164] Flaum, *Miss Goodall and the Wild Chimpanzees*; van Lawick-Goodall, *In the Shadow of Man*, photo inset 1, at p. 4; Campbell and Young, *Search for the Great Apes*; Fossey, *Gorillas in the Mist*, 80; Strum, *Almost Human*, 13, 36; Galdikas, *Reflections of Eden*, 92.
[165] For clear examples of this language, see Fossey, *Gorillas in the Mist*, 145; van Lawick-Goodall, *In the Shadow of Man*, 29; Goodall, *Through a Window*, 82.

[166] Adrienne Rich, "The Observer," in *Collected Poems, 1950-2012* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2016), 264.

[167] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 17.

researcher in ways that embrace the entanglements of knowledge production.[168] In her search to find new ways to "learn in our bodies," Haraway argues that the optics of science can teach people "how to see faithfully from another's point of view."[169] Understanding how another species lives and navigates their shared worlds allows the scientist to occupy — however temporary or incomplete — another creature's point of view. As a process that uses open sight lines and regular observation to establish familiarity with other beings, habituation asks primatologists to consider the perspectives of wild primates. "As a result [of habituation]," Smuts remarks, "it became possible to observe our subjects from a baboon's perspective—for example, to climb onto the sleeping cliffs with the troop and watch while dozens of baboons settled down for the night all around us."[170] An embodied practice, habituation places the researcher on ground level among primate research subjects and asks them to observe and experience, as Smuts puts it, the "daily drama" of their lives.[171] Emerging from situated conditions and practices among primate groups, this kind of vision is what Haraway calls a "view from somewhere."[172] There is, therefore, an *openness* about habituation. Not only is the scientist out in the open where their movements, actions, and behaviors are fully seen and

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[168] Haraway reminds us, "Vision is *always* a question in the power to see — and perhaps of the violence implicit in our visualizing practices." Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 585. Similarly, van Dooren observes that "ways of seeing are never neutral or innocent." van Dooren, *The Wake of Crows*, 13.

[169] Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 582, 583.

[170] Smuts, *Sex and Friendship*, 27.

[171] Ibid., 8.

[172] Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 590.

interpreted by the primates under study, but they are also opening themselves up to the perspectives and lives of others. They become, in Haraway's terms, modest witnesses.

The narratives told by Goodall, Fossey, Galdikas, Strum, and Smuts use the openings generated by habituation to rewrite their understandings of selfhood. Like the broader field of primatology, habituation is an autobiographical practice. The researcher must always attend to their behaviors, appearances, and reactions when they attempt to condition a group of wild primates to their long-term presence. Sudden movements, even accidental slips or falls, must be stifled; eye contact must be avoided; bright-colored clothing is generally forbidden; and research equipment must gradually be introduced. Most taken-for-granted behaviors and personal quirks must be acknowledged and then suppressed. Strum, for example, halted her habit of wearing sunglasses around the Pumphouse baboons "despite the wind and the blinding light" because they covered her eyes, "obliterating important visual communication" and presenting the monkeys with "the biggest, wide-eyed threat they'd ever seen."[173] The scientist subjects their sense of self to extreme scrutiny during the entire process. As Rees observes, habituation requires "continual management of the self in contexts of interaction."[174] By relentlessly managing one's sense of self, the researcher begins to behave like their research subjects. Ceasing to act, see, and even think by themselves, the primatologist adjusts their presentation of self to reflect the behaviors and cultures of the primate group under study. Goodall, in an attempt to appear like a chimpanzee, frequently imitated, or "aped," her study subjects by climbing trees and laying in their abandoned nests which she found to

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[173] Strum, *Almost Human*, 35.

[174] Rees, "Reflections on the Field," 886.

be “quite comfortable.”[175] Goodall, as well as Fossey, Strum, and Galdikas, also often collected and tasted primate foods in order to authenticate themselves as insiders from the perspective of another species and to occupy another’s point of view.[176] Strum writes, “Munching, writing, crunching, gazing, I realized suddenly that I was looking at the Kekopey landscape in an entirely different way—as a baboon, eyeing what was next on the daily menu.”[177] Fossey adjusted her behaviors to an unusual degree while habituating mountain gorillas, even “crawling toward groups on knuckles and knees and maintaining contacts in a seated position.”[178] As seen in a *National Geographic* photograph, Fossey performed gorilla-like behaviors among her study subjects, including imitating their verbal messages and even participating in grooming sessions once they became used to her presence. She explains, “I tried to elicit their confidence and curiosity by acting like a gorilla. I imitated their feeding and grooming, and later, when I was surer what they meant, I copied their vocalizations, including some startling deep belching noises.”[179]

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[175] Flaum, *Miss Goodall and the Wild Chimpanzees*; Goodall, “My Life Among Wild Chimpanzees,” 300; van Lawick-Goodall, “New Discoveries Among Africa’s Chimpanzees,” 815; van Lawick-Goodall, *In the Shadow of Man*, 54.

[176] Flaum, *Miss Goodall and the Wild Chimpanzees*; Myrow and Saxon, *Monkeys, Apes, and Man*; Galdikas, *Reflections of Eden*, 157, 173.

[177] Strum*, Almost Human*, 56.

[178] Fossey, *Gorillas in the Mist*, 13.

[179] Dian Fossey, “Making Friends with Mountain Gorillas,” *National Geographic*, January 1970, 48-67, at p. 51. See also Campbell and Young, *Search for the Great Apes*; Dian Fossey, “More Years with Mountain Gorillas,” *National Geographic*, October 1971, 577, 580-81; Dian Fossey, “The Imperiled Mountain Gorilla: A Grim Struggle for Survival,” *National Geographic*, April 1981, 500-23, at p. 503; Fossey, *Gorillas in the Mist*, 11, 53-54; Fossey, “Fossey’s Notes on Gorilla Research Project,” 227 and 229, HHP; Dian Fossey, “Manual for Census Worker,” box 37, folder 13, 1-2, HHP.

Summing up this behavior in her eulogy for Fossey, Galdikas explained, "Dian had habituated gorillas to her presence by acting like one."[180] As these examples illustrate, habituation is a process of learning how to "pass" as another species, a process that requires transforming the self into another. "Fieldwork forces you not only to confront situations you could never have anticipated," Galdikas explains, "but also to confront elements of your own character you might never have known. Every trip into the field is also a trip into yourself."[181] Regulating one's version of selfhood to include the behaviors of another species is a performative process that asks the primatologist to "confront elements of [their] own character" and rewrite the self as a collective entity shaped by other species. To be a field primatologist, in other words, is also to become like the primates under study.

Viewing habituation as a process of rewriting the researcher's self demonstrates that behavioral conditioning is far from the "neutral" activity that many primatologists claim. The belief that a neutral position among a group of wild primates can eventually be earned and that researchers can practice neutral behaviors among the primates they desire to condition are convenient myths that enable field primatologists to imagine themselves, and the scientific knowledge they produce, as separate from and transcendent of the beings they study. The primatologists under discussion rejected this detached position and what Haraway calls its associated "logic of 'discovery'," suggesting instead that habituation is a situated process dependent upon "conversation" between the multiple

[180] Biruté Galdikas, "Verbatim Transcriptions of Her Smithsonian Eulogy," box 40, folder 13, HHP.

[181] Galdikas, *Reflections of Eden*, 337.

entities involved.[182] This latter position produces what I am calling *habituated knowledges*, or the scientific knowledges and knowledge-making practices that emerge through the entangled processes of habituation. Habituated knowledges recognize other species as agential co-participants in scientific knowledge production and they rewrite the boundaries of the researcher's self to include nonhuman study subjects. If, for Haraway, situated knowledges do not separate the "object" of inquiry from the "subject" overseeing the study, habituated knowledges take this boundary refusal even further, arguing that the researcher and the species studied are mutually shaping one another to such a degree that selfhood becomes an entangled, multispecies configuration. Additionally, habituated knowledges recognize the identity categories and social contexts that draw boundaries around, and otherwise shape, the science of behavioral conditioning. Habituated knowledges make it clear that habituation, and species science more generally, is a *cooperative* practice that brings together researchers and the species being studied in ways that mutually transform those involved.

Indeed, habituated knowledges emerge from daily encounters between the researcher and their study primates, both of whom must get along together in order for scientific knowledge to be produced. Not only must primates grow accustomed to human observers, but scientists must become accustomed to their new primate groups. As Fossey acknowledges, "I have become well-acquainted with mountain gorillas, and they with me."[183] While habituation is nearly always described as an inevitable outcome rather than an ongoing process very much open to failure, its success depends upon the cooperation

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[182] Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 593.

[183] Fossey, "Making Friends with Mountain Gorillas," 49.

of another species. Haraway understands habituation to be as much about the primates considering the behaviors of the primatologist as it is about the primatologist observing primate behaviors. The primatologist is a "guest" and must earn what Strum, Fossey, and Goodall call "acceptance" by the primate group.[184] Strum described the experience of being a guest as deeply informing her research methodology. Within the first weeks of the habituation process, a young male baboon immigrating from another troop joined Strum in her attempts to become an accepted member of the Pumphouse community. They sat at the edge of the troop together, carefully observing the group's social dynamics while trying "to appear as unobtrusive as possible."[185] Noting a shift in her sense of self, Strum explains: "The fortunes of Ray . . . were closely intertwined with my own. Ray and I joined Pumphouse at the same time. We both sought acceptance and we both—at first— were viewed askance."[186] Ray eventually joined the troop through several strategic attacks on top-ranking male baboons, leaving Strum to learn baboon behavior from Naomi, an older female. Over time the baboons relaxed around Strum and, as she explains, "I gradually relaxed around them."[187] No longer a guest, Strum realized, "I was occupying a physical space in their social world—and, for all I knew, a social

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[184] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 24; Strum, "Life with the Pumphouse Gang," 686; Shirley Strum, interview by Harold T.P. Hayes, June 14, 1986, transcript, Box 44, Folder, 8, HHP; Fossey, *Gorillas in the Mist*, 141; van Lawick-Goodall, *In the Shadow of Man*, 2.

[185] Strum, *Almost Human*, 24.

[186] Strum, "Life with the Pumphouse Gang," 679.

[187] Strum, *Almost Human*, 36.

space as well."[188] The move from being a guest who occupies physical space on the margins of the troop to an accepted almost-baboon member who occupies physical and social space *among* the group led Strum to redefine her research practices altogether. "My aim was to let the baboons tell me about their primateness," she writes, "not to force my humanness on them."[189] By learning about the troop's "primateness" from her almost-baboon vantage point and allowing the baboons to direct scientific inquiry, Strum practiced what Barbara McClintock calls "a feeling for the organism."[190] Strum, as Rees argues about contemporary primatologists, was an "active participant" involved in relationships with the Pumphouse troop.[191] The ongoing negotiation of such relationships reveals the extent to which habituation is a "mutually transformative" process.[192] Describing a long "follow" of TP, or Throat Pouch, a large adult male orangutan, Galdikas notes: "Clearly, TP had become habituated, but so, I realized, had I. The process was reciprocal. Gradually, TP and I worked out an unspoken agreement. If he didn't want me to advance, he would angrily slap or shake the vegetation near him until I stopped moving. I learned that if I didn't make eye contact with TP, I could come within ten feet."[193] A reciprocal process, habituation required Galdikas and TP to find ways of

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[188] Ibid., 57.

[189] Strum, "Life with the Pumphouse Gang," 674.

[190] Evelyn Fox Keller, *A Feeling for the Organism: The Life and Work of Barbara McClintock* (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman, 1983).

[191] Rees, "Reflections on the Field," 893.

[192] Hanson and Riley, "Beyond Neutrality," 854.

[193] Galdikas, *Reflections of Eden*, 184.

getting along together. This does not mean, however, that the science is reciprocal. More often than not, the primates do not need the researchers, but the researchers need the primates. Writing about one of her favorite orangutans, Galdikas explains: "Cara's relationship with me could never be reciprocal. I needed Cara much more than she would ever need me."[194]

Habituated knowledges do not only develop cooperatively among the researcher and their study primates; they also arise among the intra-actions of multispecies communities and environments. Goodall, Fossey, Galdikas, Strum, and Smuts all, to varying degrees, became habituated to research environments in Tanzania, Rwanda, Kenya, and Indonesia. Goodall describes how the first weeks "did serve to acquaint me with the rugged terrain. My skin became hardened to the rough grasses of the valleys and my blood immune to the poison of the tsetse fly, so that I no longer swelled hugely each time I was bitten. I became increasingly surefooted on the treacherous slopes. . . . Gradually, too, I became familiar with many of the animal tracks in the five valleys that became my main work area."[195] Doing science at Gombe meant habituating one's body to the local terrain and species. Galdikas had a similar experience with the rainforests of Borneo where parasites gradually toughened her body. In addition to leeches, she writes, "My blood would also nourish countless generations of mosquitos, sand flies, and elephant flies. Tiny red ticks, looking like chili powder sprinkled on the skin, bore their heads into the armpits, the backs of the knees, and the groin, causing spasms akin to

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[194] Galdikas, *Reflections of Eden*, 250.

[195] van Lawick-Goodall, *In the Shadow of Man*, 22.

electrical shock every time the ticks were touched."[196] Ceasing to belong to her, Galdikas's body becomes a generalized (e.g. "the skin," "the armpits," and so on), trans-corporeal site inhabited by multiple parasites. To conduct field research alongside and with wild primates, the primatologist must become "habituated by the forest and its beings."[197] Habituation is not simply a "*bidirectional* process of mutual attunement between observers and study groups" as some ethnoprimatologists argue.[198] Rather, it is a *multidirectional* process involving wider communities of organisms.

For Goodall, Fossey, Galdikas, Strum, and Smuts — and many of the field researchers who have since lived among wild primates — primatology is a science that demands passionate immersion in the lives of others. Far from being isolated observers who produce transcendent and universal knowledge, these female primatologists immersed themselves in the lives of other species and, through shared processes and practices, co-created habituated knowledges. In primatology, Keller argues, "the arrival of a number of prominent women has been associated . . . with the introduction of new and *more interactionist paradigms*."[199] These paradigms have embraced aspects of feminist, and what later became known as multispecies, thought, including a willingness to become personally involved in chimpanzee, gorilla, baboon, and orangutan lives. Writing in her authoritative *The Chimpanzees of Gombe*, Goodall remarks, "I readily

[196] Galdikas, *Reflections of Eden*, 94.

[197] Alcayna-Stevens, "Habituating field scientists," 834.

[198] Hanson and Riley, "Beyond Neutrality," 872.

[199] Keller, "Women, Science, and Gender," 386, emphasis added.

admit to a high level of emotional involvement with individual chimpanzees—without which, I suspect, the research would have come to an end many years ago."[200] Strum describes becoming similarly involved, although, in her case, she initially dismissed the possibility of such feelings and claims: "I was changing. I had come to Africa to do my research project; I had no intention of getting involved with the animals. . . . Yet slowly and almost imperceptibly I had become deeply involved with the animals. Just being with them created a strong emotional bond. It was nothing like the feelings I would have for a pet; they were not pets. They were friends, in a very unusual sense. Unknowingly, they shared the joys of companionship and the intimate details of their lives with me."[201] The "joys of companionship" and the "high level of emotional involvement" were, for Strum and Goodall, hallmarks of strong science. In Strum's words, "I could do good science and be emotionally involved at the same time."[202] Indeed, as Galdikas notes, primatology and other species sciences often transform the researcher into a passionate advocate for those they study: "[M]ost people who study a single species or a single population for any length of time end up falling for their subjects. This is particularly true when the research involves primates, who are so much like ourselves. Even researchers who study animals who are neither majestic and imposing, nor cute and cuddly — such as snakes or spiders — become passionate observers."[203] In their own ways, these primatologists all became "passionate observers." Living, writing, and conducting research among primate groups,

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[200] Goodall, *The Chimpanzees of Gombe*, 59.

[201] Strum, *Almost Human*, 54.

[202] Strum, interview by Harold T.P. Hayes, HHP.

[203] Galdikas, *Reflections of Eden*, 391.

they inhabited the entanglements of science and selfhood. Being a passionate observer requires practicing what van Dooren, Kirksey, and Münster, drawing upon feminist theories of care, refer to as "arts of attentiveness." Attending to the lives of others is, in their view, "both a practice of getting to know another in their intimate particularity — steadily applying one's observant faculties and energies . . . —and, at the same time, a practice of learning how one might better respond to another, might work to cultivate worlds of mutual flourishing. . . . In short, the arts of attentiveness remind us that knowing and living are deeply entangled and that paying attention can and should be the basis for crafting better possibilities for shared life."[204] Habituation is an effective way of coming to "intimately" know the lives of another species and of learning how to establish "worlds of mutual flourishing." Influenced by the understanding that selfhood is a multispecies affair, these five primatologists spent their lives trying to improve human and nonhuman primate relations.

COERCION AND HABITUATED KNOWLEDGES: DARTING BABOONS IN *A PRIMATE'S MEMOIR*

As the involvement of rhesus macaques in the development of COVID-19 vaccines and the participation of wild primates in conditioning experiments indicate, species science relies upon a variety of coercive techniques to produce mutual knowledges. In the former, monkeys restrained in cages were exposed to the live coronavirus or injected with experimental vaccines; in the latter, primates were relentlessly followed by field scientists until they suppressed their initial fears and acquiesced to the researcher's prolonged presence. These examples demonstrate not only

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[204] van Dooren, Kirksey, Münster, "Multispecies Studies," 17. For more on attentiveness, see Chapter 2, "Avian Care: Conflict, Justice, and the Quotidian."

how other species — in this case several species of primates — become forced participants in scientific processes, but also how modes of coercion and the stakes of such research vary significantly. To use the schema outlined by van Dooren in his discussion of multispecies ethics, "better" and "worse" forms of coercion make themselves available to science.[205] Research models that prioritize the reduction of physical and mental suffering, for example, would view the coercion associated with habituation as a "better" mode of compulsion and the coercion required to test a potentially lethal virus as "worse." If all species science relies upon differing degrees and kinds of coercion to produce knowledge, how do scientists navigate, justify, and minimize practices that coerce others? Furthermore, how does recognizing and accounting for coercion change how people understand the mutual knowledges and entangled selves that become produced through such activities?

Robert Sapolsky pursues answers to these questions in *A Primate's Memoir: A Neuroscientist's Unconventional Life Among the Baboons*. The memoir considers Sapolsky's involvement in the violent and invasive activities of tranquilizing baboons and taking blood samples, two scientific practices which enable him to accurately plot hormone levels over time. Unlike the accounts of habituation in the previous section where cooperation by research subjects was viewed by Goodall, Fossey, Smuts, and Galdikas as largely voluntary, *A Primate's Memoir* describes cooperation as an activity imposed upon, and subsequently challenged by, study subjects. Indeed, at times savanna baboons refuse to cooperate, forestalling the activities of science. At other times, however, Sapolsky ignores the rules of habituation and forces the unruly participants to

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[205] van Dooren, *The Wake of Crows*, 9.

carry on with the experiment despite their struggles and best efforts to avoid him. Recognizing species science as a process of mutual participation that rewrites the boundaries of selfhood, Sapolsky is forced to grapple with the coercion that makes his species science, and sense of self, possible.

At once drawing upon and departing from the primatology discussed above, Sapolsky's memoir considers science that acquires knowledge through invasive procedures. *A Primate's Memoir* describes a decade of research carried out with a troop of approximately 60 olive baboons in Kenya's Masai Mara National Reserve. Sapolsky, a neuroendocrinologist at Stanford University who has published several critically acclaimed books, grew up an Orthodox Jew in New York City and began studying baboons shortly after graduating from Harvard University in 1978. Having worked alongside Strum and Jeanne Altmann, Sapolsky entered baboon field research during a time when theories of male dominance were being replaced with a new understanding of primate social cohesion that focused on the central roles of adult females and adolescents.[206] Sapolsky's research on stress among male baboons participated in this paradigm shift. Through behavioral observation and hormone sampling, Sapolsky learned that male baboons, with "half a dozen solid hours of sunlight a day to devote to being rotten to each other," experience high levels of stress, especially low-ranking individuals and males with few friends.[207] A healthy male baboon, in other words, could no longer be imagined as the most aggressive, dominant individual; instead, mid-ranking male

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[206] Robert M. Sapolsky, *A Primate's Memoir: A Neuroscientist's Unconventional Life Among the Baboons* (2001; New York: Touchstone, 2002), 16; Strum and Fedigan, *Primate Encounters*, 18.

[207] Sapolsky, *A Primate's Memoir*, 15, 177, 233.

baboons with enduring social relationships had to be regarded as the healthiest individuals. With his reassessment of baboon masculinity that moved away from models of individual dominance to focus instead on social cohesion, it is not surprising that Sapolsky views species science as a personal and entangled undertaking. As the title and cover image depicting an adult male mandrill recording jottings in his field journal indicate, *A Primate's Memoir* blurs species boundaries to the point where Sapolsky identifies with his research subjects.[208] Indeed, he regularly describes himself as a member of the baboon troop. Sapolsky opens the memoir with the following line: "I joined the baboon troop during my twenty-first year."[209] At different points he describes himself as "an impressionable young transfer male" and "a late-adolescent male primate."[210] In a humorous understatement he argues that field biologists "take on a lot of the traits of their animals."[211] Even narratological time is measured not in what Haraway calls "the end of the Second Christian Millennium," but rather by the historical events occurring among the baboon troop.[212] Writing from the inside perspective of a troop member, Sapolsky describes events as they happen during "the reign of Saul" or the

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[208] Sapolsky studies olive baboons but the monkey featured on the cover is a mandrill. Belonging to a separate genus, male mandrills feature striking coloration on their faces and make attractive cover images. See "Mandrill," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed July 30, 2020. https://www.britannica.com/animal/mandrill.

[209] Sapolsky, *A Primate's Memoir*, 13.

[210] Ibid., 16, 87.

[211] Ibid., 123.

[212] Haraway, *Modest_Witness*, 132, 10.

"season of Nathanial's ascendancy."[213] For Sapolsky, biological field science is a collection of situated practices that articulate a multispecies sense of self.

To gather measurable data on the stress levels of male baboons, Sapolsky observed behaviors and collected regular hormone samples from members of the troop. Gathering daily hormonal data required extracting blood, and this could only be accomplished by "darting" baboons, or using a blowgun to shoot a dart laden with the correct amount of anesthesia into an unsuspecting individual. Once the baboon fell unconscious five minutes later, Sapolsky would collect blood samples and take physiological measurements.[214] Unsurprisingly, darting and obtaining scientifically accurate hormone samples presented numerous challenges. Sapolsky could only study males because it was dangerous to anesthetize females who were often pregnant or nursing young. To maintain consistent data, he could only dart baboons at a specific time of day and he could not dart any baboons who were recently sick, had been in a fight, received an injury, or had mated because their hormone levels would be elevated.[215] In addition to taking into account wind speed and direction and where the baboon would likely run once darted, he had to ensure that rivals who could injure the darted male were not lurking nearby.[216] All of these difficulties overwhelmed Sapolsky when he darted Isaac, his first research subject:

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[213] Sapolsky, *A Primate's Memoir*, 105, 197. The book is even arranged in life stages that mirror primate development from "The Adolescent Years" to "The Subadult Years" to "Tenuous Adulthood" to "Adulthood."

[214] Ibid., 38-39, 15.

[215] Ibid., 37.

[216] Ibid., 38, 39, 43-44, 230.

> I spent the entire night before my first darting awake and tossing, feeling queasy. By dawn, I was sick to my stomach, convinced I was about to pass out, all an excuse to get out of it. Finally, I headed out. And within a few minutes, I walked up to dear Isaac, . . . controlled my desire to scream a warning to him, and darted him. . . . I was so excited that I kissed him on the forehead, and then spent the rest of the day fretting with guilty concern every time he groaned or shifted or farted—heart attack, allergic reaction, darting-induced flatulence? We both recovered from the darting just fine.[217]

While Sapolsky overcame his initial anxiety about darting baboons, his tenderness and care for anesthetized males continued throughout his fieldwork. As he makes evident in the final statement about "recovering" from the darting, this practice required passionate involvement on his behalf as a researcher. Anesthetizing baboons to take vials of blood makes it apparent how "science is based on forms of life," including the life and feelings of the scientist.[218] Differing markedly from the research techniques used by the primatologists in the previous section, the invasive procedure of collecting blood samples in order to determine hormone levels pushed the limits of how far another species was willing to cooperate with science. As male baboons became unwilling participants in

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[217] Ibid., 41.

[218] Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 25. In a 2001 book review for *The New York Times*, Nixon argued that Sapolsky's memoir seeks to "reconcile" his identity as a scientist driven by "clinical dispassion" with his identity as a "layman" who feels "great affection" for the baboons. Rob Nixon, "Even Baboons Get the Blues," *The New York Times* (New York City), Apr. 1, 2001. As this discussion and chapter demonstrate, such distinctions should be viewed as suspect.

Sapolsky's research, the habituated knowledges produced by such coercive science became tested, along with the stability of habituation itself.

Going against the accepted practices of primatology which favored incremental contact and openness, Sapolsky sought to outsmart and elude male members of the troop. Baboons such as Isaac were accustomed to his presence and did not flee, at least not at first. Enraptured by the activity's initial ease, Sapolsky waxes nostalgic about how "there's nothing I enjoy more in the world" than going on "a darting."[219] Stalking and darting a wild baboon, he writes, is "perfect to shore up your precarious sense of manhood, and, *best of all*, you're not even doing something appalling like hunting, you're doing it all in the name of science and conservation."[220] Darting baboons, like the field of primatology, can coexist alongside a masculine, colonial legacy of game hunting and contemporary science. However, once the male baboons associated Sapolsky with the startling effects of the dart and the subsequent disruptive hiatus from the troop that left them confused and in pain, they began to "elude" him at all costs.[221] Instead of becoming habituated to darting, they fled upon seeing him. The baboons even learned the maximum distance the darts could travel and remained just outside this perimeter.[222] Rather than working to cultivate a positive image that would allow him to once again engage with the troop, Sapolsky used coercion to obtain research subjects and collect data. He "thought like a baboon" and darted unsuspecting males while concealed in vehicles and behind

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[219] Sapolsky, *A Primate's Memoir*, 39.

[220] Ibid., 29.

[221] Ibid., 37.

[222] Ibid., 41-42.

brush.[223] As he explains, "The baboons just got more and more wily. I could no longer just walk up to someone and dart him. Instead, I had to become increasingly surreptitious, so that the baboons didn't know it was coming, didn't have an anticipatory stress response."[224] Adopting the baboons' evasion strategy and adapting it for his own use, Sapolsky planned ways to anesthetize males from hiding points. "You find yourself, a reasonably well educated human with a variety of interests," he explains in the second person, "spending hours and hours each day and night obsessing on how to outmaneuver these beasts, how to think like them, how to think better than them. Usually, unsuccessfully."[225] Despite his coercive tactics and the hard work involved, the baboons frequently outsmarted him, disrupting and challenging Sapolsky's science by refusing to cooperate. In stark contrast to the generally positive encounters described in the previous section, Sapolsky's science took a sinister turn.

> [H]ere's the real pisser, you can't dart someone if he knows it's coming. If I'm trying to see what stress hormone levels in the bloodstream are like under normal unstressed resting conditions, I have to get the baboons when they are quiet, unsuspecting. I must sneak up on them. No witnesses. To wit, I dart baboons in the back for a living. And then get a first blood sample as fast as possible before normal values are thrown off by the stress of being darted.[226]

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[223] Ibid., 41.

[224] Ibid.

[225] Ibid., 42.

[226] Ibid., 38.

Sapolsky abandoned the preferred method of open visibility to pursue a science that relied upon evasion and invisibility. While he justified this approach by arguing that blood samples reflecting "normal unstressed resting conditions" must be collected, Sapolsky could have pursued alternate ways to obtain this data such as re-habituating himself to the troop. Had Sapolsky taken a break from darting to refamiliarize himself with the baboons, he might have been able to earn back their confidence, however temporary. Instead, the baboons lost control of their bodies and became subjects of coercion. Under anesthesia, they were forced to cooperate, providing data points for Sapolsky's science and his academic career. Yet, despite the ethical red flags and the aversion of the troop, Sapolsky believed that darting brought him closer to the baboons because he had "to think like them" and occupy their perspectives in order to anticipate their next moves. His science and attachment to the troop, in other words, were only made possible by severe power imbalances. Sapolsky understands his coercive science as producing habituated knowledges; however, the forceful recruitment of research subjects raises questions about whether or not such openly coercive practices qualify as performing the on-the-ground, immersive, and mutually transformative work this chapter identifies as habituated knowledges. The problem of coercion demonstrates that although habituated knowledges are created through mutual encounters, they can take a variety of forms — some better and some worse than others.

While Sapolsky's descriptions of darting evince a lack of consideration for the ethics of baboon research, he was, in fact, well aware of the suffering that his science inflicted upon other species. Death was always a very real possibility when a baboon was under anesthesia. At the end of *A Primate's Memoir* Sapolsky recounts the death of Saul,

one of his closest baboon friends, while he was anesthetized and suffering from the bovine tuberculosis outbreak of 1989 that claimed twelve of the troop's male baboons.

> He died. Of all things, in my arms, while anesthetized, while in trouble. I tried to revive him. I did CPR, I shoved an endotracheal tube down his throat. I pounded his chest and infused an insane amount of epinephrine into him. And still he wouldn't breathe. He had actually made a death rattle, and each time I flung myself on his chest, he made a bit of a gargly sound again, and each time it triggered hope and shivers. Finally, I had pummeled and pushed and pounded and cursed until I was exhausted. I would have guessed that trying not to lose someone would be emotionally exhausting; I had no idea that it could be such a physical battle.[227]

In a final farewell to Saul, Sapolsky laid beside his body and then buried him in a grave. After the death of Saul and the conclusion of the tuberculosis pandemic, Sapolsky moved field sites and reduced his amount of field work. "It was just too hard and too depressing," he admits, to return to Kenya for extended periods of time.[228] By 2001, he spent only three weeks in the field every year.[229] While he fled baboon suffering in the field, he only found more anguish in the laboratory. "Nine months each year I would spend in my lab," he explains, "doing my experiments, and the suffering that the animals would endure there was appalling. They'd undergo strokes, or repeated epileptic seizures,

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[227] Ibid., 220.

[228] Ibid., 222.

[229] Patricia Leigh Brown, "At Home with Dr. Robert Sapolsky," *The New York Times* (New York City), Apr. 19, 2001.

or other neurodegenerative disorders. This is all to find out how a brain cell dies, and what can be done to prevent it—all to do something for the couple of million people each year who sustain brain damage from stroke or seizure or Alzheimer's disease."[230] Feeling guilt for causing so much pain, Sapolsky sought ways to reduce suffering. "I tried to compensate for my work, but probably not enough. I remained a vegetarian when in America. I would work hard to cut every corner I could in my research, to minimize the numbers of animals, the amount of pain. But there was still dripping, searing amounts of it for them. My first day as a student when I was taught to do brain surgery on a rat, I threw up."[231] As these examples make clear, Sapolsky is acutely aware of his role in animal suffering. Despite its shortcomings on the ethics of baboon darting, *A Primate's Memoir* can be read as one way for Sapolsky to practice what Haraway calls "sharing suffering," or the opening of oneself to feel and understand a research subject's pain.[232] Although the concept's actual implementation and its use to justify the animal suffering associated with experimentation is questionable, "sharing suffering" takes on new meanings when viewed as a literary practice. Here the memoir's narrative form compels Sapolsky to dwell with the challenging moments of his species science and to find ways of responding to other species that might permit more attentive and responsible practices in the future. While thinking like a baboon can lead to the coercion of research subjects, it can also be used to plot alternate futures of science where suffering is both diminished and shared.

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[230] Sapolsky, *A Primate's Memoir*, 219.

[231] Ibid., 220.

[232] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 76-77.

Habituation in the Twenty-First Century: Preconditioned Subjects, Primatology in Zoos, and Wildlife Tourism

With global populations of wild primates in decline, captive primate populations well-established or otherwise stable, and populations of free-living primates becoming more accustomed to scientific study or cohabitation with humans, the research contexts for practicing habituation during the twenty-first century look different from those just a few decades ago.[233] While Goodall, Fossey, and Galdikas could imagine their study sites as patches of Edenic, uninhabited wilderness and could proudly declare themselves the first scientists to successfully habituate wild chimpanzees, mountain gorillas, and orangutans, today's primatologists work in strikingly different research contexts and landscapes where habituation has, by necessity, assumed new forms. No longer needing to devote a few months or even a few years to condition wild populations to the presence of researchers, many field primatologists join primate groups already familiar with scientists. Most free-living great apes have now been studied continuously for decades, including several chimpanzee groups in Gombe Stream National Park, the baboons near Gilgil, the mountain gorillas of Karisoke, and many orangutans living in the Tanjung Puting National Park.[234] After establishing proper credentials and securing adequate funding, graduate students and professional researchers face few barriers to entering and

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[233] An estimated 60% of primate species are threatened with extinction and 75% are experiencing population decline. See Alejandro Estrada et al., "Impending extinction crisis of the world's primates: Why primates matter," *Science Advances* 3, no. 1 (2017).

[234] To be sure, unconditioned, free-living primates still inhabit parts of Africa, Southeast Asia, and Central America, and primatologists continue to study them. For a recent discussion of attempts to habituate a group of guinea baboons, see Julia Fischer, *Monkeytalk: Inside the Worlds and Minds of Primates*, trans. Frederick B. Henry Jr. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 49-54. This section considers primates who have extensive experience with people.

studying preconditioned primate groups. With the high costs and increasingly competitive grant cycles associated with field research, it has also become common for primatologists to conduct studies in captive settings such as zoos, primate sanctuaries, and national primate research centers. In most cases, the primates living in these institutions are either captive-born or have extensive familiarity with humans. The behavioral researcher must then establish and maintain relationships with the captive primates that allow for ongoing research. Contemporary studies of preconditioned and captive primates require alternate approaches to habituation than those practiced by earlier, first-generation field primatologists and their wild research subjects. Primatologists studying wild primate groups already familiar with researchers, for example, feel obligated to practice non-intrusive research techniques and to avoid interfering with group behavior. Additionally, depending upon their prior experiences, primates in zoos may be wary of researchers or they may seek out human attention. Although the process by which habituated knowledges are produced has not changed, the kinds of knowledges and the practices involved in their production have taken on new appearances.

Having conducted decades of research with preconditioned baboons in previously established sites, field primatologists Dorothy Cheney, Robert Seyfarth, and Julia Fischer describe occupying intermediary roles in their long-term, intergenerational projects. They understand that their personal engagement with baboon study subjects has been shaped by previous researchers and that the ways they conduct their science will determine how future researchers engage with the same individuals. After twenty years of fieldwork elsewhere across Africa, Cheney and Seyfarth began studying chacma baboons in 1992 at

the Moremi Game Reserve located in Botswana's Okavango Delta, a place internationally known for its abundant wildlife and renowned safari tourism. They inherited the research site and a troop of approximately 80 baboons from American and British scientists who had conducted behavioral studies over the last fourteen years. Cheney and Seyfarth viewed the previous research activity as a positive arrangement because it allowed them to proceed right away with their inquiries into baboon behavior. "Because the baboons have endured interlopers for three decades," they explain in *Baboon Metaphysics: The Evolution of a Social Mind*, "they are completely habituated to humans walking among them and even tolerate our presence with diffident aplomb, if not affection. Even the oldest female in the group, the curmudgeonly and mean-spirited Sylvia, has had to put up with human observers since her birth in 1982."[235] Fischer, then a postdoctoral researcher working with Cheney and Seyfarth, adds another reason why this arrangement was so favorable, writing in *Monkeytalk: Inside the Worlds and Minds of Primates*, "From the moment of their birth, the baboons have been habituated to the inquisitive gaze of scientists. If new males happened to immigrate into the group, they were initially somewhat timid but soon saw that none of the other animals were skittish around the researchers. So they quickly grew accustomed to our human presence."[236] Since the troop had already become familiarized with the presence of scientists, they were able to condition new transfers, usually adolescent males, without the researchers having to intervene.

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[235] Dorothy L. Cheney and Robert M. Seyfarth, *Baboon Metaphysics: The Evolution of a Social Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 12.

[236] Fischer, *Monkeytalk*, 34.

As the baboons felt comfortable around the binocular- and clipboard-donning Cheney, Seyfarth, and Fischer, the focus shifted away from habituating baboons so they could be studied to, instead, maintaining the relationship established by prior researchers. Entering this previously established research site in the Okavango Delta required that Cheney, Seyfarth, and Fischer be attentive to not only how earlier scientists engaged the baboons (and vice versa), but also how their present-day practices and behaviors might impact future scientists and primate research subjects. Unlike Sapolsky who chose to tranquilize baboons in order to extract blood samples for hormone testing, these primatologists opted for the less-invasive strategy of collecting fecal samples. Cheney and Seyfarth explain that a fecal sample "can be collected without itself inducing stress, as would certainly happen if we tried to extract blood."[237] While this approach makes sense from a methodological perspective, it also evinces a desire to avoid disrupting relations with the troop. As we have seen, Sapolsky's decision to dart baboons came at a great expense: he lost the friendly relations he had previously established with the troop. Collecting fecal samples offered Cheney, Seyfarth, and Fischer a way to maintain good standing with the baboons and to preserve the positive relations already established for future researchers. Habituation, in other words, no longer focused on conditioning a group of primates to the presence of researchers. Instead, habituation became a method for preserving the working relationships shared among scientists and research subjects to ensure that primatology could continue into the future.

Studies of captive primates similarly view habituation as a way to familiarize the researcher and study subject within existing webs of relations. Following restrictions

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[237] Cheney and Seyfarth, *Baboon Metaphysics*, 13.

placed on the wildlife trade by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) which went into effect in 1975, wild-captured endangered primates could no longer be exchanged without proper permits. As a result, zoos and research institutions established their own breeding programs. With "improved husbandry, nutrition and medical care" offered by captivity, many primates were able to breed "very successfully" until their birth rates exceeded death rates in many sites.[238] It was within this context that the primatologist Frans de Waal studied the "social lives" of primates, especially chimpanzees and bonobos.[239] In *My Family Album*, an autobiographically titled collection of primate photographs, de Waal presents the "dignified" lives of primates "living in human care."[240] Having worked with captive primates living at institutions such as the Yerkes Primate Center Field Station, the Arnhem Zoo, the Vilas Park Zoo, and the San Diego Zoo since the early 1980s, de Waal acknowledged that he was one person within much larger social networks of people with whom his study subjects were familiar. He describes, for example, how Socko and Georgia — two chimpanzees at Emory University's Yerkes Primate Center — became "extensively familiar" with him over a few decades to the point where "trust" was established.[241] Such involvement in the lives of captive chimpanzees not only enabled de

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[238] P.Y. Wallace, C.S. Asa, M. Agnew, and S.M. Cheyne, "A Review of Population Control Methods in Captive-Housed Primates," *Animal Welfare* 25 (2016): 7-20, at p. 7.

[239] Frans de Waal, *My Family Album: Thirty Years of Primate Photography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 1.

[240] Ibid., 1, 3.

[241] Ibid., 3.

Waal to take the photographs for *My Family Album*, but it also required practicing a kind of habituation that promoted closeness in relation to the previous encounters that primates experienced with other humans, including other scientists, zookeepers, and visiting tourists. He provides a particularly illustrating example, writing: "The studies that my students and I conduct are nonintrusive. Most of the time we just watch what the primates do spontaneously, but we sometimes ask them to enter situations in which they can obtain food by working together or are given a joystick to play computer games. . . . I use the word *ask* since we cannot force obedience from large animals such as chimpanzees: we are dependent on their willingness to participate when we call out their names."[242] Like Cheney, Seyfarth, and Fischer, de Waal and his students favor "nonintrusive" experimentation. Recognizing that chimpanzees need to preserve favorable relations with humans in captive settings, de Waal hinges his studies on the "willingness" of chimps to participate.

Up to this point, the value of habituated knowledges has derived mostly from the benefits that habituation affords a researcher, especially the data collected through proximal observation. With the rise of wildlife ecotourism in the 1980s and 90s, however, habituated knowledges became translated to fit the objectives of neoliberal economic development. For tourism companies promising exclusive access to wildlife, including charismatic megafauna and endangered species, habituating wild creatures to the presence of guides and tourists not only helped secure reliable streams of revenue, but, more importantly, made their business possible. The habituated knowledges of tourist

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[242] Ibid.

guides which included tracking, locating, and speaking about wildlife acquired new value from their ability to produce capital. Encounters with wildlife, in other words, established the foundations of a profitable industry. While early glimpses of organized wildlife tourism can be seen with Goodall showing National Geographic Society executives the chimps of Gombe Stream and Fossey complaining about the "tourists" who visited Karisoke during the 1970s to "demand cabin space and my services as their personal guide to the gorillas," the global ecotourism industry that developed a decade later systematized the observation of wildlife and carefully curated experiences of wildness for paying tourists.[243] In the varied contexts of the African continent, wildlife ecotourism emerged during the wake of imperial rule and the rise of neoliberalism. "Market-oriented reforms" of the 1980s sought to privatize landscapes, achieve economic and environmental deregulation, and become more "efficient" at extracting capital.[244] Native peoples such as Maasai herders who subsisted outside of the agrarian economy were viewed as having "a pre-modern social and economic system" that needed to be replaced by the modern efficiencies of privatization.[245] Tourism companies, often managed by investment firms located in elite centers of capital, purchased large tracts of land or leased property in national parks that were previously colonial game reserves. Contrary to the stated objectives of promoting "sustainability, conservation and empowerment of host communities," many tourism outfits directly or indirectly supported the dispossession and

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[243] Fossey, *Gorillas in the Mist*, 153.

[244] Benjamin Gardner, *Selling the Serengeti: The Cultural Politics of Safari Tourism* (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 2016), 5.

[245] Ibid.

enclosure of Indigenous African communities, rendering once-occupied lands "painfully exclusive spaces" for previous occupants.[246] Steeped within cultural discourses that structure the tourist's expectations regarding "wild Africa," tourists believe they are contributing to sustainability, wildlife conservation, and the economic prosperity of their host communities. Although in some situations tourists may be improving lives, the actual benefits of the ecotourism industry to wildlife, host communities, environments, and the climate have all been questioned.[247]

Positioned in the contexts of late-twentieth and early-twenty-first century African ecotourism, Peter Allison's memoir *Whatever You Do, Don't Run: True Tales of a Botswana Safari Guide* demonstrates the degree to which habituated knowledges have become re-valued within a neoliberal economy. Allison began working for the wildlife ecotourism industry in 1994 when, after travelling from his childhood home in the suburbs of Sydney at the age of nineteen to tour parts of Africa, he took a job as a bartender at a wildlife outfit in South Africa. Two years later, he began working as a safari guide for the ecotourism company Wilderness Safaris in northern Botswana's Okavango Delta, the same location where Cheney, Seyfarth, and Fischer carried out baboon research. Today, Wilderness Safaris manages dozens of camps in Botswana, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, promising guests "high-end ecotourism" experiences.[248] Indeed, rates in Mombo, the camp where Allison worked for

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[246] Stephen Wearing and John Neil, *Ecotourism: Impacts, Potentials and Possibilities* (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1999), 131; Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence*, 176.

[247] See, for example, David A. Fennell, *Ecotourism: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 1999), 34-47; Ralf Buckley, ed., *Environmental Impacts of Ecotourism* (Oxfordshire: CABI Publishing, 2004).

[248] "Our Purpose," *Wilderness Safaris*, 2021, https://wilderness-safaris.com/our-purpose.

the period described in *Whatever You Do, Don't Run*, ranged from $2,310 to nearly $4,000 a night per person in 2021.[249] During the twelve years from when he first became a safari guide to the memoir's publication, Allison came to know the behaviors and habits of the delta's iconic wildlife. As he explains at multiple points, the success of every tour depended on his ability to locate and identify wildlife, especially the must-see predators like lions, cheetahs, and leopards, along with the so-called "charismatic megafauna" such as elephants, giraffes, and rhinoceroses. Tourists expected to see these wild animals as part of their paid experience, and it was Allison's responsibility as a guide to ensure they did not leave "disappointed."[250]

To provide tourists with wildlife encounters, Allison relied upon habituation and the habituated knowledges he gained through personal intra-actions with wild species. Having been formally protected since 1963 with the establishment of the Moremi Game Reserve by the Batawana tribe, many of the wild creatures living in the Okavango Delta were conditioned to the presence of vehicles, guides, and groups of tourists by the late 1990s and early 2000s.[251] Through regular, repeated, and open contacts with a range of species, guides could reliably bring their guests within close proximity of wildlife. As Allison explains, many of the large species in the vicinity of Mombo are "very relaxed with the vehicles, having never been persecuted by hunters or large numbers of tourists,

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[249] "Mombo Rates," *Wilderness Safaris*, 2021, https://wilderness-safaris.com/our-camps/camps/mombo-camp/rates.

[250] Peter Allison, *Whatever You Do, Don't Run: True Tales of a Botswana Safari Guide* (Guilford, CT: The Lyons Press, 2008), 100.

[251] "Moremi Game Reserve," Okavango Delta Explorations," 2021, https://www.okavangodelta.com/destinations/moremi-game-reserve/.

so they behave as if you aren't there at all."[252] Unlike the private modes of habituation practiced by earlier primatologists, safari tourism relies upon habituating wildlife to large vehicles carrying groups of unpredictable tourists. In this model, habituation functions as a multidirectional process occurring among several actors, one that most immediately implicates wildlife, tourists, and safari guides. While many of the wild creatures presented to visiting tourists had long been familiar with the sights, sounds, and smells of humans, some individuals required further conditioning before becoming tourist attractions. Allison, for example, describes how he, several other guides, and two professional photographers "spent months" getting a female cheetah and her cubs "used to us."[253] After months of repeated contact, the cheetahs became "incredibly relaxed around the vehicles," so relaxed, in fact, that Allison is able to show off a photo taken of himself lying on the ground in his safari outfit just three feet from the adult cheetah.[254] For Wilderness Safaris and Allison's reputation as a guide, however, habituating the female cheetah and her cubs provided the experience of "wild Africa" that tourists paid to see. Indeed, shortly after Allison could successfully approach the cheetah and her cubs without them fleeing, he led a group of tourists who saw the female cheetah kill an impala "a few yards in front of the hood of our Land Rover."[255] This moment became "the highlight" of the tourists' stay.[256] Assuming that they remain within the bounds of

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[252] Allison, *Whatever You Do*, 71.

[253] Ibid., 203.

[254] Ibid., 201.

[255] Ibid.

[256] Ibid., 202.

the Okavango Delta, the conditioned cheetahs promise long-term profits for Wilderness Safaris. With company profits and the safety of employees, tourists, and wildlife on the line, Wilderness Safaris established a set of rules to protect humans and wild species from each other. For instance, guides could not lure wildlife with food or calls because the company frowned upon acts that could "disturb any animal out making its living."[257] Instead, safari guides such as Allison had to use their habituated knowledges gained from close and sustained contact with conditioned animals to track and appropriately encounter wildlife.

Within the corporate culture of Wilderness Safaris that revalued conditioning wildlife as profitable and the ecotourism industry which promoted wildlife conservation, Allison came to understand habituation as a mutual practice, one that inspired him to teach others about biodiversity. After years of repeatedly encountering wild creatures, Allison became habituated to their presence. With each close contact, he grew increasingly comfortable until he lost all fear of wildlife. He explains, "There is a specific madness that infects people who live in the bush. They ignore the rational fear that stops an ordinary individual from approaching dangerous animals. This fear diminishes when you live with these animals every day, and you start pushing the boundaries of safe behavior to the breaking point."[258] Putting this differently, Allison writes: "Dealing with the dangerous animals becomes something as habitual as looking both ways when you

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[257] Ibid., 30, 54. In addition to disturbing the ebb of life in the Okavango Delta, calls and lures would disrupt the "authenticity" of encountering wild animals.

[258] Ibid., 225.

cross a road."[259] Caught in the entanglements of habituation, Allison kept company with the species of the Okavango Delta to such an extent that he came to identify with them. Although he views his feelings of comfort and safety as reckless, such experiences once again raise the question: Who is habituating whom? For Allison, habituated knowledges lead to didacticism and create wider webs of concern. In his view, guiding is about "making people aware of the value of all life, not just the lions and elephants, slyly trying to make conservationists of them while making the whole package entertaining."[260]

CONCLUSION: COVID-19, BOUNDARY DISRUPTIONS, MULTISPECIES JUSTICE

Nine and a half months after the US declared the COVID-19 pandemic a national emergency, then Vice-President elect Kamala Harris received her first dose of the Moderna vaccine on camera. Attempting to dispel unfounded doubts regarding the safety and efficacy of the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines that were, just weeks earlier, approved for emergency use by the Food and Drug Administration, Harris told a crowd of reporters, "Literally this is about saving lives. . . . *I trust the scientists, and it is the scientists who created and approved this vaccine.* So I urge everyone, when it is your turn, get vaccinated."[261] While her statement credited scientific endeavors and the people who labored to produce a life-saving vaccine during a moment when the outgoing Trump

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[259] Ibid., 214.

[260] Ibid., 39.

[261] Morgan Chalfant, "Harris receives coronavirus vaccine on camera, urges Americans to get vaccinated," *The Hill*, December 29, 2020, https://thehill.com/homenews/administration/531947-harris-receives-coronavirus-vaccine-on-camera-urges-americans-to-get, emphasis added.

administration peddled doubt regarding the accuracy and benefits of medical science in a move that Naomi Oreskes has termed "implicatory denial," Harris's remarks obscured the multitude of creatures who suffered or were otherwise involved in months of trials before the vaccine could be deemed effective and safe for human use.[262] Similarly, most reporting on the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States avoided crediting other species for the roles they played in producing not only a vaccine but also scientific knowledge about the virus.[263] In addition to casting the development of scientific knowledge as an exclusively anthropocentric activity and flattening the complex relations that many scientists share with the species they come to know as research subjects, such elisions signaled a desire to purify the operations of biotechnology and its products. Like the anxieties expressed by Perlman who defensively told a *New York Times* reporter that species exposed to the live coronavirus "don't care at all that they're being infected,"

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[262] Oreskes argues that right-wing conservatives downplayed the seriousness of the COVID-19 pandemic because they were concerned about the *implications* of accepting the virus as a major threat. In other words, to acknowledge the necessity of vaccines would have required viewing COVID-19 as a danger and threat. Isaac Chotiner, "How to Talk to Coronavirus Skeptics," *The New Yorker*, March 23, 2020, https://www.newyorker.com/news/q-and-a/how-to-talk-to-coronavirus-skeptics; Naomi Oreskes, "Can Science Be Saved?" (lecture, Oregon Humanities Center, Eugene, OR, March 12, 2021).

[263] For a thorough overview of the multiple COVID-19 vaccines and their histories of development, see Jonathan Corum and Carl Zimmer, "How Nine Covid-19 Vaccines Work," *The New York Times*, March 5, 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/health/how-covid-19-vaccines-work.html?searchResultPosition=2. The timelines for vaccine development provided by Corum and Zimmer show that early reporting on vaccine trials in the spring and early summer of 2020 occasionally acknowledged the presence of other species as test subjects. However, in the few stories that noted the involvement of species such as macaques or hamsters in trials, details about the coerced participation of these creatures were never given. Instead, positive narratives about the potential success of vaccines were emphasized over the participation of other species.

knowing that other species were involved in the development and testing of the COVID-19 vaccines would have probably produced much squeamishness and discomfort. Not only would such knowledge have raised ethical questions about animal testing for many people, it would have also raised concerns about disrupting the boundaries of the human body with an agent developed using the bodies of other species. Although these would have been valid concerns if they deterred people from pursuing vaccination, knowing that the vaccine injected into one's body — to protect oneself against a virus that mutated from the body of another species — was the product of the multispecies contact zone called science seems like it would have done much good. Indeed, such awareness could still lead to the questioning of boundaries that separate scientist from research subject, self from other, and human from nonhuman, enabling the creation of collective futures where an always-emergent, always-multiple "we" can do a better job of getting along together.

Recognizing that a post-COVID-19 future without the virus will never exist, some biotech companies turned their attention to developing vaccines suitable for other species at risk of contracting the virus. As William Karesh, an executive at the wildlife infectious disease organization EcoHealth Alliance, told *Science*, "There's a perception that COVID-19 is going away. It's not. It will be with us forever. So the risk to animals won't go away, either."[264] Even with the virus suppressed to manageable levels among human populations, COVID-19 will likely continue to circulate within, and pose health risks to, other species. Responding to these concerns, scientists at the US veterinary

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[264] David Grimm, "Do we need a COVID-19 vaccine for pets?," *Science*, December 18, 2020, https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/12/do-we-need-covid-19-vaccine-pets.

pharmaceutical corporation Zoetis, along with research subjects, developed a vaccine for dogs and cats which they announced to have efficacy in late October 2020.[265] Encouraged by positive preliminary results, Zoetis modified their vaccine to be effective in minks and experimentally injected four orangutans and five bonobos at the San Diego Zoo in February 2021, the same location where eight gorillas tested positive for the virus a month earlier.[266] Vaccines for other species, especially for minks and great apes, were sought over concerns that captive species will spread the virus to conspecifics in cramped environments and that COVID-19 will continually pose a risk to some endangered species. "Fewer than 5,000 gorillas remain in the wild," Natasha Daly explains for *National Geographic*, "and, because they live in close family groups, researchers worry that if one caught the virus, the infection might spread quickly and imperil already precarious populations."[267] Many conservationists worried that the coronavirus could "decimate endangered primate species in Africa and Asia" and threaten other species

[265] "Zoetis Researchers and Scientists Present at 6th World One Health Congress," Zoetis, November 17, 2020, https://www.zoetis.com/news-and-media/feature-stories/posts/zoetis-researchers-and-scientists-present-at-6th-world-one-health-congress.aspx; Grimm, "Do we need."

[266] Natasha Daly, "First great apes at U.S. zoo receive COVID-19 vaccine made for animals," *National Geographic*, March 3, 2021, https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/article/first-great-apes-at-us-zoo-receive-coronavirus-vaccine-made-for-animals?loggedin=true; James Gorman, "The Coronavirus Kills Mink, So They Too May Get a Vaccine," *The New York Times*, January 22, 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/22/science/covid-mink-vaccine.html?searchResultPosition=1; Grimm, "Do we need."

[267] Daly, "First great apes." A parallel to the concern about captive great apes infecting one another because of an inability to socially distance can be found in discussions regarding the treatment and vaccination of prisoners.

already on the brink of extinction like black-footed ferrets.[268] Scientists were also concerned, however, about the virus mutating in wild and captive populations and then reinfecting human populations. James Gorman with *The New York Times* summed up this position, writing, "Scientists worry that if the virus spreads to more wild mink or to other animals, it could become established in natural populations and form a reservoir from which it could emerge, perhaps in mutated form, to reinfect humans at another time."[269] While the reasons for developing safe and effective vaccines for other species could be seen as ultimately self-serving, more productive possibilities open up if we collectively imagine a widespread effort to vaccinate other species. What would it look like to mass produce and distribute vaccines for great apes, monkeys, minks, ferrets, dogs, cats, and other susceptible beings? Could taking their needs seriously help blur the boundaries of technoscience and break down the barriers that led to and worsened the global pandemic? Could such an effort provide a way of working toward multispecies justice? A global program to vaccinate other species could never be a panacea to habitat loss, extinction, and the conditions that lead to the emergence of infectious diseases, but it could offer openings for the work that this chapter proposes.

This chapter set out to draw connections between the practices of biological and behavioral science, species participants, and the researcher's sense of self. By reconsidering species science as a mutual, multispecies endeavor, the chapter confuses distinctions separating the scientist from the research subject. As habituated knowledges

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[268] Grimm, "Do we need."

[269] Gorman, "The Coronavirus Kills Mink."

and the COVID-19 vaccine indicate, species science cannot be conceived as a unidirectional process that generates knowledge about organisms from an isolated position. Instead, the practices and knowledges of species science — along with the researcher's sense of self — emerge through the situated encounters shared by scientists and research subjects. The authors discussed above demonstrate how science's "insights are drawn from diverse ways of life," and they reveal the degree to which species study and intra-act with researchers.[270] While it may be tempting to do away with terms such as "researcher" and "research subject" altogether, the distinctions still matter, especially when differences in power are at stake. In the western versions of species science under consideration, researchers plan and justify experimentation procedures in ways that differ from the participation of the species involved. Terms like "passionate observers" and "significant others" help rewrite the dichotomy between researcher and research subject while providing necessary specificity for attending to the relations that develop through scientific practice.

In addition to disrupting the boundaries between scientist and research subject, the texts and individuals studied in this chapter challenge species differences that have contributed to fantasies of exceptionalism. Primatology, in its search for answers regarding human evolution, demonstrated that wild primate societies share many affinities with contemporary humans. As Strum notes, "[T]he similarities intrigued me. It

[270] Tsing, *Mushroom at the End of the World*, 217. The point about species observing scientists is not used in Jacques Derrida's sense of a cat looking back at a person, but instead references van Dooren's remark concerning the ability of crows to watch people who are, in turn, watching them. He argues that the experience of being watched by a crow is "an invitation to pay attention . . . to a world of diverse forms of mindful and creative presence." van Dooren, *The Wake of Crows*, 1.

was the similarities that made it possible to imagine how behaviors could evolve through time."[271] These similarities were, of course, always interpreted through dominant discourses such as the misguided belief that patriarchy is a natural evolutionary outcome for both chimpanzees and humans, and they were always held in tension with the differences that distinguish various "kinds." Recognizing likenesses opened a space for scientists and broader publics to begin considering how humans might establish relations with other species. In an epigraph for this chapter, Smuts suggests that "our world is replete with nonhuman beings with whom each of us could potentially form personal relationships."[272] She goes on to describe how "personal relationships" with other species may encourage forms of responsibility:

> Although rare people exist who are devoted to the welfare of other species in principle, for most people, a sense of caring and responsibility for other species depends on feeling directly connected to them. Jane Goodall and Dian Fossey proved that research that makes other animals come alive as individuals, with whom we could in principle have personal relationships, contributes immensely to this kind of awareness. We scientists are privy to a rare and precious opportunity when we come to know intimately nonhuman animals living in their own worlds. We have a responsibility to those animals to show other people who they really are—sentient beings who matter to one another, living lives as full of drama and emotion and poetry as our own. To perceive the planet as populated with billions

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[271] Strum, *Almost Human*, 154.

[272] Barbara B. Smuts, *Sex & Friendship in Baboons* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), xv.

> of such creatures staggers the imagination, but it is true, and if we want the world of the future to retain this richness, we need to become ever more conscious of this reality before it is too late.[273]

Scientists, she argues, have a responsibility to show broader publics the varied ways that other beings lead "lives as full of drama and emotion and poetry as our own." The scientists and research subjects studied in this chapter have reconsidered the abilities, intelligence, and importance of other species, bringing about nothing less than a paradigm shift. The changing views toward many species have also contributed to the growing interest in multispecies approaches. As van Dooren observes, species science can not only "animate a fuller and richer sense of the lives of particular beings," but it can also help "craft more livable possibilities" with others.[274]

Plotting the connections that tie species, researchers, entangled selves, and science in knots of mutual practice prompts the question: Can habituation provide ways of relating with others that will consistently improve the lives of multiple humans and species, especially those threatened by the eruptions of intersecting crises? The habituated knowledges that emerge from repeated, open encounters with other species foreground relational modes and practices. Whether or not such frameworks generate improved and more just futures depends on a host of factors, many of which have been explored above. An obstacle to multispecies justice is knowing what other species require

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[273] Ibid., xv-xvi.

[274] van Dooren, *Flight Ways*, 9; van Dooren, *The Wake of Crows*, 6.

in order to flourish, succeed, or otherwise achieve good health.[275] Access to appropriate food, social engagements, sexual choice, clean air and water, safe living conditions, and an array of resources are all necessary in differing combinations and amounts for various species. Once these requirements have been determined, an additional complication arises in knowing how to act in ways that are going to be most beneficial for certain groups. Habituated knowledges and science can provide some — but not all — of the information necessary to make thoughtful decisions and act with the best interest of other species in mind. Ursula Heise used conservation science as a point of departure for the first sustained consideration of multispecies justice because it raises necessary questions and provides some answers regarding the needs of others.[276] Far from leaving science behind, the subsequent chapters continue to engage scientific practices and knowledges. The next chapter considers how ornithology and conservation have been used to care for birds, shifting attention away from the scientist and research subject as entangled knowledge producers to consider how humans use science and its histories to make decisions on the behalf of other beings.

[275] Environmental justice that focuses on human communities has encountered the same challenges, of course. Biomonitoring and toxicology have been necessary for establishing minimum risk levels, determining or proving harm, and pursuing justice among oppressed communities, as Alaimo has made clear. Stacy Alaimo, "Invisible Matters: The Sciences of Environmental Justice," in *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 61-83.

[276] Heise, "Biodiversity, Environmental Justice, and Multispecies Communities."

CHAPTER II

AVIAN CARE: CONFLICT, JUSTICE, AND THE QUOTIDIAN

"Care helps us to rethink humans as interdependent beings."
Joan Tronto, *Moral Boundaries*

"Care is a human trouble, but this does not make of care a human-only matter."
Maria Puig de la Bellacasa, *Matters of Care*

"I've made a hawk part of a human life, a human life part of a hawk's,
and it has made the hawk a million times more complicated
and full of wonder to me."
Helen Macdonald, *H is for Hawk*

For three years, Mozart shared his Vienna apartment with a European starling. From 1784-87, "the most musically productive, prosperous, and engaging" years of his life, Mozart composed and played music in the company of a male starling.[1] While historians and musicologists continue to debate the exact sequence of events, most agree that Mozart purchased a locally caught starling in a Vienna shop on May 27, 1784, after hearing the bird recite part of his recently completed *Piano Concerto No. 17 in G*. At some point during the previous days or weeks, the starling had learned the tune, perhaps by overhearing Mozart whistle the melody as he attended to his daily activities. It remains unclear how many other motifs the starling learned during his time with Mozart; however, ornithologists who have studied this period of Mozart's life concur that his playful composition *A Musical Joke* (K 522) mimics the clipped vocalizations and repetitious cadences of starling chatter.[2] As Lyanda Lynn Haupt, a writer who studied

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[1] Lyanda Lynn Haupt, *Mozart's Starling* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2017), 43.

[2] Ibid., 181; Meredith J. West and Andrew P. King, "Mozart's Starling," *American Scientist* 78, no. 2 (1990): 106-114, at p. 112; Tim Birkhead, *The Wisdom of Birds: An Illustrated History of Ornithology* (London: Bloomsbury, 2011), 259.

Mozart's life and who lives with a starling, observes, such musical exchanges were likely typical in Mozart's household. "Bird and composer had much in common. Both maestro and starling shared an astonishing likeness in talents (mimicry, vocal play, musical gymnastics), personality (busy-ness, silliness, flirtatiousness, tomfoolery), and social priorities (attention-seeking!)."[3] Together, the starling and Mozart exchanged melodies and co-created musical compositions.

The starling died unexpectedly in June 1787, just two months after the death of Mozart's father, Leopold. Much to the disappointment of historians searching for a tidy resolution to the father and son's volatile relationship, Mozart did not attend Leopold's funeral. Instead, he held a funeral for the starling. At the time, Mozart was unable to afford the travel to Salzburg to bury his father and did not attend the services. However, following the sudden death of the starling, Mozart arranged a formal funeral in his backyard garden where he read an elegy that he composed to close friends who gathered for the occasion. Although light-hearted in tone, the poem's subject matter of living in the wake of loss overshadows its theatricality. The poem begins as a meditation on the feelings that arise as Mozart contemplates losing an avian companion:

A little fool lies here

Whom I held dear—

A starling in the prime

Of his brief time,

Whose doom it was to drain

[3] Haupt, *Mozart's Starling*, 182. West and King make a similar observation, noting that Mozart, like starlings, "was quite fond of mocking the music of others, often in quite irreverent ways." West and King, "Mozart's Starling," 112.

Death's bitter pain.

Thinking of this, my heart

Is riven apart.[4]

The opening lines evince genuine affection for the starling, a troublesome and beloved "little fool" whom Mozart "held dear." Thinking, however, of "death's bitter pain" — a pain perhaps experienced by the dying starling and a pain that attended Mozart's thoughts of the bird's death — leads him to the melodramatic and yet sincere pronouncement that his "heart / Is riven apart" by the related acts of remembering the bird and of writing and reciting a eulogy to mark the bird's death. Moreover, his description of the starling demonstrates a deep familiarity with the species' mischievousness and curiosity, a sense of the bird that could have developed only through sustained and meaningful engagement. The "little fool" who opens the elegy is described as "not naughty, quite, / But gay and bright" and who, "under all his brag," exhibits "A foolish wag," always carrying on in a "friendly way."[5] Such descriptions make evident Mozart's admiration for the starling and his very real grief over the bird's untimely death. While it was not unusual for Europeans to pen elegies to deceased house birds such as parrots during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the sincerity of Mozart's loss and the fact that he wrote about a common bird set him apart.[6] Some, like ornithologists Meredith West and

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[4] Marcia Davenport, *Mozart* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), 273, lines 1-8. Davenport's translation is cited most often.

