The Biopolitics of Species and Race in the Post-Civil War United States

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ABSTRACT

Human relationships with animals typically fall under the purview of scientists, ethicists, lawyers, and philosophers. The narrative has a relatively consistent historiography that involves tracking direct human contact with or advocacy for animals in various ways. What that narrative often ignores is the American historical and cultural context that emphasizes less idealistic questions and more pragmatic incidents of how humans in the United States have the notion of human superiority and speciesism reinforced for them, reinforcements that appear in economics, semiotics, literature, language, and news. Those incidents often interact with the other dominant form of American dispossession, that of racial bigotry, in surprising ways. "The Biopolitics of Species and Race in the Post-Civil War United States" tracks the assumption of human supremacy in the development of United States culture from the post-Reconstruction period to the present, emphasizing in particular its intersection with and reinforcement by white supremacy. It argues that both supremacy assumptions are unfounded and survive through a series of interactions and cultural constructions designed to validate, on one hand, anything human, and, on the other, anything white, always to the detriment of those who do not fit such categorizations. It describes such relationships in terms of biopower, the Foucauldian term describing an effort to control and order populations in decidedly human forms for decidedly human ends. The biopolitics that results from such orderings uses biological frameworks to keep certain groups of humans, the ones doing the ordering, in power, while a variety of dispossessed human groups face subjugation. Those human groups, then, are placed above nonhuman animals in a descending order of concern. As Cary Wolfe

has explained, “you can’t talk about biopolitics without talking about race, and you can’t talk about race without talking about species, simply because both categories—as history well shows—are so notoriously pliable and unstable, constantly bleeding into and out of each other.” This thesis is an analysis of that bleeding.

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“Every man that has the sense of an animal must see that there is no future in this country for the Negro.”

-AME minister Henry Turner, 1900

INTRODUCTION

Thomas Nast was born in Germany in 1840, but he came to the United States as a young child and grew up in New York to become the country's foremost cartoonist. While he often displayed anti-Catholic and anti-Irish sentiment in his cartoons, he was an abolitonist who abhored machine politics, racial segregation, and the violence of terrorist groups like the Ku Klux Klan (Halloran, 2012; Dewey, 2007). In November 1869, Nast published one of his most influential cartoons, "Uncle Sam's Thanksgiving Dinner," in *Harper's Weekly*. By that time, both the Thirteenth Amendment, freeing the slaves, and the Fourteenth Amendment, defining birthright citizenship and protecting the rights of citizens, had been ratified. The Fifteenth Amendment, granting former slave men the right to vote, had passed Congress and was on its way to being ratified. Nast intended "Uncle Sam's Thanksgiving Dinner" to be a paean to the promise of a new nation built on the equality of traditionally dispossessed groups. In the cartoon, Uncle Sam and Columbia host a variety of different immigrant groups who have made their way to the United States to find a better life. There are Native Americans, Europeans, and Asians, all sitting around a table that features universal suffrage (Nast, 1869: 745).

Figure 1: Nast T (1869) Uncle Sam's Thanksgiving Dinner. *Harper's Weekly*, 20 November, pp. 745.

This study is concerned with the two ends of Nast's Thanksgiving table. At one is a family representing the only group of people who didn't willingly arrive in the country, the black population who had found freedom at the end of the Civil War just four short years earlier. At the other end, Uncle Sam carves a representation of the only individual who didn't willingly arrive at the table. It is an idealistic picture, one of promise and hope. But the universal suffrage optimistically placed as a centerpiece of the gathering would be stripped from the black man a decade later, and the turkey whose corpse was the centerpiece of the meal itself never got a vote in the first place.

Speciesism and racism are their own independent entities, but in the United States from Reconstruction to the present they have acted on each other in ways that have been generative of new manifestations of both. They feed off of one another, helping to shape the contours of both in the twenty-first century. They do not act in the same way, but they both act in concert, making engagement in one form of coded alterity a de facto engagement in the other.

The one existing substantial comparative analysis of species and racism appeared in 1988, Marjorie Spiegel's *The Dreaded Comparison: Human and Animal Slavery*. It is a powerful tract for animal rights with a searing preface by novelist Alice Walker. "Comparing the suffering of animals to that of blacks (or any other oppressed group) is offensive only to the speciesist," Spiegel argues. "Those who are offended by comparison to a fellow sufferer have fallen for the propaganda spewed forth by the oppressors" (Spiegel, 1988: 25). It is comparative ground that has been trod by other scholars in the years since, most trading on the similarities and differences between activist rights movements, antebellum abolitionists on one hand and twentieth-century animal advocates on the other (Wrenn, 2014). What follows in this account is not a rights tract like Spiegel's, and it is not a rights comparison like those who followed in her wake. Unlike Spiegel's book, this one does not make a broad comparison of the current treatment of animals with the historical treatment of slaves in the United States, particularly in the antebellum era. It also does not use phrasing like "propaganda spewed forth by the oppressors." Still, Spiegel's linguistic hubris does not undercut the correctness of her argument. *The Biopolitics of Species and Race in the Post-Civil War United States* does, in many ways, describe the propaganda spewed forth by oppressors--and by those being oppressed, as would happen in any postcolonial society. It argues that the power relationships created by the discourse of race reified existing power relations between humans and nonhumans, creating--in real time, without the temporal distance of Spiegel's account--a self-replicating cycle of alterity that redounded to the benefit of white humans over and against everyone not aligned with whiteness or humanness. It was those relationships, then, and the othering

that accrued as a result, that shaped the racial inequalities of modern America and the human supremacy that governs almost all nations and cultures.

This is, then, a history of the intersection of race and species in the century-and-a-half since the end of the Civil War. It is not *The Dreaded Comparison*, but it unapologetically traffics in the dreaded comparison.

The history of the intersection of race and animality has also been the subject of more recent studies. Work by Joshua Bennett (2020) and Zakiyyah Iman Jackson (2020) argues that African Americans deploy animal metaphors in direct response to historical white claims of black animality and the long colonial project of treating black experience as a meaningless non-entity (see also Ko, 2019). Lindgren Johnson (2019) goes farther, describing a "fugitive humanism" among African Americans that maintains significant animal relationships in pushing back against the animal associations created by white supremacy. Iman Jackson and Johnson, in particular, track such associations through literary production, while Bénédicte Boisseron's *Afro-Dog* (2018) combines with literary theory a more historical approach to understanding such associations, arguing that the white discourse of race and species served both to tie blackness to animality and to bolster the white supremacist project. The conclusions of this study compliment those of Jackson, Johnson, and Boisseron and add further historical context to a growing subfield in African American history and critical animal studies.

Inevitably, when engaging such subjects, difficult issues arise, as the humans experiencing dispossession or violence not only experience the specific trauma of a given act, but also live with a historical memory of similar acts practiced on their ancestors, wounds that can be reopened through human

language and metaphor that nonhuman animals are unable to access. The resulting scars, whether physical or psychical, evince what Cathy Caruth has called the "belatedness" of trauma, one that comes through the process of knowing. "The complex ways that knowing and not knowing are entangled in the language of trauma" define the modes in which people experience past trauma in the present, particularly when the underlying basis of that trauma has remained a constant lived reality (Caruth, 2016: 4). As Jennifer D. Williams has explained in relation to lynching, the "traumatic effects" of violence for humans "tend to transpire through acts of secondary witnessing like oral culture, photographs, literature, and journalistic accounts" (Williams, 2011: 86-87). The collective trauma isn't simply in the act itself, but also in its retelling.[1]

The trauma of racial murder in all of its forms exists in both the past and present; or, perhaps, in the various presents in which it is experienced, by those who are killed and those who are left behind to experience it in collective memory and literary and artistic representation. In their foundational text on trauma theory, Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub describe "the practical hazards of listening--of coming to know," which "lead to a rethinking of the crucial role the (always threatened) preservation of the truth, of knowledge and reality, plays in the enablement of psychological survival--in the very ability to sustain and continue life after catastrophes" (1992: xv). In describing the trauma of World War II in Europe, they make a case applicable to racial violence in the United States. It is "a trauma we consider as the watershed of our times"; it is not "an event encapsulated in the

[1] For more on the relationship between speciesism and racism and their generative role in suffering, see Olivier and Cordeiro-Rodrigues, 2018.

past," but a "history which is essentially *not over*, a history whose repercussions are not simply omnipresent (whether consciously or not) in all our cultural activities, but whose traumatic consequences are still actively *evolving*" Felman and Laub, 1992: xvii).

That omnipresence and its reification in human language creates differences between violence against dispossessed humans and violence against nonhuman animals because the nonhumans can't push back against such linguistic constructions. It then creates a further problem that necessarily requires vigilance in analysis because only one of those groups carries historical traumas. Still, that isn't to say that nonhuman animals do not have their own important history.

"The history of animals is not merely a 'fad' in the ever widening reach of historical scholarship," argues Erica Fudge. (2002: 5) It is instead the necessary outgrowth of debates in the discipline and broader public narratives outside of it. For Fudge, "the history of animals is a necessary part of our reconceptualization of ourselves as human" (2002: 5). Animals "are the site of social change," which itself is the driver of historical progression (Fudge, 2002: 9). If meaning-making is a function of difference, and the human animal-nonhuman animal divide is the largest remaining assumed cavern of difference in the human mind, then it is vital that we seek to "learn more about humans by understanding what they claimed that they were not: animals" (Fudge, 2002: 9-10; see also Hribal, 2007).

At the same time, meaning-making is also a function of similarity, of comparisons that create the shifting dynamics of identity between, for example, humans and other animals, or between humans of differing levels of racial and class privilege. Cary Wolfe has argued in regard to critical theory that with the

developments in biology, cognitive science, and other disciplines, “there is no longer any good reason to take it for granted that the theoretical, ethical, and political question of the subject is automatically coterminous with the species distinction between *Homo sapiens* and everything else” (Wolfe, 2003: 1). The same can be said--must be said--for the discipline of history. When those in the field produce “a rather traditional version” of what Wolfe calls “the discourse of species,” that discourse, “in turn, reproduces the *institution* of species*ism*” (Wolfe, 2003: 2; Wolfe, 2003b; italics in original).

Richard Ryder coined the term “speciesism” in an anti-vivisection pamphlet in 1970, and it was popularized by Peter Singer in the years that followed (Singer, 1975). Speciesism, Ryder argued, was “the widely held belief that the human species is inherently superior to other species and so has rights or privileges that are denied to other sentient animals” (Ryder, [n.d.], quoted in Corman and Colling, 2015: 36-37). It could certainly encompass oppression and physical cruelty, but oppression and cruelty were not necessary. Speciesism was any set of “beliefs and behaviours if they are based upon the species-difference alone, as if such a difference is, in itself, a justification” (Ryder, [n.d.], quoted in Corman, 2011: 42) for those beliefs and behaviors (Ryder, 2010; see also Waldau, 2001). Singer concurred, seeing speciesism as “a prejudice or attitude of bias toward the interest of members of one's own species and against those of members of other species,” and argued that it could only be properly understood in relation to other dispossessions like sexism and racism (Singer, 1975: 7).

Taking that speciesism seriously through the intersectional lens of race requires respecting the life of the nonhuman as much as that of the human, while still acknowledging their fundamental differences. It is the common position for any

deontological conception of animal ethics, spanning from Kant's categorical imperative (2002) to never treat anyone only as a means to an end to Ronald Dworkin's non-relative interests (1977) that have total weight in moral calculations. The position was taken most influentially by Tom Regan. "Inherent value," he argues, "belongs equally to those who are the experiencing subjects of a life" (1986: 187). Assuming nonhuman animals to be experiencing subjects of a life who have inherent value, and thus should not only be treated as a means to an end, shapes the mid-century signposting of animals in new ways and demonstrates how different bigotries intersect in the treatment of groups coded by race and species.

"It could be argued," writes Samantha Hurn, "that 'Western' 'speciesism' began with Aristotle and his continuum of living things, which saw humans at one end of a spectrum, the 'perfection' which for all other animals was unattainable" (Hurn, 2012: 16; see also Ryder, 2000). Its presence in the historical discourse appears most regularly when historians ignore the interests of and consequences for nonhuman animals in the progression of human social history. After all, "the figure of the 'animal' in the West," writes Wolfe, "is part of a cultural and literary history stretching back at least to Plato and the Old Testament, reminding us that the animal has always been especially, frightfully nearby" (2003: 6). That hiding in plain sight of other beings in temporal and physical space stands as a signpost of the influence of speciesism in "the formation of Western subjectivity and sociality as such, an institution that relies on the tacit agreement that the full transcendence of the 'human' requires the sacrifice of the 'animal' and the animalistic" (Wolfe, 2003: 6). That tacit agreement is built on semiotic referents designed to reinforce the notion of human supremacy, ultimately leading to what Jacques Derrida calls a "noncriminal putting to death" of those nonhuman animals that humans cannot see

as beings with interests because of the influence of such signs (Derrida, 1995: 278).

When Derrida describes his “noncriminal putting to death,” however, he does not just refer to nonhuman animals. The others put to death in such a manner are those humans animalized by similar semiotics that code them as being either unworthy of life or less worthy than those in power. And in the United States, worth has been determined more than anything else by race.

The drawing of the racial line in America was not an inevitable or immediate event. It was a process that developed over the course of the seventeenth century. In 1611, for example, John Rolfe planted the first crop of tobacco in the Chesapeake region of Virginia. It was an immediate success. By the late 1620s, Virginia alone shipped one-and-a-half million pounds. It required labor, and indentured servants originally helped supply it. But as production demands increased and the indigent British labor pool declined, wealthy planters began turning to African slaves, a group already being exploited in Caribbean sugar farming to overwhelming profits (Morgan, 1975).

The Caribbean sugar islands were killing fields that imposed a race-based, all-encompassing, destructive slave life that fed on the deaths of innocents (Kiple, 2002; Browne, 2017). In the early life of the colonies that would ultimately become the United States, however, slaves found themselves in a nebulous position. They were not free, but they were not necessarily in a Caribbean predicament. Unlike the Portuguese or Spanish, the English had no laws for slavery. Also, the original African imports to the colonies were Christians, and English morality customs barred the enslavement of Christians, a holdover from the era of the Crusades. Many early African slaves, then, were able to work off their purchase price and

regain their freedom, in the same manner as indentured servants (Berlin, 1998; Davis, 2006; Klein, 1967).

Historian Ira Berlin has famously called these early slaves “Atlantic creoles.” These creoles had intercultural experience around the Atlantic world, many of them shipped from the Caribbean where they had already been taught a modicum of English and prepared for gang agricultural labor. Early colonial slaves were not treated well, but they were a small, constituent part of a broader labor force in what Berlin has termed a “society with slaves” (Berlin, 1998: 10). Anthony Johnson is a famous example of this phenomenon. He arrived a slave in 1621, but thirty years later he had an estate of 250 acres and was master of several servants, some of whom were white (Russell, 1913). In 1655 a mulatto slave woman named Elizabeth Key claimed her freedom. Though her owner fought her claim, a white man named William Grinstead, who had fathered two children with her, sued for her freedom, won, then married her (Banks, 2008). Black men often emerged from their servitude throughout much of the seventeenth century. They owned land, farmed, lent money, sued in court, served as jurors, served as minor officials, and voted. Such instances were not necessarily common, but in coming generations they would become impossible (Morgan, 1975; Berlin, 1998).

As more and more slaves were imported into the New World, however, more and more were direct products of Africa—not creoles, and certainly not familiar with the Eurocentric West. They were darker complected. They couldn’t speak English. And as these new arrivals continued to populate American plantations, colonists began drawing distinct racial lines between them and whites, developing detailed and elaborate policies to govern those racial lines. Berlin’s “society with slaves” became a full-on “slave society” (Berlin, 1998: 10).

This transition happened in the last decades of the seventeenth century. In Virginia in 1671, for example, the slave population was less than five percent of the non-native population, and white indentured servants outnumbered them three-to-one. By 1700, however, slaves were at least twenty percent of the population and the lopsided ratio had disappeared (Morgan, 1975; Berlin, 1998). This process was the result of an inter-related series of factors. First, there had always been an assumption of inferiority toward nonwhite people. Black women, for example, almost always worked in the tobacco fields with the men, while most white female indentured servants did domestic work. Slaves were not given surnames like white servants. Several local Anglican priests even claimed that people of African descent could not become Christian. Second, there was a clear precedent for the profitability of lifetime slavery in the Caribbean. Finally, loss of demand arising from increased opportunities for the British poor made indentured servants far more expensive than they had been earlier in the century. Meanwhile, the price of Africans was becoming less expensive, as Britain began taking more control of its slave trade, cutting out foreign middle-men and slave traders.

It was a process that would only calcify the racial line that was developing in the seventeenth century. In 1662, for example, Virginia doubled the fine for fornication when white perpetrators committed the act with a “negro man or woman.” In 1705, Virginia made whipping a white servant illegal, further drawing that distinction, essentially making the case that no matter how problematic life became for white colonists, the new baseline for social existence was that anyone white was superior to anyone black. Between 1660 and 1710, American colonies began developing slave codes to further define the new life-long African slave labor system. Slaves could no longer testify against whites in court, own property, leave

their master's estate without a pass, congregate in large groups, enter into contracts, legally marry, or bear arms (Morgan, 1975; Berlin, 1998).

Meanwhile, nonhuman animals in the colonial period lived lives even more tenuous. As Kathryn Gillespie has noted, the cattle used for meat and dairy were so named as an etymological crib of chattel, property, also used to define chattel slavery in the slave society. "Livestock," she explains, "literally means 'live stock' and reinforces animals' status as live property" (Gillespie, 2018: 8). But it wasn't just farmed animals who experienced cruelty in colonial America. Slaveholder Thomas Jefferson once hanged a dog from a rope passed over the branch of a tree to watch him die, foreshadowing what would later become the most common method of racial lynching. In a letter to a correspondent, the author of the Declaration of Independence wrote, "I participate in all your hostility to dogs, and would readily join in any plan for exterminating the whole race. I consider them as the most afflicting of all the follies for which men tax themselves" (quoted in Smith, 2012: 126).

Thus it was that by 1700, Africans and African Americans had been reduced to the legal status of nonhuman animals, with the exception that unlike animals, slaves were held strictly accountable for their own transgressions.[2] Race was solidified as the defining dividing line in American society, and it would remain. It still remains. And metaphorical animality is still a scarlet letter marking the consequences of being on the wrong side of that line. Those consequences were more than simply an othering, a bifurcation of "us" and "them." Being a member of

[2] Kari Weil, in her study of horses in nineteenth-century France, makes much the same case about the situation there, noting that "the definition of race was necessarily intertwined with the notion of breed" (2020: 12).

the wrong race or the wrong species meant a diminishing of meaning, of mattering, of rightful participation in the ethical sphere of white human thought. The American interaction between racism and speciesism, then, particularly after the "slave society" had run its course and taken away the obvious property comparisons between the two constituent groups, has defined the trajectory of American thinking as to race and species, but it is an entanglement almost uniformly ignored in the historical literature.[3]

That ignorance has little to do with the groundbreaking and still-evolving history of American race relations. In the early twentieth century, Columbia University professor William Archibald Dunning wrote histories of the Reconstruction period, the era where this narrative begins, that sympathized with the white South and claimed that black failures at self-governance had created a need for the segregationist Jim Crow period that followed. Dunning was influential, and his graduate students spread across the country and made the position historical dogma for many in the field (Dunning, 1907; Fairclough, 2012; Smith and Lowery, 2013). The Dunning School, as it came to be known, "was not just an interpretation of history. It was part of the edifice of the Jim Crow system," wrote historian Eric Foner. "It was an explanation for and justification of taking the right to

[3] Such is not to say that racialized nonhuman animal associations only went one way. Brigitte Nicole Fielder has demonstrated in her study of early nineteenth century abolitionism that white activists attempting to rid the country of slavery often used animal representations, often in literature geared toward children, to draw sympathy with the antislavery position. Animals in those accounts were "points of familiar reference, in cross-species comparisons that were also meant to garner interracial sympathy" (Fielder, 2013: 488). Those efforts didn't always succeed, and Fielder's account does demonstrate clear "limitations of humanist rhetorics that depend on familiar animals to evoke cross-racial sympathy" (Fielder, 2013: 510). That being the case, such sympathetic efforts greatly diminished in the postbellum national discourse, when this narrative begins. The limitations of those humanist rhetorics are themselves an argument for a posthumanist critical-animal studies analysis of historical intersections of species and race.

vote away from black people on the grounds that they completely abused it during Reconstruction. It was a justification for the white South resisting outside efforts in changing race relations" (Foner in interview with Konczal, 2015: [n.p.]. And that justification cast a long shadow. "For a long time it was an intellectual straitjacket for much of the white South" (Konczal, 2015: [n.p.]). W.E.B. Du Bois began pushing back against such racist histories in his *Black Reconstruction in America*, published in 1935, but a more sustained effort at revisionism did not begin until the 1960s (Du Bois, 1935). It was a rebuke that ultimately won the day, assuring that no Dunning-style work that refused to acknowledge the agency and importance of slaves and freedmen would ever survive modern scrutiny.

Meanwhile, the history of human-animal relations and the speciesism that conditions those relations is still in its infancy, if not in its Dunning School phase. Historians, conditioned by their place in the humanities, tend to preference the human not just to the absence of animals but to the detriment of animals. This account is an attempt at revisionism. "The effective power of the discourse of species when applied to social others of whatever sort relies," Wolfe argues, "on a prior taking for granted of the institution of speciesism" (2003: 7). That institution and the discourse surrounding speciesism, "once anchored in this material, institutional base, can be used to mark any social other," Wolfe explains, and it casts a dramatically large net. Everyone has "a stake in the discourse and institution of speciesism; it is by no means limited to its overwhelmingly direct and disproportionate effects on animals" (Wolfe, 2003: 7).

Wolfe is a leading proponent of the posthumanist position.[4] Positing that humans are no more important or valuable than any other planetary species might at first seem to be an anachronism in studies of the nineteenth century, but it is no more so than the historical revisionism that takes place after any rights awakening. Power interventions designed to aid those humans already in power against subaltern humans and all animals has been a consistent refrain throughout human history. Michel Foucault termed such interventions “biopower,” an effort to control and order populations in decidedly human forms for decidedly human ends. The biopolitics that results from such orderings uses biological frameworks to keep certain groups of humans, the ones doing the ordering, in power, while a variety of dispossessed human groups face subjugation (Foucault, 1998: 140). Biopower, usually housed within the fuction of the state, was “the power to ‘make’ live and ‘let’ die” (Foucault, 2003: 241). Foucault’s critique appears within a decidedly humanist tradition, but by applying posthumanist thinking to that biopolitical frame, a broader conception of biological life can be included in the paradigm (see Asdal, Durglitrø, Hinchliffe, 2016).[5] It then creates a chain of being wherein those dispossessed human groups are placed above nonhuman animals in a descending order of concern. Gwendolyn Blue and Melanie Rock (2010) have described such politically motivated orderings as “trans-biopolitics,” an organized effort to institutionalize a position in direct contradistinction to posthumanist principles (see also Hurn, 2016: 219-220).

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[4] For more on posthumanism, see Callus and Herbrechter, 2007; Clarke, 2008; Wolfe, 2010.

[5] “In relation to racism,” writes Samantha Hurn, “it might be ventured that this hierarchical biological continuum extends beyond the human species” (2013: 229).

Biopower forms what Krithika Srinivasan calls a “power–knowledge nexus,” (Srinivasan, 2013: 113) where the truth of animal lives is “articulated and put into practice” (Holloway et al. 2009, 405).[6] Categories like human and animal are “linked to hierarchical forms of knowing that posit one side (human) as superior to the other (animal)” (Hamilton and Taylor, 2017: 52). Posthumanism seeks to uproot that traditional dichotomy (Hamilton and Taylor, 2013). Lindsay Hamilton and Nik Taylor explain that “the ‘pure’ categories that segregate animal from human (and segregate human from human) are about power in the Foucauldian sense. The power lies in the discourse, the names and the definitions. By denying animals a role in the discourse, their voices disappear with it” (Hamilton and Taylor, 2017: 62). Such distinctions matter because those discourses validate certain knowledges over and against others, almost completely unaware of the cultural constructs that are generative of such knowledge. Posthumanism helps to correct such imbalances by “attending to the details in the lives of other animals--those often silenced through mainstream, normative research.” (Hamilton and Taylor, 2017: 63; Madden, 2014)

Foucault’s notion of biopower relies on “self-governing subjects,” and Srinivasan has worried that such a reliance “has not translated easily when it comes to human relations with the non-human world” (Srinivasan, 2013: 108; see also Youatt, 2008). Foucault’s conception of biopower aided a move away from sovereign power that gave leaders the ability to enact public displays of violence.

[6] In this regard, Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose describe “a form of truth discourse about living beings and an array of authorities considered competent to speak the truth; strategies for intervention upon collective existence in the name of life and health; modes of subjectification, in which individuals can be brought to work on themselves, under certain forms of authority, in relation to truth discourses, by means of practices of the self, in the name of individual or collective life and health” (Rabinow and Rose, 2006, 197–8).

Under a system dominated by biopower, however, the regulation of life publicly emphasized population wellbeing, and killing was less a project of defending leadership and instead a stated “necessity” enacted on “behalf of the existence of everyone” (Foucault 1998, 136). Biopower, then, uses science and social science to normalize violence in aid of human benefit.

The violence he described was human violence against other humans, but the framework has been used as a theory for nonhuman management, as well, like governmental relationships with environmental concerns (see, for example, Demeritt 2001; Whitehead 2009). Even in that context, however, the interests of nonhuman animals are often ignored, though such is “not due to any essential poverty in the potential scope of Foucault’s term,” explains Dinesh Joseph Wadiwel. “Rather, the deficiency relates to the tradition of politics itself, at least in the West, which has, by and large, exempted the non-human animal from agency as a political being” (Wadiwel, 2002: [n.p.]). Matthew Hannah has likewise explained that Foucault’s emphasis on care implies that his work on biopower extends to nonhuman animals (Hannah, 2011: 9, 11). That being the case, the scholarship has developed to encompass the nonhuman in a Foucauldian theoretical scope (see, for example, Holloway et al. 2009; Thierman 2010; Rabinow and Rose 2006), and that has, in turn, laid the groundwork for the posthumanist turn.

It has also sought to wrestle with the anthropomorphism at the heart of many of those deficiencies. The attribution of an element of “humanity” to nonhuman animals is derided in the scientific community as a form of ventriloquism (see Ingold, 2013: 51), but “the belief that animals are essentially like humans” (Daston and Mitman, 2005: 2) is simply hueing to the principle of evolutionary

parsimony. As Kay Milton has explained, "In order to describe the way an animal is understood as 'anthropomorphic' we need to assume the opposite of what anthropomorphism itself seems to imply. In other words, we need to assume that the animal concerned is not capable of the inner state supposedly attributed to it, and that these are specifically human characteristics" (Milton 2005: 259). Samantha Hurn (2012) has similarly demonstrated the incompatibility between common claims of anthropomorphism and its actual application are steeped in assumptions of human supremacy that render our species uniquely capable of determining worth. Critical charges of anthropomorphism rest on a misapprehension that scientific detachment is an achievable goal while engaging in a speciesism that itself is anything but a demonstration of objectivity. Frans DeWaal has termed this dissonance "anthropodenial: a blindness to the humanlike characteristics of other animals, or the animal-like characteristics of ourselves" (1997: np), and cognitive ethology, "the comparative and evolutionary study of nonhuman animal thought processes, consciousness, beliefs, or rationality" (Bekoff and Allen, 1997: 313), has helped to bridge some of these divides and has given anthrozoologists new tools with which to combat such charges (see Mitchell, 2005; Kennedy, 1992; Griffin, 2013).

Meanwhile, this dissertation also deals at several points with a different kind of anthropomorphism, one that intentionally gives animals human clothing, speech, or movements to marshall them in service to specifically human, and often bigoted, ends. Matt Cartmill (1993) had described a variety of different forms of anthropomorphic representations, all using animal figures in a variety of ways to embellish arguments about a variety of issues. Those efforts, in any posthumanist

reading, redound negatively both to the human group being represented and the animals used in those anthropomorphic figures.

Posthumanism, to be fair, does have its critics. Philosopher Keith Ansell Pierson, for example, worries that the physical embodiment of posthumanism could lead to a superman or human replacement; that it essentially adds categories to a hierarchical system rather than eliminating the system altogether (Pierson, 1997). But posthumanism can also work a different way, to reconcile bigotries toward different groups of humans not by embodying a superior being, but by demonstrating the fallacy of human superiority itself, engrained as it is by the humanist project that claims to be in aid of reconciling the very bigotries it supports (Burt, 2009).

The discipline of history has always been part of that humanist project. “We must abandon the status of the human as it is presented within humanist history; we must read against this,” argues Fudge. “Instead, we need to assert and assess the ways in which ‘human’ is always a category of difference, not substance: the ways ‘human’ always relies upon ‘animal’ for its meaning” (Fudge, 2002: 15). This account is an attempt to gauge that reliance in American history, to track the assumption of human supremacy in the development of United States culture from the post-Reconstruction period to the present, emphasizing in particular its intersection with and reinforcement by white supremacy. It argues not only that both supremacy assumptions are unfounded, but that they survive through a series of interactions and cultural constructions designed to validate, on one hand, anything human, and, on the other, anything white, always to the detriment of those who do not fit such categorizations. Such was an essentializing effort built on Foucauldian biopower (Foucault, 1970; Foucault, 1998; Foucalt, 2003; Foucault,

2007), one that had a dramatic impact on both human speciesism and American racism. As Wolfe has explained, “you can’t talk about biopolitics without talking about race, and you can’t talk about race without talking about species, simply because both categories—as history well shows—are so notoriously pliable and unstable, constantly bleeding into and out of each other” (Wolfe, 2013: 43).

This narrative is an analysis of that bleeding. Ultimately, what is at stake in the chapters that follow are the consequences of conflict over the semantic evolution of naming. “Nominalizations will function to fix, stabilize, and, most crucially, enable bounding, especially for countable nouns,” explains Mel Chen (2012: 74). It is that bounding that so dramatically affected both human and nonhuman dispossessed groups in American culture. Chen has traced such conflicts in relation to the term “queer” and the history of its contested use in both public and academic spheres throughout the twentieth century (Chen, 2012: 58-63). There has been a similar evolution in nomenclature for the black population, whereas terms of respect like Negro, designated as such by whites, was ultimately pushed from favor by twentieth-century black activists, to be replaced at different times by Afro-American, African American, black, or Black (Martin, 1991; Hock, 1986: 300).[7] Inevitably, however, semantic transitions occur because semiotic representation creates belittling among various human groups. It does the same with nonhumans. Whether through language, symbol, or law, the American intersection of race and species created a similar belittling for nonhuman animals, one that led not only to segregation and its corollaries, but also to mass slaughter.

[7] “The term ‘black’ had achieved widespread usage and acceptance by both blacks and whites,” explained Geneva Smitherman in 1977, though she admitted, demonstrating the frought way that naming evolves, that “there are some blacks, especially older ones, who do a double flinch at being called ‘black.’ You see, they remember when black was not so beautiful” (Smitherman, 1977: 35)

Gloria Anzaldúa, a leading queer theorist and artist, wrote in a 1981 poem, "We are the queer groups, the people that don't belong anywhere, not in the dominant world nor completely within our own respective cultures. Combined we cover so many oppressions. But the overwhelming oppression is the collective fact that we do not fit, and because we do not fit we are a threat." She never signaled any intent to include nonhumans in such categorizations, but they clearly fall within that rubric. Her poem followed, however, with a statement that did not ring true for the animal population. "Not all of us have the same oppressions, but we empathize and identify with each other's oppressions" (Anzaldúa, 1983: 198). As this dissertation makes clear, the oppressions associated with racism often drove a lack of empathy and identity between dispossessed humans and their nonhuman counterparts. Speciesism was used as a cudgel against black lives and bodies, but racism only exacerbated speciesism among both its perpetrators and its victims. It was an uneven alterity, as the diminutions associated with race were the result of social constructions of which nonhuman animals were never a part. Thus the conflicts over naming, whether in language, symbol, or law, redounded negatively to both human minority groups and nonhuman animals, but the consequence for nonhuman animals was almost always death.

As Michael Warner explained in 1993, "The preference for 'queer' represents, among other things, an aggressive impulse of generalization; it rejects a minoritizing logic of toleration or simple political interest/representation in favor of a more thorough resistance to regimes of the normal" (Warner, 1993: xxvi). That generalization has proven beneficial in many regards, but it can also falter when the differences between dispossessed groups drift beyond the bounds of the

human. “Queer, then, “also suggests the difficulty in defining the population whose interests are at stake in queer politics” (Warner, 1993: xxvi).

Still, queer theory has much to offer animal studies (Hurn, 2012: 202-219). “Queer is by definition whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant,” writes David Halperin. “There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers. It is an identity without an essence” (Halperin, 1994: 62). It is in this way that the generalization of queerness can become beneficial to analyses of the intersectionality of nonhuman animals and othered human groups. The dominant figure in American human relations was white, the dominant in relations among the living more broadly was human. In that sense, both black Americans and nonhuman animals were transgressive of the constituted lines of normalcy, as Chapter 1 demonstrates in its discussion of chain of being metaphors that dominated scientific and social science discourses in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The dominant figure in American human relations was also wealthy and male, and it stands to reason that a study of such intersections would include an evaluation of class and gender. While brief evaluations of such otherings appear in this account in places where they are immediately relevant to the human race narrative, there is no sustained analysis of class and gender, as such categories would require their own volumes to dissect and could not be done proper justice in a study of race and species.[8]

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[8] For more on the intersection of gender and species, see the special Animal Others issue of *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy* (2012) 27(3). See also Schiebinger, 1993; Dunayer, 1995 Kohlsted, 2006; Wyckoff, 2014; Barard, 2003; Derby, 2014; Kemmerer, 2013; Donovan, 2017; Wrenn, 2017; Glasser, 2011.

The role of institutions in the maintenance of systemic racism has been ubiquitous in modern scholarship in black history and African American studies, but, as Arnold Arluke has noted, "a similar focus has been strikingly absent in discussions of contradictory attitudes to animals" (Arluke, 1994: 145). The rectification of that absence "depends on the acceptance of the ontological premise of realism--the premise that there exists a world separate from human experience," explains Philip Macnaghten (1993: 53). "This premise is taken on board through the assumption that a natural environment exists whether we exist or not," an assumption often lost in the description and analysis of tumultuous human relations (Macnaghten, 1993: 53). Thus the dissertation takes such ontological realism as its starting point, beginning in the second half of the nineteenth century and ending in the twenty-first, covering the broad scope of the post-slave period in American history. Human slavery has often been used as a comparative model for the human treatment of nonhuman animals, and posthumanist literature has drawn clear connections between species and race in the creation and manipulation of alterity for biopolitical ends. That work, however, has not used a historical lens, has not traced the development of that intersection over time. Nor has it demonstrated the historical ways that racism and speciesism have built upon one another, with speciesist language and semiotic representation creating an easy reference for both sides of racial rights fights. Racism fed speciesism because it gave white powerbrokers a way to belittle black others, but it also provided them a way to hurt the black population economically and politically. Speciesism fed racism by preferencing the human over and against other sentient groups providing convenient tropes for arguments for and against civil rights. As explained by Gabriel Rosenberg, "racialization and speciation are distinct processes" that

“overlap and entangle materially and symbolically at given moments” (2016: 54). They worked together to ensure a chain of being that moved from white human to black human to nonhuman that would have dire consequences for everyone nonwhite and nonhuman.

That being the case, this dissertation examines the racist and speciesist consequences of that chain through the lenses of history and critical animal studies, using documentary evidence, archival sources, and newspapers from various periods beginning in the late nineteenth century and continuing to the present day, then examining them with the aid of the growing body of critical animal studies literature, with particular emphasis on the literature of posthumanism and biopolitics. While queer theory is used as an introductory frame, it is unable to ground much of the contextual material that follows. Actor Network Theory (Latour, 1993; Latour, 2007), which argues that the traditional distinction between “social” and “natural” worlds ought to be avoided in favor of understanding the world as composed of networks of relationships, seems at first glance to be an appropriate framework for analysis here, particularly within a dissertation that seeks to synthesize an overwhelming glut of historical data. But as Owain Jones (2003) has explained, the group of animals can, en masse, act as an individual actor. Taking animals seriously as individuals is important, but no one is an island unto themselves. Seeing animals as independent from their species categorization is no different, for example, than the common act of describing a human without including his or her ethnicity. The same is true of rats, for example (see Chapter 5), who are individuals who often press upon human society as a group, which is the dominant way they make their presence felt in that other, human world (Jones, 2003: 284).

Of course, the differences in myriad animal groups are matched only by the myriad differences in the way humans see and interpret those groups. Thus Actor Network Theory efforts, as Jones explains, “offer a powerful re-examination of the nature and locus of agency and thus of the way the world is ordered as it continuously unfolds.” The locus of agency for Jones is in "the rural," but such categorizations work in the same way for "the urban" and the rats who live as individuals within groups, in tense relationships with the humans in their midst (Jones, 2003: 292).

In a similar vein, Bob Carter and Simon Dyson have worried that the theory has “difficulty in sustaining a plausible notion of durable, structured social interests” (2015: 62). Carter’s collaborations with Nickie Charles have made the case that Actor Network Theory both discounts the ability of traditional sociological methods to accurately depict human relations with the animal other and distorts the way power formations work among human groups, whose language formations often condition such formations (Carter and Charles, 2013; Carter and Charles, 2016).[9]

There are further difficulties, however. As Jones notes, using Actor Network Theory runs the risk of interpreting animals in the same way, having individualities subsumed into the broader network, “undermin[ing] their identity as distinct subjects worthy of epistemological, political and ethical distinction.” The same critique, of course, could be made for human actants. Jones explains that “the natures and identities of actants are not only subordinate to the relational connections and output of the network they may be in, but are actually formed by the relational position they are held in” (Jones, 2003: 292). There is, for example,

[9] Building from such an approach, Noel Castree has sought a synthesis between Actor Network Theory and eco-Marxism to remedy some of its limitations (2002).

value in seeing various groups of animals as being victims of their relational position, particularly having to adapt as they do to the attempt of humans to demonize and kill them (though Actor Network Theory would not necessarily interpret animal collectives at this level of group relations). But such relationality runs the risk of eliminating the individuality of each nonhuman animal in that given paradigm (Asdal, Druglitrø, Hinchliffe, 2016: 15-18).[10]

That reationality can create thorny epistemological issues. “Animals have forms of intentionality, agency and otherness,” writes Jones, “which generate certain effects in relation to their ongoing enrolment into networks. Any denying of autonomous agency and being to animals flies in the face of reassessments of the capacities and status of animals coming from environmental philosophy” (Jones, 2003: 294-295). The same could be said for humans, particularly as portrayed in histories of race relations and housing in American urban spaces.

With these potential problems in mind, in this dissertation, a more traditional historical approach is accompanied by the work of critical animal studies, allowing it to fill a gap in the scholarship of race and species. Zakiyyah Iman Jackson’s (2020) *Becoming Human*, for example, melds black critical theory, and African diasporic literary studies in particular, with posthumanist thought to engage seminal works of black literature, arguing that those works, in defining black humanity over and against a national dialogue that considered members of the diaspora unseen beasts, fundamentally altered what it meant to be human. Equating black nonexistence and black animality obviously had dire consequences for animals

[10] “So these approaches seem to deny that certain entities do have some ‘internal agency,’ can have ‘inherent characteristics’, and have form that is other to and resistant to the network identity inscribed upon them,” writes Jones. “I argue that differing actants are enrolled into hybrid networks precisely because they have inherent qualities; what would be the point of hybridity otherwise?” (Jones, 2003: 292-293)

themselves, but Jackson gives most of her attention to the fluctuating meaning-making about the state of humanity forced by a black unwillingness to shrink from popular and scientific bigotries (Jackson, 2020).[11]

Joshua Bennett's (2020) *Being Property Once Myself*, too, uses literary criticism to evaluate how black authors uses animal tropes to combat dominate white assumptions of personhood (Bennett, 2020). The work of Ko (2019), Johnson (2019), and to a lesser extent Boisseron (2018), all make similar rhetorical moves. Then there are groundbreaking texts like Alexander Weheliye's *Habeas Viscus*, which reframe the biopolitics of race through feminist theorists like Hortense Spillers and Sylvia Wynter, emphasizing racial theory and thinking in the construction of the human (Weheliye, 2014). Their work is vital, powerful; but none combines traditional historical archival research (rather than literary analysis) with a critical animal studies historiography that sees humans and nonhumans as equivalent actors in the historical narrative, then evaluates the rhetoric of racism and speciesism as a form of reciprical biopolitics. The role of critical animal studies is central here. The discipline has been inordinately successful in examining the relationships between species and capital (Kolozova, 2019; Hudson, 2008; Taylor and Twine, 2014: 137-200) and between species and gender (Adams, 1990; Luke, 2007), and most of the literature on the intersections of race and species fall under that rubric.[12] A central element of the critical animal studies discourse is a concern that the study of human-animal relationships not become "overly abstract and dislocated from various publics" (Twine, 2010: 8). Another is to ensure that "the

[11] Shorter treatments like that of Olivier and Cordeiro-Rodrigues, 2018, make a similar case.

[12] For more on CAS intersectionality in practice, see Griffin, 2014.

mateiral experiences of nonhuman animals for which humans are signfiicantly responsible" (Twine, 2010: 8) are centered as primary. This dissertation seeks to use historical methods to limit abstraction and treat nonhuman experiences as primary, while seeking out the self-sustaining relationship between species and race.

While the work of Jackson (2020), Bennett (2016), and others is absolutely correct that speciesist discourse was used as a cudgel for various forms of racial discrimination, *The Biopolitics of Species and Race in the Post-Civil War United States* demonstrates that racism was also generative of speciesism. The methodological framework of this dissertation, then, provides a necessary furtherance of the work in this burgeoning intersectional vein.

It does so not by recounting every instance of those intersections in the second half of American history, but instead uses representative periodic episodes to demonstrate their progression into the twenty-first century, using qualitative content analysis to generate its conclusions. Though "quantitative content analysis remains the dominant method in political communication," qualitative efforts to "interpret symbolic construction of social and cultural meanings and emphasis in political messages in documents/texts has been growing" (Neuendorf and Kumar, 2015: 4). This kind of research strategy is interpretive, flexible, and built from a series of representative case studies (Schreier, 2012: 21). In this form of "ethnographic content analysis," exemplary incidents are analyzed qualitatively within a given social and, in this case, historical context (Altheide and Schneider, 2013).[13] Of course, "quantitative and qualitative approaches should be viewed as

[13] For more, see Krippendorff, 2012; Liu, 2012.

complementary," and this dissertation also combines those approaches in one part of Chapter 5 (Neuendorf and Kumar, 2015: 4). That chapter, as described below, includes the one data set in which calculating instances of mention is beneficial. That quantification itself becomes a qualitative primary source, but in its presentation, the dissertation divides the data set through human coding into broad replicable categories, with more interpretive subcategories within them. That data is then "collated with source data" (Neuendorf and Kumar, 2015: 3) to provide a broader qualitiative content analysis consistent with the dissertation's other chapters.[14]

This approach is marshalled in the chapters that follow to demonstrate how racism and speciesism have acted upon one another from the 1880s to the present. It argues that the interplay between them reinforced both, but also served to create new forms of race and species bigotry in the United States. Racism and speciesism were not, and are not, the same thing. They work differently in human social relations and language, but they feed off of one another in American culture, bigotry begetting bigotry in a way that not only reified those individual markers of difference, but combined them in hierarchical social constructions that dominated national life.

To make that case, the first of the dissertation's chapters traces the biopolitical consequences for animals of several human developments in the American post-Reconstruction period: the legal development of the property status of animals, the popularity of phrenology, and the role of early anthropology in

[14] For an important analysis of the animalized racial implications of early twentieth-century fictional accounts like Edgar Rice Burroughs's *Tarzan of the Apes*, for example, one not included in this account, see Lundblad, 2013: 139-156.

generating an artificial “chain of being” that placed humans of African descent at the bottom of such human lines and nonhuman animals below them. It was naming by language and law, and thus the chapter maps the consequences of that naming using popular scientific and legal documents from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth. They demonstrate, in the words of Anzaldúa, a failure to “empathize and identify with each other’s oppressions” (Anzaldúa, 1983: 198). Social Darwinism redounded dramatically negatively for black America, aiding the development of Jim Crow; and it redounded dramatically negatively for nonhuman animals, who were made even more vulnerable to human abuse through emphases on “food chains” and other manifestations of speciesism.

Of course, speciesism was functionally ubiquitous in the nineteenth century American South, a general lack of concern about the lives of nonhuman animals crossing all races and classes in the region. Meanwhile, white supremacy was just as ubiquitous. In the postbellum period, as Chapter 2 explains, these twin bigotries combined in the form of a series of “pig laws” in the states of the former Confederacy. White governments expanded charges of grand larceny to include the theft of farmed animals like pigs and chickens, taking advantage of the hunger and desperation of freedpeople and the tradition of theft among slaves to generate convictions that led to disenfranchisement and the elimination of black political power. Such laws might at first seem to better respect the nonhuman animals potentially traumatized by theft, but in reality any personhood was taken from such animals in a public discourse that saw them as objects in service to punishing former slaves. It was the lived declension of the chain of being, a naming by law that punished black sharecroppers and belittled the lived value of nonhuman animals in the process. It was a tiered creation of “whatever is at odds with the

normal, the legitimate, the dominant," as presented by Halperin. The intentional shaping of "an identity without an essence" (Halperin, 1994: 62). To pinpoint that shaping, the chapter moves its focus to legislative documents from southern state governments, combining them with newspaper accounts and secondary sources to describe the late nineteenth-century human relationship with farmed animals and white southern relationship with former slaves.

In the years that followed such laws, the most systematic body of literature produced by the African American population developed in the form of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century black newspapers, which often covered stories mainstream white newspapers were unwilling to display, including lynchings, race riots, and other forms of racial abuse. But they also included all of the other issues of the day, including discussions of vegetarianism and animal cruelty. Chapter 3 will analyze the contents of five major black newspapers between 1890 and 1939 to gauge the evolution of black thought on nonhuman animal issues. It will simultaneously evaluate the contents of the *National Humane Reivew* and *Our Dumb Animals*, the two principal American animal activist publications, to gauge the groups' perspective on the black human population and its own fight for recognition and equality. The publications suggested "the difficulty in defining the population whose interests are at stake" in racial politics (Warner, 1993: xxvi).

It was a period that ended in the tumult of World War II. Towards the end of that conflict, in November 1944, both the terms "genocide" and "vegan" were coined and the reelection of Franklin Roosevelt laid the ground for the creation of the United Nations and its constituent emphasis on human rights. It was an emphasis that would develop over the proceeding two decades, culminating in the

1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. That emphasis on humanity as the standard for worth would move parallel to the development of the other neologism from November 1944 but overshadow it, allowing the onset of an American industrial agribusiness and factory farming regime in the same year that the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights was formed. The divergence of human thought in the postwar period was exemplified in particular by the actions of two humans with stakes in the game. On one trajectory of that bifurcated path was Eleanor Roosevelt, civil rights advocate and driver of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights. On the other was Ezra Taft Benton, a Mormon white supremacist opposed to civil rights who became Secretary of Agriculture in the Dwight Eisenhower administration of the 1950s. Roosevelt would stand as a symbol of civil and human rights; Benton would begin the process that would ultimately lead to industrial agribusiness and the factory farming of animals. It was the apotheosis of linguistic, legal, and symbolic naming, the culmination of "nominalizations" that "function[ed] to fix, stabilize, and, most crucially, enable bounding" (Chen, 2012: 74), a bounding that stabilized human rights in one category and animal rights in another, only making it more difficult for the two to meet. The dissertation's fourth chapter maps that bifurcated path by analyzing documents from the United Nations, on one hand, and the American Department of Agriculture, on the other, supplementing that material with the historiography of both human rights and animal agriculture in the post-World War II period. The chapter explains the split in thinking between advocates of human and animal rights. In the process, it also wrestles with another human trauma, the Holocaust, and the relationship of responses to that atrocity with the creation of instutitonalized atrocities toward animals.

In the 1960s, as the civil rights movement found itself in full swing and factory farming began in earnest, there was a demonstrable profusion of the phrases “like animals” and “like an animal” in a variety of American newspapers. N-gram analysis of those papers demonstrates a disproportionate use of the phrases in exponentially greater numbers than decades prior. Chapter 5 evaluates that spike, the role dehumanization plays in diminishing various human groups while maintaining a mainstream standard that props up “human” as a functionally superior category, and contextualizes the role of civil rights in the creation of those narratives. The chapter turns again, as in Chapter 3, to newspapers as its principal source base, this time by tracking and tabulating instances of such phraseolgy in major national white and black newspapers throughout the decade of the 1960s, using the complimentary combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis described above.

That analysis yields a narrative of naming through language, the semiotic representation that belittled human groups through the use of nonhuman groups, the ultimate intersection of racism and speciesism. And it was that representational intersection that allowed for namings through law. In 1967, for example, in response to such civil rights activism, Lyndon Johnson proposed the Rat Extermination Act, providing federal funds to exterminate millions of rats in American inner cities. Before the vote in the House of Representatives, however, an uprising in Newark, New Jersey by inner city black residents scared white legislators. Southern members of the House derided the bill as one for “civil rats.” Legislators equated the bill, which would predominantly affect black homes, with the Black Power movement and violence like that in Newark and refused to pass it. Meanwhile, black activists used dead rats as symbols of the crumbling

infrastructure of their neighborhoods. It was a debate about human wellbeing in which both sides used the death of rats to marshal their arguments. Chapter 6 uses an anthrozoological reading of the language used to criticize the bill to describe the consequences for rats themselves, who occupied the same spaces as the human residents of urban housing, were scapegoated as disease-carrying monsters, and were killed en masse for the crime of having semiotic resonance in human political discourse. It marshals oral histories, government documents, and newspaper accounts, particulary from Baltimore, Chicago, New York, and Washington, DC, to describe the racial dispossession that created the conditions for rat "inefstation" and the government wrangling over responsibility and financing for solving the problem by killing rats.

The Black Power movement would be at the vangaurd of advocating for rat extermination programs. Those activists—along with the broader counterculture, in which a generation of students in the 1960s and 1970s rejected the received culture of former generations, a culture that gave them segregation, McCarthyism, and Vietnam—used a very specific nomenclature in portraying bureaucracy and figures of authority who they saw as responsible for the violence they were rejecting. Policemen were "pigs." Many government workers were "rats." The most brazen use of this language came from the Manson family, who scrawled, "Death to Pigs" on the wall of the Polanski-Tate home after their murders. Perhaps the most consistent use of such tropes came in the art of Emory Douglas, Minister of Culture for the Black Panther Party, whose illustrations and posters consistently portrayed police and other leaders as pigs. The effort set up a dichotomy that associated an otherwise innocent animal with the corrupt and violent behavior of human law enforcement, a naming through symbol that sought to turn the queering

edifice on its head. It was a rejection of the "minoritizing logic of toleration or simple political interest/representation in favor of a more thorough resistance to regimes of the normal" (Warner, 1993: xxvi). Chapter 7 turns to the history of material culture, analyzing the use of pig imagery in the work of Douglas and other countercultural figures and evaluating its consequences for nonhuman animals.

The final chapter of the narrative interprets the naming of pig imagery in a different way, though its source material is again one of material culture. It analyzes twentieth and twenty-first century American barbecue restaurant signs that feature grinning pigs that serve not only as symbols of the dining experience, but also as symbols of the need to obviate the reality of what human diners are doing to the nonhuman animals inside. It is the ultimate creation of an "identity without an essence" (Halperin, 1994: 62). The signs are a barrier that keep customers from "empath[y] and identi[t]y with each other's oppressions" (Anzaldúa, 1983: 198). They serve as a form of caricature as permission, a making of innocent lives as comedy to excuse the behavior of those who might laugh off any malice toward the group that is affected. In this way, pig-themed barbecue signs are imitative of the racist kitsch and cartoons of the Jim Crow era, where the imagery of Little Black Sambo and exaggerated minstrelsy belittled black lives and customs and, by extension, gave license to whites to treat them as inherently inferior. The chapter's second collection of material culture source material, then, are the cartoons and figurines that represented minstrel racism. The semiotics of difference that play out on barbecue signs give similar license to those who eat barbecue in their behavior toward pigs, and the two sets of source material are held up to one another to demonstrate their thematic similarities, drawing historical comparisons between pickaninny and Sambo illustrations and kitsch of the early

twentieth century and the early twenty-first century caricatured pigs on barbecue signs.

"Recognizing the centrality of the animal in our own understanding of ourselves as human forces us to reassess the place of the human," Fudge explains (2002: 11). The process of decentering the human as the purveyor of "transcendent truth" forces a kind of historical reckoning, one that, in turn, forces a change in the way we interpret history (Fudge, 2002: 11). It forces historians "to question the anthropocentric view of the world—to brush history against the grain." It is "to challenge the status of the human, which in turn is to throw all sorts of assumptions into question. If we can no longer assume our own status then we can no longer take the status of animals as a given"[15] (Fudge, 2002: 14).

This account is an attempt to write history without taking the status of animals as a given. When nonhumans are treated as equally relevant, as equally affected by human decisions, history looks different. And humans are better for it. "Every image of the past that is not recognized by the present as one of its own concerns threatens to disappear irretrievably," Walter Benjamin explained in 1940 (Benjamin, 1992: 247). *The Biopolitics of Species and Race in the Post-Civil War United States* is an attempt to recognize images of the past that hide in plain sight and have hidden in plain sight in American history--to retrieve those whom the twin bigotries of species and race have sought to make disappear.

[15] "The inevitable centrality of the human in the history of animals," writes Fudge, "the reliance upon documents created by humans—need not be regarded as a failing, because if a history of animals is to be distinctive it must offer us what we might call an "interspecies competence"; that is, a new way of thinking about and living with animals" (Fudge, 2002: 11).

CHAPTER 1

Darwin's Outcasts:

Chains of Being, Early Anthropology, and the Intersection of Race and Species in Late-Nineteenth Century Intellectual History

On April 9, 1865, Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered to Union General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox, Virginia, ending a Civil War that had taken the lives of roughly 752,000 people[1] (Hacker, 2011). It was the bloodiest war in American history, but at its conclusion chattel slavery and the property status of humans would come to its formal end.

Four days prior, on April 5, the Supreme Court of Iowa issued a ruling in *Anson v. Dwight*, a case in which a young boy shot and killed a neighbor's "thorough-bred setter dog." The court's decision concerned itself almost entirely with procedural issues, but in the process of adjudicating them, it explained that "dogs may be personal property and have value, and are, in such case, within the rule" (*Anson v. Dwight*, 1865: 18 Iowa 241). It was the first decision in American jurisprudence to formally recognize the property status of nonhuman animals.[2]

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[1] The number of dead in the Civil War had been repeated by historians for more than a century as 618,222, a number built partially on military totals in the North and estimates in the South, but demographic history by J. David Hacker revised that number upward, giving 752,000 as the most likely number, but estimating that the death toll could be as high as 851,000. His study has in large measure shifted mainstream historiographical assumptions about the war's death toll (Hacker, 2011).

[2] Animal property status was not uniform. Dogs were not part of the property holdings in English common law. Dogs and cats were not deemed to be legal property in Virginia until 1984 (Favre, 2010: 1026-1027; Huss, 2002; Wise, 1996; Root, 2002).