[5] Davenport, *Mozart*, 273, lines 11-12; 13-14; 20.

[6] Ingvar Svanberg and Daniel Möller, "History of Aviculture," in *Aviculture: A History*, eds. Svanberg and Möller (Surrey, CAN: Hancock House Publishers Ltd., 2018), 9-31, at p. 27.

Andrew King, have even suggested that in addition to penning and performing an elegy, Mozart completed *A Musical Joke* as an "appropriate musical farewell, a requiem of sorts for his avian friend."[7]

While several biographers have argued that the elegy completed in the aftermath of the starling's death was merely a farcical display meant to hide Mozart's true sorrow over Leopold's passing, a more straightforward — and far more compelling — truth haunts the poem: Mozart cared a great deal about the bird. He admits as much in the opening lines, "A little fool lies here/ Whom I held dear—." The elegy form, after all, constitutes a genre of care, one that arises from personal spaces of concern, appreciation, and respect for another. Mozart's descriptions of the "little fool" as "gay and bright," full of "brag," and "friendly" indicate a tenderness and fondness for his bird companion. Indeed, burying the starling in a formal ceremony, writing and performing an elegy, and completing a musical composition all function as material and performative acts of Mozart's care. At the same time, however, Mozart's intimations of care are marked by conflict and possibly even guilt. Almost immediately, the elegy raises the question of whether Mozart, by mistake or inattention, precipitated the bird's death. Mozart describes the starling as being "in the prime / Of his brief time" when he died. If European starlings can live twenty years or longer in captivity and this bird died when he was likely no older than five in "the prime" of his life, it seems that Mozart's musical partner died early from an unexpected cause.[8] Mozart never resolves or addresses the question of the starling's

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[7] West and King, "Mozart's Starling," 113.

[8] The exact age of the starling remains unknown, but it seems likely that Mozart bought the bird when they were a year or two old. Generally, children and bird sellers would remove nestlings from their nests, raise them by hand, and sell them within the first year

premature death, suggesting that either the cause was unknown to him or that perhaps he was somehow implicated. The elegy seems to hint at Mozart's involvement, describing how the very thought of "Death's bitter pain" and the loss of the starling "in the prime / Of his brief time" cause his heart to be "riven apart." These lines suggest that Mozart feels most upset about the bird losing his chance to lead a longer life, one lived with the maestro. The heartache that Mozart describes may, in fact, signal guilt over his involvement in the bird's death or in his inability to stop the death from happening. What is guilt if not a sense of unrealized care, a feeling that arises when care goes wrong? In any event, the story of Mozart and the male starling who lived with him raises several questions that guide this chapter. Which modes of care emerge through the contexts of birds and birdkeeping, and why? What role does conflict play in practices of care? How do care and selfhood relate to one another? And how might care for avian species support more just and multispecies modes of living?

This chapter considers several modes of care — and their attendant conflicts — that arise through everyday relations with birds. My understanding of the concept is best reflected in Berenice Fisher and Joan Tronto's feminist description of care as "*a species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible*. That world includes our bodies, our selves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining

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or two, often around the time that the bird began to vocalize. For more on this historical practice in Europe and the US, see Svanberg and Möller, "History of Aviculture," 24-27; Katherine Grier, *Pets in America: A History* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 235.

web."[9] In referring to care as a "species activity," emphasizing the open-ended and ongoing goal of living "as well as possible," and drawing attention to the relations among self and care, Fisher and Tronto provide a starting point for the work of this chapter. I diverge, however, in my insistence that conflict is bound up with care and in my desire to center species among care activities. Fisher and Tronto's definition notably avoids conflict and their application of the generalized, third-person "we" and "our," while used to establish a spirit of inclusivity and community, evokes a specific kind of humanity that often excludes non-normative humans and other species from consideration. In what follows, I examine care as a central, and often fraught, activity in multispecies memoirs about birds, an activity necessary not only to the conceptualization and maintenance of a sense of self, but also to theorizing and practicing multispecies justice. Placing multispecies studies and feminist care theory in conversation with an archive of memoirs and personal narratives that describe activities of care in the contexts of birdkeeping, birdwatching, bird rehabilitation, falconry, and cognitive science, I argue that avian care can establish multispecies senses of self and open possibilities for justice across species lines.

Despite Tronto's early warning against using the concept as a "utopian device," care has become, over the last few decades, a leitmotif for the environmental humanities where it has been adopted as a panacea for remedying the broken world.[10] Authors and

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[9] Berenice Fisher and Joan Tronto, "Toward a Feminist Theory of Caring," in *Circles of Care: Work and Identity in Women's Lives*, eds. Emily Abel and Margaret Nelson (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), 35-62, at p. 40.

[10] Joan Tronto, *Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for an Ethic of Care* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 172.

speakers often evoke the following logic: “If people *cared* about the environment, or if they *cared more*, the world would be better.”[11] Typically functioning as a call to action, this appeal misses how human and nonhuman communities regularly perform care — often in diverse ways that are not clearly legible to mainstream activism — and how practices of care are often frustrated by political, economic, and social dictates that forbid or limit involvement in others’ lives. This chapter approaches care not as a cultural resource in short supply; rather, it understands care as the daily activities of living used by humans and avian species to hold one another in the world. Care, in this sense, need not be associated with positivity or determinism. By introducing this chapter with the story of Mozart and the starling, I seek to align their modes of care with the care activities present in contemporary memoirs and personal narratives. My use of Mozart is not to suggest that care has remained static over the centuries nor to imply that enlightened European men are the protégés for the kinds of care examined in this chapter, but rather to illustrate the mutability of avian care practices and the ongoing roles that birds play as co-participants in literature and the arts.[12]

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[11] To give but one example pertaining specifically to avian life, Peter Doherty, an immunologist who won the Nobel Prize, writes in an op-ed, “The birds need us to measure, observe and count them so we know what is happening and have data to use against the deliberately ignorant, the infinitely greedy, corrupt and stupid who are poisoning our planet and robbing us of our future. . . . If you care about our future, then become a citizen scientist.” Peter Doherty, “We need the birds, and the birds need us,” *CNN*, May 30, 2014, https://www.cnn.com/2014/05/30/opinion/doherty-save-birds/index.html.

[12] Today, for example, veterinarians tend to birds, many find it unthinkable to keep birds in cramped cages, inbreeding is viewed with horror, and international rules govern the importation and purchase of “rare” and “exotic” birds.

Care, Caring, and Structures of Care

As a set of activities that were historically devalued, underappreciated, rendered invisible, and dismissed by men and patriarchal institutions, the daily labors of care such as raising children, cooking, and cleaning that were performed mostly by women — especially women of color, including enslaved women and servants — received scant attention until feminists in the United States defiantly reclaimed these domestic activities and transformed them into generative sites of political action and social theory during the 1970s and 80s. At once a "laborious and devalued material doing" usually practiced by the "least well off members of society" *and* a set of activities "crucial for getting us through the day," care was historically erased from matters of social importance, even while it produced the very conditions required for the continuation of life and the production of the social.[13] Feminist theorists attuned to the inequities of power and gender viewed care as a radically disruptive concept, one capable of centering women's labors, challenging the patriarchal erasure of women's work, and providing a position from which to articulate feminist thought.[14] While historian Carroll Smith-Rosenberg's 1975 publication of "The Female World of Love and Ritual" in the opening issue of *Signs* marked one of the earliest feminist engagements with caregiving, psychologist Carol Gilligan's *In a Different Voice* is widely recognized as inaugurating the study of

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[13] María Puig de la Bellacasa, "Matters of Care in Technoscience: Assembling Neglected Things," *Social Studies of Science* 41, no. 1 (2011): 85-106, at p. 95, 93; Tronto, *Moral Boundaries*, 113.

[14] Not all feminist theorists agreed about the value or importance of caring. Some sought to distance themselves from care entirely as they did not believe that women should continue to be associated with the concept given its patriarchal history. Fisher and Tronto, "Toward a Feminist Theory," 35-36.

care.[15] Challenging Lawrence Kohlberg's androcentric theory of moral development which proposed individualism, abstractionism, and personal development through adversarial opposition as the defining milestones of moral growth, Gilligan argued that women speak about morality "in a different voice" entirely. She found that her female interlocutors practiced an "ethics of care" that positioned themselves among a wider "network of relationships" where interconnection and the maintenance of meaningful relations were necessary to moral and social development.[16] "The ideal of care is thus an activity of relationship," Gilligan explains, "of seeing and responding to need, taking care of the world by sustaining the web of connection so that no one is left alone."[17] Gilligan's argument that women often live by an ethics of care, one that prioritizes the maintenance of relations, established care as a feminist practice. Subsequent work during the early 1990s and 2000s explored the sticky terrains of obligation that care illuminates and fashions, including what Tronto calls "interdependence," Black feminist sociologist Patricia Hill Collins refers to as "connected knowing," and political philosopher Daniel Engster terms "inevitable dependency."[18]

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[15] See Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth-Century America," *Signs* 1, no. 1 (1975), 1-29.

[16] Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 30.

[17] Ibid., 62.

[18] Tronto, *Moral Boundaries*, 101; Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*, 2nd ed. (2000; New York: Routledge, 2002), 264; Daniel Engster, *The Heart of Justice: Care Ethics and Political Theory* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2007), 12.

By emphasizing interconnection rather than self-made individualism, early feminist literature on the topic considered how activities of giving and receiving care expand the boundaries of the self to include the lives and actions of others. Gilligan observes that caring for another makes "the boundaries between self and other . . . less clear than they sometimes seem."[19] In foregrounding dependency and relatedness, care disrupts dominant patriarchal visions of a disconnected, autonomous individual who, through personal experiences, independently crafts a self. Instead, centering care as necessary to the maintenance of everyday life makes apparent that one's sense of self can only exist through the interventions made by others. As Gilligan explains, care "evolves around a central insight, that self and other are interdependent."[20] Such interdependency makes it necessary to consider others while regarding one's self. Going beyond Gilligan's argument for recognizing the interconnectedness of self, Tronto has argued that care presents as radically anti-self. She remarks in *Moral Boundaries*, "[C]are implies a reaching out to something other than the self: it is neither self-referring nor self-absorbing."[21] Always appearing to be directed away from the self and toward others, care "implies" selflessness. Despite presenting as "neither self-referring nor self-absorbing," however, care activities are often performed to satisfy selfish desires and can never be detached from one's sense of self. As feminist theorists have made clear, givers and receivers of care are shaped by the other parties involved in their relationships.

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[19] Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 172.

[20] Ibid., 74, 127.

[21] Tronto, *Moral Boundaries*, 102.

More recently, in response to the growing tendency to associate care with positivity in ways that inadvertently support gender and labor inequities, feminist theorists have begun to examine how care and conflict are co-constitutive. As evidenced by the concept's circulation within the environmental humanities, care can be idealized and normalized in ways that are counterproductive to its core projects. "Care can be easily idealized as a moral disposition," feminist science and technology (STS) scholar María Puig de la Bellacasa explains, "or turned into a fairly empty normative stance disconnected from its critical signification of a laborious and devalued material doing."[22] Even worse, such uses can lead to real harm, as the suggestion that some people need to care more about environmental issues often leads elite, white environmentalists to discount environmentalisms that do not look like their own. Such acknowledgements have led feminist thinkers such as Puig de la Bellacasa and Métis technoscience scholar Michelle Murphy to respectively "reclaim" and "unsettle" care.[23] Puig de la Bellacasa argues that care needs to be "constantly reclaimed from idealized meanings, from the constructed evidence that, for instance, associates care with a form of unmediated work of love accomplished by idealized carers."[24] Murphy similarly cautions against "the conflation of care with affection, happiness, attachment, and positive feeling."[25] She

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[22] Puig de la Bellacasa, "Matters of Care in Technoscience," 95.

[23] María Puig de la Bellacasa, *Matters of Care: Speculative Ethics in More Than Human Worlds* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 11. Michelle Murphy, "Unsettling Care: Troubling Transnational Itineraries of Care in Feminist Health Practices," *Social Studies of Science* 45, no. 5 (2015): 717-37.

[24] Puig de la Bellacasa, *Matters of Care*, 8.

[25] Murphy, "Unsettling Care," 719.

explains, "there is an ongoing temptation within feminist scholarship to view positive affect and care as a route to emancipated science and alternative knowledge-making without critically examining the ways positive feelings, sympathy, and other forms of attachment can work with and through the grain of hegemonic structures, rather than against them."[26] Puig de la Bellacasa and Murphy argue that feminists need to oppose the association of care with positivity, happiness, and inherent good while investing new energies in exploring how care and conflict are interconnected.

Friction, dissent, and violence pervade the activities of giving and receiving care. As Puig de la Bellacasa observes, "Relationality is all there is, but this does not mean a world without conflict nor dissension."[27] A collection of activities "fraught with conflict," care is often "difficult," "unpleasant," and "exasperating" work for those involved.[28] Disagreements arise over how to best administer and receive care, and how to do so in the most respectful, efficient, and helpful manner. Receiving care can sometimes be unwelcome and feel smothering, especially when it strips someone of their sense of independence. "Being cared for can be stifling, if not infantilizing and oppressive," disability and animal studies scholar Sunaura Taylor explains, "as of course can be the role of caregiver."[29] Puig de la Bellacasa makes a similar point when she acknowledges

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[26] Ibid.

[27] María Puig de la Bellacasa, "'Nothing comes without its world': thinking with care," *The Sociological Review* 60, no. 2 (2012): 197-216, at p. 204.

[28] Tronto, *Moral Boundaries*, 109; Fisher and Tronto, "Toward a Feminist Theory," 37.

[29] Sunaura Taylor, *Beasts of Burden: Animal and Disability Liberation* (New York: The New Press, 2016), 205.

that "caring or being cared for is not necessarily rewarding and comforting."[30] Caregivers often concede that providing care for others leaves them feeling psychologically, emotionally, and physically drained. Indeed, professional caregivers experience disproportionately high "burnout" rates, especially when compared to other health professions.[31] At other times, caregivers hurt those they love by providing the wrong kinds of care. From becoming overinvolved or neglectful to administering the wrong medications, those giving care can cause suffering. Care and conflict, therefore, should not be understood as two separate activities that occasionally intersect. Rather, care and conflict co-constitute one another to such an extent that they cannot — to paraphrase Karen Barad — preexist their relating.[32]

Like the growing body of revisionist research that challenges the tendency to normalize and idealize care, some modes of feminist thought have opposed the exclusionary position that renders care a singularly human activity. Beginning in the mid 1980s and extending into the early 2000s, feminists argued that an ethics of care could "move beyond" the problematic frameworks, beliefs, and assumptions of animal rights

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[30] Puig de la Bellacasa, "'Nothing comes," 198-99.

[31] Ludmyla Caroline de Souza Alves et al., "Burnout syndrome in informal caregivers of older adults with dementia: A systematic review," *Dementia and Neuropsychologia*, 13, no. 4 (2019): 415-21; Nadia Kandelman, Thierry Mazars, and Antonin Levy, "Risk factors for burnout among caregivers working in nursing homes," *Journal of Clinical Nursing* 27, no. 1-2 (2018): e147-e153; Matthias C. Angermeyer et al., "Burnout of Caregivers: A Comparison Between Partners of Psychiatric Patients and Nurses," *Archives of Psychiatric Nursing* 20, no. 4 (2006): 158-65.

[32] Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), ix.

and the animal liberation movement.[33] Feminist theorists Nel Noddings, Marti Kheel, Deane Curtin, Josephine Donovan, and Carol Adams, among others, critiqued the use of rationality, logic, universality, separatism, autonomy, principles, and equality by animal rights proponents — especially Peter Singer, Tom Regan, and J. Baird Callicott — which, they argued, did little to garner widespread support for animal liberation or improve the material conditions of domestic animals.[34] Instead, Donovan and Adams proposed a feminist ethics of care for animals that emphasized situatedness, interconnection, particularity, attentiveness, emotion, and narrative to not only avoid privileging the "rational individual" and "restore . . . emotional responses to the philosophical debate," but also "construct a human ethic in conversation with the animals rather than imposing on them a rationalistic, calculative grid of humans' own monological construction."[35] Care, they argued, enacts a "relational" or "dialogical"

[33] Carol Adams, "Caring about Suffering: A Feminist Exploration," in *Beyond Animal Rights: A Feminist Caring Ethic for the Treatment of Animals*, eds. Josephine Donovan and Carol J. Adams (New York: Continuum Publishing Company, 1996), 170-96, at p. 193.

[34] Nel Noddings, "Caring for Animals, Plants, Things and Ideas," in *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics & Moral Education* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 148-70; Marti Kheel, "The Liberation of Nature: A Circular Affair," *Environmental Ethics* 7, no. 2 (1985): 135-49; Deane Curtin, "Toward an Ecological Ethic of Care," *Hypatia* 6, no. 1 (1991): 60-74; Josephine Donovan and Carol J. Adams, eds., *Beyond Animal Rights: A Feminist Caring Ethic for the Treatment of Animals* (New York: Continuum Publishing Company, 1996); Josephine Donovan, "Feminism and the Treatment of Animals: From Care to Dialogue," *Signs* 31, no. 2 (2006): 305-29; Josephine Donovan and Carol J. Adams, eds., *The Feminist Care Tradition in Animal Ethics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

[35] Josephine Donovan and Carol J. Adams, "Introduction," in *Beyond Animal Rights: A Feminist Caring Ethic for the Treatment of Animals*, eds. Josephine Donovan and Carol J. Adams (New York: Continuum Publishing Company, 1996), 13-16, at p. 15; Donovan, "Feminism and the Treatment of Animals," 306.

ontology, a mode of relating that develops among caring activities and points beyond the one-sidedness of animal rights to consider what animals need from their own perspectives.[36] As Donovan explains, such work requires "listening to animals, paying emotional attention, taking seriously—*caring about*—what they are telling us."[37] In proposing that a relational or dialogical ontology develops from care activities, however, feminists concerned with animal ethics separated care from conflict. Adams, for example, writes, "[V]iolence against people and against animals is interdependent. Caring about both is required."[38] While factually correct, Adams's statement casts care as an antidote to violence, a mode of relating unattached to the conflicts shared across groups of humans and animals. Through their critique of animal rights approaches, feminists came to recognize care as a "species activity" in a fuller sense of the phrase.

Recent work in multispecies studies has also examined how care promotes more hospitable relations and attachments with other species. Feminist care theory, in fact, informs nearly all multispecies research. Emphasizing the entangled interdependency of humans and other species, multispecies approaches argue that humans and species need each other to live and pursue meaningful lives, and therefore must support, *or care for*, one another in ways that achieve collective wellbeing. Perhaps unsurprisingly, then,

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[36] Lori Gruen develops a similar concept she names "entangled empathy," or a mode of care that arises from working to understand the needs of another being. Lori Gruen, *Entangled Empathy: An Alternative Ethic for Our Relationships with Animals* (Brooklyn: Lantern Books, 2015).

[37] Donovan, "Feminism and the Treatment of Animals," 305.

[38] Carol J. Adams, "The War on Compassion," in *The Feminist Care Tradition in Animal Ethics*, eds. Josephine Donovan and Carol J. Adams (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 21-38, at p. 22.

multispecies engagements with care have avoided feminist critiques of animal rights, instead drawing from feminist science and technology studies, especially the work of Donna Haraway and Puig de la Bellacasa. Haraway argues that practicing care for other species can lead humans to "think and feel more adequately."[39] "Caring means becoming subject to the unsettling obligation of curiosity," she writes, "which requires knowing more at the end of the day than at the beginning."[40] Such a view of "knowing more" to create better conditions of coexistence informs multispecies scholar Thom van Dooren's understanding of care which asks humans to "become emotionally and ethically entangled and to consequently get involved in whatever practical ways we can."[41] Puig de la Bellacasa — herself strongly influenced by Haraway — has taught van Dooren and other multispecies researchers that becoming entangled and involved in the lives of other species can never be free of conflict, dissent, and violence. Indeed, van Dooren's concept of "violent-care" emerges from Puig de la Bellacasa's observation that "interdependent existences" always produce "inescapable troubles."[42] In his chapter on whooping crane breeding conservation in *Flight Ways: Life and Loss at the Edge of Extinction*, van Dooren argues that care for whooping cranes involves several forms of violence that seek to preserve the species at the expense of sacrificing individual birds, including the

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[39] Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 90.

[40] Ibid., 36.

[41] Thom van Dooren, "Banking the Forest: Loss, Hope and Care in Hawaiian Conservation," in *Cryopolitics: Frozen Life in a Melting World*, eds. Joanna Radin and Emma Kowal (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017), 259-82, at p. 276.

[42] Puig de la Bellacasa, "'Nothing comes," 198-99.

violence of artificial insemination, sexual imprinting, egg theft, and solitary confinement. "Caring is not achieved through abstract well-wishing," van Dooren explains, "but is an embodied and often fraught, complex, and compromised practice."[43] Other multispecies thinkers such as Eben Kirksey, Ursula Münster, Sara Asu Schroer, and Hugo Reinert have since used the framework of violent-care to study how extinction has produced fraught modes of care that demand alternative responses to species loss.[44] Moving beyond the interest in dialogical relationships between caregiver and care receiver and the focus on liberating domesticated animals that were the central concerns of feminist ethics of care, multispecies studies has demonstrated how care emerges through complex sets of relations characterized by multiple encounters and how an array of species from wild and lab animals to plants and fungi participate in care activities.[45] Multispecies approaches have also adopted and altered the feminist concept of attentiveness, using it as a methodology for accessing the perspectives, needs, and worlds of another being who

[43] Thom van Dooren, *Flight Ways: Life and Loss at the Edge of Extinction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 92.

[44] Eben Kirksey, *Emergent Ecologies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 60, 266n55; Ursula Münster et al., "Multispecies Care in the Sixth Extinction," *Cultural Anthropology*, January 26, 2021, https://culanth.org/fieldsights/series/multispecies-care-in-the-sixth-extinction.

[45] Grace Clement has critiqued feminists for avoiding wild animals, arguing that "while the ethic of care seems to fit our interactions with domestic animals well, it is at best unclear how it might guide our interactions with wild animals." Grace Clement, "The Ethic of Care and the Problem of Wild Animals," in *The Feminist Care Tradition in Animal Ethics*, eds. Josephine Donovan and Carol J. Adams (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), pp. 301-15, at p. 302.

belongs to a different species.[46] Care, as conceptualized in the multispecies turn, is far from a "human-only matter."[47]

My understanding of care diverges slightly from earlier theorists and commentators. For the purposes of this chapter, I regard care to be an *activity* and a *structure*. In the former, care operates as an intervention into another's life (and possibly even their death) in which a person, whether human or another species, materially and affectively responds to another, always doing so within wider networks of relations and shifting terrains of conflict.[48] In the latter, care operates as a way of being and living shaped by broader cultures *and* as a structure that produces the understandings and feelings of multispecies entanglement. Drawing from cultural and literary critic Raymond Williams's "structure of feeling" and literary scholar and environmental humanist Stephanie LeMenager's adaptation of the concept, I use the phrase "structures of care" to study how cultural apparatuses such as birdkeeping and birdwatching shape the material and affective activities of care, and how care itself provides a structure for multispecies being and relating that points toward better ways of coexisting with, rather than escaping,

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[46] Thom van Dooren, Eben Kirksey, and Ursula Münster, "Multispecies Studies: Cultivating Arts of Attentiveness," *Environmental Humanities* 8, no. 1 (2016): 1-23; van Dooren, *Flight Ways*, 37; Thom van Dooren, *The Wake of Crows* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019), 9. See also Traci Warkentin, "Interspecies Etiquette: An Ethics of Paying Attention to Animals," *Ethics and the Environment* 15, no. 1 (2010): 101-21.

[47] Puig de la Bellacasa, *Matters of Care*, 2.

[48] Puig de la Bellacasa argues that care signifies "an affective state, a material vital doing, and an ethico-political obligation." Puig de la Bellacasa, "Matters of Care," 90. While the triad helpfully points to the multiple sides of care, it separates affective response from embodied doing. By viewing care as an affective *and* material activity, I refuse to separate the doings and affects of care, as they are both intimately entangled.

conflict.[49] In his classic cultural and proto-ecocritical study *The Country and the City*, Williams argues that the juxtaposition of country and city described in the pastoral genre — via both an historical looking back and an obsession with recording cultural change — produces and reflects structures of feeling, including happiness, innocence, and nostalgia.[50] By studying the structure of feeling, as Williams understands it, the critic can also examine the evolution of a literary genre within the particular and mutable cultural contexts that gave rise to that narrative style. It allows, in other words, the cultural literary critic to access the "deep community" that historically shaped narrative modes.[51] LeMenager, in her brilliant study of the narrative, affective, and material forms produced by US petroleum cultures, argues that oil and the stories told about it generate embodied feelings that often reproduce dominant modes of consumerism and extractivism.[52] The phrase "structures of care," then, shares a focus on how literary genre, in this case the memoir, describes the broader cultural and material apparatuses that shape care activities. Often challenging to describe but clearly felt and practiced, "avian care," or care for, with, and by bird companions, is fashioned through the cultures that develop at sites

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[49] I also consider the physical structures of aviaries and birdcages used to care for birds, which function, quite literally, as structures of care.

[50] Raymond Williams, *The Country and The City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 12, 35. See also Raymond Williams, "From *Preface to Film*," in *Film Manifestos and Global Cinema Cultures: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Scott Mackenzie (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 856-65, at p. 862 and 865, previously published as *Preface to Film* (London: Film Drama Limited, 1954); Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961; Ontario, Canada: Broadview Press, 2001), 319.

[51] Ibid., 48.

[52] Stephanie LeMenager, *Living Oil: Petroleum Culture in the American Century* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014).

where birds and humans meet. By proposing forms of togetherness capable of navigating conflict, avian care offers a structure for pursuing more responsive worlds and ways of living.

Rethinking care as a multispecies phenomenon mired in conflict, this chapter examines how structures of care that emerge through relations with birds expand the limits of selfhood and move toward multispecies justice. I argue that the daily, on-the-ground work of giving and receiving care renders the isolated self an impossibility. Instead, the dozen memoirs considered in this chapter describe selfhood as an entangled, multispecies affair. In each narrative considered, the memoirist recognizes "their" self as emerging from and including avian companions because they understand care to be a reciprocal and shared process. Following their lead, I contend that other species, in this case a range of bird species, care for humans. The move to recognize birds as carers challenges earlier portrayals of these creatures as passive, needy recipients of human attention or, worse, as mindless, reactionary "bird brains."[53] Rather, birds negotiate their shared lives as active co-participants, providing care that ranges from emotional support to hair preening. With such an understanding, I argue that avian care occupies a strategic site for theorizing and practicing multispecies justice. Challenges arise in bringing care and justice together, however. Since Gilligan separated an "ethic of care" from an "ethic of justice" over concerns that the latter depends on rationality, equality, rights, rules, universalism, and autonomy, feminist theorists have repeatedly pointed out the apparent

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[53] See, for example, Tim Birkhead, *Bird Sense: What It's Like to be a Bird* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012); Jennifer Ackerman, *The Genius of Birds* (New York: Penguin Press, 2016); Irene M. Pepperberg, *The Alex Studies: Cognitive and Communicative Abilities of Grey Parrots* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

incompatibilities posed by care and justice.[54] Justice, as conceived via liberal humanism, centers and supports an autonomous, rights-bearing individual human who is guided by rational thought and reason, who can independently make decisions, and who universally represents all humans.[55] "Care theory, by contrast," writes Engster, "begins with individuals already existing in society and dependent upon one another for their survival, development, and social functioning, and highlights the unchosen obligations we all have toward others by virtue of our interdependency."[56] Justice, as Tronto observes, speaks from "universal, abstract principals" based in law and formal governance, whereas care speaks from positions of compassion, immersion, and particularity that center the "daily experiences and moral problems of real people in their everyday lives."[57]

The move by feminist theorists to prescribe care over justice kept the two approaches from speaking to one another and, perhaps worse, it left the problems associated with justice largely in tact and unresolved. This chapter joins a growing

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[54] Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 174, 167. See also Cheshire Calhoun, "Justice, Care, and Gender Bias," *The Journal of Philosophy* 85, no. 9 (1988): 451-63, at pp. 451-53; Tronto, *Moral Boundaries*, 78-79; Brian Luke, "Justice, Caring, and Animal Liberation," in *Beyond Animal Rights: A Feminist Caring Ethic for the Treatment of Animals*, eds. Josephine Donovan and Carol J. Adams (New York: Continuum Publishing Company, 1996), 77-102, previously published in *Between the Species* 8, no. 2 (1992): 100-08; Virginia Held, "Introduction," in *Justice and Care: Essential Readings in Feminist Ethics*, ed. Virginia Held (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, Inc., 1995), pp. 1-3, at p. 2; Engster, *The Heart of Justice*, 5; Daniel Engster, "Rethinking Care Theory: The Practice of Caring and the Obligation to Care," *Hypatia* 20, no. 3 (2005): 50-74, at p. 70.

[55] Engster, *The Heart of Justice*, 7. See also Maneesha Deckha, *Animals as Legal Beings: Contesting Anthropocentric Legal Orders* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2021), 208.

[56] Engster, *The Heart of Justice*, 7.

[57] Tronto, *Moral Boundaries*, 79.

collection of calls to think justice and care together.[58] Indeed, scholars are challenging the either-or logic that separates care and justice, arguing instead that "care needs to be connected to a theory of justice" and that "the relationship between justice and care can be a relationship of compatibility."[59] Positioning care as a reformist concept, I argue that the core practices, orientations, and values of care theory offer a necessary lens for critiquing and reimagining problematic aspects of justice, in ways that open outward to, and offer a foundation for, multispecies justice. Like environmental sociologist David Schlosberg who argues that ecological perspectives push justice frameworks beyond the distributive justice paradigm developed by political philosopher John Rawls, I argue that the optics of care, especially as they connect to nonhuman species, can reorientate justice around interdependence, relationality, and affective response in ways that support multispecies worlds and relationships.[60] While the goal to apply the same law to everyone in a nondiscriminatory manner is absolutely necessary, modern systems of justice are built upon, and serve to perpetuate, exclusionary logics. For instance, they oppress and deny modes of being that do not align with liberal humanism as they simultaneously produce modern citizens, humans, and selves; they privilege individual, rights-based models premised upon the fantasy of disconnection; and they sanction violence toward

[58] I agree with Tronto's position that "justice without care is incomplete." Tronto, *Moral Boundaries*, 167.

[59] Ibid., 171, 167; Engster, "Rethinking Care Theory," 70; Clement, "The Ethic of Care," 302; Engster, *The Heart of Justice*.

[60] David Schlosberg, *Defining Environmental Justice: Theories, Movements, and Nature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

nonhumans while preventing other species from standing before the law.[61] Care theory challenges the isolated liberal humanist subject at the center of justice, asserting, instead, groups of interconnected, entangled actors whose relationships with others, including nonhumans, receive precedence. A care lens brings more responsive, situated, relational, and compassionate modes to juridical systems that align with the multispecies justice frameworks of wellbeing, flourishing, attentiveness, reciprocity, and community.[62] Moreover, care theory's attention to conflict can direct attention to the disagreements and incommensurabilities that characterize multispecies justice, demonstrating that "conflicts are not faults, but features of such an approach."[63]

Finally, this chapter focuses on modes of care that arise through the quotidian events of day-to-day life and it contributes to several areas of avian care that have been overlooked in the birdkeeping literature. By examining the mundane sites where multispecies encounters co-produce care, I consider how the everyday makes care possible and I challenge what might be called the "dramatization of care" that I see occurring in feminist theory and multispecies studies. When thinking care in relation to other species, feminist and multispecies approaches have shifted their focus away from

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[61] For more on how legal and juridical systems perpetuate violence toward humans and nonhumans, see Chapter 3, "Multispecies Violence: Colonialism, Anthropocentric Legal Orders, and the Erasure of Entangled Selves."

[62] Ursula K. Heise, *Imagining Extinction: The Cultural Meanings of Endangered Species* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 198-99; Donna Haraway, "Staying with the trouble for multispecies environmental justice," *Dialogues in Human Geography* 8, no. 1 (2018), 102-05; Danielle Celermajer et al., "Justice Through a Multispecies Lens," *Contemporary Political Theory* (2020).

[63] David Schlosberg, "Ecological Justice for the Anthropocene," in *Political Animals and Animal Politics*, eds. Marcel Wissenburg and David Schlosberg (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 86.

the everyday conditions that produce care to, instead, attend to the workings of care in the broader and flashier contexts of animal liberation and species extinction.[64] Such a shift appears to reflect institutional anxieties about the role of the quotidian in academic contexts where the grand and extraordinary tend to receive the lion's share of funding and attention. This move, however, threatens to unmoor care from its situated specificity and render the concept an abstraction instead of a worldly intervention. While this chapter recognizes how avian communities have been shaped by extinction and colonization, it primarily attends to the daily activities of getting along that tie humans and birds together. There is, therefore, no "ideal" care that this chapter pursues. Rather, it explores several structures and activities of care that have come into being through living with birds.[65] By theorizing what I call vocal-aural, sexual, and rehabilitative care, for instance, I propose more attentive modes of being together. Departing from the unidirectional movement by which a human caregiver supports an avian care receiver, the following considers how birds and birdkeepers practice care for others and self-care, all while navigating the uneven terrains created by conflict. Doing this work not only requires attending to the multiple dimensions of care, including "caring about," "taking care of," "caregiving," and "care-receiving," it also requires determining what counts as a "better"

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[64] See, for example, Donovan and Adams, *Beyond Animal Rights*; Donovan and Adams, *The Feminist Care Tradition*; van Dooren, *Flight Ways*; van Dooren, "Banking the Forest"; van Dooren, *The Wake of Crows*; Münster et al., "Multispecies Care."

[65] In outlining these different modes of care, I am not implying that they are separate or distinct from one another. Rather, these structures and activities of care overlap. To name but one example, the way that spatial care is performed can influence vocal-aural care. I have separated care projects for the ease of reading and comprehension.

or "worse" life for a bird.[66] Focusing on acts of caregiving and care-receiving, I use van Dooren's concept of "flight way" to evaluate care activities. In his schema, a flight way signifies all the "intergenerational work" that needs to be accomplished during a bird's life to ensure that this creature passes their unique ways of being on to "successive generations."[67] In what follows, I view a "better" life for a bird as that which reproduces or replicates their flight way and a "worse" life as that which deviates from or harms their flight way.

CARING WITH BIRDS

Though rarely acknowledged, birds remain among the most popular companion species in the United States. Birds are, in fact, the third most common pet in US households after dogs and cats.[68] Such popularity has led ornithologist and author Tim Birkhead to declare, "We identify more closely with birds than with any other group of animals (apart from primates and our pet dogs)."[69] Unlike dogs and cats, however, who were kept outside houses until the late nineteenth century, birds have been accepted as indoor pets for centuries. Adept at responding to social contexts with song and conversation, birds have long been viewed as good company. Indeed, from the second half of the eighteenth century to the early nineteenth, birds were the most popular pet in

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[66] Fisher and Tronto, "Toward a Feminist Theory," 40-45. See also Tronto, *Moral Boundaries*, 106-08.

[67] van Dooren, *Flight Way*, 27, 22.

[68] Patricia K. Anderson, "A Bird in the House: An Anthropological Perspective on Companion Parrots," *Society & Animals* 11, no. 4 (2003): 393-418, at p. 394.

[69] Tim Birkhead, *Bird Sense: What It's Like to be a Bird* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), x.

the US, especially native songbirds such as mockingbirds, cardinals, and goldfinches.[70] Today the most common bird companions include finches, canaries, cockatiels, parakeets, and lovebirds.[71] In addition to keeping captive birds, the activities of bird feeding and birdwatching have become increasingly popular. While the number of hunters pursuing "gamebirds" has plummeted over the last two decades as part of a much longer decline that began during the late nineteenth century, adherents of birdwatching and bird feeding — two activities that were popularized during the post-war years — have been growing.[72] It is estimated that in the US more than 45 million people engage in birdwatching and at least 60 million engage in bird feeding, making these activities the primary way that most humans encounter wildlife.[73]

Responding to such enthusiasm, a range of bird experts, including veterinarians, animal therapists, and lifelong birdkeepers, have produced an array of guidebooks

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[70] Katherine C. Grier, *Pets in America: A History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 20, 46.

[71] Svanberg and Möller, "History of Aviculture," 29; Larry Lachman, Diane Grindol, and Frank Kocher, *Birds off the Perch: Therapy and Training for Your Pet Bird* (New York: Touchstone, 2003), 5.

[72] Scott Yaich, "Passing on the Tradition," *Ducks Unlimited*, https://www.ducks.org/hunting/waterfowl-hunting-tips/passing-on-the-tradition; Frances Stead Sellers, "Hunting is 'slowly dying off', and that has created a crisis for the nation's many endangered species," *The Washington Post*, Feb. 2, 2020, https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/hunting-is-slowly-dying-off-and-that-has-created-a-crisis-for-the-nations-public-lands/2020/02/02/554f51ac-331b-11ea-a053-dc6d944ba776_story.html.

[73] U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, "Quick Facts from the 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation," March 19, 2018, https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/2016/demo/fhw-16-nat.html; Darryl Jones, *The Birds at My Table: Why We Feed Wild Birds and Why It Matters* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018), xiii, 248.

designed to help humans care for avian companions and to develop an official set of best practices. Blending the genres of self-help, animal caretaking, and veterinary science, guides such as *The Complete Pet Bird Owner's Handbook*, *Birds off the Perch: Therapy and Training for Your Pet Bird*, and *The Welfare of Domestic Fowl and Other Captive Birds* present a well-meaning, but limited, understanding of care, one based on the birdkeeper meeting three basic needs. According to these guidebooks, a bird under someone's care must be supplied a proper diet, provided adequate cage space and exercise, and granted regular interaction. The author of *The Complete Pet Bird Owner's Handbook* recommends feeding a "combination of commercial diets, home cooking, fresh fruits and vegetables, and possibly a few seeds" in ways that "stimulate natural feeding behaviors."[74] Similarly, the authors of *The Welfare of Domestic Fowl and Other Captive Birds* advise supplying a variety of foods in ways that imitate foraging behaviors such as mixing fruits and vegetables with a substrate or hiding snacks in toys.[75] On cage space and exercise, the guides recommend supplying, at minimum, a cage that allows a bird to stretch their wings and freely move about.[76] Cages made of stainless steel or coated in durable non-scratch paints, along with larger floor-to-ceiling aviaries, are generally preferred and should be placed in social settings.[77] Cages should contain

[74] Gary A. Gallerstein, *The Complete Pet Bird Owner's Handbook* (Minneapolis: Avian Publications, 2003), 99, 101.

[75] Penny Hawkins, "The Welfare Implications of Housing Captive Wild and Domesticated Birds," in *The Welfare of Domestic Fowl and Other Captive Birds*, eds. Ian J.H. Duncan and Penny Hawkins (Dordrecht: Springer, 2010), 53-102, at p. 73.

[76] Gallerstein, *The Complete Pet*, 80; Hawkins, "The Welfare Implications," 59.

[77] Gallerstein, *The Complete Pet*, 81, 96.

multiple perches of varying thickness, shape, and material, as well as several toys, a substrate on the ground, and tray liners to catch waste.[78] Food and water dishes need to be cleaned daily whereas cages and aviaries must be thoroughly cleaned at least once a week.[79] Penny Hawkins, in *The Welfare of Domestic Fowl and Other Birds*, argues that "good housing" for birds will "allow for sufficient space for exercise and appropriate social interactions," "provide good quality space," "stimulate appropriate wild conditions," "encourage a range of behaviours and a time budget broadly similar to that observed in the wild," "include compatible conspecifics (for social species)," and "promote good health."[80] Finally, the authors of *Birds off the Perch* and *The Complete Pet Bird Owner's Handbook* advise playing, cuddling, and talking with birds, as well as providing them with at least twelve hours of sleep a day, in order to ensure that they do not develop anxiety or physical disorders such as feather plucking.[81]

While adequate diet, space, and engagement are certainly necessary to ensure a fulfilling life, organizing care around a tripartite scheme of basic needs limits the reach and scope of avian care activities and may cause some birds to suffer as their other needs go unmet. And, although the author of *The Complete Pet Bird Owner's Handbook* admits that "the emphasis in bird care has shifted from basic maintenance to a desire to provide the best life possible for our feathered friends" over the past four decades, it remains

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[78] Ibid., 90, 93-94; Hawkins, "The Welfare Implications," 61, 78-79.

[79] Gallerstein, *The Complete Pet*, 17, 72-73.

[80] Hawkins, "The Welfare Implications," 55.

[81] Lachman, Grindol, and Kocher, *Birds off the Perch*, 94, 110, 112; Gallerstein, *The Complete Pet*, 17, 68-69.

apparent that the dominant structure of care — reproduced here in the official discourse of guidebooks — misses much of what it means to be a bird and much of what it means to be a person entangled in interdependent relationships with birds.[82] The memoirs and personal narratives studied below develop more expansive and multispecies ways of looking at care. Instead of turning to the formalized advice printed in guidebooks, however, they turn to the daily, lived experiences that arise from cohabiting worlds.

Food Care: Raptors, Killing, and Death

Unlike care associated with passerines, or perching birds, care associated with raptors requires a sustained involvement in killing and death. To maintain their health, birds of prey must consume several whole animals every day. Acquiring small rodents, mammals, and birds is not only challenging and expensive, it also demands that carers become implicated in a raptor's food source to a much greater extent than most bird- and pet-keepers. Raptor caretakers cannot open a bag of industrially produced dried kibble that no longer resembles the beings inside, nor can they provide locally sourced organic fruits and vegetables. Nor do they enjoy the ease with which the amateur ornithologist and British author Maxwell Knight collected "odd beetles, woodlice, caterpillars and daddy-longlegs" in his backyard to feed a fledgling cuckoo.[83] Instead, lacking easy access to appropriate food sources, they often rely on mice discarded from laboratories and male chicks rejected from industrial hatcheries. Sometimes these creatures can be purchased

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[82] Ibid., 171. To be sure, the authors of the guidebooks mentioned here also discuss other care activities. However, they mostly consider a limited collection of activities that involve food, housing, and social involvement.

[83] Maxwell Knight, *A Cuckoo in the House* (London: Methuen, 1955), 34.

dead, but it is likely that they will need to be killed before being fed to a raptor. Falconers — in addition to the daily killing of rodents and small birds — take hawks, eagles, and falcons on hunting expeditions where the raptors kill mammals and "gamebirds." In these instances, caring for and with a bird of prey entails becoming intimately affiliated with killing and death. Put differently, killing functions as a kind of care in these circumstances. Although raising birds of prey in captivity is far less common than raising popular passerine species sold at pet shops, examining the complexities of killing that arise through the quotidian acts of feeding and eating demonstrates that an act as simple and necessary as providing food for another implicates those involved in broader multispecies webs and centers conflict within care relationships.[84] Research assistant Stacey O'Brien, in her memoir *Wesley the Owl*, attempts to kill pet-store mice in the most sanitized and detached way possible, whereas biologist Bernd Heinrich, in *One Man's Owl*, and falconer Helen Macdonald, in *H is for Hawk*, pursue more responsive modes of killing and caring.

As O'Brien explains in *Wesley the Owl*, obtaining and killing mice posed multiple challenges in ensuring that Wesley, a barn owl with a partially disabled wing, could meet his dietary needs. During the mid-1980s, O'Brien worked as a student assistant at the California Institute of Technology's owl laboratory. A faculty advisor offered her the chance to raise a barn owl nestling with a nerve-damaged wing and she took the opportunity. Shortly after bringing the four-day-old Wesley home, however, O'Brien

[84] In the United States, keeping captive raptors requires federal and state licenses which are obtained by passing various exams, staying up to date on best practices for care, and paying membership fees.

learned that she would have to begin killing mice. Due to a "statewide shortage of rodents," she began buying white mice from all the pet stores "within a twenty-mile radius" of her home.[85] Wesley, at this point in his young life, could only consume parts of mice, so O'Brien became tasked with killing and dismembering the rodents for him. "Even though Wesley was a bird of prey," she explains, "it had never occurred to me that I would actually have to kill animals to take care of him. I was horrified, but there was no other way."[86] Wanting their deaths to be "as quick and painless as possible," O'Brien tried cutting off their heads with "sharp scissors."[87] While certainly effective, the technique felt too "grisly" and presented O'Brien with no easy way to store their bodies until Wesley could eat them.[88] Freezing the dead mice together in a plastic bag caused their bloodied bodies to "congeal" in "frozen clumps" which made thawing and feeding difficult.[89] Adopting a more sanitary method, O'Brien began holding each mouse by the tail and slamming them into a hard surface with a flick of her wrist. Although she claims that each mouse "would die instantly, painlessly, and unconscious of even being threatened," it seems likely that at least some of the 28,000 mice that she killed during Wesley's nineteen-year lifespan did not die with ease.[90] This preferred method of killing

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[85] Stacey O'Brien, *Wesley the Owl: A Remarkable Love Story of an Owl and His Girl* (2008; New York: Free Press, 2009), 25, 27.

[86] Ibid., 25.

[87] Ibid., 25-26.

[88] Ibid., 26.

[89] Ibid., 27.

[90] Ibid.

brought O'Brien into regular and close contact with death and with Wesley's daily nutritional requirements. "Like all full-grown barn owls," she writes, "Wesley ate three to four large whole mice per day, it was hard to keep up with his needs."[91] Over time, she even developed carpal tunnel syndrome in her wrist, a painful, embodied signifier of her care. Although it took on qualities of the quotidian, the act of killing remained a constant challenge: "I never got used to having to kill mice and was just as horrified by it after many years as I was the first time. I had thought I would become desensitized to it, but it remained painful to do. Eventually, I found a pet store that would kill mice for me before bagging them up, which helped somewhat."[92] Sustaining a barn owl's life, she discovered, requires a caregiver to confront death and grapple with killing every day.

With her purchases of white mice from pet stores, her quick and bloodless killing technique, and her careful feeding routine, O'Brien sought a hygienic and distanced relationship with killing and death, one that suppressed and ignored Wesley's behaviors as an avian predator. Reminders of his barn owl flight ways resurfaced regularly, however. Wesley, for instance, would throw body parts and organs of dead mice onto the floor of their shared bedroom. Such remainders from his meals served as tokens of the killing necessary to sustain another's life and as evidence of Wesley's hunting prowess. At other times, O'Brien tried to feed Wesley chicken when she was unable to find live mice, a protein source that he correctly viewed as an unacceptable replacement for his

[91] Ibid., 80.

[92] Ibid., 85.

standard diet.[93] As O'Brien explains, Wesley "usually stared at it for a long time and then cried, begged, and pointedly stepped all over it until I took it away."[94] Moments such as these demonstrate how Wesley refused to consume inadequate food, demanding owl-appropriate meals and proper modes of care instead. In one particularly upsetting incident, Wesley killed four zebra finches living in the bedroom, which led O'Brien to question her view of Wesley as a "friendly, nonhunting owl—my little baby."[95] Struck by "the shock of the real," O'Brien was reminded in this instant that birds of prey hunt and kill to obtain their food.[96] Despite her best attempts to kill mice and feed Wesley in a detached way that would allow her to continue to view him as a "baby," she was unable to manage his feeding behaviors. By asserting his preferences and needs, Wesley intervened in O'Brien's care.

While O'Brien tried to minimize her involvement with killing to maintain the illusion that a raptor could stand in as a child, Heinrich viewed killing as an ethical dilemma that persisted until the great-horned owl learned to hunt independently. Part Thoreauvian nature diary, part memoir, and part scientific study, *One Man's Owl* recounts the two years in the mid-1980s during which Heinrich raised a great-horned owl named Bubo in the Vermont and Maine woods.[97] When a late-season snowstorm knocked

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[93] Owls, like other raptors, must consume a mixture of bones, flesh, cartilage, organs, and fur to remain in good health.

[94] O'Brien, *Wesley the Owl*, 85.

[95] Ibid., 101.

[96] Helen Macdonald, *Falcon* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 2006), 175.

[97] "Bubo" refers to the genus that designates horned, eagle, and snowy owls, hence the great-horned owl's name.

a three- to four-week-old great-horned owl nestling from their nest, Heinrich rescued the young owl near his Vermont home. Well aware that great-horned owls cannot be removed from their nesting sites or rehabilitated without the proper permits, he justified the owlet's removal by arguing that the bird would be part of a scientific study on "the development of . . . hunting behavior."[98] As Heinrich explains, "Such scientific inquiry would justify my saving this owlet in the eyes of the law."[99] Although he studied bumblebees at this point in his academic career, the desire to rescue and save Bubo prompted him to broaden his biological interests. Heinrich did not make such a decision lightly, recognizing that raising a great-horned owl required "a commitment to give constant care to the animal for its lifetime."[100] This care, Heinrich notes, should support multiple needs: "Taking an animal from the wild is something one does not do casually. It requires much time and commitment to live with another creature, and one must be prepared to provide not only for its physical needs but also for its psychological requirements."[101] For Heinrich, the skill of observation needed to succeed in the biological sciences provided a methodology for ensuring that Bubo's needs were met. "With animals," he argues, "we can never assume that they have the sense or ability to tell us what they need or want. We must study them closely for signs of their needs, and

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[98] Bernd Heinrich, *One Man's Owl* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 13.

[99] Ibid.

[100] Ibid., 100.

[101] Ibid., 15.

then we must make ourselves available to minister to those needs."[102] Aided by the caregiving powers of observation, Heinrich primarily made himself available during mealtimes, always seeing to it that the voracious Bubo had enough to eat.

Reluctant to kill other creatures and become involved in their deaths, Heinrich almost exclusively fed Bubo a diet of dead critters collected from roadways and retrieved from the family cat, viewing such deaths as the collateral — and therefore less ethically fraught —outcome of actions larger than himself. An ultra-marathon runner, he collected dead creatures along the winding roads near his home in Vermont and his research cabin in Maine, placing their bodies in a bag and recording their number and species identification in a diary. Over the course of two summers, he brought Bubo 73 birds representing 31 different species and approximately 10 mammals that were all killed by vehicles. Over the same period, Bunny, the family cat, provided nearly one hundred mammals representing about sixteen species. Taken together, automobile drivers and Bunny the cat indirectly took care of the great-horned owl. "Bubo's diet was . . . broad," Heinrich writes, "as it largely reflected Bunny's hunting success and the vagaries of automobile kills."[103] Heinrich saw Bubo's consumption of roadkill and the dead critters abandoned by the cat as a service benefitting multiple groups, a public good that cleaned up roadways and utilized flesh that would have gone to waste had it not been consumed by scavengers. As he puts it, "I have felt pleased so far to have been able to feed Bubo the already dead animals that would otherwise have gone to feed bacteria and

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[102] Ibid.

[103] Ibid., 62.

maggots."[104] From his perspective, caring for Bubo by supplying him with already deceased birds and mammals provides what social theorists and ecologists call a social and ecosystem service. "If cars and the cat had not killed these animals," Heinrich reasons, "then Bubo (and I) would have had to do it."[105] Such logic assumes, however, that some species need to be sacrificed for humans to benefit from car culture and petroleum infrastructures or for cats to roam free. Indeed, adjustments such as redesigning transportation to ensure that other species are not harmed and keeping cats indoors would end the killing that Heinrich normalizes and justifies as necessary to sustaining Bubo.[106]

Not only does Heinrich hesitate to kill other species for Bubo and become involved in killing and death, he also believes that decisions about which species to kill should be based on a kind of multispecies ethics that carefully weighs the impacts of each death on wider communities of beings. After just two months of living with Bubo, Heinrich ran out of dead birds and mammals to feed the hungry and rapidly growing

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[104] Ibid., 69.

[105] Ibid., 152.

[106] At one point Heinrich complains about Bunny killing wild rabbits, writing, "I am not at all pleased by his depredations." Ibid., 56. Yet, he continues to let the cat outside because he believes that Bunny only kills "the excess population" of a species before it "threatens to harm the environment for other species." Ibid., 56-57. Studies have since shown, however, that cats can cause significant harm to populations. See, for example, P.J. Baker et al., "Impact of predation by domestic cats *Felis catus* in an urban area," *Mammal Review* 35 (2005): 302-12; K.E. Moseby, D.E. Peacock, and J.L. Read, "Catastrophic cat predation: A call for predator profiling in wildlife protection programs," *Biological Conservation* 191 (2015): 331-40; Philip J. Baker et al., "Cats about town: is predation by free-ranging pet cats *Felis catus* likely to affect urban bird populations?," *International Journal of Avian Science* 150, no. 1 (2008): 86-99.

owlet. Forced to make his "first conscious decision to choose Bubo's life over that of his prey," Heinrich took his small-caliber rifle into the woods beside Camp Kaflunk, his cabin in Maine, with Bubo following in pursuit.[107] Though he later admitted to "being squeamish" about killing some creatures such as rabbits, Heinrich wounded a red squirrel whom Bubo promptly killed with "the strong clenching movements of his taloned toes."[108] Heinrich selected a red squirrel only after considering which death would be most appropriate for the forest and its inhabitants.

> For better or worse, I place different values on different lives; for example, if I had to choose a live prey for Bubo's meal, I would choose a red squirrel or blue jay over a chickadee. Squirrels and jays are very common near Kaflunk, and both are significant consumers of the eggs and young of songbirds. On more than one occasion, I have seen a red squirrel emerge from a bird's nest with a naked chick in its yellow incisors. Jays are protected by law, but red squirrels are not, and squirrel meat is one of Bubo's favorites.[109]

Obligated to continue feeding Bubo, Heinrich considered the available species and then used scientific knowledge and law to make an informed decision. He killed a red squirrel because they are common and easy to hunt, they consume songbirds, they are not legally protected, and they are tasty by Bubo's standards.[110] Guided by substantial ecological

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[107] Heinrich, *One Man's Owl*, 69.

[108] Ibid., 152, 70.

[109] Ibid., 69.

[110] Recent research has determined that birds do, in fact, have taste buds and enjoy tasting their food. Birkhead, *Bird Sense*, 116-17.

knowledge, Heinrich's multispecies ethics of killing emerged from a situated location at a specific moment in time.[111] When he had to kill to support Bubo, he chose the creatures whose deaths would most benefit others. In doing so, Heinrich articulated a kind of care that went beyond Bubo's immediate needs to attend instead to wider, interdependent relationships. To kill responsibly — to remove another life from a set of relations — Heinrich had to consider the interconnections that bring species into being. Indeed, killing to provide others with care led Heinrich to recognize his own evolutionary embeddedness. As he explains, "I am the accumulated information that has been passed down since the dawn of life, and my body contains the substance that I have inherited from millions of lives, from every species that has ever existed."[112] In articulating his own version of a flight way and his own ethics of care, Heinrich crafts a sense of self dependent upon inheritance and wider communities of species knotted together.

Departing from Heinrich and O'Brien who express significant reservations about killing, Macdonald tackles killing head on, pulling the hood — to use a falconer's metaphor — off falconry which often obscures death and killing to instead grapple with the activity's gore, entanglements, and necrocentrism. Having been involved in falconry for most of her life, Macdonald decided to train a young goshawk shortly after her father's unexpected death because, as she puts it, "the world had changed, and so had

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[111] van Dooren, *The Wake of Crows*, 7-14. Heinrich does not explain if the ethics engages future species or if the ethics ever pertains to individuals rather than entire species. Also, Heinrich sees no problem with bringing Bubo live snakes, toads, frogs, clams, and fish. These creatures often experience painful deaths at the hands of Heinrich and the talons of Bubo, but he does not include them in his ethics.

[112] Heinrich, *One Man's Owl*, 14.

I."[113] *H is for Hawk* describes the extensive training that Macdonald and the goshawk undertook together near Cambridge in the United Kingdom. Until her father died in 2007, Macdonald felt unsettled around goshawks. "They unnerved me. They were things of death and difficulty: spooky, pale-eyed psychopaths that lived and killed in woodland thickets."[114] In an attempt to distance herself from killing and the recent death of her father, she named the young hawk Mabel, a moniker derived from the term "amabilis" which means "loveable or dear."[115] By using the name "Mabel," an "old, slightly silly name, an unfashionable name," Macdonald sought to be "as far from Death as it could get."[116] She quickly realized however, that such a goal was not only impossible, but also misplaced. As she explains, "My flight from death was on her [Mabel's] barred and beating wings. But I had forgotten that the puzzle that was death was caught up in the hawk, and I was caught up in it too."[117] Macdonald purchased Mabel and began training her in order to escape her father's death; however, once she began killing other creatures with Mabel, Macdonald understood that together they specialized in death. With its history in the U.K. and much of Europe as an exclusionary sport taken up by wealthy aristocratic men, falconry uses specialized terms like "quarry" and "game" to displace the actual creatures killed and to hide from death.[118] Mabel's primary function as a goshawk

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[113] Macdonald, *H is for Hawk* (New York: Grove Press, 2014), 24.

[114] Ibid., 22.

[115] Ibid., 89.

[116] Ibid.

[117] Ibid., 160.

[118] Macdonald, *Falcon*, 88-89.

and a falconry bird, however, was to "Kill things. Make death."[119] As she began to train Mabel, Macdonald sought to provide the hawk with better care than was typically offered and to dismantle the boundaries believed to separate raptor and trainer. She was especially critical of the English author T.H. White who, in addition to writing the 1938 classic *The Sword in the Stone*, also wrote a book about training a goshawk. She writes of White, "I was . . . angry with him. First, because his hawk had suffered terribly as he tried to train it. And second, because his portrayal of falconry as a pitched battle between man and bird had hugely influenced our notions of what goshawks are and falconry is. Frankly, I hated what he had made of them. I didn't think falconry was a war, and I knew hawks weren't monsters."[120] Feeling "haunted" by White and the goshawk he mistreated, Macdonald set out to train and see Mabel differently.[121]

Killing became an activity shared among Macdonald, Mabel, and their prey, a way of honoring bonds of interdependency and enacting care for one another. Akin, in some ways, to habituation, falconry requires building a relationship of trust. First a raptor needs to eat from a gloved fist and once they become habituated to the trainer's presence, and vice versa, the raptor steps to the trainer's fist for food. The falconer then walks outside with the raptor tied securely to leather straps called jesses to habituate the bird to local sights and sounds. Once the raptor grows comfortable with these activities, the

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[119] Macdonald, *H is for Hawk*, 160.

[120] Ibid., 33. White caused suffering for the goshawk he tried to train in several ways. Mostly he was inexperienced and, as Macdonald puts it, "didn't know what he was doing." Ibid., 74. This inexperience coupled with impatience caused him to overfeed the goshawk, give unclear commands, and mete out punishment. See T.H. White, *The Goshawk* (New York: Putnam, 1951).

[121] Macdonald, *H is for Hawk*, 38.

trainer begins calling the bird to fly to them for a food reward while tethered to a line called a creance. The creance is eventually removed and, after additional practice without the line, the raptor can begin hunting. In addition to altering the raptor's behaviors, the extensive process shapes the trainer's sense of self. "For centuries," Macdonald writes in her book *Falcon*, "the process of training a falcon has been seen as training oneself, learning patience and bodily and emotional self-control."[122] At the same time, however, training and "hawking" — "flying" a raptor with the intent of making a kill — ask the falconer to identify with the bird.[123] "You *are* the bird" in these moments, as Macdonald puts it.[124] She acknowledged that through the repetitious process of training and flying Mabel, she adopted aspects of the goshawk's personality. "The hawk was everything I wanted to be: solitary, self-possessed, free from grief, and numb to the hurts of human life. I was turning into a hawk."[125] Gradually, their body movements matched one another until Macdonald felt she could at least partially view the world from Mabel's perspective. "Eventually you don't see the hawk's body language at all. You seem to feel what it feels. Notice what it notices. The hawk's apprehension becomes your own."[126] After several months of being together, Macdonald writes, "I felt incomplete unless the bird was sitting on my hand: we were parts of each other."[127] Hunting became a

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[122] Macdonald, *Falcon*, 97.

[123] Ibid., 76.

[124] Macdonald, *H is for Hawk*, 79.

[125] Ibid., 85.

[126] Ibid., 86.

[127] Ibid., 135.

transformative experience, one that brought Macdonald beyond species boundaries. "Hunting with the hawk took me to the very edge of being human. Then it took me past that place to somewhere I wasn't human at all."[128] Indeed, going beyond the limited borders of her human self forced Macdonald to become entangled with killing and death.

A site of multispecies cooperation, hunting became a way for Macdonald and Mabel to care with one another and practice better ways of killing and consuming. After Mabel made a kill, for example, Macdonald would help her access the meat by removing feathers or fur. She describes handling a dead pheasant, "I reach down and start, unconsciously as a mother helping a child with her dinner, plucking the pheasant with the hawk. For the hawk. And when she starts eating, I sit on my heels and watch, watch her eat. Feathers lift, blow down the hedge, and catch in spiders' webs and thorn branches. The bright blood on her toes coagulates and dries. Time passes."[129] Caught up in this shared moment, Macdonald begins crying "[f]or the pheasant, for the hawk, for Dad and for all his patience, for that little girl who stood by a fence and waited for the hawks to come."[130] Killing not only permitted Mabel to practice her flight way, it also allowed Macdonald to share food with Mabel and dwell with the interconnections that bound pheasant, goshawk, father, and self. Moreover, by killing pheasants, quail, and rabbits, Mabel supplied Macdonald with food. Care occurred not only between Macdonald and Mabel, however; care also extended to the creatures they hunted together. Though Mabel killed her prey quickly and efficiently, she would often — especially when Macdonald

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[128] Ibid., 195.

[129] Ibid., 184.

[130] Ibid.

withheld food — begin eating while the prey was still alive. “If I didn’t kill the rabbit [or other creature],” Macdonald explains, “the hawk would sit on top of it and start eating; and at some point in the eating the rabbit [or other prey] would die.”[131] Horrified by their suffering, Macdonald would intervene by quickly ending the creature’s life. Together, Mabel and Macdonald practiced a kind of killing informed by care. By supplying one another with food and ensuring that their prey die as painlessly and with as much respect as possible, Macdonald and Mabel demonstrate how care can guide the activities of falconry and killing.

Spatial Care: Avian Architecture and Embodiment

Although birdkeeping guidebooks continue to recommend housing birds in smaller, portable cages, birdkeepers have increasingly challenged this position, arguing instead that avian companions require much larger floor-to-ceiling aviaries inside the home. Such a move has followed the wider cultural shift in the second half of the twentieth century that encouraged people to see pets less as objects of decoration that bestow status upon themselves and more as living beings with specific needs who require care and attention.[132] Writing at mid-century, the Austrian ethologist and Nazi

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[131] Ibid., 196.

[132] The first attempt to rethink birdcages occurred in the nineteenth century when birdkeepers in the US and parts of Europe considered how to make cages more comfortable. As Grier explains, “Bird keepers added baths, sunshades, cuttlefish bones, perches on springs, or swings to cages to improve the domestic comforts of their pets. Patented innovations in birdcages and their accessories reflected this concern about kindness and ambivalence about cage life altogether.” Grier, *Pets in America*, 66-67. Before this, birds were often kept in cages with little regard given to their need for exercise and play. Valerie Chansigaud, *All About Birds: A Short Illustrated History of Ornithology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 38.

sympathizer Konrad Lorenz cautioned that "clever and highly developed beings whose lively mentality and urge for activity" can "find no outlet behind the bars of a cage."[133] Responding to the American animal behaviorist B.F. Skinner who studied animals by placing them in boxes and cages where they could be deprived of "external stimuli" such as food, water, and companionship, Lorenz proposed that many species — here he was thinking of parrots in particular — should never be kept in cages. Today, birdkeepers generally agree that a bird's home "should be a haven," a space that allows them to express the full range of their behaviors.[134] Indeed, all the memoirists considered in this chapter, and the birds who have lived with them, could be described as strongly anti-cage. Rather than live in cages, the birds who populate this chapter inhabit full- or partial-room aviaries, or they live without separate containment structures altogether and inhabit multiple rooms.[135] This section examines what I call "spatial care," a designation that calls attention to the spatial dimensions of care and the ways that care shapes the architecture, design, and construction of physical spaces. As such, spatial care describes the ways that birdkeepers and birds organize physical spaces to meet avian needs. Chris Chester's memoir *Providence of a Sparrow* and the Iizuka family's published narratives about a starling describe designing, building, and occupying bird architecture to care for

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[133] Konrad Lorenz, *King Solomon's Ring: New Light on Animal Ways* (New York: Crowell, 1953), 53.