Neither of these seminal events, taking place just four days apart, were directly dependent on the other. But they were related. Throughout the 1860s and 1870s, for example, as Reconstruction dominated the American landscape as the country tried to put itself back together and ease the transition from slavery to freedom for roughly four million African Americans (Du Bois, 1935; Foner, 1988), the first animal testing laboratories opened, replacing one form of social engineering with another[3] (DeMello, 2012: 184-185).

In 1873, with the Reconstruction effort faltering but still ongoing, states in the South began testing the limits of northern concern by passing new laws designed to regain a measure of control over black bodies, a control they originally lost at Appomattox. Tennessee and Kentucky, for example, formally segregated public education in their states that year (Ayers, 1992; Woodward, 1955; Cohen, 1991; Litwack, 1980). Also in 1873, Congress passed and now-President Ulysses S. Grant signed the "28-Hour Law," which mandated that animal transport vehicles stop every twenty-eight hours to provide those headed to slaughter a modicum of food, water, and exercise (DeMello, 2012: 404; Davis, 2016: 169-170). It was a law rife with loopholes, but it demonstrated the continued cascade of temporal interactions between race thinking and animal thinking in American postwar legal and social thought.[4]

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[3] For more on the nineteenth century development of animal testing, see Hutt, 1997; Committee on the Use of Laboratory Animals, 1988: 12-15.

[4] Derek Jacoby has also argued for a version of this continuity in the antebellum era. "There existed an intriguing interplay between opposition to slavery and concern over the treatment of animals. Britain's abolition of the slave trade in 1807 coincided closely with the earliest Parliamentary debate on cruelty to animals (an unsuccessful effort in 1800 to outlaw the sport of bull baiting). The successful passage in 1822 of the first animal welfare bill, designed 'to prevent cruel and improper treatment of Cattle', came about only after its endorsement by Evangelicals and the signing of mass petitions, events similar to what had occurred some fifteen years earlier over the cause of slavery" (Jacoby, 1994: 96). Abolitionists like William Wilberforce also cared about

Thus it was that in the second half of the nineteenth century, and into the twentieth, the national reckoning with race and species intersected in unique and meaningful ways. Animal protections began in fits and starts as post-Reconstruction retrenchment in the South led to retributive crackdowns on black lives and bodies. Early anthropology and social and biological applications of Darwinian evolutionary theory, first published in the year prior to Lincoln's election and the onset of the Civil War, created chains of being that placed white humans over black humans on a hierarchical scale, while simultaneously placing all humans over all nonhumans. Such intersections established a scientific and legislative backing for human assumptions about species and race that would carry through the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

"The American people," observed black sociologist Bertram Wilbur Doyle in 1937, "seem to exhibit a perennial interest in problems pertaining to contact and association of the many races which constitute the general population" (Doyle, 1937: viii). It was an interest that consumed American social thinking and created a culture that built itself on what historian John Higham has called racial nativism, "intense opposition to an internal minority on the ground of its foreign (i.e., 'un-American') connections" (Higham, 1967: 4). He describes the evolution of two distinct racisms in American culture, the first stemming from the romantic movement and dominating in politics and culture, and the second building from naturalistic science and social science beginning in the seventeenth century "to

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animal welfare causes. "In some vague way, at least, these reformers recognized that the condition of slaves and that of animals were not unrelated" (Jacoby, 1994: 97; Serpell, 1986: 29, 181; Ritvo, 1987: 125-127, 133). In another version of such conflations, former abolitionist Lydia Maria Child wrote in 1870, "The man who claims a right to abuse the beasts that are in his power is spiritually akin to those who claimed a right to 'wollop their niggers' without interference" (quoted in Freeberg, 2020: 89).

study human types systematically in order to catalogue and explain them" (Higham, 1967: 134). It was itself a project that stemmed from the effort to systematize, order, and catalogue nonhuman types. There was, however, substantial intermixing between the two efforts, politics and culture often feeding from cause celeb pronouncements from naturalists that either created new human bigotries against nonhuman animals or white bigotries against racial minorities, or that provided an academic seal of approval on bigotries already present in American society. Ultimately, those efforts combined in the second half of the nineteenth century, "when social science and history came increasingly under the sway of environmental assumptions," to lead scientists to advance "dramatic claims for heredity" and help "to translate them into a political and social creed" (Higham, 1967: 149).

It was an attitude with a long history. One of the first historians, Herodotus, elevated Greeks and Greekness in his *Histories* by describing non-Greeks in animalistic terms. They were barbarians. They were uncivilized, closer to nonhuman animals than to the cultural elite of Greece. "Greeks have been from very ancient times," Herodotus argued, "distinguished from the barbarians by superior sagacity and freedom from foolish simpleness" (Herodotus, 1999: 26). As time developed, such binaries only grew in import, always to the detriment of the humans considered closer to nonhuman animals. The "distinction between 'them and us' assumed greater significance," notes Samantha Hurn, "as the reaches of the 'Western' world extended rapidly during the overseas exploration and conquest of the medieval period and beyond" (Hurn, 2012: 20).

At the very end of that period, in 1492, a disgraced Italian slave trader, Christopher Columbus, convinced the newly unified nation of Spain to fund his

exploratory voyage around the world, a voyage that unexpectedly ended at San Salvador in the Carribean. “I greatly desired conversation with them,” Columbus wrote of the native population, demonstrating his lack of cultural understanding for indigenous human groups, “but it seemed that I had nothing left to show them which would induce them to come nearer still. So I had a tambourine brought up to the poop [deck] and played, and made some of the young men dance, imagining that the Indians would draw closer to see the festivities. On observing the music and dancing, however, they dropped their oars, and picked up their bows, and strung them. Each one seized his shield, and they began to shoot arrows at us” (Columbus, 1946). The natives did not understand European music, which was to say that they had no culture, which was itself a determinant of proper humanity. They were, in other words, somehow less than human. Columbus made that point upon his return to Spain, and used his interpretation of native animality to convince a monarchy hungry for territorial conquest that the area was ripe for colonization (Davidson, 1997; Wey, 2008; Phillips and Phillips, 1992).

Tzvetan Todorov notes that the first thing Columbus noticed about the natives of San Salvador was that they wore no clothes, placing them on the order of other animals to be encountered. “Physically naked, the Indians are also, to Columbus’s eyes, deprived of all cultural property,” Todorov explains, “they are characterized, in a sense, by the absence of customs, rites, religion (which has a certain logic, since for a man like Columbus, human beings wear clothes following their expulsion from Paradise, itself at the source of their cultural identity)” (Todorov, 1984: 35). Indiginous people were, like nonhuman animals, separated from the properly human because they didn’t adhere to the strictures for humans

placed on them by the Biblical genesis story, which itself validated humanity as the lived manifestation of God in the flesh.

It was a legacy that would continue in both the New World that Columbus "discovered" and in the Europe he represented. Enlightenment thinkers and scientists developed their theoretical models of the world around them with such biases built into their various schema. When Linnaeus presented his taxonomy in *Systema Naturae* in 1735, the genus Homo had physical classificatory elements, but also mental or spiritual elements. *Nosce te ipsum*, he wrote of humans, "know for yourself," demonstrating that he saw humans as unique, distinct among all other animals (Bendyshe, 1865: 422). Linnaeus's work, then, helped influence that of Comte de Buffon, whose *Histoire naturelle, générale et particulière*, published in thirty-six volumes from 1749 to 1788, criticized Linneaus and his taxonomy and sought instead a better way to classify and systematize everything in the known world. Buffon saw similarities between humans and apes, but argued, again with that same inherited bias, that the two groups did not, could not, share a common descent[5] (Farber, 2000). If there was an inherent assumption of human superiority, after all, common descent would destroy the conceit.

One of Buffon's chief critics on that count was Scottish judge James Burnett, Lord Monboddo, who emphasized common descent and a much more pliable veil between human and nonhuman. Even with such an advocate, however, there could be versions of similar bigotries. In the late eighteenth century, Burnett produced a multi-volume scientific account of humans and other animals, and

[5] For more on that common descent, and the various gendered and racialized uses of such portrayals in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, prior to the scope of this particular study, see Schiebinger, 1993.

included the story of a supposed Swedish discovery of a human island community in the Bay of Bengal that had tails. The report was wrong and demonstrated an ethnocentric willingness to believe that humans from the Global South were literally and biologically closer to animals, but it was also intended as a demonstration that there was diversity even among different humans (Burnett, 1773: 234-239). And while there is no indigenous human group with tails, Tim Ingold explains that "humanity presents itself as a continuous field of variation, compounded of a myriad of finely graded differences" (Ingold, 1994: 17).

The Enlightenment naturalists were all engaged, in their own way, in an attempt to classify "all objects of existence according to the ancient `Great Chain of Being' system. Every being, from humans to fauna and flora had a naturally assigned position and status" (Anderson, 2000: 308-309). That chain of being, which had been around in various forms since the ancient Greeks, was refurbished for the modern era in 1764 with the publication of Charles Bonnet's *Contemplation de la Nature* (Anderson, 1976). Alexander Pope's *Essay on Man* did much the same work and was perhaps even more influential in the English-speaking and largely still England-dependent colonies, reprinted as it was throughout the eighteenth century (Sibley, 1949: 23). Americans, too, then, took the "great chain of being" metaphor and made it their own. As one anonymous Philadelphia poet wrote at the end of the century:

> From animalcula, progress to man,
> Explore each link of nature's wond'rous chain:
> Say, can'st thou mark a nothing throughout space,
> Or one minutia miss'd from race to race?

Then, if thou can'st not, study not in vain,

To alter nature, or unlink the chain (Anonymous, 1797).

The verse was a clear manifestation of the popular conception of the great chain of being. Animals were at the bottom of the chain, humans at the top. And among the humans, there were variances between races that put certain human groups higher on the scale than others.[6] It was a consistent theme. No matter how the great chain of being was construed, it always redounded negatively, first, to nonhuman animals, and, second, to human animals neither European nor European-descended. George Lakoff and Mark Turner describe the "great chain of being" metaphor as a relational "folk theory" to help order the world, with humans at the top of the chain with "higher-order" attributes (Lakoff and Turner, 1989: 166-181; Talebinejad and Dastjerdi, 2005). Animals followed next with "instinctual attributes," then plants, complex objects, and natural physical things. The metaphorical use of the "great chain of being" serves to map animal traits onto humans and human traits onto animals. In the first, using animal traits to describe human behavior distinguishes human superiority by using nonhuman behaviors to define human failings (Martsa, 2003: 3; see Chapter 5). It creates a rhetorical move wherein statements like "human behavior is animal behavior" and "human is animal" shift to new constructions like "objectionable human behavior is animal

[6] For more on the manifestation of race thinking in relation to the "great chain of being" metaphor in the eighteenth century, which is beyond the scope of this particular study, see Jordan, 1968: 482-511. The most important scholar of the pre-19th century evolution of the "great chain of being" is Arthur Lovejoy, whose *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea* (1936) set the standard on such thinking from the ancient Greeks through the Enlightenment. He concluded, "The history of the idea of the Chain of Being--in so far as that idea presupposed such a complete rational intelligibility of the world--is the history of a failure; more precisely and more justly, it is the record of an experiment in thought carried on for many centuries by many great and lesser minds, which can now be seen to have had an instructive negative outcome" (Lovejoy, 1964: 329). For more on Lovejoy's work, see Wilson, 1980; Wilson, 1987.

behavior" and "objectionable people are animals" (Talibinijad, 2005: 137; Kovecses, 2002: 125). In the second, mapping human traits onto animals uses anthropomorphization to distort and diminish the personhood of nonhuman beings, which translates linguistically what more scientific chain of being designs had been doing for centuries.

In the nineteenth century, as Sylvia Yanagisako and Carol Delaney have explained, "the Biblical worldview began to collapse, and God began to drop out of the picture," particularly among the intellectual elite, giving rise to a celebration of the natural, that which was left after religious mystery was gone. It was a process aided by "industrialization, questions about slavery and women's rights as well as increased contact with other peoples and other classificatory schemes," all of which seemed to lay bare the old order. Americans and Europeans, then, began looking for a new, secular genesis point for life, one that could be implemented into existing classificatory schemes. Ultimately, they found evolution. "In the shift from the biblical account to an evolutionary one," however, "something of the god-given quality remained," leading Western elites to continue their obsessive categorizations and orderings. Humans were on top of the evolutionary ladder, the similar if slightly modified story now went, and white humans were on top of the social ladder (Yanagisako and Delaney, 4-5). As Marshall Sahlins has noted of those of European descent, "We are the only people who think themselves risen from savages; everyone else believes they descend from the gods" (Sahlins, 1976: 52-53).

Such Western thinking typically fractures into what Tim Ingold calls "parallel dichotomies," human is separate from animal as nature is from culture, or emotion is from reason, or urban is from rural, or white is from black (Ingold, 1994: 21). In

1865, for example, Englishman John Lubbock compared “savages” to “children,” arguing that they both began in virtual intellectual darkness and gradually developed, children becoming adults and savages becoming quantitatively cultured in one way or another (Lubbock, 1865: 570). “Every generation has recreated its own view of animality as a deficiency in everything that we humans are uniquely supposed to have, including language, reason, intellect and moral conscience” (Ingold, 1994: 14). And Europeans and Americans have done the same to Africans and people of African descent, who inevitably fall short on every “chain of being” scale, thus remaining “in closer evolutionary and behavioral proximity to nonhuman animals (especially the great apes). Colored bodies are viewed as primitive and closer to animals. Such associations persist and are often made explicit” (Elder, Wolch, Emel, 1998: 195).

Of course, though “the Biblical worldview began to collapse, and God began to drop out of the picture” for the intellectual elite (Yanagisako and Delaney, 4-5), it was very much a part of life for everyone else. Black and white churches, however, interpreted the Great Chain of Being in decidedly different ways. White churches, particuarly in the American South, shunned evolutionary theories more broadly, but openly adapted the work of naturalists that allowed them to bolster the claims of the book of Daniel that “wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou *art* this head of gold” (Daniel 2:38). They were also able to marshal such arguments to supplement assumptions of white supremacy that went along with their depictions of a white Jesus. Black churches, however, while clearly supporting the religious element of that human supremacy, rejected

the racial element of such chain of being thinking.[7] Neither white nor black churches in most protestant denominations, however, had strong theological ties to the medieval church that helped solidify the Great Chain of Being religious doctrine that developed in the fifteenth century as a check against a different era of scientific advancement (Lovejoy, 1936; see also, for example, Mirandola, 2012). When combined with the white church's documented inability to marshal religious fervor to the cause of imposing legal white supremacy in the same way that black churches were able to marshal it to fight such legal restrictions (Chappell, 2004), the religious outgrowth of the Great Chain of Being metaphor is not part of this study. Religion was an important method of conceptualizing the world for many in Gilded Age America, but its decline in the period and science's heightened profile give it pride of place in this chapter.

Helping to solidify this way of scientifically conceptualizing the world, nineteenth-century anthropologist Lewis H. Morgan studied the Iroquois Indians, focusing in particular on kinship. He assumed that kinship as experienced by European-descended people and driven by blood relations and sexual contact were the height of human social being. Many American Indian groups, including the Iroquois, had different notions of kinship, which marked them as objects of fascination, but also as lower-order beings. They did not reach the European cultural bar, and thus they were degraded (Morgan, 1851). His studies ultimately led him to a broader effort to rank different human groups in hierarchical order, with

[7] For more, see Beckham, 1999; Chappell, 1998; Cone, 1985; Lincoln and Mamiya, 1990; Raboteau, 1996.

European-descended people at the top of that Great Chain of Being, and aboriginal Australians at the bottom[8] (Morgan, 1871).

Perhaps even more than natives, however, the group affected most by such theoretical work was the slave population. "Never before has the black race of Central Africa, from the dawn of history to the present day, attained a condition so civilized and so improved, not only physically, but morally and intellectually" by arriving in the United States, said South Carolina's John C. Calhoun in defense of slavery in 1837[9] (Calhoun, 2007: 600). He was playing on the Chain of Being classification systems to make the case that both races would be better off with the maintenance of slavery.

Both slaves and domesticated animals were subjects of domination, existing in functional master-servant relationships wherein violence was justified to force compliance. "The drive for control is so essential," says Karl Jacoby, "and so similar, whether the object of control is a slave or a domestic animal--as to overwhelm most distinctions between humans and animals. In fact, since homo sapiens is a social animal, like nearly every other creature successfully domesticated by humans, one can interpret slavery as a little more than the extension of domestication to humans."[10] Thus it was that masters sought to breed their slaves to create more free labor and control for various strengths and

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[8] For more on Morgan, see Moses, 2009; Stern, 1946.

[9] At this point in his life, Calhoun had already served as Vice President of the United States and was currently a sitting senator from South Carolina. For more on Calhoun, see Bartlett, 1994; Niven, 1988.

[10] It was an argument that had been influential since Aristotle's *Politics*, in which he made an argument for natrual slavery. "Those who are as different as the soul from the body or man from beast—and they are in this state if their work is the use of the body, and if this is the best that can come from them—are slaves by nature," wrote Aristotle. "For them it is better to be ruled in accordance with this sort of rule, if such is the case for the other things mentioned." (Aristotle, 1995: 1254b16–21)

weaknesses, just as would the breeders of pets. Jacoby explains that “the very condition at the heart of slavery,” wherein “the slave is spared death in exchange for the promise to labor for the slaveowner also bears strong similarities to the domestication of animals” (Jacoby, 1994: 92).

Because of the power of such comparisons, slaveowners often defended slavery by claiming that slaves were different species. Antebellum scientist John Campbell, for example, argued that “the Negro has on his head 'wool, properly so termed', and not hair. And since the white man has hair upon his head, and the Negro has wool, we have no hesitancy in pronouncing that they belong to two distinct species” (Campbell, 1851: 362-363). Not only were slaves a distinct species, but it was similarity to sheep that demonstrated the difference. Other scientists argued that people of mixed race were sterile because they were hybrids of two species, similar to the mule offspring of horses and donkeys[11] (Frederickson, 1987: 161).

Even more invasive was the profusion of phrenology. Formally founded upon the 1819 publication of German physician Francis Gall’s *The Anatomy and Physiology of the Nervous System in General, and of the Brain in Particular*, phrenological science claimed to study certain segments of the brain and their measurements related to the skull, such measurements able to judge mental capacity and therefore a measure of human superiority (Finger and Eling, 2019; Staum, 2003: 49). It would be popularized in the United States by Gall’s one-time collaborator, Johann Spurzheim, who made a lecture tour through the country in 1832 (Riegel, 1933; McCandless, 1992: 199). From there the mantle was taken by

[11] For an example of the historical continuity of the animalizing tendency of slaves, see Bradley, 2000 for evidence of similar semantic efforts in classical antiquity.

a group of siblings who would dominante much of the American phrenological conversation. Orson Squire Fowler, Lorenzo Niles Fowler, and Charlotte Fowler Wells established a phrenological publishing house in the 1830s and founded the *American Phrenological Journal* (Stern, 1971; Horlick, 1971). It was a discipline that survived for much of the century, helping the racist cause by establishing a measurement that could "prove" the superiority of Europeans and European-descended people. Slaveowners tended to support phrenological investigations as they justified their behaviors toward slaves and their a priori belief in white supremacy (Lyons, 2009; Posket, 2019; Colbert, 1997; White, 2006).

In 1864, southerner James Hunt played on phrenological reports to make a sustained case for white supremacy, drawing on "scientific" evidence of physical and social characteristics to demonstrate the alleged inferiority of black people.[12] "It cannot be doubted," wrote Hunt, "that the brain of the Negro bears a great resemblance to a European woman or child's brain, and thus approaches the ape far more than the European, while the Negress approaches still nearer the ape" (Hunt, 1864: 10). It was an accounting that played on the scientific dogma of the day to make its case, but in so doing, the argument used nonhuman animals as a measuring stick for inferiority, thereby damaging both the black human image and that of apes in the process. If it was impossible for white thinkers to see black people as equals, or even to take them seriously as adult humans, because of their proximity to animals, the distance between those thinkers and a proximate belief in animal equality, or even serious consideration of the animal mind, was even farther.

[12] For more on Hunt, see Bettany, 1891.

“In the negro race there is a great uniformity of temperament,” Hunt claimed. “In every people of Europe all temperaments exist; but in the Negro race we can only discover analogies for the choleric and phlegmatic temperaments” (Hunt, 1864: 11). It was a strategy common to references to nonhuman animals. Humans had individual traits and temperaments, while the traits and temperaments of nonhumans were uniform. Speaking for one was ostensibly speaking for the species. In differentiating different temperaments in Europe and portraying black temperaments as uniform, Hunt was engaged in a more subtle but still effective method of comparing slaves and animals. It is a colonial discourse often referred to as “Africa is a country,” European and American thinkers seeing the continent not as the home of hundreds of language groups, cultures, and nations, but instead as one monolith, in a way those same thinkers would never view Europe or the Americas. The generalizing tendency for dispossessed human groups and all nonhuman animal groups removed individuality because, it was assumed, individuality was beside the point. Humans, for example, speak of animal species as a whole, one dog or cat representing “dogs” or “cats.” Individual members of marginalized groups often feel the effects of that marginalization through generalization.[13]

In another, similar strategy, Hunt explained that “the many assumed cases of civilized Negroes generally are not of pure African blood” (Hunt, 1864: 12). If cases of productive and interesting individuality do exist, Hunt labored to say, it is because miscegenation has gifted the lesser beings with a modicum of white blood, and it is the latent whiteness that creates the productivity and interest. Again

[13] There has more recently been a move away from this generalizing tendency in biological and zoological literature. See, for example, Richter and Hintz, 2019.

the pseudoscientific racism mimicked human arguments about nonhuman animals, whose individualistic traits were routinely explained by either genetic proximity to humans, in the case of apes, or physical proximity to humans, in the case of domesticated animals and pets. The narrative around various apes like chimpanzees tends to create human assumptions that chimps are “incomplete humans rather than complete apes. We see the human infant in every mature chimpanzee, and treat it accordingly as a case of arrested development” (Ingold, 1994: 28).

To further add the scientific veneer to the tract, the medical doctor who sponsored the publication of what was originally an extended speech to the London Anthropological Society wrote a preface to the volume endorsing Hunt’s arguments with his medical seal of approval. “The Human Family is composed of a certain number of species or races,” wrote John H. Van Evrie, a consumate defender of slavery, who also authored his own books on the subject, “just as all other forms of being, which are generally alike, but specifically unlike. The White, or Caucasian, is the most elevated, and the Negro the most subordinate of all the Races in their organic structure, and therefore in their faculties”[14] (Hunt, 1864: ii).

Van Evrie, when doing his own writing, drew the animal line more directly in refuting Linnaeus’s taxonomy for not anticipating American racism. “Linnaeus placed ‘man’ in the category mammalia, but made him an order, a genus and species by himself,” wrote Van Evrie. “This is false as a matter of fact, for in the entire world of animal existence there is no such fact as a single species. All the forms of life are made up of groups or families, properly genera, and each of these

[14] For more on Van Evrie, see Roberts, 2008: 75-78.

is composed of a certain number of species. These species, as already observed, differ from each other." Van Evrie's claim was that Homo sapiens was not a unified species. It was, instead, something broader, with a variety of species within it. This allowed him to make the case that people of African descent were not the same species as people of European descent. Such species "begin with the lowest, or simplest, or grossest formation, and rise, one above the other, in the scale of being, until the group is completed; so that they are all, not only specifically different from each other, but absolutely unlike each other in every thing, in the minutest particle of elementary matter as well as in those things palpable to the sense." The different races were "absolutely distinct" (Van Evrie, 1861: 39).

It wasn't that such distinctions compared to those of nonhuman animals. They surpassed them. "The human creation was yet separated by an absolutely boundless as well as impassable interval," Van Evrie claimed, "for the distinctions between them are utterly unlike those separating mere animal beings" (Van Evrie, 1861: 42). The differences between "mere" animal species were less pronounced than those among human groups. Red foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*) and blue foxes (*Vulpes lagopus*) had different habitats, for example, but they had, for the most part, similar capacities. Such was not the case for white and black Americans.

The essentializing nature of such naturalist theory was, in the words of Harriet Ritvo, "constantly challenged by the profusion and variety of the world." (1996: 39) The failings of their categorizations of nonhuman animals were just as stark as the failings of their categorizations of human animals. The groups, in fact, that had far less trouble differentiating species were those who were dispossessed, black and brown humans and the nonhuman animals who knew exactly, without chart or manifesto, precisely with whom to breed. "In the most important

transactions of their lives, those involving the selection of reproductive partners, animals could be relied on to identify members of their own species and to avoid members of other species"[15] (Ritvo, 1996: 39).

Less intentional in his racism, but all the more influential because of it, Harvard professor Louis Agassiz argued for a theory of polygenism, positing that human races had a variety of origin points.[16] When writing of his research trip to Brazil, Agassiz explained, "What struck me at first view, in seeing Indians and Negroes together, was the marked difference in the relative proportions of the different parts of the body. Like long-armed monkeys the Negroes are generally slender, with long legs, long arms, and a comparatively short body, while the Indians are short-legged, short-armed, and long-bodied, the trunk being also rather heavy in build." Comparing Brazilian natives and African Americans was, for Agassiz, like comparing two nonhuman animals. "So far as my observation goes, the essential difference between the Indian and Negro races, taken as a whole, consists in the length and square build of the trunk and the shortness of limbs in the Indian as compared with the lean frame, short trunk, deep-cleft legs, and long arms of the Negro" (Agassiz, 1869: 529-530). Agassiz was declaring two distinct evolutionary lines, stemming from two different nonhuman animal groups.

Looming over Agassiz and everyone else in the naturalist line was Charles Darwin himself. His *On the Origin of Species*, first published in 1859, made the case for broad-based, randomized botanical and zoological evolution that varied by

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[15] For more on naturalists and their fraught relationship with animal categorization, particularly in Victorian Britain, see Ritvo, 1994: 114-117.

[16] For more on Agassiz, see Lurie, 1988; Winsor, 1979; Menand, 2002: 97-116.

environmental conditions.[17] His theory argued that populations were modified by natural selection, wherein beneficial traits that aided survival and reproduction were favored. Small, inherited variations developed over time to allow species to successfully compete, thrive, and ultimately reproduce (Darwin, 1859). It was revelatory and well-reviewed in academic circles in the United States, despite the implications it might have on the racially essentializing narratives in the national discourse, but its wider public influence was delayed by that very discourse, as 1860 was the election year of Abraham Lincoln. Then came southern secession, then Civil War (Hofstadter, 1959: 13). Thus it was that American race conflict prohibited the possible spread of a more comprehensive understanding of the biological evolution of nonhuman animal life in the nation.

Even when it was given a comprehensive hearing, however, Darwinian evolutionary theory could be a double-edged sword for the human relationship with animals. In the nineteenth century, "Darwinism and the work of other naturalists challenged the notion of the divine plan of creation, in some ways replacing the idea of a fundamental separation between humans and animals with that of similarity and kinship," Molly H. Mullin explains. That said, the naturalists dealt in hierarchies, and those hierarchies remained in place. "In Darwinian terms,

[17] Darwin would also have a reaction to a native population similar to Columbus several centuries prior. Upon encountering the Yaghan people of Tierra del Fuego, he remarked, "The astonishment which I felt on first seeing a party of Fuegians on a wild and broken shore will never be forgotten by me, for the reflection at once rushed into my mind--such were our ancestors...They possessed hardly any arts, and like animals lived on what they could catch; they had no government, and were merciless to every one not of their own small tribe. He who has seen a savage in his native land will not feel much shame, if forced to acknowledge that the blood of some more humble creature flows in his veins. For my own part I would as soon be descended from that heroic little monkey, who braved his dreaded enemy in order to save the life of his keeper, or from that old baboon, who descending from the mountains, carried away in triumph his young comrade from a crowd of astonished dogs--as from a savage who delights to torture his enemies, offers up bloody sacrifices, practices infanticide without remorse, treats his wives like slaves, knows no decency, and is haunted by the grossest superstitions" (Darwin, 1883: 612-614). Darwin's ship, the Beagle, took a group of the "Fuegian" children back to England.

perceptions of inferiority and superiority, as well as the colonial project, could be justified and explained in terms of evolution" (Mullin, 1999: 206-207; Kuper, 1997: 274-289; Ritvo, 1987: 39-42).

Because of that wartime delay, however, and because of the racial history of the United States represented by the Civil War, the public influence of Darwin existed in the shadow of two scientists whose published work on evolution predated his own. The first, Jean-Baptiste Lamarck, a French invertebrate zoologist and botanist writing in the early nineteenth century, developed the original systematic theory of evolution. He argued in *Recherches sur l'Organisation des Corps Vivants* (1802) for a version of evolution wherein the environment generated necessary changes in animals, but it did so in an orderly, structured way (see also Lamarck, 1809; Lamarck, 1815-1822). Lamarck was no traditional Catholic, but believed in a divinely ordered world, and as his evolutionary theory developed, he focused more and more intently on *Le pouvoir de la vie* or *la force qui tend sans cesse à composer l'organisation*. All living organisms evolved upward, becoming more complex over evolutionary cycles in a clear, straight-forward trajectory. His conception of evolution was one of verifiable progress (Bowler, 2003; Burkhardt, 1970; Coleman, 1977).

Lamarck was also the first scientist to use the word "biology," and one of the biologists who benefited most from his work was British anthropologist Herbert Spencer, who presented his own version of evolution two years prior to the publication of *On the Origin of Species*. In 1857, he posited another progressive system, all organisms developing from simple structures to ones far more complex, much as had his French predecessor (Spencer, 1857). In 1864, he published his *Principles of Biology*, in which he coined the phrase "survival of the fittest" to crib

Darwin's evolutionary theory that had appeared in the interim (Spencer, 1864). Perhaps most influential in the United States was Spencer's application of that biological idea to society. Just as with animal or botanical organisms, he argued, social organisms also developed from simple structures to ones far more complex. The simple structure of human society was ordered around obedience to hierarchical authority. The complex structure was an industrial society built on social contracts. It was voluntary, a laissez-faire system that functioned without an overweening government authority (Spencer, 1862; Taylor, 2007; Francis, 2007; Bannister, 1979: 34-47).

Spencer's ideas would become the genesis point for what became known as social Darwinism after his ideas were coopted and repurposed in American hands.[18] William Graham Sumner, sociology professor at Yale active in the last three decades of the nineteenth century, took Spencer's laissez-faire social theory and carried it forward to its logical ends (Shone, 2004; Hofstadter, 1959: 51-66; Bannister, 1979: 98-104; Kluger, 2004: 306). Nature favored the fittest, he argued, showing little concern for the environmental structure of fitness proposed by Darwin, and therefore any attempt to aid the unfit was artificially rigging the system, harming not only their social betters, to whom resources should naturally flow, but society itself. Any attempt, then, to mitigate inequalities was an attack on liberty and against the natural order of things. "Let it be understood that we cannot go

[18] Herbert Spencer is himself often mentioned as a social Darwinist, a label that began accruing to him in the early twentieth century but that was solidified in Richard Hofstadter's *Social Darwinism in American Thought*, originally published in 1955, which devoted a chapter to Spencer and framed him as the intellectual fountainhead for the racist movement (Hofstadter, 1959: 31-50). David Weinstein, however, explains that Spencer himself was not a social Darwinist. Though his ideology carried with it plenty of systemic flaws, the application of his work by Americans with a particular racial ax to grind does not make him specifically responsible for their later thought (Weinstein, 2019).

outside of this alternative," wrote Sumner, "liberty, inequality, survival of the fittest; not-liberty, equality, survival of the unfittest. The former carries society forward and favors all its best members; the latter carries society downwards and favors all its worst members" (Sumner, 1914a: 25; see also Horsthemke, 2018: 122-124).

Such was the essence of social Darwinism. Loosely defined betters should not be responsible for those who fall behind economically. Those loose definitions allowed the skirting of historical context, like, for example, centuries of slavery, and the false assumption that all wealth was earned. It was an effort to convince humans to treat one another on a warped model of how Sumner saw nonhuman animals treating one another (Claeys, 2000). At times, he even used animal terms. "If there is any 'banquet of life' offered, by the fact that the world is here," he claimed, "we find that there are a great number of us who have come to be guests at it and that there is a hungry crowd of other animals, upon whom we look down as not fit to dispute the banquet with us, but who defend their possession of it with as much ferocity and tenacity as if they were revolutionists and could declaim about natural rights" (Sumner, 1914b: 112). Not only did Sumner attempt to belittle impoverished humans by comparing them to starving, desperate nonhuman animals, but he completely misconstrued animals themselves, assuming in his broad laissez-faire that nonhuman animals had no sense of community and were only out for themselves. It was a misrepresentation of animal society, which led to a misrepresentation of human society. In such social stratification metaphors, belittling groups of dispossessed humans almost always led to the belittling of

nonhuman animals (see Chapter 5). And those metaphors were the bedrock upon which social Darwinism was built.[19]

"The slave acted only under two motives, fear and sensuality," wrote Sumner. "Both made him cowardly, cringing, cunning, and false, and at the same time fond of good eating and drinking and of sensual indulgence" (Sumner, 1906: 290). It made him, in other words, one of those hungry animals, part of the problem with human society that limited its ability to enact a broader noninterventionist policy. Sumner and his theories would dominate the discussion of social structures in the United States throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Of course, there were dissenters, but even academic dissents in the era redounded negatively to both dispossessed humans and their nonhuman counterparts. Lester Ward, author of *Dynamic Sociology* (1883), the first comprehensive account of sociology in the United States, diverged sharply from Spencer and Sumner in that he saw dualism as defining social growth. There was in his thought, and in the words of Richard Hofstadter, "a sharp distinction between physical, or animal, purposeless evolution and mental, human evolution decisively modified by purposive action" (Hofstadter, 1959: 68). Such binaries were in direct contradiction to the unitary, determinist thinking of Sumnerian social Darwinism, and they were able to counter its racist consequences "with a positive body of social theory adaptable to the uses of reform" (Hofstadter, 1959: 68). Still, even in making such distinctions Ward's binary divided species in a way that discounted the nonhuman as lacking the fundamental purposefulness that separated humans

[19] For more on the philosophical bedrock of social Darwinism, see Rogers, 1972; Simpson, 1959; Ruse, 2005: 42-63, 103-128; Wells, 1907.

from other species, not recognizing that purposefulness was artificially constructed just as was Spencer's determinism (Burnham, 1954; Nelson, 1972).

It was into this crucible that the discipline of anthropology began to take hold, wrapped as it was around the twin pillars of race and species. In January 1896 Daniel G. Brinton, one of the founders of American anthropology and the president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, wrote that "the black, the brown and the red races differ anatomically so much from the white...that even with equal cerebral capacity they never could rival its results by equal efforts" (Brinton, 1896). Later that year, another American anthropological figurehead, John Wesley Powell, director of the Smithsonian's Bureau of American Ethnology explained that "the laws of evolution do not produce kinds of men but grades of men; and human evolution is intellectual, not physical" (Powell, 1896). Anthropology, then, emerged as a discipline in the United States to distinguish the study of humans over and against nonhumans, hence its decidedly humanist name. As Barbara Noske has argued, "Anthropologists treat animals as integral parts of human economic constellations and human-centered ecosystems: They are economic resources, commodities and means of production for human use"[20] (Noske, 1993: 185). But anthropology was also a discipline designed to distinguish select groups of humans from each other. Like the naturalists before them, anthropologists sought to catalog human traits for classificatory ends. Again, humans always came before nonhumans, and white always came before black (Baker, 1998: 27-48).

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[20] For more on the modern debate about the relationship between nonhuman animals and anthropology, see Spencer, 2007/2008 and Hurn, 2012.

The thinking of the naturalists and anthropologists would redound negatively to nonhumans, but for most humans in American society whose speciesism blinded them to the concerns of nonhuman animals, the most immediately visible effects of such theoretical work played out in the southern legislative response to the collapse of Reconstruction. When white Redeemer politicians reclaimed control of state governments in the former Confederacy, their first priority was to use legislation to reimpose a version of the slavery they lost to the war. To do so, they had to get around the Reconstruction amendments, three additions to the American Constitution that made slavery illegal, defined birthright citizenship, and made it illegal for states to deny anyone the right the vote based on race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

To remove black political power, new state governments of the late 1870s and early 1880s passed state constitutional provisions that mandated literacy tests, property qualifications, and poll taxes for voting, ensuring that black citizens would be disenfranchised without the mention of race. South Carolina, for example, passed its infamous Eight Box Law in 1882. It required voters to deposit separate ballots for separate election races in the proper ballot box. Illiterate voters couldn't identify the boxes without white election officials helping them. And, of course, those officials were only really willing to help illiterate white voters (Kousser, 1974; Perman, 2000). In *Williams v. Mississippi* (1898) the United States Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of such disenfranchisement provisions because they did not discriminate "on their face" against black southerners.

It was also during these years that states began passing "Jim Crow" laws, mandating segregation in almost all public facilities. That imperative for segregation would take over every facet of southern life, but it began most

systematically on railroads. Tennessee mandated segregation on railroad cars in 1881. Florida in 1887 (Cohen, 1991; Cell, 1982). Louisiana took its turn in 1890, and the following year, a group of concerned black business leaders in New Orleans formed a citizens committee and planned a test case to challenge the law's constitutionality. The Louisiana district court ruled that the state had the right to regulate railroad companies within its borders, which started the process of appeal, and in 1896 it reached the Supreme Court (Hoffer, 2012; Luxenberg, 2020).

Henry Billings Brown wrote the majority opinion in the case that became known as *Plessy v. Ferguson*, and his argument clearly benefited from the scientific dogma of the day. "Legislation is powerless to eradicate racial instincts or to abolish distinctions based on physical differences, and the attempt to do so can only result in accentuating the differences of the present situation," he wrote. "If the civil and political rights of both races be equal, one cannot be inferior to the other civilly or politically. If one race be inferior to the other socially, the Constitution of the United States cannot put them on the same plane" (*Plessy v. Ferguson*, 1896). It was social Darwinian thinking writ onto the legal plane, towing the ideological line from Spencer to Sumner.

As Lee Baker has explained, "Lawmakers have used anthropology to write legislation that shapes public policy, and journalists have used it to produce media that shape public opinion. The discipline of anthropology, in turn, is validated by this sort of appropriation" (Baker, 1998: 4). It was an act of self-replication that kept most American social theorists towing that same line. Many Europeans did, as well. British biologist Thomas Huxley in 1894, two years prior to the *Plessy* decision, compared European superiority over the indiginous "savage" to the

superiority of that same “savage” over apes[21] (Huxley, 1894). Not only, then, was there a chain of being that moved up an animal chain to humans, then from indiginous groups to the fully superior European human, but there was also a representative one-to-one comparison between the degrees of difference separating high and low humans and low humans and high apes. It was a convenient symmetry that only made it easier for white people in the US to tie blackness to animality, and to apes in particular (see Bennett, 2020).

“While the land-hungry colonizers found animalistic savages in the colonies,” writes Samantha Hurn, “in the wake of the Industrial Revolution the European bourgeoisie saw in the native people of newly discovered natural paradises an attractive metaphor and comparison for all that was wrong with industrial Europe--the ‘noble savage’ who lived in harmony with the environment” (Hurn, 2012: 24). It is no coincidence that such theoretical work was conducted in the age of American imperialism. Jingoism was the order of the day, the United States first beginning its territorial conquest in 1878, immediately following Reconstruction. The acquisition of American Samoa and Hawaii would then give way in 1898 to the Spanish American War, which added Puerto Rico, Guam, and a contested Philippines to the burgeoning empire (Healey, 2011; Musicant, 1998; Burns, 2017). “Take up the White Man’s burden,” wrote Rudyard Kipling in support of the American project in the Philippines, in a poem that would become the anthem of both white supremacy and imperialism.

Send forth the best ye breed—

Go send your sons to exile

[21] For more on Huxley, see White, 2003; Desmond, 1994; Desmond, 1997.

To serve your captives' need

To wait in heavy harness

On fluttered folk and wild—

Your new-caught, sullen peoples,

Half devil and half child (Kipling, 1899)

The comparison of Philippinos with nonhuman animals is overt, with talk of breed and harness. Kipling also compared them to children, a common trope that gave lie to any real epistemic disconnect between humans and animals, as human children filled in for nonhuman animals in a variety of such comparisons. In a more prosaic defense of American actions in the Philippines, for example, Indiana Senator Albert Beveridge assured his colleagues that “it would be better to abandon this combined garden and Gibraltar of the Pacific, and count our blood and treasure already spent a profitable loss than to apply any academic arrangement of self-government to these children,” referring to the Phillipine people. “They are not capable of self-government. How could they be? They are not of a self-governing race. They are Orientals, Malays, instructed by Spaniards in the latter’s worst estate” (Beveridge, 1900).

Those comparisons also directly used animals as models, and Africans were even more vulnerable than Asians (Pieterse, 1992: 44). “Africans were incorrectly viewed by European colonialists as having no history or culture (like animals),” argues Hurn, a claim that could be made for white Americans, as well. “Because they had ‘nature in abundance’ they were thought to be more akin to animals than the ‘civilized’, ‘cultured’ Europeans,” or Americans. “Along with other ‘less evolved’ animals, they were thought to function largely on instinct, lacking the capacity for rational thought.” That being the case, they could be more than just

"animalistic," they could literally be part animal. "For some evolutionists African peoples such as the !Kung San represented the 'missing link' between apes and humans" (Hurn, 2012: 24). With such prevailing scientific evidence, it became easy for the public to accept popular accounts and images comparing black and brown people and primates as having legitimate currency (Pieterse, 1992: 30-51).

Popular accounts, of course, could take a variety of forms. Minstrelsy remained popular through the nineteenth century (see Chapter 8), but so did events that combined the alterity of blackness with the alterity of animality. In Gabriel Rosenberg's comparative analysis of race and livestock breeding, for example, has demonstrated how "emergent pseudo-Darwinian 'scientific' racism shaped how breeders conceptualized their art" (2016: 64). The racial theory that drove racial typing through human biological characteristics and ultimately generated the discipline of eugenics would lend some of its language—terms like "race suicide"—to that of American livestock breeders seeking to create the perfect cow or pig, with its perfection judged by how the animal best served human ends (Rosenberg, 2016; Rosenberg, 2020). "Race suicide," Rosenberg explains, "described the conditions of both a symbolic economy of race and gender and a material economy of flesh and reproduction" (2016: 69).[22]

More accessible cultural output like carnivals, world's fairs, and zoos brought the Dark Continent of Africa and its embodiment of the primitive to nineteenth-century American consumers. Human zoos provided "anthropo-zoological" exhibitions where representations of the would-be savage were

[22] One of the livestock breeding trade periodicals that Rosenberg examines mimics in 1903 the language of President Theodore Roosevelt and his fear of "race suicide," then goes on to explain, "Any science that deals with men must of necessity concern itself with a great many hogs" (quoted in Rosenberg, 2016: 49).

presented alongside nonhuman animals of various colonial regions. The displays played on formal tropes associated with the bizarre. There were Zulu warriors, Pygmies, and Ethiopian Ubangis with large lip plates (Lindfors, 2014; Lindfors, 2000; Rydell, 1993; Blanchard, et al., 2009). All were presented as exotic and savage, and that exoticism was coded by their proximity to nonhuman animals. PT Barnum never conducted a circus, for example, with just a group of human freaks. Animals were always part of the show because they served as semiotic referents for the primitive, largely because of the naturalistic science that intertwined the animal and colonial human in an evolutionary web that made one the mirror of the other.[23] When New Yorkers visited the Bronx Zoo in 1906 to see Ota Benga, a Congolese victim of kidnap who had been shipped to the United States in a grim recreation of the slave trade that had formally ended ninety-eight years prior, he was housed in the zoo with an orangutan. Two years prior, at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair, he was housed with chimpanzees (Newkirk, 2015). Humans and primates from Africa were, in the minds of spectators, similar if not the same, and they both belonged behind bars, on display, part of the menagerie that served as entertainment for a white human American audience fortunate enough to find itself on the right side of the metaphors that defined difference and diminution in Europe and the United States. Such productions, whether traveling with the Ringling Brothers or stationary in the Bronx Zoo, combined the speciesism and racism theorized by the scientists and formalized by the politicians, demonstrating the magnifying power of the biopolitical frame that saw white and human supremacy

[23] For further examples, particularly relating to world's fairs, see Baker, 1998: 54-80. For the appearance of social Darwinism in the work of authors like Mark Twain, see Cummings, 1957. Such was also common fare across Europe. See Kérchy and Zittlau, 2012.

trickle down from the academy to popular audiences, reifying their worst impulses and cauterizing them together on the superstructure that was quickly becoming the American twentieth century.

Such cultural functions were compensatory. They filled a representational gap, as Darwinian evolutionary theory never addressed, nor did it intend to, variances between civilization and wilderness, the urbane and the primitive (Noske 1997: 68-70; Ritvo 1987: 16). That left plenty of semantic room for observers to catalog primitive peoples as closer to nonhuman animals than to those humans studying them. “Humans might be animals, but humans alone possessed rationality, language, consciousness, or emotions,” explains Molly Mullin. “Among mid-twentieth century anthropologists, the Man-the-Hunter hypothesis proposed that at a certain point Homo sapiens, with the males of the species providing the momentum, took a fundamental turn away from their closest animal relatives”[24] (Mullin, 1999: 206-207).

The primitive and rural, however, were not alone in creating separation between human and animal. Another element aiding in the construction of these new hierarchies was that the urbanization that came as a result of increasing industrial enterprise left nonhuman animals and immigrant laborers who packed into segregated slums out of the view of those who would do the constructing. Experiencing contact with the poor was an act that middle and upper class city-dwellers tried to avoid. Experiencing nonhuman animals wasn’t, but as Jennifer Ham explains, the experience of animality in the new Western city was “more likely

[24] For examples of this phenomenon, see Cartmill 1993; Ingold 1994: 26; Noske 1997: 102–4; Haraway 1989: 81–108. Nick Thomas has argued that this kind of typology, though it has shifted from physical features to cultural outgrowths, still remains embedded in the anthropological discipline (Thomas, 1994: 65-104).

to be an exotic *fauve* from Africa or a dancing circus bear than a common herd animal." She makes a case for modern Europeans that could also be made of urban Americans. They both "had to renegotiate a relationship to animality in terms of exoticism, wildness, and clever performance" (Ham, 1997: 145-146). But in each of those negotiations, humans were protected from the natural danger that might accrue from encountering such animals in the wild, thus providing them with a false assurance that humans were, in fact, in a position of superiority over beings that in other environments would clearly prove such assumptions hubris. "As a speechless sub proletariat in the urban jungle," says Ham, "animals were unable to defend themselves against the abuses of the modern subjectivization process" (Ham, 1997: 146).

It was a reality that ensured that anyone, human or nonhuman, vulnerable to the subjectivization process would find themselves grouped together rhetorically, actually, or both.[25] Anthropologist John Borneman explains that even the artificial constructions of American notions of horse breeds stem from concepts of race and ethnicity. Breed, like race, is socially constructed, though the construction is so embedded in American thinking that such differences, in horses or in humans, are often misinterpreted as biological or genetic (Borneman, 1988: 26, 48). Or, as Claude Levi-Strauss explained, "Men's [*sic*] conceptions of the relations between nature and culture is a function of modifications of their own social relations" (Levi-Strauss, 1966: 117).

[25] This is still the case in a variety of modern contexts, like, for example, the use of vulnerable migrant labor that populates industrial plant and animal agriculture. See Blanchette, 2015.

Far more evasive was the human relationship with primates. Donna Haraway describes the American relationship with apes and monkeys in the early twentieth century, as the National Institutes of Health began creating regional primate research centers and the American Museum of Natural History outlined collecting practices that cared little for the lives of the primates they hunted. It was a phenomenon she describes as "simian orientalism." In every way, "literally and figuratively, primate studies were a colonial affair, in which knowledge of the living and dead bodies of monkeys and apes was part of the unequal exchange of extractive colonialism" (Haraway, 1989: 19–25). Hunters pulled monkeys from colonial countries to display in museums or to inject with diseases in the hopes of creating human cures with little thought to the health and welfare of the primates themselves, and they pulled them from sites they already associated with human forms of exoticism[26] (Mullin, 1999: 205-206; Kohlstedt, 2006). It was a colonial practice with obvious roots in America's original extraction project, the one that created its most vulnerable human subaltern group.

That cross-species intersection of dispossession made the scientific effort to remedy the failings of those groups all the easier for many to accept. Another development bleeding from the corpse of the best intentions of Darwinian science, for example, was the eugenics movement, originally proposed by British Darwinist (and relative of Darwin) Francis Galton. (Galton, 1883) It was an effort to use the same breeding principles that created superior captive animals and apply such genetic thinking to the human species (Higham, 1967: 150; Brookes, 2004;

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[26] In the museum context, this process also occurred with elephants. As Molly Mullin has explained, the African hunting and extraction of the animals, "first with guns and then with cameras, was perceived as an encounter with nature, constructed as a purifying antidote to the ills of civilization" (Haraway, 1989: 26–58; Mullin, 1999: 206).

Gillham, 2001). It is no coincidence among the intricate connections between scientific manifestations of racism and specieism in the period that the American Galton was a zoologist by training. Charles B. Davenport created the nation's first genetics laboratory and organized the Eugenics Record Office. He also played a leadership role in the American Breeders' Association, which became an advocacy group for eugenics after an early history of emphasizing animal breeding (Higham, 1967: 151; Witkowski and Inglis, 2008; Davenport, 1910).

Eugenics became an academic discipline at many colleges and universities and received funding from sources across the country. Andrew Carnegie, John Rockefeller, Alexander Graham Bell, and others were all devoted to creating better "germ-plasm." Organizations were formed to win public support and sway opinion towards responsible eugenic values in parenthood. Women's clubs also became involved, holding "better baby" contests. Protestant clergy had national eugenic sermon competitions. Hollywood movies warned of the consequences of allowing defective babies to live.[27] And just as animal breeding sought to create nonhuman animal breeds based on human standards of superiority, to control for the whims of human bigotry, the eugenic effort to help advance human genetic superiority ultimately led to an effort to control for the whims of white bigotry, to use science to generate racial purity (Black, 2003; Lombardo, 2011; Cohen, 2016).

Michael Lundblad has argued that the outgrowths of Darwinism combined with Freudian theory to create what he calls the "discourse of the jungle" (Lundblad, 2013: 1). That discourse established the human as "heterosexual in the name of reproduction and violent in the name of survival" (Lundblad, 2013: 4-5). It

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[27] This kind of emphasis on human defect continues into the present, as anthrozoology often intersects with disability studies. See Taylor, 2011; and see Chapter 5.

not only, then, worked to to literally queer the animal, but it also in Lunblad's account laid the groundwork for racist and eugenic projects of the Progressive Era of the first two decades of the twentieth century, with dire consequences for nonhuman animals. The standard for whiteness became the ability to overcome "animal instincts," which separated them from a black population that was stuck at the level of "savages" (Jackson, 2013: 677-678). As Zakiyyah Iman Jackson has concluded, "at the moment when the conception of 'the human' was reorganized such that humanity was understood as coincident with 'the animal,' humane discourse relying on this new understanding simultaneously reformulated blackness as inferior to both 'the human' and 'the animal'" (Jackson, 2013: 678).

In 1916, American eugenicist Madison Grant published *The Passing of the Great Race: Or, The Racial Basis of European History*, which argued for what he called "Nordic superiority" and the need for eugenics to maintain it.[28] He advocated the sterilization of "undesirables," a treatment he thought it might be necessary to extend to "types which may be called weaklings" and "perhaps ultimately to worthless race types" (Grant, 1916: 51, 229).

There was no doubt who the worthless race types were. In 1906, Johns Hopkins researcher Robert Bennett Bean revived phrenology, publishing "Some Racial Peculiarities of the Negro Brain" in the *American Journal of Anatomy*. Bean claimed "that there is a difference in the size and shape of Caucasian and Negro brains, there being a depression of the anterior association center and a relative bulging of the posterior association center in the latter; that the genu of the corpus callosum is smaller in the Negro, both actually and in relation to the size of the

[28] For more on Grant, see Spiro, 2009; Okrent, 2020: 195-218.

splenium." In addition, "the cross section area of the corpus callosum is greater in relation to brain weight in the Caucasian, while the brain weight of Negro brains is actually less." It was a twentieth-century recitation of nineteenth century science, but it had currency because of the bigotry upon which it was based (Bean, 1906).

The year prior, in 1905, the Binet-Simon Intelligence Quotient Test was invented in France and soon made its way to the United States. The test unsurprisingly showed that black test-takers were demonstrably less mentally capable than their white counterparts, running the gamut from children to veterans of the Great War. In the soldier study, eighty-five percent of black respondents scored below the white average. "When it was noted that Northern blacks scored higher than Southern whites," explains historian Richard Kluger, "the test-givers answered that this was due to the high mixture of white blood among the colored subjects." No consideration was given to northern educational systems versus a segregated southern system that largely ignored black education. Quite the contrary, researchers hypothesized that "the brightest Southern blacks had bestirred themselves and moved North. These Northern Negroes, in other words, were the exceptions that proved the rule" (Kluger, 2004: 306-307). It was the culmination of every self-fulfilling prophecy.

And there was no shortage of academics willing to fill it. Four years after Grant's screed, in 1920, historian Lothrop Stoddard published *The Rising Tide of Color Against White World Supremacy*, a treatise introduced by Grant himself. The book argued that high birth rates in black and brown nations threatened a surplus that would ultimately bleed over into predominantly white countries and thus help dilute the gene pool (Stoddard, 1920). In a public debate with WEB Du Bois in 1929, he synthesized his racial views, tinged with the social scientific veneer of the

social Darwinists and the eugenicists. “Even a general knowledge of historical and scientific facts suffices to show the need for a racial basis to our national life,” wrote Stoddard. “We know that our America is a White America.” It was a country founded by white men, “who evolved institutions, ideals, and cultural manifestations which were spontaneous expressions of their racial temperament and tendencies. And the overwhelming weight of both historical and scientific evidence shows that only so long as the American people remains White will its institutions, ideals, and culture continue to fit the temperament of its inhabitants—and hence continue to endure”[29] (Frazier, 2019; Taylor, 1981).

But neither Stoddard nor Americans in general were on an island in relation to white supremacy. Meanwhile, in France, Lucien Lévy-Bruhl argued in 1923 that the principal factor that distinguished “the mentality of primitive communities from our own” was that “primitives manifest a decided distaste for reasoning.” It was a distaste that “did not arise out of any radical incapability or any inherent defect in their understanding, but was rather to be accounted for by their general methods of thought” (Lévy-Bruhl, 1923: 21). It was, in other words, their fault. And that blaming had significant consequences, because if the incapacity of indigenous peoples was their own fault, then they could still be considered human, still be distinguished as a representative of the interstitial space between European humans and those decidedly nonhuman. Thus while the designation of “primitive” was itself inherently a comparison of humans to primates, Lévy-Bruhl was actually moving away from any one-to-one relationship between indignous people and apes, while still diminishing the personhood of both groups. And Lévy-Bruhl’s work would be

[29] For more on Stoddard, see Newby, 1965.

influential in the United States among those who saw Grant and Stoddard as intellectual lodestars.