[134] Anderson, "A Bird in the House," 404.

[135] The emphasis on permanent structures is not meant to exclude individuals and birds who live in temporary or semi-permanent housing. Unhoused people sometimes keep birds in cages because they lack other alternatives, for example. See Leslie Irvine, *My Dog Always Eats First: Homeless People and Their Animals* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2013).

two underappreciated species. When sharing spaces designed for birds, Chester and the Iizuka family practiced embodied forms of care, deliberately and carefully moving their bodies to ensure they did not crush avian occupants. Never free from conflict, however, these spaces also became sites of accidental injury and harm.

Providence of a Sparrow details how Chester, a computer technician who lived in Portland, Oregon, and a house sparrow named "B" formed an enduring relationship based on mutual care. Chester found B "close to death" beside his house in June 1993.[136] Together with his fiancé Rebecca, Chester brought the nestling inside, fed him wet puppy food every half hour, and kept him warm. After it became apparent that the sparrow would survive, Chester and Rebecca debated whether they should raise him in captivity or release him outside. Rebecca argued that the fledgling sparrow was "a wild creature, and it wouldn't be fair to keep him caged."[137] Chester, however, wanted the young sparrow to stay inside the house because he felt an "incredible affinity" with him and he knew that captivity would significantly extend the bird's life.[138] They decided to keep the house sparrow when, shortly after learning the rudiments of flight, B flew to Chester's shoulder. "After staring at me for a minute," Chester recounts, "B flew from the bookcase to my shoulder and has, in a manner of speaking, never really left it. I can close my eyes or stare into space and relive the surprise and delight of an instant when the order of

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[136] Chris Chester, *Providence of a Sparrow: Lessons from a Life Gone to the* Birds (2002; New York: Anchor Books, 2004), 21.

[137] Ibid., 33.

[138] Chris Chester, interview by Duncan Strauss, *Talking Animals*, April 4, 2005, https://talkinganimals.net/2005/04/chris-chester/.

things reversed and a bird flew to me instead of away."[139] Chester and Rebecca quickly changed the sparrow's name from the pejorative "Birdbrain" to the simpler and more appropriate B. As the sparrow settled into the household, Chester felt his lifelong struggle with depression gradually lessen. He admits that when he found B, "I was as depressed as I've ever been."[140] Chester found that caring for B — feeding, cuddling, and playing with the sparrow — helped free him from "the quotidian fretting that gobbles up so much of our time." [141] As the nonfiction writer Inara Verzemnieks explains, "B pulled Chris outside of himself, and in doing so, he gave him something to write about: this crazy life he was living — *living* — with a bird flying around in the background, seed husks crunching underfoot."[142] By displacing Chester's "quotidian fretting" and lessening the symptoms of his depression, B reciprocated care. They held each other in the world in this way, giving and receiving care to sustain their entangled life. After B died in 2002, Chester slid back into major depression. Rebecca left him in 2005 and, a year later, Chester died a bloody, horrific, and solitary death when an untreated cancer that had spread down his throat killed him before his ambulance could arrive at the nearest hospital.

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[139] Chester, *Providence*, 59.

[140] Ibid., 81.

[141] Ibid., 6.

[142] Inara Verzemnieks, "The Sorrow and the Sparrow: The Life and Death of Chris Chester," *The Oregonian*, June 1, 2007, https://www.oregonlive.com/oregonianextra/2007/05/sparrow_man.html, emphasis added.

Before the narrative descended into tragedy, Chester and Rebecca converted the entire upstairs of their house into one large aviary, a design feat that required them to do their best to eliminate potential avian dangers while anticipating present and future needs. Chester and Rebecca initially followed birdkeeping conventions by purchasing a small birdcage for B when he was still a fledgling. However, once the sparrow took a strong interest in Chester and Rebecca, they began to see the new birdcage as a "dispensable evil" and to view all cages as nothing more than "shit-containment structures."[143] Citing William Cowper's poem "On a Goldfinch Starved to Death in His Cage," Chester argues that "loss of freedom" is a "privation more brutal than any other."[144] Caging a bird, he contends, is a symptom of "human convenience and control," a way of "punishing" the creature for "possessing the ability to fly" and a mode of capture that prevents "creatures from exercising an ability honed to perfection by roughly two hundred million years of evolution."[145] To limit a bird's mobility, in other words, is to destroy their flight way. Such a conviction led Chester to opine that "people shouldn't have birds if they can't do so without caging them."[146] Determined to give B adequate space for flight, Chester and Rebecca converted an upstairs guest bedroom with a "sharply sloping ceiling on its south side" into an aviary.[147] Owing to its previous use during WWII as an apartment for shipyard workers, the guest room conveniently contained a sink and countertop which

[143] Chester, *Providence*, 40, 261.

[144] Ibid., 40.

[145] Ibid., 88.

[146] Ibid.

[147] Ibid., 76.

allowed B's possessions to be washed with ease. Before moving the ever-curious sparrow into his new aviary, however, Chester and Rebecca "took the precaution of covering windows, mirrors, and anything else that posed a navigational hazard."[148] By making accommodations for B, Chester and Rebecca practiced a kind of spatial care, one that required them to adopt a sparrow's perspective and see the inside of their house differently. Windows and mirrors became hazards that needed to be hidden. Within a few months of B settling into his new aviary, Chester and Rebecca moved him a second, and final, time to a more comfortable room that was previously a large study.

Unlike the guest room aviary which needed few accommodations, the aviary in the study presented multiple dangers and required some minor remodeling. Chester and Rebecca brought B into the new room with few preparations and were shocked to find him soon thereafter stuck in a lamp shade on the ceiling. Concerned about the room's safety, they promptly set about redesigning the space to best suit B's needs and activities. Dealing with the room "as if it were an enemy we needed to disarm," Chester and Rebecca closed the heating and cooling vent which could trap a small bird and "covered unused electrical outlets with duct tape."[149] Once the study was made safe, Chester installed a double-door system for "security purposes" to keep the two housecats out.[150]

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[148] Ibid, 45.

[149] Ibid., 56.

[150] Ibid., 47. Chester struggled to find the correct material for the second screen door, accidentally buying a plastic screen that smelled like petrochemicals. "Knowing I didn't want B inhaling whatever petrochemical vapors were off-gassing from it," Chester writes, "I went back to the store and exchanged it for the metal [screen]." Ibid., 131. Chester kept all vapors and odors out of the house because, as he later explains, "Vapors innocuous to us can be fatal to birds, their tiny respiratory systems being extremely

They also rearranged the furniture, ensuring that a bookcase, desk, sofa, bed, and table were clear of dangerous debris and placed in locations amenable to B's flight patterns. In addition to clearing the room of potential dangers and adjusting its layout, Chester and Rebecca added features to make B feel comfortable and provide him with entertainment. For example, they refashioned the small birdcage into a multipurpose area for sleeping, eating, and playing. "We brought in the cage we'd bought at Newberry's and readied it for service by installing the standard accessories—wooden perches set at different heights; mirror with sliding, abacus-like beads for entertainment; plastic water and seed dishes clamped in on either side of the entrance."[151] Much like the floor-to-ceiling aviary that Carmen, a European starling who lives with Haupt, chose as her preferred location, the birdcage with its contained boundaries became a "safe space" for B.[152] As the upstairs rooms were gradually converted into avian spaces that housed up to a dozen sparrows, finches, and canaries in total, B continued to prefer his aviary.

> For years now, B's cage has consisted of a large room with high ceilings. We've offered him access to the rest of the upstairs, but he prefers the familiarity of his room and usually demurs. The cage we bought from Newberry's sits on a table by a window, the door held open by a safety pin. A cloth draped over one side forms a canopy under which he sleeps at night. Trips to the vet are the only times the door is closed. If he ever has a feeling of being trapped, I think it must be akin to

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fragile in this regard. We don't use aerosols; we don't burn incense." Ibid., 221. See also Anderson, "A Bird in the House," 406.

[151] Ibid., 57-58.

[152] Haupt, *Mozart's Starling*, 49.

> the sense any of us have sometimes had of finding ourselves indefinably hemmed in.[153]

In converting the former study into an aviary, Chester and Rebecca sought to create an environment that not only felt open, but also gave B ample opportunities for shaping the space as he saw fit. The sparrow hoarded bottle caps — his favorite playthings — in nooks on the bookcase, for instance, and he investigated every new entity that entered the aviary. Far from simply a "participant" in what is called "interspecies design," B guided the entire process of converting a study into an aviary.[154] Avian architecture displaces human functions from built spaces and invites birds in, reorientating space around multispecies needs and the provision of care for others. Together, Chester, Rebecca, and B redesigned a room with a nonhuman life at its center.

As the incident involving B and the ceiling light fixture demonstrates, disputes and conflicts arose from the activities of spatial care and from the physical spaces that centered and supported avian lifeways. Conflicts typically erupted when other birds shared the same, or adjacent, space and when care activities went wrong inside B's designated space. Shortly after B moved into his permanent aviary, for instance, he was asked to share the space with a zebra finch whom Chester and Rebecca mistakenly

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[153] Chester, *Providence*, 41. Chester and Rebecca, citing "politically correct reasons," eventually referred to B's cage as his "house." Ibid., 62. Such a renaming emphasized the qualities of comfort, safety, and openness that the cage, an object of confinement, lacked.

[154] Michelle Westerlaken and Stefano Gualeni, "Becoming With: Towards the Inclusion of Animals as Participants in Design Processes," *ACI'16: Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Animal-Computer Interaction*, no. 1 (2016): 1-10; Alan Hook, "Interspecies Design," *Imagination Lancaster*, https://interspeciesdesign.co.uk/toolkit/toolkit.pdf. See also, Exhibit, *The Architecture of Multispecies Cohabitation*, Tin Sheds Gallery, Sydney, Australia.

thought would keep B company during the day when they were at work. B expressed no interest in his new roommate, however. Unsure about what to do with the newcomer, Chester bought a second zebra finch and kept them both in a separate cage inside B's room for "more than a year" until the two finches — Akbar and Jeff — were moved into their own room-sized aviary.[155] Such a divergent treatment of B and the finches highlighted sharp discrepancies in access to mobility and spatial care. Once the upstairs became an avian territory, further conflicts arose as Chester and Rebecca gradually introduced three additional house sparrows named Baby, Seven, and Pee-Wee into the shared space. Baby and Seven, two males, would chase Pee-Wee, the only female who was "in constant demand from early spring until late summer," from room to room in frantic mating displays.[156] Pee-Wee avoided Baby and Seven as much as possible by hiding in different aviaries but every year she inevitably began laying eggs, an activity that worried Chester and Rebecca because it left Pee-Wee "groggy," "unsteady," and unable to stand for a few hours.[157] Intervening in her own care, Pee-Wee eventually started to play the "two suitors against one another" in such a way that she could keep "two beaus but no lovers" and no longer had to lay eggs.[158]

Other conflicts flared up inside B's aviary, usually from quotidian care activities required to maintain or share the space. B especially disliked a yellow broom that Chester used every late afternoon to sweep the "considerable amount of debris" that B

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[155] Chester, *Providence*, 137.

[156] Ibid., 233.

[157] Ibid., 233-34.

[158] Ibid., 234.

generated.[159] Viewing the broom as a threat, B would fly to the other side of his aviary and watch as Chester swept up the day's accumulation of sparrow feces, bits of birdseed, and shredded objects. Chester played classical music when he visited B in his aviary, but he turned the music off as he swept to make sure he never accidentally stepped on or otherwise harmed B. Chester writes in one of the memoir's italicized anecdotes, "*I need to know where he is when I'm moving around occupied. Despite mistrusting the broom, he's been known to fly onto my back or thigh or butt while I'm sweeping, and because he's light enough to land surreptitiously, my failure to detect his approach has led to several close calls—accidentally brushing him off me by lowering my arm, for example. No injuries resulted, but these incidents startle him and frighten the hell out of me.*"[160]After many hundreds of hours joining B in his aviary, Chester developed what he called "B consciousness," an "ongoing awareness . . . of my body's position relative to a creature I could crush without knowing it."[161] Put differently, Chester defines "B consciousness" as "the principle of never shifting my weight unless I know exactly where the bird is—an ethic that can be difficult to impress upon visitors: No casual sitting down, standing up, or rearranging your ass on the sofa."[162] As a kind of embodied care, B consciousness had to be practiced at all times when anyone navigated the sparrow's space. Indeed, Chester believed that B saw him as little more than a "clumsy primate" and a "boon companion" who knocked into furniture and rarely, if ever, moved with

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[159] Ibid., 66.

[160] Ibid., 70.

[161] Ibid., 87. The phrase also signified Chester's conviction that B possessed a conscious.

[162] Ibid., 8.

ease.[163] One time in the evening while playing "Fetch the Cap," B's favorite game which involved retrieving a tossed bottle cap, Chester violated his rule of careful and attentive movement, somehow leaning against the small bird as he sat on the bed in B's aviary.[164] "I turned around," Chester recalls, "and there he is sitting on his back, lying on the bed in the approximate place I'd just been sitting. . . . I knew then that I'd crushed him, that I'd somehow violated the unbreakable rule of never shifting my weight unless I knew exactly where he was—a rule I believed I'd internalized to such a degree that obeying it was as automatic as breathing."[165] B quickly woke up from his unconscious stupor but the experience left Chester feeling "frantic" and "troubled."[166] A rule meant to preserve another's life, B consciousness signified an agreement, a multispecies pact, between Chester and B that enabled them to share the aviary. More than the design of spaces that support avian lives, spatial care also involves the movements of vastly different bodies in shared spaces.

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[163] Ibid., 52, 56.

[164] Chester often played with B on the bed, a piece of furniture that seems out of place in an aviary. Such co-occupation of household furniture recalls Studio Ossidiana's conceptual bench that hosts parrots and humans by providing spaces where different bodies can sit and perch together. Exhibit, "Furniture for a Human and a Parrot," Studio Ossidiana, Cambridge, MA, 2018, http://www.studio-ossidiana.com/furniture-for-humans-and-a-parrot.

[165] Chester, *Providence*, 189. Haupt describes the similar need to know where Carmen the starling is located in case the bird places herself in danger. Indeed, she enacts a number of "rules" in her house that her family and visitors must follow to ensure Carmen's safety, such as cutting food only with small knives and not moving one's body without knowing Carmen's exact whereabouts. Haupt, *Mozart's Starling*, 58.

[166] Chester, *Providence*, 188, 189.

In some respects, the Iizuka family went even further in accommodating avian life, opening their entire home to one European starling who lived with them in Toronto for nearly two decades. Megumi and Izumi, two of the family's four school-aged daughters, found a starling nestling on the ground beneath their school's bell one Saturday morning in the spring of 1981. Izumi placed the young bird in a Styrofoam cup and brought them home. Like Chester and Rebecca, the Iizukas planned to release the starling but, as they explain in *Kuro the Starling* — a children's book and "we-narrative" that circulated for many years in Canada's public schools — they chose to raise the bird in captivity because they felt "attached" and believed that the starling also felt like "a member of the family."[167] Initially mistaking the nestling for a blackbird, they named the young bird Kuro, the Japanese word for "black."[168] Even though the Iizukas quickly learned that Kuro was a starling, the name stuck. A gender-inclusive name, "Kuro" allowed the family to refer to the starling without evoking standards of maleness or femaleness, a central issue for the Iizukas who used multiple pronouns to describe the bird.[169] Given the "freedom" to explore the house on their own volition, Kuro quickly

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[167] Keigo Iizuka and Family, *Kuro the Starling* (Scarborough, ON: Nelson Canada, 1988), 12; Natalya Bekhta, "The Promise and Challenges of 'We': First-Person Plural Discourses across Genres," *Style* 54, no. 1 (2020): 1-6. A collectively written, first-person plural account of living with an avian companion, *Kuro the Starling* favors a pluralized narration, one that includes a starling, over the singular.

[168] "Kuro" is phonetically pronounced "coo-doh."

[169] The family originally assumed that Kuro was a female, then, once the bird grew older and never laid an egg, believed that the starling was a male. When referring to Kuro today, Izumi generally views the bird as a male but recognizes that the starling's gender identity will never be determined. Izumi Kyle, interview with author, April 20, 2021. Seeking to highlight such openness, I refer to Kuro by "they/them."

joined the "family routine."[170] The starling flew throughout the house to greet everyone, ate breakfast with the family, and even took a bath every morning with Keigo, the father who worked as a professor of electrical engineering at the University of Toronto. To minimize the "tiny messes" that Kuro deposited around the house, the Iizukas placed newspapers in the places the bird most often visited.[171] Kuro especially enjoyed exploring a hibiscus plant that Yoko, the mother who cooked impressive meals for the household, carefully tended. As Izumi recalled, "Kuro loved my mom's hibiscus plant. Kuro would hang out on one of the branches and luckily the pot would catch the droppings."[172] Mutually beneficial relationships such as this one were common in the household as Kuro brought the family great joy and they supplied Kuro with the rich social, material, and spatial environments that starlings require. By summertime, the Iizukas explain, Kuro had already become "an important part of our family life. We couldn't imagine her not being there."[173] After Izumi, Megumi, Nozomi, and Ayumi left the house, Kuro received even greater attention and care. Yoko made the starling a "hand-crafted futon sized perfectly" to fit the bird and every day she fed Kuro "four different dishes" all "chopped in starling-bite sizes."[174] Kuro enjoyed traditional Japanese food, especially variations on tofu, shrimp, and chopped vegetables. As Izumi puts it, "My mom put a lot of care into

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[170] "The Story of Kuro: The World's Longest Lived Domesticated Starling," *Animal World*, http://www.suprememastertv.tv/aw/?wr_id=566&page=; Iizuka, *Kuro the Starling*, 14.

[171] Iizuka, *Kuro the Starling*, 12; "The Story of Kuro."

[172] Kyle, interview with author.

[173] Iizuka, *Kuro the Starling*, 16.

[174] Ibid.

ensuring that Kuro was very well fed."[175] Able to visit all areas of the house, including the busy kitchen, Kuro participated in daily activities and shaped the dynamics of the home for nineteen years.[176] At times, however, it felt as if the house had been given up to Kuro. Izumi captures this feeling when she exclaims, "Our house was his home and our family lived in his cage!"[177] Kuro's presence throughout the house not only disrupted the fantasies of purification that seek to limit which species gain access to interior spaces, it also challenged the normative expectations for housing avian companions that structure relations among birdkeepers and pet birds.[178]

Though Kuro benefitted from unlimited access to the house, such freedom also presented multiple risks that challenged the Iizuka family's open-ended approach to spatial care. As anthropologist Patricia Anderson has observed regarding spatial access and parrots, granting birds expanded territory inside homes that have not been designed with their bodies, mobilities, and needs in mind generally increases the chances of avian companions becoming harmed or injured.[179] Potential dangers range from flying into

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[175] Kyle, interview with author.

[176] At the age of 18, Kuro became the "world's oldest domesticated starling," setting an official Guinness World Record. They died in December 2000 at the age of 19. Izumi Kyle, "Kuro," *Starling Talk: Care and Rehabilitation of Injured and Orphaned Starlings*, http://www.starlingtalk.com/kuro.htm. While such a long age in captivity is unusual, it demonstrates that the starling who lived with Mozart whom I discuss in the opening of this chapter died much earlier than would be expected.

[177] Kyle, "Kuro."

[178] For more on the purification of the house, see Stacy Alaimo, "This Is about Pleasure: An Ethics of Inhabiting," in *Exposed: Environmental Politics and Pleasures in Posthuman Times* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016), 17-40, at pp. 17-19.

[179] Anderson, "A Bird in the House," 403.

windows, to tangling with cats and dogs, to consuming nonedible objects, to escaping from the house entirely. The insatiable curiosity of birds — few of whom can match a starling's eagerness for new experiences — only heightens indoor risks. Haupt observes, "It is difficult to imagine a more brazenly curious creature than the starling."[180] Ever curious about their shared space, Kuro sang on the edge of the toilet seat and ate rubber bands found around the house. Keigo once tossed a ball of aluminum foil in the air for Kuro to catch, an activity the bird enjoyed with grapes, and the starling swallowed it. Attempting to dislodge the aluminum, the Iizukas "held Kuro upside down" and gently massaged the bird's throat.[181] The technique did not work, however, and the family waited patiently until Kuro regurgitated the aluminum ball a day later. Another time, Ayumi accidentally shut the bathroom door on Kuro who sat perched on the top near the doorway. The action of closing the door pinched Kuro's leg in the doorframe. Luckily, the bird's leg did not break and was able to heal within two weeks. As this accident made evident, navigating household spaces with a being who moves and acts so differently from humans requires constant attentiveness. In another incident, the Iizukas brought Kuro outside in a box to participate in a backyard lunch. Kuro escaped after Megumi opened the top, flying into the neighborhood. Worried about Kuro's safety, Izumi searched for several hours before she located Kuro and returned the bird to their home. "For the rest of the day," the Iizukas write, "Kuro flew restlessly about the house. Maybe she was excited to be back home. Or maybe she was regretting her decision to come back

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[180] Haupt, *Mozart's Starling*, 57.

[181] Iizuka, *Kuro the Starling*, 17.

to her human family. . . . [W]e all knew then that she might really fly away some day."[182] Although the Iizukas cite their concern for Kuro's safety as the primary reason for bringing the starling back inside, such a statement about Kuro experiencing "regret" suggests that the family questioned whether the spatial care they provided was enough to meet the bird's needs. Kuro could traverse and explore the entire house where multiple dangers and accidents occurred, but the starling was not permitted to go outside because the Iizukas felt greater concern about those dangers. For the Iizukas, the apparent risks outside the home outweighed those inside. While it may be true that chances of death are much greater outside than in, both spaces pose significant dangers to birds. Spatial care asks us to rethink the assumption that indoor living is inherently risk free. In doing so, it may prompt more experimental and just forms of avian architecture that disrupt the inside-outside dualism.

Figure 2.1: The Iizuka family with Kuro, age 18. In the top, from left to right, sit Ayumi, Yoko, Keigo, and Megumi. In the bottom, from left to right, sit Izumi, Nozomi, and Kuro. Photo courtesy of Izumi Kyle.

[182] Ibid., 23.

Vocal-Aural Care: Participating in Soundscapes

While genres of music and sounds made by running rivers, ocean waves, and rustling leaves have helped humans relax and concentrate for millennia, the use of sound as a mechanism and structure of care to aid other species has been less recognized. Perhaps the best-known examples are speaking to houseplants to help them grow and leaving the television or radio on for nervous dogs and cats left home by themselves. Recognizing the potential impact of bringing sound therapy to their 356 million users, the music-streaming platform Spotify introduced a "beautiful audio experience" called "My Dog's Favourite Podcast" in 2020.[183] Branding itself an "aural treat" and "the ultimate canine companion for any hound left home alone," the podcast was "designed to calm and reassure your dog, with specially commissioned music and soothing voices" narrated by Jessica Raine and Ralph Ineson.[184] Though endeavors such as this may simply reflect the expansion of what Haraway calls "lively capital" into the multi-billion-dollar entertainment market, they may also signal a growing interest in what I call vocal-aural care.[185] In the contexts of birdkeeping, vocal-aural care requires supporting the textured soundscapes in which many birds lead raucous lives. To provide vocal-aural care is to create soundscapes in which birds can insert themselves and then play major roles in actively co-shaping. Refusing the tendency inherited from semiotics to view all avian

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[183] "My Dog's Favourite Podcast," *Spotify Studios*, January 2020, https://open.spotify.com/show/0STnwcEaUq6mdrs4EKLyux.

[184] Ibid.

[185] Donna Haraway, "Value-Added Dogs and Lively Capital," *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 45-68. The hyphen linking "vocal" and "aural" emphasizes that producing sounds and receiving sounds are interconnected processes for birds that cannot be separated.

utterances as signs that index discrete objects or events, vocal-aural care views avian utterances and sounds as idiosyncratic modalities that enable birds to parse and engage their worlds, often in ways that are specific to single species and even individuals. This section explores how American avian cognition scientist Irene Pepperberg, Scottish writer and bird "housemate" Esther Woolfson, and American author Haupt co-create, with the birds who share their labs and homes, situated and complex sound environments.[186] As important as flying and eating, aural settings provide birds, especially the mimics discussed below, with an indispensable way to join and contribute to avian life ways.

Recounting three decades of research with Alex the African Grey parrot at several universities across the US, Pepperberg's multispecies memoir *Alex & Me* discusses how stimulating aural learning environments not only produce sophisticated language skills in parrots but also constitute a necessary part of caring for birds in laboratory settings. Trained as a theoretical chemist, Pepperberg began studying the cognition of African Greys after watching a NOVA episode in the mid-1970s on the nascent field of animal communication. By teaching American Sign Language to chimpanzees Washoe and Nim Chimpsky and to the gorilla Koko, researchers such as Roger Fouts, Herbert Terrace, and Francine Patterson developed a new field of animal communication science. Seeking to be part of this "revolution," Pepperberg purchased and began training Alex in 1977 when

[186] Woolfson rejects the terms "birdkeeper" and "bird owner," preferring instead "parent, housemate, beneficiary." Esther Woolfson, *Corvus: A Life with Birds* (2008; Berkeley: Counterpoint, 2009), 6.

he was a year old.[187] Together with Alex, she demonstrated that African Greys — and other birds with advanced cognitive functions — have language and memory abilities that surpass those of great apes and young children. When he died unexpectedly in 2007 at age 31, Alex received obituaries in *The New York Times* and other leading newspapers.[188] Pepperberg and Alex became so entangled over the three decades they were together that, in the days following Alex's death, Pepperberg wondered if she would be able to continue her research: "*What's to become of the lab? What's to become of the research? What's to become of everything we've created? What's to become of me?*"[189] To a great degree, Pepperberg's research, life, and sense of self were all determined and shaped by thirty years of intra-acting with Alex, much of which occurred through sound.

Departing from the dominant instructional models of the late 1970s which continued to use Skinner's method of operant conditioning, Pepperberg followed a

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[187] Irene M. Pepperberg, *Alex & Me: How a Scientist and a Parrot Discovered a Hidden World of Animal Intelligence—and Formed a Deep Bond in the Process* (2008; New York: Harper, 2009), 54.

[188] See Benedict Cary, "Alex, a Parrot Who Had a Way with Words, Dies," *The New York Times*, Sept. 10, 2007, https://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/10/science/10cnd-parrot.html; Stephen Moss, "Bird brain — or parrot prodigy?," *The Guardian*, Sept. 13, 2007, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/sep/13/usa.stephenmoss; "Bird brain Alex the parrot dies after helping researchers for 3 decades," *The Seattle Times*, Sept. 12, 2007, https://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/bird-brain-alex-the-parrot-dies-after-helping-researchers-for-3-decades/; "Alex the African Grey," *The Economist*, Sept. 20, 2007, https://www.economist.com/obituary/2007/09/20/alex-the-african-grey. Pepperberg's research remains in the news; most recently, Griffin, an African Grey who was raised alongside Alex, outperformed 21 Harvard undergraduates in a memory experiment. See Juan Siliezar, "When a bird brain tops Harvard students on a test," *The Harvard Gazette*, July 2, 2020, https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2020/07/african-grey-parrot-outperforms-children-and-college-students/.

[189] Pepperberg, *Alex & Me*, 8.

model-rival program to teach Alex speech labels, a system of learning that established an engaging aural environment in the laboratory. Viewing the behaviorist "dogma" that asked researchers to starve study subjects, isolate them in a box, and then reward their correct responses with food as "completely crazy," Pepperberg opted to use a rather obscure language training program developed by Dietmar Todt, a German ethologist.[190] Todt's instructional program teaches a research subject labels such as words for colors, shapes, and objects within an immersive and engaging "social context."[191] Pepperberg describes model-rival learning accordingly:

> [U]nder this system, instead of having one trainer, an animal subject had two. The principal trainer, A, would ask the secondary trainer, B, to name an object A showed to her. If B answered correctly, A would reward her; an incorrect answer would result in scolding. Trainer B is the 'model' for the animal subject and its 'rival' for the attention of trainer A. From time to time, trainer A would ask the animal subject to name the object, and it would be rewarded or scolded accordingly. Todt reported that Greys had learned speech very rapidly under this approach.[192]

Modifying Todt's method to ensure that Alex comprehended the labels he used, Pepperberg had trainers occasionally switch learner and teacher roles and allowed Alex to possess the object when he used the correct label. Learning as an active participant within a robust social setting, Alex was able to use more than 100 vocal labels to identify

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[190] Ibid., 68, 69.
[191] Ibid., 62.

[192] Ibid., 70.

objects, colors, and actions. He also learned how to count to six and coined the memorable neologism “banerry” to describe an apple which, from a parrot’s perspective, tastes like a banana and looks like a cherry. Over the thirty years that Pepperberg and Alex were together, additional parrots and humans joined the lab which gave Alex the opportunity to further participate in conversation and to learn alongside other research subjects. Alex enjoyed helping and frustrating a younger African Grey named Griffin, for example, by giving him either the correct or incorrect labels for objects. As Alex and the other parrots demonstrated daily, “a rich social context is essential to teaching communication skills.”[193] In many ways, the vocal-aural care of the lab made Pepperberg and Alex’s research so successful and generative. “Alex was happy in the lab,” Pepperberg writes, “as were the other birds. And why not? They enjoyed far more attention than the vast majority of pet birds.”[194] Part of their happiness came from the lab’s immersive aural setting, a cacophony of human voices, parrot vocalizations, noise from instruments and objects, and ambient sounds.

Although Pepperberg provided Alex with a stimulating aural environment that allowed him to acquire an impressive range of vocal labels, she also restricted his vocal range and participation in ways that may have limited the happiness she describes above. Pepperberg’s training program emphasized the acquisition and correct pronunciation of discrete vocal labels. As the anthropologist Jean Langford observes, there is a tendency to practice the “Saussurian search for the signified” while considering parrot

[193] Ibid., 113.

[194] Ibid., 154.

vocalizations.[195] When immersed in the context of parrot speech, humans often assume that every vocal utterance must correspond to an object or action. If the utterance is unrecognizable, they assume that the parrot is simply working to produce a correct pronunciation.[196] Such a view, Langford argues, misses how parrots and other birds use vocalizations to participate in, feel out, and engage with the soundscapes that texture their worlds. Drawing upon anthropologist Tim Ingold, she argues that "utterances derive their meaning not from attachment to concepts but from improvisational engagements with the world."[197] Rather than view avian utterances as signifying a concept, Langford argues that those who encounter birds would do better seeing bird vocalizations as "improvisational engagements with the world," as context-specific performances that allow birds to intra-act with members of their group or species, with members of other species, and with the broader soundscapes and landscapes they animate. Vocal-aural care, as I understand it, begins from such an acknowledgement. To produce credible science, however, Pepperberg had to ask Alex to match labels to objects, valuing his vocalizations only when they signaled the correct pronunciation of a label. In a journal entry, for example, Pepperberg wrote that Alex was acting "stupid" because he did not clearly pronounce two words.[198] "He acts as tho' he's forgotten yesterday existed! Almost impossible to get him to say a decent KEY. PAPER never

[195] Jean M. Langford, "Avian Bedlam: Toward a Biosemiosis of Troubled Parrots," *Environmental Humanities* 9, no. 1 (2017): 84-107, at p. 94.

[196] As one critic observes, the parrot "signifies the desire to communicate." Paul Carter, *Parrot* (London: Reaktion Books, 2006), 8.

[197] Langford, "Avian Bedlam," 93.

[198] Pepperberg, *Alex & Me*, 65.

clear. What happened?"[199] Dismissing the vocal utterances that Alex did make, Pepperberg only expressed interest in those with "correct" pronunciation and those that corresponded to one of the objects he was learning. Alex would be asked again and again during training sessions to correctly pronounce vocal labels and identify objects using these labels. To dismiss the wide range of vocalizations and sounds that Alex regularly produced was to dismiss the ways he engaged with the lab and inserted himself into his shared world.

In many ways, Pepperberg's research program and Alex were fundamentally at odds with one another, a contradiction that created conflict. Cognitive science requires repetition, and endlessly repeating color or shape labels holds little interest to an African Grey. As Pepperberg and Arlene Levin-Rowe, the lab manager at Brandeis University where Alex spent much of his life, discuss in the documentary *Life with Alex: A Memoir*, Alex had a rigorous daily schedule of training and testing. He would eat breakfast and then promptly begin his morning training sessions at 10 am. He would have two morning sessions, each twenty minutes in length, where he would learn or practice new skills such as distinguishing shapes, and then he would have two or three 20-minute training sessions in the afternoon. In total, he trained for an average of 80-100 minutes each day. In addition to the training routines, Alex also participated in regular testing to check his knowledge and collect data for studies.[200] During testing, Pepperberg and her lab assistants asked Alex to repeat the same tasks. He would, for example, be asked to

[199] Ibid.
[200] Emily Wick, dir., *Life with Alex: A Memoir* (Waltham, MA: Grey Parrot Studios, 2012), DVD.

identify the number of corners on a block of wood several times until his knowledge could be statistically proven. Pepperberg explains, "Science needs numbers. Science needs tests to be done over and over again—actually, sometimes sixty times or more—before the answer has statistical legitimacy, and before scientists will take you seriously. Poor Alex."[201] In addition to providing statistical validation, repetition was even more necessary in the androcentric, primate-centered field of cognitive science. As a woman working to demonstrate the intelligence of a bird, Pepperberg — and Alex, too — had to consistently produce irrefutable knowledge. Despite Pepperberg's attempts to make the cognitive science "fun" without "los[ing] the rigor," however, the training and testing never complemented Alex's social or emotional life as an African Grey.[202] Simply put, identifying colors and shapes in a lab at regularly scheduled hours were not activities that Alex's wild relatives living across west and central Africa evolved to achieve.

Lacking interest in the repetitive tasks he was asked to perform, Alex frequently refused to participate in Pepperberg's research. While the experiments did take into account Alex's ability to pronounce some sounds clearer than others and they did adjust to his cognitive level, they were designed to assess his acquisition of human language concepts. The experiments did not account for Alex's interests, nor did they consider vocal utterances that went beyond the labels the parrot was required to learn. Accordingly, Alex often refused to cooperate during trainings and tests. When in "bad moods" he would stop participating altogether, turn away from the researcher, or throw

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[201] Pepperberg, *Alex & Me*, 108.
[202] Wick, *Life with Alex*. To Pepperberg's credit, she did design toys to keep parrots living in labs and as pets entertained. Pepperberg, *Alex & Me*, 163-66. These attempts largely failed, however, since parrots most require social engagement.

his food.[203] In some cases, Alex went on "strike" for weeks at a time, refusing to answer any questions associated with research.[204] A preferred way to refuse cooperation, however, involved Alex vocalizing his demands. He would give answers he knew to be incorrect, shout "no," produce a "high-decibel sound best conveyed as *raaakkkk*," or exclaim "Wanna go back" to be returned to his cage.[205] Here is a typical testing session where Alex quit identifying items on a tray and used vocal labels to disrupt the research:

> At first, Alex answered correctly most of the time: 'key' or 'wood' or 'wool' or 'three', et cetera. But before too long, he started to act up. He would say 'green' and then pull at the green felt lining of the tray, hard enough that all the objects would fall off. Or he would say 'tray' and bite the tray. Sometimes he'd say nothing and suddenly start preening. Or he'd turn around and lift his butt in my direction, a gesture too obvious to need translation.[206]

Moments like these not only demonstrate the degree to which species science requires the cooperation of research subjects, they also show how vocal utterances can be used to demand better conditions of care.[207] Fed up with the repetitious testing and not getting his way, Alex used his voice to reassert himself in the lab. Haraway's claim that "the world encountered in knowledge projects is an active entity" almost reads as an understatement

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[203] Wick, *Life with Alex*.

[204] Pepperberg, *Alex & Me*, 189-90.
[205] Ibid., 75, 94.

[206] Ibid., 108.

[207] For more on the cooperation of research subjects, see Chapter 1, "The Science of Knowing Others: Species, Researchers, and Entangled Selves."

when Alex refuses to participate.[208] Thanking Alex for "putting up with 20 years of training and testing" in her academic monograph *The Alex Studies: Cognitive and Communicative Abilities of Grey Parrots*, Pepperberg was well aware of Alex's displeasure and continued testing despite his objections.[209] As she observes in *Alex & Me*, "Who can blame him [for acting up]? None of the objects were new to him. He'd answered these kinds of questions dozens of times, and yet we still kept asking him, because we needed our statistical sample."[210] In an interview on National Public Radio's *Fresh Air* with Terry Gross, Pepperberg acknowledged that "pushing them [parrots and other animals] to communicate with us [cognition and communication scientists] is unfair, but it's one way of our actually getting . . . a window into their minds."[211] While the severe restrictions placed upon Alex cannot be minimized or pushed away, it is also wrong to view him as a powerless victim. Instead, Alex's persistent refusals can be read as his attempt to create a more participatory soundscape, one that can support his behaviors and vocalizations as an African Grey while rejecting the standards, expectations, and procedures enforced by Pepperberg and modern science, including the overemphasis on attaching labels to objects.[212]

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[208] Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," *Feminist Studies* 14, no. 3 (1988): 575-99, at p. 593.

[209] Irene Maxine Pepperberg, *The Alex Studies: Cognitive and Communicate Abilities of Grey Parrots* (1999; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), x.

[210] Pepperberg, *Alex & Me*, 109.

[211] Irene Pepperberg, "The Parrot Who Said 'I Love You'," interview by Terry Gross, National Public Radio, Dec. 26, 2008.

[212] For more on species resistance, see Chapter 4, "Resisting With: The Anti-Normativity of Queers and Pets."

Departing from Pepperberg, Woolfson and Haupt acknowledge that actively fostering the sound and songscapes of birds opens more expansive understandings of avian intelligence and promotes modes of coexistence that are more attuned to avian lives. Woolfson's memoir *Corvus: A Life With Birds* describes how a rook, magpie, and crow taught her to live more attentively and with greater care by enlarging her sense of self. She explains that the three birds "altered forever my relationship to the rest of the world. . . . The world we share is broad, the boundaries and differences between us negligible, illusory."[213] Like Chester and Rebecca whose daily routines came to revolve around birds, Woolfson rearranged her house, her family, her activities, and her life in Aberdeen, Scotland, to accommodate several avian housemates. Household rules included "a prohibition on the word 'cage' (the word 'house' being substituted), a de facto granting of full civil rights to all birds, which in practice meant never stopping them from doing anything that did not endanger their own well-being (ours being incidental), and enshrining in law the benefits of universal education, the necessity for perpetual intellectual stimulation and the freedom to avail themselves of anyone else's possessions."[214] One of the birds who benefitted from the living arrangements was Spike, a magpie who fell from a nest in her neighbor's yard. Regarded with fear and widely loathed, magpies have been persecuted in Scotland since at least the nineteenth century when many populations were extirpated. Only since the 1940s have they returned to Aberdeen, a twentieth-century petrocapital built on the wealth of North Sea oil

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[213] Woolfson, *Corvus*, 7.

[214] Ibid., 44.

deposits.[215] Woolfson's family decided to keep Spike once he began saying his name, feeling that "he was ours for life."[216]

A talented mimic, Spike's exceptional skills at imitating voices and improvising cadences demonstrated the extent to which he became part of Woolfson's life and she part of his. Woolfson spoke with Spike every day as the two "spent a lot of time together."[217] In addition to shouting his favorite greeting "Hello, Spikey!," the magpie would repeat phrases uttered to him such as "Bugger off!" and he reliably used words like "Eh!," "Oy!," and What!" in appropriate contexts or when he wanted attention.[218] Indeed, "nothing escaped Spike's attention, neither sound nor action."[219] Having been raised in a household bustling with voices, sounds, music, and the chatter of several other birds, Spike enjoyed a lively soundscape. When Spike was a few days old, Woolfson overheard him having a conversation in the kitchen.

> I came home to what I thought was an empty house to hear a conversation in progress in the kitchen. Standing outside the door, I listened. Although I have tried, there is no method by which I can render what I heard in words or letters. They were words but not words, a cascade, a trill, a babble of sounds; all the terms of the phonetic dictionary, rolled and lateral and fricative, syllable, consonant and vowel, were there. The voice was enthusiastic, eager in intonation,

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[215] Ibid., 122.

[216] Ibid., 135.

[217] Ibid., 196.

[218] Ibid., 194-96.

[219] Ibid., 196.

> the rising, falling cadences of speech, the perfect pauses, an amazing mimetic model of speech. The words, for they were words of a sort, were a magpie's, but the voice was mine. It was the sound of me, conducting a phone call or conversation, every nuance of intonation, every laugh, every mannerism, me, revealed through the conduit of a magpie's voice. Spike spoke in my voice and, more than that, he laughed with my laugh. I listen to the tape I have and hear myself, piped through the vocal chords of a bird.[220]

Spike combined vocalizations unique to magpies — "a cascade, a trill, a babble of sounds" — with the cadence of Woolfson's conversational speech — "eager in intonation" and full of "perfect pauses" — to improvise a kind of "trans-species pidgin" that blurred the boundaries of speech, song, species, and self. Anthropologist Eduardo Kohn understands trans-species pidgins as modes of communication that combine Runa and dog speech modalities to create an "emergent and highly ephemeral self distributed over two bodies," a self that "transcends" species boundaries and locates itself within a broader "ecology of selves."[221] Although the notion of transcendence runs counter to the multispecies projects undertaken here, a kind of "self distributed over two bodies" does emerge from Spike's utterances. By adopting the cadences and patterns of Woolfson's speech, the magpie gives Woolfson the opportunity to listen to herself through another being's vocal apparatuses and through another mode of communication altogether. While

[220] Ibid., 194-95.

[221] Eduardo Kohn, *How Forests Think: Toward an Anthropology beyond the Human* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 145, 49. Kohn compares trans-species pidgins to "motherese," the language that "adult caregivers use when speaking to babies." Ibid., 145.

some might rush to say that Spike became Woolfson as he adopted her patterns of conversation or that mimics do nothing more than repeat what they hear, something far more complex happened in this moment. Cobbled together from the utterances, rhythms, and sounds he heard every day, Spike's conversational babble — part magpie, part Woolfson — reveals the degree to which he improvised and created original vocal arrangements by piecing together and recombining parts of the immediate soundscape. In doing so, Spike actively participated in and shaped his household's aural environment. Robin Perkins, a self-described music producer and "long-time bird lover," attempted to do something similar by digitally mixing electronic music with the songs of endangered birds.[222] The resulting collaborative albums, *A Guide to the Birdsong of South America* and *A Guide to the Birdsong of Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean*, cut birdsong into discrete components, remixed them, and layered them on top of other melodies to create a genre of music that *responds back* and thus participates in the project of sharing and building immersive soundscapes.[223] Spike's babble simultaneously arose from and engaged with a complex, mutually produced, and ever-changing aural setting.

To an even greater degree than Woolfson, Haupt created a participatory soundscape in her shared home where music, speech, and bird calls intermingled. As a

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[222] Robin Perkins, "What if some of the most beautiful bird songs in the world disappeared forever?," *Caribbean Birds*, May 27, 2020, https://www.birdscaribbean.org/2020/05/what-if-some-of-the-most-beautiful-bird-songs-in-the-world-disappeared-forever/.

[223] Robin Perkins, *A Guide to the Birdsong of South America*, Amsterdam: Rhythm and Roots, 2015, https://rhythmandroots.bandcamp.com/album/a-guide-to-the-birdsong-of-south-america; Robin Perkins, *A Guide to the Birdsong of Mexico, Central America & the Caribbean*, Berlin: Shika Shika, 2020, https://soundcloud.com/shikashikacollective/sets/a-guide-to-the-birdsong-of.

studied musician writing a book that is partly about Mozart and his music, it should be no surprise that Haupt took an interest in sound and aurality. She named the European starling who continues to coinhabit her home "Carmen," the Latin word for "song," after all. Haupt also happens to be experienced with birds, having worked as a raptor rehabilitator, studied ornithology, and written *Rare Encounters with Ordinary Birds*.[224] As she puts it, "[M]y thoughts, my life, and my work have been inspired by birds."[225] In addition to exploring Mozart's entangled life with a starling, *Mozart's Starling* describes Haupt's experiences raising and living with Carmen in their Seattle home. She acquired Carmen as a week-old nestling from a public park restroom before park employees destroyed the nest. Dubbing the starling's removal "part rescue, part theft," Haupt acknowledged that while she may have saved Carmen from being killed by Seattle park employees, she also stole the bird from her nest.[226] Such complicated feelings and relations tend to follow starlings and other birds labelled "invasive." As Haupt observes, it is perfectly legal to touch a starling's nest, remove it, or even "destroy the nests and eggs of starlings and kill the nestlings and adult birds" in Washington, but it is not legal to "lovingly raise a starling as a pet" because a state law prohibits activities that may support the "propagation" of starlings.[227] The state, in other words, formally recognized Carmen as a member of an "invasive" species, guaranteeing and sanctioning her death.

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[224] See Lyanda Lynn Haupt, *Rare Encounters with Ordinary Birds: Notes from a Northwest Year* (Seattle: Sasquatch Books, 2001).

[225] Haupt, *Mozart's Starling*, 8.

[226] Ibid., 15.

[227] Ibid., 16, 20. As we will see, a similar rule applies in many states regarding European starling rehabilitation.

By giving Carmen a chance to live, Haupt challenged the legal mechanisms that sought to have her killed. Haupt adopted Carmen because she wanted to better understand what Mozart may have experienced living with a starling. "I reluctantly realized that to truly understand what it meant for Mozart to live with a starling," Haupt explains, "I would, like the maestro, have to live with a starling of my own."[228] Instead of "settling dutifully into her role" as the subject of Haupt's "grandiose social-scientific-musical experiment," however, Carmen became "the teacher, the guide" and Haupt "an unwitting student—or, more accurately, a pilgrim, a wandering journeyer who had no idea what was to come."[229]

One of the most important lessons that Carmen taught Haupt was that starlings use their vocalizations to actively engage their worlds and to develop relationships with others. Rather than teach Carmen words, Haupt decided to "let her vocalizations unfold in tune with her life within our family."[230] Raised in a house full of sounds, Carmen listened to Haupt and her family play musical instruments, to classical music — especially Mozart's — issuing from speakers, to the hum and whirr of kitchen gadgets, to conversations in the kitchen and throughout the house, and to the regular greetings she received inside and out of her aviary. Carmen quickly learned to imitate the sound of the coffee grinder, the wine bottle vacuum-sealer, and the microwave oven, and she learned several phrases, including "Hi, Carmen," "Hi, honey," and "C'mere!"[231] Haupt noticed

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[228] Ibid., 12.

[229] Ibid., 13-14.

[230] Ibid., 78.

[231] Ibid.

early on that Carmen's vocalizations were always used in the correct contexts. The starling, for example, would mimic the sound of the coffee grinder just before it was used. Such careful timing suggested to Haupt that perhaps Carmen's vocal utterances were one way she invited others into her world. Carmen's calls, Haupt writes, are "[a]ll participatory, *anticipatory*, all involved, all cognizant of what is going on aurally in her world and what precipitates what."[232] Imitating the coffee grinder was not just a way for Carmen to anticipate the action that was to follow, but was also a way to participate in the daily activity of grinding coffee, even if she was inside her aviary or several rooms away. "Carmen's verbal and aural participation is a way of locating herself in her surroundings," Haupt observes, "which for a starling are not just physical but also social. Response from the world around her is essential."[233] Carmen, in other words, used an assortment of calls to reach out and encounter aspects of the world inside the house. At the same time, other sounds emitted inside made contact with Carmen, entangling her in a lively soundscape. Such an understanding led Haupt to realize that "Carmen's vocalizations are *relational*, a kind of conversation. They are her way of *being with us*."[234] When Carmen interpellated Haupt with the command "C'mere!," she seemed to be using sound relationally. Haupt asks, "Why couldn't Carmen's *C'mere* not equal the hope of Lyanda coming over to the aviary?"[235] If Carmen's vocalizations placed her

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[232] Ibid., 80.

[233] Ibid.

[234] Ibid., 83.

[235] Ibid., 95.

among soundscapes and established relations with others, mimicry itself can no longer be described simply as a functionalist strategy of survival. Instead, avian mimicry should be understood as "a form of connection and belonging among flock-mates, of environmental awareness and participation."[236] Indeed, as ornithologists West and King note in a study on starling communication, the "echoing of greetings, farewells, and words of affection" by starlings conveys "a sense of shared environment with another species, a sensation hard not to forget."[237] Attuned to the ways in which sound brings multispecies communities together, vocal-aural care promotes sharing and relationship building among birds and their housemates.

Sexual Care: Imprinting, Nesting, and Interspecies Kink

Since the second half of the twentieth century, desexualizing household companion species has become common practice in the United States and much of Europe. Spay and neuter campaigns coupled with a growing cultural tendency to view pets as substitute children have encouraged people to deny pets their sexuality.[238] J.R. Ackerley, a gay author who survived mid-century homophobic attacks in Britain and was deeply ambivalent about his own sexuality, was a rare exception, writing eloquently about his attempts to grant Tulip, a German shepherd, a "full life" where she "experienced sex and utilized her creative organs and maternal instincts."[239] Most pets

[236] Ibid., 92-93.
[237] West and King, "Mozart's Starling," 113.

[238] Frederick L. Brown, *The City is More Than Human: An Animal History of Seattle* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2019), 182-83.

[239] J.R. Ackerley, *My Dog Tulip* (New York: Poseidon Press, 1965), 128.

have not been so fortunate, however. People who visit dog parks, for instance, display any number of behaviors that signal their discomfort with canine sexuality. Dogs humping other dogs, neutered dogs getting erections, or even dogs sniffing each other's rear ends, an activity that queer and trans* theorist Harlan Weaver memorably calls "butt culture," will usually elicit nervous laughter from onlookers followed by sharp commands to redirect or halt the behavior.[240] Simply put, many view the sexual behaviors and activities of companion species as out of place, actively suppressing and denying their sexualities. Birds fair slightly better simply because spaying and neutering are out of the question and their sexual behaviors are more difficult to regulate. They still, however, experience much sexual frustration and the outright denial of their sexual needs by caregivers. Chester and Rebecca, for example, separated two amorous male zebra finches and paired them each with a female, ending a relationship the two birds had created. Similarly, attempting to increase Alex's productivity, Pepperberg suppressed the African Grey's sexuality by taking away a cardboard box he treated as a nest and feeding him tofu to "temper" his hormones.[241] The rejection of sexuality has become standard in care practices.

Much of the trouble for birds arises from having sexually misimprinted upon a person who is unable — and more often unwilling — to engage in their species-specific sexual activities. In broad terms, imprinting names a semi-permanent attachment that a developing bird makes to either a parental figure or a mating partner, an attachment that

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[240] Harlan Weaver, "Pit Bull Promises: Inhuman Intimacies and Queer Kinships in an Animal Shelter," *GLQ* 21, no. 2-3 (2015): 343-63, at p. 351.

[241] Pepperberg, *Alex & Me*, 201.

helps young birds survive and increases their odds of establishing successful future relationships. Most birds who imprint experience two stages: filial and sexual imprinting. Filial imprinting occurs during what Lorenz, the ethologist who initiated the study of imprinting, called "certain impressionable phases" of a chick's life, usually within the first hours or days of hatching.[242] During this "sensitive period," the young bird identifies with a "particular object or class of objects," typically a parental figure, or perhaps a sibling, who can provide the developing bird's basic needs.[243] Sexual imprinting also occurs within a specific window of time, usually before the bird reaches sexual maturity. At this point, an adolescent bird identifies fellow members of their species group with whom they can mate as an adult. In many ways, sexual imprinting can be understood as the modification of filial imprinting to "follow different, but similar-looking, individuals."[244] Ornithologists use the term "misimprinting" to refer to incidents when a bird imprints, either filially or sexually, on a member of another species.[245] While this typically happens when human caregivers raise young birds and unintentionally establish bonds of dependency, intentional misimprinting also regularly occurs, as Joe Hutto

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[242] Lorenz, *King Solomon's Ring*, 133.

[243] Johan J. Bolhuis, "Mechanisms of Avian Imprinting: A Review," *Biological Review* 66 (1991): 303-45, at p. 310, 305; Brian J. McCabe, "Imprinting," *WIREs Cognitive Science* 4 (2013): 375-90, at p. 377; Birkhead, *The Wisdom*, 94.

[244] Darren E. Irwin and Trevor Price, "Sexual imprinting, learning and speciation," *Heredity* 82 (1999): 347-54, at p. 349.

[245] Tim Birkhead, Jo Wimpenny, and Bob Montgomerie, *Ten Thousand Birds: Ornithology since Darwin* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 559.

describes in his memoir on raising wild turkeys, *Illumination in the Flatwoods*.[246] van Dooren argues that most instances of misimprinting between birds and humans are "fundamentally coercive relationships" caused by "human carelessness" that destroy flight ways for the sake of human gratification.[247] Writing against Vinciane Despret's romanticized interpretation of Lorenz's relations with graylag geese, he contends, "Imprinting does not produce a relationship in which human and bird enter into each other's social worlds, leading to additional possibilities for connection and care. Rather, it produces a relationship with humans *at the expense of* a whole set of other ways of being, often severing the possibility for a bird's relating with others of its own species, and so profoundly altering its chances for procreative relations."[248] While the ethics of consent should be taken into consideration, a more generous view suggests that misimprinting can, in fact, produce relationships involving "connection and care." Imprinting, in some form or another, has occurred for every bird discussed in this chapter. Far from being stripped of their flight ways, birds who misimprint continue to display a complex repertoire of avian behaviors, often with the support of human caregivers and fellow birds. To say that birds lose their flight ways underestimates the resiliency, adaptivity, and creativity of birds, and it positions human intervention as deleterious in ways that are

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[246] Hutto believes that filial imprinting gave him "the gift of glimpsing, if only momentarily, the world through another's eyes." Joe Hutto, *Illumination in the Flatwoods: A Season with the Wild Turkey* (New York: Lyons & Burford, 1995), 3. See also *Nature*, season 30, episode 4, "My Life as a Turkey," produced by David Allen, written by Joe Hutto, featuring Jeff Palmer, aired November 16, 2011, in broadcast syndication, WNET.

[247] van Dooren, *Flight Ways*, 103.

[248] Ibid.

ultimately counterproductive to multispecies thought.[249] Indeed, how would someone go about raising a nestling or fledgling at home without having the bird misimprint along the way?[250] Rather than reject misimprinting in its entirety, it seems more generative for the work of multispecies justice to study how some kinds of misimprinting are better or worse than others. As these authors suggest, sexual misimprinting on humans is more troubling than filial, as it teaches birds to believe that a member of another species is their correct mate. Such misidentification leads to the bird being unable to practice their sexual activities and often leads to gender friction and misunderstanding between bird and human. The following considers how three instances of avian misimprinting among male and female birds produced different modes of sexual care ranging from detachment and repulsion to empathetic involvement.

In *The Parrot Who Owns Me*, Joanna Burger, an avian behavioral scientist at Rutgers University, describes how an adopted Red-lored Amazon parrot courted her for many years after sexually misimprinting.[251] While Tiko the parrot practiced what

[249] Moreover, researchers working on imprinting have acknowledged since the 1960s that imprinting is often reversible and more malleable than early researchers such as Lorenz thought. See P.P.G. Bateson, "The Characteristics and Context of Imprinting," *Biological Review* 41 (1966), 177-220.

[250] van Dooren does acknowledge that misimprinting can, in some cases, produce meaningful relationships. He writes, "And so I am left with the view that insofar as an ethical relationship with a deliberately human-imprinted bird is possible, it requires a genuine commitment grounded in ongoing and dedicated care for that individual being. I am highly dubious about whether the affective and ethical obligations, as well as the real time and daily labor of being with and providing for another, can be adequately achieved if the individual bird and its well-being are not the primary motivation for the relationship." van Dooren, *Flight Ways*, 105.

[251] The memoir's title evokes bitter histories that continue to inform the present moment, including chattel slavery, patriarchal ownership of women, and ownership of animals as property.

amounted to parrot sexual care — building Burger a nest, preening her hair and fingers, and defending her from physician Michael Gochfeld, her spouse — Burger sought to remain neutral and avoid engagement during his periods of courtship. Allowed to roam their Somerset, New Jersey, home, the parrot began building a nest under a credenza in the early 1990s when he was in his mid-thirties. Performing what avian biologists call "male nest-showing," Tiko made "enticing" sounds, "maniacally preened" Burger's feet, and tried to lead her to the nest under the credenza.[252] Unsure about how to "respond to this behavior" that was "so full of excitement and longing," Burger slipped her hand under the credenza one day.[253] "Cooing . . . in ecstasy," Tiko "fondled" her fingers with his beak and tongue, an experience that made Burger feel "slightly squeamish."[254] As she explains, "Prior to this point, I had found his courtship of me charming and fascinating, although his constant need for attention was a bit trying at times. But as he ran his tongue over my fingers under the credenza, I realized for the first time how serious he was, and I found that vaguely unnerving. . . . I was uneasy, as though I had transgressed an ancient taboo."[255] Pulling her hand out from the nest, Burger retreated back into her "role of scientist, observing his behavior and stashing it for later analysis," a position that became her default during Tiko's prolonged courtships.[256] Recognizing that she was responsible

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[252] Joanna Burger, *The Parrot Who Owns Me: The Story of a Relationship* (New York: Random House, 2001), 6, 5.

[253] Ibid., 13.

[254] Ibid., 14, 13.

[255] Ibid., 14.

[256] Ibid.

for Tiko's sexual misimprinting, Burger seemed to feel some obligation to support the parrot during his courtship acts while, at the same time, she understood that she could never meet his earnest expectations for a mate. Burger felt stuck, in other words, between an obligation she owed to Tiko as his caretaker and the limits she felt comfortable supporting the sexual activities of another species. Attempting to circumvent the problem, Burger opted to imagine that she could remain uninvolved as a scientist in Tiko's courtship and sexual advances.

Burger eventually credits her aloofness with ensuring the continuation of their relationship, even though such a position fails to grapple with the conflicts inherent in supporting avian sexual care. Tiko continued to persistently court Burger throughout the 1990s, attacking Michael when he felt the need. Once when Burger became ill with Lyme disease after returning from a research trip, Tiko stayed by her side, preening her fingers and hair. She writes, "His constant preening and undivided attention were his way of showing me that he wanted to take care of me. I'd been caring for him all these years, feeding him, sheltering him, carrying him around the house on my arm. Now I was immobile, helpless, completely vulnerable. Illness tests a relationship, and Tiko was there for me."[257] From this experience, Burger learned "the importance of interdependence, the importance of taking care, and the importance of being cared for."[258] While Tiko expressed an outpouring of concern for her wellbeing, Burger sought to remove herself from the aspects of Tiko's behavior she did not want to address. Indeed, she believed that limiting her involvement in Tiko's courtship behaviors by walking away from him,

[257] Ibid., 197.

[258] Ibid., 206.

ignoring his mating dances, and not interfering with his nest construction enabled her to preserve their relationship. "Lacking a truly responsive mate," she explains, "Tiko never copulated. This seemed not to bother him; he remained happy and good-natured. He flew willingly to my shoulder whenever I appeared, and contentedly preened my hair to indicate that all was well."[259] Despite Burger's reassurance that "all was well," it seems more likely that Tiko experienced confusion, frustration, and disappointment as he tried to perform his parrot sexuality with an inattentive, disinterested partner. Sexual misimprinting and Burger's cool detachment produced a one-sided relationship, one where Tiko nested, cooed, danced, and regurgitated food to no avail. Burger even conceded that Tiko was deprived a central experience of being a Red-lored Amazon, writing, "Tiko has never had this experience [of 'copulating'], which for most of us is such a central part of being alive. As I've mentioned, I've on occasion considered introducing him to a female bird, but parrots bonded to human beings typically disdain other parrots."[260] Rather than find ways to support Tiko's sexual care and accept responsibility for the attachment he formed through sexual imprinting, Burger expresses a reluctance to intervene and a desire to detach herself from the situation.

O'Brien took a very different approach to sexual misimprinting by actively participating in mating activities. Without other social engagement, Wesley the barn owl filially and sexually misimprinted on O'Brien. Her advisers at the Caltech owl lab even promoted early filial misimprinting, advising that she take Wesley home "right away" to

[259] Ibid., 20.

[260] Ibid., 21.

ensure his social attachment.[261] O'Brien, in turn, identified as "mommy" around Wesley, an imagined relationship that grew strained and assumed different meanings once Wesley viewed her as a mating partner.[262] One evening when Wesley was three and a half years old, he mounted O'Brien's arm and, with a fit of "convulsions," deposited "a small drop of white fluid" that O'Brien determined to be semen.[263] Unfamiliar with the mating habits of barn owls, O'Brien was initially under the impression that Wesley had consumed something poisonous and was having seizures. She jokes that after Wesley had "consummated his commitment," "I didn't know whether to take a shower or have a cigarette."[264] Taking the opposite position of Burger who would have removed herself entirely from what Kirksey calls "kinky interspecies sex," O'Brien saw sexual intercourse as a way to maintain Wesley's attachment with her.[265] "Perhaps if Wesley had not chosen me as his mate," she speculates, "he would have grown distant from me and seen me as an adversary."[266] After this initial incident, Wesley began treating O'Brien as his mate and she willingly participated. "He grew very protective and fussed over me. He constantly sought out dark corners and little hidden spots, and tried to lure me to them with his ear-splitting nesting or mating call. One of his favorite places was the space behind the toilet, the perfect babe lair. He would drag magazines back there and rip them

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[261] O'Brien, *Wesley the Owl*, 7.

[262] Ibid., 89.
[263] Ibid. 107.

[264] Ibid., 108.

[265] Kirksey, *Emergent Ecologies*, 139.

[266] O'Brien, *Wesley the Owl*, 108.

into fluffy nests."[267] When O'Brien heard Wesley's loud mating calls, she presented him with her arm. As she explains, "The only way to make Wesley stop was to let him mate with my arm. Then he would be quiet and docile, for a while."[268] Such mating behaviors indicate how Wesley tried to carry on sexual activities in a severely diminished environment with a diminished array of social relationships. Rather than acknowledge Wesley's sexual misimprinting as a violent relationship created out of necessity, O'Brien frames it as a parental relationship based on love and normalizes it as commonplace. Indeed, she describes feeling "relief" when she learned that "other people who have cared for imprinted raptors had experienced this mating behavior."[269] Citing the work of imprint handlers who collect semen from endangered raptors by training them to sexually imprint on a latex hat, O'Brien references "one guy whose endangered bird regularly mated with his hat" in an attempt to normalize her and Wesley's "mating ritual."[270] In another incident, O'Brien explained Wesley's mating behavior to a gathering of Caltech faculty and postdocs while returning tape recording equipment she used to record the vocalizations that Wesley made while mounting her arm. Learning that Wesley made unique vocalizations every time he mounted, she concluded that "owls are anything but

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[267] Ibid.

[268] Ibid., 109.
[269] Ibid., 110.

[270] As Macdonald explains, "The task of an imprint handler is to build a pair-bond with an imprinted falcon, mirroring the behaviour of a real falcon: bowing like a courting falcon, making 'chupping' courtship noises, bringing it food. Eventually the falcon—if male—will mate with its handler, copulating on a specially designed latex hat. The imprint handler then collects the falcon semen with a pipette and uses it to inseminate an imprinted female falcon." Macdonald, *Falcon*, 125; O'Brien, *Wesley the Owl*, 110.

simple" and determined that because of their complexity they are "not really that different from us."[271] By drawing a parallel between owls and humans, O'Brien normalizes the interspecies kink she performed with Wesley. If anything, however, Wesley's mating behaviors and O'Brien's embarrassment at describing them highlight the differences that distinguish barn owls from humans. In this sense, O'Brien's intimate involvement in Wesley's sexual activities was an outcome of the violence of sexual misimprinting.

Relying neither on cool detachment nor kinky participation, Woolfson proposed a structure of sexual care that supported avian sexualities while navigating the challenges of sexual misimprinting. In addition to supporting Spike the magpie, Woolfson pursued more attentive modes of care for Chicken, a female rook named after the New York drag artist Madame Chickeboumskaya. Found as a nestling near Crathes Castle just outside Aberdeen, Chicken remained in captivity because it never occurred to Woolfson to release her and, if such a thought had crossed her mind, she did not know how to release Chicken safely. As Woolfson explains, "By now it seems at best disingenuous to say that I didn't know enough of birds to consider reintroducing her to the wild. I wouldn't have known how to. Even now I'm not sure that I would know. Her home was fifteen miles away and there were no rooks nearby. The matter seemed simple. She had been brought to us and was, therefore, our responsibility."[272] Chicken soon became a household favorite, teaching Woolfson knowledge about corvids that was "revelatory, mind-

[271] Ibid., 190.
[272] Woolfson, *Corvus*, 57.

expanding, world-expanding."[273] Once she reached sexual maturity, Chicken built a nest every spring. The rook selected a nesting site just before the month of March, usually deciding that the "square bounded by the legs of a dining chair" in the dining room provided an adequate location.[274] Gathering up "newspaper from the floor, old receipts, magazine covers and anything else she could find or steal," including, one year, a "grey angora sock, a couple of floor cloths, [and a] small, heart-shaped cover of a hand-warmer," Chicken would carefully arrange these items into a nest.[275] The meaning of bird nests, Macdonald observes in *Vesper Flights*, is "always woven from things that are partly bird and partly human."[276] Chicken takes this observation even further, using avian design aesthetics to assemble things made by humans. During March, Chicken would lay several eggs and stop leaving the nest altogether. Woolfson, temporarily assuming the role of her mate, would hand-feed Chicken from the nest, giving her extra "vitamin drops" and feeding her crushed eggs.[277] She also stopped vacuuming the floors and scrubbing the carpet in "Chicken's spring territory" to avoid disrupting the nesting rook.[278] In pausing her domestic routines and bringing food to Chicken, Woolfson expressed generosity and care for the rook. Every year during the month of March, the dining room became Chicken's nest site, an avian space where the rook could perform

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[273] Ibid., 59.