That work would also seep into more popular culture, where even those not intending to justify their own white supremacy would of necessity be unable to avoid it. In 1933, Sterling A. Brown identified seven stereotypes used by white novelists when depicting black characters, but the typology could have been one writ larger, for the whole of white society building from the social Darwinian assumptions of Gilded Age thought. The “Contented Slave” was the early version of Malcolm X’s later “House Negro” (see Chapter 5), a black man or woman who wrapped his or her identity in the success and happiness of the white slaveowner, either unwilling or unable to differentiate between mutually exclusive interests. The “Wretched Freeman” was the impoverished former slave having difficulty functioning in a world where his basic needs are not taken care of by a white master. The “Comic Negro” was the clown played for laughs, who demonstrated to white audiences that happiness was a choice, and that those who railed about racial inequality were themselves to blame. Then there was the “Brute Negro,” a caricatured representation of a hypersexualized predator who victimized white women and stole from white men. The “Tragic Mulatto” existed in an existential wasteland between black and white, with enough white blood to understand the superiority of white people but with too much black blood to achieve it. The “Local Color Negro” created a sense of a given locality through stereotypical black dress, speech, foodways, and other customs. And, finally, the “Exotic Primitive” (see Chapter 8), who lived for the moment, for lust and drink, who was closer to those of untamed savage lands than to the decency and working ethos of America. The caricatures described by Brown fit black characters into specific categories that

white readers would understand and accept. The tropes helped make plotlines cognizable, but at the same time they reinforced assumptions about blackness that gained academic currency through early anthropological codes. They not only continued the effort at categorization, they simultaneously essentialized blackness to a set of tropes, again diminishing individuality and tying blackness to the collective coding of nonhuman animals. They thus both represented existing stereotypes and recreated them for new audiences, all to the detriment of black America (Brown, 1933).

Black authors certainly pushed back against those stereotypes in the era of the Harlem Renaissance, building an African American literary tradition on the long oral folkloric tradition in the United States and in West Africa. It was, as Henry Louis Gates famously described, an act of “signifying” that inverted many dominant stereotypical white presentations of black characters. (Gates, 1988) That signification would continue through generations, maintaining that tradition of representational or literary resistance, but it was a resistance constantly pushing back against far more visible tropes.

But the consequences of American race science were more than mere representations. Perhaps the most notorious outgrowth of this progression was the Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment. In 1932, in Macon County, Alabama, the United States Public Health Service initiated a major study of syphilis. Formally called the Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Male Negro, officials recruited 622 black sharecroppers, most of them illiterate. 431 had advanced syphilis; the rest,

who served as a control group, were free of the disease.[30] Though the Tuskegee Study claimed to be a treatment program, it was instead designed to chart the progression and development of a potentially fatal malady. Even though penicillin, which would have cured the subjects, became available in the 1940s, they never received it. And because they were rural illiterates, they didn't have access to the information that would have exposed them to the workings of their plight.[31]

Meanwhile, the early twentieth-century consequences of Victorian-era science for nonhuman animals were even more harrowing. In 1902, Wilbur Olin Atwater, inaugural director of the Office of Experiment Stations for the United States Department of Agriculture, published a farmer's bulletin titled *Principles of Nutrition and Nutritive Value of Food* (Levenstein, 2003: 72-78). For guidance on how to select the right foods, "nature provides us with instinct, taste, and experience," he explained. And nature told humans that animal products were a constituent part of that instinct. It was the lesson that had redounded from the naturalists themselves. If Darwinian "fitness" could be pulled from random environmental spaces and universalized to human social groups, then humans had surpassed random environmental controls altogether. Atwater argued for a balanced diet that included a variety of foods, but animals and animal products always came first.[32] "For the great majority of people in good health," he argued,

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[30] There was a similar experiment underway in Guatemala, wherein they actually infected participants with syphilis. One of the doctors from the Tuskegee study had previously participated in its Guatemalan counterpart.

[31] The men were observed for roughly forty years, never receiving treatment for the disease. Eventually, a 1970s lawsuit made the government provide a nine million-dollar settlement to survivors and descendents.

[32] This kind of thinking would ultimately be disproven, but it maintained a resonance in American popular discourse. See, for example, Peace, 2008.

“the ordinary food materials--meats, fish, eggs, milk, butter, cheese, sugar, flour, meal, and potatoes and other vegetables--make a fitting diet” (Atwater, 1902: 38). His pronouncement was by no means revolutionary; it simply made the case for what was already the standard American diet. But by formalizing that standard with the imprateur of both government and “nature,” Atwater’s work would play on the nineteenth century zoological and botanical work that came before him, and it would have dramatic consequences for the nonhuman animals who would be killed to provide those meats, fish, eggs, milk, butter, and cheese. Their government-sponsored deaths would not be a slow burn over a forty year syphilis study. Such sanction would cut animal lives dramatically short and create an institutional standard that would set the stage for the later development of large-scale agribusiness (see Chapter 4).

Atwater’s work would become a precedent document for the first USDA food guide in 1916, “Food for Young Children,” by home economist Caroline Hunt. It was in that guide that Hunt first enunciated five distinct food groups (Dupont and Beecher, 2017: 9-10, 200-201; Levenstein, 2003: 76).

1. Milk and dishes made chiefly of milk (most important of the group as regards children’s diet); meat, fish, poultry, eggs, and meat substitutes.
2. Bread and other cereal foods.
3. Butter and other wholesome fats.
4. Vegetables and fruits.
5. Simple sweets (Hunt, 1916: 2).

The following year, the USDA repackaged the food groups for everyone, not just young children. In this iteration, the order of the listing changed, but the groups themselves remained functionally the same.

1. Vegetables or fruits.
2. Milk, or cheese, or eggs, or fish, or meat, or beans.
3. Cereal: corn, rice, oats, rye, or wheat.
4. Sirup or sugar.
5. Fat: such as drippings, oleomargarine, oil, butter (USDA, 1917).

The original food groups emphasized animal products more than the subsequent version, but both used two of the five for nonhuman animal products. It was a speciesist presentation made a fait accompli by the chain of being narrative coming from nineteenth century naturalists. If human was superior to nonhuman, and that superiority was given validation by science, then including animals and their derivatives in governmental nutrition plans like food groups made perfect sense. And because that direction was public from the onset, it has remained doctrine.

There is, of course, no direct correlation between the atrocities of Tuskegee and the atrocities faced by those nonhuman animals shunted into an overweening food infrastructure that preferenced their deaths, but both were the products of the mutually sustaining discourses of speciesism and racism developing from nineteenth century science. The white supremacy of social Darwinism grew directly from chain of being metaphors provided by biological categorizations that placed humans above nonhumans, thereby providing the necessary reification of human supremacy in every act of racist scientific experimentation. And those assumptions were all the more institutionalized because they both developed with the imprateur of academic validity, leading one track of the vicious cycle to government sponsored medical testing and the other track to government sponsored food

guides (and, later, government subsidies for animal agricultural production to meet the artificially generated need, see Chapter 4).

That institutionalization received further scientific backing a decade later, as in 1927 British zoologist Charles Elton published *Animal Ecology*, which popularized the concept of the food chain, wherein animal relationships were measured by consumption[33] (Elton, 1927). Organisms moved in a Spencerian linear progression from simple organisms to the more complex, he argued, and while Elton was not making a social Darwinian statement in any way, the progressive nature of linear animal chains embedded itself in a public mind conditioned by naturalists like Lamarck and Spencer, one that placed humans as the principal signpost of complexity and thus the pinnacle of any conceptual chain, whether a nineteenth century chain of being or a twentieth century food chain. Black and brown human groups were victims of the former; nonhuman animals were victims of both.

The same year of Elton's publication, on March 7, 1927, the United States Supreme Court ruled unanimously that one of Texas's black voter restrictions, its white primary, wherein only white voters were allowed to participate in primary elections, violated the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, one of the constitutional amendments ratified in the wake of the Civil War (*Nixon v. Herndon*, 1927). Texas would just rewrite the law, however, and the practice would continue until another case, *Smith v. Allwright*, in 1944, finally stopped the practice (*Smith v. Allwright*, 1944).

[33] For more on Elton, see Southwood and Clarke, 1999; Crowcroft, 1991.

Two months later, on May 26, rubber magnate Harvey Samuel Firestone gave a pygmy hippopotamus (*Choeropsis liberiensis*) to American president Calvin Coolidge. “Billy,” as he was named, had been captured on one of Firestone’s colonial rubber plantations in Liberia (*New York Times*, 1927: 25). Billy spent the rest of his life at the National Zoo in Washington. He died in 1955, eleven years after the *Smith* decision, a captive testament to the consequences of the scientific intersection of the bigotries of species and race (Crandall, 1964). While there was no direct relation between Billy and Lonnie Smith, who initiated the suit that would become *Smith v. Allright*, Billy’s lifespan in enforced captivity mirrored the Supreme Court’s period of reckoning with an element of the forced captivity of the motion and freedom of black lives and bodies, both such captivities directly feeding from the decidedly different but mutually reinforcing scientific bigotries that sustained them.

Back in the nineteenth century, in the crucible of Social Darwinian thought, there were other laws being put forward by southern legislators, laws that would never have their day in the Supreme Court. New statutes in the states of the former Confederacy would put much of the chain of being theory into practice by modifying existing animal larceny statutes to make it easier to control the lives and bodies of desperate black farmers. They would be one of the first pragmatic outgrowths of the new thinking, and they would become known as “pig laws.”

CHAPTER 2

The Redeemer Pig Laws:

Policing Black Bodies with Nonhuman Animals in the Nineteenth Century

Freedom's Journal, the nation's first black newspaper, explained in 1828 that "there is no animal thing that dies with so much clamor, and that has such a sincere objection to die as a pig" (4). Even to a group so often faced with involuntary death, this objection was not interpreted positively. "The sturdy bull takes the death blow on his head, and drops to the ground, without uttering one bellow of complaint; and even the silly sheep dies quietly under the stab of the slaughterer, but your perverse pig no sooner suspects the knife to be at his throat than his shrieks reach the skies." There was in the description an admission that the pigs understood what was happening to them, that their protest was specifically in aid of wanting to live, but it did not generate sympathy with the author. "Even when the fatal thrust has passed through his skin, and complaint would be thought useless with any other living or dying creature, his lament, instead of suffering diminution, increases with his sufferings; he reels round the sty of his father, drunk with death, and continues to shriek till the 'last ruddy drops' that visited his 'sad heart' depart to visit the amalgators of black puddings." As with a beloved pet, the author acknowledges that the pig sees his killer as his father. And yet the article is a complaint about the pig's ruckus and unwillingness to die, titled "A Pig's Objection to Death," chalking up the action to a character flaw. "The reason is to be found in the perverse and obstinate disposition of the little brute," the article concluded. "He will make a fuss about every thing which is done without his being

consulted--if he is starving, and suspects that you are determined to make him eat, he will die of hunger ere he will touch a potato" (*Freedom's Journal*, 1828: 4). *Freedom's Journal* was the standard of journalistic advocacy against human murder and slavery, and yet was able to include such a callous description of killing pigs because the state of mind of the abolitionist movement used humanity as the standard of equality and freedom. And pigs did not meet that standard.

Despite the fact that the first known use of the word "vegetarian" actually came from Georgia, in the memoir of a British actress named Fanny Kemble, who kept a journal of her experience in the 1830s living on a coastal plantation,[1] it is clear that speciesism was functionally ubiquitous in the American South and the national as a whole. As Hendrik Hertog has demonstrated in his study of nineteenth century prosecutions of pig-keeping in New York, it was a disconnect that demonstrated "the problematic relationship between our social pluralism—the multiplicity of our social practices and normative identities—and the values we impute to legal order" (Hertog, 1985: 900). Pig-keeping was a part of life in the largely rural South, of course, but with the exception of a smattering of Seventh Day Adventists, a church officially organized in New England during the Civil War, a general lack of concern about the lives of nonhuman animals crossed all races and classes in the region.[2] That lack was, to be sure, built in part on the scientific and social science thinking that permeated the late-nineteenth century, giving rise

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[1] "The sight and smell of raw meat are especially odious to me," wrote Kemble, "and I have often thought that if I had had to be my own cook, I should inevitably become a vegetarian, probably, indeed, return entirely to my green and salad days" (Kemble, 2004).

[2] Founded in the wake of the antebellum reform movement and the health and wellness craze that attended it, Seventh Day Adventists abstained from eating meat and drinking alcohol. Such dietary restrictions, along with the observation of Saturday, the seventh day of the week, as the sabbath, distinguished the denomination from other protestant groups (Bull and Lockhart, 2006).

to popular assumptions of a Great Chain of Being among humans and nonhumans alike, but the region was influenced even more by religious dogma. The Protestantism that pervaded the American South had long emphasized the dominion of man over animals (Serpell, 1996: 150; Charles and Davies, 2011: 71). Or, as Mary Midgely has explained, "'In the West, both the religious and the secular moral traditions have, til lately, scarcely attended to any non-human species" (Midgley, 1983: 10). That does not mean, however, that white supremacy did not have a role to play in eliminating the potential common cause of dispossessed groups that could theoretically have commenced between slaves and nonhuman animals. Both were legally interpreted as property, and slaves recognized those connections, but the dehumanization of slavery and racism placed the focus of black equality on a standard that equated civil rights with human rights, thus eliminating nonhuman animals from any potential advocacy. In addition, the use of nonhuman animals became a symbol of status and legitimacy that helped ingrain the assumed necessity of their use by those denied such legitimacy through white supremacy (see Bennett, 2020).

In the postbellum period, these twin bigotries combined in the form of a series of "pig laws" in the states of the former Confederacy, where white governments expanded charges of grand larceny to include the theft of farmed animals like pigs and chickens, taking advantage of the hunger and desperation of freedpeople and the tradition of theft among slaves to generate convictions that led to disenfranchisement and the elimination of black political power.[3] Such laws

[3] This tradition of theft was both a rebellion against ownership in the style described by Herbert Aptheker and a reclaiming of humanity against an overweening system designed to take all forms of humanity from those in bondage (Aptheker, 1983; Shapiro, 1984; Stampp, 1971). The thinking of slaves themselves in justifying such choices is described later in this chapter.

might at first seem to better respect the nonhuman animals potentially traumatized by theft, but in reality any personhood was taken from such animals in a public discourse that saw them as objects in service to punishing former slaves.

The emphasis on vigilance against thieves of animal bodies was a larger stakes game than those in power acknowledged or even realized, as, in the explanation of Cary Wolfe, thinkers from Freud (2001) to Sartre (1943) to Foucault (2007) have used sight, the human signpost of that vigilance, as a mark of delineation between humans and nonhumans, and of human transcendence or supremacy, as humans emerged from a more rudimentary state while deemphasizing olfactory and auditory and tactile senses in favor of the visual (Benson, 1994; Brosman, 1987). In the words of Wolfe, "the figure of vision is indeed ineluctably tied to the specifically human" (Wolfe, 2003: 3; Wolfe, 2003b).

Dafna Shir-Vertesh has described the human relationship with companion animals as "flexible personhood," a human way of thinking about animals that can incorporate them as functionally temporary parts of the family, meriting care and concern while present, but expendable in the broader family outlay when better circumstances are interpreted. Again, though the Shir-Virtesh study focused on companion animals in late-twentieth century Israel, farmed animals on southern smallholdings can be viewed the same way, as having a flexible personhood that made them valuable members of the family who needed a measure of care and concern, but simultaneously a valuable piece of property that constituted a substantial portion of the wealth of middling farmers (Shir-Vertesh, 2012).

And so more pragmatic reasons for conditioning such vigilance also existed, as pigs were expensive. In 1860, southern livestock had a valuation of $500 million, more than twice the worth of cotton. The South raised two-thirds of the

country's hogs that year and traded more hogs than all other large animals combined by at least a factor of five. In the postbellum period, however, that production had suffered. As Jonathan Bass has explained, "Eight states of the former Confederacy produced 2.6 million fewer hogs in 1880 than they had in 1860" (Bass, 2008: 374, 278; McDonald and McWhiney, 1975: 147, 163).

Pigs arrived in the New World as part of the broader Columbian Exchange. Christopher Columbus brought eight pigs to Cuba on his second trip west. The Spanish explorers who followed did much the same on other West Indian islands, all in aid of creating an easily accessible food source. By 1514, Diego Velasquez de Cuellar claimed that there were roughly 30,000 pigs in Cuba. "Hernando de Soto brought thirteen pigs with him to Florida in 1539 and had 700 at the time of his death in 1542" (Mizelle, 2011: 42). Pigs could take care of themselves and there was plenty for them to eat. They bred quickly. They were easy to kill.

The English became involved in 1607, bringing three pigs to Jamestown. In eighteen months the colonists counted more than sixty. By the late seventeenth century, Robert Beverly reported that pigs "swarm like Vermaine upon the Earth" (Mizelle, 2011: 42-43). They were so plentiful and roamed so freely, even when ostensibly "owned" by colonial farmers, that taxation records did not include pigs in listings of individual wealth. That ability of some pigs to roam free led to the creation of a feral hog population, commonly called "razorbacks" in the colonies (Crosby, 1988: 108).

The grazing of pigs in the wild caused little problem, but when free-roaming pigs rooted cultivated farmland, humans reacted violently. Colonists often insterted metal rings in pigs' noses to keep them from rooting up crops (Anderson, 2004: 86, 162). Massachusetts in 1633 legalized killing pigs that encroached on a colonist's

farmland. Two years later, the colony built pounds to hold pigs not properly corralled. In 1636, the colony expanded its provision to allow anyone to claim unrestrained pigs. It was not a popular law and had to be repealed in 1638, largely because of class resentment, notes Bret Mizelle, “as pigs were favoured by poorer colonists while wealthier ones had both more cattle and more fields to be rooted up” (Mizelle, 2011: 43; Cronon, 1983). Colonists also ringed and yoked pigs at times. “The emphasis was always upon protecting English property and sentiments,” never on the wellbeing of the pigs themselves (Mizelle, 2011: 44; Cronon, 1983).

With the profusion of pigs in the New World, colonies and, after the Revolution, states began to monetize an available resource by trading pork throughout the hemisphere. As Mizelle has argued, “The more pigs there are in the world, the harder it has become to see them” (2011: 8). Such was true in the colonies and early states, and if pigs were no longer just a food source, but now an official commodity, new laws had to help create figurative and literal boundaries around the new business. Fencing laws appeared in most states to require pigs to be kept within enclosures. Again the lower classes protested, leading to early-nineteenth century “hog wars,” where poor farmers defended the open range against fencing (Mizelle, 2011: 45; Grettler, 1999; King, 1984). Again, the lower classes lost, fencing laws and private property rights becoming the standard of the day.

The southern relationship with animals was always fraught. In 1785, South Carolina prohibited farmers from letting hogs run free in two low-country counties. White farmers responded by burning down the fences that were being erected (King, 1982: 55). While such burnings ultimately benefited livestock in the short

term, such moves were never about nonhuman animals themselves, who were always destined to be killed. Instead, hogs were the narrative tools by which freeholders fought against what they saw as unfair and overburdening government intervention. That unwillingness to see the personhood of nonhuman animals remained constant across time, but also across the boundaries of race.

Ultimately, however, that fencing mandate to an early version of at least flexible personhood. “To recount the story of live stock raising in the South is to tell the story of a struggle against odds,” explained historian Rupert Vance in 1932 (174). The diet of both sharecroppers and small-holding farmers was comprised heavily of pork and dairy products, and the animals that provided such fare lived on the smallholdings where they lived, fenced either near or adjoining the family living quarters (Vance, 1932: 423-428). The same was true from those families fortunate enough to have mules, who were not exploited for food but were exploited for agricultural labor. The human reliance on those mules, and the tenant inability to afford replacements, created close relationships and preferential treatments for the animals (Raper and Reid, 1941: 145-146). That close relationship between humans and animals on the largely impoverished farms of the American South played out in other ways, as well. It is significant, for example, that southern farmers never diversified into livestock farming, where animals would be more plentiful but more distanced from their individual lives, despite the spread of financial risk that such a move would provide. While the north and west developed large-scale livestock operations, the South never did. Cotton was for profit, animals were not (Wright, 1986: 57-58). There was not, then, a direct one-to-one correllation between this version flexible personhood and that used to describe twenty-first century domestic pet relationships, but there was, to be sure, a flexible

personhood ascribed to farmed animals on smallholding southern farms in the late nineteenth century.

That said, while there was in the American South a legitimate human bond formed with farmed animals, it was a bond always in aid of something more sinister, directed either at the pig or the desperate, hungry sharecropper. “The expressions of pig management and sociality,” argue Peter Dwyer and Monica Minnegal, “must be understood as mutually constituted; neither dimension can be accorded causal priority.” (Dwyer and Minnegal, 2005: 54). Humans in the nineteenth century United States used bonding claims as leverage against those most desperate, leaving the black population in its own form of alienation, its own segregation, making it easier to oppress both groups, each defined by the value they could provide to those with some form of legal dominion over them.

That variable use-value was always paramount in American relations with farmed animals. Cincinnati had become the pork-producing capital of the country in the early nineteenth century, and Chicago took over the role in the century's second half. The late American Industrial Revolution, generated through electricity and railroads, then through mechanized mass production, the conveyor belt, and canning, then through cars and chemical fertilizers, pushed nonhuman animals to the margins and eliminated them from human view. Streetcars replaced horses, suburbs replaced the open range, and a variety of human exploitations left many species endangered, pushed for survival into wildlife reserves and national parks. Animals went from machines to products produced by machines (Berger, 1980: 12-13; Mizelle, 2011: 51-54). Pigs on southern farms, however, were not part of the growing industrialized pig slaughter that grew the Midwest. The pigs of the South being “protected” by pig laws were raised to be killed, to be sure, but raised to be

killed and eaten by those who raised them. It was a region, in that sense, far more rural, far more connected to individual animals than those in northern urban hubs, where animals began to be hidden behind slaughterhouse walls. “The traditional Southern way of raising and slaughtering hogs and preparing pork would have been familiar to earlier generations of Americans and, for that matter, to rural communities throughout the world,” places like Papua New Guinea (Mizelle, 2011: 60). Farmers even waited for full moons as propitious times for slaughter. The preparation that went into the procedures was massive, as portrayed in myriad instances in southern literature (Sams, 1982; Crews, 1995). There was even the ritual of absolution. Belinda Jelliffee of North Carolina remembered, “The shrill frightened squeals they made! A sound accusing, asking for help, full of consummate awareness of annihilation! The completely unbearable fact that every pig was a member of the family” (Mizelle, 2011: 61-63; Ownby, 1990: 93).

Hogs in the South were, in the words of Mizelle, “crucial in enabling rural southerners to develop and maintain an independent way of life. Prior to the Civil War, the South raised two-thirds of America’s hogs.” Pigs roamed free in the rural wilds of the region, farmers collecting them when necessary. But then came the Civil War, which devestated any existing infrastructure for hog production in the South (Mizelle, 2011: 58; Bass, 1995: 308). The open range ended in the region, as well, and despite the economic hit that the South suffered in the 1860s and 1870s, the period provided an opening for a new form of property-based racial legislation.

As historian Talitha LeFlouria has explained (2015: 23), freedwomen in particular had a generically adversarial role with farmed animals. They were often charged with slaughtering animals owned by whites in the immediate postbellum

South, as the task was seen as a “domestic chore” and thus women’s work. When those women were incarcerated in the convict lease system, fed in various ways by the pig laws passed by southern state legislatures, they demonstrated defiance against the corrupt system by attacking livestock, and mules in particular, with rocks and sticks. “LIke other forms of labor-related sabotage, harming work animals was a significant way of interfering with the economic productivity of the carceral establishment,” says LeFlouria (2015: 24). Injured mules could not do the transport work for which they were tasked, and thus gave convict laborers a respite. But there was also a psychological factor to the animal beatings. “Abusing the stock allowed bondwomen to overcome feelings of powerlessness; what they were incapable of achieving against their armed white male antagonists was easily executed against defenseless beasts” (LeFlouria, 2015: 71). Such action was taken with little consideration of their stutus as defenseless beasts to white male antagonists, a lived embodiment of a self-fulfilling “Great Chain of Being” prophecy in the nineteenth century.

“As people struggle to make sense of their experiences with cruelty, they begin to see themselves in a different light,” argues Arnold Arluke. “Experiences with cruelty can be used to recast human identities.” He explains that humans use encounters with cruelty to help them gauge worth and respectability in thought and action, and in the creation of those standards they craft the contours of what it means to be human. And because individual experiences with such cruelty are always fundamentally unique, then identity formations are also inevitably bound to be mapped to those experiences and thus personal to each individual. That said,

there is a group dynamic to many experiences.[6] Arluke explains that "using cruelty to create a self is an emergent and reflective process that often occurs in subcultures imputed by others," but it is a process that can be inverted by dispossessed groups to redefine themselves against stereotypes. In the historical context, for example, slaves "might use an encounter with cruelty to refashion their sense of self and present it to others in a positive light"[7] (Arluke, 2006: 7).

The literature on animal cruelty and abuse is vast, but usually tracks the core of its analysis along the lines of the nature of human depravity and the common contact between human animals and those considered worthy of the label "abuse," namely pets. Farmed animals are left out of such paradigms because their role in human society is one of perpetual abuse. Only further complicating the issue, as Phil Arkow has explained, "From the outset, animal cruelty laws were enacted primarily for human welfare" (Arkow, 1998: 20). And that mattered. As the antebellum period progressed, for example, Victorian travellers told stories "of 'primitive savages' living wild, animal-like existences in remote outposts of the Empire," which in turn fueled "the Victorian middle classes' sense of beleaguered cultural superiority" (Serpell, 1998: 39). That association of the human primitive [sic] with the nonhuman was also common in the United States, only giving freedpeople more reason to transgress the border between property destruction and animal abuse.

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[6] For more on the relationship between experience and cognition and its relationship to the human relationship with animals, see Tim Ingold's *Perceptions of the Environment*, and in particular his essay, "Culture, Perception, and Cognition" (Ingold, 2000: 157-171). Also beneficial in this regard is Ingold's edited collection, Biosocial Becomings," and in particular Noa Vaisman's essay, "Shedding Our Selves: Perspectivism, the Bounded Subject and the Nature-Culture Divide" (Ingold and Palsson, 2013; Vaisman, 2013: 106-122).

[7] For more, see Arluke et al., 1999; Ascione, 1998; Flynn, 2012.

This kind of action also took place during slavery, when a different form of bondage dominated and slaves sought respite from that work, as well (Aptheker, 1983). The continuity of such behaviors demonstrates that white supremacy was generative of nonhuman animal abuse. Bigotry begat bigotry, abuse begat abuse, not in some theoretical or platitudinal sense, but in actual on the ground pragmatic responses to systemic mistreatment, wherein one of the only avenues to temporary respite and one of the only actions of power and control by the dispossessed group was another version of systemic mistreatment. Slaves and, later, convict laborers abused farm animals, but white authoritarianism created the abuse. Similarly, white farming and eating standards were generative of the slaughter system that killed other livestock animals for food.

"All sorts of boundary-work are involved in social struggles over which group has authority," explain Chris Philo and Chris Wilbert, "and hence over which form of knowing is taken as legitimate, and the participants in these struggles obviously all portray themselves--and seek to persuade others to portray them--as the relevant 'experts' in the field" (Philo and Wilbert, 2004: 9). Edward Said famously called this kind of work "imaginative geography," a way of positioning in and out groups in given social structures (Said, 1978: 71-72). Those imaginative geographies worked in two ways in the construction of late-nineteenth century pig laws: first, by creating artificially constructed social boundaries between black and white, economically stable and indigent among humans; then, second, by creating artificially constructed physical boundaries between human and nonhuman, farmer and farmed animal.

As Toni Morrison has explained, the roots of the American belief in individualism and autonomy was "made possible by, and shaped by, activated by a

complex awareness and employment of a constituted Africanism," conditioned by the white man's "absolute power over the lives of others" in the fact of slavery, a phenomenon that remained prounounced in the South even after slavery ran its course (Morrison, 1992: 44-45).

But the absolute power of humans over animals has an important role to play in that particular scheme. "As long as this humanist and speciesist *structure* of subjectivization remains intact, and as long as it is institutionally taken for granted that it is all right to systematically exploit and kill nonhuman animals simply because of their species," explains Cary Wolfe, "then the humanist discourse of species will always be available for use by some humans against other humans as well, to countenance violence against the social other of *whatever* species," or, in the postbellum South, of whatever race[8] (Wolfe, 2003: 8).

There were other factors at play for the black population, as well. In slavery, theft of a hog would earn a beating or equivalent corporal punishment. In the postbellum South, such theft could mean years of incarcerated labor. In 1866, for example, a black field hand stole a pig from a Mississippi plantation. The planter, and former owner of the thief, called the sheriff, who promised that if he could convince the law to arrive, "she shall be arrested and prosecuted. If not I will drive her from the place, first making her pay for the 40 lb. hog" (Oshinsky, 1996: 31). The field hand had been hungry, had no other access to what was considered food. But there was also an assumed ownership stake among the black population. "The negroes are so destitute they will keep stealing," said one Mississippi white

[8] As mentioned in the introduction, and building on the analysis of Foucault and Roberto Esposito, Wolfe argues that "you can't talk about biopolitics without talking about race, and you can't talk about race without talking about species, simply because both categories—as history well shows—are so notoriously pliable and unstable, constantly bleeding into and out of each other" (Wolfe, 2013: 43; Foucault, 2003; Esposito, 2008).

woman. “They think, the last one of them, that they have a right to what belongs to their former owners” (Oshinsky, 1996: 32-33). Such was a continuation of antebellum thinking. In one instance in the South Carolina Low Country, white officers of a local church investigated a slave for theft on his owner’s plantation. The slave told them that he didn’t consider such stealing a sin, as he was the one who had helped produce the goods of the farm, and thus he had a right to those goods. The horrified officials began an informal survey and discovered that such was the common way of thinking among slaves (McCurry, 1995: 198).

Frederick Douglass told a similar story of hunger in slavery, and of discussing his hunger with a friend named Sandy Jiggins. “You must learn to steal something to eat, you mustn’t be hungry--aye, I could steal a pig--blessed be God--and shout hallelujah!”

“How do you justify that, Sandy?” Douglass asked.

“Well, see that pig?”

“Yes.”

“Well, that pig is master’s property.”

“Well?”

“Well, you master’s property too.”

“Yes.”

“Well, then suppose you put some of that master’s property into this--it would only, in the language of Gen. Jackson, be a question of removal!” (*North Star*, 1849: 1).

The story was telling, as it acknowledged a fundamental equivalency between slave and sow. Both were “master’s property.” At the same time, there was another threshold of equivalency that pigs did not meet, in the same way that

the native population was acknowledged as human by Jackson but obviously didn't merit worthiness of life. Sandy Jiggins would never have suggested to Douglass that he kill another slave and exclaim "hallelujah." Livestock, then, met the property equivalency but did not merit worthiness of life. It is a demonstration that equality was not a single thing. There was, instead, a tiered understanding of equality by those in power, another constructed chain of being: of white slave owners over slaves, of Jackson's troops over Indians, of all of them, including Jiggins and Douglass, over livestock.

As Philo and Wilbert have noted, there have always been conceptual problems when humans set up "classificatory schemes wherein each identified thing has its own 'proper place'," where animals "can be neatly identified, delimited and positioned in the relevant conceptual space so as to be separate from, and not overlapping with," the space designated as functionally human (Philo and Weibert, 2004: 6). This attempt to classify and the assumptions that ultimately emerge from it have existed since before the Neolithic period and were particularly acute in the late nineteenth century, building from both biblical animal classifications and the zoological science of the day (Foucault, 1970; Shepard, 1993; see Chapter 1). The result of such assumptions was to "fix animals in a series of abstract spaces, 'animal spaces', which are cleaved apart from the messy time-space contexts, or concrete places, in which these animals actually live out their lives as beings in the world"[9] (Philo and Wilbert, 2004: 6-7).

[9] Wilbert has made a similar case in his essay, "What Is Doing the Killing?" in which he examines animal attacks on humans and the speciesist way that humans interpret them based on this understood geography of proper animal space and the division between human and nonhuman spheres (Wilbert, 2006).

As Marshall Sahlins has explained, western food thinking created an order of being for animals that determined whether or not they were worthy of life, based largely on proximity. Pets, for example, would not be eaten because they were close to humans both physically and emotionally (Sahlins, 1976). Farmed animals, however, were, "domesticates living under human 'control'," explains Samantha Hurn, "and are objectified as 'livestock', 'things'" (Hurn, 2012: 85). They are fit to be food. Critics agree, however, whether they are structuralist thinkers like Sahlins who ascribe meaning to culture based largely on arbitrary symbolic values, or whether they are cultural materialists like, for example, Marvin Harris, who try to find historical context for social eating practices, that the human way of seeing animals as worthy or not of life is constructed differently across myriad global cultures (Harris, 1979; Hurn, 2012). Those differences, then, become powerful stakes games for nonhuman animals, who could suffer or die as a result. White southern farming attitudes toward "domesticates living under human 'control'" set the standard for any abuse that might have been enacted by a black population frustrated by similar constructions about race that seemed in the moment all too arbitrary.

"Black women left a trail of chicken bones," writes food historian Psyche A. Williams-Forson (2006: 1). Hers is not a tale of animal abuse. She refers, in fact, to chickens as "objects" in an effort to diagnose how black women have used chickens, chicken imagery, and chicken corpses to generate outward expression, inward definition, and versions of economic self-sufficiency throughout the long history of their dispossession[10] (Williams-Forson, 2006: 2, 7).

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[10] The willingness to consume animals and the belief in its necessity would follow southern freedmen through time and space, across the nation through the Great Migration, and across the

Selling poultry was a way for slaves to supplement their own subsistence for many in both colonial and national slavery, despite the fact that such entries into the economy were tightly regulated by white owners. Slaves practiced a variety of husbandry techniques to produce as many chickens as possible, but such did not end the public accusations of chicken theft. “By the 1800s,” notes Williams-Forson, “black men and women had fully come to be associated with chicken stealing. They were often convicted even when the evidence against them was preposterous” (2006: 17-18, 27-28). That said, such thefts did happen. Weekly allotments of food were often gone before the end of the week. In the memory of former slave Annie Burton, that left no other choice but “to steal hogs and chickens” (Burton, 1909: 4).

As Charles Ball’s slave narrative explained, “I was never acquainted with a slave who believed that he violated any rule of morality by appropriating to himself any thing that belonged to his master” (Ball, 1970: ix). Such was often called theft, Ball noted, “but the slave reasoned differently, when he took a portion of his master’s goods, to satisfy his hunger, to keep himself warm, or to gratify his passion for luxurious enjoyment” (1970: xi). Frederick Douglass also used the language of “removal,” reasoning that taking meat out of the owner’s tub was justified. “The ownership of the meat was not affected by the transaction. At first, he owned it in the tub, and last, he owned it in me” (Douglass, 1987: 189). Such

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generations into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In one study of African-American women in inner-city Los Angeles at the turn of the twenty-first century, the group argued for “the necessity to eat meat—often of animals or animal parts devalued by mainstream white society—in order to survive.” It was a common way of thinking, but as Jennifer Wolch, Alec Brownlow, and Unna Lassiter have explained, “one that carries particular force for African-Americans given their historical and contemporary oppression. Their perspectives from the margin also allowed them to view the animal practices of other cultural groups with understanding rather than condemnation, despite the conflict between such practices and their own forms of animal consumption” (Wolch et al., 2004: 79).

was the Sandy Jiggins line of reasoning. Williams-Forson explains that this is not simply a tale of victimization. She refers to such efforts at appropriating the master's property as "African American trickster heroism" (2006: 30).

At the end of Reconstruction, white Redeemers sought to play on the hunger and desperation of freedmen to create state "pig laws" that moved livestock theft of hogs or chickens from petit larceny to grand larceny on the statute books, attempting to feed a burgeoning convict lease system that provided a version of the slave labor that whites had lost following the Civil War. The willingness of legislators to define these animals, to whom they were so close, out of any meaningful existence rested on, as explained by Charles and Davies, "the contradiction between, on the one hand, recognizing the affinity between humans and other animals, caring for them and forming attachments to them and, on the other, exploiting them, killing them to eat or simply for pleasure and regarding them as possessions akin to 'things'" (Charles and Davies, 2011: 72). It was clear that "hunting, domestication, meat eating, vivisection (which became common scientific practice in the late seventeenth century) and the wholesale extermination of vermin and predators" (Thomas, 1983: 41) were normalized in the nineteenth century mind, part of the great chain of being, creating a near-fait accompli that the pig, so important to human survival and raised in such close proximity to humans, was treated with "nothing but contempt and hatred" (Serpell, 1996: 19).

More immediate and pragmatic in influencing the new legislation was the Pig War in the Pacific Northwest. In June 1869 on San Juan Island off the Oregon coast, an American squatter shot and killed a pig rooting on his land, thereby claiming the land as his own. The pig was owned by a representative of the Canadian Hudson Bay Company, and the British responded by threatening the

squatter's arrest. The Americans on the island, sympathetic to the shooter, called for the US military. The British responded in kind, not wanting the island to fall completely into American hands, and an international standoff that threatened to become the third major conflict between the United States and Great Britain in a century kept much of the nation gripped. Finally a joint occupation agreement settled the issue, but the "Pig War," bound up as it was with pigs, property rights, and the potential consequences of traversing those boundaries, surely weighed on the minds of southern legislators working in its aftermath (Mizelle, 2011: 128-129; Kaufman, 2003; Coleman, 2009).

The most infamous "Pig Law" came from Mississippi in 1876, and stood at the intersection of white supremacy and speciesism, maintaining the property status of nonhuman animals and attempting to return black humans to the status of property in the immediate post-Reconstruction age (Holloway, 2009: 937-938; Taylor, 1993: 46; Adamson, 1983: 562). The law reduced the grand larceny property value from twenty-five dollars to ten dollars, and singled out a variety of stolen farm animals as requiring a charge of grand larceny, even if the human-imposed value of those animals was less than ten dollars (Dolovich, 2005: 451-452; Waldrep, 1996: 1450; Perman, 1984: 242-243). "Any hog, pig, shoat, cow, calf, yearling, steer, bull, sheep, lamb, goat, or kid of the value of one dollar or more" earned the human thief a charge of grand larceny, which merited a sentence in the state penitentiary (*Laws of the State of Mississippi*, 1876: 51-52; *Journal of the Senate of the State of Mississippi*, 1876: 495).

In 1947, Vernon Lane Wharton described Mississippi's Pig Law, arguing that it exploded the prison population and fed convict lease (237). His characterization held sway until the 1990s, when Matthew J. Mancini's study of convict lease

demonstrated that Wharton's claims did not match actual convict statistics, though there was an increased number of arrests and convictions after the law's passage. It was instead, he argued, convict lease itself that boosted those numbers[11] (Mancini, 1996: 135-136).

Whatever the direct cause of increased criminal convictions, passage of Mississippi's Pig Law was not only intended to punish African Americans, the group of landless poor most likely to steal animals for basic survival, and tie Republican rule in the South to a scourge of lawlessness, but it was also passed to help earn the loyalty of small white landholders, because their economic position was so tenuous and their reliance on the few livestock in their possession kept them alive. Those livestock were usually the only meaningful possessions held by poor southern whites (Holloway, 2009: 941).

"Landowners were concerned about petty theft not only because of the losses they incurred but also because agricultural theft gave landless laborers independence," writes Pippa Holloway, who has studied these laws in relation to criminalizing the black population. "Individuals who could survive on their own did not need to depend on their employers for income and food" (Holloway, 2009: 240).

Adding to such difficulties, as Mary Ellen Curtain has demonstrated in her study of the postbellum Alabama Black Belt, white trade dominated largely because white leadership "waged a protracted political and legal struggle against

[11] As Mancini explains, the prison population in Mississippi grew from 375 in 1874 to 1,003 in 1877, but by 1883, it was down to 752. When the Pig Law was repealed in 1888, the prison population was only 499. After the repeal, the prison population in the state exploded again to 990 by 1895 (Mancini, 1996: 135-136). Still, Wharton's analysis cast a long shadow. Much later scholarship featured repetitions of such numbers (Adamson, 1983: 562; Novak, 1978: 32; Perman, 1984: 243; Woodward, 1971: 213).

independent black trading" (2000: 21). When barred from such activity, black animal theft became more likely, playing into the hands of lawmakers who wanted struggling freedman imprisoned. Even those freedmen not attempting to engage in trade had difficulties of white people's making. Planters, for example, had little cash on hand and were not paying wages to former slaves working as agricultural labor (Curtain, 2000: 23-24).

Along with direct need in the face of poverty, there was also secondary theft, known as deadfall markets, wherein poor whites convinced freedman to take a variety of goods or small animals from wealthier farms in exchange for a small pittance or illicit material like whiskey. Still, whether the theft was a primary or secondary method to alleviate the rigors of poverty, it made the black population vulnerable to white machinations and revised larceny laws (Curtain, 2000: 28). It also, of course, meant that animals stolen were not part of a direct action against hunger, but instead part of a retail effort to provide some kind of ancillary profit to the human thief.

Holloway has made clear that another of the reasons for these livestock larceny laws was to tie disenfranchisement to felony convictions so as to eliminate the black right to vote (2009: 941). Those laws were part of a broader effort to move misdemeanor crimes to felonies in a variety of areas that principally affected black southerners. "The expansion of criminal penalties for livestock theft was only part of a coordinated regional agenda that used disfranchisement for criminal conviction to aid the Democratic Party as it sought political dominance in the South," as criminal conviction forever disqualified a citizen from further exercizing the right to vote (Holloway, 2009: 941).

Or, as Sharon Dolovich has explained, powerful whites “might impose punishment regimes that burden the security and integrity of the most vulnerable in order that they themselves could benefit financially” (Dolovich, 2005: 464). And it created a vicious cycle. An 1880 editorial decrying convict leasing in the *Weekly Louisianian*, Louisiana’s largest black newspaper at the time, argued that “hen men are consigned to the penitentiary for a term of years at hard labor for the theft of a chicken, side by side with a red-handed murderer, they will leave their gloomy cells only with a sense of degradation which will render them hardened villains and irreclaimable to the demands of good citizenship” (*Weekly Louisianian*, 1880: 2).

In an 1880 hearing about black migration north after Reconstruction, Charles N. Otey, a black lawyer and newspaper editor headquartered in Washington, DC, told a Senate committee that disenfranchisement for petit larceny was a principal grievance. “The law was made for the purpose of disfranchising colored men. If a colored man steals a chicken he is pretty liable to be sent to the penitentiary,” he explained. That trip to the penitentiary then took away his right to vote. “Up North they do not send people to the penitentiary for petit larceny, but they do down there [the South]” (Senate Reports, 1880: 117). There was no mention made in the hearing about the life of the stolen chicken, the larceny of whom was, in fact, petit.

"Negroes are frequently arraigned before petty magistrates on the most trivial charges of larceny, and a conviction in these petty courts is sufficient to disfranchise them forever,” explained a Republican congressman in South Carolina. “This conviction is readily obtained, and the whole proceedings clearly indicate, in many cases, that the prosecution is merely a pretext to deprive the negro of his vote” (Raum, 1884: 449).

There was a vigorous Republican response from black and white leaders attempting to fight against the practice, but none were able to stop the onslaught of these petit larceny disenfranchisement laws. Black conventions in Virginia and Florida both denounced the practice (Livingston, 1884: 2; *New York Times*, 1875: 1; *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, 1875: 1). Animals, however, were always the objects of the debate, never the subjects, valued only with a monetary designation on both sides because of their ability to provide for humans or because of their ability to land freedpeople in prison.

"Livestock theft and, more particularly, chicken theft became a key focus for individuals on both sides of the debate over the suffrage rights of individuals convicted of petty theft," Holloway explains. "African American leaders and their Republican allies emphasized the small and desperate nature of livestock theft and the disproportionality of the sanction of disfranchisement in their arguments against these new laws. Chicken theft figured prominently as a symbol of a minor, justifiable crime." She documents one frustrated Norfolk resident as complaining, "they want to disfranchise a colored man because he takes a chicken when he is hungry" (Holloway, 2009: 956-957). The implication was that the life of the chicken was less important than either the franchise or human hunger.

A New Orleans black newspaper, the *Weekly Pelican*, quoted white New York commentary that decried the fact that "petty offences" in the South, like stealing pigs and chickens, "are punished with extraordinary severity, and it has been declared that the profit derived by the State from the chain-gangs has had the effect, unconsciously perhaps, to encourage sentences for long terms." There was nothing unconscious about it, but the commentary made it clear that motives for pig

laws were evident to contemporary observers around the country[12] (*Weekly Pelican*, 1889: 1). Or, as a correspondent for the *Washington Bee* declared, after watching a North Carolina trial for "the theft of a chicken worth, perhaps, about 25 cents," and the dire consequences of such a seemingly small crime, "The mill that never lacks grist, and keeps grinding mostly by poor ignorant Negroes, who seem fascinated by the charms(?) of law!" (Turner, 1891: 2)

African American arguments defending livestock theft claimed that such efforts were the result of hunger, but also of the patriarchal responsibility of feeding one's family, of providing for women and children. That being the case, such petit larcenies should not result in the elimination of citizenship but the validation of it. White southern Democrats did not accept such claims (Holloway, 2009: 957; Bardaglio, 1995: 121-124; McCurry, 1995: 198). "A sapient member of the negro convention in this city is shocked at the idea that a chicken-stealer shall lose his vote," went one representative editorial. "Why should not sheep-stealing be also classed among the harmless pursuits that should in no wise affect a man's political rights? It is time that the wayward morality of other days should be squelched, and that gentlemen chicken and sheep-stealers be looked upon as patriots determined not to die for the want of food" (*Richmond Daily Dispatch*, 1875: 2).

But that was a view challenged by many. "What sort of claim to participation in the matter of governing the country has a 'chicken thief'?" asked a later article published in the same newspaper. "It is an insult to the people entitled to vote that they should march up to the polls with chicken-thieves and sheep-stealers"

[12] The pettiness of such offenses was inherently challenged by the taking of an animal's life, but it was occasionally also challenged in other ways. A month after the Pelican's account, five hundred chickens were stolen in one night in Rockdale County, Georgia (*Leavenworth Advocate*, 1889: 4).

(*Richmond Daily Dispatch*, 1876: 2). If this was an attempt at enacting some kind of patriarchal control, in other words, it was a failed attempt. As Holloway has explained, this tendency among white critics to graduate black thieves to sheep stealing also played on a stereotype of the African American tendency to excess and absence of self-control, a reductio ad absurdum that built caricature into its critique (Holloway, 2009: 958; Curtain, 2000: 24).

That being the case, white commentary on the pig laws often defaulted to the theft of chickens, because they were smaller and easier to steal. There had been a long history of antebellum slaves making off with the master's chickens for extra food, reasoning that both the human and chicken were property of the same person and thus no offense was committed (Holloway, 2009: 958-959). As Booker Washington explained, "One of my earliest recollections is that of my mother cooking a chicken late at night, and awakening her children for the purpose of feeding them. How or where she got it I do not know. I presume, however, it was procured from our owner's farm. Some people may call this theft," he conceded. "But taking place at the time it did, and for the reason that it did, no one could ever make me believe that my mother was guilty of thieving. She was simply a victim of the system of slavery"[13] (Washington, 1978: 4-5).

Meanwhile, Richmond's black newspaper, the *Virginia Star*, took a decidedly different view than its white counterpart. "The African robs hen roosts. What does the white man rob? Does he not rob banks, corporations, stores, widows and orphans, star routes, syndicates, and corners, and bulls and bears the markets?"

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[13] That kind of thinking, then, set standards of thought for the rest of the recipient's life. Later in his *Up From Slavery* narrative, for example, while describing the organization of a festival at Tuskegee, Washington classes "a chicken" as one in a list with cake, bread, and pie as items "that could be sold at the festival" (Washington, 1978: 131).

(*Virginia Star*, 1882: 1) Black chicken theft was borne of necessity, the paper seemed to be arguing, while white crime was born of greed.

Reverend James Livery of Baltimore made a similar argument, speaking at the end of slavery in 1865. “If a darkey stole five silver spoons he was a thief; but if a white quarter-master stole $50,000 it was smoothed over. A darkey stole a pig--a white man $10,000. The former was a thief, the latter respectable” (*Colored Tennessean*, 1865: 1).

Such hierarchical chains redounded negatively toward nonhuman animals in both instances, just as they had in academic and scientific circles (see Chapter 1). Debates of the kind always did in what Gwendolyn Blue and Melanie Rock call trans-biopolitics, “the classification and evaluation of life as it unfolds in complex, technologically-mediated networks with global reach” (2011: 2). It was the Foucauldian biopolitical vision writ large onto all categories of animal and plant life. At the same time these “pig laws” were being developed, for example, southern states were also working to develop new fencing laws requiring landowners to protect their crops from animals who might commit their own version of larceny. Fencing crops to protect them from erstwhile and hungry animals had been normative since the first law to require such efforts came from the colonial Virginia House of Burgesses in 1632. Still, there was for the next two hundred years a broadly open range in the region, one that “encouraged a leisurely method of raising livestock,” notes historian J. Crawford King, that “was seriously restricted in the postbellum period and ultimately ceased to exist” (1982: 54).

As they had in 1785 in South Carolina, many farmers pushed back against such efforts. Fencing hogs and cattle and improving the stock and breed of the animals did not interest most farmers in the South, who instead preferred cheaper

breeds, lower stakes, and an open range. What helped change that sentiment was the moral panic developing around the theft of farm animals by former slaves[15] (King, 1982: 56-57; Bonner, 1964: 127-148). "We cannot raise a turkey, chicken, or a hog," complained Alabama farmer James Holt Clanton, "in consequence of the stealing by negroes." Thus the southern states began passing their "pig laws" (Clanton, 1960: 279).

It was a reminder that both potential black thieves and white freeholders only valued such animals at the cost of their lives. Such debates about larceny accompanied more consistent debates about the best way to raise and kill the nonhuman victims of such thefts. As one Georgia farmer explained, describing his frustration with a particular breed of hog, "[When the next litter came] I altered all the boars, spayed all the sows, killed all the hermaphrodites and knocked all the old hogs in the head." It convinced him "that this breed will soon pass away, and the sooner the better." Another antebellum farmer developed a method that provided what one author called "a short and merry life." He fed young hogs well from their birth in the early months of the year, then killed them in December, when they weighed between 140 and 190 pounds. He sold the carcasses of the young animals at four cents per pound. It was a method that would become common in the postbellum period, after proclaimed pork shortages in Georgia during the Civil War led leaders to emphasize that farmers should raise both subsistence crops and hogs. Such proclamations only made the forthcoming pig laws more

[15] There is a broader historiography of moral panics (Ben-Yehuda, 1986; Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994; Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994b; Hier, 2011; Jenkins, 1992), but also examples of the theory related to the human relationship with animals (Mica, 2010; Jerolmack, 2008).

meaningful, as more and more southern wealth was tied up in the ownership of pigs (Bonner, 1964: 146-147).

When the laws finally came, however it was clear that convictions on pig law charges could have nothing to do with accumulated wealth and could instead be merely retributive. A writer for the *Cleveland Gazette*, a black newspaper far from the South in northern Ohio, described asking a Mississippi legislator about conditions for black residents in his state. The legislator told a story of a small black landholder who had been arrested for stealing a white man's hog. At the trial, his lawyer demonstrated that the white man docked the tails of his hogs, while the black man did not, a discrepancy that disproved the charge. The jury, however, took only ten minutes to render a guilty verdict. When the indignant lawyer later asked one of the jurors why the group had ruled as it did, he said, "Well, we know that the old fellow is a mighty shrewd and sly old cuss, and we thought we would never have a chance at him again, and we had better give him a lick while we had it" (*Cleveland Gazette*, 1886: 1). The larceny statute was in this case less an effort to police black criminality or to defend white landowners and their financial stakes, but instead a tool for racially motivated revenge.

When a correspondent for the *New York Globe* found himself in north Florida, for example, he described the vulnerability of local black residents to vengeful white citizens. When local authorities declined to investigate pig theft in the area, whites organized a "Pig-stealer's Club." It was a kind of terroristic neighborhood watch. "They enter men's houses by night in pursuit of alleged pigs; they lie out in the wiregrass, and watch shanties and in case of detection, the culprit is hauled before the 'Mystic Council of the Pig-stealers,' and dire punishment is inflicted on the wretch" (*New York Globe*, 1883: 1). That punishment

usually involved beating or whipping. It was local retributive terrorism that used pig-theft as an excuse for racial violence.

The pig laws themselves began in 1875. Prior to that year in Alabama, horses had been the only property animal whose theft fell under the category of felony grand larceny. That year, however, the state legislature changed the law to include any "cow, or animal of the cow kind, hog, sheep, goat, or any part of any outstanding crop of corn or cotton" to the list of property animals (or crops) to be considered grand larceny if stolen, carrying a prison sentence of two to five years (*Acts of the General Assembly of Alabama*, 1875: 258, 259-260). Republican politicians in Alabama petitioned Congress in response, claiming that the new expansion of grand larceny had "ulterior purposes" to "persecute and oppress" the black population by making it easier to imprison and disenfranchise them (Memorial, 1877: 663).

They were right. Mary Ellen Curtain described the conviction of Ann Austin, a freedwoman from Greene County, Alabama, sentenced to two years for grand larceny for killing a shoat. The presiding judge was somewhat sympathetic, but could not reduce her sentence as two years was "the least term of imprisonment allowed by law for person convicted of said offense" (Curtain, 2000: 34). Both the sentence and the crime demonstrated bigotries against freedpeople but also against the young pig who was killed. Historical accounting of such engagements, however, have only dealt with the former, ignoring the victim whose life was taken.

Arkansas's legislature made a similar move that year, reducing the grand larceny charge to stealing anything--including farm animals--over two dollars in human value. Like so many others, it was known as the Arkansas "pig law" because of the implications relating to livestock theft (Perman, 1984: 243; Mancini,

1996: 120). In 1881, the legislature raised the minimum requirement to ten dollars in stolen property, putting their law in line with that of Mississippi and others (see below), but in 1883, during the next legislative session, the group included a carve-out in the legislation that made stealing a cow of any value felony grand larceny. “Every person who shall mark, steal or kill, or wound, with intent to steal, any kind of cattle, pigs, hogs, sheep, or goats” would be imprisoned for “not less than one year nor more than five years” (*Acts, Resolutions and Memorials of the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas*, 1882: 112; *Acts of the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas*, 1883: 10).

In 1875, Georgia’s legislature passed its own infamous “pig-law,” a statute that raised the penalty from a misdemeanor to a felony for hog theft, putting it on the same legal plain as cattle theft. Two years later, the state’s prison population had more than tripled from 432 to 1,441, and 95 percent of that new population was black (Novak, 1978: 32-33; Adamson, 1983: 562-563). There was no specific effort at disfranchisement that went with felony conviction as there were in other southern states, but that would change with the state’s Redeemer Constitution of 1877 (Constitution of the State of Georgia, 1941).

The Virginia assembly passed a constitutional amendment that year, 1875, to disenfranchise those convicted of petit larceny, and the following year the voters of the state ratified it. As frustrated black leader Gilbert Horton explained of Virginia, “They send [a man] to the penitentiary if he steals a chicken” (Foner, 1988: 594; Morton, 1919: 91-92). North Carolina passed its own constitutional amendment in 1875 to disenfranchise people convicted of felonies and “infamous” offenses. The courts did not distinguish between petit and grand larceny, meaning

that chicken theft could merit a defendant up to ten years in prison[16] (Adamson, 1983: 562; Holloway, 2009: 944; Foner, 1988: 594; Logan, 1964: 193).