[274] Ibid., 238.
[275] Ibid., 235, 38.

[276] Helen Macdonald, *Vesper Flights* (New York: Grove Press, 2020), 4.

[277] Woolfson, *Corvus*, 241.

[278] Ibid., 243.

her nesting behavior. Woolfson encouraged the construction of a nest and the brooding of eggs, supporting Chicken along the way. Chicken, in turn, cared for eggs that would never hatch, a task that Woolfson felt "saddened by" because it could never produce a "positive conclusion."[279] Although Chicken's eggs never yielded young rooks, her nesting and brooding activities cannot be so easily dismissed. Having offspring does not need to be the mark of success for a captive and imprinted bird. Rather, the central priority should be ensuring that the bird can, to the best of the abilities of those involved, practice their species-specific and individual sexuality. In this respect, the avian sexual care that emerged through Woolfson and Chicken's shared nesting arrangement moves toward improved sexual futures for avian companions.

Care and Multispecies Justice

This chapter has mostly considered the activities of avian care that emerge within the boundaries of the home. By way of a conclusion, however, I examine two sites that transgress the domestic, private spheres associated with home life. Taken together, recent calls by Black birdwatchers for equity, inclusion, and care within birding communities and efforts by bird rehabilitation centers to rethink care for "avian crips" have demonstrated how care produces structures of thinking, acting, and feeling that support and enable the work of multispecies justice. Indeed, Black birdwatchers have articulated a mode of care that reflects the indispensability of their bodies and the bodies of birds, and avian rehab programs have pursued more hospitable forms of care to better support birds with disabilities and wildlife rehabbers. In doing so, both have expressed entangled

[279] Ibid., 241.

senses of self that embrace interdependency with other species while challenging the isolationism of humans and nonhumans.

Black Birdwatching: Exclusion, Care, and Indispensability

Many of the authors discussed thus far have implicitly argued for the universality of care activities, even though their ideas about caregiving usually emerged from the specific institution of whiteness. As conceived in Europe and North America, birdkeeping, falconry, birdwatching, and ornithology are all steeped in the histories and imaginaries of whiteness and its supremacist projects of colonialism, capitalism, and individualism. Of course, such histories and imaginaries have also used gender, race, class, sexuality, and ability to determine who belongs and which ideas matter in avian cultures. After all, modern birdkeeping and ornithology emerged through colonialism. Beginning in the sixteenth century, living and deceased birds were taken from the "New World" and brought to Europe to satisfy the growing birdkeeping and collecting market among the wealthy.[280] By the eighteenth century, it became a priority for many colonists, including the British navigator James Cook and naturalist Joseph Banks, to kill and capture as many birds as possible to be given away as gifts and sold to bird enthusiasts and scientists.[281] At the same time, traders in the early colonies enlisted dispossessed Indigenous peoples to trap birds for sale in Britain and the European mainland while early American ornithologists and naturalists such as the famed John James Audubon and

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[280] Michael Walters, *A Concise History of Ornithology* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 31.

[281] Ibid., 76.

William Clark, both of whom had several birds named after them, owned enslaved persons and participated in the genocide of Indigenous tribes.[282] In the nineteenth century, with the development of taxidermy, global bird collecting for private hobbyists and scientists entered its "heyday."[283] When ornithologists, naturalists, and wealthy birdkeepers were obtaining birds to cage or study, enslaved Africans and their descendants were using birdcalls to plot their escape from slavery.[284] By the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, upper-class white people formed the first bird conservation organizations in Britain and the United States to stop the sale of bird skins and feathers — only later did they focus on halting habitant loss — and they began the activity of birdwatching during trips to the "countryside."[285]

With this history and the demographics of birdwatching organizations, conservation groups, and avian science, it is not surprising that people of color, especially

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[282] Josef Lindholm III, "Aviaries in the Wilderness to Arks in the Metropolis," in *Aviculture: A History*, eds. Svanberg and Möller (Surrey, CAN: Hancock House Publishers Ltd., 2018), 140-202, at p. 141; Dorceta Taylor, *The Rise of the American Conservation Movement: Power, Privilege, and Environmental Protection* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016). A growing number of birding organizations are calling for the removal of all names attached to birds such as Wilson's warbler or Swainson's hawk. See Jeff St. Clair, "Monuments and Teams Have Changed Names As America Reckons with Racism: Birds are Next," *NPR*, June 9, 2021, https://www.npr.org/2021/06/05/1002944505/monuments-and-teams-have-changed-names-as-america-reckons-with-racism-birds-are-.

[283] Birkhead, Wimpenny, and Montgomerie, *Ten Thousand Birds*, 126-27.

[284] Dorceta Taylor, "Untold Stories of the Conservation Movement: Race, Power, and Privilege," (virtual lecture, University of Oregon, May 7, 2021).

[285] Stephen Moss, *A Bird in the Bush: A Social History of Birdwatching* (London: Aurum, 2013), 72, 174.

African Americans, have significant trouble with bird institutions and cultures today.[286] Indeed, the birder, wildlife biologist, and author J. Drew Lanham notes that very few birders look like him. A "birder of a different hue," "forever . . . the odd bird, the raven in a horde of white doves, the blackbird in a flock of snow buntings," Lanham has encountered fewer than ten Black birdwatchers in his lifetime.[287]As he puts it, "The chances of seeing someone who looks like me on the trail are only slightly greater than those of sighting an ivory-billed woodpecker."[288] A similar problem persists in the "white world" of ornithology, not to mention the biological sciences, more generally.[289] After Lanham completed his doctoral degree in the late 1990s at Clemson University and went

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[286] In addition to the below discussion, a statement made by Philonise Floyd, the founder of the Philonise and Keeta Floyd Institute for Social Change and younger brother of George Floyd, after speaking with President Biden and Vice President Harris about the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act illustrates how many Black people view birds in the United States. Floyd said, "This is the thing, if you can make federal laws to protect the bird, which is the bald eagle, you can make federal laws to protect people of color." Michael D. Shear and Nicholas Fandos, "George Floyd's Family Meets with Biden Amid Push for Police Reform," *The New York Times*, May 25, 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/25/us/politics/george-floyd-white-house-meeting.html. This declaration compares a bird species that symbolizes the strength of the US and that nearly went extinct to Black residents who have also played a central role in the narratives and material conditions of the US and yet continue to be threatened by white supremacist institutions. While Floyd's remarks seem to trivialize the Endangered Species Act in a move that endorses what Weaver calls "zero-sum" logic, they do illustrate how far the work of multispecies justice must go to ensure that bald eagles and people of color receive support. Harlan Weaver, *Bad Dog: Pit Bull Politics and Multispecies Justice* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2021), 21-22.

[287] J. Drew Lanham, "The United State of Birding," *National Audubon Society*, December 19, 2017, https://www.audubon.org/news/the-united-state-birding; J. Drew Lanham, *The Home Place: Memoirs of a Colored Man's Love Affair with Nature* (Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 2016), 141.

[288] Ibid., 153.

[289] Ibid., 117.

on to teach wildlife biology and ornithology at the same institution, a few faculty colleagues doubted the wisdom of hiring him on racist grounds. "Early on," Lanham explains, "a few fellow faculty members told me that I'd never make it—that my hire had been strictly an affirmative action move and progression through the ranks would be all but impossible."[290] Despite such hostility at an institution rooted in the histories of slaveholding, Lanham became a distinguished professor with an endowed chair and a master teacher.[291] While Black ornithologists continue to be unwelcomed by many academic institutions, Black birdwatchers experience even greater antagonism and harassment. As the experience of Christian Cooper, a Black author and birdwatcher, who was harassed in May 2020 by Amy Cooper, a white woman walking a dog without a leash in Central Park's Ramble, demonstrated quite clearly, Black birders face significant hostility in outdoor spaces. Cooper later published a comic based on the incident that features Jules, a Black teenager, taking his grandfather's binoculars out birding. Every time he looks through them to see a bird, however, he sees the ghosts of Black people killed by police officers, including Amadou Diallo, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd. Along the way, Jules is harassed by a white man who calls him a "hoodlum" and accuses him of "casing" his house, and he encounters a white woman who threatens to call the police after he asks her to leash her dog in protected wildlife areas.[292] Lanham details similar hauntings and abuses in his "9 Rules for the Black Birdwatcher," a list originally published in *Orion* magazine, when he advises Black birders to carry "three forms of

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[290] Ibid., 148.

[291] Ibid., 199.

[292] Christian Cooper, *It's a Bird*, Represent! v.1 (September 2020), DC Comics.

identification" to "convince the cops, FBI, Homeland Security, and the flashlight-toting security guard that you're not a terrorist or escaped convict" and to avoid birding in a hoodie, especially in the evening.[293] Biracial author Emily Raboteau puts the situation in especially stark terms, writing, "Bird-watching is a way of bearing witness—of being transported by the beauty in nature. I'm yanked from that reverie, knowing that Blackness is not a beauty that everyone sees; some see danger, and so my watching is always tenuous, provisional, unstable."[294]

The history of avian cultures and the difficulties encountered by African Americans who seek to participate in these spaces suggest that care activities and structures operate differently for Black birdkeepers and birdwatchers. How, then, do Black enthusiasts of birds, especially birdwatchers, perform and think about avian care? Lanham's memoir *The Home Place* offers a counterpoint to the structures and activities of care discussed above. In this family memoir and history of place, Lanham articulates a mode of caring with birds that responds to the historical and ongoing realities of violence directed against Black people and birds, one that asserts the indispensability of Black and avian lives.[295] Lanham grew up in Edgefield County, South Carolina, on a family farm

[293] J. Drew Lanham, "9 Rules for the Black Birdwatcher," *Orion Magazine*, 2013, https://orionmagazine.org/article/9-rules-for-the-black-birdwatcher/.
[294] Emily Raboteau, "Spark Bird: Bearing witness to New York's endangered species," *Orion Magazine*, February 2021, 27.

[295] My use of indispensability is borrowed from David Pellow who writes about what he calls "*racial indispensability* (when referring to people of color) and *socioecological indispensability* (when referring to broader communities within and across the human/more-than-human spectrum)." David Naguib Pellow, *What is Critical Environmental Justice?* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2018), 26. As Pellow defines it, indispensability challenges "the logic of racial expendability," asserting that people of color, other species, and environments are necessary to the work of environmental justice and worldmaking. Ibid. I use the term to emphasize how Lanham and other Black

called “the Home Place.” Raised by two schoolteachers who not only worked full-time jobs, but also grew crops and raised livestock to supplement the family’s diets and incomes, Lanham benefitted from a happy childhood. He became obsessed with birds in second grade when his teacher gave him the outline of what his grandmother, Mamatha, called a “markingbird” to color.[296] Lanham soon acquired his first field guide which allowed him to assign the common names of birds to the names his grandmother used. He writes, “[M]y grandmother’s birds became my ornithology. Her redbirds, bee-martins, yellowhammers, snowbirds, rain crows, partridges, buzzards, and chicken hawks became northern cardinals, eastern kingbirds, yellow-shafted flickers, slate-colored juncos, yellow-billed cuckoos, northern bobwhite, vultures, and red-tailed hawks.”[297] An “everyday part of life on the Home Place,” birds provided Lanham with a sense of calm and a fascination with “life on the wing.”[298] As he explains in an essay for the National Audubon Society, “No matter what transpires negatively in my life, things with wings lift me.”[299] Raised by a supporting family on a rich tract of land, Lanham’s childhood and adolescence shaped him into a birdwatcher. He writes, “From the outside our Home Place family was as close to a black American ideal as it could get: middle class, achieving, and striving to stay together.”[300] From a different angle, however, Lanham’s life was marred

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birdwatchers have used care to create spaces of belonging in historically white, racist institutions and to hold avian species in the world.

[296] Lanham, *The Home Place*, 106.

[297] Ibid.

[298] Ibid.

[299] Lanham, “The United State.”

[300] Lanham, *The Home Place*, 65.

by the institutional violence of slavery, racism, war, environmental degradation, and lack of access to medical care and well-paying jobs. Like so many descendants of slavery, his surname was given by a white slaveholding ancestor, and his grandmother was just "one generation removed from slavery."[301] The landscape that so deeply shaped his upbringing could not escape harm either, having been logged to provide lumber during WWII, a devastating event that led to the extinction of the Ivory-billed woodpecker.[302] Such violence shaped Lanham's relationship with the Home Place and its avian occupants. When he was ten years old, he received a Daisy BB gun for Christmas and, wanting to "make something die with my new power [of possessing a weapon]," he killed a chipping sparrow perched in the pecan tree outside Mamatha's house. "I had done what I had set out to do and killed something," Lanham recalls, "but when I stared at the dead bird lying on the ground, I was ashamed of the deed, afraid to even pick the lifeless form up."[303] Understanding in that moment that "killing simply for the sake of killing wasn't right," he "left that Christmas behind" with his "feelings for feathered creatures—and life—forever changed."[304] Although he grew up steeped in the violence of the South, his own act of violence toward a bird disgusts and frightens him to such a degree that he does not shoot a bird again. As Lanham grew older and began actively birding in the region, he

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[301] Ibid., 36.
[302] Ibid. For more on the violent history of logging in the US South, see Chapter 3, "Multispecies Violence: Colonialism, Anthropocentric Legal Orders, and the Erasure of Entangled Selves."

[303] Lanham, *The Home Place*, 114.

[304] Ibid., 160, 115.

encountered additional forms of violence. "[R]emote places," he observes, are typically "populated by white people" who act distrustful and even hostile toward his presence.[305] White supremacists posted KKK signs, brandished confederate flags and guns, and engaged in verbal threats, harassing Lanham to the point where he was forced to abandon a research project and change birding locations.

Care offers Lanham a structure for challenging the interlinked forms of violence that make rural landscapes and avian institutions hostile to Black people. With its emphasis on interdependence and mutual flourishing, care points toward the indispensability of Black birdwatchers and birds. Put differently, thinking through the frameworks of care holds open spaces for Black people and birds to exist together free of harassment and harm. In his essay for the Audubon Society, Lanham describes encountering a racist farmer while looking for sparrows in a thicket not far from the Home Place. The farmer, indicating to the gun in the back of his truck, told Lanham he wished "the good old days" would return when Black people "picked the cotton" and "everyone knew their place."[306] This declaration not only devalues and dispenses Black lives, but it also dismisses the "out of place" activities of Black birdwatchers and, by extension, the birds whom Lanham admires. As Raboteau explains, "I am the mother of Black children in America. It's not possible for me to consider the threats posed to birds without also considering the threats posed to us."[307] Lanham stopped birdwatching in that area and recounted the incident to his birdwatching friends on social media. Hundreds of

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[305] Ibid., 156, 123.
[306] Lanham, "The United State."

[307] Raboteau, "Spark Bird," 26.

people expressed “care and concern” online for Lanham’s wellbeing and several of his local birdwatching peers showed “solidarity and friendship” by refusing to frequent the area where he was harassed.[308] Lanham argues that the birds were responsible for the outpouring of kindness and care he received, writing, “That portal of kinship comes in large part because of birds. I, for one, need that connection more than ever. I have a feeling that many of us do. It’s a uniting that I’m grateful for, and one we could all use.”[309] Such “uniting” functions as a kind of care, an assertion of the indispensability of Black birdwatchers and the relationships they maintain with avian species. At the same time, Lanham observes that birds have sustained him, helping him to love places inhabited by people who often do not love him back and who seek to isolate him. He writes, “I owe birds my life in so many ways.”[310] Believing in the necessity to reciprocate such care, Lanham uses his positions as an ornithologist, educator, birdwatcher, and writer to teach others about birds and support their continued existence. He describes an alternate method of encountering avian life, one that avoids listing and instead allows him to “absorb” the “thickety sparrowness” of sparrows and the unique qualities of the birds he sees.[311] “It’s an exercise in intensity for me as my relationships with individuals have become paramount. It’s not a dismissal of those who do list; it’s just my way of concentrating care on the beauty and wonder I see in the birds I encounter. In that concentration, I’ve found that I know birds better and in knowing them better can teach

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[308] Lanham, “The United State.”
[309] Ibid.

[310] Ibid.

[311] Ibid.

conservation to my students and other birders better."[312] By "concentrating care," or granting birds his full attentiveness, Lanham learns to see individual birds not as names on a list, but rather as an accumulation of experiences shared with fellow birdwatchers, other birds, and the places they both shape. In caring for birds and fellow birdwatchers, and in receiving care from these groups, Lanham insists on his own personal indispensability and on the indispensability of birds and Black people everywhere.

Rehabilitative Care: Disability and Avian Crips

Scattered across the US and usually operating on shoestring budgets, avian rehabilitation centers accept injured, misimprinted, and very young birds, providing those who can be rehabilitated with adequate care until either they can be released or transferred to long-term housing elsewhere. Because local demand is often so great and the knowledge required is always extensive, rehab facilities typically specialize in one or two avian groups such as raptors, waterbirds, or songbirds. Though the care administered to each bird varies depending on their needs, this final discussion focuses on care provided to birds with physical injuries, especially those deemed unreleasable. An astonishing 95 percent of injuries to wildlife are caused by human activities and, in the case of birds, most result in their death.[313] Rehabilitation centers must decide whether to accept an incoming bird or euthanize them depending on the severity of their injuries, with many being euthanized. Most states mandate that "non-native" species such as house sparrows and European starlings be euthanized upon receipt by licensed and

[312] Ibid.
[313] Suzie Gilbert, *Flyaway: How a Wild Bird Rehabber Sought Adventure and Found Her Wings* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2009), 11.

permitted rehab facilities.[314] If a bird has been rehabilitated and is determined to be unreleasable for any variety of reasons, they also face the prospect of death. As Louise Shimmel, executive director of the Cascades Raptor Center, explains, state and federal rehabilitation permits are "conditioned on the premise that if a bird is not releasable, it will be placed [in a long-term facility] or euthanized."[315] Birds unable to be placed in long-term, permitted sanctuaries must be euthanized within a specified period.[316] The Cascades Raptor Center in Eugene, Oregon, for example, euthanizes "the vast majority of birds that cannot be released because living in human care takes a very special bird. . . . Welfare issues come up really quickly."[317] To determine whether a bird can be released, avian rehabilitators assess their overall ability to survive outside of captivity. Depending on the species and injury, intensely dedicated staff examine any number of factors, with some places like Cascades hiring professional videographers to record and analyze wing beats to determine if peregrine falcons and other raptors are releasable. The overwhelming majority of birds with prior injuries do not receive this treatment, however. Their chances of survival are quite small. The goal of avian rehabbers, explains author and former rehabilitator Suzie Gilbert, is to "accept an injured wild animal, treat its injuries, carefully learn each of its quirks and preferences, help it heal, and then let it go. If things go according to plan, we will never see it again. Somehow, this is

[314] The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, for example, follows such practices. Louise Shimmel, interview with the author, May 7, 2021.
[315] Shimmel, interview with author.

[316] Gilbert, *Flyaway*, 147.

[317] Shimmel, interview with author.

enough."[318] Birds with permanent disabilities, however, do not fit neatly into such a narrative of physical recuperation. Rather, the rehabilitation system, one largely controlled by federal and state bureaucracies, is designed to systematically exterminate birds with disabilities. As Taylor puts it in *Beasts of Burden: Animal and Disability Liberation*, this is an ableism "played out across the species divide."[319] Disrupting the ableism of avian rehabilitation, I follow Taylor's pathbreaking work to argue that care, when read through the lens of disability, reformulates dependency and reconsiders the meaning of flight ways to produce more just modes of living. I look to the care-grounded work of the Cascades Raptor Center as one model for supporting "avian crips."[320]

Widely seen as burdens, birds with permanent disabilities caused by physical injuries are often pitied for having to lead lives in captivity that are assumed to be partial and incomplete. Heinrich, for example, surrendered Bubo the great-horned owl to the Vermont Institute of Natural Science for half a year and questioned whether Bubo should be kept alive if he had to live in an aviary. Heinrich asks, "Was he now really destined to spend the rest of his days in the cage between the one-winged Cooper's hawk and the sad raven? This seemed like a waste of time and resources and life."[321] Suggesting that

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[318] Gilbert, *Flyaway*, 127.
[319] Taylor, *Beasts of Burden*, 214.

[320] The phrase "avian crips" is inspired from Taylor's phrase "animal crips." As she explains, "Animal crips challenge us to consider what is valuable about living and what is valuable about the variety of life." Taylor, *Beasts of Burden*, 43. Her designation builds upon the work of crip activism and theories that reclaim disability to challenge ableist structures and promote a diversity of experiences. Taylor uses the term "crip" to think about how animals with disabilities can be embraced, celebrated, and supported, rather than seen as burdens and dependents. The phrase "avian crip" does similar work, although it explicitly considers disabilities in the contexts of avian care.

[321] Heinrich, *One Man's Owl*, 99.

"time," "resources," and "life" would be better spent elsewhere, Heinrich not-so-subtly hints that the "one-winged Cooper's hawk" and the "sad raven" should be euthanized.[322] Gilbert makes a similar point in *Flyaway*, a memoir that recounts the five years she founded and ran an eponymous bird rehabilitation center and nonprofit organization in upstate New York. "When the healthy young nestlings were released," she writes, "they would live out their lives as wild birds. If any of the others [i.e. the birds with permanent disabilities] survived, they would spend their crippled lives in a cage. There was not a ghost of a chance that they could someday live the way they were meant to live."[323] In both accounts, rehabilitated birds with disabilities are described as avian captives forced to lead damaged, unhappy lives behind the bars of a cage.[324] Expressing wider cultural attitudes about creatures with disabilities, Gilbert and Heinrich saw these not-quite-fully birds as burdens, as dependents forever requiring resources that are already spread thin. Their descriptions also suggest that birds with permanent disabilities can never practice their flight ways, or "live the way they were meant to live." As Taylor observes in *Beasts of Burden*, humans with disabilities are often similarly described as dependent upon others, permanently unhappy with their bodies, and stuck leading partial lives. Care theory, however, disrupts the normativities of ableism, demonstrating that dependency makes every life possible, not just those shaped by disabilities, and arguing that a

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[322] Taylor names this the "'better-off-dead' narrative." Taylor, *Beasts of Burden*, 23-24.
[323] Gilbert, *Flyaway*, 231.

[324] Heinrich and Gilbert strategically use the term "cage" in their accounts. While they refer to avian housing for nondisabled birds as "aviaries," they use the term "cage" when referring to birds with disabilities.

diversity of bodies and ways of living are deserving of attention, intervention, and support.[325] In such a light, the emphasis that "flight ways" places on the continuation of past ways of being and on flight itself becomes suspect.[326]

The Cascades Raptor Center opens a space to begin rethinking care practices for rehabilitated birds with permanent disabilities. Rather than see the species they rehabilitate and house as leading partial lives, rehabbers acknowledge the violence that led to permanent disabilities while recognizing that these birds practice an array of experiences that do not make their current lives less than their non-captive relatives. Each aviary at Cascades contains a brief one- or two-page description of the raptor living inside. Providing a way for visitors to introduce themselves to each bird, these avian autobiographies discuss how birds with physical disabilities obtained their injuries and, without pitying individual raptors, describe how each avian "ambassador" engages in their favorite activities to live well. In addition to receiving basic living requirements, the permanent raptor residents benefit from daily "wellness checks" by staff and a wide variety of "enrichment" activities. Dante the golden eagle, for example, is given vegetation to rip up; some birds enjoy tearing open paper bags with meal worms inside; many raptors take pleasure in ripping up stuffed animals and dog squeakers; and the great-horned owls like to tear heads of lettuce. Enrichment also includes providing birds such as turkey vultures with appetizing smells, encouraging engagements with visitors, and giving raptors views and sounds of trees, squirrels, and birds. By providing birds with daily enrichment and narrating their lives as full and valuable, Cascades positions

[325] Taylor, *Beasts of Burden*, 210-11.

[326] The emphasis placed on reproduction also smacks of repronormativity.

physical recovery not as an end goal that can be reached, but as a process of coming to live in a different body and in a different, but no less fulfilling, environment. The larger work of abolishing ableism in rehabilitation centers requires federal and state action, however. Shimmel argues that change needs to begin with the statistics reported at the federal level.

> I've been fighting for years to get this field to stop looking at release rates as the primary sign of success. Because it's really out of our control, I mean some of these birds come in so mangled. And then a year when we have a lot of healthy babies come in that we can renest or take all the way through rehab, our statistics look great. And it really has nothing to do with us, it has to do with the shape of the birds when they came in. What I see as much more valid criteria to judge quality of care, is basically *quality of care*. If we're being able to provide an individualized treatment plan for every single bird to the best our ability. If we have trained staff and good equipment and veterinary input and flight enclosures for conditioning, then even if in the end they're not releasable, I still consider that a success.

Shimmel proposes a care-based system for evaluating the success of rehabilitation centers, one that replaces the current emphasis on release rates which, she observes, is a poor measurement. An emphasis on "quality of care" shifts attention away from releasability — yet another way that birds deemed releasable are counted as successful and birds with permanent disabilities who cannot be released do not figure as success cases — to instead focus on the conditions and practices of care given to avian patients. Additionally, with federal and state support, some birds who would otherwise be

euthanized could be released. As Taylor observes, "Recent research offers numerous examples of disabled animals surviving and sometimes thriving."[327] States could also end the practice of euthanizing birds who cannot be released, following a system similar to the one recently implemented in California that makes it illegal to euthanize most dogs and provides funding to adequately support shelters.[328] Care, in these contexts, disrupts ableist structures, helping avian crips lead full, meaningful lives after suffering permanent injuries.

As the multiple modes and structures of care discussed in this chapter demonstrate, the interconnected activities of caregiving and care receiving draw humans into relationships with nonhumans that reorientate senses of self around interdependence and entanglement. In *Wild Dog Dreaming*, ethnographer Deborah Bird Rose writes, "To care for others is to care for one's self. There is no way to disentangle self and other, and therefore there is no self-interest that concerns only the self."[329] The authors and memoirs taken up here collectively propose what might be called care-informed modes of justice, or ways of living with nonhuman species that require humans to recognize, and to meet, the daily needs of others while also navigating the conflicts that arise from such involvement. The daily acts of care that hold humans and nonhumans in the world together reject isolationism in favor of more just multispecies futures.

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[327] Taylor, *Beasts of Burden*, 27.

[328] For more on this, see Andrew Sheeler, "Gavin Newsom calls for ending animal euthanasia: 'We want to be a no-kill state'," *The Sacramento Bee*, January 10, 2020, https://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article239174863.html.

[329] Deborah Bird Rose, *Wild Dog Dreaming: Love and Extinction* (Charlottesville, University of Virginia Press, 2011), 27.

MULTISPECIES VIOLENCE AND RESISTANCE

CHAPTER III

MULTISPECIES VIOLENCE: COLONIALISM, ANTHROPOCENTRIC LEGAL ORDERS, AND THE ERASURE OF THE SELF

"Settler colonialism is violence that disrupts human relationships [with] the environment."
Kyle Whyte, "Settler Colonialism, Ecology, and Environmental Injustice"

"Both animality and humanness are deeply embedded in the constitution of the law."
Irus Braverman, *Animals, Biopolitics, Law: Lively Legalities*

"Violence is an attack upon a person's dignity, sense of selfhood and right to participate in this world."
Brad Evans, "Myths of Violence"

Just five days before President Biden took office, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), operating under the outgoing Trump Administration, approved the development of a 5,700-acre lithium mine located on public land sacred to Northern Paiute and Western Shoshone peoples. Known as Peehee mu'huh, or "rotten moon" by Paiutes, and as Thacker Pass by settlers, the site has been inhabited by Indigenous peoples and nonhuman species since time immemorial. For Paiute Shoshones affiliated with the nearby Fort McDermitt Indian Reservation, Summit Lake Reservation, and Winnemucca Indian Colony, Peehee mu'huh is a sacred burial ground that looks after the bodies and spirits of their ancestors who were massacred once by Pit River warriors and then again, in 1865, by US military troops. In the second attack, at least 31 — and perhaps as many as 70 — elders, women, and children were violently murdered by federal forces when the tribe's warriors were away hunting.[1] As Daranda Hinkey, a Fort

[1] Kelsey Turner, "Tribes Claim BLM Violated Multiple Federal Laws in Permitting Thacker Pass Lithium Mine in Nevada," *Native News Online*, Dec. 10, 2021,

McDermitt tribal member and outspoken critic of the Thacker Pass Lithium Mine, tells it, "their remains — their [rotting] intestines — were [found] scattered across the sagebrush" in the shadow of the moon-shaped pass days later by the tribe's hunters.[2] Today, in defiance of the US government's ongoing genocide of Indigenous peoples, Paiute Shoshones continue to gather medicine, hunt, and practice ceremony on land managed by the federal government and the State of Nevada.[3] Nonhuman species such as old-growth sagebrush, crosby's buckwheat, western sage grouse, golden eagles, and burrowing owls also continue to inhabit Peehee mu'huh, similarly resisting erasure by the settler state.

The Trump Administration championed the mine as a necessary investment in the nation's security and technological dominance, a political and rhetorical position repeated by the project's managing company, Lithium Nevada, itself a subsidiary of the multinational corporation Lithium Americas. Although lithium was first detected at this location in the mid-1970s by Chevron, Lithium Americas only began considering the site during the Great Recession of 2007-08 when petroleum prices, and investments in renewable energy and battery technology, soared.[4] After conducting two "pre-feasibility

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https://nativenewsonline.net/sovereignty/tribes-claim-blm-violated-multiple-federal-laws-in-permitting-thacker-pass-lithium-mine-in-nevada.

[2] Daranda Hinkey, interview by Paul Feather, "Finding Ourselves at Peehee Mu'huh: An interview with Daranda Hinkey," *CounterPunch*, June 4, 2021, https://www.counterpunch.org/2021/06/04/finding-ourselves-at-peehee-muhuh-an-interview-with-daranda-hinkey/.

[3] Briana Flin, "'Like putting a lithium mine on Arlington cemetery': the fight to save sacred land in Nevada," *The Guardian*, Dec. 2, 2021, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/dec/02/thacker-pass-lithium-mine-fight-save-sacred-land-nevada.

[4] "Thacker Pass," *Lithium Americas*, https://www.lithiumamericas.com/thacker-pass/.

studies," the corporation submitted an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to the BLM in 2020 and, under a fast-tracked permitting system, received a Record of Decision granting approval on the eve of the Trump Administration's exit in January 2021.[5] A process that takes, on average, four and a half years occurred over just seven months.[6] "Under the Trump Administration's leadership," boasted Casey Hammond, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Land and Minerals Management, "we are developing reliable domestic sources of lithium and other critical minerals, keeping the United States' manufacturing capacity competitive and maintaining our nation's technology and national security edge."[7] Much like petroleum, which has similarly been labelled a "critical" energy by the American Petroleum Institute and the US military, lithium has become necessary for preserving the image of American prosperity and security.[8] Indeed, Lithium Nevada boasts that "Production from Thacker Pass is anticipated to meet most or all of the projected demand for lithium in the United States and will significantly reduce the country's dependency on foreign suppliers."[9] Most recently, the Biden-Harris Administration tacitly signaled their support for the project,

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[5] Ibid.

[6] Council on Environmental Quality, "Environmental Impact Statement Timelines (2010-18)," https://ceq.doe.gov/docs/nepa-practice/CEQ_EIS_Timeline_Report_2020-6-12.pdf.

[7] Bureau of Land Management, "The Bureau of Land Management Releases Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Thacker Pass Lithium Mine," press release, Dec. 4, 2020, https://www.blm.gov/press-release/bureau-land-management-releases-final-environmental-impact-statement-thacker-pass.

[8] Suzanne Lemieux, "Protecting America's Critical Energy Infrastructure," *American Petroleum Institute*, May 10, 2021, https://www.api.org/news-policy-and-issues/blog/2021/05/10/protecting-americas-critical-energy-infrastructure.

[9] "Thacker Pass."

asking the Supply Chain Disruptions Task Force in June 2021 to expand the "extracting and processing of critical minerals at home and abroad" and to "urgently develop a domestic lithium battery supply chain that combats the climate crisis by creating good-paying clean energy jobs across America."[10]

Lithium Nevada has, in turn, adopted the magical thinking of renewable energy, technological innovation, and corporate environmentalism, strategically describing the mine as an environmentally friendly and social justice-oriented project, one necessary for challenging climate change and producing twenty-first-century jobs. Drawing upon the compulsory language of US national security, Lithium Americas proclaims that "Lithium batteries are essential for a clean energy future."[11] By aligning lithium production with clean energy and promises of climate stability, the multinational corporation has attempted to reinvent the excoriated image of the mining company, a move that follows BP's rebranding to "Beyond Petroleum" and the development of so-called "clean coal" by the coal industry. As part of their marketing and public relations strategy, Lithium Nevada describes a commitment to "employing locally and working with local service providers to the greatest extent possible," along with "avoiding sensitive environmental habitat and employing the best available environmental control technologies."[12] At the

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[10] "Biden-Harris Administration Announces Supply Chain Disruptions Task Force to Address Short-Term Supply Chain Discontinuities," *The White House*, June 8, 2021, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/06/08/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-announces-supply-chain-disruptions-task-force-to-address-short-term-supply-chain-discontinuities/.

[11] "Lithium for a Clean Future," *Lithium Americas*, https://www.lithiumamericas.com/sustainability/clean-energy/.

[12] "Thacker Pass."

same time, however, the corporation has also downplayed the potential impacts of mining activities, primarily by erasing the inhabitants of this place. Wide-lens drone footage and photography on Lithium America's website present an expansive, sparsely inhabited, and unpeopled landscape.[13] Narratives of corporate stewardship reinforce such images, including the contradictory claim that "The flat and expansive terrain allows for a very compact footprint and allows for future potential expansions."[14] Such settler rhetorics of depopulation not only permit extractive mining activities, they also sit uneasily with Lithium Nevada's purported interest in supporting the human and nonhuman communities who co-habit this place.

Unsurprisingly, Lithium Nevada's proposed mining activities are at odds with their public image of sustainability. Unlike lithium mining operations in China and South America — including Lithium Americas' Cauchari-Olaroz mine — that extract lithium carbonate from salt lake brines, often after concentrating the solution in large evaporation "ponds," the removal of lithium at this site will follow a process similar to the one used in Australia where the lithium-rich mineral spodumene is mined from the earth and then processed.[15] In this case, lithium locked in clays will be removed using open-pit mining

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[13] A few corporate research scientists are shown in the flyover video and landscape photography; however, the viewer is meant to understand their presence as temporary and to read them as synecdochic extensions of the corporation. Such images of endless, depersonalized landscapes stand in stark contrast to the photos posted on the resistance website *Protect Thacker Pass*. Populated with a diverse array of humans and nonhumans, these images challenge the erasure of the many beings who share relationships with this place. "Protect Thacker Pass," *Protect Thacker Pass*, https://www.protectthackerpass.org/.

[14] "Thacker Pass."

[15] Jianfeng Song et al., "Lithium extraction from Chinese salt-lake brines: opportunities, challenges, and future outlook," *Environmental Science: Water Research and Technology*

techniques and then soaked in a sulfuric acid solution. The lithium that leaches from the acid solution will then be neutralized and crystallized, leaving "high-quality, battery-grade" lithium carbonate.[16] Lithium Nevada signed a contract with the North American Coal Corporation, operating under the guise of the newly formed subsidiary "Sawtooth Mining," that grants the coal-mining corporation "exclusive responsibility for the design, construction, operation, maintenance, and mining and mine closure services for Thacker Pass."[17] As one of the world's most dangerous corporations, North American Coal has played a leading role in producing the climate crisis and in damaging Indigenous communities and ecologies.[18] In a stunningly visible display of settler-colonial violence, the corporation's logo features the disembodied head of an Indigenous chief adorned in a ceremonial headdress and tribal regalia, upon which the words "North American Coal Corporation" are emblazoned in green, brown, and black font that represents the trees, land, and coal removed through the mining process. In addition to wrongfully implying the nativity of North American Coal and fossil fuel extractivism, the settler-corporate logo explicitly links the mining of coal to the theft of Indigenous land and the destruction of Indigenous cultures.

3, no. 4 (2017): 593-97; "Cauchari-Olaroz," *Lithium Americas*, https://www.lithiumamericas.com/cauchari-olaroz/; Allen Yushark Fosu et al., "Physico-Chemical Characteristics of Spodumene Concentrate and its Thermal Transformations," *Materials* 14, no. 23 (2021): 7423.

[16] "Thacker Pass."

[17] Ibid.

[18] See, for example, the corporation's Eagle Pass Mine located near the contested US-Mexico border. Riley Hutchings, "The Unfair Burden of Coal in Eagle Pass: An Environmental Justice Case Study of the Eagle Pass Mine," *Environmental Justice in the Southwest*, Nov. 16, 2016, https://sites.coloradocollege.edu/ejsw/author/r_hutchings/.

In addition to opening an 1,100-acre pit mine under the management of North American Coal, Lithium Nevada plans to develop processing facilities, transportation infrastructure, and tailings ponds on another 4,600 acres of land. One of the most substantial projects is a sulfuric acid plant that will be able to produce 5,800 tons of acid per day once fully operational.[19] In order to manufacture such large quantities of sulfuric acid, Lithium Nevada will pump groundwater from a wellhead extending 400 feet into the earth.[20] Although the corporation often points out that their mining activities will "draw less than 1%" of the total water pumped every year in Humboldt County, Nevada, ranchers are concerned that the long-term removal of groundwater will reduce the water table and make the surrounding region uninhabitable for nonhuman species, especially cattle.[21] Taken together, the mining activities, sulfuric acid production, and lithium processing are expected to consume an astonishing 11,300 gallons of diesel fuel every day.[22] Over the course of the mine's 46-year life expectancy, Lithium Nevada will pollute the atmosphere with two million metric tons of carbon dioxide. All of this will take place in an area occupied by at least 37 different species, including dozens of burrowing owls,

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[19] Bureau of Land Management, "Thacker Pass Lithium Mine Project," *Final Environmental Impact Statement*, Dec. 4, 2020, https://eplanning.blm.gov/public_projects/1503166/200352542/20030633/250036832/Thacker%20Pass_FEIS_Chapters1-6_508.pdf.

[20] Evan Malmgren, "The Battle for Thacker Pass," *The Nation*, Sept. 23, 2021, https://www.thenation.com/article/activism/thacker-pass-mine-protest/.

[21] "Thacker Pass"; Malmgren, "The Battle."

[22] Ibid.

a few hundred golden eagles, thirteen species of bats, and several dozen crosby's buckwheat plants.[23] Lithium Americas expects to earn $2.6 billion from these activities.

Rejecting government claims to national security and corporate assurances of safety, economic prosperity, and fossil-fuel independence, members of the Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribe and the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony have overwhelmingly opposed the lithium mine. In pointing to the loss and contamination of groundwater, the removal of a sacred burial site populated by their ancestors, the killing of nonhuman species, the anticipated incidents of abuse toward Indigenous women caused by "man camps," and the enormous consumption of fossil fuels, among other forms of violence, they have repudiated the extractivist and colonialist logics of renewable energies.[24] Their position also disputes the widely held assumption that renewable energy supports Indigenous sovereignty. In *This Changes Everything*, for instance, Naomi Klein declares renewable energy "a viable alternative to extraction for Indigenous peoples around the world," arguing that "it can provide skills training, jobs, and steady revenue streams for impoverished communities."[25] Far from operating as an "alternative to extraction," however, the lithium and rare earth metals used in renewable infrastructure require substantial mining operations placed on or near Indigenous land. A

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[23] Bureau of Land Management, "Appendix H: Wildlife and Special Status Species Information," *Final Environmental Impact Statement: Thacker Pass Lithium Mine Project*, https://eplanning.blm.gov/public_projects/1503166/200352542/20030639/250036838/Thacker%20Pass_FEIS_Apx%20H_Wildlife%20Info_508.pdf.

[24] See Turner, "Tribes Claim BLM"; Flin, "Like Putting"; Malmgren, "The Battle"; Stone, "Native Opposition."

[25] Naomi Klein, *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2014), 398.

2021 study by MSCI, an investment research firm, found that 79% of lithium deposits in the United States are located within just 35 miles of a reservation.[26] "A lot of environmentalists will argue that we do need that lithium," Hinkey explains, "but I don't think they've thought about the outcome. . . . What ancestral homelands, what Indigenous lands are they taking from?"[27] As Arlan Melendez, Chair of the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, puts it, "Annihilating old-growth sagebrush, Indigenous peoples' medicines, food, and ceremonial grounds for electric vehicles isn't very climate conscious."[28]

Indigenous nations, local ranchers, and concerned environmentalists brought several lawsuits challenging BLM's handling of the permitting and approval process; however, the courts repeatedly sided with the federal government and Lithium Nevada. Just months after the BLM approved the mine in early 2021, several lawsuits were filed against the BLM, Department of the Interior, and Lithium Nevada.[29] The lawsuits argued that the rushed and incomplete approval process violated the National Historic

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[26] Samuel Block, "Mining Energy-Transition Metals: National Aims, Local Conflicts," *MSCI*, June 3, 2021, https://www.msci.com/www/blog-posts/mining-energy-transition-metals/02531033947.

[27] Flin, "Like Putting."

[28] Maddie Stone, "Native opposition to Nevada lithium mine grows," *Grist*, Oct. 28, 2021, https://grist.org/protest/native-opposition-to-nevada-lithium-mine-grows/. Melendez told *Native News Online*, in a joint statement with Michon Eben, manager of the Cultural Resources Program and Tribal Historic Preservation Office for the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, "If we are going to have this new rush for lithium, it is going to cause the same kind of genocide the gold and silver rush had on Native peoples in Nevada." Turner, "Tribes Claim BLM."

[29] In April 2021, Chief Judge Miranda Du allowed Lithium Nevada to join the federal government as a co-defendant in these cases. Brian Bahouth, "Federal Judge Consolidates Lawsuits, Plaintiffs Opposing the Thacker Pass Lithium Mine," *Sierra Nevada Ally*, Aug. 11, 2021, https://www.sierranevadaally.org/2021/08/11/federal-judge-consolidates-lawsuits-plaintiffs-opposing-the-thacker-pass-lithium-mine/.

Preservation Act, the Archaeological Resources Protection Act, the Administrative Procedure Act, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, and the National Environmental Policy Act, resulting in insufficient consultation with local tribes and inadequate assessment of environmental impacts.[30] The legal challenges were promptly dismissed.[31] Chief Judge Miranda Du, who presided over the cases, argued in one ruling that the plaintiffs, the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony and the Burns Paiute Tribe, could not "definitely establish that a massacre occurred within the project area," despite the existence of published accounts written by eyewitnesses and calvary members who participated in the 1865 massacre and enshrined the events in the annals of settler lore.[32] Reflecting upon the series of court losses, Hinkey remarked, "These court systems, these legal systems, . . . [are] not set up for Indigenous people at all."[33] The judicial system not only devalued Paiute and Shoshone oral histories, but also failed to account for the ways that settler institutions have suppressed Indigenous knowledges.[34] Moreover, the courts

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[30] Turner, "Tribes Claim BLM."

[31] See Hallie Golden, "Nevada's Thacker Pass highlights how federal courts routinely dismiss Indigenous concerns," *High Country News*, Oct. 20, 2021, https://www.hcn.org/articles/law-nevadas-thacker-pass-highlights-how-federal-courts-routinely-dismiss-indigenous-concerns.

[32] Scott Sonner, "US judge won't reconsider tribes' bid to block Nevada mine," *ABC News*, Nov. 11, 2021, https://abcnews.go.com/Business/wireStory/us-judge-reconsider-tribes-bid-block-nevada-mine-81118056.

[33] Golden, "Nevada's Thacker Pass."

[34] In an interview on Oregon Public Broadcasting's *Think Out Loud*, Eben discussed the problems of securing and presenting adequate documentation. See Michon Eben, interview by Dave Miller, "Tribes and environmentalists continue to push back on a lithium mining operation," *Oregon Public Broadcasting*, Oct. 7, 2021, https://www.opb.org/article/2021/10/07/tribes-environmentalists-oppose-lithium-mining-operation/.

overlooked the nonhuman lives threatened by the lithium mine, completely missing the ways that Paiute and Shoshone cultures emerge through reciprocal and sustained relationships with the nonhumans who co-occupy Peehee mu'huh. In response to the court rulings, members of the Fort McDermitt tribe established Atsa Koodakuh wyh Nuwu, or the People of Red Mountain, an organization dedicated to protecting Peehee mu'huh. Like other post-DAPL, Indigenous-led protest movements that seek justice outside the courts, Atsa Koodakuh wyh Nuwu is the "last obstacle" standing in Lithium Nevada's way.[35] The corporation began archaeological surveys in early 2022.[36]

Made possible by the interconnected forces of settler colonialism, capitalism, and western juridical systems, the Thacker Pass Lithium Mine will cause substantial harm to humans and nonhumans. When studied through an energy lens, the lithium mine demonstrates the extent to which renewable energies rely upon the logics, technologies, and practices of extractivism, many of which have been borrowed from the fossil fuel industry. Although Lithium Americas fashions their multinational corporation as a necessary player in the nation's purported move away from fossil fuels, they are fully saturated in the fossil economy and in the sociomaterial infrastructures that Stephanie LeMenager names "petromodernity."[37] Indeed, technological surveys completed by Chevron, open-pit mining techniques developed by the coal industry, enormous amounts of diesel fuel used to process lithium, and a substantial contract signed with North

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[35] Malmgren, "The Battle."

[36] "Thacker Pass."

[37] Stephanie LeMenager, *Living Oil: Petroleum Culture in the American Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 67.

American Coal all evince business-as-usual mining practices masquerading in a green cloak.[38] When considered through a multispecies justice lens, however, it becomes apparent that lithium mining and other extractive industries depend upon the violent structures of settler colonialism, capitalism, and western juridical orders to dispossess Indigenous communities and nonhuman ecologies. Settler colonialism facilitated the original theft of land from Paiute and Shoshone peoples and has since ensured its ongoing management by the BLM and the Department of the Interior. Capitalism is responsible for transforming land into a passive collection of resources, and the promise of large financial returns provided the impetus to mine lithium from volcanic clay.[39] Finally, western juridical systems sanction settler colonialist and capitalist activities by interpreting laws and legal decisions that privilege national security and economic interests, overlook nonhumans, and devalue Indigenous knowledges. All three perpetuate violence across species borders, rendering nonhuman and Indigenous lives disposable.

This chapter studies how violence — especially the violence of colonialism and legal systems — affects humans, nonhumans, and their relationships with each other. Naming this structural apparatus "multispecies violence," I engage recent efforts in the environmental humanities to expand the understanding of what constitutes violence and

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[38] Indeed, the greatest challenge in moving to post-fossil futures is going to be abandoning extractivism altogether in favor of more participatory and just energy systems.

[39] As Janelle Baker et al. remind us, "[T]he free market, imagined as disembodied and unencumbered exchange, is only possible through the theft of land, labor, and the multispecies lives that become 'resources' for investment and growth." Janelle Baker et al., "The Snarled Lines of Justice: Women Ecowarriors Map a New History of the Anthropocene," *Orion*, Nov. 19, 2020, https://orionmagazine.org/article/the-snarled-lines-of-justice/.

its operations. Part of this project involves reconsidering who is capable of perpetuating and experiencing violence, while a related part involves recognizing how violence that crosses species lines damages entangled selves. The chapter examines British colonialism in Wangari Maathai's *Unbowed*, Jamaica Kincaid's *My Garden (Book)*, and Janisse Ray's *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*, along with the anthropocentrism of legal systems in Ava Chin's *Eating Wildly* and Nick Jans's *A Wolf Called Romeo*. These memoirs, I argue, not only rethink the casualties and processes of violence, they also understand justice to be the elimination of violence that reaches across species lines and displaces entangled selves.

The Trouble with Violence

The field of environmental studies arguably organizes itself around the problem of violence. Emerging during the 1960s and 70s in response to the violence of modernity described by Rachel Carson and Paul Ehrlich, among others, environmental studies has fashioned itself in opposition to socio-environmental destruction. Early scholarship in the United States drew upon the preservation and modern environmental movements to expose and challenge violence perpetrated against environments by corporations, industry, and science. In the 1980s and 90s, environmental justice criticism asked the field to consider how environmental pollution disproportionately harms impoverished communities of color. Feminist, Indigenous, and postcolonial critiques have drawn similar connections between the destruction of environments and the disposability of disadvantaged humans. It is little wonder, then, that to speak of environmental studies is to speak of violence. Although the field has used violence to bring its methodologies, values, and practices into focus, the concept itself remains remarkably undertheorized.

Until the past decade, violence was generally understood in narrow terms, as either a direct-action conflict or a structural problem. This limited view was further compounded by the tendency to use violence as a monolithic category, one that erased and minimized the wide range of experiences, victims, and perpetrators associated with the concept.

In a post-9/11 world where spectacular and hidden violence constitute the fabric of everyday life, scholars have begun to recognize the limitations of earlier definitions and to expand the meanings of violence. The publication of Rob Nixon's *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* marked a watershed moment in the study of violence and the environmental humanities. Contrary to the instantaneous and highly visible violence described by media outlets and examined by scholars, Nixon considers violence that occurs over extended temporal periods. Difficult to recognize and act upon, such violence is "typically not viewed as violence at all."[40] By studying slow violence, Nixon argues, a new field of conflict and potential remedies comes into view. Accounting for slow violence "affects the way we perceive and respond to a variety of social afflictions," especially the growing injustices caused by neoliberalism and modern warfare that threaten impoverished communities.[41] Further expanding the frameworks of violence, Ursula Heise argues for not only pluralist approaches that take into account multiple forms of violence, but also for intersectional analyses that attend to the overlaps of power and harm. In *Imagining Extinction: The Cultural Meanings of Endangered Species* she considers the violence of species loss and extinction, examining the

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[40] Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 2.

[41] Ibid., 3.

intersections of "political, sexual, and economic violence" in the graphic novel *Virunga*, a book produced by Stanford's Graphic Novel Project, along with political and military violence in Mayra Montero's novel *Tú, la obscuridad*.[42] Heise proposes a methodology for studying how forms of violence reinforce one another and dispossess nonhuman ecologies. Similarly, Amanda Kearney has argued that environmental and human "wounding is co-terminus," and Joseph Pugliese has proposed the concept of "forensic ecologies" to "articulate" and bring into "relational visibility" war violence that harms humans and nonhumans.[43] In addition to expanding the boundaries of violence and proposing intersectional methodologies for its study, scholars like Nixon, Heise, Kearney, and Pugliese have extended violence and its impacts to nonhumans.

Like other concepts subjected to the purification rituals of humanism, violence has become an exclusively human activity. Widely seen as caused by human actors and experienced by human victims, violence is primarily studied through anthropocentric lenses. In her influential book *On Violence*, for instance, political philosopher Hannah Arendt considers "the enormous role that violence has always played in human affairs."[44] Pointing to the development of the nuclear bomb as the ne plus ultra of global violence during the second half of the twentieth century, Arendt conceptualizes violence as a spectacular event brought about to achieve an end. Despite the innumerable nonhuman

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[42] Ursula K. Heise, *Imagining Extinction: The Cultural Meanings of Endangered Species* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 186.

[43] Amanda Kearney, *Violence in Place, Cultural and Environmental Wounding* (London: Routledge, 2017), 1; Joseph Pugliese, *Biopolitics of the More-than-Human: Forensic Ecologies of Violence* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2020), 2.

[44] Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (Orlando: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1970), 8.

lives lost and damaged during World War II, Arendt describes violence as an activity that "menaces the existence of whole nations and conceivably of all mankind."[45] The anthropocentrism that undergirds her study of violence presents itself most prominently in a passage where she argues that recent behavioral and ethological studies of nonhuman animals — research that includes Jane Goodall's work with the chimpanzees of Gombe Stream — can never yield knowledge about what it means to be human.[46] In dismissing similarities that reach across species lines and in narrowly casting violence as a human concern, Arendt adopts Enlightenment logics that systematically deny nonhuman species victimhood and the experience of suffering. Indeed, nonhumans have been denied the ability to experience violence and they have been denied access to the concept altogether, including any protections afforded against it. On the one hand, Cartesian "mechanomorphic" myths that nonhumans cannot experience physical and emotional pain have excluded other beings from the realm of violence and established "the notion that suffering is exclusive to human beings."[47] On the other, dominant understandings of violence have solidified around the human subject to such a degree that nonhumans have

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[45] Ibid., 17.

[46] Ibid., 59-60. She writes, for example, "I am surprised and often delighted to see that some animals behave like men; I cannot see how this could either justify or condemn human behavior. I fail to understand why we are asked 'to recognize that man behaves very much like a group territorial species,' rather than the other way round—that certain animal species behave very much like men." Ibid.

[47] Thom van Dooren, Eben Kirksey, and Ursula Münster, "Multispecies Studies: Cultivating Arts of Attentiveness," *Environmental Humanities* 8, no. 1 (2016): 1-23, at p. 8; Kearney, *Violence in Place*, 7.

been excised from its operations.[48] Such narrow views constitute what Pugliese calls "traditional anthropocentric accounts of violence."[49] As the critical animal studies scholar and geographer Kathryn Gillespie explains regarding nonhuman animals, "[T]here remains—in critical academic scholarship—a level of unwillingness to think seriously about nonhuman animals as subjects of violence, power and dispossession."[50] This unwillingness not only produces incomplete and insufficient accounts of violence, but also permits ongoing violence against nonhumans.

In this chapter, I examine how the anthropocentric logics undergirding colonialism and juridical systems exclude nonhumans from the realm of violence and perpetuate violence against other species and the humans entangled with them. Colonialism views nonhuman species, and human subjects belonging to the ruled classes, as either passive resources to be killed, captured, and exploited in the pursuit of wealth and power or as obstacles to projects of domination that must be overcome.[51] Colonial regimes and societies systematically deny other species, and human subjects, the ability

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[48] Of course, excluding nonhumans from the realm of violence is a kind of violence itself, one that continues to cause substantial suffering. "The practice of violence, like all action, changes the world," Arendt writes, "but the most probable change is to a more violent world." Arendt, *On Violence*, 80.

[49] Pugliese, *Biopolitics of the More-than-Human*, 34.

[50] Kathryn Gillespie, "Placing Angola: Racialisation, Anthropocentrism, and Settler Colonialism at the Louisiana State Penitentiary's Angola Rodeo," *Antipode* 50, no. 5 (2018): 1267-89, at p. 1284.

[51] For historical accounts of colonialism using animal bodies, especially marine life, to accrue capital and possess lands and waters, see Ryan Tucker Jones, *Empire of Extinction: Russians & The North Pacific's Strange Beasts of the Sea, 1741-1867* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Bathsheba Demuth, *Floating Coast: An Environmental History of the Bering Strait* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2019).

to experience violence, to suffer, and to possess victimhood. Mohawk and Anishinaabe scholar Vanessa Watts summarizes colonial views accordingly, "The measure of colonial interaction with the land has historically been one of violence and bordered individuations where land is to be accessed, not learned from or a part of."[52] Juridical systems — including judicial, or court, proceedings, laws, government policies, and standards of legal precedence — also deny oppressed nonhumans and humans the status of victimhood. Far from supporting the sovereignty, health, and livelihoods of marginalized groups, anthropocentric legal orders sanction violence against nonhumans and humans.[53] Juridical processes built around the liberal humanist subject collectively deny nonhumans legal standing and protections under the law. To stand before the law, nonhuman species must either be owned as property or they must have personhood extended to them. Both moves render species valuable only in relation to humankind, and both preserve the liberal humanist subject as ultimate decision-maker and beneficiary of legal rulings.[54] When considered together, it becomes apparent that the anthropocentrism of legal orders and colonialism is mutually reinforcing. As Samera Esmeir observes in *Juridical Humanity: A Colonial History*, "modern law . . . [is] at the heart of the colonial

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[52] Vanessa Watts, "Indigenous place-thought & agency amongst humans and non-humans (First Woman and Sky Woman go on a European world tour!)," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 2, no. 1 (2013): 20-34, at p. 26.

[53] The term "anthropocentric legal orders" was developed by Maneesha Deckha. For an extended discussion, see Maneesha Deckha, *Animals as Legal Beings: Contesting Anthropocentric Legal Orders* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2021).

[54] Ibid., 121-22. See also Danielle Celermajer et al. "Multispecies Justice: Theories, Challenges, and a Research Agenda for Environmental Politics," *Environmental Politics* 30, no. 1-2 (2021): 119-40, at pp. 130-31.

enterprise and . . . [is] one of its constitutive powers."[55] We might also add that colonialism creates the conditions and infrastructures for juridical systems, such as forcing communities to adopt liberal humanism and stealing land for the construction of prisons and courthouses, and that colonialism reproduces itself through legal rulings that uphold the status quo. Moreover, both colonialism and legal orders depend upon, and construct, the figure of a liberal humanist self detached from the world. Colonialism understands humans as self-made, autonomous beings who use nonhumans to support their notions of independence, while legal systems preserve the isolated self through their reliance on liberal humanism.

Taken together, the anthropocentric views of violence in the critical literature and the violent projects of colonialism and western juridical systems have caused epistemological problems for the study of violence and produced multiple ontological crises for those impacted by violence. First, such perspectives have foreclosed the study of violence as a multispecies issue, one that ripples across groups of humans and nonhumans. Second, they have shored up the liberal humanist subject, along with beliefs in individualism and self-fashioning, while suppressing the feelings, experiences, and identities associated with entanglement. Finally, they have limited the participants and scope of justice by excluding nonhuman species from juridical subjecthood, relegating nonhumans to the anthropocentric positions of property and personhood, and severing the relationships that bind species to one another and to humans. With the goal of not only addressing these problems in the critical literature, but also proposing improved futures

[55] Samera Esmeir, *Juridical Humanity: A Colonial History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 3.

for nonhumans and humans, this chapter examines the phenomenon that I call "multispecies violence." As I conceptualize it, multispecies violence produces community-wide suffering for humans and nonhumans, destroys entangled senses of self, and moves across groups of humans and nonhumans to harm both, often unequally. In studying the structures and effects of violence, I look toward ways to halt or minimize its effects and craft alternate justice systems. The collection of memoirs under consideration engage what it would look like, from procedural justice positions, to grant justice to the victims of multispecies violence.

In rendering multispecies violence visible and exploring modes of justice that challenge colonial and legal orders, this chapter makes three additional interventions in the study of violence. First, I move away from the continued emphasis on violence as an event to instead study violence as a structure.[56] In many ways, the architects of what might be termed violence criticism — especially Arendt, Frantz Fanon, and Johan Galtung — established the groundwork for current debates. Though contemporaries to one another, they wrote from very different positions in world history and subsequently expressed divergent views on the topic. Arendt understood violence as an event, particularly one that accomplishes a political end and does so in spectacular fashion. For her, violence comes and goes amid a world of relative stability. Fanon, in comparison, theorized violence as a structure. In *Wretched of the Earth*, he describes colonization as a violent structure of oppression that seeks to control groups of people, often those deemed subhuman, through a range of violent activities. Fanon observes that in colonized

[56] Bruce Lawrence and Aisha Karim also make the case for theorizing violence as structural. See Bruce B. Lawrence and Aisha Karim, eds., *On Violence: A Reader* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 5-6.

societies, violence textures and defines daily life, operating as a veil that all oppressed groups must navigate and learn to survive.[57] Similarly, Galtung's concept of structural violence acknowledges the institutional and systemic manifestations of harm, conflict, and abuse. In doing so, he distinguishes between direct and structural violence, "We shall refer to the type of violence where there is an actor that commits the violence as *personal* or *direct*, and to violence where there is no such actor as *structural* or *indirect*."[58] By decoupling structural violence from intentional action and creating a dualism that separates direct violence from structural violence, Galtung's work has hindered subsequent efforts to expand the concept's meanings.[59] This chapter acknowledges that all violence is, to a greater or lesser degree, bound up with larger structures; the job of the critic is to study violence in ways that expose, clarify, and challenge its structural bases. Like Nixon's slow violence which productively shifted critical conversations toward questions of temporality, multispecies violence attends to the vulnerabilities caused by colonial and legal orders that impact human and nonhuman groups.

Second, I bring together the study of selfhood and violence to consider how the displacement and disfigurement of entangled, multispecies selves functions as a kind of

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[57] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox (Paris: F. Maspero, 1961; New York: Grove Press, 2004), 46-47.

[58] Johan Galtung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research," *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no. 3 (1969): 167-91, at p. 170.

[59] Historian Ruth Miller argues that an obsession with agency and intentionality has hindered the study of violence. See Ruth Miller, "Violence Without Agency," in *Performances of Violence* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011), 43. To Galtung's credit, however, he does introduce the possibility that violence can occur without an individualized actor and without being planned, a move that diverges from Arendt's and Fanon's perspectives.

violence and how the isolated, liberal humanist self is an especially violent way of seeing the world and one's place in it. Informed by trauma studies — which broadly understands trauma as a "self-shattering experience," to use Leigh Gilmore's phrase — recent scholarship on violence and selfhood has imagined the two as either fundamentally incompatible or co-constitutive.[60] Brad Evans, a political philosopher, takes the former position when he describes violence as "an attack upon a person's dignity, sense of selfhood and right to participate in this world."[61] Here violence operates as an external force that wounds one's sense of self and diminishes their ability to participate as a member of society. Historian Howard Brown takes the latter position as he examines how moments of mass violence occurring in France from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century rearranged the fabric of society in ways that produced modern senses of self. Notions of an interiorized, "individualized self," he argues, arose as a primary tactic for surviving and navigating an extended period of mass violence.[62] While Brown proposes that scholars examine violence as a self-generating force, his account overlooks how the individualized self reproduces violent ways of seeing and being. In what follows, I understand multispecies violence as a central threat to entangled selves, and I argue that the liberal humanist self perpetuates violent logics of living that aim to dominate and

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[60] Leigh Gilmore, *The Limits of Autobiography: Trauma and Testimony* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 6. Gilmore understands trauma as not only rearranging one's sense of self, but also as redrawing the boundaries of life writing and the individual, autonomous self.

[61] Brad Evans, "Myths of Violence," *Journal of Humanitarian Affairs* 2, no. 1 (2020): 62-68, at p. 62.

[62] Howard G. Brown, *Mass Violence and the Self: From the French Wars of Religion to the Paris Commune* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018), 4.

control multispecies communities. Turning to Wangari Maathai's *Unbowed*, Jamaica Kincaid's *My Garden (Book)*, Janisse Ray's *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*, Ava Chin's *Eating Wildly: Foraging for Life, Love, and the Perfect Meal*, and Nick Jans's *A Wolf Called Romeo*, I study how colonial and legal orders damage nonhuman and human lives, sever multispecies relationships, and destroy entangled selves. As these multispecies memoirs demonstrate, efforts by oppressed populations to support entangled selves and cultivate reciprocal relationships is a kind of resistance, a way of claiming opposition to the injustices of western colonial and juridical orders.

Finally, I avoid developing a zoocentric account of multispecies violence and instead draw attention to wider taxa, especially vegetal life. While violence toward nonhuman animals has been documented by animal rights scholars, animal welfare activists, and feminist animal ethicists, among others, violence against plants — beings who lead rooted, photosynthetic lives so unfamiliar to humans — has largely been thought an impossibility. Phenomenologist Michael Marder writes, "[P]lants neither speak, nor shriek, nor squeal, nor screech, nor cry out in pain when they are chopped down."[63] Such an apparent absence of meaningful response might suggest vegetal complacency and an inability to experience, or be affected by, violence. However, as Marder makes clear, "[T]his absolute silence is not at all symptomatic of the absence of suffering; even if vegetal beings do not have a nervous system, they are prone to distress."[64] Indeed, plants regularly experience violence that ends or otherwise limits their

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[63] Michael Marder, "Resist Like a Plant! On the Vegetal Life of Political Movements," *Peace Studies Journal* 5, no. 1 (2012): 24-32, at p. 27.

[64] Ibid.

lives. In response, they have developed complex survival mechanisms that often rely upon mutualism and reciprocity with other beings. It is no surprise that researchers have rewritten evolutionary theories of competition, survival of the fittest, and aggression after studying the biological functions of plants.[65] From longleaf pines to fig trees to daylilies, this chapter takes up a diverse collection of vegetal life. Beings from the animal and fungi kingdom are also present, but to a lesser degree. Indeed, a central contention of the chapter is that the study of multispecies violence must include a wide cast of nonhuman and human actors.

British Colonialism: Logics of Control and Isolation

Scholars working on colonialism and its logics have increasingly recognized the need to study how environments and nonhuman species are implicated in colonial formations, while environmental researchers have realized that they need to better account for colonialism as a historical and ongoing process that shapes physical environments and relationships with place. Seeking to explain how colonial possession and displacement depend upon local ecologies, recent work in Indigenous and postcolonial studies has taken a leading role in developing this research. Of particular importance to the study of multispecies violence, scholars have examined how colonialism seeks to control Indigenous peoples and nonhuman species, and how colonialism severs relationships among Indigenous persons and nonhumans in ways that restrict the ability of multispecies groups to adapt to changes and reproduce their cultural

[65] For recent takes on plant mutualism, see Suzanne Simard, *Finding the Mother Tree: Discovering the Wisdom of the Forest* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2021); Rob Nixon, "The Less Selfish Gene: Forest Altruism, Neoliberalism, and the Tree of Life," *Environmental Humanities* 13, no. 2 (2021): 348-71.

belief systems and ecologies. If, according to criminologists Marianne Nielsen and Linda Robyn, "Colonialism is a classic state crime that relies on violence and the threat of violence to achieve political and economic ends," Indigenous and postcolonial critiques have asked scholars to move beyond the narrow focus on political and economic consequences to consider how the violence of colonialism operates through environmental discourses and spaces.[66]

One key position argues that colonialism attempts to control groups of humans and nonhumans together, often by implementing the shared logics of anthropocentrism and animalization. Sociologist Kari Norgaard, in conversation with the Karuk Tribe, explains, "If settler-colonialism is about Indigenous erasure, that erasure involves not only Indigenous peoples but also the Indigenous ecologies within which people exist."[67] Gillespie makes a similar point, writing that colonial histories impact "human and nonhuman lives in distinct modes of bodily appropriation."[68] Colonialism seeks to possess, control, and eliminate humans and nonhumans together. In settler-colonial contexts, this often occurs through the production of what Kyle Whyte calls "settler ecologies" or what D. Ezra Miller names "settlerscapes."[69] Historians such as Marsha

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[66] Marianne Nielsen and Linda Robyn, *Colonialism is Crime* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2019), 1.

[67] Kari Norgaard, *Salmon and Acorns Feed Our People: Colonialism, Nature, and Social Action* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2019), 73. Pugliese makes a similar point, observing that both "Indigenous and more-than-human subjects" are deemed "eliminable" in colonial societies. Pugliese, *Biopolitics of the More-than-Human*, 5.

[68] Gillespie, "Placing Angola," 1268.

[69] Kyle Whyte, "Settler Colonialism, Ecology, and Environmental Injustice," *Environment and Society: Advances in Research* 9 (2018): 125-44, at p. 135; D. Ezra

Weisiger, William Cronon, John Ryan Fischer, and Virginia Anderson have described how farmed animals were used to steal Indigenous land and claim settler belonging, even as they became vital to the survival of Indigenous cultures.[70] As legal scholar Irus Braverman explains, nonhuman animals "naturalize and thereby normalize settler modes of operation. At the same time, animal bodies either criminalize native practices or make them seem as devoid of agency and as part of the natural landscape of place."[71] Colonial forces also destroy or remake lands in the image of the settler, a process that naturalizes settler environments and reinforces "settler ignorance against Indigenous peoples."[72] Neel Ahuja's point that empire is "a project in the government of species" rings doubly true: colonialism uses nonhuman species to produce colonial ecologies that, in turn, reproduce myths of nativity and generate capital and power at the expense of Indigenous peoples.[73]

Miller, "'But It Is Nothing Except Woods': Anabaptists, Ambitions, and a Northern Indiana Settlerscape, 1830-41," in *Rooted and Grounded: Essays on Land and Christian Discipleship*, ed. Ryan D. Harker and Janeen Bertsche Johnson (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2017).

[70] See Marsha Weisiger, *Dreaming of Sheep in Navajo Country* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2011); William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983); John Ryan Fischer, *Cattle Colonialism: An Environmental History of the Conquest of California and Hawai'i* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015); Virginia DeJohn Anderson, *Creatures of Empire: How Domestic Animals Transformed Early America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). Michael Pollan similarly describes how land grants issued in the so-called "Northwest Territory" required settler colonialists to plant apple and pear trees as a condition of receiving land. Michael Pollan, *The Botany of Desire: A Plant's-Eye View of the World* (New York: Random House, 2001), 16.

[71] Irus Braverman, "Wild Legalities: Animals and Settler Colonialism in Palestine/Israel," *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 44, no. 1 (2021): 7-27, at p. 8.

[72] Whyte, "Settler Colonialism," 137-38.

[73] Neel Ahuja, *Bioinsecurities: Disease Interventions, Empire, and the Government of Species* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), xi.

To enact and justify violence against human and nonhuman groups, colonial regimes frequently use the twin logics of anthropocentrism and animalization. Gillespie and Yamini Narayanan explain, "The domination of, and socio-spatial distancing from, both nonhuman animals and animalised humans have been essential to the construction of a racially, genetically, and morally superior nation-state."[74] The colonial nation produced on the backs of animalized humans and persecuted nonhumans then excludes these actors from legal and juridical protections and banishes them from the national imaginary.[75] Legal studies scholar Maneesha Deckha argues that anthropocentrism has played a "*foundational role*" in developing "human colonialism and racial ideologies" to such an extent that "colonial violence is also an anthropocentric violence."[76] Anthropocentrism and animalization work in tandem to subjugate groups of humans and nonhumans in colonial societies.

A second key position to emerge from Indigenous and postcolonial scholarship considers how colonialism severs relationships among Indigenous peoples and

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[74] Kathryn Gillespie and Yamini Narayanan, "Animal Nationalisms: Multispecies Cultural Politics, Race, and the (Un)Making of the Settler Nation-State," *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 41, no. 1 (2020): 1-7, at p. 1.

[75] As Gillespie and Narayanan point out, animals and "animalised humans" are "only rarely (if ever) provided the protections of a true member of the nation." Ibid., 3. Pugliese makes a similar point when he explains that settler colonialism forecloses the political participation of human and nonhuman subjects. He writes, "[T]he possibilities of political life for the settler subject are indissociably predicated on infrastructural foreclosures of political life for the broad spectrum of more-than-human entities attempting to survive within regimes of settler occupation and militarized violence." Pugliese, *Biopolitics of the More-than-Human*, 5.

[76] Maneesha Deckha, "Unsettling Anthropocentric Legal Systems: Reconciliation, Indigenous Laws, and Animal Personhood," *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 41, no. 1 (2020): 77-97, at p. 78; Deckha, *Animals as Legal Beings*, 23.

nonhumans in ways that limit adaptation to change, weaken the ability of Indigenous peoples to reproduce cultural belief systems, and restrict the health of broader ecologies. Recent studies of settler colonialism have explored how colonial violence disrupts Indigenous relationships with nonhuman species and environments. As Norgaard contends, "[T]he enactment of colonialism onto land is not a separate issue from what happens to people—targeting of the land has been about targeting and severing relationships between people and land."[77] In her study of plantation agriculture in West Papua, for instance, multispecies ethnographer Sophie Chao observes that oil palm fields established by Indonesian colonists and backed by foreign multinationals have "radically undermined the intimate and ancestral relations binding Marind [peoples] to their plant and animal siblings."[78] Sociologist J.M. Bacon has coined the term "colonial ecological violence" to describe how settler colonialism "disrupts Indigenous eco-social relations."[79] Colonialism damages "eco-social relations" by killing and harming Indigenous peoples and nonhuman species, stealing and controlling land, relocating human and nonhuman inhabitants, and polluting environments, among other activities of domination. By disrupting relationships, colonialism not only compromises the cultural practices of Indigenous peoples who depend upon access to certain species and the health of environments that rely upon human activities, but also the ability of Indigenous peoples

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[77] Norgaard, *Salmon and Acorns*, 95.

[78] Sophie Chao, "Can There Be Justice Here? Indigenous Perspectives from the West Papuan Oil Palm Frontier," *Borderlands* 20, no. 1 (2021): 11-48, at p. 18.

[79] J.M. Bacon, "Settler colonialism as eco-social structure and the production of colonial ecological violence," *Environmental Sociology* 5, no. 1 (2019): 59-69, at p. 59. Whyte makes a similar point when he writes that "[S]ettler colonialism is violence that disrupts human relationships to the environment." Whyte, "Settler colonialism," 137, 125.

and nonhuman species to express adaptive resiliency in the face of colonial violence. Whyte argues that settler colonialism, in particular, "works strategically to undermine Indigenous peoples' social resilience," a collection of adaptive frameworks that enable what he calls "collective continuance."[80] He considers, for example, how settler states suppress Indigenous food collection and processing activities, produce pollution that poisons and kills nonhumans, and restrict Indigenous access to culturally important food sources, all of which serve to "undermine Indigenous collective continuance in Indigenous peoples' own homelands."[81]

Multispecies violence considers how humans, nonhumans, and their relationships with one another suffer under colonialism, and it proposes that the dissemination and enforcement of the liberal humanist self is a central, although often overlooked, tactic used by colonial regimes to disrupt relationships, control humans and nonhumans, and maintain power. European colonialism and its variants depend upon and perpetuate liberal humanism, even as they withhold or otherwise alter its core tenets like freedom, rights, and justice.[82] Central to colonial imaginaries and worldviews is the figure of the rational, universal, individual, autonomous, and anthropocentric self, an entity rooted in

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[80] Ibid., 125.

[81] Kyle Whyte, "Food Sovereignty, Justice, and Indigenous Peoples: An Essay on Settler Colonialism and Collective Continuance," in *The Oxford Handbook of Food Ethics*, eds. Anna Barnhill, Mark Budolfson, and Tyler Doggett (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 347.

[82] Literary critic Simon Gikandi describes how laws in British colonial outposts across Africa during the eighteenth century were not premised upon rights and freedoms like they were in Britain, but instead were designed to control and manage propertied bodies. Simon Gikandi, *Slavery and the Culture of Taste* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 91.

the violence of isolation, separation, and domination.[83] Indeed, to participate as a legible subject of the colonial state, one must adopt this style of selfhood. As part of the subjugation, domination, and possession of humans and nonhumans, colonial states force Indigenous peoples and colonized populations to assume identities based upon the isolated, anthropocentric self.[84] Many Indigenous peoples understand their sense of self as arising through interdependent relationships with nonhumans. As Whyte explains, "The concept of interdependence includes a sense of identity associated with the environment and a sense of responsibility to care for the environment. There is also no privileging of humans as unique in having agency or intelligence, so one's identity and caretaking responsibility *as a human* includes the philosophy that nonhumans have their own agency, spirituality, knowledge, and intelligence."[85] Colonial cultures seek to disrupt this interdependent, multispecies self and replace it with the liberal humanist self. This is typically accomplished through colonial institutions of education, dominant narratives about nature and humanity, English-language enforcement, and activities that disrupt reciprocal relationships with nonhuman species. Nixon describes the colonial disfigurement of Indigenous identities as nothing less than the imposition of a violent

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[83] Kathryn Yusoff reminds us that colonialism also produces liberalism. She writes, "Modern liberalism is also forged through colonial violence." Kathryn Yusoff, *A Billion Black Anthropocenes or None* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2018), 2.

[84] Bacon notes that "settlers expropriate land and resources from Indigenous people, disrupting Indigenous cultures, economies, and conceptions of kinship and personhood." Bacon, "Settler colonialism," 62-63. During the second half of the eighteenth century, for example, Spanish colonists sought to convert Indigenous peoples occupying the region that became known as Alta California into "gente de razón" or "people of reason." Fischer, *Cattle Colonialism*, 25. The cultivation of reason required the adoption of the detached, liberal self.

[85] Whyte, "Settler colonialism," 127.

worldview. He writes, “Settler colonial cultures have repeatedly sought to impose on Indigenous lifeways a hierarchical world view in which Cartesian dualism and utilitarian economics prevail.”[86] Fanon makes a similar point, observing that “The colonialist bourgeoisie hammered into the colonized mind the notion of a society of individuals where each is locked in his subjectivity.”[87] Colonialism not only installs the individual at the heart of the social, political, economic, and environmental order, it also uses the isolated, liberal humanist self to reorganize societies and environments around the logics of control, possession, and extraction.

In the analysis that follows, I study how the historical and ongoing effects of British colonialism in multispecies memoirs by Maathai, Kincaid, and Ray harm humans and nonhumans together, sever reciprocal relationships, and disrupt entangled selves. These memoirs understand colonialism as multispecies violence. Collectively, they illustrate how violence moves across groups of humans and nonhumans in ways that compromise relationships, cultures, ecologies, and selves. Multispecies violence, in these accounts, is intergenerational and inherited, and it often carries long-term effects. Rather than consider humans and nonhumans as passive victims, however, Maathai, Kincaid, and Ray challenge aspects of multispecies violence and propose decolonial modes of multispecies justice.

[86] Nixon, “The Less Selfish Gene,” 367.

[87] Fanon, *The Wretched*, 11.

"Kinship with the soil": Maathai and the Green Belt Movement

Commissioned after Maathai became the first African woman and environmentalist to win the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004, her autobiography-memoir *Unbowed* demonstrates how British colonialism and its postcolonial afterlives dispossess Kikuyu and Maasai peoples together with nonhuman species. Born into a Kikuyu family in 1940, Maathai lived her childhood years in the area around Ihithe, a village north of Nairobi in the central highlands, while Kenya remained under British imperial rule. "At the time of my birth," she writes, "the land around Ihithe was still lush, green, and fertile."[88] Maathai describes how "the land and the riverbanks . . . [were] covered by vegetation," how the rivers ran "clear and clean," and how the soil appeared "rich, dark-red brown, and moist."[89] "Because of the fertile soil, good climate, and abundant food," she explains, "the people of the central highlands were healthy."[90] The land and water continued to support humans and nonhumans despite having been under British imperial control for nearly half a century — a reminder that multispecies violence is distributed in temporally and geographically uneven ways.

Maathai identifies multiple ways British colonialism crossed species lines to dominate, possess, and control multispecies communities. Most apparent, she describes how British colonialists violated verbal treaties with Kikuyus and stole land. "To make way for them [British colonialists]," Maathai writes, "many people were displaced,

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[88] Wangari Maathai, *Unbowed* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006; New York: Anchor Books, 2007), 3.

[89] Ibid., 33, 4.

[90] Ibid., 36.

including a large number who were forcibly relocated to the Rift Valley. Those who refused to vacate their land were transported by the British elsewhere."[91] Although slightly understating her point, she explains, "The appropriation and redistribution of land became a feature of the British presence in Kenya."[92] As British colonialists removed people from desirable lands and severed their relationships with specific places and species, they also reorganized social and familial life around Euro-centric ideals of patriarchy. Traditionally, Kikuyu clans were organized matrilineally; women oversaw and inherited land, farmed animals, and agricultural crops. Under British social, legal, and economic orders, however, "many privileges, such as inheritance and ownership of land, livestock, and perennial crops, were gradually transferred to men."[93] The patriarchal social fabric of British Kenya disempowered Kikuyu women and caused significant environmental destruction. Women lost not only their connections to species and land, but also their vast ecological knowledges. Men were taught how to farm using British methods of land clearing, monocrop cultivation, and animal rearing. Such techniques reframed the land and the beings it supported as commodities, subsequently leading to large-scale environmental reorganization. Though they possessed more rights than women, Kikuyu men were prevented from owning land in British Kenya. To pay annual taxes imposed by the colonial government, Kikuyu men were forced to work for

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[91] Ibid., 9-10.

[92] Ibid., 62.

[93] Ibid., 5. See also Nixon, *Slow Violence*, 139-40.

landowners who reimbursed them with British currency.[94] Maathai describes living on a large farm owned by a wealthy British landowner who employed her father. Seeking to maintain a reliable labor source, the landowner restricted access to school for the children of laborers. As Maathai explains, "[E]ducating African children was not a priority for the settlers."[95] In lieu of education, colonialists offered Kikuyus and other ethnic groups the salvation of Christianity. Those who forgave their "primitive and backward" ways in favor of Christian teachings and the "modern world" were often rewarded with jobs.[96] Through these practices, British colonialists pursued subjugation and control.

Multispecies violence in British Kenya also included the extraction of resources, the renaming of landmarks and places, and the introduction of non-native species. British colonialists saw nonhumans and humans as resources to be harnessed for the production of capital. "Before the Europeans arrived," Maathai writes, "the peoples of Kenya did not look at trees and see timber, or at elephants and see commercial ivory stock, or at cheetahs and see beautiful skins for sale."[97] British colonialism, however, forced people to see nonhumans as commodities to be sold and consumed throughout the larger empire. "[W]hen Kenya was colonized and we encountered Europeans," she writes, "with their knowledge, technology, understanding, religion, and culture—all of it new—we converted our values into a cash economy like theirs. Everything was now perceived as

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[94] To be sure, members of other ethnic groups also labored under British colonial rule, including Indians, Kipsigis, and Luos. See Maathai, *Unbowed*, 22, 26.

[95] Ibid., 29.

[96] Ibid., 11.

[97] Ibid., 175.

having a monetary value."[98] The new colonial economy required the bodies and labor of humans and nonhumans alike. Maathai observes that "numerous explorers, adventurers, fortune seekers, and those in the service of the European powers" sought "riches in Africa (*both natural and human*) to exploit."[99] Colonial traders and administrators "introduced new methods of exploiting our rich resources: logging, clear-cutting native forests, establishing plantations of imported trees, hunting wildlife, and undertaking expansive commercial agriculture."[100] The extraction of commodities, in this case nonhuman bodies, required the initial displacement of Indigenous people, the adoption of a cash economy, and the labor of subjugated populations. Colonialists also applied English names to places, such as renaming the mountain known as *kīī-nyaa* to "Mount Kenya," a possessive move that allowed British foreigners and their descendants to extend their possession and naturalize their presence.[101] Finally, Maathai describes how non-native plants were introduced to British Kenya.[102] Maize and tea, for instance, were grown on deforested, stolen land and they quickly changed Kikuyu foodways. "Millet

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[98] Ibid.

[99] Ibid., 8, emphasis added.

[100] Ibid., 6.

[101] Ibid. "Throughout Africa," Maathai writes, "the Europeans renamed whatever they came across. This created a schism in many Africans' minds and we are still wrestling with the realities of living in this dual world. At home, we learned the names of mountains, streams, or regions from our parents, but in school we were taught the colonial names, deemed the 'proper' names, which we had to use on our exams." Ibid. Indeed, Maathai was punished at school if she spoke Kikuyu and not English. Ibid., 59-60.

[102] For more on this, see Katja Kurz, "Life Writing and Environmental Activism in Kenya: The Case of Wangari Maathai," in *Ecology and Life Writing*, eds. Alfred Hornung and Zhao Baisheng (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag, 2013), 207.

gave way to maize, and millet porridge, then the most common Kikuyu drink, was displaced in favor of tea."[103] The British also brought jacaranda, pine, eucalyptus, and black wattle trees, distributing the introduced species to farmers who "planted them enthusiastically at the expense of local species."[104] The tree species, however, "eliminated local plants and animals, destroying the natural ecosystem that helped gather rainwater. When rains fell, much of the water ran downstream. Over the subsequent decades, underground water levels decreased markedly and, eventually, rivers and streams either dried up or were greatly reduced."[105] At once the "subject *and* object of injustice," the introduced tree species aided colonial efforts by reconfiguring ecologies and, in rendering landscapes inhospitable even for themselves, they also suffered from colonialism.[106]

Despite the intentions of anti-colonial fighters in the Mau Mau Rebellion who sought an end to land grabbing and displacement, Kenya's post-independence government under Jomo Kenyatta and Daniel arap Moi quickened the pace of multispecies violence. Under the collaborative slogan of "harambee," Kenyatta urged citizens during the 1960s and 70s to "return to the countryside and create wealth from the land by growing coffee and tea and developing . . . [the] agricultural industry."[107] Such

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[103] Maathai, *Unbowed*, 11.

[104] Ibid., 39.

[105] Ibid.

[106] Chao, "Can There Be Justice," 22. Chao points out that oil palm is used to displace Indigenous ecologies and communities, and that it suffers in monocultures far removed from the multispecies webs within which it evolved.

[107] Maathai, *Unbowed*, 99.

nation-building activities involved the widescale clearing of forests, an act that served as an extension of colonial violence. Maathai writes, “I remembered how the colonial administration had cleared the indigenous forests and replaced them with plantations of exotic trees for the timber industry. After independence, Kenyan farmers had cleared more natural forests to create space to grow coffee and tea.”[108] As Nielsen and Robyn explain, “Colonial processes continue to oppress Indigenous peoples in countries invaded by settler-colonists. This is accomplished through cultural imperialism, exploitation, marginalization, disempowerment, and violence.”[109] Instead of lifting the country’s agriculturalists out of poverty, Kenya’s economic policies further disempowered and oppressed these communities. The governments of Kenyatta and Moi consolidated wealth and power, viewing trees and land as the property of an elite few.[110] “In many ways the government continued the policies of the colonial era,” Maathai observes, “but made sure the benefits went only to the small elite it favored.”[111] This system of wealth consolidation and extraction depended upon constant access to nonhuman beings and to inexpensive and replaceable human laborers. The Green Belt Movement (GBM) founded by Maathai in the late 1970s offered an entirely different vision of social and environmental well-being, one that understood the health of human communities as interconnected with the health of the land, and vice versa. Viewing the GBM and its tree-planting activities as a threat to the exploitative systems developed to benefit themselves,

[108] Ibid., 123.

[109] Nielsen and Robyn, *Colonialism is Crime*, 1.

[110] Nixon, *Slow Violence*, 136.

[111] Maathai, *Unbowed*, 173.

members of Moi's government continually attacked Maathai — along with her organization and their newly planted trees — with physical violence, "criticism[,] and threats."[112]

Maathai understands the historical and ongoing operations of British colonialism as multispecies violence, a structure that damages land, nonhuman species, human communities, and relationships among living beings, including entangled senses of self. Upon her return to Kenya in the 1970s after nearly a decade-long absence, she observed how years of cumulative violence finally caused multispecies communities to unravel in the rural areas outside Nairobi. "I noticed that the rivers would rush down the hillsides and along paths and roads when it rained, and that they were muddy with silt. . . . I also observed that the cows were so skinny that I could count their ribs. There was little grass or other fodder for them to eat where they grazed."[113] At the same time, years of destructive policies harmed the human communities that depended upon the land. She observes, "The people, too, looked undernourished and poor and the vegetation in their fields was scanty. The soils in the fields weren't performing as they should because their nutrient value had been depleted."[114] Such violence "precipitate[s] the death of . . . entire communities," for humans and nonhumans alike.[115] Maathai made additional

[112] Ibid., 178. For additional examples, see ibid., 191, 244. Members of Moi's oppressive regime "tried to destroy the trees by slashing the trunks and branches or even burning them to the ground." Ibid., 207. With police approval, they would also uproot saplings planted by the Green Belt Movement. Ibid., 263.

[113] Ibid., 121.

[114] Ibid.

[115] Kearney, *Violence in Place*, 163.

observations while visiting her childhood home in Ihithe: "I saw rivers silted with topsoil, much of which was coming from the forest where plantations of commercial trees had replaced indigenous forest. I noticed that much of the land had been covered by trees, bushes, and grasses when I was growing up had been replaced by coffee and tea."[116] Without trees, landslides were common, water became scarce, firewood for cooking and heating grew difficult to obtain, and habitat disappeared. No longer able to access the species and environments that supported their cultures and identities, Kikuyus and other ethnic groups lost the relationships that sustained and defined their senses of self. Indeed, throughout *Unbowed*, Maathai describes her sense of self as emerging through her relationships with the soil. She feels a "kinship with the soil," remarking "I have never lost that closeness. . . . I knew that the soil should remain on the land and painfully recognized the destruction of the land when I saw silt in rivers, especially after the rains."[117] As one literary critic observes, "Throughout her life story, Maathai parallels the cultivation of the land with the cultivation of herself."[118] For Maathai, therefore, losing soil through deforestation and other modes of multispecies violence also led to the erosion of her entangled self.

Planting trees not only challenged the multispecies violence that Maathai and many others experienced, it also repaired the relationships and senses of self that colonialism damaged. Under Maathai's leadership, the "foresters without diplomas" who constituted the Green Belt Movement planted native trees across Kenya to reverse the

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[116] Maathai, *Unbowed*, 121.

[117] Ibid., 47, 48.

[118] Kurz, "Life Writing," 205.

environmental, social, political, and economic degradation caused by decades of violence.[119] Trees, as Maathai explains, carry worlds among their roots and branches:

> The trees would provide a supply of wood that would enable women to cook nutritious foods. They would also have wood for fencing and fodder for cattle and goats. The trees would offer shade for humans and animals, protect watersheds and bind the soil, and, if they were fruit trees, provide food. They would also heal the land by bringing back birds and small animals and regenerate the vitality of the earth.[120]

An example of what I call "resisting with," tree planting brought humans and nonhumans together to collaboratively challenge the multiple and intersecting crises of colonial rule.[121] As Nixon observes, this "iconic act of civil disobedience" repeatedly "tapped into a robust national memory of popular resistance to colonialism."[122] Together, women eco-activists and native trees reestablished relationships and ways of co-existing that were disrupted by colonial nation-building projects. Planting a tree became an especially powerful way for Maathai to perform and reenact her sense of an entangled, interconnected self. She explains, "Trees have been an essential part of my life and have provided me with many lessons."[123] While, on one level, tree planting may function as a

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[119] Maathai, *Unbowed*, 136.

[120] Ibid., 125.

[121] For more on this concept, see Chapter 4, "Resisting With: The Anti-Normativity of Queers and Pets."

[122] Nixon, *Slow Violence*, 129, 137.

[123] Maathai, *Unbowed*, 293.

"selfless act" of support for nonhumans that obscures the operations of selfhood, on a much deeper level it actively resuscitates and reconstitutes the self as a relational entity that emerges through relationships with others.[124] To plant a tree is to take the first step in restoring the ecologies and relationships that support cultural identities and interconnected senses of self. Pointing to the book's "largely American audience" and its participation in the "movement memoir" subgenre, Nixon argues that Maathai's autobiography-memoir contains "a singular autobiographical self as its gravitational center."[125] Although the book adopts Euro-American conventions, *Unbowed* can be read not as a traditional autobiography organized around a liberal humanist subject, but rather as a multispecies memoir that charts Maathai's attempts to reassemble an interconnected sense of self that unraveled from colonial violence. Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson point out that postcolonial authors have "both engaged and challenged the Western tradition of individualist life narratives," while also using life writing as "a tactic of intervention in colonial repression."[126] In considering herself "as much a child of my native soil as I am of my father, Muta Njugi, and my mother, Wanjiru Kibicho," Maathai describes her lifelong fight to maintain these connections to the land and to her human and nonhuman kin.[127]

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[124] Nixon, *Slow Violence*, 134.

[125] Ibid., 144, 142-43.

[126] Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 59-60.

[127] Maathai, *Unbowed*, 4.

Kincaid's Gardens: Plants, Empire, and Colonized Selves

Like Maathai's multispecies memoir, *My Garden (Book)* considers how colonial violence crosses species borders and damages relationships. However, while Maathai understands tree planting to be a direct act of self restoration, Kincaid is much more skeptical about the possibility of recovering entangled selves and relationships once they have been disrupted and reconfigured by British colonialism. Kincaid examines how her sense of self and identity emerged from histories of Indigenous dispossession, African enslavement, and British imperialism, and she questions whether planting and tending a garden can resolve the violence that has brought her together with plants from Antigua and the far reaches of the British empire. She provocatively asks: "[W]hat is the relationship between gardening and conquest? Is the conqueror a gardener and the conquered the person who works in the field?"[128] *My Garden (Book)* upsets this colonial dualism, showing the extent to which Kincaid's sense of self blurs such distinctions. As she explains,

> When it dawned on me that the garden I was making (and am still making and will always be making) resembled a map of the Caribbean and the sea that surrounds it, I did not tell this to the gardeners who had asked me to explain the thing I was doing, or to explain what I was trying to do; I only marveled at the way the garden is for me an exercise in memory, a way of remembering my own immediate past, a way of getting to a past that is my own (the Caribbean Sea) and

[128] Jamaica Kincaid, *My Garden (Book)* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999; 2001), 116.

the past as it is indirectly related to me (the conquest of Mexico and its surroundings).[129]

Gardening, in other words, offers Kincaid the opportunity to unearth and dig into her personal history as a subject of colonial violence, one who shares the experiences of conquest with the plants growing in her Vermont gardens.

Kincaid describes a wide collection of violent strategies used by British colonialists on Antigua to control plant species and groups of humans collectively deemed inferior. Following their initial takeover of the island in 1632, English settlers emptied the land of Indigenous Taino and Carib peoples through violent force while removing native plants through deforestation, global trade, and plantation agriculture. Drawing parallels between the initial colonization of Antigua and the Dutch East India Company's seventeenth-century colonial trading posts, Kincaid observes that these places were "emptied of their people as the landscape itself was emptied of the things they [Indigenous people] were familiar with, the things that Linnaeus found in . . . [the] greenhouse[s] [of East India Company bankers]."[130] As colonialists emptied the land of Indigenous peoples and vegetal beings, they introduced plants from "various parts of the . . . British empire," including the infamous breadfruit tree championed by Englishman Joseph Banks as a cheap foodstuff for enslaved West Africans.[131] In a public demonstration of power and wealth, settlers constructed botanical gardens that, as

[129] Ibid., 7-8.

[130] Ibid., 165. She specifically references George Clifford, a Dutch banker and director of the East India Company who collected plants throughout the empire. Carolus Linnaeus studied Clifford's plant collections.

[131] Ibid., 120. A breadfruit tree grew in the yard of Kincaid's childhood home. Ibid., 44.

Kincaid recalls, "reinforced for me how powerful were the people who had conquered me; they could bring to me the botany of the world they owned."[132] Such examples of botanical replacement demonstrate how "settler populations . . . create their own ecologies out of the ecologies of Indigenous peoples" by bringing in "additional materials and living beings (e.g., plants, animals) from abroad."[133] In emptying the land of its previous human and nonhuman inhabitants, British colonialists forced Taino, Carib, and West African peoples into slavery where they grew, harvested, and processed commodity plants like tobacco, sugarcane, and cotton.[134] The violent system of forced labor fundamentally transformed human relationships with, and affective responses to, plants and the activities involved in their care. Kincaid, for instance, discusses how "the Spanish marauder" Hernando Cortez severed Indigenous Aztec relationships with plants.[135] "Quite likely," she writes, "within a generation most of the inhabitants of this place (Mexico), spiritually devastated, would have lost touch with that strange idea—things planted for no other reason than the sheer joy of it."[136] She describes a similar affective and relational displacement occurring with cotton. Startled upon seeing a cotton plant at the Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew — a place founded through "colonial botany," "green imperialism," "traveling natures," and "bioprospecting" — she writes:

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[132] Ibid., 120.

[133] Whyte, "Settler Colonialism," 135.

[134] Kincaid, *My Garden (Book)*, 159.

[135] Ibid., 117.

[136] Ibid.

> Cotton all by itself exists in perfection, with malice toward none; in the sharp, swift, even brutal dismissive words of the botanist Oakes Ames, it is reduced to an economic annual, but the tormented, malevolent role it has played in my ancestral history is not forgotten by me. Even so, long after its role in the bondage of some of my ancestors had been eliminated, it continued to play a part in my life.[137]

The colonial system of slavery produced a profound rupture in Kincaid's relationship with this plant, reminding her, in the words of Ahuja, that empire is a "project in the management of affective relations—embodied forms of communication and sensation that may occur independently of or in tandem with sentient forms of thought and discourse."[138]

As she considers the magnitude and scale of harm committed against multispecies communities, Kincaid points to possession, including naming, as the root logic of colonial violence. Referring to British colonialism as a "culture of Possession," she diagnoses a drive among colonial landowners, government officials, and scientists to "isolate, name, objectify, possess various parts, people, and things in the world."[139]

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[137] Londa Schiebinger and Claudia Swan, eds., *Colonial Botany: Science, Commerce, and Politics in the Early Modern World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005); Richard Grove, *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism, 1600-1860* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Alan Bewell, *Natures in Translation: Romanticism and Colonial Natural History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017); Londa Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004); Kincaid, *My Garden (Book)*, 150.

[138] Ahuja, *Bioinsecurities*, xi. See also Gikandi, *Slavery and the Cultures of Taste*.

[139] Kincaid, *My Garden (Book)*, 148, 143.

Kincaid uses the term "botany thief" to describe men like Banks who founded the Kew Gardens, "a clearinghouse for all the plants stolen from the various parts of the world these people [the English] had been."[140] Botanical gardens like Kew, she argues, specialize in "the capture, isolation, and imprisoning of plants."[141] An English botanical garden in Antigua, for example, contains bamboo and a rubber tree, while colonial gardens in Europe and North America grow plants from the West Indies, including "the coconut tree, the banana, a clump of sugarcane."[142] By removing plants from the multispecies ecologies in which they evolved and isolating them from the range of species they coexisted with and depended upon, English botanists harmed plants and weakened their ability to be resilient amid colonial violence. As one literary critic observes, "[T]he botanical garden not only serves as a physical reminder of conquest, but does violence to the landscapes it borrows from as well."[143] In addition to the violence of botanical gardens, Kincaid identifies the violence of naming as yet another way colonial societies possess plant species and human subjects. Undoubtedly thinking about her own name change, she writes, "The naming of things is so crucial to possession . . . that it is a murder, an erasing, and it is not surprising that when people have felt themselves prey to

[140] Ibid., 135. She first applies the term to Meriwether Lewis, himself a descendant of Welsh citizens.

[141] Ibid., 151.

[142] Ibid., 145, 149.

[143] Rachel Azima, "'Not-the-native': Self-Transplantation, Ecocriticism, and Postcolonialism in Jamaica Kincaid's *My Garden (Book)*," *Journal of Commonwealth and Postcolonial Studies* 13, no. 2 (2006), 101-119, at p. 104.

it (conquest), among their first acts of liberation is to change their names."[144] English settlers and naturalists replaced indigenous Caribbean and African plant names with their own vocabularies and taxonomies, robbing colonized peoples of their botanical naming systems and knowledges.[145] The European scientific naming system played a crucial role in the colonial possession of plants and humans, as it "worked to eradicate pre-colonial memories of self, history and *place*."[146] Although Kincaid eventually adopts scientific names, she initially resists identifying plants using binomial nomenclature. "The botanists are from the same part of the world as the man who sailed on the three ships," she explains, "the man who started the narrative from which I trace my beginning. . . . [T]he botanists are like that man who sailed on the ships; they emptied the worlds of things animal, vegetable, and mineral of their names and replaced these names with names pleasing to them."[147] The colonial erasure of plant names moved beyond the simple removal of a label; it was an attempt to weaken relationships with vegetal beings, to install settler epistemologies, and to control human and nonhuman subjects.

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[144] Kincaid, *My Garden (Book)*, 122.

[145] Kincaid says, "I do not know the names of the plants in the place I am from (Antigua)." Ibid., 119. She goes on to explain, "The ignorance of the botany of the place I am from (and am of) really only reflects the fact that when I lived there, I was of the conquered class and living in a conquered place; a principle of this condition is that nothing about you is of any interest unless the conqueror deems it so." Ibid., 120. Knowledges and naming systems of plants belonging to Black and Indigenous Caribbean peoples were actively suppressed under colonial rule.

[146] John Thieme, "After the Bounty: Botany and Botanical Tropes in Caribbean Writing," in *Re/membering Place*, eds. Catherine Delmas and André Dodeman (Bern: Peter Lang, 2013), 44.

[147] Kincaid, *My Garden (Book)*, 160.

By acknowledging that the long history of multispecies violence in Antigua significantly damaged senses of self and ecologies, Kincaid doubts whether precolonial identities and selves can be recovered through gardening or other activities. As “a site of unsettled negotiation,” gardening, much like writing, continued to implicate Kincaid in the operations of colonialism, even as she sought to escape and challenge its colonial histories and associations.[148] Indeed, Kincaid found herself reenacting possessive violence, some of it learned from colonial Antigua, in her Vermont garden. In addition to adopting scientific names for plant identification, she taught her children to sprinkle salt on slugs until they melted into a “brown liquid”; she plotted ways to kill rabbits and groundhogs; and she kept a gun near the garden to “shoot the things the scarecrow didn’t scare.”[149] In a garden bed she called “Hispaniola,” Kincaid surrounded a European hornbeam with plants from Europe, Asia, and North America.[150] Standing in the garden, the “beautiful specimen” appears “as if it has found itself *orphaned* and in care of people who could not love it in the way it had thought appropriate in which to be loved.”[151] She also describes attending a “plant hunting” expedition to China where she collected seeds from 130 flowering plants.[152] Never unencumbered by British colonial influence, Kincaid’s garden participated in the violence of empire that shaped her sense of self and

[148] Melanie Murray, “Shifting Identities and Locations in Jamaica Kincaid’s *My Garden (Book)* and *A Small Place*,” *World Literature Written in English* 39, no. 1 (2001): 116-26, at p. 119.

[149] Kincaid, *My Garden (Book)*, 178, 70.

[150] Ibid., 27.

[151] Ibid.

[152] Ibid., 188, 214.

her relationships with plants. As Austin Sarat, Carleen Basler, and Thomas Dumm observe, "Violent deeds are embedded in elaborate rituals and enactments, performances."[153] Gardening, for Kincaid, was a performance of multispecies violence inherited from the legacies of British colonial rule. Instead of finding comfort or joy in cultivated spaces, Kincaid felt constantly unnerved. "I mostly worry in the garden," she says, "I am mostly vexed in the garden."[154] Gardening demonstrated to Kincaid that her sense of self was caught somewhere between the colonizer and the colonized.[155] She remarks, "I have joined the conquering class: who else could afford this garden—a garden in which I grow things that it would be much cheaper to buy at the store."[156] And yet, as a Black Antiguan woman who lived under British rule, she remained intimately familiar with the horrors of colonialism.[157] Recalling the evocative opening image of her standing in a garden that resembles "a map of the Caribbean and the sea that surrounds it," she explains, "My feet are (so to speak) in two worlds."[158] Responding to her earlier question — "Is the conqueror a gardener and the conquered the person who works in the

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[153] Austin Sarat, Carleen R. Basler, and Thomas L. Dumm, eds., *Performances of Violence* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011), 2.

[154] Kincaid, *My Garden (Book)*, 19.

[155] Azima, for instance, argues that Kincaid's garden "provides a concrete way for Kincaid to come to terms with her postcolonial identity." Azima, "'Not-the-native'," 113.

[156] Kincaid, *My Garden (Book)*, 123.

[157] For more on how Kincaid reconceptualizes the intimacy of domestic spaces and global politics, see Agnese Fidecaro, "Jamaica Kincaid's Practical Politics of the Intimate in *My Garden (Book)*," *Women's Studies Quarterly* 34, no. 1-2 (2006): 250-70.

[158] Kincaid, *My Garden (Book)*, 123.

field?" — Kincaid determines that the line separating conqueror from conquered is less obvious than first appears.

Gardening can never give Kincaid access to a sense of self and identity that existed prior to colonial possession. *My Garden (Book)* makes it clear that to grow, think, and live with plants is to participate in violent colonial histories. Acknowledging that she will always live among the messy, broken ecologies created by British colonialism, Kincaid questions whether the subjects of colonial regimes can ever recover the relationships and senses of self that used to support multispecies worlds. While postcolonial scholars like Esmeir have argued that colonialism can never "confiscate" the "status of humanity" because "*the nonhuman coexists with and within the human*," Kincaid suggests that colonialism rearticulates the human and the nonhuman together in ways that ultimately leave their "status" and relationship in doubt.[159] For her, the point is not so much about recovering what has been lost to colonial violence, but is instead about finding ways to collectively survive the multiple crises created by global imperialism.

Inheriting Violence: Cracker Settlers and Longleaf Pine

Rather than consider how external colonial regimes enact multispecies violence, Ray writes from the position of a settler descendant who seeks to understand how the harmful actions of her ancestors have precipitated the collapse of multispecies relationships and impoverished her sense of self. *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood* describes how Ray's "Cracker" ancestors, immigrants from the border region of England and Scotland, participated in nearly a century and a half of sustained violence that pushed

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[159] Esmeir, *Juridical Humanity*, 8.

the longleaf pine ecosystem to near extinction and, by association, damaged their cultural identity as people who lived among the pines. Upon arriving in the forested region of southern Georgia during the first decades of the nineteenth century, her ancestors — people whom Ray describes as prone to violent outbursts, eager for physical confrontation, and committed to patriarchy — displaced the Lower Creek peoples who had occupied the "pine country between the Altamaha River and Florida" since time immemorial.[160] Participating in the original violence of Indigenous displacement and settler occupation, Ray's ancestors systematically eliminated the longleaf pine woodlands that grew in the fire-prone region. In her declensionist memoir, Ray considers how the violence of clear-cut logging and the violence of fire exclusion destroyed longleaf pine ecologies and further impoverished a group of people already struggling to achieve social ascendency. In doing so, Ray understands multispecies violence as inherited, a cumulative violence passed along from one generation to the next until it damaged her own relationships with place and her own sense of self. A "child of pine," Ray cannot separate her understanding of self from the pinewoods.[161] Calling attention to her inherited history, she writes, "The memory of what they [her Cracker ancestors] entered is scrawled on my bones, so that I carry the landscape inside like an ache. The story of

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[160] Janisse Ray, *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood* (Minneapolis: Milkweed, 1999), 81, 83. As she explains, "I was born from people who were born from people who were born here. The Crackers crossed the wide Altamaha into what had been Creek territory and settled the vast, fire-loving uplands of the coast plains of southeast Georgia, surrounded by a singing forest of tall and widely spaced pines whose history they did not know, whose stories were untold." Ibid., 4.

[161] Ibid., 5.

who I am cannot be severed from the story of the flatwoods."[162] The memoir's formal organization — particularly the oscillation of chapters on her familial history followed by shorter chapters on the ecology of longleaf pines — further emphasizes Ray's entangled relations. Her feeling of "ache" arises from the gulf between her identification with longleaf pine ecologies and their elimination that was caused, in part, by her forebears. Through the interconnected violence of turpentine extraction, clear-cut logging, and fire exclusion, the longleaf pine woodland is now "one of the most threatened ecosystems in North America."[163]

The exploitative and extractive systems established by the turpentine and "naval stores" industry laid the groundwork for the multispecies violence enacted through logging and fire exclusion. Though Indigenous peoples have, for millennia, used the copious amounts of pitch or resin produced by longleaf pines for a variety of purposes, settler colonialists began intentionally injuring, or "tapping," the trees during the eighteenth century in the longleaf pine forests of North Carolina, mainly to extract and collect the sticky ooze, also called "tar," that they used to waterproof and seal ships.[164] By the 1830s, prices for pitch products rose and transportation infrastructure and distillation technologies improved to such a degree that the naval stores and turpentine

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[162] Ibid., 4.

[163] Shibu Jose, Eric J. Jokela, and Deborah L. Miller, eds., *The Longleaf Pine Ecosystem: Ecology, Silviculture, and Restoration* (New York: Springer, 2006), ix.

[164] Robert B. Outland III, *Tapping the Pines: The Naval Stores Industry in the American South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004), 14. The "tarheels" name emerged from this industry.

industry began to spread throughout the southeastern US.[165] Resin forms "water-impermeable barriers," contains "anti-microbial and insecticidal properties," and constitutes a "good adhesive," all properties that made the unprocessed material highly desirable, especially in a growing settler economy.[166] Turpentine, a liquid processed from pitch, was used as a paint and stain solvent, as a laxative and insecticide in medicine, and as a waterproofing agent for leather and cloth.[167] Rosin, the hard residue remaining after turpentine distillation, was used to produce soap, cover floors, and pave roads.[168] Collecting and processing this desirable material from longleaf pines involved substantial violence, for trees and laborers alike. Pine trees produce pitch or resin as a defense mechanism after receiving an injury; the sticky substance helps to "seal wounds and eject foreign matter."[169] To trick longleaf pines into producing a steady supply of pitch, laborers would cut a "cat face" or "box," a heart-shaped pattern eight to fifteen inches wide and three to four inches deep, in the side of a tree just above a main root.[170] They would then "corner" the boxes by cutting "downward-pointing chevrons" into the sapwood that would guide the resin into the box where it could be collected.[171] Once the

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[165] Laura Mason, *Pine* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 2013), 93; Outland, *Tapping the Pines*, 37-38.

[166] Mason, *Pine*, 80; Outland, *Tapping the Pines*, 6.

[167] Ibid.; Mason, *Pine*, 97.

[168] Outland, *Tapping the Pines*, 6.

[169] Mason, *Pine*, 72.

[170] Outland, *Tapping the Pines*, 68; Mason, *Pine*, 94.

[171] Outland, *Tapping the Pines*, 70; Mason, *Pine*, 94.

boxes filled, a laborer would "dip" them four to seven times every season, extracting the fresh resin with a long ladle.[172] Every one or two weeks, a worker would cut fresh wounds in the bark just above the box — an activity called "chipping" — that kept the tree "bleeding" or producing pitch.[173] This exploitative and violent process not only depended upon tricking trees to produce resin, it also severely injured, disfigured, and killed longleaf pines.[174] Laborers, the vast majority of whom were Black and deeply impoverished, similarly endured significant violence under this extractive economy.[175] In addition to injuring several hundred trees a day, Black laborers suffered from dangerous working conditions and poor pay.[176] Pitch caused dermatitis; the vapors and fumes from turpentine distillation gave workers asthma; turpentine was often ingested accidentally which led to abdominal irritation; the heating of resin often resulted in severe burns; and laborers lived in "isolated camps" distanced from other communities.[177] During the

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[172] Outland, *Tapping the Pines*, 70.

[173] Ibid., 72.

[174] As one economist observes, "Naval stores production is based upon *exploiting* the terpene chemical defense system of the pine tree." Alan W. Hodges, "The Naval Stores Industry," in *The Longleaf Pine Ecosystem: Ecology, Silviculture, and Restoration*, eds. Shibu Jose, Eric J. Jokela, and Deborah L. Miller (New York: Springer, 2006), 43, emphasis added.

[175] Outland, *Tapping the Pines*, 60; Hodges, "The Naval Stores," 44; Mason, *Pine*, 94. Even by the 1940s, nearly all the laborers in the naval stores industry were Black. Outland, *Tapping the Pines*, 280. Poor whites also worked to collect pitch, albeit in far fewer numbers. See Ray, *Ecology*, 160, 162.

[176] Experienced cutters were "expected to cut 75 to 80 boxes a day or 450 to 500 a week." Outland, *Tapping the Pines*, 69.

[177] Ibid., 22, 90-91, 44. Black laborers collected a variety of plants in the forests to treat their ailments. Ibid., 92.

Antebellum Period, enslaved Africans and their descendants working in the "piney woods" likely "endured harsher working and living conditions than bondsmen on a typical agricultural plantation."[178] Ray's ancestors, a collection of people she names "longleaf pine settlers," took up residence in Appling County, Georgia, during this time, a period when pine trees and Black people were seen as resources for the production of economic capital.[179] By the late nineteenth century, longleaf pines "tapped" for the naval stores and turpentine industries had been "worked to exhaustion."[180] With thousands of acres of longleaf pines dying or already dead, landowners began clear-cutting stands of trees to further extract profits, a move that starkly illustrated how "violence reproduces more violence."[181]

From the 1880s to the 1920s, the expansive pinewoods of the southeastern US were logged nearly to extinction, a process that also disrupted the multispecies ecologies associated with longleaf pines. In southern Georgia, cutting began in earnest during Reconstruction and continued into the early 1900s.[182] As logging companies exhausted timber supplies in the Great Lakes region, they turned their attention to the US South where "there remained a substantial amount of timber in the public domain" and a cheap

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[178] Mason, *Pine*, 93; Outland, *Tapping the Pines*, 60.

[179] Ray, *Ecology*, 85.

[180] Mason, *Pine*, 94.

[181] Hodges, "The Naval Stores," 44; Jennifer L. Rike, "The Cycle of Violence and Feminist Constructions of Selfhood," *Contagion: Journal of Violence, Mimesis, and Culture* 3 (1996): 21-42, at p. 26.

[182] Ray, *Ecology*, 99.

source of labor.[183] Industrial timbering in the region peaked during the early twentieth century and had, by the 1930s, moved westward in pursuit of new timber stands, leaving the southern states mostly devoid of longleaf pine.[184] The lumber was used to build houses, ships, and fences for the nation's growing settler population. Botanist Stephen Elliott, in his 1824 study of regional plants, explains that longleaf pine is "more extensively used than any other species of timber we possess. For the frames, the covering, and even the roofing of houses, it is used wherever cypress cannot be obtained; for the flooring of houses, it is preferred to any wood that is known. It is extensively used in ship-building, for the beams, plank, and running timber of vessels. It is used to make the casks in which we ship our rice, and the fencing of our plantations."[185] In addition to enabling plantation agriculture and settler-colonial expansion, lumber from longleaf pines sustained Ray's ancestors, several of whom worked in local sawmills and participated in clear-cutting the area around Baxley, Georgia. "More than anything else," Ray reflects, "what happened to the longleaf country speaks for us. These are my people; our legacy is ruination."[186] Most immediately, logging caused severe population declines for the species who co-evolved with longleaf pines. Ray observes, "A clan of animals is bound

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[183] Albert G. Way, "Burned to be Wild: Herbert Stoddard and the Roots of Ecological Conservation in the Southern Longleaf Pine Forest," in *Environmental History and the American South: A Reader*, eds. Paul S. Sutter and Christopher J. Manganiello (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 286.

[184] Leon Neel, *The Art of Managing Longleaf: A Personal History of the Stoddard-Neel Approach* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2012), 6.

[185] Stephen Elliott, *A Sketch of the Botany of South-Carolina and Georgia*, vol. 2 (Charleston: J.R. Schenck, 1824), 637.

[186] Ray, *Ecology*, 87. She explains that once her family contributed to clearcutting, "there was no way to re-create a forest. Not quickly." Ibid., 124.

to the community of longleaf pine. They have evolved there, filling niches in the trees, under the trees, in the grasses, in the bark, under ground. They have adapted to sand, fire, a lengthy growing season, and up to sixty inches of rain a year. Over the millennia, the lives of the animals wove together."[187] Nonhuman species, she argues, are the victims of logging violence: "As Southern forests are logged, these species of flora and fauna, in ways as varied as their curious adaptations to live in the southeastern plains, suffer. All face loss of place."[188] By the late 1990s, for instance, more than 65 percent of vascular plants associated with longleaf pinelands were endangered or threatened.[189] In the wake of longleaf forests, planters grew monoculture plantations of fast-growing, fire-prone pines, especially slash and loblolly, using violent agricultural practices.[190] "To prepare ground, they chopped, disked, root-raked, herbicided, windrowed. In wetter soils they bedded, plowing and heaping the soil into wide racks with drainage furrows between. The land was laid bare as a vulture's pate, and the scriveners came on their tree-planting tractors, driving new words to replace the old one, *forest*."[191] These plantations, in turn, quickened the decline of species such as the flatwoods salamander, the redstart, the pine snake, and the gopher frog.[192]

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[187] Ibid., 141.

[188] Ibid., 142.

[189] Ibid., 67.

[190] Ibid., 124; Jose, Jokela, and Miller, *The Longleaf Pine*, ix.

[191] Ray, *Ecology*, 124-25.

[192] Ibid., 125.

In addition to the violence of logging, settlers and their descendants implemented fire exclusion practices and policies that prevented future longleaf pines from growing and unraveled relationships with the tree and its associated species. Seen as a destructive evil that threatened people's livelihoods, fire was widely discouraged, even by timber companies that insisted on keeping clear-cut land unburned.[193] In withholding fire from the land, however, proponents of fire exclusion harmed nonhumans, humans, and their relationships with one another. Indeed, regular burning through human intervention and lightning leads to what Frank Lake, a Karuk and Yurok ecologist and wildlife fire scientist, calls "pyro-kincentricity," or the collection of multispecies kin networks produced and sustained by fire.[194] Having evolved in a lightning-prone region, longleaf pine is exceptionally adapted to large-scale burns. Historically, often aided by Indigenous peoples, coastal longleaf woodlands burned once every one to three years, with pinewoods in swamps and on mountaintops burning at least once every twelve years.[195] Without fire to expose the soil and suppress the growth of other pine species, however, longleaf seeds rarely germinate and, if they do, they seldom mature. As environmental historian Albert Way explains, "[F]ire was necessary to expose the bare mineral soil needed for seeds to germinate, and to suppress early successional pines such as loblolly and slash pines, as well as hardwoods, so the longleaf seed stock could establish its

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[193] Way, "Burned to be Wild," 286.

[194] Norgaard, *Salmon and Acorns*, 92.

[195] Neel, *The Art of Managing*, 12; Cecil Frost, "History and Future of the Longleaf Pine Ecosystem," in *The Longleaf Pine Ecosystem: Ecology, Silviculture, and Restoration*, eds. Shibu Jose, Eric J. Jokela, and Deborah L. Miller (New York: Springer, 2006), 14.

dominance."[196] The dense brush that built up also replaced wiregrass as the primary ground covering and prevented species such as flatwoods salamanders from accessing their breeding grounds.[197] Although forest ecologists Herbert Stoddard and Leon Neel fought during the mid-twentieth century to bring fire back to the pinewoods, very few fragments of longleaf forest exist.[198] With the loss of longleaf pines and the nonhuman species who coevolved with them came the loss of cultural attachments and senses of self associated with the forest.

Even though she has only known the absence of longleaf pines, Ray feels that she has inherited not only a sense of self arising from the trees, but also the burdens and responsibilities attached to two centuries of multispecies violence committed, in part, by her settler relatives on the pinewoods. Such ecological inheritance places Ray in two seemingly impossible positions: she identifies with a tree species and set of relations that she cannot directly experience, and she assumes responsibility for violence she did not perform. Throughout the memoir, Ray understands her sense of self as emerging from the historical presence and contemporary absence of pinewoods. She writes, "I drink old-growth forest in like water. This is the homeland that built us. Here I walk shoulder to shoulder with history—my history."[199] The memories of longleaf pine have been passed down through her family while the land provides continual reminders of the ecologies

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[196] Way, "Burned to be Wild," 286. Unique in their ability to survive fire at a young age, longleaf seedlings survive the first few years of life in "a grass stage with long needles that protect the terminal bud from fire." Neel, *The Art of Managing*, 13.

[197] Ray, *Ecology*, 218.

[198] For an extended discussion, see Neel, *The Art of Managing*.

[199] Ray, *Ecology*, 69.

and relationships that used to exist. Indeed, she wonders, "Maybe a vision of the original longleaf pine flatwoods has been endowed to me through genes, because I seem to remember their endlessness."[200] Ray makes it clear, however, that she is not the only person to inherit this violent history. As she explains, "This was not a loss I knew as a child. *Longleaf* was a word I never heard. But it is a loss that as an adult shadows every step I take. I am daily aghast at how much we have taken, since it does not belong to us, and how much as a people we have suffered in consequence."[201] Challenging settler moves to innocence that cast the behaviors and activities of previous ancestors as separate from the present, Ray asserts that the settler communities of southern Georgia have inherited the absence of longleaf pines and the loss of human relationships with them.[202] Violence to the pinewoods, she observes, has produced widespread suffering and cultural impoverishment.

> When we consider what is happening to our forests—and to the birds, reptiles, and insects that live there—we must also think of ourselves. Culture springs from the actions of people in a landscape, and what we, especially Southerners, are watching is a daily erosion of unique folkways as our native ecosystems and all

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[200] Ibid., 65. As one literary critic remarks, "For Ray, the land itself offers new ways of viewing notions of the self." Sarah Robertson, "Junkyard Tales: Poverty and the Southern Landscape in Janisse Ray's *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*," in *Poverty and Progress in the U.S. South Since 1920*, eds. Suzanne W. Jones and Mark Newman (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 2006), 171.

[201] Ray, *Ecology*, 15.

[202] Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, "Decolonization is not a metaphor," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 1-40, at pp. 3-4.

> their inhabitants disappear. Our culture is tied to the longleaf pine forest that produced us, that has sheltered us, that we occupy.[203]

By refusing to separate cultural practices, beliefs, and identities from the environments that make them possible, Ray draws connections between species loss, societal poverty, and diminished resilience. She goes on to say, "We recognize that the loss of our forests—which is to say of health, of culture, of heritage, of beauty, of the infinite hopefulness of a virgin forest where time stalls—is a loss we all share. All of our names are written on the deed to rapacity. When we log and destroy and cut and pave and replace and kill, we steal from each other and from ourselves. We swipe from our past and degrade our future."[204] An inherited collection of activities, multispecies violence spills into the present and the future, denuding lands, cultures, and selves.

As a study of inherited violence, *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood* argues that the only way to repair multispecies communities and the relationships and senses of self that emerge from them is to intervene in the historical and ongoing harm. Ray describes the task ahead as one that simultaneously involves repairing damaged ecologies and senses of self.[205]

> My heart daily grows new foliage, always adding people, picking up new heartaches like a wool coat collects cockleburs and beggar's-lice seeds. It gets

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[203] Ray, *Ecology*, 271.

[204] Ibid., 271-72.

[205] The ecocritic Jay Watson argues that, for Ray, "the only way to become whole is to make the land whole." Jay Watson, "Economics of a Cracker Landscape: Poverty as an Environmental Issue in Two Southern Writers," *The Mississippi Quarterly* 55, no. 4 (2002): 497-513, at p. 511.

> fuller and fuller until I walk slow as a sloth, carrying all the pain [my ancestors] . . . and so many others tried to walk from. Especially the pain of the lost forest. Sometimes there is no leaving, no looking westward for another promised land. We have to nail our shoes to the kitchen floor and unload the burden of our heart. We have to set to the task of repairing the damage done by us and to us.[206]

Like *My Garden (Book)*, Ray's memoir understands "the task of repairing the damage done by us and to us" as a project of the heart, one that involves taking responsibility for wrongs and actively intervening in ways that support and foster multispecies relationships. In doing so, she proposes a kind of multispecies justice orientated around the optics of inheritance. Ray suggests that pursuing more just ways of being and relating requires addressing the inherited violence distributed across groups of humans and nonhumans. Such a position, more generally, offers ways to overcome the inaction associated with extinction and settler guilt. *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood* considers how humans can experience a sense of connection with species lost from memory and place, and how settler descendants can acknowledge the violence caused by their ancestors as they set out to create more livable worlds.

ANTHROPOCENTRIC LEGAL SYSTEMS: FORAGING AND POACHING

Over the past few decades, a growing number of voices from legal studies, Indigenous activism, and the criminal justice reform movement have sought to reframe legal and juridical systems as violent structures designed to serve the interests of the state over the needs of its residents. Postcolonial and feminist scholars have paid particular

[206] Ray, *Ecology*, 103.

attention to the ways that western law justifies and enables colonial nation-building projects. As Nielsen and Robyn explain, "Laws that were advantageous to settlers were among the main tools used to coerce dispossession and marginalization. These laws created an environment in which settlers could steal Indigenous land and resources for their own purposes with impunity."[207] A primary mechanism for accomplishing this work involves drawing boundaries around the category of the human that serve to either exclude or replace the worldviews of the colonized population. The human is typically defined vis a vis the liberal humanist subject, an idealized "individual fully in control of himself, non-relationally autonomous, normatively rational and guided by reason, unmarked by identity or social location, and representative of a universal human."[208] In colonial states, this means that people who refuse to adopt the tenets of liberal humanism are excluded from the frameworks, protections, and benefits of the law. Put differently, to participate in legal and juridical systems, colonized peoples are forced to join the category of "the human" outlined by liberal humanism. Ratna Kapur understands the adoption of this subjective position as a violent act: "Legal rights and entitlements are endowed on the human. And the only way in which to be human, to belong or to move from a state of non-existence[,] is through appropriation and violence."[209] Similarly,

[207] Nielsen and Robyn, *Colonialism is Crime*, 5. Similarly, Esmeir calls modern law one of colonialism's "strategies of conquest and rule" that operates by "binding the living to the state." Esmeir, *Juridical Humanity*, 3.

[208] Deckha, *Animals as Legal Beings*, 11. Ratna Kapur explains, "The idea of the liberal subject lies at the heart of [the] liberal project and the rule of law on which it is based." Ratna Kapur, "On Violence, Revolution and the Self," *Postcolonial Studies* 24, no. 2 (2021): 251-69, at p. 253.

[209] Ibid., 256.

Esmeir argues that British colonialists used law to establish the category of the human in Egypt. To be considered human, or to possess what Esmeir calls "juridical humanity," the colonized population had to assume the standards of British law.[210] In defining the modern human subject and guaranteeing this individual protections under the law, juridical and legal systems have excluded nonhumans from their frameworks, shored up beliefs in anthropocentrism, and institutionalized an isolated, liberal humanist self.

Increasingly, scholars are turning their attention to the ways that anthropocentric laws and courts systematically deny nonhumans legal standing and sanction violence against other species. For instance, the field of green, or environmental, criminology operates within existing legal frameworks to examine the disproportionate crimes inflicted upon environments and nonhuman species. Arising in the early 1990s out of the desire to apply criminological analysis to the myriad legal concerns of mainstream environmentalism, green criminology has redefined several core concepts of legal theory, with the notable exception of liberal humanism.[211] Most prominently, the field has critiqued the frameworks of "legal" and "illegal" used to discuss criminality. Pointing to the ongoing exclusion of nonhumans in modern law, environmental criminologists have

[210] She writes, "[T]he human became entangled with and indebted to modern law." Esmeir, *Juridical Humanity*, 77.

[211] Michael Lynch, "The Greening of Criminology: A Perspective on the 1990s," *The Critical Criminologist* 2, no. 3 (1990): 3-12; Bill McClanahan, "Guest Editor's Introduction to the Special Issue on Green Criminology," *Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* (2020): 1-5, at p. 2; Michael J. Lynch et al., *Green Criminology: Crime, Justice, and the Environment* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2017), 161.

observed that the law legitimizes and legalizes violence against nonhuman species.[212] Indeed, many forms of environmental crime are perfectly legal, including the deforestation and land theft discussed in the previous section.[213] With this in mind, Ragnhild Sollund argues that green criminologists should shift attention away from explicitly "illegal" activities to instead focus on the violence occurring under the rubric of the law.[214] While discussing wildlife trafficking, she notes, "[F]rom the perspective of the animals, whether they are trafficked legally or illegally is irrelevant."[215] As British criminologists Penny Green, Tony Ward, and Kirsten McConnachie observe, "There are . . . serious problems in accepting 'legality' as a criterion of criminality."[216] The field has also reconsidered the orientations of "victim," "perpetrator," and "crime" as part of its broader criticism directed toward the categories of "legal" and "illegal." Nigel South and Piers Beirne write, "[A] green criminology suggests that we need to reappraise traditional notions of crimes, offences and injurious behaviours and start to examine the role that societies (including corporate and government actors) play in generating harms to the

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212 Tarik Kochi, "Species War: Law, Violence and Animals," *Law, Culture and the Humanities* 5 (2009): 353-69, at p. 354; Lynch et al., *Green Criminology*, 161.

213 Ibid., 12-13.

214 Ragnhild Aslaug Sollund, *The Crimes of Wildlife Trafficking: Issues of Justice, Legality and Morality* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2019).

215 Ibid., 2.

216 Penny Green, Tony Ward, and Kirsten McConnachie, "Logging and Legality: Environmental Crime, Civil Society, and the State," in *Environmental Crime: A Reader*, ed. Rob White (Portland, OR: Willan Pub., 2009), 118.

environment and all species dependent upon it."[217] In this framework, nonhumans and environments are capable of experiencing crime and are recognized as victims while perpetrators are held accountable for their actions. Rather than construct a dualism separating human perpetrator from nonhuman victim, however, some scholars have observed that oppressed groups of humans often find themselves caught up in crimes against nonhumans and environments. Rob White observes that "environmental harm frequently involves the simultaneous exploitation of particular bio-spheres, of particular plants and animals, and of the poorest, most vulnerable sections of the human community."[218] Similarly, Matthew Hall notes that "the impacts of environmental crime (like most other forms of crime) . . . fall disproportionately on the weak, the marginalized, and the powerless."[219] Addressing crimes against places and species, then, requires supporting the human communities implicated in this violence.