Then, in 1876, came the infamous pig law from Mississippi. The Mississippi Pig Law was first vetoed by Republican governor Adelbert Ames in March. He worried that even a stolen animal "not worth more than one or two dollars" would land the perpetrator in the state penitentiary, "perhaps, for a term of years. Even if sent for a short time, the person so sentenced is disfranchised" (Ames, 1876: 358-359). Democrats in the legislature couldn't manage to override the veto, but a Redeemer legislature who had already impeached and removed the state's Republican lieutenant-governor and its education superintendent, then did the same to its Republican governor. They impeached, and Ames resigned to avoid what was seen as an inevitable guilty verdict at the forthcoming show trial. He was replaced in April by Democrat John Stone. The legislature then again passed the Pig Law, and Stone willingly signed it[17] (Dunning, 1907: 280).

South Carolina's general assembly passed an 1878 law that ruled "any person found guilty of the larceny of any horse, mule, cow, hog or any other live stock, shall suffer imprisonment in the state Penitentiary" (*State v. Corley*, 1880). It was an increase, and one that would go even farther in 1882, when the state added burglary and larceny to the list of criminal convictions that resulted in disenfranchisement. Among those who couldn't vote after conviction were those

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[16] Technically the document produced in 1875 was not a new constitution but an amended version of the 1868 constitution (Orth, 1995: 16).

[17] Ames's veto of the Pig Law was one of his last acts as governor. He signed the veto on March 2, amid impeachment hearings, and resigned March 29 (*Journal of the Senate of the State of Mississippi*, 1876: 1-62; *Laws of the State of Mississippi*, 1876: 51-52).

convicted of “robbery of the goods or chattels of another with or without violence”[18] (*Acts and Joint Resolutions of the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina,* 1883: 3).

Louisiana created a new constitution in 1879 that added larceny to the list of offenses that led to disenfranchisement. There was no direct mention of the theft of farmed animals in the larceny article, but such theft would clearly fall under its cope (*Constitution Adopted by the State Constitutional Convention of the State of Louisiana*, 1868; *Constitution of the State of Louisiana, Adopted In Convention*, 1879). Florida’s postbellum 1868 constitution included larceny as a crime that led to disenfranchisement. In 1880, the Florida attorney general issued an opinion that petit larceny was an offense that led to disenfranchisement. In 1881, the Florida Supreme Court agreed. Again, there were no specific mentions of farmed animals, but by reducing disenfranchisement to petit larceny, animal theft was not only included but clearly implied, particularly in light of the actions of their predecessor states of the former Confederacy (Constitution of the State of Florida, 1868: 24; *Appletons' Annual Cyclopaedia*, 1881: 274).

Thus it was that southern states took turns criminalizing the theft of hogs, combining a white supremacy that had been generative of speciesism among slaves with its own version of speciesism that used the lives of nonhuman animals as weapons against the now free black population in its midst. Tennessee, for example, never got an overt pig law like its Confederate counterparts, but that impetus showed itself in different ways. In the early 1890s, for example white Tennessee miners brought a lawsuit to challenge the use of convict labor in

[18] For more on the broad scope of the 1882 disenfranchisement legislation, see Tindall, 2003; Cooper, 1968.

mining, angry not because black petty criminals were being arrested but because convict labor impinged on the hiring and fair pay of white workers doing jobs as civilians. The bubbling frustration of the group led to the burning of stockades at two different mining concerns and freeing the convict labor therein. They gave the convicts civilian clothes and helped them escape. In the wake of the escape, either the miners or the convicts symbolically left on the side of the road “a dead hog dressed in a convict garb and an empty jug lying beside the dressed hog and an old pipe lying on the hog” (Daniel, 1975: 284-285).

Mel Chen describes a linguistic animacy hierarchy in which language orders various forms of human life above that of nonhuman animal life, then that above plant life and that above nonliving entities (Chen, 2012: 13, 23-55). The nineteenth century South was a model of Chen’s animacies, with white powerbrokers creating levels of value within humans--man was more valuable than woman, rich more valuable than poor, a plantation more valuable than a farm, landowners more valuable than sharecroppers, former slaveowner more valuable than former slave, free citizen more valuable than convict, white more valuable than black, and human animal more valuable than nonhuman animal. It was the Great South Cultural Chain of Being. The legal definitions of nonhuman animals originally demonstrated a clear animacy hierarchy between various nonhumans, as well, but the pig laws were meant to level that particular playing field. Chickens, for example, were far more plentiful and far less expensive in human dollars than, say, cows, but by making chicken theft a felony, not only were white legislators further devaluing the lives of desperate black tenant farmers who took chickens as a method of survival, but they simultaneously altered that linguistic hierarchy by eliminating the legal difference between different farmed animals. Linguistics, of

course, is never static, and those hierarchies still existed in other contexts--cows remained more expensive than chickens, for example; cows required more maintenance; the corpse of a cow provided more meat than the corpse of a chicken--but in a legalistic society, legal equality meant more. Black sharecroppers understood such a framework, for example, when their burgeoning pseudoequality during Reconstruction disappeared after the Compromise of 1877, further allowing abuses of the criminal system. Thus the status of chickens in the animacy hierarchy rose as that of African Americans fell, but both movements on that particular linguistic ladder led paradoxically to a further devaluing of both lives, ensuring that chickens would be seen as nothing more than actual property and freedmen would be seen as nothing more than potential property. White assumptions about black criminality colored the way they thought about the law. Though plenty of white southerners were also destitute and hungry, and though they responded by stealing, as well, livestock theft was assumed to be a race issue over and against one of class. After arrests for larceny began to mount in Mississippi, for example, "almost no one save Negroes went to trial," explains historian David Oshinsky. "As convictions mounted, Southern prisons turned black"[19] (Oshinsky, 1996: 34).

Once that feat had been accomplished, the state pig laws became unnecessary, and the protests from farmers against the laws finally penetrated legislative ears. Mississippi's Pig Law would come under fire from poor white farmers in the 1880s and would ultimately fall in 1888 (Taylor, 1993: 63, 65). The

[19] As a comparison of communities passing "pig laws" while thinking about the actual pigs, Israel passed a controversial "pig law" in 1962 banning the raising of pigs in the nation, as the government realized that the only reason humans were raising such animals was to slaughter and eat them, a violation of orthodox Jewish law (Lobban, 1994: 65).

others would disappear in the years to follow. None would survive into the twentieth century. But while they existed, these laws demonstrated the close relationship between two forms of objectification, of generating an other for the ends of power formation. As Hendrick Herzog's study of nineteenth century New York prosecutions for pigs in the streets has demonstrated, such legal efforts were "less about the continued existence of a social practice than [they were] about the terms under which the practice is going to continue. Assume that it made a difference to all concerned that pigs in the streets were labelled a public nuisance. Once so labelled, an important symbol of power had been transferred to those who opposed pigs in the streets" (Hartog, 1985: 935). In the Redeemer South, pigs were used to facilitate human power relations, as well. Criminalizing their theft was no indication that "it made a difference to all concerned" about the fate of the pigs themselves. Enactments of biopower in service to bigoted ends rarely are.

John Berger has argued that the post-Darwinian late-nineteenth century had a long legacy. "Animals came from over the horizon," he said. They were seen in binaries--mortal things and immortal gods. "Each lion was Lion, each ox was Ox. This--maybe the first existential dualism--was reflected in the treatment of animals. They were subjected *and* worshipped, bred *and* sacrificed." That dualism never disappeared, even though post-Reconstruction southerners, for example, weren't worshipping animal gods. "A peasant becomes fond of his pig and is glad to salt away its pork. What is significant," he argues, "is that the two statements in that sentence are connected by an *and* and not by a but." Nineteenth century southern pig laws were themselves representations of that "and" (Berger, 1980: 6-7).

The work of Nickie Charles and Charlotte Aull Davies (Charles and Davies, 2011: 69) has demonstrated "the permeability of the species barrier which

allegedly separates humans from other animals," a barrier assumed as a priori by so many in the second half of the nineteenth century because it was backed in various ways by both science and religion.[21] Rebekah Fox has argued for "a liminal position on the boundaries between 'human' and 'animal'" in relation to pets, but it is an analysis, particularly in the nineteenth century, that would apply to a variety of farmed animals that lived in close proximity to humans[22] (Fox, 2008: 526). After all, as Andrew Isenberg has explained, the "[s]entimentalization of farm animals and pets was common in the nineteenth century, as an industrializing society romanticized its rural past," only exacerbating the liminality described by Fox and others[23] (Isenberg, 2002: 48-49).

"Family and kinship are socially constructed," say Charles and Davies (2011: 88). It is a fact that may be self-evident, but its consequence is that such constructions have historically left nonhumans outside of their bounds. Those frameworks put animals in close proximity to such family networks in positions of marginal value, positions that allow humans to recognize the need for care--and even companionship--up to a point before stopping at the water's edge of equal respect and the protections that come with it.

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[21] This permeability, over and against the presiding notions of mainstream nineteenth-century ideology, has also been demonstrated by Durrell, 1959; Haraway, 2003; Rowlands, 2002.

[22] The point of separation between humans and nonhumans is "both tenuous and fragile" (Serpell, 1996: 167). As Tim Ingold has explained, there was a far more equalitarian relationship between humans and other animals in hunter-gatherer societies. That changed with the birth of sedentary agriculture, wherein humans sought 'to secure the compliance of the other," imposing their will by force or manipulation. It was (and is) "an abrogation of trust, entailing as it does the denial rather than the recognition of the autonomy of the other on whom one depends" (Ingold, 1994: 16). Ingold's analysis is not without its detractors. See, for example Armstrong, 2010.

[23] Many similar conclusions about twenty-first century pets could easily apply to nineteenth-century pigs. "Pets are commonly seen as kin and as having agency," explain Charles and Davies. "People establish meaningful and supportive relationships with their companion animals" (Charles and Davies, 2011: 75). In the nineteenth-century, such relationships could redound to all animals held close to the home.

The laws closed the twin circles of property status and race-and-species bigotry. White southerners, of course, were crueler to animals than any other group. They were the ones running plantations that formalized animal use for food and labor. That there was no common cause made between two groups, African and African American humans and farmed nonhuman animals, both considered property by those white leaders, is not surprising. Such has been the state of play for most of human history. But the fact that such common cause did not occur was due at least in part to the white supremacy that underlay everything in the antebellum and immediate postbellum South, that ordered labor and standards of equality along lines that always tilted to the detriment of African Americans and nonhuman animals in overt ways. That supremacy created metaphorical and literal hunger games among dispossessed groups and lead black actions toward nonhuman animals to manifest themselves in decidedly racially coded ways in direct response to systemic white oppression against a variety of groups, human and nonhuman, with sincere objections to their own death.

Such coding also appeared in the most prevalent manifestation of black thought as the nineteenth century became the twentieth: the African American newspaper press. That press, of course, was national in both the locations of its publications and its scope, demonstrating a spread of such thinking across the country.

CHAPTER 3

Grass Widows and Vegetarians: Representations of Animals and Animal Rights in the Early Twentieth-Century Black Press

"What are we going to do with that grass widow who hangs around here so much?" asked a character in a joke printed in the Baltimore *Afro-American* in 1933. "I know," her friend responded. "We'll introduce her to that vegetarian"[1] (*Afro-American*, 1933: 17).

It was a common joke printed in black newspapers from 1893 to 1939 and representative of a common theme in the coverage of those papers in relation to animal cruelty, vegetarianism, and vivisection. Such jokes were interspersed with coverage of animal cruelty charges, comparisons of animal rights and black rights, and alternating advocacies for and denunciations of vegetarians. Animal cruelty and its prevention were given nods at various points in the newspapers, but those nods were never indicative of assumptions of moral equivalency. The absence of that equivalency created a seeming moral schizophrenia in the presentation of animal cruelty in the black press, a complicated relationship between the newspapers and animals wherein they sometimes advocated for kindness to animals and at other times reveled in cruelty or portrayed animal protection as trivial when compared to the plight of black America. It was, in many ways, the

[1] Another version of this joke appeared in the *Chicago Defender*. "I understand that your friend Bronson is a vegetarian," said one. "Yes," said the other. He has such pronounced views on the subject that he married a grass widow" (*Chicago Defender*, 1913: 6). A grass widow was a slang term for a woman whose husband spent a large amount of time away from her, traveling for either vocation or avocation.

logical outgrowth of nineteenth century pig laws, a representative form of the lived difference enforced between human and animals, and one that all readers across the country, not just southern farmers, would experience.

That said, there were points of consistency in the coverage. Animal experimentation was almost completely ignored, and vegetarianism was either mocked or advocated without any substantially neutral coverage. Animal abuse, which was the dominant focus of the black press's relationship with nonhuman animals, was generally considered to be problematic, but white organizations for animal protection tended to be presented as a foil for a lack of white concern for the rights of African Americans. Black instances of reported animal abuse usually emphsized horses driven by black teamsters, a phenomon by no means given approval by the black press, but one interpreted as drivers being scapegoated for the demands of white team owners. Animal welfare, then, was almost always used as a lens for racial commentary. The newspapers' moral schizophrenia concerning the lives of nonhuman animals was thus conditioned by a more consistent emphasis on the preeminent need for a human racial recockoning.

That species preference would redound to speciesist coverage was a fait accompli created by the biopolitical discourse stemming from the Great Chain of Being narrative and racially targeted legislation like southern "pig laws." The black press was presented with the immediate need in the wake of such opposition to defend the humanity and human rights of those it represented, and in response to that need developed a scattershot moral depiction of animal abuse, because that abuse was also subsumed within the broader elevation of black rights and black lives. Meanwhile, the biopolitics of race and species played out on the other side of media representation, as well, as the two principal American animal activist

publications, the *National Humane Review* and *Our Dumb Animals*, also demonstrated a fraught and inconsistent position on race, particularly because they subsumed such discussions within the braoder elevation of animal welfare concerns.[2]

An examination of six of the largest, most influential black newspapers in the United States in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries demonstrates the fraught relationship of the African American population with kindness to animals.[3] It was a relationship coded by the history of dehumanization wrought by slavery and the segregationist regime that replaced it following Reconstruction; by the triviality of animal life on American farms for a largely rural black popluation and in factories for those who escaped the countryside during the Gilded Age. The white wealth that funded humane organizations also created a disconnect (Beers, 2006: 52-53; Davis, 2016: 90-93). Still, for many black Americans, the message that such organizations presented was valid and even vital to a proper understanding of kindness in a country that had been decidedly racially unkind. A series of black southern American Humane Education Society groups, for example, spent much of the 1920s and 1930s combining a message of animal kindness with a one promoting racial uplift (Davis, 2016: 101).

The history of the black press itself seemed to create a space for sympathy regarding the plight of animals. On March 16, 1827, John Russwurm's *Freedom's*

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[2] Animal publications, of course, took a variety of forms. For an analysis of the racial implications of white periodicals specifically related to livestock breeding (and not at all concerned with animal rights), see Rothenberg, 2016, wherein the trade publications of commercial pig breeders are examined through the lens of eugenic race science in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

[3] This chapter will use the Baltimore *Afro-American*, the New York *Amsterdam News*, the *Atlanta Daily World*, the *Chicago Defender*, the *Los Angeles Sentinel*, and the *Pittsburgh Courier* as subjects of analysis.

Journal argued that “we wish to plead our own cause. Too long have others spoken for us. Too long has the public been deceived by misrepresentations.” (1) Russwurm, the first African American to earn a bachelor’s degree, founded the country’s first black newspaper with Samuel Cornish (Detweiler, 1922; see Chapter 2). Nell Irvin Painter has argued that the two characteristics that most clearly differentiated that early black press from its white counterpart were a racial orientation (as opposed to a “partisan orientation”) and “a sense of a supranational racial identity” (Painter, 1971: 30-32). As sociologist Charlotte O’Kelly points out, as early as Reconstruction, black newspapers emphasized “the Horatio Alger-type story of individual achievement against great odds,” while pushing for “equal citizenship rights and better economic and educational opportunities for blacks” (O’Kelly, 1982: 2, 5). Indeed, as historian Martin E. Dann noted in the 1970s, the nineteenth century black press “was the focal point of every controversy and every concern of black people representing as it did the strengths and re-inforcements which united the black community” (Dann, 1971: 14).

The twentieth century press continued that trend. The papers covered political disputes between black activists like Marcus Garvey, A. Philip Randolph, and WEB Du Bois, and at times they did take sides, but Frederick Detweiler and others have concluded that coverage by the black press led to greater understanding of those issues and unity around the cause of equality, despite disagreements on substantive issues about how to achieve it (Detweiler, 1938). The press, as O’Kelly has demonstrated, “served to solidify in the black person’s mind concepts of race and racial struggle” (O’Kelly, 1982: 8). The interwar period was the black newspaper at its most radical, and that militancy grew its audience and made it nationally relevant, a “much greater intermediary link and integrative

force for the black population" than it had been before (O'Kelly, 1982: 9). It was, in the words of sociologist Guy Johnson, "almost as if all the rancor, all the resentment and brooding, all the inhibited impulses to retaliate for discrimination and injustice were brought together and let loose every week in the two hundred or more Negro newspapers" of the 1930s (Johnson, 1939: 334).

The black press reflected the full range of opinions that a group might have, from radicalism to accommodation (Standing, 1932). "As a whole, however, it is a decidedly potent influence in wielding those divergent attitudes into something of a more homogeneous character," O'Kelly explained (1982: 9). And it would lead to success. In 1931, there were 228 black newspapers in the country, up from 130 in 1884. In 1936, reported black newspaper circulation was 1,120,198. The following year it was over 1.2 million (Department of Commerce, 1938: 1). "Most significant and heartening," announced the NAACP's *Crisis*, "has been the advance in circulation, advertising revenues, payrolls and equipment of the Negro newspaper during the depression period of the thirties" (LeCour, 1941: 108).

Reporting and editorial commentary on physical cruelty was the most common form of engagement the black press had with nonhuman animals. One of its dominant modes of commentary in the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth was the use of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) as a foil for the lack of organizations devoted to preventing cruelty to black citizens in an age of lynching and Jim Crow. "Tho' we have a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals," explained a representative article in an 1893 edition of the *Afro-American*, "we have no society for protecting indigent, ignorant and helpless blacks from injustice in our courts of justice" (LHB, 1893: 14).

The ASPCA was founded by Henry Bergh and others in New York in 1866, and it spread quickly across the country. He began by creating a “Declaration of the Rights of Animals” and secured commitments from wealthy and influential leaders like publisher Horace Greeley and New York mayor John Hoffman. He used his connections to get the association an official legislative charter in the state of New York and a new anticruelty statute that classified and scheduled for prosecution cruelty to any nonhuman animal and gave the new group the ability to enforce it (McShane and Tarr, 2010: 236; Beers, 2006: 43-44; Lundblad, 2013: 123-128).

The message of the association was never one that the black press would openly reject. “The white Christian laity with their Good Government Club, Societies for the Improvement of the Condition of the Poor, Suppression of Vice, and prevention of cruelty to animals and many similar institutions,” explained the *Afro-American*, “demonstrate lines of operation well worthy of the consideration of the Christian laity of our colored churches” (*Afro-American*, 1898: 2). There is a suggestion in the quote that black churches work for an end to cruelty to animals, but there is also an inherent conflation of preventing cruelty to animals with helping the human poor and suppressing human vice. Even in its admitted absence from black Christian circles, the assumption of the statement elevated animal cruelty to one of the core problems in human society.

Still, it was a message that was aspirational rather than proscriptive. The first shift in that dynamic, when the press featured actual black advocacy for animals, came in 1901 with an *Afro* profile of a Santa Fe, New Mexico black women’s club known as the Women’s Board of Trade. The paper noted that along with its other accomplishments, the group had a committee devoted to the

prevention of cruelty to animals. It was the first time in one of the country's major black newspapers that black participation in preventing animal cruelty was mentioned (*Afro-American*, 1901: 5).

The cruelty itself, however, was also newsworthy. Five years later, in October 1906, the *Afro* reported on the arrest of a Greek teenager arrested for animal cruelty after chaining roughly fifty chameleons to a board and selling them on the street for fifteen cents. The chameleons had strings around their necks attached to chains. On the other end of the chain was a safety pin that allowed customers to attach the desperate, wriggling reptiles to their coats, a sort of live-action, moving brooch (*Afro-American*, 1906: 7). The arrest was significant because it showed that officials were willing to interpret the small lizards as animals deserving of protection, and counterintuitive because those same small lizards were surely killed all the time, subject to the regular poisons of exterminators, the foot traffic of pedestrians, and the occasional malign intent of children at play. Despite such contradictions, the abuse of the chameleons was galling enough that the *Afro* chose to report on the arrest, even though the perpetrator was not black.

In 1907, the *Afro* reprinted an editorial from *Outing Magazine* that explained the expertise required to properly diagnose pain and illness in horses, much less to treat horses. "Every animal lover hopes for the time when the management of such bodies shall be placed in the hands of men competent to decide and alert to administer," the author argued, "and not left to the indifferent, the inert and the inept in matters which concern animal care and management" (Ware, 1907: 6). The next year, the paper provided much the same message in a different context for a younger audience, printing a fictional story aimed at children originally

published in the *Philadelphia Record* about a boy who used his slingshot to kill birds, put out the eyes of cats, and torture other larger animals. Eventually, the police came to arrest him, explaining to his horrified mother what he had done. She paid a heavy fine to keep him out of jail, "but, my, didn't the boy's papa settle with him when he heard of it" (*Afro-American*, 1908: 3). It was a cautionary tale for young readers to be kind to animals or suffer real and frightening consequences.

Despite such seeming belief in the need to be kind to animals, there were always demonstrations of skepticism. In 1910, for example, the *Afro* published the report of a wealthy woman who died and left ten thousand dollars to her three dogs. It was the same share she left to her husband. If the dogs died before her son from a previous marriage, he would get the remainder of the ten thousand. She also left three thousand dollars to the ASPCA. The article presented the woman's will as an oddity, noting that six of her close relatives were not mentioned in the document (*Afro-American*, 1910: 2). Her overzealous concern for her dogs was depicted as a form of betrayal to her human relatives rather than a legitimate or reasonable request. It only added to the seemingly disjointed presentation of human-animal concern in the black media. More broadly, however, the coverage did fit within the press's consistent concern for black welfare over and against that of animal welfare, a concern presented in this example as a manifestation of class and monetary issues.

The following year, the *Chicago Defender* reprinted a story from the *New York Tribune* wherein a man tried to get a dog license for a chihuahua. When a policeman told him he would have to go to the SPCA, the frustrated man explained that he had already been to another government agency with his beloved for a marriage license, but his fiancé demanded that he also get a license for the dog.

He was frustrated and incredulous, but his fiance's demands were clear, "I guess it's no dog license, no marriage license" (*Chicago Defender*, 1911: 4). Animal concerns were inevitably filtered through a lens of human concerns in the same way that black concerns were filtered publicly through a lens of white mainstream concern. It was a parallel filtering that the *Defender* did not seem to recognize and did not include in its coverage.

Human supremacy, of course, could have effects even at higher levels of government. In October 1910, the *Afro* reported on the arrest of Samuel Lewis Shank, mayor of Indianapolis, Indiana for cruelty to animals when a humane law enforcement officer saw him driving a horse-drawn carriage in which the horse appeared to be laboring in his gait. The officer stopped the vehicle and realized that the horse had been improperly shod. He ordered the mayor to immediately send his horse to a smith then report to the courthouse to answer an animal cruelty charge (*Afro-American*, 1910: 2).

Horses, the dominant mode of transportation for many and thus a near ubiquitous presence in early-twentieth century urban spaces, were the most common concern for adult animal cruelty charges.[4] As early as 1910, the *Chicago Defender* lamented "the way that horses are loaded down in Chicago," quickly becoming "a city of miserly ignorance" (*Chicago Defender*, 1910: 2). In June 1922, the *Afro* reported that Baltimore teamster John McGhee had been charged and fined fifty dollars for beating a horse (*Afro-American*, 1922: 14). In 1925, another,

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[4] For examples of coverage of the abuse of horses used for urban transportation and the punishment of that abuse, see *Afro-American*, 1920: 1; *Afro-American*, 1922: 14; *Afro-American*, 1925: A8; *Afro-American*, 1930: A18; *Afro-American*, 1931: 17; *Afro-American*, 1932, 5; *Afro-American*, 1932: 22; *Atlanta Daily World*, 1932: 1; *Atlanta Daily World*, 1932: 6A; *Atlanta Daily World*, 1935: 6; *Atlanta Daily World*, 1936: 1; New York *Amsterdam News*, 1927: 3; New York *Amsterdam News*, 1927: 4; New York *Amsterdam News*, 1930: 15; New York *Amsterdam News*, 1931: 1; *Chicago Defender*, 1910: 2; *Chicago Defender*, 1929: 1; *Chicago Defender*, 1930: 4.

Abee Johnson, faced the same charge after "beating a horse unmercifully." The ASPCA had to take the horse to its stables in an ambulance because of his wounds. When asked to explain, Johnson said that he "was in the express business"[5] (*Afro-American*, 1925: A8).

After his second offense for driving a lame horse in Chicago, one black New York teamster "pleaded that his employer forced him to drive the horse." His employer was white, but unlike many in his position appeared in court and paid his driver's fifteen dollar fine. It was the exception that seemed to prove a consistent and pervasive rule (*Amsterdam News*, 1927: 3). "The ancient southern joke about the black man who was hauled into court and fined for driving a white horse came true in Brooklyn Friday," the *Amsterdam News* reported in 1931. A black teamster was fined for driving two white horses, both with visible neck sores (*Amsterdam News*, 1931: 1).[6]

In 1932, Georgia's state humane officer warned Atlanta teamsters that there would be a crackdown on driving unshod horses on paved streets in Atlanta. He singled out coal and ice wagons as being the most common and notorious offenders and argued that the new emphasis would usher in "a crusade against cruelty to animals" in the city (*Atlanta Daily World*, 1932: 1). The *Atlanta Daily*

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[5] There were, of course, claims against defendants that were not the result of the greed or negligence of employers. That same month, the Afro reported on the fine of Walter Holland, arrested for driving an unshoed and limping horse while intoxicated (*Afro-American*, 1925: A16).

[6] The relationship between race and horse labor could also go the other way. During a horse epidemic of the early 1870s, for example, dispossessed humans often took the places of horses as teamsters. In Baltimore, black men hauled oysters; in San Francisco, Chinese men were those pressed into service. In Boston, New York, and other major cities, humans became the vehicles of transportation (Freeberg, 2020: 98-99). As the chain of being descended, the distinctions became more pronounced. As Kari Weil has explained, "The beautiful pure-bred horse would increasingly be a pampered pet and have little in common with the workhorses that drew heavy carriages through the city streets or descended deep into mines, rarely seeing daylight (2020: 10).

World was incredulous about the new ordinance. “Keep the horses rested and contented,” went one sarcastic editorial. “If their owners as a result either starve or become wards of the city, overlook it and think how the mares and mules will have been made happy!” What the city really needed, the paper argued, “is an organization for the prevention of cruelty to honest and hard working Negroes” (*Atlanta Daily World*, 1932, 6A).

Three years later, the Atlanta paper reported on a Memphis incident where members of the city’s SPCA shot and killed the “scrawny diseased horse driven by an aged Negro.” The thrust of the article argued that in so doing, the organization took away the livelihood of the poor, disabled man who was “engaged in honest toil” and not on depression relief. The account discussed the difficulty the man would now have in making a living without any consideration of the enfeebled situation of the horse or the SPCA’s decision as to a remedy (*Atlanta Daily World*, 1935: 6).

As Clay McShane and Joel Tarr have noted in their study of urban horses in the nineteenth century, the animals were considered by many to be technology more than sentient beings. They were machines, and those who profited from the use of those machines “compared them closely in terms of cost and efficiency to other animals, including humans, as well as a variety of mechanical technologies” (McShane and Tarr, 2010: 228).