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[217] Piers Beirne and Nigel South, *Green Criminology* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2006), xv. Sollund points out that "human society" is all too often "recognized as the victim" of crimes against wildlife, not the nonhumans directly suffering from violence. Sollund, *The Crimes of Wildlife Trafficking*, 1.

[218] Rob White, "Introduction: Environmental Crime and Eco-Global Criminology," in *Environmental Crime: A Reader*, ed. Rob White (Portland, OR: Willan Pub., 2009), 5. He defines environmental crime as encompassing "transgressions against humans, transgressions against environments, and transgressions against nonhuman animals." Ibid., 4-5.

[219] Matthew Hall, "Victims of Environmental Crime: Routes for Recognition, Restitution, and Redress," in *Environmental Crime and its Victims: Perspectives within Green Criminology*, eds. Toine Spapens, Rob White, and Marieke Kluin (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014), 103. Christopher Williams uses the term "environmental victimology" to describe how communities of humans and nonhuman species become victims of violence. Christopher Williams, "An Environmental Victimology," in *Environmental Crime: A Reader*, ed. Rob White (Portland, OR: Willan Pub., 2009), 216.

More recently, legal scholars aligned with "posthumanist" and multispecies thought have developed a distinct field of study that calls for the dismantling and reconstitution of the liberal, human subject at the center of law and justice. While this body of research has adopted multiple names, I cluster the various approaches under the wider umbrella of "lively legalities" developed by Braverman.[220] In broad strokes, the field of lively legalities examines how law deploys anthropocentric logics to produce the categories of "human" and "nonhuman" — along with the incommensurability between the two — and to sanction violence against nonhuman species. Braverman, in her edited collection *Animals, Biopolitics, Law: Lively Legalities*, contends that "both animality and humanness are deeply embedded in the constitution of the law" and that "law is acutely relevant for constituting the animal."[221] Deckha makes a similar point, arguing that the law supports not only the separation of human from nonhuman, especially animals, but also "the claims of humans' superiority and animals' inferiority that underpin it."[222] Nonhumans are only permitted to stand before the law if they meet one of two criteria: they must be the property of a human, rights-bearing subject or they must have been

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[220] Such an approach identifies commonalities and places different positions in conversation with one another. Braverman defines lively legalities as a collection of "legal frameworks that move beyond the humanist perspective." Irus Braverman, "Lively Legalities," in *Animals, Biopolitics, Law: Lively Legalities*, ed. Irus Braverman (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2016), 3.

[221] Braverman, "Lively Legalities," 9. See also Irus Braverman, "Law's Underdog: A Call for More-than-Human Legalities," *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 14 (2018): 127-44, at p. 128.

[222] Deckha, *Animals as Legal Beings*, 6.

endowed personhood by a human voting body or state court.[223] As legal categories, property and personhood depend upon the logics of possession and anthropocentrism, and they reflect the degree to which legal and juridical systems marginalize the positions of nonhumans. Deckha, for example, calls property "inherently exploitative" and personhood "inherently anthropocentric," while Cary Wolfe observes that "legal protections for animals depend upon their being under human control."[224] By organizing itself around the figure of a liberal human subject, modern law can only understand nonhumans within the bounds of liberal humanism.[225] Lively legalities, however, fundamentally challenges liberal humanism and its violence toward nonhumans, proposing alternative legal and social orders that are built from, and take into account, multispecies entanglements and mutual relationships. Braverman proposes alternative legal systems where nonhuman animals "assume a meaningful voice in a new social order," and Deckha proposes "beingness" as a "new legal subjectivity for animals oriented toward respecting animals for what they are — rather than for their proximity to idealized versions of humanness."[226]

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[223] Braverman, "Law's Underdog," 135; Deckha, *Animals as Legal Beings*, 8. The concept of rights plays a crucial role in defining property and personhood. For critiques of rights approaches and their association with liberal humanism, see Braverman, "Lively Legalities," 3; Braverman, "Law's Underdog," 129.

[224] Deckha, *Animals as Legal Beings*, 121; Cary Wolfe, "'Life' and 'the Living', Law and Norm" in *Animals, Biopolitics, Law: Lively Legalities*, ed. Irus Braverman (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2016), xv. See also Braverman, "Lively Legalities," 7; Cary Wolfe, *Before the Law: Humans and Other Animals in a Biopolitical Frame* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 13.

[225] As Braverman observes, liberal humanist orientations toward law can only treat nonhuman animals as liberal subjects. Braverman, "Lively Legalities," 3-4.

[226] Braverman, "Law's Underdog," 140; Deckha, *Animals as Legal Beings*, 6.

The following discussion considers how Chin's *Eating Wildly* and Jans's *A Wolf Called Romeo* envision legal and juridical systems capable of addressing multispecies violence and making decisions that support multispecies relationships. In doing so, these memoirs not only make interventions within green criminology and lively legalities, they also propose modes of multispecies justice that modify existing laws and judicial procedures. Chin and Jans consider how human and nonhuman communities are doubly harmed, once by perpetrators of violence and then again by legal systems that fail to either punish the oppressor, include nonhumans in the judicial process, or improve the basic conditions of their lives. They collectively ask: What might laws and courts designed to protect multispecies relationships look like? And how might the justice system eliminate multispecies violence to serve humans and nonhumans alike?

Anti-Foraging Laws and Chin's Eating Wildly

Developing out of her urban foraging column for *The New York Times*, Chin's memoir *Eating Wildly* describes anti-foraging laws as enacting multispecies violence and reclaims foraging as an activity that benefits local ecologies and human communities, especially people of color and immigrants. In addition to describing the key moments and experiences that constituted Chin's metamorphosis into an urban forager, the memoir functions as a didactic field guide that teaches safe, effective, and ethical foraging practices. On a deeper level, however, *Eating Wildly* operates as a counternarrative that challenges the violence of anti-foraging discourse and laws designed to marginalize foragers and suppress foraging activities. One of the most common complaints raised in opposition to the public collection of foods, medicines, and materials is that such activities irreparably harm environments. Though she initially expresses a concern that

New York City residents would accuse her of "plundering and harming the neighborhood flora," Chin learns that foraging offers a way to care for the land and nonhuman species.[227] She explains, "I didn't believe that foraging, which was sustainable if practiced correctly and mindfully and which had opened my eyes to the resiliency of nature, was anti-preservation. Most foragers I knew cared about the health of the land—and protecting habitats—because it was the direct source of our food."[228] Contrary to claims evoking Garrett Hardin's "tragedy of the commons" and western preservationism, Chin understands foraging as an environmental intervention that encourages humans to act in the best interests of nonhumans.[229] A forager, she argues, is someone "*who loves the land so much that she literally eats from it*."[230] Instead of imagining an ideal forager as "a crunchy-granola hippy type" who wears "socks over his trousers" and situates himself amid the alternative food movement, Chin understands foragers to be immigrants and people of color, especially "immigrant grandmotherly types" who continue to practice "the foraging habits of their homelands."[231] Naming these overlooked people

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[227] Ava Chin, *Eating Wildly: Foraging for Life, Love and the Perfect Meal* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2014), 28.

[228] Ibid., 182. Research supports this point. Jennifer Lee and Supriya Garikipati, in a study of the United Kingdom's common land, found that "foraging is carried out mainly in a sustainable way and that people have devised mechanisms to effectively manage these communal systems over time." Jennifer Lee and Supriya Garikipati, "Negotiating the Non-negotiable: British Foraging Law in Theory and Practice," *Journal of Environmental Law* 23, no. 3 (2011): 415-39, at p. 416.

[229] Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons," *Science* 162, no. 3859 (1968): 1243-1248.

[230] Chin, *Eating Wildly*, 184.

[231] Ibid., 28, 215.

"the hidden foragers," she writes, "They, and we, were engaging in a kind of pre-agricultural endeavor that kept us tied close to the land. It wasn't such an odd thing in other parts of the world—I knew of Russian, Korean, and French foragers who grew up gathering edibles with their families."[232] In positioning foraging as a traditional practice used by immigrants to perform and retain their cultural identities, Chin challenges popular narratives by authors such as Gary Nabhan, Michael Pollan, Barbara Kingsolver, and Wendell Berry that locate foraging within the alternative food movement.[233] *Eating Wildly*, then, reclaims foraging as a collection of activities and knowledges belonging to people of color, especially immigrants. Identifying as third-generation Chinese American, Chin initially learned how to forage by watching her grandparents and "Asian ladies" collect and prepare Chinese foods and medicines, including *wun yee* (cloud ear fungus), *dong gu* (shiitake mushrooms), and *lingzhi* (reishi mushrooms).[234] She began foraging in

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[232] Ibid., 215.

[233] Despite Chin's stance on the matter, ecocritics continue to frame urban foraging within the memoir as participating in the alternative food movement. Shiuhhuah Chou, for instance, contrasts the foods foraged by Chin to the industrial foods of agribusiness. She writes, "Unlike cheap, colorful, farm products with long shelf-lives that are manufactured by agribusinesses, wild foods provide a readily available medium through which the estranged bodies of urban consumers reconnect directly with seasonal changes to their food sources." Shiuhhuah Chou, "Chinatown and Beyond: Ava Chin, Urban Foraging, and a New American Cityscape," *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 25, no. 1 (2018): 5-24, at p. 11. Chou's reading also evinces a tendency to place *Eating Wildly* within the subgenre that Allison Carruth calls the "locavore memoir." Allison Carruth, *Global Appetites: American Power and the Literature of Food* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 155. Unlike locavore narratives which confront globalization and industrial food systems, however, Chin's memoir approaches questions of eating locally from immigrant positions.

[234] Chin, *Eating Wildly*, 7. Many mushroom foragers in the US belong to immigrant groups. See, for instance, Cynthia D. Bertelsen, *Mushroom* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 2013), 32; Anna Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015).

places like Fort Greene, Brooklyn, and Clinton Hill, "beautiful, historic, largely middle-class [B]lack neighborhoods."[235] By using Chinese knowledge to collect plants that grew in largely Black neighborhoods, Chin situates foraging within communities of color.

To recast foraging as an activity that supports human and nonhuman communities, Chin critiques and resists anti-foraging laws that not only separate people of color from nonhuman species and traditional food systems, but also actively produce multispecies violence through this separation. As Chin makes clear, anti-foraging laws prevent people of color from accessing the land, a move that collectively denies food sovereignty, damages cultural identity and resiliency, and hurts ecologies that benefit from human activities and relationships. In the US, the first laws to restrict foraging were developed to prevent Indigenous peoples from accessing the land. Though they often broke signed treaties that guaranteed access rights to tribes, such laws criminalized the collection of plants and materials, and they enforced a new system of private land ownership.[236] These laws were then adopted across the US South during the postbellum period to prevent Black folks from supplementing their diets and incomes in a bid to keep them indentured to white landowners, a move that the African-American and Indigenous forager Alexis Nikole Nelson calls "economic bondage."[237] Nelson notes that during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, enslaved Black persons would forage as a means of survival. "[F]or a lot of people who were enslaved," she explains, "the way

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[235] Chin, *Eating Wildly*, 27.

[236] Baylen J. Linnekin, "Food Law Gone Wild: The Law of Foraging," *Fordham Urban Law Journal* 45, no. 4 (2018): 995-1050, at p. 1011.

[237] Alie Ward, interview with Alexis Nikole Nelson, *Ologies*, podcast audio, May 18, 2021, https://www.alieward.com/ologies/foragingecology.

that you beefed up the meager meals or the scraps that you were given was often by supplementing with foraging, with trapping, with fishing. So that knowledge was a huge part of early Black culture here in the Americas."[238] Much of this knowledge, she points out, was exchanged between Black and Indigenous peoples who helped one another survive.[239] Anti-foraging laws were developed, often alongside anti-trespassing laws, to prevent Black folks from sustaining themselves at a time when they were also prevented from owning land.[240] As legal scholar Baylen Linnekin observes, anti-foraging laws emerged from positions of "racism, classism, colonialism, imperialism, or some combination."[241] Varying widely across federal, state, and local jurisdictions, these laws have increased to such a degree that they "robustly restrict our right to forage" today.[242] Over the years, anti-foraging laws have removed people of color from foraging activities, from relationships with nonhumans, and from environments, producing significant suffering for cultures and species alike. Laws to restrict and prevent foraging "limit the use and enjoyment of parkland; ignore foraging's health, cultural, and nutritional

[238] Alexis Nikole Nelson, interview by Manoush Zomorodi, "How foraging reconnected Alexis Nikole Nelson with food and her culture," *NPR*, Oct. 5, 2021, https://www.npr.org/2021/10/04/1043187830/how-foraging-reconnected-alexis-nikole-nelson-with-food-and-her-culture.

[239] Ibid.

[240] Linnekin, "Food Law," 1012; Cynthia Greenlee, "How Black Foragers Find Freedom in the Natural World," *New York Times*, July 30, 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/30/dining/black-foragers-nature-alexis-nelson.html.

[241] Linnekin, "Food Law," 1011.

[242] Ibid., 997, 998; Lee and Garikipati, "Negotiating the Non-negotiable," 416.

benefits; and further marginalize vulnerable populations, particularly those in urban, rural, and wilderness areas."[243]

As a forager of color invested in the health of urban ecologies, Chin confronted this violent legal landscape every time she ventured outside in search of food. New York City maintains several anti-foraging laws, including an ordinance that "prohibits destroying, cutting, or pruning trees, or severing or removing plant vegetation."[244] Pertaining to "rights of withdrawal," not "rights of access," this ordinance grants city officials the power to fine foragers for removing vegetation from public spaces.[245] While fines are rarely issued, officials do actively discourage foragers from collecting plants.[246] In the memoir's opening pages, Chin recounts an incident when a park ranger "chased" her and a group of foragers away from Prospect Park where they were foraging for wild parsnips.[247] "While I could understand why the parks didn't want folks willy-nilly digging up plants," she writes, "I became angry when I later learned that they were planning to raze the entire area to expand the skating rink."[248] Her minimal foraging activities coupled with the future removal of the plants did not, in her view, match the ranger's violent response. Defying anti-foraging measures, Chin continued to collect plants and fungi growing in the green spaces of New York City and to write about these

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[243] Linnekin, "Food Law," 1031.

[244] Ibid., 1015.

[245] Lee and Garikipati, "Negotiating the Non-negotiable," 420.

[246] Linnekin, "Food Law," 1016.

[247] Chin, *Eating Wildly*, 99.

[248] Ibid.

experiences in her "Urban Forager" column. One story about harvesting and eating the young stems of tawny daylilies growing around the Central Park reservoir, a plant widely considered "invasive" in the US, led her readers to question "the legalities of foraging in the park."[249] After speaking with Adrian Benepe, the Commissioner of Central Park, Chin learned that it is "illegal to take anything from the park" per Section 1-04 which declares, "No person shall deface, write upon, sever, mutilate, kill or remove from the ground any plants, flowers, shrubs or other vegetation under the jurisdiction of the Department without permission of the Commissioner."[250] Citing concerns that the readers of Chin's column would rush out to harvest daylilies and, in the process, "wipe out the entire population," Benepe subsequently forbade their collection.[251] Knowing, however, that lily bulbs, flower buds, and stems are a common food source in China, Chin argues that such a decision "showed a total lack of understanding and underestimation of the hardiness of the plant. Botanically speaking, it was hard to even make a dent in the tawny daylily population by picking their tops—*Hemerocallis fulva* propagates through

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[249] Ibid., 180.

[250] Ibid., 179. See also New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, §1-04 Prohibited Uses, https://www.nycgovparks.org/rules/section-1-04.

[251] Chin, *Eating Wildly*, 179. Litt Woon Long, herself an immigrant from Malaysia who lives in Norway, describes a similar experience while foraging in Central Park. In her foraging memoir *The Way Through the Woods: On Mushrooms and Mourning*, she describes being stopped by a park ranger who told her and the mycologist Gary Lincoff that "it is forbidden to pick flowers or plants in Central Park." Long Litt Woon, *The Way Through the Woods: On Mushrooms and Mourning*, trans. Barbara J. Haveland (New York: Random House, 2019), 50. This experience shocked her because, as she explains, "In Norway everyone has the right to pick berries, mushrooms, or flowers anywhere—not just in the countryside, but on private land, too, if it's uncultivated. The same rule does not apply, however, to a park in the United States." Ibid.

underground tuberous roots, which was why it was such a successful invasive."[252] Instead of viewing her actions as harming the daylilies, Chin suggests that "it may be because of such consistent foraging action that the plants were thriving."[253] By redefining the immigrant forager as an environmental steward and caretaker, Chin positions foraging as a desirable activity that supports humans, nonhumans, and their relationships with each other. As Linnekin argues, "Treating foragers as scofflaws rather than as what they truly are—conservationists, park users, outdoor lovers, cultural preservationists, foodies, or some combination of these traits—is a misguided approach" and is one built upon exclusionary histories of racism.[254]

In removing humans, particularly people of color, from relationships and environments shared with nonhumans, anti-foraging laws — like other forms of multispecies violence discussed in this chapter — disrupt senses of self that emerge from relationships. By continuing to forage in spite of anti-foraging measures and discourses, Chin was able to preserve an entangled sense of self, one that also supported her Chinese American identity. She explains, "It's the unexpected bounty and regenerative powers of

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[252] Chin, *Eating Wildly*, 180. Chin's Chinese identity provides "the (ethno-)botanic knowledge necessary for harvesting and preparing foods locally." Chou, "Chinatown and Beyond," 6.

[253] Ibid., 181. This argument, however, is held in tension with Chin's other claim that the daylilies in question were "choking out the native flora population" and that foragers, by harvesting them, were performing an "efficient, less wasteful means of control" on plants deemed "invasive." Ibid., 180. Braverman observes that law divides nonhumans into several legal categories, including "wild, domestic, agricultural, pests, lab, and zoo animals." Braverman, "Lively Legalities," 6.

[254] Linnekin, "Food Law," 1031. See also Melissa R. Poe et al., "Urban Forest Justice and the Rights to Wild Foods, Medicines, and Materials in the City," *Human Ecology* 41 (2013): 409-22.

nature that have deepened my connection with my hometown, my family, and even myself."[255] The "meditation" of foraging taught Chin that all beings are "interconnected, interrelated, and interdependent," and it provided her with great "satisfaction" and "comfort."[256] Litt Woon Long, a Malaysian anthropologist and professional mushroom forager who lives in Norway, calls foraging "fieldwork of the heart" because, in her words, it provides a way to reflexively "observe myself" intervening among, and growing attached to, nonhuman species and environments.[257] To counter anti-foraging claims that the collection of plants, fungi, and materials amounts to environmental devastation and to preserve her relationships with nonhuman species threatened by anti-foraging laws, Chin developed a foraging etiquette and ethics built upon the values of appreciation, respect, and reciprocity. In addition to thanking plants before she collects them, she avoids overharvesting and only gathers foods in ways that ensure the plant will "continue to grow."[258] These foraging practices enable nonhumans to flourish and they give Chin the opportunity to access, and therefore maintain relationships with, these species for the foreseeable future. Nelson argues that foragers of color are practicing "an act of restorative justice" because "historically, culturally, and legally, a lot of barriers were put in place to prohibit us . . . from being able to do so."[259] She explains, "[F]or me to be a Black woman foraging . . . it feels like justice. . . . It's an act that I feel like we should

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[255] Chin, *Eating Wildly*, 8.

[256] Ibid., 105, 211, 148.

[257] Woon, *The Way*, 46, 80.

[258] Chin, *Eating Wildly*, 101, 187, 146, 33.

[259] Ward, interview.

begin reclaiming."[260] Challenging anti-foraging laws and the multispecies violence they produce, Chin's *Eating Wildly* understands foraging as a practice that restores relationships, entangled senses of self, and nonhuman species.

Lawful Killing: Anthropocentrism and Procedural Justice in A Wolf Called Romeo

Seeking to move beyond a critique of liberal humanist legal orders and the multispecies violence they produce, Jans proposes legal subjects situated among broader multispecies communities and juridical orders designed to uphold multispecies relationships. In his memoir *A Wolf Called Romeo*, Jans argues that Alaska's anthropocentric laws and court systems produce multispecies violence by legalizing the killing of wolves and by denying justice to communities of humans and nonhumans harmed by poachers. After the violent killing of Romeo — a black wolf loved by many human and canine residents of Juneau — and the sham trial of the wolf's poachers, Jans and the local community pursue multispecies justice and healing through extrajudicial means. Jans, an author and wildlife photographer, describes his many encounters with Romeo from December 2003 to September 2009 when the wolf co-inhabited the Mendenhall Glacier and Lake.[261] Unlike most wolves in the US who carry a "dark notoriety," Romeo was overwhelmingly viewed as a positive figure.[262] A friendly

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[260] Ibid.

[261] Jans explains, "Though we might have understood those same areas as *our* territory – we'd built or shaped them and made our marks on the surrounding land — they'd become the wolf's as well, defined by scents we couldn't detect, and howls with meanings we could only guess." Nick Jans, *A Wolf Called Romeo* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014), 56.

[262] Ibid., 120.

individual who enjoyed visiting, socializing, and playing with dogs, Romeo quickly became "Alaska's best-known, most accessible wolf."[263] While his popularity garnered him attention and support, it also presented the wolf with great danger. During Romeo's second season at Mendenhall, for example, one vocal young man demanded the wolf be shot or relocated for allegedly killing a beagle. Although the death of the beagle could not be confirmed nor its cause determined, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game responded with "adverse operant conditioning," shooting Romeo with rubber bullets and bean bags, and startling him with loud pyrotechnic rounds.[264] Romeo also regularly navigated leg-hold and snare traps in the woods near the glacier, in addition to the cars and streets of Juneau. Knowing that the wolf would "take the hard fall" if another negative encounter occurred, Jans and his partner Sherrie assumed a guardianship role, feeling "elation and angst" as they watched his movements from their home overlooking the lake and dissipated tense encounters among humans, dogs, and wolf.[265] Despite his interventions on the wolf's behalf, however, Jans concedes that Romeo's long-term survival was the result of the wolf's intelligence and adaptability. "The black wolf was hardly a passive presence, subject to our whims. He moved among and around us, a

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[263] Ibid., 153. Jans describes the long-term relationships that Romeo established with Juneau dogs as friendships. "The dog-wolf social interplay offered no apparent survival benefits," he writes, "and often the contrary, judging from the energy and time he expended. But the degree to which they mattered to the wolf indicated some complex need, no less real than food or shelter. Hard not to label these ties with certain dogs as social contact for its own intrinsic value: friendship, as we understand the word. As with human relationships, these bonds came in all categories, from strong interest to outright adoration, sometimes for reasons others might find inexplicable." Ibid., 110.

[264] Ibid., 129-30.

[265] Ibid., 57, 93, 168.

formidable melding of intelligence, power, razor-honed reflex, and sensory input, constantly interpreting, reacting, and making decisions on which his life depended. He obviously had learned to read nuances of human posture and scent, and to fade into the shadows when danger whispered."[266] Jans explains, "As a sentient, intelligent being, he made a choice to live where he did, and to interact with us and our dogs — not only on his own social terms, but through an adaptive understanding of our rules."[267] Setting an "unprecedented standard for coexistence and mutual safety between two species conflicted as any on this planet," the human residents of Juneau lived with Romeo for six years, until his sudden and violent death.[268]

The product of settler masculinity and anxiety, Alaska's anthropocentric legal and judicial systems not only legitimize violence against wolves and wider multispecies communities, they also deny wolves victimhood and legal standing. "Wolf management," a polite phrase used by conservation scientists and politicians to obscure the violence of extermination, has long been a controversial subject in Alaska.[269] Although the state outlawed several late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century extermination programs by

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[266] Ibid., 139. See also ibid., 154.

[267] Ibid., 228.

[268] Ibid.

[269] Jans calls wolf management "the sort of topic that leads to hard feelings, finger-jabbing, nasty letters to the editor, and occasional bar fights." Ibid., 17. Rather than construct a dualism of pro-wolf advocates and anti-wolf detractors, Jans points out that most Alaskans have mixed feelings about wolves. He writes, "A truer model would be a continuum with a few ardent, prowolf advocates on one end, a small number of equally impassioned voices pulling toward the opposite extreme, and the vast majority falling along a sliding scale that covered every possible shade of reaction, up to and including indifference." Ibid., 86. See also Ken Ross, *Environmental Conflict in Alaska* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2000).

the 1960s and 70s, including bounties and poison, lawful wolf "harvests" have continued well into the present.[270] From 1970 to 2000, approximately 15 percent of Alaska's annual wolf population — anywhere from several hundred to over one thousand individuals — were "killed legally each year."[271] Alaska's wildlife management laws, including the Intensive Management Law of 1994, stipulate that "wildlife be managed for human benefit."[272] Tasked with "maintaining maximum numbers of trophy and meat animals in a given area," the state's anthropocentric legal order sanctions the killing of wolves who are seen as a threat to "game" populations.[273] Under state law, Jans explains, "People come first, and Alaskans have a right and legal mandate to manage wildlife for their own maximum benefit."[274] This legal order has produced much suffering for wolves and the communities that support their presence. Jans describes, for instance, how "guns, steel traps, and broadcast poison bait" were used in combination with "the sort of inventive torture reminiscent of the worst episodes of human genocide. Wolves were burned alive, dragged to death behind horses, fed fishhooks inside meat, set free with mouths and penises wired shut."[275] In a particularly gruesome incident, Jans recalls how a woman,

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[270] Ibid., 49, 50, 53, 61.

[271] Ibid., 62; Sine Anahita and Tamara Mix, "Retrofitting Frontier Masculinity for Alaska's War Against Wolves," *Gender & Society* 20, no. 3 (2006): 332-53, at p. 337.

[272] Jans, *A Wolf Called Romeo*, 150.

[273] Ibid. See also Anahita and Mix, "Retrofitting Frontier Masculinity," 346-47.

[274] Jans, *A Wolf Called Romeo*, 18. Sarat, Basler, and Dumm observe, "A line is drawn, on one side of which is legitimate violence, on the other side all those terrible crimes we commit. Such is the domain of the law." Sarat, Basler, and Dumm, *Performances of Violence*, 4.

[275] Jans, *A Wolf Called Romeo*, 16.

while berry picking in Juneau during the summer of 2006, came across the body of a black wolf "dumped by a roadside turnout."[276] The wolf's throat was brutally cut and his body was riddled with bullet holes. As Jans explains, "He'd been killed several times over."[277] The State Wildlife Troopers determined the killing was illegal because the wolf was shot out of season and the creature's hide was not immediately "salvaged," as state law dictates.[278] While two men were ultimately charged, neither received meaningful punishments by the court system. "In the end," Jans writes, "one man pled guilty to a misdemeanor and received a minor fine; the other went to trial, where a jury of his peers found him not guilty on the basis of his claim that he wasn't aware that wolf season was closed, despite the fact that ignorance of the law is technically not a valid defense. The whole business just went to show how little the life of a wolf was valued in Alaska."[279] Once wolves have been removed from the land, numerous species suffer from the ensuing population changes, including humans dependent upon stable wildlife.[280] Treated

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[276] Ibid., 142.

[277] Ibid. He problematically describes the killing and dumping of the black wolf using racial language, comparing the deceased wolf to "a two-bit punk in some gangland execution." Ibid. Jans similarly describes the shooting of Romeo as a "gangland hit." Ibid., 206.

[278] Ibid.

[279] Ibid., 145. Anahita and Mix argue that contemporary wolf killing in Alaska offers a way for men concerned about the erosion of masculinity and white supremacy in a global capitalist economy to shore up their positions. Anahita and Mix, "Retrofitting Frontier Masculinity," 339.

[280] Among other research, long-term studies of wolf reintroduction to Yellowstone have documented this trend. For an update twenty-five years after the initial reintroduction, see Cassidy Randall, "A rewilding triumph: wolves help to reverse Yellowstone degradation," *The Guardian*, Jan. 25, 2020,

as "exquisite vermin" by Alaska's laws and courts, wolves continue to be systematically denied victimhood and deemed expendable.[281]

This legal landscape ultimately guaranteed Romeo's death and allowed his killers to escape without penalty. In September 2009, six years after Romeo had joined the Mendenhall community, Jeff Peacock and Park Myers III killed the eight-year-old wolf with a .22 caliber rifle. Having moved from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, to Juneau after being convicted in 1999 for sexually assaulting two underage girls and serving them alcohol and marijuana, Myers possessed a lengthy criminal record at the time. Peacock, "a slight, unremarkable man with a . . . blank face, wire-rimmed glasses, and a bad haircut" who lived in Lebanon, Pennsylvania, visited his friend Myers to collect animal bodies for the "dead zoo" in his living room.[282] Both men were widely known in Juneau as "serial poachers" who bragged about killing and torturing dozens of creatures, including black bears, geese, and opossums.[283] While the exact details of Romeo's death are unknown, Myers and Peacock likely took advantage of the wolf's friendly demeanor and shot him within or near his home territory. Peacock had plans to taxidermize the famous wolf and put him on display in his living room next to a copy of *The Glacier Wolf*, Jans's first book on Romeo. Jans, who dedicated years investigating this "wildlife crime," explains, "The idea was a quick, easy kill with no witnesses, and a body that

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https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/jan/25/yellowstone-wolf-project-25th-anniversary.

[281] Jon T. Coleman, *Vicious: Wolves and Men in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 13.

[282] Jans, *A Wolf Called Romeo*, 215, 205.

[283] Ibid., 213.

vanished without a trace. The thrill, Peacock made clear to anyone who would listen, lay not in the chase, but in the killing and the suffering he caused. All that and more would be memorialized in the trophy that he would display as a supreme accomplishment."[284] Typically, poachers are younger white men who illegally kill nonhuman animals for economic gain or subsistence purposes.[285] While Park and Myers fit the demographic of most "camouflage criminals," they killed Romeo not for money or food but rather to possess the wolf's body and the narratives associated with him, and to remove him from the multispecies community he co-created over the years.[286] By ending Romeo's life, they cut short the hundreds of relationships he had established with humans and dogs and they left deep suffering in the Juneau community.

Despite the best efforts of citizen investigators who pursued justice for Romeo and the larger community by bringing the criminals to court, both Peacock and Myers got away without having to pay fines, complete volunteer hours, or serve prison time. Though many Juneauites wanted to see the two men punished for killing Romeo, state enforcement agencies could only bring unsworn falsification charges against them in connection to the case. Citing the need to pursue charges that could be supported with undeniable evidence, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Alaska State Wildlife Troopers, and the US Forest Service came together to catch Myers and Peacock illegally

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[284] Ibid., 212, 206.

[285] Matthew Crow, Tara O'Connor Shelley, and Paul Stretesky, "Camouflage-collar Crime: An Examination of Wildlife Crime and Characteristics of Offenders in Florida," in *Environmental Crime and its Victims: Perspectives within Green Criminology*, eds. Toine Spapens, Rob White, and Marieke Kluin (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014), 188-90.

[286] Ibid., 186.

setting a bait station and killing an undersized, young black bear in May 2010. In addition to facing federal charges for illegally shipping a firearm via US mail, Myers was arrested for "taking big game by unlawful methods, baiting bears without a permit, and three charges of unlawful game possession."[287] Peacock was arrested and charged with "unsworn falsification [for the killing of Romeo], taking big game in a closed area, baiting bears without a permit, plus three counts of unlawful possession of game."[288] Each charge "carried a possible maximum fine of $10,000 and three hundred days in jail — times five for Myers, six for Peacock."[289] At the time of their arrest, residents of Juneau who knew Romeo or had negative interactions with Peacock and Myers were confident that justice would be meted. "Maybe we were all in shock," Jans writes, "but one truth held sure: we were law-abiding citizens bound by a sense of community, confident that the law would deliver a measure of justice—maybe not perfect, but something we could recognize."[290] During the trial, "a purposely dull, well-choreographed procedural dance," Myers initially entered a "not guilty" plea and then changed to "guilty" near the end of the proceedings.[291] By using the "not guilty" plea as a "bargaining chip," Myers was able to receive a reduced sentence.[292] At the end of the trial, Judge Keith Levy, the judge sentencing the two men, had to stay within legal

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[287] Jans, *A Wolf Called Romeo*, 214.

[288] Ibid.

[289] Ibid.

[290] Ibid., 215.

[291] Ibid., 223.

[292] Ibid.

precedence established by the Alaskan judicial system or else his sentence would be appealed and overturned. Because the state legitimizes the killing of wildlife and does not enforce significant charges against the perpetrators of wildlife crime, the two men received minor sentences. Jans explains, "Despite lip service paid to the high value of Alaska's wildlife, state law and the record of its application tell another story. Court records show that no one serves time for first-time misdemeanor wildlife violations in Alaska, and full fines on all possible charges are seldom, if ever, imposed. If Judge Levy had exceeded those boundaries set by precedent, his sentence would have been appealed and overridden."[293] Myers was ordered to pay $5,000 in fines and $1,100 in restitution, to forfeit three firearms and Alaska hunting privileges for three years, and to serve three years probation. Peacock was ordered to pay a $3,000 fine, to serve three years probation, and to lose three years of hunting privileges.[294] Both men left the courts without receiving any penalty for the killing of Romeo.[295] The sentences made it apparent that Romeo's life "came cheap" to the State of Alaska and they demonstrated the degree to which poaching continues to be seen as a "small crime" in the criminal justice system.[296]

Feeling abandoned by the courts, Jans disputes several tenets of a legal and juridical system built upon the violence of anthropocentrism and liberal humanism. The system failed to secure justice not only for Romeo and other wildlife, but also for the

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[293] Ibid., 224.

[294] See Klas Stolpe, "Probation Violation Hearing for Game Hunter Who Shot Romeo Delayed," *Juneau Empire*, Apr. 6, 2011, http://www.wolfsongnews.org/news/Alaska_current_events_3482.html.

[295] Jans, *A Wolf Called Romeo*, 284.

[296] Ibid., 218; Lynch et al., *Green Criminology*, 186.

humans and dogs of Juneau who shared relationships with the wolf. Jans remarks with frustration, "That was the best the state could manage: it provided justice to neither the wolf, nor the dead bears, nor us — just to itself, on its own terms. The system had taken care of itself; it was up to us to do the same."[297] He acknowledges that justice, to be effective, must serve humans and nonhumans, and it must work to uphold multispecies relationships. Far from serving nonhuman animals and the humans caught up with their lives, the courts legitimize the killing of wildlife and contribute to the dissolution of multispecies relationships.[298] As he reflects upon the unjust trial, Jans proposes changes to the classification, sentencing, and enforcement of wildlife crime that would allow the justice system to address nonhuman suffering. Most immediately, he suggests that wildlife crime in Alaska be classified more seriously than a misdemeanor and that fines be substantially increased. He notes that a large discrepancy often exists between "the public perception of the crime" and "the available penalty" as defined by law.[299] "[C]onsider the fine that Myers would pay in direct compensation for a wolf," he writes, "if found guilty of illegally depriving Alaska of said resource: $500. Each black bear was worth $600. And though the total penalties in the two cases were fairly severe — nearly $20,000 combined and years in jail for Myers and Peacock — the violations they were facing were all misdemeanors."[300] In addition to recommending more substantial

[297] Jans, *A Wolf Called Romeo*, 226.

[298] Part of this problem may stem from the focus on the victimizer rather than the victim that remains common in western legal orders. Nielsen and Robyn, *Colonialism is Crime*, 22.

[299] Jans, *A Wolf Called Romeo*, 217.

[300] Ibid., 218.

classificatory and pecuniary penalties, Jans implies that assigning a monetary value to individual members of a species is wrong and ineffective, since their inherent and communal values far exceed these small sums.[301] Moreover, to implement more severe sentences, the courts would need to rethink legal precedence altogether. Jans also advises changes to the "jurisdictional tangle" that ensnares wildlife and complicates enforcement of the law.[302] He notes that during any given day, Romeo traversed lands governed by multiple agencies, including the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the Alaska State Wildlife Troopers, the US Forest Service, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Juneau Police.[303] To further complicate matters, the State of Alaska legally "owns" every wolf living within the borders of the state, even as state and federal agencies hold different responsibilities for "managing" these populations.[304] The tangle of jurisdictions and agencies frustrate efforts to hold poachers accountable.

In response to the judicial system's inability to adequately address or resolve the killing of Romeo and the loss suffered by the local community, Jans — together with other Juneauites who felt deep attachments to Romeo — pursued extrajudicial forms of justice. Asserting what Jans calls "local justice," community members pushed Myers out of his job at Alaskan Brewing and ensured that his spouse lost her job at a veterinary

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[301] The law viewed Romeo as just another wolf, even though he was special to hundreds of humans and dogs. "As far as the state was concerned, a wolf was a wolf; there was no law or penalty addressing the killing of a specific individual, no matter how well known or regarded." Ibid., 217.

[302] Ibid., 58.

[303] Ibid.

[304] Ibid.

hospital.[305] During the weeks following the trial, some aggressive residents even shoved, roughed up, and threatened Myers in public. While meeting violence with more violence is, at best, ineffective, such a response marks a sharp move away from "internalist" positions where justice is pursued within the bounds of the law to, instead, "externalist" positions where justice is enacted outside the law, typically in ways that reflect judgements about the fairness of legal proceedings.[306] Indeed, the greatest frustration with the court was the exclusion of the larger community, especially the inability of residents to express their profound sense of collective loss. Upon hearing Myers's sentence, Jans and the other residents who packed the courtroom "understood the full extent to which we'd been marginalized. The wolf belonged to the state. Paradoxically, we, its law-abiding citizens, were nonentities — observers without importance or voice in the proceedings. There was no provision for any member of the community to take a turn at the microphone and address Romeo's killer, as nearly the whole gallery would have done."[307] Jans asks, "No doubt the letter of the law had been served in the matter of *State of Alaska v. Park Myers III*, but what about justice?"[308] Two weeks after Myers's trial, Juneau residents came together to hold a memorial service for Romeo at Mendenhall Lake. "Though this was probably the first memorial service for a wolf in Alaska, and maybe in human history," Jans explains, "it seemed natural enough — in fact, what

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[305] Ibid., 221.

[306] Adam Reed, "Crow Kill," in *Animals, Biopolitics, Law: Lively Legalities*, ed. Irus Braverman (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2016), 112-13.

[307] Jans, *A Wolf Called Romeo*, 225.

[308] Ibid.

circumstances demanded."[309] Romeo had, over the years, "melded into Juneau's story and became part of us."[310] At the ceremony, community members installed a bronze plaque in remembrance of the black wolf and they shared stories of encountering, playing with, and loving Romeo. In a particularly touching moment, those who had gathered played recordings of Romeo's howls and the dogs who were present responded one final time to his calls.[311] Seven years later, the same group of supporters installed an exhibit at the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor's Center that features Romeo's hide sculpted into a taxidermized figure "reclining on a rock outcropping," along with "two interpretative panels, a bronze cast of the wolf's paw-print, and his recorded howls."[312] As acts of communal mourning that occurred outside the formal justice system, the memorial service and exhibit offered a way for community members affected by Romeo's death to practice their own version of multispecies justice — one that foregrounded community participation and relationality — and to perform, once again, their entangled senses of self.[313] By coming together to reciprocate and affirm their relationships with the wolf, the wider community was able to heal and memorialize Romeo's life outside the courts. Jans felt a particularly strong connection with Romeo, calling him "a wild animal I loved like

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[309] Ibid., 230.

[310] Ibid., 229.

[311] Jans writes, "As his recorded howls rose into a vacant sky, dogs joined his song, twining a chorus more perfect than human voices could have been." Ibid.

[312] USDA, "Black wolf exhibit dedication with January 13 Fireside Chat at the glacier," *Tongass National Forest*, Jan. 9, 2017, https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/tongass/news-events/?cid=FSEPRD529300.

[313] For more on multispecies relationships experienced during grief, see Chapter 4, "Resisting With: The Anti-Normativity of Queers and Pets."

no other" and writing that the black wolf "redefined . . . my own understanding of where I stood in the world."[314] Defying the legal and juridical systems responsible for enacting multispecies violence that rippled across nonhuman and human groups, Jans and other Juneau residents turned to communal acts of justice to memorialize and celebrate a wolf who shaped each of their lives.

Conclusion

Identifying and studying multispecies violence is a necessary step in pursuing justice that extends across species boundaries and in producing more livable worlds for oppressed groups of humans and nonhumans. On one level, suffering and victimization must be recognized before they can be addressed. Though multispecies violence has been used as a mode of oppression for centuries, the study of violence has mistakenly sought to limit itself to human concerns and actors. Potawatomi botanist and author Robin Wall Kimmerer reminds us that "Paying attention to suffering sharpens our ability to respond. To be responsible."[315] The interconnected suffering of nonhuman species and human communities urgently demands our attention. On another level, the elimination of multispecies violence must constitute a core pillar of multispecies justice. Some scholars have suggested that justice be understood as the elimination or absence of violence. Evans, for example, defines justice as "the ability to live a life with dignity and free from lawful violence."[316] Though constrained by the bounds of the law, his definition points to

[314] Jans, *A Wolf Called Romeo*, 155, 41.

[315] Robin Wall Kimmerer, "Returning the Gift," *Humans and Nature*, Oct. 18, 2015, https://humansandnature.org/returning-the-gift/.

[316] Evans, "Myths of Violence," 64.

anti-violence as the central position to be taken up by justice. Chao goes further in conceptualizing justice as fundamentally concerned with anti-violence, writing, “Justice . . . can be defined as lack or absence of a form of violence or harm: not being removed from or dispossessed of one’s land, not being subjected to racist treatment, or not being forcefully separated from the other-than-human beings and ecologies that are constitutive of one’s being, becoming, and belonging.”[317] This chapter shares Chao’s vision, positing that the elimination of multispecies violence provides an organizing principle for working toward multispecies justice. Put another way, multispecies justice will be needed as long as multispecies violence persists.

Perhaps more dramatically, this chapter identifies a need to reimagine legal orders and juridical systems, and to open spaces for extrajudicial activities and practices to take hold. Much like its associations with the colonial state, justice remains problematically bound to, and dependent upon, legal systems that often do not share the same interests. In the case of multispecies justice, the current legal and juridical frameworks organized around the liberal humanist subject can never provide adequate support for nonhuman lives. While the legal system can shift away from liberal humanism to more relational models of subjectivity that prioritize reciprocal relationships, this change will be resisted by those who use the law to legitimize violence against others. Practitioners and scholars of multispecies justice, therefore, need to begin viewing western law as an adversary, not a partner, in the pursuit of justice for humans and nonhumans. Critical geographer Laura Pulido has made a similar point regarding environmental justice activism and the role of the state, writing:

[317] Chao, “Can There Be Justice Here?,” 24.

> [W]e need to change how we view the state and our relationship to it. Far too often the state is seen as an ally, or neutral force. Indeed, even when people lose faith in the state, they often still turn to it because there is no other apparent alternative. Much of the EJ movement has become too implicated in the state itself. What is needed is to begin seeing the state as an adversary that must be confronted in a manner similar to industry.[318]

It remains doubly unjust that the legal and juridical systems perpetuate multispecies violence and that they cannot be used to eliminate violence across species lines. Indeed, it should be no surprise that the authors in this chapter — and throughout the larger project — all imagine and pursue multispecies justice through extrajudicial means. As the Indigenous-led resistance organization People of Red Mountain demonstrates in the fight against Lithium Americas and the US government, the pursuit of multispecies justice often requires deliberately circumventing legal orders that fail to take the needs of human and nonhuman communities into consideration. Such tactics will likely become vital in the near future, especially as states seek to consolidate power amid the growing global crises of the twenty-first century. The next chapter considers how oppressed humans and nonhumans turn to extrajudicial activities to resist multispecies violence.

[318] Laura Pulido, "Geographies of race and ethnicity II: Environmental racism, racial capitalism and state-sanctioned violence," *Progress in Human Geography* 41, no. 4 (2017): 524-33, at p. 530.

CHAPTER IV

RESISTING WITH: THE ANTI-NORMATIVITY OF QUEERS AND PETS

> "If orientation is a matter of how we reside in space, then sexual orientation might also be a matter of residence; of how we inhabit spaces as well as 'who' or 'what' we inhabit spaces with."
> Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*

> "[W]e need more promiscuous and polyamorous forms of attachment."
> Eben Kirksey, "Queer Love, Gender Bending Bacteria, and Life after the Anthropocene"

> "But who will I be without my dog."
> Eileen Myles, *Afterglow*

John Grogan's immensely popular *Marley & Me: Life and Love with the World's Worst Dog* tells how Marley, a purebred yellow labrador retriever purchased from a Florida backyard breeder, becomes a member of Grogan's "quintessentially heterosexual" family.[1] Grogan, a self-described "alpha leader in the household hierarchy," and Jenny, his wife, bring Marley into their home during the "sublime early days of marriage."[2] As Grogan explains, "[J]ust as we knew we wanted children someday, we knew with equal certainty that our family home would not be complete without a dog sprawled at our feet."[3] For the Grogan household, having a dog was as essential and expected as having a child. Moreover, a yellow lab, just like a child, provided one of the missing pieces necessary to "complete" their family. "In many

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[1] John Grogan, *Marley & Me: Life and Love with the World's Worst Dog* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), 150. Breaking from spelling conventions, I do not capitalize proper nouns named after colonialists or nations. This refusal aims to destabilize the power of these words and restore some agency to the species who have been etymologically claimed.

[2] Ibid., 19, 1.

[3] Ibid., 4.

ways," Grogan writes, "[Marley] was like a child, requiring the time and attention a child requires, and we were getting a taste of the responsibility that lay ahead of us if we ever did have a family."[4] After an initial miscarriage, the Grogans have their first son who is protected by the family dog and becomes "best friends" with him.[5] Marley's compatibility with the Grogan household quickly wanes, however. The firstborn's demands for attention push Marley into the position of "second fiddle," and, while suffering from postpartum depression after the birth of their second child, Jenny insists that Marley — whose energetic behaviors no longer belong in a house with two infants — either "reform or relocate."[6] Given this ultimatum, Grogan trains Marley to become an obedient member of the family, and Jenny quickly "returns" to her "upbeat" self.[7] Eventually, Grogan explains, "Marley had earned his place in our family."[8] Unlike their three children who are born into the family unit, Marley has to "earn" his place by supporting, and never compromising, the "quintessentially heterosexual" family.

Grogan's book, along with the *Marley & Me* franchise that followed, became so popular because it joined two wildly successful and well-established subgenres: the family memoir and the pet memoir. As Grogan explained in an interview with the book's publisher, "I realized my book was not so much a 'dog book' as the story of a family in

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[4] Ibid., 81.

[5] Ibid., 109.

[6] Ibid., 125, 145.

[7] Ibid., 146.

[8] Ibid., 226.

the making and the bigger-than-life animal that helped shape it."[9] In combining the two subgenres and their shared interests in belonging and upbringing, *Marley & Me* describes how one dog fits into and maintains a contemporary white, middle-class family comprised of a husband, a wife, and their biological children. While family and pet memoirs vary considerably in their foci and subjects, Grogan's memoir imagines only one kind of family and only one role for pets, normalizing the "quintessentially heterosexual" family and the pet's duty to uphold this social unit.[10] Not only does Grogan exclude all other narratives and families that differ from his own, but he also limits the range of relations possible among pets and other family members. By declaring the story "universal," Grogan claims a position of dominance and erases all familial relations that do not adhere to his own.[11] *Marley & Me*, therefore, understands petkeeping to be a *heteronormative* activity. Pets provide coherence to "heterosexual" identity positions while normalizing "heterosexuality" as the only possible mode of familial experience.[12]

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[9] Ibid., 298.

[10] While I appreciate Donna Haraway's efforts to move beyond limiting terms such as "pet" in favor of "companion species," I use the term "pet" rather than "species" in this chapter to indicate a specific set of historically constructed relations among humans and a select few animals. Keeping with Katherine Grier who defines pets as animals "singled out by human beings," my use of the term refers to animals, in this case dogs and cats, who live closely with humans to such a degree that they occupy an exceptional and unusual place compared to most other beings. Katherine Grier, *Pets in America: A History* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 8. As Erica Fudge explains, pets are "crucial parts of our lives and are therefore significant in those terms." Erica Fudge, *Pets* (2008; New York: Routledge, 2014), 3.

[11] Grogan, *Marley & Me*, 294.

[12] "Heterosexuality" is placed in quotations to call attention to its categorical instability and to refuse its normalization. The concept of heteronormativity is discussed below.

Since the book's publication in 2005, *Marley & Me* has inspired dozens of memoirs that install pets, especially dogs and cats, as central to the operations of hetero families. Many memoirs position pets as "de facto children" or "significant others," participating in a trend that has achieved increasing popularity as more cats and dogs are desexualized through spay and neuter campaigns, as increasing numbers of people forgo long-term relationships in favor of careers, and as many decide to prolong having children, if any at all.[13] Lauren Fern Watts, for example, in *Gizelle's Bucket List: My Life with a Very Large Dog*, refers to herself as "dog-mom" and to Gizelle, an english mastiff, as "my massive baby."[14] While terms like these evoke the close bonds that many feel with pets, they tend to reinscribe the nuclear family as the center of social and emotional life, particularly the view that the parent-child bond is the most meaningful and therefore must continually be reproduced.[15] In other memoirs, pets function to restore the threatened hetero family unit. Helen Brown, a New Zealand journalist, describes how a cat named Cleo saved her "crumbling" family by "dragg[ing] us into the here and now"

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[13] Monica Flegel, *Pets and Domesticity in Victorian Literature and Culture: Animality, Queer Relations, and the Victorian Family* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 9; Frederick L. Brown, *The City is More Than Human: An Animal History of Seattle* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2019), 182-83; Adrian Franklin, *Animals and Modern Cultures: A Sociology of Human-Animal Relations in Modernity* (London: SAGE Publications, 1999), 12.

[14] Lauren Fern Watts, *Gizelle's Bucket List: My Life with a Very Large Dog* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2017), 29, 42.

[15] As Donna Haraway has observed, these terms also misrepresent "the sorts of multispecies relationships emerging among us." Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 51. A person's relationship with a pet exceeds that of parent-child or partner-significant other.

in her memoir *Cleo: The Cat Who Mended a Family*.[16] After several years of being unhappily married to her husband, Brown loses her nine-year-old son in a traffic accident and turns to Cleo for support. Teaching Brown's family how "to loosen up, laugh and toughen up when necessary," Cleo saves the family from collapse.[17] Julie Barton's *Dog Medicine: How My Dog Saved Me From Myself* and Julie Klam's *Love at First Bark: How Saving a Dog Can Sometimes Help You Save Yourself* tell similar stories, albeit with dogs instead of cats playing the role of savior.[18] Some memoirs even reverse this trope by saving a pet in order to preserve the hetero family. Margaret and Michael Korda's *Cat People*, for instance, describes how Michael, the former editor-in-chief of Simon & Schuster, once accidently let his family's cat Napoleon escape from a fourth-floor window of their New York City apartment. Seeking to restore his and the cat's position in their family, Michael climbs a fire escape in the "pouring rain" to retrieve Napoleon.[19] Learning that the cat had broken his fall by landing on a canvas awning, Michael brings Napoleon "home to his grieving wife and son" who are "so astonished to get him back alive" they forgive Michael for opening the wrong window.[20] As these examples demonstrate, pets are often used to construct and shore up the figure of the

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[16] Helen Brown, *Cleo: The Cat Who Mended a Family* (New York: Citadel Press Books, 2009), 110, 67.

[17] Ibid., 286.

[18] Julie Barton, *Dog Medicine: How My Dog Saved Me From Myself* (New York: Penguin Books, 2016); Julie Klam, *Love at First Bark: How Saving a Dog Can Sometimes Help You Save Yourself* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2011).

[19] Margaret and Michael Korda, *Cat People* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), 18.

[20] Ibid., 20.

"heterosexual" family.[21] In doing so, family pet memoirs suggest that dogs and cats "naturally" belong in hetero families where they can achieve their best and truest expression as guardians of the fragile configuration that calls itself "heterosexuality." Avoiding sexual, familial, or multispecies relations that exist outside of a hetero landscape, these narratives reveal the degree to which pets are bound up with the practices and articulations of "heterosexual" identities.

While the family pet memoir is a novel subgenre, dogs and cats have been explicitly associated with hetero families since the nineteenth century. The rise of the middle class coupled with the decline of urban livestock during the mid-1800s led many in the United States and Europe to view dogs and cats as "animals of leisure" belonging indoors rather than outdoor creatures tasked with fulfilling utilitarian needs such as guarding property or killing rodents.[22] With their move inside the home, pets became connected to domesticity, morality, and family life. "As the nuclear family became a more important component in organizing urban life," historian Frederick Brown explains, "dogs and cats more frequently became confined and integrated within that structure."[23] Cats were seen as "an embodiment of domestic virtue—a high calling at a time when the

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[21] For more on the harms of pet salvation narratives, see Harlan Weaver, "Gimme Shelter: Saviorist Storying, Animal 'Rescue', and Interspecies Intersectionality," in *Bad Dog: Pit Bull Politics and Multispecies Justice* (Seattle: Washington University Press, 2021), 23-54.

[22] Brown, *The City is More than Human*, 150; Margo DeMello, "The Present and Future of Animal Domestication," in *A Cultural History of Animals in the Modern Age*, ed. Randy Malamud (2007; Oxford: Berg, 2011), 67-94, at p. 81; Katharine Rogers, *Cat* (London: Reaktion Books, 2006), 47; Andrew Robichaud, *Animal City: The Domestication of America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019), 160; John Berger, *About Looking* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 12.

[23] Brown, *The City is More than Human*, 150.

pure and harmonious home was idealized as never before. Popular artists constantly included cats in their wholesome domestic scenes to reinforce family values."[24] Symbols of domesticity and family values, pets became tools for teaching gender roles to children and for enforcing these roles within the contexts of family life. A common lesson involved associating "good" behaviors of pets such as obedience, loyalty, and docility with the "good" behaviors of subservient wives and children.[25] Parents, particularly mothers, also taught their children to be kind to dogs and cats in order to instill a sense of social respect and responsibility toward other people.[26] Children were taught that their relationship with household pets should mirror the one they had with their mother.[27] This "domestic ethic of kindness" became a way for families to raise respectable children and pets capable of following social expectations.[28]

At the same time families began incorporating pets into domestic life to support gender norms and behaviors, new sexualities were being crafted and managed. The nineteenth-century construction of "the heterosexual" and its defining opposite "the homosexual" sought to normalize "heterosexuality" as a homogenous, natural, and

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[24] Rogers, *Cat*, 97-98. As Philip Howell succinctly explains, "Pets came to express the ideal of the Victorian family." Philip Howell, "Flush and the *banditti*: dog-stealing in Victorian London," in *Animal Spaces, Beastly Places: New Geographies of Human-Animal Relations*, ed. Chris Philo and Chris Wilbert (London: Routledge, 2000), 35-55, at p. 46.

[25] Rogers, *Cat*, 133.

[26] Brown, *The City is More than Human*, 154; Robichaud, *Animal City*, 160, 176-77; DeMello, "The Present and Future of Animal Domestication," 81.

[27] Grier, *Pets in America*, 166.

[28] Ibid., 128.

superior kind of "personage," to use Foucault's term, while pathologizing "homosexuality" as an unnatural, wrong, and peripheral category.[29] As Foucault observes, all "unnatural" or deviant sexualities were collapsed under the umbrella of "homosexuality" in order to be managed by institutions of power such as the church or state.[30] Much like human sexualities which were limited through a range of techniques that included state laws and social censorship, pet sexualities were also controlled on a wide scale during the nineteenth century. Brown, for example, argues that the regulation of "animal sexuality" through spay and neuter campaigns and the suppression of public mating displays "revealed prevailing attitudes on human sexuality."[31] Similarly, animal studies scholar Karla Armbruster notes that spaying and neutering allows people to avoid "the inconvenience of . . . sexuality."[32] Indeed, as the queer theorist Beatriz Preciado explains, French cities sought to simultaneously remove the "contaminated" bodies of lesbians and french bulldogs from "heterosexual, hegemonic space[s]" during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[33] Dogs and cats became entangled with

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[29] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*. Vol. 1, *An Introduction*. Trans. Robert Hurley (1978; New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 43.

[30] Ibid., 41.

[31] Brown, *The City is More than Human*, 167.

[32] Karla Armbruster, "Into the Wild: Response, Respect, and the Human Control of Canine Sexuality and Reproduction," *JAC* 30, no. 3-4 (2010): 755-83, at p. 759.

[33] Beatriz Preciado, "Queer Bulldogs: Histories of Human-canin [*sic*] Co-breeding and Biopolitical Resistance" (presentation, "Disowning Life" conference, Sept. 10, 2012), https://d13.documenta.de/#/research/research/view/on-seeds-and-multispecies-intra-action-disowning-life-beatriz-preciado-queer-bulldogs-histories-of-human-canin-co-breeding-and-biopolitical-resistance.

sexualities and families to such a degree that these associations continue to inform contemporary narratives of family pets.

The connections between pets, family, sexuality, and gender that emerged in the nineteenth century and continue into the present have transformed family pets into agents of heteronormativity. A "pervasive and often invisible" force, heteronormativity reproduces itself as ubiquitous, normative, and universal by standing alone in a privileged position without a parallel or opposite.[34] As Michael Warner, the literary critic and queer theorist who coined the term, explains, heteronormative culture "thinks of itself as the elemental form of human association, as the very model of inter-gender relations, as the indivisible basis of all community, and as the means of reproduction without which society wouldn't exist."[35] Heteronormativity, in other words, positions itself as indispensable to all life. Lauren Berlant and Warner capture this presumed necessity when they define heteronormativity as consisting of "the institutions, structures of understanding, and practical orientations that make heterosexuality seem not only coherent—that is, organized as a sexuality—but also privileged."[36] In following the logic of this "presumed bedrock of society," departing from heteronormativity would not only

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[34] Michael Warner, "Fear of a Queer Planet," *Social Text* 29 (1991): 3-17, at p. 3; Gust A. Yep, "The Violence of Heteronormativity in Communication Studies," *Journal of Homosexuality* 45, no. 2-4 (2003): 11-59, at p. 18; Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner, "Sex in Public," *Critical Inquiry* 24, no. 2 (1998): 547-66, at n. 2 p. 548. Unlike "heterosexuality" which operates by defining itself against "homosexuality," heteronormativity defines and reproduces itself by standing alone. Heteronormativity, therefore, is viewed as "normal," a baseline to which all other actions and practices must be measured.

[35] Michael Warner, ed. *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), xxi.

[36] Berlant and Warner, "Sex in Public," n. 2 p. 548.

be misanthropic but it would also lead to human extinction.[37] Heteronormativity operates, in part, by making hetero institutions appear "compulsory," as Adrienne Rich once put it, a problem that has also produced homonormativity.[38] And yet, heteronormativity never acts alone or in isolation. It also shapes relations with, and the material conditions of, other species, especially pets. Dogs and cats have been employed in making "heterosexuality" appear normal and universal, and in protecting hetero institutions — particularly what one critic calls the "heteronormativities of home" — from challenges and threats.[39] Pets have also become normalized within hetero families to the extent that Marley became a training tool for having children and was viewed as a natural fit for the Grogan household.[40] Cats and dogs, therefore, have played central roles in defining and constituting a culture of heteronormativity.

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[37] Yep, "The Violence of Heteronormativity," 18.

[38] Adrienne Rich, "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence," *Signs* 5, no. 4 (1980): 631-60; Lisa Duggan, "The New Homonormativity: The Sexual Politics of Neoliberalism," in *Materializing Democracy: Toward a Revitalized Cultural Politics*, eds. Russ Castronovo and Dana D. Nelson (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 175-94.

[39] Will McKeithen, "Queer Ecologies of Home: Heteronormativity, Speciesism, and the Strange Intimacies of Crazy Cat Ladies," *Gender, Place & Culture* 24, no. 1 (2017): 122-34, at p. 125.

[40] As Monica Flegel argues, pets have "helped to define normative human relations." Flegel, *Pets and Domesticity*, 6. Noël Sturgeon makes a similar point in her reading of the documentary *The March of the Penguins*, arguing that the film shows penguin families and acts of sexual reproduction as "a metaphor for human heteronormative romance and nuclear families." Noël Sturgeon, "Penguin Family Values: The Nature of Planetary Environmental Reproductive Justice," in *Queer Ecologies: Sex, Nature, Politics, Desire*, ed. Catriona Mortimer-Sandilands and Bruce Erickson (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2010), 102-33, at p. 110. For a similar reading, see Judith Halberstam, "Animating Revolt/Revolting Animation: Penguin Love, Doll Sex and the Spectacle of the Queer Nonhuman," in *Queering the Non/Human*, ed. Noreen Giffney and Myra J. Hird (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2008), 265-82.

In addition to structuring relations, heteronormativity establishes and enforces modes of conduct that are deemed appropriate for hetero family members and their pets. These rules and behaviors generally seek to protect the family unit from disruption while transforming pets into proper family members. Although not all hetero relationships produce or otherwise support heteronormativity, the memoirs discussed above generally view pets as objects of satisfaction and tools of entertainment that enable the maintenance and reproduction of the hetero family unit. Narratives such as Barton's *Dog Medicine* and Watts's *Gizelle's Bucket List* position dogs as necessary to sustaining the emotional, psychological, and physical health of the author and their family.[41] Pets, especially those associated with savior narratives, are valued primarily for the support they provide. Despite the family's dependence on them, however, cats and dogs are understood to be completely dependent upon humans. With their movements largely restricted to the boundaries of the house, pets are viewed as additional dependents, as Grogan makes clear when he calls Marley "a child." Similarly, family pet memoirs describe the behaviors of dogs and cats as entirely predictable and knowable. The Kordas, for example, claim to know all the behaviors of the multiple cats in their house, along with their specific placements.[42] Such knowledge claims seek to manage the home by regulating pet bodies and foreclosing alternate modes of coexistence. When family pets die in such narratives, prolonged grief is almost never explored. In *Colter: The True Story of the Best Dog I Ever Had*, Rick Bass provides a respectful burial for Colter — a bird hunting dog named

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[41] The "therapeutic value" of dogs and cats has been recognized since at least the mid-nineteenth century. Grier, *Pets in America*, 179.

[42] See, for example, the discussion of the cats' various territories. Korda and Korda, *Cat People*, 131-33.

after the settler colonialist John Colter who accompanied Lewis and Clark and remains enshrined in settler lore for outrunning "a whole tribe of Blackfeet" — but finds a replacement hunting dog just a month later.[43] Mourning the loss of a pet is seen as a temporary, never extended, process. Finally, like the suppression of mourning, family pet narratives seek to establish a bounded, impervious self. Brown's family, for example, becomes "broken, frayed remnants of our former selves," after the death of her son, but Cleo restores their senses of self, allowing them to "forgive the unfamiliar people we'd become."[44] Sociologist Adrian Franklin supports such a view when he argues that pets provide a feeling of stability in a fragmented postmodern world, calling the "enduring, stable, and robust relationship" provided by pets "ontological security."[45] As these examples indicate, family pet memoirs seek to normalize appropriate behaviors and relations with dogs and cats. One of the operations of heteronormativity, therefore, is to normalize the position of pets within the home and the family, to produce and enforce a domestic version of what Catriona Mortimer-Sandilands and Bruce Erickson call "hetero-ecologies."[46]

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[43] Rick Bass, *Colter: The True Story of the Best Dog I Ever Had* (2000; New York: Mariner Books, 2001), 34.

[44] Brown, *Cleo*, 37, 109.

[45] Adrian Franklin, *Animals and Modern Cultures: A Sociology of Human-Animal Relations in Modernity* (London: SAGE Publications, 1999), 87, 86.

[46] Catriona Mortimer-Sandilands and Bruce Erickson, "Introduction: A Genealogy of Queer Ecologies," in *Queer Ecologies: Sex, Nature, Politics, Desire*, ed. Catriona Mortimer-Sandilands and Bruce Erickson (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2010), 1-47, at p. 22.

While family pet memoirs since the publication of *Marley & Me* have presented their stories and subjects as normative and universal, numerous memoirs have resisted such claims by queering the role of the pet, the composition of the family, and the boundary of the self. This chapter examines how several queer memoirists, all of whom identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual, critique and challenge petkeeping as a (hetero)normative activity and pursue alternatives amenable to queer and pet lives.[47] At the risk of imposing frameworks around a term that resists definition, I offer some guideposts to signal my critical approach to the varieties of queer theory that have emerged over the past three decades.[48] Although some critics, including some queer theorists, seek to decouple the term from its association with a diverse array of sexualities and positions, I maintain this attachment in order to acknowledge how people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender experience forms of harm, such as heteronormativity, differently from those who occupy other subject positions.[49] Many of

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[47] My bracketing of "(hetero)normativity" signals that not all normative formations discussed in this chapter have arisen through the construction of "heterosexuality," but that many have been framed in this way. Moreover, the examination of dogs and cats, and not other household companions such as birds or reptiles, accounts for their popularity in literature and US petkeeping cultures. For a detailed discussion on birds and the activity of birdkeeping, see Chapter 2, "Avian Care: Conflict, Justice, and the Quotidian."

[48] As Annamarie Jagose notes, queer not only has "definitional indeterminacy," but the term also carries a "resistance to definition." Annamarie Jagose, *Queer Theory: An Introduction* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 1. See also Nikki Sullivan, *A Critical Introduction to Queer Theory* (New York: New York University Press, 2003), 43.

[49] For examples of monographs that seek to decouple queer from an identity position, not including recent work on species, see William B. Turner, *A Genealogy of Queer Theory* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000); Erin J. Rand, *Reclaiming Queer: Activist & Academic Rhetorics of Resistance* (Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 2014). David Halperin critiques the move to disconnect queer from its identity politics roots, writing against the tendency that he calls "the normalization of queer theory."

the authors discussed in this chapter position queer cultures of resistance as emerging specifically from the historical moment that preceded marriage equality in the US. As such, the queer and pet cultures under consideration developed within a hostile set of cultural attitudes and legislative apparatuses that denied people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transexual, queer, and intersex the right to marriage and the rights afforded by anti-discrimination laws. At the same time, however, my use of queer also refers to positions and practices that challenge normative relations and the harms imposed by normativity.[50] Queer, in this sense, can be taken up by any actor that defies, resists, or challenges what Kim Tallbear and Angela Willey call "normative ways of relating."[51] In their discussions of queer and trans* entanglements, for example, Karen Barad and Eva Hayward demonstrate that other species and bodies can function as disruptive, anti-normative agents.[52] Similarly, this chapter recognizes dogs and cats as queer beings who

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David M. Halperin, "The Normalization of Queer Theory," *Journal of Homosexuality* 45, no. 2-4 (2003): 339-43.

[50] Rather than position itself against "heterosexuality," queer resists and challenges normativity. As Halperin explains, queer "acquires its meaning from its oppositional relation to the norm. Queer is by definition *whatever* is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant. *There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers*. It is an identity without an essence. 'Queer,' then, demarcates not a positivity but a positionality vis-à-vis the normative." David M. Halperin, *Saint Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 62. See also Elena Gambino, "'A More Thorough Resistance'?: Coalition, Critique, and the Intersectional Promise of Queer Theory," *Political Theory* 48, no. 2 (2020): 218-44, at p. 220; Warner, "Fear of a Queer Planet," 16; Warner, *Fear of a Queer Planet*, xxvi.

[51] Kim Tallbear and Angela Willey, "Critical Relationality: Queer, Indigenous, and Multispecies Belonging Beyond Settler Sex & Nature," *Imaginations* 10, no. 1 (2019): 5-15, at p. 6.

[52] Karen Barad, "Nature's Queer Performativity," *Qui Parle* 19, no. 2 (2011): 121-58; Eva Hayward, "Lessons from a Starfish," in *Queering the Non/Human*, ed. Noreen Giffney and Myra J. Hird (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2008), 249-64;

often challenge, rather than support, (hetero)normativity. Finally, I understand queer as creating spaces and relations outside of (hetero)normative structures where queer identities and practices survive and even flourish. To assume a queer position is to practice, in the words of Mel Y. Chen, "the social and cultural formations of 'improper affiliation'."[53] As Chen explains, queerness "describe[s] an array of subjectivities, intimacies, beings, and spaces located outside of the heteronormative."[54] In this sense, queer requires breaking from (hetero)normativity and creating worlds of improper, defiant affiliation.[55]

Guided by such positions, this chapter argues that heteronormativity harms queers and pets in similar ways and leads to mutually shared injustices. The chapter examines several pet memoirs written by queer authors, including Lars Eighner's *Travels with Lizbeth*, Mark Doty's *Dog Years*, Caroline Paul's *Lost Cat: A True Story of Love, Desperation, and GPS Technology*, Nicole Georges's *Fetch: How a Bad Dog Brought Me Home*, and Eileen Myles's *Afterglow (a dog memoir)*, all of which challenge the

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Eva Hayward, "More Lessons from a Starfish: Prefixial Flesh and Transspeciated Selves," *Women's Studies Quarterly* 36, no. 3-4 (2008): 64-85. The term "trans*" signals a multiplicity of identities, including transgender, transexual, transwoman, transman, non-binary, androgynous, transfeminine, and transmaculine, among others.

[53] Mel Y. Chen, *Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 104.

[54] Ibid. Rather than adhere to Chen's passive voice, I emphasize that "the subjectivities, intimacies, beings, and spaces" of queerness actively locate themselves outside of the heteronormative.

[55] Harlan Weaver uses the phrase "queer affiliation" to describe anti-familial and anti-kinship projects that reject heteronormative, white supremacist, and colonialist logics. Weaver, *Bad Dog*, 130. While I attend to queer affiliations in this chapter, I ground the study of anti-normative relations in the experiences of gay, lesbian, and bisexual authors.

shared harms and injustices of (hetero)normativity by proposing strategies of resistance that involve the author and their pets coming together to create relations and spaces supportive of queers and pets alike. Beginning from the understanding that heteronormativity harms members of all social positions and sexualities, including those who identify with what Gust Yep, following Warner, calls "regimes of the normal," it becomes apparent that other species can also suffer from "the ongoing violence of heteronormativity."[56] This is perhaps most visible with family pets. While some forms of violence are more apparent such as the physical abuse of pets and recently out queers by patriarchal, homophobic men who seek to control the family unit, others are more obscure such as considering pets children whose behaviors and movements must be managed to conform to, and therefore reproduce, hetero ideals of dependency and obedience.[57] As the literary and cultural critic Richard Rodríguez argues about Justin Torres's novel *We the Animals*, heteronormativity projects consistent hostility toward queers and other animals.[58] Resisting heteronormativity's hostility and shared harms requires, as Warner puts it, "actively imagining a necessarily and desirably queer

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[56] Yep, "The Violence of Heteronormativity," 45, 26; Warner, "Fear of a Queer Planet," 16.

[57] Barton, for example, describes how her abusive older brother scrawled the word "lesbian" on her bedroom door when she was ten years old, thinking it an insult. He also abused their first childhood dog, indirectly killing Midnight when she broke her back after trying to hide from one of his cruel fights. Barton, *Dog Medicine*, 34, 64-65.

[58] Richard T. Rodríguez, "Oedipal Wrecks: Queer Animal Ecologies in Justin Torres's *We the Animals*," in *Latinx Environmentalisms: Place, Justice, and the Decolonial* (Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 2019), 267-80.

world."[59] By joining one another to create "biopolitical alliances," queers and pets establish spaces outside of heteronormativity that provide mutual support.[60]

Unlike hetero narratives of the family pet, the memoirs under consideration understand dogs and cats as queer agents, as beings who queer heteronormative families, narratives, and selves. No longer viewed as tools for resurrecting, protecting, and reproducing heteroscapes, pets inspire queer rebellion. Full of liveliness and disruptive potential, cats and dogs point to the surprising multispecies, and queer, configurations that become possible when species meet.[61] Indeed, the literary critic Erica Fudge refers to pets as "boundary breakers" because they "challenge some of the key boundaries by and in which we live."[62] Kath Weston, in *Families We Choose*, captures this sense of boundary disruption in a surprising passage about her lesbian friend's cat joining their "chosen" queer family.

> [W]e began to apply the terms 'family' and 'extended family' to one another. Our remarks found a curious counterpart in a series of comments on changes in the behavior of Liz's cat. Once an unsociable creature that took to hiding and growling from the other room when strangers invaded her realm, now she watched silently from beneath the telephone table and even ventured forth to greet

[59] Warner, "Fear of a Queer Planet," 8.

[60] Preciado, "Queer Bulldogs."

[61] Haraway, of course, has underlined this point in her work with dogs. See Donna Haraway, "The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness," in *Manifestly Haraway* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016), 91-198; Haraway, *When Species Meet*.

[62] Fudge, *Pets*, 17, 19.

> her visitors. Not that she does that for everyone, Liz reminded us: clearly we were being taken into an inner circle.[63]

While this anecdote provides comic relief and offers a glimpse of their gathering space, it also points to the ways in which a cat can further queer a chosen family. Like Weston and her group of lesbian and gay friends who redefine "the family" by choosing one another, the cat also "chooses" a family. In forging attachments with a cat, Weston's chosen family rejects a futurity premised on the production of biological children. With a newfound sociability that emerged from queer friends holding regular meetings, the cat draws Weston's chosen family into "an inner circle," remaking queer kinship into a multispecies site. This passage evokes a deep sense of camaraderie, love, affiliation, and even kinship shared among queers and pets. As the queer theorist and literary critic Alice Kuzniar explains, "[O]ne of the major repercussions of pet love is that it reorients companionship and kinship away from the normative strictures of heterosexual coupling and the traditional family."[64] Just as Weston's queer family chooses to socialize and incorporate the cat, the cat chooses to socialize with and accept Weston's queer family.

Pets also queer narratives and selves, disrupting genre conventions in order to center the experiences of queers and pets while rewriting the boundaries of the self to be more porous and inclusive. As a subgenre of life writing that challenges conventional ideas of selfhood, narrative form, and species relationality, multispecies memoirs are, in an important sense, queer. Much like memoirs written by and about queer subjects that

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[63] Kath Weston, *Families We Choose: Lesbians, Gays, Kinship* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 104.

[64] Alice Kuzniar, *Melancholia's Dog* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 207.

call attention to "the mediated, subjective, and inherently unreliable nature of autobiography," as the cultural and literary critic Julie Minich puts it, multispecies memoirs destabilize the genre's assumptions regarding subjects, authorship, and narrative structure.[65] I read Eighner's *Travels with Lizbeth*, Doty's *Dog Years*, Paul's *Lost Cat*, Georges's *Fetch*, and Myles's *Afterglow* as queer not only because they are written from queer subject positions about queer subjects, including pets, but also because the texts challenge genre conventions and resist normativity in ways that support queer and pet lives. Much like the disputing of narrative conventions, pets queer senses of self by disrupting imagined borders and forging multispecies alliances. Often understood to signify only when attached to a first-person speaker, queer has a strong association with selfhood.[66] Queer's interest in what Eve Sedgwick has called "self-perception and filiation" suggests that living with pets through queer entanglements requires that one pay careful attention to their sense of self, including their relations with others. The memoirs examined in this chapter queer the self by disrupting the boundaries that separate self from other and human from nonhuman. As Haraway explains, "Queering has the job of undoing 'normal' categories, and none is more critical than the human/nonhuman sorting

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[65] Julie Avril Minich, "Writing Queer Lives: Autobiography and Memoir," in *The Cambridge Companion to American Gay and Lesbian Literature*, ed. Scott Herring (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 59-72, at p. 70.

[66] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Tendencies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 9. See also Jagose, *Queer Theory*, 17; Teresa de Lauretis, "Queer Theory: Lesbian and Gay Sexualities," *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 3, no. 2 (1991): iii-xviii, at p. xi; Frank Browning, *A Queer Geography: Journeys Toward a Sexual Self* (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1996).

operation."[67] Queer(ed) selves are those mutually entangled with others. They establish shared relations and spaces in the pursuit of more just futures.

Queer Resistance

A central challenge of pursuing this work involves theorizing resistance as a multispecies practice, a set of actions that include, and are taken up by, other species. To do so, I propose queering the concept of resistance itself. This involves not only considering how persons who identify as queer practice resistance, but also examining how other species such as dogs and cats resist multiple harms, always alongside — and in ways that strengthen and reinforce the actions of — people, queer and otherwise. Resistance, therefore, does not solely belong to human agents; rather, it also emerges through the defiance of species. Queer(ed) forms of resistance reframe the possibilities of relating with others, opening up new venues for participatory action and making undeniable the agencies of species. Although the term queer and its historical precursors have always been associated with social and political resistance, "queer" and "resistance" became more tightly coupled following the 1969 Stonewall Riots and the emergence of queer theory in the early 1990s. In contrast, queer criticism has largely neglected to explore associations with other species, and the few engagements that do consider overlaps between queer thought and species curiously avoid any mention of resistance. While queer actors and positions are deemed capable of resistance to the point where the

[67] Donna Haraway, "Companion Species, Mis-recognition, and Queer Worlding," in *Queering the Non/Human*, ed. Noreen Giffney and Myra J. Hird (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2008), xxiii-xxvi, at p. xxiv.

term has lost some of its disruptive power, species continue to be stripped of agency and excluded from political action.

The set of orientations that coalesce under the umbrella of queer theory have remained, at best, ambivalent toward other-than-human lives. Much of this ambivalence emerged from a strong distrust of biology and "the natural" by the founding fields of queer theory, which were critical of science and nature's twin roles in essentializing human behaviors. While queer theory is most often traced back to Teresa de Lauretis's demand that scholars depart from the limited scope of gay and lesbian studies to instead examine a wide-ranging field of sexualities through anti-normative frameworks, the field also has roots in feminism's disruption of categorization, including intersectional approaches developed by women of color feminisms that attend to the operations of recursive power and the construction of democratic modes of being.[68] Influenced by these founding fields and their skepticism of biological claims to the natural, queer theory of the 1990s became, in the words of the ecocritic Greg Garrard, "biophobic."[69] As Stacy Alaimo — echoing her earlier critique of feminist theory — explains, queer theorists "bracketed, expelled, or distanced the volatile categories of nature and the natural,

[68] For genealogies of queer theory emerging from gay and lesbian studies and gender criticism, see de Lauretis, "Queer Theory"; Sedgwick, *Tendencies*; Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990); Jagose, *Queer Theory*, 2; Sullivan, *A Critical Introduction*; Iain Morland and Annabelle Willox, eds., *Queer Theory* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Warner, "Fear of a Queer Planet," 16. For genealogies that explicitly point to the role of feminisms in shaping queer theory, see Turner, *A Genealogy of Queer Theory*, 5-8; Gambino, "A More Thorough Resistance," 220-22.

[69] Greg Garrard, "How Queer is Green?" *Configurations* 18, no. 1-2 (2010): 73-96, at p. 79.

situating queer desire within an entirely social, and very human, habitat."[70] Pushing back against the anthropocentrism of mainstream queer theory, many scientists and science studies critics sought to expand the diversity of animal sexuality by resisting biology's attempts to pathologize or explain away "non-heterosexual" behaviors.[71] To borrow a phrase from Haraway, these critics observed that the traffic of nature and culture moves both ways: cultural beliefs about sexuality inform biological science while the wide diversity of sexual expression practiced by animals can change cultural beliefs of human sexuality.[72] In critiquing what Jennifer Terry calls "reproductive heterosexuality" or what Judith Halberstam has termed "repro-heterosexuality," these critics reassigned pleasure and desire to animals while opening up a wider view of the diversity of human sexualities.[73] More recently, critical animal studies and environmental politics have also become sites for queer theory. The edited collection *Queering the Non/Human*, for

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[70] Stacy Alaimo, "Eluding Capture: The Science, Culture, and Pleasure of 'Queer' Animals," in *Queer Ecologies: Sex, Nature, Politics, Desire*, ed. Catriona Mortimer-Sandilands and Bruce Erickson (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2010), 51-72, at p. 51.

[71] See Lynda I. A. Birke, "Is Homosexuality Hormonally Determined?" *Journal of Homosexuality* 6, no. 4 (1981): 35-49; Bruce Bagemihl, *Biological Exuberance: Animal Homosexuality and Natural Diversity* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999); Roger N. Lancaster, *The Trouble with Nature: Sex in Science and Popular Culture* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003); Joan Roughgarden, *Evolution's Rainbow: Diversity, Gender, and Sexuality in Nature and People* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2013); Susan McHugh, "Queer (and) Animal Theories," *GLQ* 15, no. 1 (2008): 153-69; Alaimo, "Eluding Capture."

[72] Donna Haraway, *Primate Visions: Gender, Race, and Nature in the World of Modern Science* (New York: Routledge, 1989).

[73] Jennifer Terry, "'Unnatural Acts' in Nature: The Scientific Fascination with Queer Animals," *GLQ* 6, no. 2 (2000): 151-193, at p. 154; Halberstam, "Animating Revolt," 267.

example, seeks to queer the dualisms of nature/culture, subject/object, and human/nonhuman that continue to structure thinking about animals.[74] Additionally, the field of queer ecologies has critiqued the (hetero)normativity of environments, nature, and environmental politics in order to reclaim these entities and spaces as queer.[75] Indeed, as Mortimer-Sandilands and Erickson explain, the goal of queer ecologies is at least twofold: to queer ecology and to green queer politics.[76] Moving queer theory away from its "very human" center of focus has not only resulted in new areas of study but it has also expanded the operations of queer, animal, and environment to such a degree that thinking one requires considering the others.

Queer has also proliferated as a key term for multispecies studies where it has been used in a different sense to describe multispecies assemblages and relations that generate lively possibilities for coexistence. With her interest in dogs as companion species and her association with de Lauretis at UCSC's History of Consciousness

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[74] Noreen Giffney and Myra J. Hird, eds., *Queering the Non/Human* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008).

[75] See Catriona Sandilands, "Lavender's Green?: Some Thoughts on Queer(y)ing Environmental Politics," *UnderCurrents: journal of critical environmental studies* 6 (1994): 20-25; Greta Gaard, "Toward a Queer Ecofeminism," *Hypatia* 12, no. 1 (1997): 114-37; Timothy Morton, "Queer Ecology," *PMLA* 125, no. 2 (2010): 273-82; Catriona Mortimer-Sandilands and Bruce Erickson, *Queer Ecologies: Sex, Nature, Politics, Desire* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2010); Nicole Seymour, *Strange Natures: Futurity, Empathy, and the Queer Ecological Imagination* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2013); Jonathan M. Gray, "Heteronormativity without Nature: Toward a Queer Ecology," *QED: A Journal in GLBTQ Worldmaking* 4, no. 2 (2017): 137-42; Catriona Sandilands, "Sexual Politics and Environmental Justice: Lesbian Separatists in Rural Oregon," in *New Perspectives on Environmental Justice: Gender, Sexuality, and Activism*, ed. Rachel Stein (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004), 109-26.

[76] Mortimer-Sandilands and Erickson, "Introduction."

Program, Haraway is responsible for bringing queer frameworks to multispecies studies. Haraway, at several points in *The Companion Species Manifesto* and *When Species Meet*, calls the assemblages that other species make with humans "queer families" and "queer kin groups."[77] Queer, for Haraway, refers to actors and practices that are "off-category" and exist "outside reproductive teleology."[78] As such, she understands canine agility training to be a queer activity, "[M]aybe queer politics . . . are at the heart of agility training: The coming into being of something unexpected, something new and free, something outside the rules of function and calculation, something not ruled by the logic of the reproduction of the same, *is* what training with each other is about."[79] Companion species such as dogs are queer because they disrupt species boundaries in ways that support relational thought and praxis. The term has since proliferated in multispecies criticism to the point where queer signifies: 1) relations with other species that are chosen and not based on sexual reproduction, 2) species and their behaviors that disrupt hetero-reproduction, transform other organisms, or express love, attraction, pleasure, and desire, and 3) an interconnectedness with other species that challenges beliefs in separation and isolation.[80] Some treatments combine the different meanings whereas others choose to keep them separate.

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[77] Haraway, "The Companion Species Manifesto," 103; Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 10.

[78] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 245.

[79] Ibid., 223.

[80] For the first sense of the term, see Haraway, "Companion Species, Mis-recognition, and Queer Worlding," xxiv; Eben Kirksey, *Emergent Ecologies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 135; Eben Kirksey, "Multispecies Families, Capitalism, and the Law," in *Animals, Biopolitics, Law: Lively Legalities*, ed. Irus Braverman (New York:

While these approaches have redirected queer thought to focus on relations with species in potentially productive ways, the underlying characterization of multispecies relations as queer raises a number of problems that call such work into question. To say that engagements and intra-actions with other species are queer because they cross species lines implies that all associations with beings other than oneself are queer. Counter to queer politics and practices, such a move normalizes, universalizes, and homogenizes connections with others, missing the diversity of humans and nonhumans that remain the focus of multispecies and queer approaches, erasing the complexity of multispecies relations, and weakening the analytical power and precision of queer theory and multispecies studies.[81] Moreover, with the notable exceptions of David Griffith's research with lichens and Preciado's engagement with nineteenth-century bulldogs and lesbians, queers themselves have been left out of multispecies discussions. Multispecies ethnographer Eben Kirksey epitomizes these moves in his chapter on "multispecies families" in *Emergent Ecologies* when he writes:

Routledge, 2016), 155-72, at p. 154; Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 102-05; Sharon Tran, "Asian Sybils and Stinky Multispecies Assemblages: Ecofeminist Departures for Asian American Studies," *Journal of Asian American Studies* 21, no. 3 (2018): 453-80, at p. 460. While not identifying her work as multispecies, see also Susan McHugh's interest in "intimacies established across species lines." McHugh, "Queer (and) Animal Theories," 154. For the second, see Preciado, "Queer Bulldogs"; Eben Kirksey, "Queer Love, Gender Bending Bacteria, and Life after the Anthropocene," *Theory, Culture & Society* 36, no. 6 (2019): 197-219. Finally, for the third, see David Griffiths, "Queer Theory for Lichens," *UnderCurrents* 19 (2015): 36-45; Tallbear and Willey, "Critical Relationality," 6.

[81] The normalization of multispecies relations raises the much larger questions about if and when normalization is beneficial and the role played by queer theory in such debates. Normalizing positive behaviors that are actively suppressed by dominant social structures has become a mode of resistance.

> Multispecies families in Florida often involve queer sensibilities, in the sense that they are based on relationships involving choice and love. Biological ties are often decentered in gay and lesbian notions of kinship, according to Kath Weston's book, *Families We Choose*. Choice in multispecies families is often asymmetrical, with humans keeping others in conditions of captivity. Still, critters that are folded into human families often choose to reciprocate by returning the love, affection, and social advances of other household members.[82]

Although the Florida families he discusses may identify as "heterosexual" and their relations with various species and individuals may differ markedly, Kirksey's claim that the multispecies families under discussion all have "queer sensibilities" erases these meaningful distinctions. Choice, for both humans and the nonhuman species with whom they share their homes, is figured as the deciding factor for designating families "queer." Through such logic, all families that live with or encounter another species — including hetero families such as Grogan's that use pets to reinforce heteronormative positions — display "queer sensibilities."

Moreover, multispecies approaches to queer theory have tended to replace a critical focus on anti-normative resistance with a celebratory tone that promotes species entanglement. Kirksey, for example, celebrates the "gender-bending" *Wolbachia* bacteria, writing, "Microbes are helping humans forge new promiscuous and convivial associations—breaking down filial divisions along lines of race, class, and nationality to

[82] Kirksey, *Emergent Ecologies*, 135-36. See also Kirksey, "Multispecies Families, Capitalism, and the Law," 154.

generate new queer kinship networks."[83] While the boundary disruptions of microbes should be applauded and most certainly seem queer, statements such as this reduce the complexities of queer thought to a set of positions that express preference for becoming kin with another species. Becoming synonymous with chosen, multispecies kinship, queer loses its anti-normative, critical, and resistant edge that brought queer theory into existence and made queer an emancipatory political position. Much of this trouble, I would like to suggest, arises from how scholars such as Kirksey collapse the boundary-disrupting practices of queer theory onto those of multispecies studies despite the two differing significantly from one another. Although queer theory and multispecies approaches seek to challenge and disrupt boundaries, they accomplish this work through different means and for different subjects.[84] Taking a position originally articulated by feminist science studies to navigate constructionist-essentialist debates, multispecies approaches confuse the boundaries that separate species by recognizing the mutual entanglements that bring us all into existence. Queer theory, on the other hand, disrupts categories that cast themselves as normal, homogenous, natural, and universal in order to support resistant ways of being.[85] Multispecies studies has only narrowly attended to the

[83] Kirksey, "Queer Love," 200, 214.

[84] There are, however, many similarities shared between queer thought and multispecies criticism. Both, for example, are on-the-ground, situated practices and both refuse to speak from centralized, or even necessarily coherent, positions.

[85] The concept of species, it seems, would be incompatible with queer thought as it depends upon the categorization of kinds and the logic of hetero-reproduction. Much multispecies thought rejects the dominant definition of species, opting instead to center "kinds" and to focus on choice rather than biological relations. See Thom van Dooren, Eben Kirksey, and Ursula Münster, "Multispecies Studies: Cultivating Arts of Attentiveness," *Environmental Humanities* 8, no. 1 (2016): 1-23, at p. 5; Deborah Bird Rose and Thom van Dooren, "Encountering a More-Than-Human World: Ethos and the

radicalness of queer thought and, by doing so, the field has not only missed the transformative potential of queer approaches but has also supported the normalization of queer positions.

In some respects, the engagement of queer theory by multispecies studies resembles yet another move that threatens to normalize and depoliticize queer actions. Many critics have questioned the assumed radicalness of queer theory, arguing that it has lost its disruptive potential and critical edge. In the early 2000s, for example, the queer critic David Halperin noted, "[A]s queer theory becomes more widely diffused throughout the disciplines, it becomes harder to figure out what's so very queer about it."[86] Queer theory, Halperin argued, was a victim of its own adversary; it was becoming normalized despite its efforts to resist regimes of the normal. Similarly, Max Kirsch, an anthropologist, contended that queer theory, with its flight from political arenas, "encourages political apathy" rather than meaningful change.[87] By proposing that multispecies relations are queer, the multispecies turn participates in the normalization and depoliticization of queer thought. Restoring queer theory's "radical potential," Halperin suggested, requires "reinventing its capacity to startle, to surprise, to help us think what has not yet been thought."[88] This chapter and the narratives it studies participate in such reinvention, revitalizing and repoliticizing the intersections of queer

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Arts of Witness," in *The Routledge Companion to the Environmental Humanities*, ed. Ursula K. Heise, Jon Christensen, and Michelle Niemann (New York: Routledge, 2017), 120-28.

[86] Halperin, "The Normalization of Queer Theory," 342.

[87] Max H. Kirsch, *Queer Theory and Social Change* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 8.

[88] Halperin, "The Normalization of Queer Theory," 343.

theory and multispecies studies. Examining how pets and queers come together to resist heteronormative violence refocuses attention on the complexities of queer and multispecies positions while pushing the fields to achieve more mutually transformative futures. By looking to relations with pets as described in multispecies memoirs, the chapter locates queers in multispecies thought, specifies the operations of queer theory in multispecies criticism, centers resistance in multispecies studies, and makes both fields more attuned to political action.

In addition to understanding heteronormativity as a problem that harms queers and pets in similar ways, I reframe resistance as a multispecies practice that emerges through queer coalitions and shared actions. Queer has a long "tradition of resistance" that dates well before, yet also took shape through, the Stonewall Riots and the political activism of groups such as ACT UP and Queer Nation.[89] By definition, queer "maintains a relation of resistance" to regimes of the normal.[90] The very existence of queer persons, cultures, and theory signifies resistance. In a related sense, queer is also constantly emerging and creating itself anew through processes and practices of resistance.[91] Always inhabiting "counter" positions, queer relentlessly survives regimes of the normal.[92] With the effects of normativity extending beyond the limited realm of the social, queer

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[89] Mortimer-Sandilands and Erickson, *Queer Ecologies*, 21; Jagose, *Queer Theory*, 30.

[90] Jagose, *Queer Theory*, 99.

[91] Noreen Giffney, "Queer Apocal(o)ptic/ism: The Death Drive and the Human," in *Queering the Non/Human*, ed. Noreen Giffney and Myra J. Hird (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2008), 55-78, at p. 57.

[92] Berlant and Warner, "Sex in Public"; Sedgwick, *Tendencies*, 3.

resistance has also been connected to environments. As Mortimer-Sandilands and Erickson explain, "Gay men, lesbians, and others identified as 'against nature' have historically used ideas of nature, natural spaces, and ecological practices as sites of resistance and exploration."[93] Discursive and material environments, in other words, have provided spaces supportive of resistant actions. While acknowledging the interconnections of queer resistance and environmental spaces enriches the study of queer ecologies, I want to open the possibilities of such resistant entanglements even further to account for the ways that other species, particularly dogs and cats, join queers in defying the distributed harms of (hetero)normativity.

This chapter argues that resistance is a multispecies activity, a shared practice that emerges through the fashioning of alliances across species boundaries in order to oppose mutual harm. Such a position goes against a long history of denying other species the ability to resist. Not only have species been denied most forms of agency altogether, but resistance has been paired with intentionality in ways that limit the potential expansiveness and political operations available to such a concept. Even groups as well-meaning as animal rights activists have stripped the ability to resist from other species. Peter Singer, for example, famously declared in *Animal Liberation*, "We have to speak up on behalf of those who cannot speak for themselves."[94] Although liberationist arguments take into account the uneven power dynamics and inequities that exist between many

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[93] Mortimer-Sandilands and Bruce Erickson, "Introduction," 22. See also Rachel Stein, "Introduction," in *New Perspectives on Environmental Justice: Gender, Sexuality, and Activism*, ed. Rachel Stein (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004), 1-20, at p. 7; David Naguib Pellow, *What is Critical Environmental Justice?* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2018), 15.

[94] Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation* (1975; New York: Avon Books, 1977), xiii.

humans and animals, they ultimately posit that humans must engage in resistance because animals are unable to practice their own forms of defiance.

Recent scholarship is beginning to complicate such views, however. Studies in materialism, for example, have demonstrated how agencies are distributed across interconnected networks. Bruno Latour's actor-network theory, Jane Bennett's vital materialism, and Timothy Morton's mesh have all posited that agency is not possessed by a single actor but is instead always distributed across much larger fields of interaction.[95] Although these lines of thought open the possibility of resistance operating as a shared practice, they avoid the question of whether injustice or harm can be experienced by material things, a key issue for any theory of other-than-human resistance. Scholars working in animal studies and biopolitics have circumnavigated this problem by focusing on how species resist the conditions of oppression. Sarat Colling, in *Animal Resistance in the Global Capitalist Era*, develops the concept "animal resistance" to describe "an animal's struggle and bid for freedom against their captive or other oppressive conditions

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[95] Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); Bruno Latour, "On actor-network theory: A few clarifications," *Soziale Welt* 47, no. 4 (1996): 369-81; Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2005); Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010); Timothy Morton, *The Ecological Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010). See also Rand, *Reclaiming Queer*, 12. Agency has similarly been rethought in postcolonial, African American, and Latinx studies which consider how oppressed groups often create their own forms of meaningful change by engaging broader communities. For environmental works, see Elizabeth DeLoughrey, *Allegories of the Anthropocene* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019); Neel Ahuja, *Bioinsecurities: Disease Interventions, Empire and the Government of Species* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016); Monique Allewaert, *Ariel's Ecology: Plantations, Personhood, and Colonialism in the American Tropics* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2013); Priscilla Ybarra, *Writing the Goodlife: Mexican American Literature and the Environment* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2016).

by transgressing or retaliating against human-constructed boundaries."[96] Resistance, according to Colling, can occur through "escape, liberations, retaliation, and everyday defiance."[97] Predominantly attending to factory farm animals suffering from the violence of global capitalism, Colling tends to cluster all humans together as animal oppressors, denying diverse groups of humans the capacity of acting as partners in liberation. Such a move reflects the larger tendency in *Animal Resistance* to separate animal and human modes of oppression and resistance. While Colling moves toward a multispecies model of resistance in the final chapter with her acknowledgment that "humans and animals are oppressed by the same corporate systems," she restricts human involvement to the role of animal ally, recommending that humans campaign for abused animals on social media or protest in "strategic locations" outside factory farms and laboratories.[98] Finally, Ron Broglio, a scholar of British Romanticism, has explored what he calls "incidents in the animal revolution" that occur when animals challenge human possession.[99] In *Beasts of Burden: Biopolitics, Labor, and Animal Life in British Romanticism*, Broglio proposes "biopolitical resistance" as a mode by which "human and animal bodies" refused to join the mechanisms of "productivity for the rising nation-state" during the eighteenth and

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[96] Sarat Colling, *Animal Resistance in the Global Capitalist Era* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2021), 12, 51.

[97] Ibid., 61.

[98] Ibid., 117, 126.

[99] Ron Broglio, "Incidents in the Animal Revolution," in *Beyond Human: From Animality to Transhumanism*, eds. Charlie Blake, Claire Molloy and Steven Shakespeare (London: Continuum, 2012), 13-30.

nineteenth centuries.[100] Broglio's project, however, depends on the poststructuralism of Cary Wolfe, Jacques Derrida, and Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, whereas I seek to queer resistance through the multispecies and queer lines of thought developed by Haraway and several queer theorists.

Resistance never occurs in isolation. Queer(ed) resistance with pets is mutual and transformative, always co-shaping those involved. To capture this sense of entanglement and its ongoing effects, I draw from Haraway's expression "becoming with" to develop the phrase *resisting with*.[101] A mode of resistance that happens with others, *resisting with* describes collections of multispecies actors coming together to defy shared harm. Always open-ended while still pursuing desired outcomes, *resisting with* takes multiple forms and expresses itself through differing degrees of visibility. The feminist cultural anthropologist Ellen Lewin has observed that resistance, particularly in queer criticism, must be "explicit and visible" or visibly "transgressive" in order to be considered worthy of study.[102] *Resisting with*, by comparison, is often less than visible, or it is visible but not in ways that conform to how most people are accustomed to looking. At times explicit and other times not, *resisting with* exposes the operations of (hetero)normativity and challenges these operations by calling them into question and carving out spaces that

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[100] Ron Broglio, *Beasts of Burden: Biopolitics, Labor, and Animal Life in British Romanticism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2017), 50.

[101] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 3-4.

[102] Ellen Lewin, *Gay Fatherhood: Narratives of Family and Citizenship in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 2.

support mutually beneficial modes of being.[103] Much like Gordon Ingram's concept of a "queerscape" which describes "a plane of subjectivities constituting a collectivity" that involves "multiple alliances of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transsexuals" and supports "a variety of activities, transactions, and functions," *resisting with* creates spaces where multispecies alliances can flourish.[104] "Unexpected biopolitical alliances" and "queer taxonomic fellowships" find themselves at home here.[105] Multispecies memoirs offer one such space for stories of *resisting with* to dwell, find new resonances, and bring about improved futures. In the same way that Mortimer-Sandilands and Erickson identify the pastoral as a genre "through which queer-identified authors have sought to engage and challenge relations between sexuality and nature," I view the memoir as a literary form central to queer stories of resistance.[106]

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[103] This point is adapted from Halberstam who, while writing about what she calls "imagined violence," observes, "female violence transforms the symbolic function of the feminine within popular narratives and it simultaneously challenges the hegemonic insistence upon the linking of might and right under the sign of masculinity." Judith Halberstam, "Imagined Violence/Queer Violence: Representation, Rage, and Resistance," *Social Text* 37 (1993): 187-201, at p. 191. In the context of industrial animal abuse, Colling argues that animal resistance renders visible structures of oppression. To illustrate her point, she describes moments when cows escape slaughterhouses as brief windows into the ways animal bodies are abused by meat processing systems. Colling, *Animal Resistance*, 7-10.

[104] Gordon Brent Ingram, "Marginality and the Landscapes of Erotic Alien(n)ations," in *Queers in Space: Communities, Public Places, Sites of Resistance*, eds. Gordon Brent Ingram, Anne-Marie Bouthillette, and Yolanda Retter (Seattle: Bay Press, 1997), 27-54.

[105] Preciado, "Queer Bulldogs"; Rodríguez, "Oedipal Wrecks," 269.

[106] Memoirs written by queer authors about their sexualities tend to reject "narratives of heroic overcoming" in favor of narratives that attend to "living in community and refusing a minoritized and stigmatized identity position." Minich, "Writing Queer Lives," 61. See also Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 152. As such, memoirs play a crucial role in queer thought.

Conceptualizing resistance as a multispecies activity is not without its challenges, however. One of the greatest difficulties requires shifting away from the model of intentionality associated with the term. As geographers Chris Philo and Chris Wilbert observe, "the concept of 'resistance' is generally taken to entail the presence of conscious intentionality."[107] To say that other species resist harm is to imply that they intentionally pursue a planned course of action. While critics such as Cathy Cohen have outlined a "politics for deviance" that moves away from the consciousness, intentionality, and goal orientation associated with resistance, such attempts do not center the generation of improved conditions necessary to instituting alternative futures.[108] Another immediate challenge is the proclivity among scholars and activists to associate resistance with emancipation. Resistance, however, does not always produce emancipated subjects or conditions, a point that international relations scholars Nadine Voelkner and Gitte du Plessis make using the example of COVID-19. The SARS coronavirus 2 may have resisted biopolitical apparatuses around the world, however, such resistance did not yield emancipation for its millions of victims or the virus itself. Voelkner and du Plessis explain, "Resistance to biopolitics is not . . . a priori emancipatory."[109] In addition to the challenges of intentionality and emancipation, understanding species as resistant agents

[107] Chris Philo and Chris Wilbert, "Animal Spaces, Beastly Places: An Introduction," in *Animal Spaces, Beastly Places: New Geographies of Human-Animal Relations*, eds. Chris Philo and Chris Wilbert (London: Routledge, 2000), 1-36, at p. 15.

[108] Cathy J. Cohen, "Deviance as Resistance: A New Research Agenda for the Study of Black Politics," *Du Bois Review* 1, no. 1 (2004): 27-45, at p. 29.

[109] Nadine Voelkner and Gitte du Plessis, "Microbial resistance to biopolitics? Biocultural Emergence and Differentiated Vulnerability," *Contemporary Political Theory* (2021).

runs the risk of misrepresenting and misunderstanding the needs of others. Perhaps worse, arguing that species can resist harms may jeopardize the protections that some species receive. Defensive measures could, for instance, be seen as redundant by industry and government if species can stage resistance efforts.[110] Although these are important concerns, they should not foreclose efforts to reimagine resistance as available to a wider community of beings, not just some human groups. Instead of dismissing the concept, I propose that we think of resistance as an open-ended, disruptive set of actions that expose and challenge specific injustices caused by systems of normalization in order to establish outcomes that work favorably for multiple beings. At its core, queer, multispecies resistance recognizes that animal oppression cannot be separated from human oppression. *Resistance cannot and must not happen alone. Resisting with* is a multispecies practice, one that brings humans and nonhumans together to fight for our common worlds.

Queers, Pets, Resisting With

The following multispecies memoirs use divergent modes of resistance to challenge a range of (hetero)normative harms. Exploring the grief and love felt in the wake of canine death, Doty's *Dog Years* and Myles's *Afterglow* attend to the spaces left behind following the death of a pet. Refusing the social convention to immediately move on following loss, both memoirs unsettle the normalized stories told about deceased pets while considering how the larger contexts of the AIDS epidemic and intergenerational alcoholism have disproportionately harmed queer bodies. Engaging more visible acts of

[110] Similarly, the postcolonial ecocritic Jennifer Wenzel expresses her concern that "distributed agency will give cover to humans and corporations seeking to evade responsibility for harm." Jennifer Wenzel, *The Disposition of Nature: Environmental Crisis and World Literature* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2020), 7.

resistance, Georges's *Fetch* and Paul's *Lost Cat* challenge controlling behaviors that have become normalized within the cultures of petkeeping. *Fetch* disputes the assumption that all dogs exist to be touched and petted while *Lost Cat* questions the belief that all cats must be kept indoors within the confines of the house. Drawing from their experiences of restriction and isolation, Georges — a recently out bisexual woman who is struggling to find a supportive community — and Paul — a lesbian in a new serious relationship who is confined to her house because of a serious injury — join a dog and a cat to establish unrestrictive spaces supportive of pet and queer lives. Finally, departing from the domesticity of the house, *Travels with Lizbeth* understands houselessness to be a resistant practice that affords Eighner and a dog named Lizbeth the ability to challenge continual management by state programs.

Grief and Love in Doty's Dog Years *and Myles's* Afterglow

Departing from family dog memoirs, including the hetero memoirs that open this chapter, Doty's *Dog Years* makes canine death — and the feelings of grief that follow — its subject. In a move that upends the usual chronology used to describe a dog's life, Doty begins his memoir with the death of Beau, a golden retriever. Instead of beginning with the birth or adoption of a dog, Doty opens the narrative with Beau's death and the feelings of grief that this event brings into focus. Arguing that the death of a pet "reverberates throughout a life," Doty follows Beau "into the depths" of their conjoined history.[111] At once an elegy and a eulogy, *Dog Years* consciously reflects upon Beau's life from the position of his death. In doing so, the memoir not only reverses the expected

[111] Mark Doty, *Dog Years: A Memoir* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2007), 10.

chronology and focal point of pet narratives, but it also challenges normalized accounts of canine death that either avoid expressing grief altogether or use the logic of capitalist exchange to replace the deceased pet with another. Doty writes against such norms, explaining:

> You can't tell most people about the death of your dog, not quite; there is an expectation that you shouldn't overreact, shouldn't place too much weight on this loss. In the scheme of things, shouldn't this be a smaller matter? *It's just a dog; get another one*.
>
> One of the unspoken truths of American life is how deeply people grieve over the animals who live and die with them, how real that emptiness is, how profound the silence is these creatures leave in their wake. Our culture expects us not only to bear these losses alone, but to be ashamed of how deeply we feel them.[112]

Though it has become more common to mourn the death of a pet two decades following the publication of *Dog Years*, such loss could rarely be met with open expressions of grief in the late 1990s and early 2000s.[113] As Doty makes clear, social expectations dictated that the surviving partner must behave as if this event left them unaffected.

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[112] Ibid., 9.

[113] While pets became more grievable in the first two decades of the twenty-first century, in part due to a growing pet remembrance industry and the rising popularity of pet cemeteries, it remains uncommon for most employers to grant emergency or sick leave for people to spend time with a dying cat or dog. As Caroline Knapp explains, "A lot of people, quite frankly, think intense attachments to animals are weird and suspect, the domain of people who can't quite handle attachments to humans." Caroline Knapp, *Pack of Two: The Intricate Bond Between People and Dogs* (New York: The Dial Press, 1998), 10. Such beliefs and feelings are often expressed toward people who mourn the death of a pet.

Moreover, to conceal their emotions, they must consider finding a replacement right away. In hetero family memoirs such as Grogan's *Marley & Me* or Bass's *Colter*, for example, the death of a pet is quickly followed by the adoption of another in order to maintain the cohesive family unit. These "expectations" regarding pet death have become normalized to the extent that one feels "ashamed" for experiencing or acknowledging the "emptiness" and "silence" that follows the death of a close companion. As the emerging field of queer death studies argues, "normativities . . . often frame contemporary discourses on death, dying and mourning," rendering some lives "grievable" and others "non-grievable."[114] Challenging the normativities that frame responses to deceased pets *and* the false division that separates lives to be grieved from lives to be gotten over, Doty explores the "unspoken" grief that follows a dog's death. For Doty, recognizing and embracing grief is a queer practice that disrupts the normative behaviors associated with the death of a pet.

Far from an isolated occurrence, the grief that Doty feels after Beau's passing becomes part of a much larger tapestry of death and loss experienced by queers during the 1990s and early 2000s. Beau died shortly after the 9/11 attacks due to complications from a brain tumor; however, Doty positions his death within the mass mortality of 9/11, the Iraq War, and the violence caused by "the machinations of global capitalism, the aftermath of colonial empires, the rise of fundamentalism, [and] the battles for the power-money elixir of petroleum."[115] Although he worries that contextualizing Beau's death

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[114] Marietta Radomska, Tara Mehrabi, Nina Lykke, "Queer Death Studies: Death, Dying and Mourning from a Queerfeminist Perspective," *Australian Feminist Studies* 35, no. 104 (2020): 81-100, at p. 89, 84.

[115] Doty, *Dog Years*, 6.

within the militarization and militancy of the early 2000s might "seem absurd," Doty acknowledges that "Beau's body was a fact, too."[116] Without diminishing the global loss of life caused by struggles over wealth and power, Doty insists that Beau's death must be mourned comparably to the "parents and children and lovers and friends" whose deaths formed a more extensive web of grief.[117] Living in Manhattan during the collapse of the World Trade Center exposes Doty's own vulnerabilities and further compounds his sense of loss. At the same time, his grief over Beau's passing is also inscribed within the larger context of the AIDS epidemic which claimed Wally Roberts, Doty's partner, in 1994. Indeed, Beau joins the household — which also includes a black lab mix named Arden — near the end of Wally's life in order to "sleep next to [Wally] and lick his face."[118] When Wally dies, Doty credits Beau with providing a necessary "distraction" that keeps him from committing suicide.[119] Clarifying Beau's role in saving his life, Doty explains, "It isn't that one wants to live for the sake of a dog, exactly, but that dogs show you why

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[116] Ibid., 6, 7.

[117] Ibid., 6.

[118] Ibid., 75. This adoption story queers the popular narrative of the hetero family who selects a puppy from a litter or adopts a dog from a rescue. Although the dog leads a happy life, they are eventually outlived by the rest of the family. Doty's memoir, in comparison, describes how Beau is adopted to bring joy to a man dying from AIDS and how the dog eventually outlives Wally.

[119] Ibid., 88. Even six years after Wally's death, Doty continues to contemplate suicide. He considers jumping off the Staten Island Ferry with Beau and drowning them both. During this moment, Doty feels that "the odds against queer people" are too great. Ibid., 137. Part of this feeling stems from experiences such as a threatening message left on his answering machine when he taught at the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop telling him "Queer I'm gonna kill you" and from the suffering caused by the AIDS pandemic. Ibid., 104.

you might want to."[120] When Beau dies during the immediate aftermath of 9/11, his passing painfully resurfaces the grief associated with Wally's death and Doty's contemplation of suicide. As such, the golden retriever is intimately connected to the narratives, experiences, and shared grief of AIDS that have acutely affected gay men.[121] In fact, the memoir's title takes on a second meaning when read in relation to the AIDS pandemic. "Dog year" has been used by persons with AIDS to highlight how, in the days before antiretroviral medication, every year needed to count for many.[122] Doty's grief for Beau must, therefore, be understood within the larger contexts of loss that shaped queer lives during the 1990s and early 2000s.

Grief, for Doty, becomes a queer affect, a collection of situated feelings emerging from the death of Beau and wider landscapes of loss which resists the normativity of detachment associated with pet death. Grief provides a way to "stay with the trouble" and resist what Doty calls the "easy embrace of detachment" that has become normalized through the often well-meaning but dismissive and empty statements regarding the death of a pet such as, "He's had a good life. Isn't that just lovely, that we're all part of the cycle, we're here and then we go!"[123] Refuting the normalizing calls to "get over" the

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[120] Ibid., 91.

[121] "HIV and Gay and Bisexual Men," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 16 Sept. 2020, 14 Dec. 2020, https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/group/msm/index.html; Radomska, Mehrabi, Lykke, "Queer Death Studies," 86; Jagose, *Queer Theory*, 96.

[122] Michael Lundblad, "Humanimal Relations in Contemporary U.S. Literature: Biopolitics and Terminal Illness in Mark Doty's *Dog Years*," *Forum for World Literature Studies* 6, no. 1 (2014): 41-49, at p. 45.

[123] Doty, *Dog Years*, 12. Judith Butler also acknowledges that grief can lead to political accomplishments: "To grieve and to make grief itself into a resource for politics, is not to be resigned to inaction, but it may be understood as the slow process by which we

death of a pet and to "move on," Doty stays with grief to hold the memory of Beau, and later Arden, in the world. "I am not," he writes, "resolutely, used to [death]. Just now death remains an interruption, leaves me furious, sorrowing, refusing to yield. Too easy an acceptance seems, frankly, sentimental, an erasure of the irreplaceable stuff of individuality with a vague, generalized truth."[124] By rendering Beau grievable, Doty queers the concept of grief itself, recognizing that grief emerges from the loss of multispecies relations following the death of a pet. If grieving for a deceased dog challenges the norms of pet death and arises from multispecies relations, Doty's grief can be understood as a way of *resisting with* Beau, even after death. Acknowledging that Beau's presence continues to shape his sense of being, Doty explains that the golden retriever remains "*inscribed within me*."[125] As Thom van Dooren argues via Vinciane Despret, grieving "problematizes" the boundaries that separate "self, world, and other" in ways that make those involved "become *at stake in each other*."[126] Through the extended and recurrent process of grief, Doty further becomes "at stake" with Beau and others.[127]

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develop a point of identification with suffering itself." Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London: Verso, 2004). While grief certainly functions as a "resource for politics" in Doty's memoir, it does not necessarily have to be a "slow process" and neither does it have to develop a "point of identification" with "suffering itself." Instead, Doty's grief matters because it points to dogs as grievable, meaningful beings.

[124] Doty, *Dog Years*, 12-13.

[125] Ibid., 7.

[126] Thom van Dooren, *Flight Ways: Life and Loss at the Edge of Extinction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 140.

[127] Anne McClintock has captured this sense of togetherness, noting that "Grief makes us kin with what we mourn." Anne McClintock, "Monster: A Fugue in Fire and Ice" (virtual presentation, Center for Environmental Futures, University of Oregon, 2 Dec. 2020).

Although the adoption of another pet in the wake of death does not necessarily signal an absence of grief, Doty and his-soon-to-be husband Paul Lisicky choose not to adopt another dog after Arden dies. Through such a refusal, they hold open a space that allows Beau and Arden to continue to fill their lives. This sense of holding on to another animates the following lines from Doty's elegy to Beau: "Believe me / a dog's gaze opens, like ours, / when the world's an invitation."[128]

Myles's *Afterglow* similarly disrupts the pet memoir genre by beginning with and exploring the death of a dog, but the narrative accomplishes anti-normative resistance through more experimental strategies. The subtitle calls the book a "dog memoir," which could refer to a memoir *about* a dog, a memoir written *for* a dog (or focusing on issues that ostensibly matter *to* a dog), or a memoir written *by* a dog. Such queer ambiguity hints at *Afterglow*'s disruptive and experimental form. Beginning with the December 2006 death of Rosie, a 16.5-year-old "pit bull" whom Myles describes as "a masculine girl, British like an old upper-class dyke," the book explores Rosie's "afterglow," or the aura she casts over Myles's life in the years following her death.[129] With an informal, often profane and conversational, writing style that makes use of stream-of-conscious narration, pastiche, and fictional scenarios, *Afterglow* pushes the conventions of the

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[128] Mark Doty, "Heaven for Beau," in *School of the Arts: Poems* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2005), 88-90, at p. 89.

[129] Eileen Myles, *Afterglow (a dog memoir)* (New York: Grove Press, 2017), 45. At the time of this writing, Myles uses they/them pronouns. However, Myles wrote *Afterglow* using she/her pronouns. In what follows, I use she/her pronouns because I am discussing a literary figure who was written at a specific moment in time. Myles refers to Rosie with she/her pronouns, as well; however, Rosie's gender occasionally wavers, such as when the dog is compared to Myles's father. I also place "pit bull" in quotations to problematize the category and call attention to its instability. See below for more on the challenges of identifying and discussing pit breeds.

memoir genre. Nowhere is this accomplished more than in the figure of the narrator. Speaking from multiple vantage points, the narrator challenges not only "the autobiographical pact" that authenticates the author's identity in relation to the narrative and the reader, but also the very ability to identify who is narrating.[130] Constantly shuffling between first-, second-, and third-person modalities, often within the same paragraph, the narrative embraces instability and multiplicity. At one point early in the book, for example, a narrator figure says, "I was a child who wanted a dog. I became myself."[131] It seems apparent that Myles, in this case her contemporary self reflecting upon one of her childhood selves, functions as the narrator. By the end of the second sentence, however, it is less clear to whom the figure "myself" or even "I" refers. There is a sense that Myles becomes this figure, but only after she adopts Rosie, the dog she always wanted. Myles can only be "myself," can only inhabit the subject position "I," when she is joined with Rosie. To speak of Myles, therefore, is to speak of Rosie, and vice versa. Narrating becomes a multispecies practice involving Myles, Rosie, and, at three other points, an alter ego named "Bo Jean Harmonica," a persona named "Jethro," and a puppet. Calling attention to the slipperiness of identity and her mutual entanglement with Rosie, Myles refers to herself as a "dog ghostwriter," asking "Who's writing who" and placing the signifier "I" in quotation marks.[132] Even Myles's body

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[130] Philippe Lejeune, *On Autobiography*, ed. Paul John Eakin, trans. Katherine Leary (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989).

[131] Myles, *Afterglow*, 5-6.

[132] Ibid., 159, 130, 34. In the chapter featuring Bo Jean, the narrator figure emphasizes the entanglement of speaking positions, saying: "Jean is speaking for Eileen, I speak for Rosie, Rosie speaks for Eileen." Ibid., 123.

becomes materially shaped by Rosie's presence and absence: "But lifting one dog, you, in those last six months was definitely what pulled these tendons the most. . . . I get on a Styrofoam roll and fling my arms forward and back fifteen times a day. I do more . . . and my right arm is getting better. But still I'm carrying that little dead dog. The new fat around my hips and waist is kind of you and how we don't go on our walks anymore."[133] Relentlessly challenging the figure of the individual in favor of the messy multispecies bonds that co-shape beings and narratives, *Afterglow* sets out "to dissolve categories."[134]

In dwelling among Rosie's boundary-disrupting afterglow, Myles addresses the years of mistreatment and neglect she forced upon the dog. Departing from elegiac narratives that seek to memorialize a pet by remembering a responsible caretaker, Myles alleges that she caused multiple injustices to Rosie. The memoir opens with Myles receiving an imaginary letter from "Rosie's lawyer" which seeks to "press charges against" Myles for "a variety of abuses and crimes against dog kind" that were "inflicted over a period of nine years upon the being you have taken to calling 'Rosie'."[135] Caught up in a different kind of grief than Doty, Myles wonders if her relationship with Rosie could "be framed as blame."[136] While she discusses what is, from her perspective, a long list of violent acts, including ignoring Rosie, spaying Rosie, writing about Rosie without her consent, and not giving Rosie a dignified death, she views forcing Rosie to be "raped" by a male dog as "[t]he greatest crime on earth" and devotes a chapter to

[133] Ibid., 51.

[134] Ibid., 159.

[135] Ibid., 2, 3.

[136] Ibid., 3.

grappling with this violence.[137] Knowing that Rosie is ovulating, Myles invites Doug, a new acquaintance, to bring Buster, a male "pit bull," to her house where she waits with Rosie and her friend Vivien. After the dogs do not cooperate with the scheduled mating in the living room, Myles wraps a leash around Rosie's muzzle to restrain her, Doug positions Buster's penis, and Vivien pushes on Rosie's vulva until "We got it in."[138] Although Myles feels "shame," "regret," "fear," and "excitement" about the forced, collective mating, she also feels that Rosie "liked being robbed of her choice" in the matter.[139] Indeed, Rosie's forced mating stands as an example of what anthropologist Elizbeth Marshall Thomas has called, in the context of dog sex, the "businesslike sexual encounter."[140] Myles's characterization of the event as "rape" and her misgivings about it appear to stem from her concern that she removed Rosie's ability to grant consent by forcing the dog to hold still and from her involvement in the sexual coupling. It is not unusual, unfortunately, for dogs to be bred in such a manner, as J.R. Ackerley, the gay mid-twentieth-century British author, explains in *My Dog Tulip*, one of the earliest published dog memoirs. Ackerley recalls trying to breed Tulip, a german shepherd, with another shepherd named Chum by helping his handler "guide" the dog's penis.[141] Like Myles, Ackerley feels uncomfortable with forcing Tulip to mate and with his physical

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[137] Ibid., 32-33, 87.

[138] Ibid., 63.

[139] Ibid.

[140] Elizabeth Marshall Thomas, *The Hidden Life of Dogs* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993), 78.

[141] J.R. Ackerley, *My Dog Tulip* (New York: Poseidon Press, 1965), 72.

involvement, but unlike her, he expresses concern about denying Tulip the "pleasure" of sex by removing consent.[142] Myles feels most disturbed by her own active complicity and participation in an act she deems violent and unethical.[143] Her grief, in other words, emerges not from Rosie's death, but from her involvement with "the greatest crime on earth" and from the responsibility she assumes for mistreating Rosie.

Attempting to understand the sources of the suffering that Rosie experiences and Myles inflicts, Myles situates their shared abuse within the intergenerational contexts of familial grief caused by alcoholism and canine grief caused by "pit bull" profiling and mistreatment. At once a source of anxiety and queer pride, Rosie's identity as a "pit bull" reflects the histories of violence she inherited. When Rosie was alive, Myles worried about her being taken to the pound and euthanized if she ever left home without a human companion simply because of her "pit bull" classification.[144] As Myles explains, pit breeds and mixes are often "synonymized with evil," a designation that has led them to be euthanized at much higher rates than more desirable breeds.[145] Once an icon of "valor" in the early-twentieth-century United States, breeds organized under the "elastic, imprecise, and subjective" category "pit bull" have been associated with viciousness and aggression since the 1970s when they first became popular guard dogs in urban

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[142] Ibid., 86, 88, 128. For more on Ackerley and dog sexuality, see Armbruster, "Into the Wild," 772-73.

[143] The attempted breeding raises questions about canine consent, pleasure, and property. How would Rosie have given her consent in the first place? Was Rosie permitted to experience pleasure? And who would have benefitted if Rosie birthed a litter — Myles, Rosie, or the newborns?

[144] Myles, *Afterglow*, 55.

[145] Ibid., 121.

neighborhoods.[146] With police forces failing to support the most marginalized communities during a moment of "tough on crime" politics, many people — especially individuals belonging to impoverished, African American, and Latinx communities — turned to pit breeds to protect their belongings and support their livelihoods.[147] Local and national media, however, linked "pit bulls" to biting and dogfighting, villainizing the dogs, and the people associated with them, as undesirable brutes and encouraging the passage of breed bans by hundreds of cities and municipalities during the 1980s and 90s.[148] Living with, and especially as, a "pit bull" during this moment of vitriol and canine suffering became a rebellious act. Queers, particularly gritty and punk lesbians, embraced what animal trainer Vicki Hearne has called the "fighting history" of pit bulls, identifying with the dogs as symbols of "strength . . . self-sufficiency, and a willingness to defend oneself at any cost."[149] Indeed, Myles calls the 1990s "[s]uch a lesbian moment for dogs," identifying with "the masculine women walking their pit bulls" as she recalls

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[146] Bronwen Dickey, *Pit Bull: The Battle Over an American Icon* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2016), 191, 11.

[147] Ibid., 131-32.

[148] Ibid., 247.

[149] Vicki Hearne, "Justice in Venice Beach," in *Intimate Nature: The Bond Between Women and Animals*, eds. Linda Hogan, Deena Metzger, and Brenda Peterson (New York: Fawcett Books, 1998), 187-88, at p. 188; Dickey, *Pit Bull*, 221. As Harlan Weaver observes, queers have been bringing pit breeds to pride parades and managing "pit bull" dog rescues for several decades. Harlan Weaver, "Pit Bull Promises: Inhuman Intimacies and Queer Kinships in an Animal Shelter," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 21, no. 2-3 (2015): 343-63, at p. 348-49. The involvement of dogs in pride parades is further discussed in this chapter's conclusion.

joining Rosie on their first walks together through their New York City neighborhood.[150] Rosie and Myles's relationship emerged from these histories of harm and resistance.

At the same time, Myles considers her family's history of alcoholism, especially her father's slow death, as informing her and Rosie's entangled life. Her Irish father, Ted, became an alcoholic after serving in the military, dying just a few decades later when Myles was eleven. Myles inherited her father's alcoholism, writing about attending "rehabilitative societies" in *Afterglow* and her autobiographical novel *Chelsea Girls*.[151] As Myles recounts in third person, her father became someone else during his drunken stupors: "Eileen's father Ted, yeah that's what we called him, was an animal man. In his final months and days he growled around the house."[152] His association with a growling animal leads Myles to believe that he "decided to come back again as Rosie" after his death.[153] She describes him as "an entirely other kind of fellow. If he was a dog he would be the tramp, with a little gay twist. My father did not project a steady sex, or a steady anything at all."[154] As the blurring of Ted and Rosie through reincarnation suggests, Myles's experiences with family alcoholism and Rosie's existence as a pit bull are intertwined. They are both, after all, intergenerational harms inherited by Myles and Rosie. Inheritance — as Haraway makes clear throughout her oeuvre, but especially in *When Species Meet* — shapes the obligations one has to another. "When species meet,"

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[150] Myles, *Afterglow*, 163.

[151] Ibid., 114; Eileen Myles, *Chelsea Girls* (Santa Rosa, CA: Black Sparrow Press, 1994).

[152] Myles, *Afterglow*, 114.

[153] Ibid., 75.

[154] Ibid.

she explains, "the question of how to inherit histories is pressing, and how to get on together is at stake."[155] By considering the intergenerational harms that shaped their lives and brought them together, Myles and Rosie try to "get on together" amid a world of suffering and grief. A project not only taken up by the living, getting on together must also happen amid the afterglow of death.

In addressing their inherited histories of grief, Myles learns how to listen and, in turn, how to love. Dwelling amid the grief of Rosie's afterglow teaches Myles how to listen to Rosie, how to pay attention and be more responsive. Realizing that "I'm writing this book to *keep* talking to [Rosie]," Myles calls *Afterglow* a "very sad book about trying to listen."[156] Although Myles finally attends to Rosie after many years of abuse, Rosie has long listened — and perhaps continues to listen — to Myles. This realization leads Myles to refer to Rosie as "god." If a god is someone who listens, Myles surmises, then Rosie is also a god.[157] One evening near the end of Rosie's life while "mopping her piss," Myles realizes, "She's god. And I felt so calm. I've found god now. My God—My Dog."[158] Far from a passive and detached activity, listening teaches Myles how to love Rosie in death. "I took such care of her when she was dying," Myles explains.[159] "I made sure she was really comfortable. I'd do it with love."[160] Listening to Rosie helps Myles

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[155] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 35.

[156] Myles, *Afterglow*, 17, 43.

[157] Ibid., 9.

[158] Ibid., 11.

[159] Ibid, 12.

[160] Ibid.

recognize her needs and address their inherited, intergenerational histories of mistreatment. "I felt loving," Myles writes, "I felt like a god too. I felt less ambivalently loving than I have ever felt in my life. *Now I felt what love feels like*. I do it and I think it. I love feeling this. Love loving your doggy ass."[161] She feels a queer love for Rosie, a love predicated not on the logics of reproduction nor on happy, equal relations, but on what queer and trans* scholar Harlan Weaver calls "relatedness without kinship" and "uneasy and noninnocent love."[162] Myles writes, "[Y]ou simply were. I loved you for that. For being who else was in my life no matter what."[163] Like the trans* writer-scholar Jennifer Finney Boylan who describes the persistent love she felt for several dogs before transitioning to identity as female, Myles encounters a love that arises from coexistence and a shared commitment to the life of another.[164] As Haraway explains, "To be in love means to be worldly, to be in connection with significant otherness and signifying others."[165] If "[d]og love and dog loss are part of the same story," Myles learns to love and meaningfully respond at the end of Rosie's life.[166]

Expressing grief and mourning for deceased pets, the memoirs *Afterglow* and *Dog Years* queer narratives of pet death and resist the normativity associated with such loss.

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[161] Ibid., emphasis added.

[162] Weaver, "Pit Bull Promises," 352; Harlan Weaver, *Bad Dog: Pit Bull Politics and Multispecies Justice* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2021), 124.

[163] Myles, *Afterglow*, 59.

[164] Jennifer Finney Boylan, *Good Boy: My Life in Seven Dogs* (New York: Celadon Books, 2020).

[165] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 97.

[166] Marjorie B. Garber, *Dog Love* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 243.

Grief becomes not just a refusal of forgetting, but also a way to challenge the normative behaviors that encourage humans to "get over" canine death. Setting resistance within broader landscapes of harm such as the AIDS epidemic, family alcoholism, and breed management, *Afterglow* and *Dog Years* situate grief within histories of mistreatment that have been shared with canine companions. The grief that Doty and Myles express is not so much the melancholia arising through "separation from animal being and from ambivalent identification with it" that Kuzniar identifies in the writings of many authors who consider deceased pets, but rather a kind of grief that seeks to bring about new relations and responsibilities.[167] Grieving the deaths of Beau and Rosie implicates Doty and Myles in the dogs' afterlives. Normative positions assume that death marks the end of relations, but these authors show that death is merely one point in an ongoing, evolving web of becoming. Telling "stories about the dead and dying that draw them into relationship with the living," Doty and Myles queer pet death by dwelling with grief.[168]

Queer and Pet Spaces: Georges's Fetch *and Paul's* Lost Cat

In moving away from a focus on grief and death, Georges's graphic memoir *Fetch* and Paul's illustrated memoir *Lost Cat* foreground the more visible, and often more public, acts of mutual resistance practiced by queers and pets together. Queering the exceptionalist and normative narratives that emphatically make a pet into "the best," "the most loyal," or "the smartest" exemplar of their breed or species, *Fetch* describes

[167] Kuzniar, *Melancholia's Dog*, 8.

[168] van Dooren, *Flight Ways*, 126.

Georges's entangled life with an unruly and challenging pet, a "decidedly bad" dog.[169] Georges adopts Beija, a dachshund/shar-pei mix with "a big dog's head on a small dog's body," from a Kansas City shelter as a gift for Tom, her boyfriend, in 1997.[170] A "mutt" or a "mongrel," Beija queerly disrupts breed taxonomies and occupies the position of "underdog."[171] Literary critic Susan McHugh has observed that mutts often challenge "mechanisms of social oppression," helping "oppressed peoples . . . imagine new forms of identity and society."[172] True to such a role, Beija joins Georges in opposing oppressive behaviors. In contrast to Georges's patriarchal stepfather Pete and his purebred boxer Paco, Georges and Beija share the underdog position: "Pete actually bought my mom a dog shortly before I acquired Beija. Paco was a manly, muscular purebred. Paco earned his spot in their household through loyalty, congeniality, and athleticism. He loved men, was a man, and exuded horse appeal. A classically hysterical female, Beija was the opposite. . . . Stubby and stubborn, she hated every man except for fey Tom."[173] Hoping that the dog would "heal Tom's childhood" and repair some of his traumas, Georges adopts Beija when she and Tom are still in high school.[174] Beija becomes for Georges "my version of a love child" and, after she moved into an apartment

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[169] Nicole J. Georges, *Fetch: How a Bad Dog Brought Me Home* (Boston: Mariner Books, 2017), 10.

[170] Ibid., 87.

[171] Susan McHugh, *Dog* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 2004), 136. Garber also observes that mutts are often seen as genuinely American dogs. Garber, *Dog Love*, 198-99.

[172] McHugh, *Dog*, 136, 169.

[173] Georges, *Fetch*, 35.

[174] Ibid., 14.

with Tom at the age of seventeen, "the center of my teen family."[175] Although Beija is originally intended to uphold the "heteronormativities of home" by repairing Tom's damaged sense of self and, in the process, supporting their young hetero family, she rejects these roles and instead engages in anti-normative behaviors. Such a move makes evident the ways in which dogs "undo the ideal of the family home in deeply material ways."[176]

Beija consistently rejects the use of her body as an object of pleasure available for petting and other forms of touch. Responding to prior trauma, including abuse and mistreatment by Pete, Beija defensively growls, bares her teeth, and lunges at most people who bend over to touch her. Pete, with his "natural machismo," would often yell and become aggressive around Beija, causing her to distrust most men.[177] As Georges explains, "Beija's fear of Pete and subsequent screaming would repeat itself with almost every man who crossed our path."[178] For many people and pets, the acts of giving and receiving rubs, strokes, and pats establishes close bonds; however, for pets traumatized by abuse, this kind of attention can be unwanted, especially from strangers and people

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[175] Ibid., 39, 84.

[176] Harlan Weaver, "Queer Affiliations and Multi-Species Justice in Pit Bull Politics" (presentation, Association for the Study of Literature and Environment, virtual conference, July 26-August 6, 2021).

[177] Ibid., 35. Similarly, Lynda Barry, in her graphic memoir *One Hundred Demons*, writes about how the dog Ooola was mistreated before she became adopted. Ooola, Barry explains, was thrown out of a window by an angry man: "She belonged to a man and a woman who got in a fight and the man threw Ooola out of a second floor window to prove some sort of point. She was four months old." Lynda Barry, *One Hundred Demons* (Seattle: Sasquatch Books, 2002), 174. Such abuse of dogs by men, especially hetero-patriarchal men who seek to control the family unit, remains quite common.

[178] Georges, *Fetch*, 37.

who look or act like previous perpetrators. Overwhelmingly seen as positive engagement, petting and physical touch have become normalized behaviors. Indeed, for many, reaching out to touch a dog or a cat is an automatic, and socially appropriate, movement. Moreover, it is widely believed that all dogs and cats enjoy being touched, even when they do not express body language suggesting this is so, and that these creatures are available to be touched whenever and however people choose. Cats and dogs have become objects of pleasure: touching them provides people with pleasure and people understand touch to be a pleasurable act enjoyed by all pets. Even Haraway normalizes touch when she asks, "Whom and what do I touch when I touch my dog?"[179] While touch indicates embodiment, situated histories, and multispecies accountability for Haraway, her use of the term assumes that dogs have no decision in the matter.[180] Dogs simply exist to be touched. What happens, however, when touch ignores consent and actually causes harm? Touch, after all, looks very different from the perspective of an abused pet constantly seeking safety. If a dog refuses to accept someone's advances by running away or avoiding physical contact, their behaviors are usually interpreted as "not normal" or "erratic," and they are viewed as requiring additional socialization. If they growl, bare their teeth, or act at all aggressive, they receive the additional label "crazy" or "threatening" and are determined to require disciplined training or, in some cases, to be euthanized. Interpreting most advances as threats, Beija uses aggressive, obvious body language to refuse unwanted touch and protect her vulnerable body from possible harm.

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[179] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 3. This question returns throughout *When Species Meet* and *The Companion Species Manifesto*.

[180] See, for example, Haraway, "The Companion Species Manifesto," 189; Haraway *When Species Meet*, 5, 36.

Recognizing Beija's defensive outbursts as attempts to create a safe space, Georges joins Beija in demanding that she be able to establish her own rules of conduct. In the process of challenging the normativity of petting and touch, they also create spaces supportive of Georges's bisexuality. Shortly after moving on a "whim" to "dirty and quirky" Portland, Oregon, Georges breaks up with Tom and starts dating women.[181] She begins to identify closely with lesbian feminists who give her a space to be herself: "I felt more connected, inspired, and accountable to the women in my life. They were true blue. The more I hung out with feminists and lesbians, the better I felt. There was a shorthand to it. I didn't have to explain feminism or my want to have a voice or to take up space. The space was already there."[182] Accepting this new space as her own, Georges begins identifying as queer in 2002.[183] Amid all of this change, she continues to live with Tom in a chaotic house with dozens of roommates who refuse to pick up after themselves, enjoy stealing things, and host loud punk rock parties. Upon first moving to the house, Beija, like Georges, "was just another punk expressing herself," however, the novelty of free expression quickly wore off.[184] The constant movement of people into and out of the house coupled with roommates inappropriately touching Beija and growing upset at her "fearful-aggressive company" presents Beija — and many others, especially Georges — with unsuitable living conditions.[185] Mockingly referred to as "mother," Georges

[181] Georges, *Fetch*, 106, 107, 113.

[182] Ibid., 174.

[183] Ibid., 175.

[184] Ibid., 122.

[185] Ibid.

becomes “the house mom, the heavy” and is made to take responsibility for her roommates’ misdeeds.[186] In rendering Georges a stereotyped domestic caretaker and forcing Beija to endlessly assume a defensive posture, such home life threatens Georges’s queerfeminist identity and Beija’s ability to establish her own modes of interaction.[187] In response, Georges and Beija pursue “stability” for themselves, setting “rules” in order to “keep our lives feeling safe.”[188] Together with Beija, Georges begins training roommates and visitors on “how to interact with my dog, the ticking time bomb.”[189] Queering the normative response that dictates training unwanted behaviors out of the dog rather than adjusting human behavior, Beija and Georges train people to be more respectful while validating Beija’s feelings and actions. In one training scene a man asks, “Why have such a funny-looking dog if no one can touch it?”[190] His utilitarian question assumes that dogs are objects of pleasure for humans and that their value derives from pleasing others. Holding on to Beija, Georges responds, “Because she exists far more than that. Beija isn’t here for you to pet. She has her own likes and dislikes, her own desires, and if she doesn’t want you to pet her, then back off!”[191] On the next full-page panel Georges continues,

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[186] Ibid., 123.

[187] In discussing her queer identity within the context of a larger narrative about Beija, Georges draws upon previous literary works that consider how queerness often emerges relationally. Alison Bechdel, for example, considers how her own experiences coming out as a lesbian are bound up with her father’s pedophilia or queer identity in *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006).

[188] Georges, *Fetch*, 122, 135.

[189] Ibid., 124.

[190] Ibid.

[191] Ibid.

"Beija could experience joy and closeness and an invigorating, meaningful dog version of life without the need for strange human hands upon her coarse fur-covered body."[192] Emerging from Beija's position and articulated through Georges, such mutually voiced demands resist the normativities of petting. Georges even makes a neckerchief for Beija to wear that reads "DON'T PET ME" in capitalized, block letters to supplement the informal training sessions and serve as a more permanent reminder.[193] While arising from Beija's demands and addressing her needs, the training sessions and the neckerchief also express Georges's desires to be respected and given her own space.

Although the neckerchief and impromptu training lessons provide some relief from harassment and mistreatment, Georges and Beija, after yet another incident, co-author a manifesto-style flier that explicitly outlines their mutual position. When taking a break from hanging posters for Georges's band "The Sour Grapes," Georges and Beija are accosted by a man who believes he can touch Beija without consent. The man, who closely resembles a younger Pete, reaches down to touch Beija when her back is turned. Surprised by the sudden and unexpected intrusion upon her space, Beija growls and lunges at him. While comforting Beija, Georges issues an apology to the man who, having recovered from his initial fear, has now grown angry. Accusatorily pointing his finger at growling Beija and apologetic Georges, the man shouts "THAT DOG'S CRAZY!"[194] Agreeing with the man, a crowd of five onlookers stand idly by and refuse

[192] Ibid., 125.

[193] Ibid., 131, 141.

[194] Ibid., 147. Men are not the only individuals responsible for abusing Beija, but they do frighten her far more than women. One notable exception is a woman named Kit whom Georges dates for a while. During their horrific breakup on Valentine's Day, Kit kicks

to defend Beija's actions. After the man stomps away with clenched fists, Georges collects herself and realizes that she was wrong to apologize on Beija's behalf. "[Y]ou're not crazy," she says to Beija, "You were just surprised. He snuck up on you and didn't ask. Why can't people see what I see? You're not like a stuffed animal for them to touch."[195] Riding away on her bike with Beija following close behind, Georges answers herself: "Because they're disrespectful, that's why. You know what — fuck that guy!"[196] In response to the incident, Georges makes a "Beija manifesto flier" that declares in large letters across the top next to a hand-drawn image of Beija: "I AM NOT A STUFFED ANIMAL."[197] A list of questions intended to disrupt the normativity of dog petting cover the page. One question, for example, asks, "[I]s it acceptable to invade [a dog's] space & expect them to conform to your standards of acceptable dog behavior without taking into account their issues or personal history with human beings?"[198] Another observes that dogs "are often objectified as property, as something cute like a stuffed animal whom you feel <u>entitled</u> to receive pleasure from (through petting, doing tricks, etc)."[199] At the

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Beija in a fit of rage. In the days and weeks that follow their breakup, Georges, much like Doty, contemplates drowning herself. Unlike Doty, however, a dog does not save her from depression and suicidal thoughts: "I want to tell you that Beija saved me. That it was only for her that I went on. But truthfully, I imagined her having a long quiet life with Avery [a close friend at the time]. A sad flag of where I'd been." Ibid., 227. As the memoir makes clear, violence also exists within queer relationships.

[195] Ibid., 148.

[196] Ibid.

[197] Ibid., 151, 150.

[198] Ibid., 150.

[199] Ibid.

bottom the manifesto concludes, "We have been brought up to want to pet and be friends with the animals that we see. If the animal is uninterested or frightened with our contact, we need to accept this as their personal choice. The animal is not "crazy" for choosing to keep you out of his/her personal space. It is offensive and unacceptable to call dogs names or refer to them as property."[200] Petting, the manifesto explains, has become normalized — often through childhood and the family unit — to such an extent that a dog's rejection of human touch earns them the designation "crazy." Affirming the message of canine consent, a drawing of Beija placed beside the final statement declares, "i have autonomy as a dog & I can create boundaries. It is my right to say you cannot touch me, and that is okay."[201] By critiquing the normalization of petting from Beija's perspective, the manifesto resists the objectification and possession of canine bodies. As a document co-authored by Georges and Beija, it becomes a tool for *resisting with* and challenging the normative structures that seek to control dogs and queers alike.

In an act of shared resistance that reclaims public space as canine *and* queer, Georges and Beija post copies of the manifesto flier throughout Portland, even at "the inciting coffeeshop."[202] Women, in particular, appreciate the fliers, remarking that respecting Beija's space is "kind of like feminism, but for dogs."[203] As a queer woman, Georges shares the same desire that guides Beija and the women who view the manifesto as a mode of feminism: to have her own space where she can be and act herself. By

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[200] Ibid.

[201] Ibid.

[202] Ibid., 151.

[203] Ibid., 152.

creating and posting the fliers, Georges expresses her desire to, as she puts it, live "harmoniously" with Beija in such a way that each has "control" over their lives and bodies.[204] Posting the fliers around town, especially at the site of the original incident, reclaims these areas as not only canine, but also queer, spaces. While the flier expresses Beija's desires, it also reflects Georges's aspirations to achieve her own "autonomy" and space as a queer woman. In this sense, putting up fliers functions as "a tactics of belonging beyond the normative."[205] A way of creating anti-normative spaces, Beija's manifesto establishes queer and canine sites that exist outside of normative structures of control.[206] Such successful resistant messaging derives, in part, from the radicalizing and emancipatory histories of the two genres upon which the flier draws: the manifesto and the zine. In bringing the two together, Georges creates what she calls "outsider art," a disruptive way of looking at problems from outside normative positions.[207] Through her art and strong sense of justice, Georges also comes to recognize Beija as an "ally."[208] Feeling "a marriage" with Beija, a kind of queer coupling, Georges understands that "she

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[204] Ibid., 252.

[205] Rodríguez, "Oedipal Wrecks," 279.

[206] Sociologist Joshua Sbicca refers to queer practices that challenge heteronormativity, homophobia, and environmental destruction as "eco-queer space making." Georges and Beija practice a similar kind of "space making." Joshua Sbicca, "Eco-Queer Movement(s): Challenging Heteronormative Space Through (Re)imagining Nature and Food," *European Journal of Ecopsychology* 3 (2012): 33-52, at p. 48.

[207] Georges, *Fetch*, 161. Zines and comics have supported Georges throughout her life. As a teenager, Georges found that zines engaged "hard, unspoken truths: abuse, mental breakdowns, and daily sexism." Ibid., 18. They gave her "a network of strong girl voices" and even provided a space for her to come out and "start the conversation" regarding her sexuality. Ibid., 20, 173.

[208] Ibid., 172.

was as much a part of me as I was of her."[209] To resist the (hetero)normativities of petting and touching, therefore, is also to resist the (hetero)normativities that designate Georges as "mother" and restrict her ability to pursue a queer identity and sexuality.

Like *Fetch*, the illustrated memoir *Lost Cat* describes how spaces inclusive of queers and pets become sites of *resisting with*, but it shifts attention away from challenging the normativities of touch and petting to instead critique normative modes of pet ownership that restrict the movement of pets, in this case cats, by limiting their bodies and desires to the confines of the home. The memoir begins with Paul, a pilot and firefighter who lives in San Francisco, suffering severe injuries when a test flight of an "experimental plane" goes horribly wrong.[210] Among her many injuries, Paul breaks her tibia and fibula which, appropriately, also happen to be the names of the two thirteen-year-old tabby cats with whom she lives. When recovering at home with her partner Wendy MacNaughton, "Fibby," an "energetic and sociable" cat, and her brother "Tibby," an "anxious and shy" creature, keep Paul from falling into "the deep dark hole of depression" that develops from the sudden life change brought about by the accident and her restricted mobility.[211] During the first weeks of home rest she develops a close affinity for Tibby, finally identifying with his "deep anxieties" and fear of the world: "I

[209] Ibid., 194, 10.

[210] Caroline Paul, *Lost Cat: A True Story of Love, Desperation, and GPS Technology*, with drawings by Wendy MacNaughton (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 2. For more on Paul's firefighting life, see her critically acclaimed memoir *Fighting Fire*. Caroline Paul, *Fighting Fire* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998).

[211] Paul, *Lost Cat*, 8, 6.

understood how Tibby felt. Everything about me was fearful and fragile."[212] Despite the new bond over their shared fragility, however, Tibby soon leaves home and is presumed to be "missing" or, even worse, "lost."[213] Unable to determine Tibby's whereabouts, Paul and MacNaughton hire a pet psychic, make regular visits to the local pound, and recruit their friends to post "lost cat" fliers around their neighborhood.[214] In their frantic search for Tibby and use of the terms "lost" and "missing" to describe him, Paul, MacNaughton, and their friends perpetuate normative beliefs associated with pet ownership. Indeed, applying the labels "lost" and "missing" to Tibby implies that he is out of place, that he has moved beyond the boundaries of his expected placement. Pets, especially those living in large cities such as San Francisco, are expected to live and always be found within the borders of the home.[215] Such normative expectations usually arise over concerns for the pet's safety in dangerous environments, not over concerns about the wellbeing of other creatures like songbirds who may be killed or harmed by free-roaming cats and dogs. When pets do leave domestic spaces, they are expected to be leashed or, at a minimum, associated with someone. As Huw Griffiths, Ingrid Poulter, and David Sibley explain, "The designation 'pet' generally indicates belonging: a placing in the home, either sharing space with people . . . or confinement within domestic space. . . . In the case of

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[212] Ibid., 10.

[213] Ibid., 14.

[214] Ibid., 14.

[215] Such behavior arose with leash laws, the concentration of the family unit around the pet, and the gradual removal of other species from urban areas that occurred throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For more on this history, see Brown, *The City is More than Human*; Robichaud, *Animal City*; Grier, *Pets in America*.

dogs, moving beyond the confines of the home is usually under the control of a human."[216] To leave "the confines of the home" without a designated human caretaker is, therefore, to become out of place. Keeping pets within the boundaries of the home has become normalized to such a degree that once a pet cannot be located within their allotted space, they must be found and returned to their proper location. In Tibby's case, leaving home qualifies him as a "lost" and "missing" cat even though his own whereabouts and activities are known perfectly well to him. With the endless searching, Paul soon gives up looking for Tibby and, five weeks after he left, he returns home looking healthy and weighing half a pound heavier.[217] Feeling "confusion," "jealousy," and "betrayal," over his unexpected appearance, Paul wonders, "Where do our pets go and what do they do, when we're not around? And why? Aren't we enough for our furry companions?"[218] Searching for answers, Paul and MacNaughton begin what they call "Operation Chasing Tibby."[219]

Aided by GPS and camera technology, Paul encourages Tibby to leave the house and roam the neighborhood in the hopes of discovering where he disappeared for five weeks. Through Operation Chasing Tibby, Paul and the tabby cat come together to queer the normativities of pet containment, the mystery genre, and the configuration of urban space. Once able to walk again with the support of crutches, Paul visits a "spy store" to

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[216] Huw Griffiths, Ingrid Poulter, and David Sibley, "Feral Cats in the City," in *Animal Spaces, Beastly Places: New Geographies of Human-Animal Relations*, eds. Chris Philo and Chris Wilbert (New York: Routledge, 2000), 59-72, at p. 61.

[217] Paul, *Lost Cat*, 25-26.

[218] Ibid., 28.

[219] Ibid.

purchase a GPS unit that can attach to Tibby's collar and track his movements.[220] The male store clerk assumes that Paul is one of the "million betrayed wives" suffering from either a "[b]ad boyfriend" or an "[a]busive husband" who needs to track someone's movements.[221] Queering the clerk's heteronormative misreading of her identity and interest in a GPS unit, Paul delights in informing him that she is not tracking the movements of a cheating husband but rather the activities of a wandering cat: "Consider it a quest to track a very short, very hairy husband."[222] Unable to find a small enough GPS unit at the spy store, Paul purchases a specially made tracking device online and straps it to Tibby's collar. Becoming one of Haraway's boundary-crossing cyborgs, Tibby is transformed into "half cat, half astronaut, with a control panel hanging from his neck, blinking red and blue, lighting up his whiskers."[223] Rather than suppress Tibby's desire to leave their home, Paul encourages the cyborg cat to explore the wider neighborhood. As a detective searching for Tibby's destination instead of the cat himself, Paul simultaneously queers the mystery genre that centers the pursuit of a criminal or missing person and the "lost pet returns home" narrative that focuses on the against-the-odds journey undertaken by "lost" pets to return to their loving homes.[224] Believing that Tibby's GPS coordinates would reveal "one line, straight and true" from their house to

[220] Ibid., 31.

[221] Ibid., 34.

[222] Ibid. Paul describes Tibby as "a husband who was getting away with something on the side" and imagines him escaping with some "bimbo." Ibid., 30, 71.

[223] Ibid., 36.

[224] For more on the most popular "lost pet returns home" narratives of the twentieth century, see Fudge, *Pets*, 33-38.

another location several blocks away, Paul and MacNaughton are surprised to see a tangle of lines crisscrossing back and forth across their block.[225] As Paul puts it, the GPS map "looked as if a kindergardener [*sic*] had been given a Twinkie, and then been let loose with a crayon."[226] After several maps plotting Tibby's movements around the block all yield a similar maze of coordinates, Paul purchases a "CatCam" that dangles from his collar and takes photographs at timed intervals.[227] Unable to capture clear images or obtain useful information, the CatCam is soon set aside, however.[228]

Such exercises in tracking Tibby's movements with technology reveal the extent to which the tabby disrupts the normativities of containment. Leaving the house for hours, days, or even weeks at a time, Tibby explores the immediate neighborhood. By ranging outside of the house, Tibby queers not only attempts at containment, but he also queers cityscapes. Imposed over parts of houses, sidewalks, alleys, streets, garages, parking lots, trees, and gardens, the crisscrossed lines reflecting Tibby's movements demonstrate that the cat moves differently from human residents in the built spaces of residential San Francisco. Climbing over and under structures, walking across roads at undesignated crossing points, avoiding sidewalks whenever possible, and moving through gardens and yards in unusual directions all queer the residential landscape

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[225] Paul, *Lost Cat*, 41, 40.

[226] Ibid. 42-43.

[227] Ibid., 46.

[228] The CatCam is quite similar to the National Geographic Channel's "Crittercam." Donna Haraway, "Crittercam: Compounding Eyes in Naturecultures," in *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 249-63.

designed almost exclusively for human use.[229] Tibby's disruptive movements and even his presence in the cityscape challenge the architecture and the anthropocentrism of built spaces.[230] Indeed, as Weaver explains, "Strayings delineate how, even within a larger normative landscape . . . there still exist connectivities, ways of doing and being, ways of relating, that depart from such [normative] mappings."[231] Many creatures, Philo and Wilbert observe, "often end up evading the places to which humans seek to allot them," instead "transgressing, perhaps even resisting . . . human placements."[232] Through such transgressions they create "their own 'beastly places' reflective of their own 'beastly' ways, ends, doings, joys, and sufferings."[233] By transgressing the boundaries of the home and moving through the built landscape in a disruptive manner, Tibby queers urban spaces and, in the process, makes them his own.

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[229] MacNaughton captures this sense of disrupted urban geography in a paratextual map placed before the first chapter. The illustrated map shows San Francisco "as seen by a cat, as imagined by a cat owner." Portions of San Francisco are labelled with the various affects and landmarks of importance to cats, including "dread," "general fear," "food?," and "feral cat colony." Felines, the map makes clear, also shape and occupy San Francisco.

[230] More-than-human geographies and histories have acknowledged how the presence of other species in urban spaces originally designed in their absence challenges beliefs that cities have been made strictly by and for humans. See, for example, Brown, *The City is More than Human*; Adrian Franklin, "The More-Than-Human City," *The Sociological Review* 65, no. 2 (2017): 202-17; Chris Philol, "Animals, Geography, and the City: Notes on Inclusions and Exclusions," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 13, no. 6 (1995): 655-81; Kelsi Nagy and Phillip David Johnson II, eds., *Trash Animals: How We Live with Nature's Filthy, Feral, Invasive, and Unwanted Species* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013). For more on this, see Chapter 2, "Avian Care: Conflict, Justice, and the Quotidian."

[231] Weaver, *Bad Dog*, 143.

[232] Philo and Wilbert, "Animal Spaces, Beastly Places," 14.

[233] Ibid.

The queering of city spaces also extends to the home where, upon discovering Tibby's hiding location and recognizing his desire to roam, Paul joins Tibby in resisting confinement and creating a space that she believes best supports queer and feline lives. After overlaying several GPS maps to pinpoint a cluster of activity and knocking on doors in the general area to narrow down the possible locations, Paul and MacNaughton find the place where Tibby stayed for five weeks when he last disappeared. Their neighbors, they learn, feed neighborhood cats, many of whom are strays. The cats sleep and shelter in an abandoned Russian *banya*, transforming the dilapidated sauna into a "beastly place" where feline activities and behaviors thrive. While Paul is relieved to learn that Tibby has been visiting a safe and welcoming place, his close proximity to their house gives her pause. She realizes that Tibby must have heard her calls when he left for several weeks and that he consciously *chose* to stay with the other cats rather than return home.[234] Paul explains, "I needed someone to blame for Tibby's disappearance. I needed to be redirected from the uncomfortable realization that I was not enough for my cat and he was keeping secrets from me. I'd thought he was pathologically shy, scared, unadventurous. Instead, he was taking up with strangers and spending time in bathhouses."[235] Upset that Tibby refused to return home for five weeks and that he behaves very differently from the "pathologically shy, scared, [and] unadventurous" cat she knows, Paul comes to accept that "He wasn't lost. . . . It seems he simply wanted to

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[234] Paul, *Lost Cat*, 112-13.

[235] Ibid., 147.

leave for a while."[236] Tibby, she realizes, "had just not wanted to be at home."[237] Such an understanding leads Paul to recognize Tibby as an autonomous creature capable of making his own choices and decisions, many of which do not include her. Tibby's extended departure and his refusal to return when called break from the normative rules of petkeeping which dictate that pets — even notoriously independent cats — must remain obedient and should never leave home. By leaving home for an extended period and ignoring calls to return, Tibby queers expected roles and, in the process, teaches Paul that her normative behaviors, actions, and thoughts must be replaced with modes that take into account feline needs. In response, Paul and Tibby create a home where Tibby "came and went freely" in pursuit of a "happy and healthy" life.[238] Although "never gone for long," Tibby always has the option of leaving and returning on his own terms.[239]

It must be acknowledged, however, that Tibby's free movements not only place his own life at risk, but also endanger the lives of others such as rodents, birds, and insects. As Suzie Gilbert, an author and bird rehabilitator, explains, "Those who profess to love the cats they let outside ignore the fact that the average life span of an indoor cat is fifteen to nineteen years, while the life span of cats allowed outside is two to three years. . . . Those who 'love' their cats might want to show it by keeping them inside,

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[236] Ibid., 149.

[237] Ibid., 154.

[238] Ibid., 158, 17.

[239] Ibid., 158.

where they are safe and secure."[240] Moreover, a study published in *Nature Communications* estimated that free-ranging domestic cats kill approximately 1.3-4.0 billion birds and 6.3-22.3 billion mammals annually.[241] Although keeping cats indoors adheres to the normativities of the home, a multispecies justice perspective suggests that many creatures — excepting those consumed as food — would benefit if cats lived inside.[242] Despite these complications, Paul views the benefits of unrestricted movement as outweighing the inherent risks. Much like Tibby, Paul benefits from anti-normative approaches. Tracking Tibby's paths on the GPS device helps her address the depression that followed the plane accident, "I was getting better. My ankle may have been healing at a glacial pace, but I had a gleam in my eye and a purpose in my heart. True, the gleam was maniacal and the purpose obsessive. But I was slowly, surely, coming back to life."[243] Even knocking on doors and talking with her neighbors of twenty years whom she barely knows makes Paul realize "how lively my street could be."[244] Together, Tibby

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[240] Suzie Gilbert, *Flyaway: How a Wild Bird Rehabber Sought Adventure and Found Her Wings* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2009), 106. For more on Gilbert, see Chapter 2 "Avian Care: Conflict, Justice, and the Quotidian."

[241] Scott R. Loss, Tim Will, and Peter P. Marra, "The impact of free-ranging domestic cats on wildlife of the United States," *Nature Communications* (2013): 1-7, at p. 2.

[242] The large amounts of meat consumed by dogs and cats has been critiqued by a number of scholars. Brown, for example, remarks on what he calls the "paradox of the pet food dish," the phenomenon where people pursue ethically sourced food for themselves while continuing to feed their pets industrially produced meats. Brown, *The City is More than Human*. For a quantitative critique, see Gregory S. Okin, "Environmental impacts of food consumption by dogs and cats," *PLOS One* 12, no. 8 (2017): 1-14.

[243] Ibid., 74.

[244] Ibid., 133.

and Paul challenge the norms of keeping pets locked within the boundaries of the home and they both benefit from doing so.

Read together, Paul and Tibby, and Georges and Beija, come together to create anti-normative, multispecies spaces where they can be and act themselves. Georges and Beija reclaim public spaces, hanging fliers that reject the control and mistreatment of their bodies by (hetero)normative forces. Paul and Tibby reassemble the boundaries of the home, rejecting normativities of containment in favor of establishing meaningful connections throughout the neighborhood. In both cases, Georges and Paul remain open to the transformative potential of being with pets. Georges learns from Beija that one can set rules outlining how they want to be treated, and Paul learns from Tibby the value of moving about as one pleases. In McHugh's words, these authors and pets "unsettle the habits of mind that otherwise render intimacies within and across other species insignificant."[245] By doing so, they become "[q]ueer messmates in mortal play" and forge their own spaces of mutual belonging.[246]

Houseless Resistance: Eighner's Travels with Lizbeth

This chapter has thus far attended to petkeeping as a domestic activity that primarily occurs inside the home and within the public sites that bring the boundaries of the household into focus. However, what kinds of living arrangements and modes of resistance, if any, are possible for queers and pets who lack stable, long-term housing? What kinds of queer, multispecies coalitions emerge through the conditions and contexts

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[245] McHugh, "Queer (and) Animal Theories," 167.

[246] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 19.

of houselessness?[247] At once a road narrative reminiscent of John Steinbeck's *Travels with Charley in Search of America* and an ethnography of houselessness, Eighner's *Travels with Lizbeth* describes how a gay author and a labrador retriever mix often mistaken as a "pit bull" survive without housing during the late 1980s and early 90s in Austin, Texas, and several locations across the US Southwest.[248] The memoir shows how being unhoused, gay, and a "pit bull" render Eighner and Lizbeth out of place. Yet, despite being policed and managed by similar forces, including abusive hospitals, state welfare systems, municipal police, and animal control agencies, Eighner and Lizbeth challenge displacement and resist shared harms together. Contrary to normative accounts that blame the condition of being unhoused upon personal failures such as drug, alcohol, or gambling addictions which, in turn, rapidly exile individuals to a life of moral bankruptcy on the streets, Eighner describes the slide into various gradations of houselessness as "a long process" occurring over several years and predicated on institutional, not personal, failures.[249] Struggling to find a job in Austin without a college

[247] Although the term "houselessness" feels burdensome to use, I prefer terms that specify a lack of housing as opposed to terms that emphasize a lack of home to describe people who are unable to access more permanent shelters. Terms such as "unhoused" and "houseless" provide specificity and grant individuals who occupy such positions greater dignity.

[248] John Steinbeck, *Travels with Charley in Search of America* (1962; New York: Penguin Books, 1986). According to sociologist Leslie Irvine, approximately 10-24% of unhoused people live with pets at any given point. Leslie Irvine, *My Dog Always Eats First: Homeless People and Their Animals* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2013), 8.

[249] Lars Eighner, *Travels with Lizbeth* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), x. Eighner resists the tendency, especially prevalent in the memoir genre, of blaming himself for his unhoused status. Instead, he makes it clear that structural problems such as wealth inequity and unfair housing and welfare policies are responsible for creating the conditions that lead to the loss of housing.

degree and unable to make rent payments with his meager salary earned from freelance writing, Eighner turns to state welfare programs and Catholic charities which, for various reasons, are unable to provide support.[250] Lacking other options, Eighner and Lizbeth inhabit a "shack" for a year and then move in with friends and acquaintances for five unstable months before they become forced to live "literally without a roof over our heads."[251] During three years of living in makeshift shelters and hitchhiking across the Southwest, Eighner and Lizbeth aspire "to nothing more than survival."[252] Often writing in third-person plural, Eighner describes survival as a contingent outcome dependent upon mutual effort. Indeed, Eighner shares sleeping bags, food scrounged from dumpsters, and various shelters with Lizbeth, always staying with her and refusing to give her up.[253] With her "keen ears," "good nose," and "sharp teeth," Lizbeth alerts Eighner to threats at night, protects their possessions, and coaxes drivers to pick them up when hitchhiking.[254] In fact, much like a cat who earns James Bowen, an unhoused man living in London, significantly larger tips after he becomes part of Bowen's busking acts,

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[250] Ibid., 4-5.

[251] Ibid., x.

[252] Ibid., xi, ix.

[253] By conducting dozens of interviews in several US cities, Irvine found that most houseless people feed pet dogs before themselves. Irvine, *My Dog Always Eats*, 53-54. The sharing of food with dogs by unhoused people is quite common.

[254] Eighner, *Travels with Lizbeth*, xiii. For more on the protection that dogs offer unhoused individuals, see Kathryn Gillespie and Victoria Lawson, "'My Dog is My Home': Multispecies Care and Poverty Politics in Los Angeles, California and Austin, Texas," *Gender, Place & Culture* 24, no. 6 (2017): 774-93, at p. 777, 786.

Lizbeth's presence leads people to treat them with greater compassion.[255] "Homeless" pets, as the literary critic Marjorie Garber notes, evoke a "pathos" that leads many to respond to them with greater "poignancy" than they would unhoused people.[256] At one point, for example, a "woman of advanced middle age" buys Lizbeth "three boxes of dog treats, a small bag of dry dog food, and two cans of dog food" even though Eighner carries plenty of food for her and has not himself eaten for several days.[257] Such preferential (mis)treatment reflects what Justin Torres has called the "narcissism" of dog cultures that carefully attend to pets while ignoring the needs of impoverished humans.[258] Although their treatment as unhoused individuals differs, Eighner and Lizbeth are only able to survive because "they provide for each other."[259]

Surviving together involves not only locating daily meals and adequate shelter, but also resisting attempts by state agencies and organizations to manage their lives. In

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[255] Bowen learns that having Bob the cat nearby when he plays his musical acts not only garners him greater attention but also increases the size and frequency of tips. After Bowen stops illicit busking and begins selling magazines, his coworkers accuse him of being a "beggar" and using Bob to turn a profit. James Bowen, *A Street Cat Named Bob and How He Saved My Life* (2012; New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2013), 197.

[256] Garber, *Dog Love*, 40.

[257] Eighner, *Travels with Lizbeth*, 233.

[258] In an essay published in *The New Yorker*, Torres describes walking a dog for a "wealthy narcissist." After a few weeks of holding the job, Torres is tasked with taking the dog to a store in New York City to buy the creature a $600 leather jacket. The task outrages him because he was paying $450 a month to sleep in someone's living room and could barely survive. He writes, "I found myself fantasizing about somehow destroying the dog and walking away with the cash." Justin Torres, "Dog-Walking for a Wealthy Narcissist," *The New Yorker*, October 3, 2016, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/10/10/dog-walking-for-a-wealthy-narcissist.

[259] McHugh, *Dog*, 168. See also Irvine, *My Dog Always Eats*, 113-20.

one demonstrative incident, Eighner checks into an Austin hospital to address a painful swelling in his leg caused by blood clots, temporarily leaving Lizbeth with an acquaintance. Appearing "pretty ragged" without a recent shave or bath, Eighner is quickly profiled by hospital staff as houseless and assigned a number of pathologies that are assumed to correspond with his condition.[260] The first medical doctor he sees, Dr. Velasquez, accuses Eighner of using "IV drugs" because he lives on the street and previously contracted hepatitis B.[261] After learning that Eighner's hepatitis was contracted "sexually" by sleeping with other men, Dr. Velasquez orders an "HIV screen" despite Eighner's protests that his "immune system was functioning adequately" and that, as he later learns, HIV has "nothing to do" with the treatment of his ailment, thrombophlebitis.[262] In addition to pathologizing Eighner as a drug addict because of his houselessness and a possible HIV/AIDS patient because of his sexuality, Dr. Velasquez orders a "psychiatric consult" to diagnose potential mental disorders that may be responsible for Eighner's long-term instability.[263] While still waiting for the actual cause of his visit to be addressed, Eighner sees a second medical professional named Dr. Stalin who orders Vicodin for his pain because she assumes that he is suffering from "opiate withdrawal" after being off the street for a day.[264] Once he finally obtains a combination of painkillers, blood thinners, and diuretics to treat the swelling in his leg, Eighner

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[260] Eighner, *Travels with Lizbeth*, 141.

[261] Ibid., 143.

[262] Ibid., 144, 153.

[263] Ibid., 145.

[264] Ibid., 147.

receives a visit from a hospital social worker who tries to determine which "three explanations of homelessness" — drug addiction, alcoholism, or psychiatric disorder — best fit his situation.[265] The social worker believes "that homelessness is the fault of the homeless—that the homeless have special flaws not common to the human condition, or at least the homeless have flaws that professional people are immune to."[266] Upon learning that Eighner lives with a dog, they recommend that he "destroy" Lizbeth in order to secure short-term lodging at shelters such as the Salvation Army.[267] Unaware of the tremendous support that Lizbeth provides and unwilling to critique the rules that prevent pets from joining unhoused individuals in shelters, the social worker views Lizbeth as an unnecessary hindrance to receiving welfare, an animal more valuable dead than alive. After three long days of being misdiagnosed by two doctors, a social worker, and several nurses, Eighner demands to see his medical chart in the hopes that he can rectify its mistakes and thereby increase his "chances of survival."[268] Multiple staff members refuse to show Eighner his chart, however, and, in defiance of their mistreatment and abuse, Eighner leaves the hospital "against medical advice."[269] The following day he returns, leaving Lizbeth in a park across the street, and, fully convinced that he could die at any

[265] Ibid., 149.

[266] Ibid.

[267] Ibid. Pets are not allowed in most shelters and aid centers. For more on this, see Gillespie and Lawson, "'My Dog is My Home'," 778; "My Dog is My Home," *My Dog is My Home*, https://www.mydogismyhome.org/; "What We Do…," *Feeding Pets of the Homeless*, https://www.petsofthehomeless.org/help-pets/.

[268] Ibid., 152.

[269] Ibid., 154.

moment from a blood clot, Eighner pickets with a sign that says "DEMAND TO READ YOUR CHART" on one side and "DR. STALIN DENIES PATIENTS' RIGHTS" on the other.[270] A few days after his protest, Eighner returns to meet with "a very reasonable and personable" psychiatric resident who informs him that he was originally admitted not for blood clots, which turned out to be minor, but because he was seen as a "psychiatric case" by several nurses and doctors who "disapproved" of Eighner's "way of life."[271] By keeping Eighner fearful of his condition and not permitting him to see his medical chart, the hospital sought to "restrain" him for enough time to diagnose his assumed psychiatric disorders.[272]

A victim of the medical model of treating houselessness, Eighner receives multiple misdiagnoses based upon stereotypes and mistruths that view houselessness as the result of personal character flaws, especially drug addiction, alcoholism, and psychiatric disorders. With its focus on identifying and treating pathologies, the medical model essentializes houselessness as resulting from individual, and often inherited, traits and promotes inaccurate claims regarding the causes of and solutions to houselessness.[273] However, as an unhoused queer writer conversant in the medical profession and who does not drink, use drugs, or qualify as psychotic, Eighner defies the misdiagnoses assigned by hospital staff. Refusing to be classified as an alcoholic, drug addicted,

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[270] Ibid., 155.

[271] Ibid., 157, 158.

[272] Ibid., 158.

[273] Jason Adam Wasserman and Jeffrey Michael Clair, "The Medicalization of Homelessness and the Sociology of the Self: A Grounded Fractal Analysis," *Studies in Symbolic Interaction* 37 (2011): 29-62, at p. 49.

psychotic, HIV-screened man, or to have his unhoused condition incorrectly explained away by such labels, he resists the medical establishment by leaving the hospital altogether and publicly protesting its injustices. Moreover, Eighner's refusal to follow the social worker's demand that he kill or part ways with Lizbeth underscores a shared resistance to the medical model. As he explains, "I realized my values were at variance with those of the society around me. Perhaps it would have been the *normal* thing for me to have my dog killed [so] that I might obtain three nights' lodging. Perhaps a more *normal* person would steal or beg than dig through garbage for his sustenance. Perhaps I really was eccentric. But I did not think I was insane."[274] By remaining together despite the medical model's attempts to separate unhoused people from pets and despite the hospital's multiple misdiagnoses, Eighner and Lizbeth practice a queer, multispecies resistance that embraces anti-normative behavior and shared survival.

In addition to encountering discrimination and abuse from medical professionals, Eighner and Lizbeth face routine harassment by members of the Austin police force. With a deep distrust of the police, they avoid engaging uniformed officers whenever possible. "As always I was concerned that any confrontation with the law, whether serious or not," Eighner explains, "might result in Lizbeth's being taken from me and put to death."[275] Perhaps aware that officers might attempt to euthanize her, Lizbeth "hated" the police and often nervously barked in their presence.[276] Despite their best attempts to

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[274] Eighner, *Travels with Lizbeth*, 158, emphasis added. As Irvine notes, houseless people "frequently refuse offers of housing or shelter that require them to give up or separate from their animals." Irvine, *My Dog Always Eats*, 5.

[275] Eighner, *Travels with Lizbeth*, 67.

[276] Ibid., 38.

avoid the Austin police force, however, two mounted officers harassed them one morning as they slept in Adams Park, a centrally located recreation area. Eighner and Lizbeth had been living in the park for several months, hiding their belongings in thickets, using the public water tap, and sleeping on the ground at night.[277] They wake as the two officers approach on horseback and, despite seeing that Lizbeth is "tied securely to a tree," one of the approaching officers draws and points his gun at the dog in a show of force.[278] As one of the police officers "detains" Eighner, ordering him to "leave the park and never return," the other rummages through their belongings and destroys Lizbeth's dog food, rendering it "a total loss."[279] The officers leave "without bothering anyone else," including "an alcoholic couple" and "a half-dozen men" sleeping throughout the park.[280] Acting "quite beyond . . . [their] legitimate authority," the officers single out and intimidate the multispecies pair.[281] City curfew had expired a few hours earlier, so Eighner's and Lizbeth's presence in the park is entirely lawful. Eighner suspects that the police harass them and not the others because of his recent sexual adventures with men in the park. "I do not know who might have been observing me closely enough to notice the sex of my bedfellows, and I cannot think of any other reason that the police would want

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[277] For more on city parks as "sites of homemaking" where houseless people forge their own modes of belonging, see Jessie Speer and Eric Goldfischer, "The City is Not Innocent: Homelessness and the Value of Urban Parks," *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 31, vol. 3 (2020): 24-41, at p. 29.

[278] Ibid., 189.

[279] Ibid.

[280] Ibid., 188.

[281] Ibid., 189.

to bother me while leaving the others unmolested, but I think they did come to the park to annoy me in particular."[282] Like other queerscapes present in *Travels with Lizbeth*, including queer bookstores, AIDS organizations, gay bars, vehicles, and public restrooms, Austin parks are claimed as queer spaces where non-normative sexual identities flourish. Parks are also, however, popular spaces for hetero bodies and sex acts, as Eighner makes clear in the following observation: "I had brought young men to the park in recent weeks and one night there had been three of us, but I thought our love-making had been reasonably discreet in comparison to that of the wino couple and of the young people from nearby apartments who sometimes came to the park at night."[283] As Mortimer-Sandilands and Erickson observe, parks have normalized "heterosexual courtship" since the nineteenth century when they were designed to support "heterosexist spatiality."[284] At the same time, recent studies on the policing of unhoused queer bodies argue that police forces maintain "public space as appropriately heterosexual" and view "non-heteronormative bodies [as] needing to be monitored in public spaces."[285] The

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[282] Ibid.

[283] Ibid., 188.

[284] Mortimer-Sandilands and Erickson, "Introduction," 19. In an introductory chapter of *Queers in Space*, the volume's editors critique what they call "homophobia by design" which has restricted queer movement. Gordon Brent Ingram, Anne-Marie Bouthillette, and Yolanda Retter, "Lost in Space: Queer Theory and Community Activism at the Fin-de-Millénaire," in *Queers in Space: Communities, Public Places, Sites of Resistance*, eds. Gordon Brent Ingram, Anne-Marie Bouthillette, and Yolanda Retter (Seattle: Bay Press, 1997), 3-16, at p. 3. By naturalizing hetero-courtship and -sexuality, parks function as homophobic landscapes.

[285] Angela Dwyer, "'It's Not Like We're Going to Jump Them': How Transgressing Heteronormativity Shapes Police Interactions with LGBT Young People," *Youth Justice* 11, no. 3 (2011): 203-20, at p. 216. Unhoused queers experience "an increased likelihood of police contact." Sean McCandless, "LGBT Homeless Youth and Policing," *Public*

targeted harassment of Eighner and Lizbeth by police in Adams Park, therefore, stands as an attempt to preserve urban parks as heteroscapes while also controlling unhoused bodies and the presence of pets in these spaces.[286] More directly, the police officers' unwarranted eviction of Eighner and Lizbeth aims to desexualize this space by removing queer sexual activities. Sara Ahmed explains, "Sexuality can be considered a spatial formation not only in the sense that bodies inhabit sexual spaces, but also in the sense that bodies are sexualized through how they inhabit space."[287] While Eighner's body is sexualized by sleeping with men in Austin parks, it also becomes *desexualized* by police who attempt to remove him from such spaces and activities. Eighner and Lizbeth resist police orders, however, and move to a nearby secluded area called "the Triangle," where they establish a camp and live together without disturbance for several months.[288] In doing so, they "resist the norm of home as a specific behavior, place, or private

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Integrity 20 (2018): 558-70, at p. 566. In general, people who lack access to stable housing experience greater contact with the police. As Yasmeen Krameddine and Peter Silverstone explain, "Police come into increased contact with homeless individuals because they are found to have both high arrest rates regarding trespassing, theft, and loitering, and higher rates of victimization." Yasmeen Krameddine and Peter Silverstone, "Police use of handcuffs in the homeless population leads to long-term negative attitudes within this group," *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry* 44 (2016): 81-90, at p. 81.

[286] Parks are not the only spaces policed in such a manner. Similarly, Eighner describes how many miles of roadway are labeled with "No Hitchhiking" signs which prevent him from obtaining rides while hitchhiking across parts of California and New Mexico. See, for instance, Eighner, *Travels with Lizbeth*, 67. Eighner describes petroscapes, especially roadsides and the tangle of interstates that crisscross the Southwest, as hostile and forbidding spaces.

[287] Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 67.

[288] Eighner, *Travels with Lizbeth*, 190.

property," and reclaim the park as a space supportive of queer sexualities, unhoused people, and pet companions.[289]

Like the discriminatory policing that seeks to remove Eighner's unhoused and queer body from Adams Park, city institutions similarly aim to manage Lizbeth's body as out of place within the urbanscapes of Austin. Often mistaken for a "pit bull" during a moment of "hysteria" when dogs with stout, muscular bodies and strong jaws are regarded as members of a "Killer Breed," Lizbeth is given "a wide berth" by people who pass her on the street or in parks.[290] She also develops a "scaly dermatitis on her back and hindquarters," likely from allergies and not from lack of access to veterinary care, that, although harmless, frightens passerby.[291] With such an appearance, many people — including the police officer who draws his weapon on her — view Lizbeth with contempt and fear. Indeed, such reactions during a moment of "collective fury" directed toward pit breeds lead to Lizbeth's capture and near death.[292] When still camping at the Triangle near Adams Park, Eighner and Lizbeth begin frequenting the Renaissance Market, a popular place for unhoused individuals and tourists. One day while sitting near the market and knitting a winter sweater, a blind student practicing "how to get around crowds" approaches Eighner and Lizbeth from behind, poking Lizbeth in the face with

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[289] Gillespie and Lawson, "'My Dog is My Home'," 787.

[290] Ibid., 135. Indeed, as Dickey observes, the term "pit bull" has grown to encompass "a general *shape* of a dog," not a specific breed. Dickey, *Pit Bull*, 12.

[291] Eighner, *Travels with Lizbeth*, 135-36.

[292] Dickey, *Pit Bull*, 24.

his cane as he tries to walk past.[293] "The student," Eighner explains, "began shrieking curses immediately and demanded that Lizbeth be killed on the spot."[294] The outraged student accuses Lizbeth of "attacking" him, but, as Eighner points out, Lizbeth did not have enough length on her leash to even approach his vicinity.[295] "That Lizbeth, tied around my waist as she was, could have bitten him was a physical impossibility."[296] Nonetheless, despite Eighner's and Lizbeth's verbal protests and their attempts to escape, a dogcatcher, accompanied by several police officers, capture Lizbeth and put her in a pound managed by the local humane society. In tears over Lizbeth's separation, Eighner walks "the considerable distance" to the pound and learns that he must pay nearly $100 — a large sum, especially for someone not earning a regular paycheck — in order to cover the fees charged by the dogcatcher for their services and to have Lizbeth released.[297] If Eighner does not pay the entire amount within ten days, Lizbeth will be euthanized because she is now categorized, incorrectly, as a "bite dog."[298]

Profiling Lizbeth as an unhoused and vicious "pit bull" in order to pin a crime on her that she did not commit, the dogcatcher and humane society remove Lizbeth from Eighner's care and from the streets of Austin through an unjust system of policing and

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[293] Eighner, *Travels with Lizbeth*, 207.

[294] Ibid.

[295] Ibid.

[296] Ibid., 208.

[297] Ibid., 210.

[298] Ibid., 211.

control.[299] In a move that exposes the multiple injustices at play during this moment, Eighner likens Lizbeth's mistreatment to the incarceration of death row inmates. He observes that if he does not pay the dues within the allotted time, Lizbeth will be euthanized using "sodium Pentothal, just like the prisoners on death row."[300] Neither Lizbeth nor Eighner can dispute or even disprove the allegations; the dogcatcher and the humane society regard all accusations against dogs as true, regardless of whether they actually occurred. "Although Lizbeth was property," Eighner writes, "the law provided no pretense of due process in her seizure. There would be no hearing. It was not even necessary that the alleged victim produce a wound. Once a bite was alleged, the dog was seized. It was up to the dogcatcher, and no one would or could, according to the law, review his decision."[301] Although the ableist urban environment designed without considering the wide spectrum of disabilities leads the student to accidentally poke Lizbeth, Eighner blames the accident on the student who, he alleges, would never have struck Lizbeth in the first place had he not been waving his "cane through the air about a foot from the ground."[302] The problem arises not from the student's walking behavior, however, but from his allegation that Lizbeth bit him, a claim taken up by the student's teacher and the dogcatcher who collectively ensure that Lizbeth is removed to the pound. In many ways Lizbeth's mistreatment during the entire ordeal parallels the abuse Eighner

[299] Such management systems have existed since the nineteenth century when unwanted cats and dogs were first caught, contained, and euthanized in large numbers. For an overview of this history, see Grier, *Pets in America*, 216-17.

[300] Eighner, *Travels with Lizbeth*, 212.

[301] Ibid., 210-11.

[302] Ibid., 207.

suffered during his hospital visit. Like Eighner who, as an unhoused man, is misdiagnosed as "psychotic" and detained against his will within a hospital for several days, Lizbeth is misclassified as a "bite dog" due to her "pit bull" resemblance and held within a pound. Additionally, in much the same way that Eighner, a sexually active gay man, is assumed to have contracted HIV, Lizbeth, an unhoused dog, is accused by humane society staff of not being vaccinated against diseases such as rabies and distemper.[303] Both, albeit for differing but intersecting reasons, are viewed as social outcasts and failures that must be managed and removed from public spaces. With help from the editor of a local literary publication, Eighner posts the fee required to release Lizbeth, only to have her suffer from kennel cough acquired at the pound. While Eighner must participate in the unjust system that criminalized and detained Lizbeth by paying the exorbitant fee, doing so prevents Lizbeth's death and ensures their continued co-presence as a "pack of two" on the streets of Austin, thereby challenging the very institutions that seek to manage their bodies.[304]

Despite his desire to escape impoverishment and secure long-term, affordable housing, Eighner regards the condition of being unhoused as a moral high ground, a position that resists — and, in some respects, queers — the inadequate state welfare system and the institutions that falsely claim to better the lives of oppressed populations. As Eighner's criticism of the public hospital's medical model indicates, he views organizations that intervene in the lives of unhoused people with deep suspicion. The

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[303] Lizbeth's vaccination tags are "not sufficient evidence" and Eighner has to obtain a written note from her veterinarian. Ibid., 211.

[304] Irvine, *My Dog Always Eats*, 103.

late-twentieth-century Texas welfare system, with its contradictions and exclusionary rules, is particularly suspect. When he tries to apply for food stamps, for instance, he learns that he needs to have a "functioning kitchen" in order to receive benefits.[305] Even worse, Eighner must prove that he has access to a meal preparation space by showing a rent or mortgage receipt. Such experiences convince him that the state welfare program has little interest in ameliorating the conditions of houseless people. Eighner comes to believe that welfare systems are not designed to provide material assistance for "poor people," especially unhoused individuals, but instead exist to "provide jobs for social workers and bureaucrats."[306] He even goes so far as to argue that state employees encourage the production of conditions that lead to chronic poverty and evictions in order to keep themselves employed. At one point he writes with cynicism and condescension, "This is of course all that social workers exist for: to keep the funds flowing to the institution, thus to preserve their own salaries. Otherwise they are just about as helpful as the average high school guidance counselor."[307] Eighner is unable to secure a steady income, long-term shelter, or dependably safe food because of rules imposed by an insufficient public welfare system. Yet, at the same time, he also refuses to participate in state welfare programs because he believes they have little, if any, interest in improving the lives of people who lack steady access to housing. Furthermore, Eighner cannot participate in welfare programs because they require him to give up Lizbeth in order to

[305] Eighner, *Travels with Lizbeth*., 99.

[306] Ibid., 100, 101.

[307] Ibid., 150.

receive most benefits.[308] Surviving together in parks, on the road, and on the street, although never desirable, allows Eighner and Lizbeth to repeatedly choose one another in defiance of state and city institutions that seek to manage their bodies. Indeed, Eighner explains that Lizbeth has "unquestionable loyalty" to him, and, in a move that queers the normative and cliché "loyal dog" narrative, he explains that he also feels "loyalty to her."[309]

Coda: Multispecies Justice and the Canines of Black Lives Matter Protests

This chapter has argued that (hetero)normativity harms queers and pets alike in shared ways and that queer authors and pets come together to resist the interconnected normativities of petkeeping and sexuality by establishing their own modes of being and spaces uniquely suited for them to lead fulfilling lives. Acknowledging that selfhood emerges through a series of entangled relations and that more just futures for queers and pets can be achieved through mutual acts of resistance, the multispecies memoirs discussed above seek to eradicate the shared injustices that impact LGBTQIA persons *and* pets. Such an approach differs from recent protest movements such as Black Lives Matter demonstrations and pride parades which involve pets, especially dogs, in demanding justice and equity for people but view demands for equitable treatment of human communities as separate from calls for animal welfare. Although liberatory protests and social movements participate in collective forms of auto-biography that

[308] Many people, including Eighner's friends and sexual partners, suggest that he separate from Lizbeth to receive state-issued benefits. Eighner, however, chooses to remain houseless rather than leave Lizbeth.

[309] Ibid., xiii.

articulate, and sometimes produce, futures where oppressed selves can flourish, many protestors see social and species issues as unrelated concerns. In fact, as Weaver observes, many social justice activists express hostility and derision toward efforts that bring together fights to improve human lives with those that seek to better the lives of other species.[310] There is a sense among activists that connecting social justice activism with concerns for species well-being deflects from the "real" or central issues at hand, distracting organizers from their work and disserving the people who most need help. Moreover, many social justice advocates believe that they cannot, for ethical and political reasons, begin to address species well-being when so many humans continue to suffer from injustices. Eighner's *Travels with Lizbeth*, Doty's *Dog Years*, Paul's *Lost Cat*, Georges's *Fetch*, and Myles's *Afterglow* challenge such views by demonstrating that *resisting with* is not only an effective, but also necessary, tool for accomplishing transformative change. Bringing humans and nonhumans together to challenge shared oppressions and produce improved worlds, *resisting with* offers a powerful way to pursue justice across species lines.

Dogs have played central roles in contemporary social justice movements, marching alongside humans in organized protests and, most recently, posing with signs and decorative outfits to garner attention on social media. In 2011, for example, a black street dog living in Santiago, Chile, became famous for joining student protestors who demanded improvements to the public education system. The dog, soon after named Negro Matapacos or "Black Police Killer," defended protestors by chasing and growling at uniformed police officers who used tear gas and water cannons on demonstrators. As

[310] Weaver, *Bad Dog*, 21.

one commentator explained, Negro Matapacos "joined the front lines voluntarily to defend the protestors against the police."[311] When

Figure 4.1: Protestors at Nathan Phillips Square in Toronto, Ontario, on June 5, 2020. Michael Swan, *A Message*, 2020, photograph, flickr, image unaltered, https://www.flickr.com/photos/15731869@N05/49977407822.

demonstrators took to the streets in Ferguson, Missouri, following the 2014 police murder of Michael Brown, they brought "pit bulls" and other breeds to protest in solidarity.[312] The presence of these dogs standing beside demonstrators, many of whom were Black residents and many of whom identified with the Black Lives Matter movement and its affirmation of "all Black lives along the gender spectrum," sent a clear message to police and city officials regarding their collective strength and fury.[313] By publicly participating in the resistance efforts, pit breeds and their handlers defied Ferguson's ban on "pit bull dogs" and reclaimed the city as their own.[314] Dogs have since become increasingly

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[311] Alexandra Isfahani-Hammond, "How a Chilean dog ended up as a face of the New York City subway protests," *The Conversation*, https://theconversation.com/how-a-chilean-dog-ended-up-as-a-face-of-the-new-york-city-subway-protests-129167.

[312] Dickey, *Pit Bull*, 310.

[313] "About," Black Lives Matter, https://blacklivesmatter.com/about/.

[314] The breed ban still stands. "Code of Ordinances: City of Ferguson, Missouri," Chapter 6 – Animal Control, Sec. 6-21 – Regulation of pit bull dogs,

common in BLM and racial justice protests, walking on leashes amid crowds and carrying signs with messages that demand an end to police murders and the elimination of white supremacy. Two photographs taken a week apart in Toronto during the summer 2020 unrest highlight how dogs have participated in racial justice protests. In Figure 4.1, a Black woman wearing Eric Garner's last words "I can't breathe" and the acronym "BLM" hand-printed on a gray t-shirt holds a leash affixed to a large, white dog. The in-tact male dog resembles one of the many breeds classified as a "pit bull" and wears a spiked collar. The dog appears to be greeting a white woman who holds a "No Justice, No Peace" sign with her left hand while petting the dog on his neck with her free hand. Matching the print on the woman's shirt, the acronym "BLM" is written on the dog's side in sharp, black letters. The dog has attracted the attention of at least five onlookers among a crowd of nearly twenty present in the photo's frame. In Figure 4.2, a Black woman wearing a medical facemask holds a cardboard sign

Figure 4.2: Demonstrator with dog at the Not Another Black Life Rally and March in Toronto, Ontario, on May 30, 2020. Jason Hargrove, *Police the Police Sign*, 2020, photograph, flickr, https://www.flickr.com/photos/82298625@N00/49957262673.

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https://library.municode.com/mo/ferguson/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIICOOR_CH6ANCO_S6-21REPIBUDO; Dickey, *Pit Bull*, 311.

with the words "Police the Police" painted on it and squats down to pet a medium-sized brown-and-black poodle mix wearing a horizontal sign around their neck that depicts the words "Black Lives Matter." The words on the woman's sign are highlighted and underlined in red to signal killings by police, and the dog's sign features two hand-painted paws that frame the phrase "Black Lives Matter." In both photographs, the dogs wear Black Lives Matter messages that match those worn and carried by the Black women who stand and squat beside them. The matching messages — one scrawled on fabric and fur and the other painted on cardboard pieces — indicate that the dogs' presence, much like their role as a companion species, is meant to support the activities of their handlers, in this case protesting. With their messages, the dogs stand in as protestors and support the actions of fellow demonstrators.[315] By no fault of the dogs, they perform roles as species allies, as companions in protest, not transformative agents working to achieve mutually inclusive futures. Such a role differs from the involvement of dogs in earlier racial justice protests such as the 1963 march in Birmingham, Alabama, when white police officers used german shepherds to savagely attack Black protestors and halt peaceful demonstrations. Horrifically, former President Trump evoked this racist

[315] Perhaps the most well-known is Buddy, a golden retriever, who carried a sign with the words "Black lives matter" painted on it during a Cincinatti protest following the murder of George Floyd. Faima Bakar, "Very good dog attends protests with Black Lives Matter sign," *Metro*, June 3, 2020, https://metro.co.uk/2020/06/03/dog-goes-viral-attending-protest-black-lives-matter-sign-12796997/. An Instagram handle has since been established under the name "dogs4blm" that boasts several hundred images of dogs participating in BLM protests. "dogs4blm," Instagram, https://www.instagram.com/dogs4blm/?utm_source=ig_embed&ig_mid=7D3D69B3-2447-41F2-968E-B086C8DBB821&hl=en.

history of violence by threatening to unleash "vicious dogs" on demonstrators protesting the murder of George Floyd in May 2020.[316]

Often intersecting with the concerns of racial justice protestors, pride parades and LGBTQIA demonstrations have also involved canine members. Dogs have participated in protests for eradicating homophobia, supporting marriage and sexual equality, and celebrating queer lives. In one of the first pride parades following the police brutality at Stonewall, a man named Eduardo Raya was photographed flexing his muscles in a leopard-print Tarzan leotard with leather boots and collar while holding a leather leash tied to a large doberman mix.[317] The two posed in the middle of a street with a large crowd lined up behind them. At once an accessory to Raya's costume and a fellow parade performer, the pooch played an integral role in this moment of gay liberation. Despite many cities banning the participation of dogs over concerns for their safety, annual pride parades often feature canine companions who dress up in bright-colored outfits that match human participants.[318] Adorning pride flags, canine participants have become event ambassadors.[319] Pride parades even host their own dog shows, many of which include fashion competitions like the "Paws-itively fierce! Doggie fashion show!"

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[316] Riley Beggin, "Trump threatens protesters with 'vicious dogs'," *Vox*, May 30, 2020, https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2020/5/30/21275643/trump-george-floyd-protests-vicious-dogs-civil-rights.

[317] Pat Rocco, *Man with dog at the Los Angeles pride parade*, 1971, photograph, USC Digital Library, http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/p15799coll4/id/4801.

[318] Weaver, "Pit Bull Promises," 348-49.

[319] As of January 2021, a search for images of dogs at pride parades alone yields nearly 800 results on Creative Commons. The same search through flickr's commons site yields nearly 5,000 photographs.

annually put on by Charlotte, North Carolina.[320] Over the past two decades many pride parades have assimilated into mainstream cultures and shifted away from projects of queer liberation. While dogs continue to make appearances, their roles are usually circumscribed within the general celebratory atmosphere of inclusion, love, and peace.

What would pride parades, the Black Lives Matter movement, and other social justice demonstrations look like if they were practiced through the lenses of multispecies justice and the project of *resisting with* discussed in this chapter? Although demonstrations for racial and sexual justice include dogs as participants, the human and canine protestors partaking in such events are not fighting for a future that benefits both parties. With the exception of Black protestors and pit breeds standing together to resist the state-sanctioned management of their bodies, the participation of dogs and humans in such events evinces little interest in how injustices are shared across species lines and how harms can be mutually challenged. Dogs primarily serve as message boards, helping to garner attention and spread awareness of social justice campaigns. Approaching justice from positions of multispecies entanglement, however, demonstrates that the pursuit of social justice must necessarily include other species. For example, in demanding an end to white supremacist institutions, the Black Lives Matter movement would also demand the banning of breed-specific legislation (BSL) that seeks to manage dogs along with Black, Latinx, and impoverished communities. In calling for sexual and gender equality, pride parades would also call for the sexual wellness of pets. Rather than foreclose action, broadening the scope of concern to consider the wellbeing of other species will only strengthen social justice activism. Indeed, attending to the ways in which oppressions

[320] Charlotte Pride, "Pride Week Events," https://charlottepride.org/prideweek/.

cross species borders and entrench themselves in multiple lives not only helps resistant communities better recognize and challenge the uneven operations of power, it also acknowledges that better futures cannot be achieved in isolation. Resistance, after all, cannot and must not happen alone.

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