This was a dilemma with high stakes entering the twentieth century. In the last thirty years of the nineteenth, the number of teamsters in Chicago grew by more than 675 percent, in Philadelphia by more than 350 percent. New York’s number grew by more than 300 percent, St. Louis’s by more than 240 percent, Baltimore’s by more than 150 percent. It was a population made up largely of lower

class black and Irish workers (McShane and Tarr, 2010: 232). While the horses themselves suffered horrid working conditions--they were unquestionably the real victims of urban transportation systems--life for the teamsters who drove them was certainly not ideal. They were vulnerable to the corporations who claimed to own the horses and demanded a level of care for the nonhuman animals that was not supervised and rarely enforced. In prosecutions for cruelty related to horse-driving, lameness and visible sores were common evidence of abuse, as was actual beating. “Also,” write McShane and Tarr, “horses suffered more in cold or rainy weather, and heat stroke increased mortality in the summer” (McShane and Tarr, 2010: 236; Davis, 2016: 97).

The ASPCA responded by prosecuting as many of the actions as possible (McShane and Tarr, 2010: 236; Beers, 2006: 43-44). Most of its prosecutions were directed at teamsters and at working-class violence against animals in general. “Its activities suggest a fight over public space, with the owners of corporate herds seeking control of workers and others seeking to make public spaces less violent and more comfortable.” (McShane and Tarr, 2010: 237) That fight often led to the arrest of teamsters who argued that it was the owners who were at fault. It was employers who provided lame or underfed horses, who required so much work from them that the teamsters had what they saw as no choice but to heavily whip horses to make deliveries on tight schedules. One teamster quoted his boss as telling him, “God damn you, buy whips and I will buy horses. When he is dead, I will give you another one” (McShane and Tarr, 2010: 237). Minority teamsters, then, saw themselves as an easy target that replaced the real culprits in the abuse of the urban horse population. As McShane and Tarr have argued, “The ASPCA did not lack a class agenda” (McShane and Tarr, 2010: 236).

That class agenda also understandably played out on a decidedly racial basis, as many working-class teamsters were black, and the vast majority of team owners were white. In New Orleans in 1919, for example, an SPCA officer arrested Henry Manuel, a driver for the Andrews Coal Company, for brutality toward his mule. Manuel was black, the SPCA officer, Albert Mulledy, was white, and soon after, Mulledy was arrested for his own brand of cruelty. In making the original charge, the SPCA man took Manuel's whip from him and attacked him with it, ostensibly to demonstrate how such attacks made the mule feel. "His heart went out in sympathy for the mule every time he took a good look at Manuel," he claimed. It was not an unusual sympathy in the face of witnessing animal abuse, but it was one that played out with a distinct racial coding in the southern city, leaving one to wonder if the retributive violence in addition to the arrest would have taken place if the perpetrator of the cruelty to the mule was white (*Chicago Defender*, 1919: 1).

That class agenda, and its concomitant racial component, could also manifest itself in the treatment of race horses. In August 1930, for example, a black horse handler at Saratoga was arrested after putting a sponge in the nose of a rival horse to stanch his breathing and slow him in a race. Though he was employed by a white stable-owner, it was only the handler who was arrested and sentenced to ninety days in jail (*Amsterdam News*, 1930: 15).

In 1925, the *Afro* printed an Associated Negro Press (ANP) report on a mule in Chester, Pennsylvania who had been traded from a farmer to a teenager.[7] His

[7] Formed in 1919 with eighty charter member papers, the Associated Negro Press was the original twentieth century attempt at a new grapevine that would bind the new diaspora that had begun to spread throughout the country. It was the *Chicago Defender*, Lawrence Hogan has explained, "along with the possibilities of a national black press it exemplified, that came to serve as the catalyst for the establishment of the Associated Negro Press." Emanating from Chicago under

parents couldn't afford to feed the mule, so the teen traded him to a friend, who traded him to another friend, and another, until the mule was left to wander without any food or shelter. ASPCA agents investigated and brought the mule's case before a judge who laid the blame at the feet of the original two traders. Their punishment was to share the cost of having the mule killed (*Afro-American*, 1925: 13). The story was a demonstration of the poverty that many rural black Americans felt even in the 1920s, a decade of supposed economic prosperity. It was also a demonstration of the general callousness to animals like mules by both locals and the courts. For locals, the mule was an expensive additional mouth to feed, for the courts he was a burden. For the black press, however, the story was a cautionary tale about rural poverty; the mule who could not find a home and was ultimately killed by court order because of that supposed failure was simply a lens through which to talk about specific human concerns.

The inconsistency of that message, however, would be one of its hallmarks. Another ANP report published in the *Afro* that same year lauded a black student in Richmond, Virginia, who won a poster contest for "Be Kind to Animals Day" sponsored by the ASPCA. He drew a dog sitting next to a globe, with the caption, "A Friend to the World" (*Afro-American*, 1925: 16). The press report celebrated both the boy and the sentiment in a manner that wasn't present when similar boys just north in Pennsylvania were trading a mule until the state ordered his death.

There were, however, different kinds of cruelty, levels of animal abuse that only rose from that of mule trading. In April 1920, the *Chicago Defender* reported

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the leadership of its founder, Claude Barnett, the ANP would make the growth of the black press through World War II possible. At the same time, however, that kind of service also priced out smaller papers that could never afford such luxuries. Scott would try to fill that gap essentially by using one ANP subscription for all of the papers he eventually printed, bringing him into regular conflict with Barnett (Hogan, 1984: 56-74).

on a Texas man who “collected all the neighbors’ kittens, skinned them and peddled the city with his wares, asking 25 cents a head under the pretense that the customer was purchasing a young squirrel.” He was so successful that he even began recruiting children to bring him more kittens. One of his white customers discovered the ruse and “grew wrathy when he found what he had been eating for good ‘country squirrel meat’.” He intended to kill the salesman before being convinced that the culprit would be prosecuted either for animal cruelty or for violating pure food standards. It was a crime that demonstrated a clear inconsistency involving human assumptions about cats and squirrels, but it also demonstrated an inconsistency in coverage. Despite the horrifying nature of the crime, the paper played the story for laughs. It was titled, “A Pupil of Barnum, Eh?” The perpetrator “didn’t have a tent, but he foooled ‘em good and plenty.” It was a tale that demonstrated the varying levels of species callousness inherent in human assumptions, the first between nonhuman species and the second between humans and nonhumans (*Chicago Defender*, 1920: 1).

The confusion continued the next year when the *Defender* reported positively on the SPCA working with Memorial Hospital to use radium to treat cancer in dogs, cats, and horses. “We treat them almost exactly as we treat human beings in similar circumstances,” explained a local doctor (*Chicago Defender*, 1921: 2). It was an appreciative account, one that treated with sympathy nonhuman animals ridden with serious illnesses, and one that was totally at odds with the paper’s kitten-killing coverage.

A similar seeming contradiction played out in the pages of the paper in 1923, when the *Defender* reported on a man coincidentally named George Washington who was arrested for starving his horse for fifteen days. He defended

himself by falsely claiming that he had been in jail for fifteen days, sentenced for playing craps. “The judge said this was the first time he had ever heard a George Washington tell a lie.” Again animal cruelty was an excuse for jokes (*Chicago Defender*, 1923: 13). The next year, however, the *Defender* reported with far more seriousness on an elderly North Carolina preacher convicted for failing to feed his chickens (*Chicago Defender*, 1924: 11). There seemed to be no consistent message in the presentation of animal cruelty arrests, newspapers like the *Defender* both promulgating and reifying the moral schizophrenia of its readers fraught relationships with nonhuman animals while at the same time hueing to its general concern for black vulnerability to a hungry white criminal justice system. (Such inconsistencies never disappeared and remain a contemporary phenomenon, an apparently inevitable aspect of human interactions with animals. See Herzog, 2010.)

The largest story in the country in 1925 was the Scopes Monkey Trial in Dayton, Tennessee. Millions around the country followed the case that sought to adjudicate whether teaching evolution would be allowed in Tennessee public schools.[8] An editorial in the *Afro* argued that any case that compared monkeys to white southerners was one that should be prosecuted by the ASPCA. “For

[8] Tennessee passed a law that forbade teaching “any theory that denies the story of the divine creation of man as taught in the Bible.” Worried about the precedent the law would set against the First Amendment. The American Civil Liberties Union, founded by white liberals during the Red Scare of 1919, convinced a twenty-four-year-old biology teacher named John T. Scopes to teach evolution so that a test case could be established in court. William Jennings Bryan announced that he would help prosecute Scopes, and Clarence Darrow announced he would lead the defense. Bryan and Darrow had been Progressives and friends, and remained friends, but took opposing sides in the trial. Scopes was convicted, but Darrow convinced the judge to let Bryan testify as an “expert on the Bible.” It wouldn’t have any bearing on the case, but he made Bryan and fundamentalist thought look inconsistent, and he forced Bryan to admit that the “truth” of the Bible was not always easy to determine. The case became known as the “trial of the century” and captured the attention of the nation (Larson, 2006).

manifestly when you accuse monkeys of being related to ordinary politicians and lynchers, the slander is against the monkey, and the animal is the one who ought to be defended." After all, the editorial concluded, "Whoever heard of a monkey that would side up with race prejudice in Florida? Whoever heard of a monkey that would burn another monkey alive? Whoever heard of any monkey business like that going on in Tennessee now?" (Pickens, 1925: 10) It was yet another strategy in the arsenal of the black press when engaging with animal cruelty--using nonhuman animals as a comparative model to belittle the racist positions of the white South.

Of course, the comparison only worked in that situation, one in which nonhuman animals were not actively being abused. Most of the time when the names of various SPCAs were involved, animals were suffering in real time. In early 1928, for example, the *Afro* reported on two teenagers who rode in "their junk wagons" and held de facto chariot races across Baltimore's Hanover Street Bridge. The horses were obviously malnourished. One was missing a shoe. Both teenagers were charged with animal cruelty and fined. In front of the judge, one of the teenagers tried to excuse his actions by claiming "that old nag of mine was going so fast that he ran clean out of that shoe." The judge was not amused. "Well, young man," he said, "I'm going to put you where you can slow down awhile unless you have one dollar and costs" (*Afro-American*, 1928: 18).

Later that year, there was a movement in one Baltimore neighborhood to acquire land purchased by the ASPCA for a dog shelter because the neighborhood wanted more park space. The *Afro* presented the debate as highlighting the need for more parks within the city limits, arguing that too many new parks were being built outside of town where only people who owned automobiles could attend. "The

question of outlying and inlying play spaces" demonstrated a racial disparity in how the city alloted parks money, the paper explained, but it ignored any consequences of the potential abandonment of a shelter designed to aid homeless animals. In racial debates, concern for nonhumans ceased to be a priority unless it was metaphorical (Jones, 1928: 6).

That said, there was black activism for animals. In June 1928, Mary Church Terrell discussed the issue in her column in the *Chicago Defender*. "There is no trait in our character which needs to be developed more than the one which prompts us to be kind to animals." She praised the work of the SPCA, "but much remains to be done." She described seeing men "beating their horses because the poor animals have not the strength to pull the heavy loads imposed upon them." Terrell did not make an explicit connection to team owners, but did encourage her readers to give horse abusers "a word of remonstrance given with politeness and tact." It was everyone's duty "to protect all animals as much as we can." One of the things that everyone could do was "persuade mothers that it is not cute in their children to pull a cat's tail or to tie a tin can to a dog's tail to scare him to death and see him run till he falls from exhaustion" (Terrell, 1928a: A2). Terrell was a long-standing activist for civil rights, women's sufferage, and black education. She had been a founding member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the National Association of College Women. She was co-founder and first president of the National Association of Colored Women (Jones, 1982: 20-33). She was, in other words, a voice with credibility when speaking to black audiences. Terrell's was a rare sustained plea for decency to nonhuman animals. It was powerful because of Terrell's fame and influence, but it was also

powerful because of its rarity. The black press did not often feature that kind of advocacy.

In another of her columns that summer, Terrell praised Italian general Umberto Nobile who announced that he was "opposed in principle to killing animals." He urged people to "cultivate kindness to animals and then we will refrain from taking their lives."[9] That kind of kindness then, could spread to humans and thus end the need for war. Terrell had nothing but praise for the sentiment (Terrell, 1928b: A2).

In 1929, a new high school in Wilmington, Delaware opened for black students. At a cost of one million dollars donated by the DuPont family, it was "the most adequately equipped secondary school for Negroes in the country." New Howard High School, named for Oliver O. Howard, who led the postbellum Freedmen's Bureau and founded Howard University, was fitted out with a variety of donations, including books presented by representatives of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (*Afro-American*, 1929: 8). Pro-animal programs for students, however, extended beyond the boundaries of Delaware and beyond book donations. National Humane Week was held in early May each year "for the purpose of encouraging kindness to dumb animals." Programs at public schools and radio discussions from the ASPCA helped highlight the cause of animal kindness (Harres, 1930: 5; *Atlanta Daily World*, 1936: 1; New York *Amsterdam News*, 1928: 8).

Of course, human students were important, but organizations like the ASPCA were even more interested in the animals they sought to protect. "If you

[9] Nobile became famous as an international aviator, airplane designer, and explorer (Cameron, 2017).

are one of those Harlem owners of dogs or cats, or any other kind of animal for that matter (mere man alone accepted)," announced the New York *Amsterdam News* in 1931, "you will be interested to know that there is an agency in the city which provides shelter, medical and surgical treatment, and other care for such animals which certainly surpasses that afforded man, a destitute Harlemite during these days of depression." That agency was the ASPCA headquarters at Madison and Twenty-Sixth, and the full article gave the organization's work in Harlem helpful publicity (Moon, 1931: 9).

And publicity for anti-animal cruelty organzations was always necessary. Also in 1931, the *Afro-American* reported on the Des Moines, Iowa divorce proceedings of a husband and wife after the husband shot and killed his wife's pet dog, arguing that she paid too much attention to the dog and not enough attention to him. The wife sued for divorce on the grounds of cruelty to animals. Despite the horrific nature of the story, the *Afro* played it for laughs. "How many husbands would like to do the same thing, even though wifie said, 'No doggie, no wifie'?" (*Afro-American*, 1931: 20; Bryan, 1930: A1; *Pittsburgh Courier*, 1931: 3). Even though the story was important enough and grotesque enough to include in the limited space of the weekly paper, it fell somewhere within a liminal space of grotesquery that allowed it to be considered funny, even by a media outlet that was stumping for National Humane Week.

In another story two years later, the paper reported on two Philadelphia women arguing over ownership of a dog in court, one suing the other for stealing her dog. "Both claimed ownership of a frisky poodle dog," the story explained, "which, like a good Mormon, loved both devotedly." The two also differed on the supposed age of the poodle, so the judge ruled that Dr. James Cooke, who headed

the city's Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, would examine the dog, determine an age, and the woman with the closer guess would be ruled custodian. Again the story was played for laughs, despite the lawsuit and the animal's life that hung in the balance (*Afro-American*, 1933: 6).

A *Chicago Defender* story that year was less funny. A Brooklyn man got drunk and killed his family dog, breaking the dog's ribs and legs. The judge sentenced the man to four months in prison. "I can understand a man setting fire to a house, or committing a robbery, or even murdering a man in the heat of passion," the judge said. "But I cannot see or believe how a man would actually kill a harmless animal, especially if that animal is a faithful dog" (*Chicago Defender*, 1933: 17). The judge was less able than his journalistic counterparts to find humor in family-based animal attacks, and the press report followed his lead in tone and tenor.

Such incredulity changed, however, when animal relations were compared to human relations (See Jackson, 2020; Johnson, 2019). That year, the *Defender* reported on the Nazi policy that banned experimentation on animals. Of course, "they still experiment on genus humanum, if the variety happens not to be Germanic-Nordic. But no vivisections are to be allowed on such critters as rats, mice, rabbits, guinea pigs and dogs." The article explained the racism of Hitler's government and its potential consequences for "Jews, Negroes and Communists," using nonhuman animals as comparative models to heighten the fear and revulsion insinuated by the article (Pickens, 1933: 10).

It was a common theme in the black press. "When you think in terms of Christianity it is strange that of the many so-called Christians about us, there is never anyone to raise his voice in protest of the inhuman treatment of Negroes at

the hands of our officers and courts," wrote one correspondent to the *Pittsburgh Courier*. "These Chrisitans form societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, but acquiesce in cruelty to men--if they are black" (Roberson, 1934: A2).[10]

The *Courier* endorsed the sentiment. The month following Roberson's letter, the paper reported on a white preacher in Oklahoma who threw a dog out of his church and suffered a public shaming for the act. The article compared the furor to the total lack of action following a lynching in Hernando, Mississippi. "I don't believe in cruelty to animals," the author wrote, "neither do I believe in condoning crime, but I do believe that the time spent in praying for dogs, etc., should be spent in praying for the souls of our youngsters" (Dillett, 1934: A2). Animal protection, in this view, was a zero sum game, a Sophie's choice where one could not pray for both adult dogs and adolescent humans at the same time. This kind of false dichotomy, along with the argumentative shift in the trajectory of coverage, put the papers in difficult argumentative positions when covering animal cruelty.

In June 1934, for example, the New York *Amsterdam News* incredulously reported on an organ-grinder fined five dollars for "having a woolen jacket on his monkey in summer" while on the same day a black man in Texas was lynched. And for that crime, "there won't be even the $5 fine. Thus putting aside all quibbling

[10] A decade later, during World War II, Langston Hughes introduced a character named Jesse B. Semple in a column he wrote for the Chicago Defender. Semple, a kind of black everyman, commented on issues of the day and demonstrated the longevity of such thinking. When told by a friend, "You cannot dislike *all* white people for what the bad ones do," Semple makes the case that exceptions prove the rule. He describes watching a documentary about wildlife protection. "This film showed how they put aside a thousand acres out West where the buffaloes roam and nobody can shoot a single one of them. If they do, they get in jail." It was, he argued, decidedly "more than the government does for me or my kinfolks down South." He suggested creating "Game Preserves for Negroes," a "place where we can go and nobody can jump on us and beat us, neither lynch us nor Jim Crow us every day. Colored folks rate as much protection as buffalo." It was a new version of an older rhetorical strategy (Hughes, 1961: 61-62).

about states' rights, and getting down to actual fact, it is a greater evil to make a monkey uncomfortable than to commit murder" (Rogers, 1934: 8). Animal cruelty was the foil by which the lack of accountability for racist violence could be compared.[11]

As the pendulum of the paper's moral concern continued to swing, animal cruelty was also an end in itself. On the *Afro*'s "junior" page, geared toward young readers, one article that year told about the city dog shelter, raving about the accommodations for stray dogs. It explained that Baltimore paid $18,500 to the local SPCA to operate the shelter, remove sick or dead dogs from human homes, prosecute cases of cruelty to animals, and prosecute cases of hit-and-run accidents affecting nonhuman animals. The article assured its junior readers that "stray dogs are kept for four days, after which time an attempt is made to find a good home. There is no limit to the time a good pet will be cared for. Here every dog gets a break and every day is dog day" (*Afro-American*, 1936: 19).

In January 1936, the *Afro* reported on a rabies outbreak among dogs in Philadelphia, leading to a one hundred-day quarantine for dogs in the city. The city's SPCA along with groups like the Animal Rescue League picked up roughly 150 stray dogs, finding rabies in at least four. Their devotion to preventing cruelty, however, was questionable, as "dogs picked up without licenses will be held only 24 hours before being killed. Owners of licensed dogs will be notified and given a definite time to call for their dogs before they are killed" (*Afro-American*, 1936: 14). Yet again the wellbeing of nonhuman animals was viewed only through a lens built

[11] Still, it was the same paper that hosted pet shows and animal photo contest to be judged by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (New York *Amsterdam News*, February 1935: 4; March 1935: 4; April 1935: 1).

by the wellbeing and convenience of human animals deemed to be potentially susceptible to disease.[12]

That emphasis on judging animals through a lens of human needs remains in the present, and is even a constituent element of the human-animal studies landscape today. Gwendolyn Blue and Melanie Rock have emphasized such dilemmas in particular relation to zoonotic diseases, arguing for a trans-biopolitics that "classif[ies] and evaluat[es] life as it unfolds in complex, technologically-mediated networks" in aid of "challeng[ing] the focus on human populations that lies at the core of much biopolitical scholarship." (Blue and Rock, 2010: 354, 355) Samantha Hurn and Alexander Badman-King have dealt more pragmatically with the human lens in relation to palliative end-of-life care as a corrective to euthenasia for pets often killed more for human convenience than for medical need. (Hurn and Badman-King, 2019) With the priority of human well-being still dominant in a field designed to acknowledge and analyze the human-animal relationship, its ubiquity in the early century African-American press remained a near certainty.

That lens created a speciesist field of vision that black newspapers hued to consistently, just as did the vast majority of Americans. Even the ASPCA, the Animal Rescue League, and other humane organizations saw their efforts as creating an easier life for nonhuman animals without liberating those animals from their forced labor or their march to the slaughterhouse. When even those organizations advocating for animals still accepted the biopolitical frame of human supremacy, the idea that another group dispossessed by that same system would

[12] Concerns about rabies in city dogs were not rare. In 1932, the New York *Amsterdam News* warned of a similar potential outbreak in Harlem. "Prevention is the best safeguard against this disease," wrote Lucien Brown, arguing that dogs should be "muzzled at all times while on the streets" (Brown, 1932: 9). See also West, 1939: 11; Burley, 1931: 9.

be able to see beyond it in the cause of a radically different group was unlikely at best.

When accounts of animal cruelty in the newspapers are taken in the aggregate, the underlying fact pattern that conditioned the coverage becomes clearer. The bulk of articles concerned animal cruelty arrests of black suspects and comparisons of animal advocacy to African American rights advocacy. Filtering animal cruelty discussions through the lens of primary concern for human rights ultimately gave the coverage its slipshod appearance in relation to nonhuman animals themselves. Consistency in one area was generative of inconsistency in another, demonstrating the interrelatedness of consequences in discussions of race and species.

Table 1: REPRESENTATIONS OF "CRUELTY TO ANIMALS," PRESENTED IN SIX NEWSPAPERS FROM 1893-1939

	ONE	TWO	THREE	FOUR	FIVE	SIX	SEVEN	EIGHT	NINE	TEN	ELEVEN	TWELVE	THIRTEEN
Baltimore Afro-American	4	4	0	0	5	21	1	3	2	2	2	2	2
Atlanta Daily World	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
New York Amsterdam News	1	3	3	4	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Chicago Defender	2	4	0	0	1	12	5	2	0	0	2	1	6
Pittsburgh Courier	3	1	0	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	3	0	0
Los Angeles Sentinel	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

1. Protection of animals compared to protection of black lives
2. Black participation in preventing or advocating against animal cruelty
3. Newspaper sponsorship of pet shows/photograph contests
4. Direct SPCA advocacy in black communities
5. The need to be kind to animals

6. Arrest/court appearance/fine/jail for animal cruelty
7. Animal cruelty and prevention overseas
8. Sarcasm in presentation of animal kindness
9. Animal advocacy as getting in the way of benefits to black lives
10. Animal advocates aiding black causes
11. Incidental mention
12. Animal cruelty in film or fiction
13. ASPCA and animal control and aid

The newspapers in the study also featured substantial commentary on vegetarianism. Vegetarians had always been a part of the American project. Benjamin Franklin spent much of his life as a vegetarian (Iacobbo and Iacobbo, 2004: 1-2). One of the most influential of the early vegetarians in the United States was Amos Bronson Alcott, an ally of Ralph Waldo Emerson and a leading Transcendentalist thinker (Francis, 2010; Iacobbo and Iacobbo, 2004: 60-61). The mantle was then taken by American followers of British reformer Henry Stephens Salt, who described an effort "to do justice to the lower races" (Salt, 1894: 8; see Chapter 4). The talk of "justice to the lower races" seemed to augur the possibility of a union between black activism and a vegetarian diet, and in the nineteenth century the coverage of vegetarianism in the black press would seem to back that possibility. That would change in the twentieth century, however, as black press coverage of vegetarianism swung on much the same pendulum as its coverage of animal cruelty.

As early as 1896, the Baltimore *Afro-American* reprinted an article from the *Westminster Review* extolling the virtues of a vegetarian diet. "We never seem to realize that a large proportion of the inhabitants of the country are practically vegetarians at the present moment," the article claimed, describing the poor who

had trouble affording meat products. “It is true that they are compulsorily so, but the fact remains.” That diet was not necessarily of their choosing, but “our laborers who have subsisted on this diet for generations are strong.” (*Afro-American*, 1896: 2) The article pointed out other predominantly meatless diets among the Russian peasantry, among Arabs and Sudanese, Zulus, Hindus, and Japanese, all productive and healthy groups. “In the face of these facts, the mere random assertion sometimes made that vegetarians are subject to ‘poorness of blood, must be taken for what it is worth” (*Afro-American*, 1896: 2).

It was a remarkable admission, or at least an admission the paper was remarkably willing to reprint, considering the wide berth given to coverage of animal cruelty. In this early period, however, the *Afro* seemed sympathetic to vegetarianism. In a 1901 article reprinted from the *New York Sun* about the tendency of many fish toward a vegetarian diet, the paper noted “that all animal life is supported directly or indirectly from the soil. The food of all animals is vegetation or other animals which live on vegetation. Thus all animal life rests on a vegetable basis” (*Afro-American*, 1901: 3). An article in the paper the following year described the success of a vegetarian in an endurance running race from Berlin to Dresden in which he defeated a meat-eater by travelling 125 miles in twenty-seven hours (*Afro-American*, 1902: 2).

The *Afro* reported in 1903 on a seeming explosion in the number of vegetarian restaurants in New York. The dishes featured steak, roast beef, and other meats, “yet the manager will tell you that you have not tasted animal flesh throughout the meal. Artful use of butter, milk, vegetables and nuts has deceived you.” The restaurants provided “a much pleasanter meal” than “the average ‘quick lunch’ room.” It was a clear endorsement of vegetarian fare, even though that

endorsement was not based on kindness to or personhood of animals (*Afro-American*, 1903: 7).

In 1904, the paper advocated vegetarianism as a fix for women's complexions. Problematic skin was based on diet, and "in the abandonment of a meat diet and substitution of a vegetable one lies her salvation." It was a truism, the article argued, that "any woman, be her skin beautiful or faulty, who will faithfully try a course of fruit and vegetable diet, including grain foods, and milk, will so speedily observe an augmentation of her charms of coloring, as well as of complexion texture, that she will never return to the old diet" (*Afro-American*, 1904: 3).

It was a presentation that supported vegetarianism without much question. When the paper didn't have to grapple with the consequences of actual animal cruelty, particularly the cruelty involved in the processing of meat, it could unapologetically report on the benefits of the lifestyle. "The school of uncompromising vegetarians boast about 300,000,000 converts, or nearly 20 per cent of the human race," the *Afro* explained in 1905, "and porkophobia is by no means confined to the devotes of Islam and its sister creed; the Parsees have it and the Druses of Mount Lebanon, also several tribes of the semi-Christian Abysinians"[13] (*Afro-American*, 1905: 6). It was a seeming endorsement, demonstrating a respect for vegetarianism. But 1905 proved to be the fulcrum when the paper's coverage first moved in the other direction. Soon after the article appeared, for example, another account of an annual dinner of the London

[13] The same year, the paper reported that famous soprano Emma Eames had become a vegetarian, demonstrating that American celebrities were just as susceptible to the benefits of vegetarianism (*Afro-American*, 1905: 6).

vegetarian association made a joke of the event. “There were Wallaceites, who will not eat salt or bread made with yeast; Haigites, who are forbidden peas and beans, and Allinsonites, to whom tea is poison,” the paper claimed. “The chef was set a difficult task, but he acquitted himself with distinction, and only the extremists grumbled” (*Afro-American*, 1905: 8).

It was in 1905 that Upton Sinclair’s *The Jungle* first appeared in the *Appeal to Reason*, a socialist newspaper in Kansas. Its success would lead to its full publication the following year by Doubleday, and with it came new scrutiny on the meat industry in the United States (Arthur, 2006: 59-84; see Chapter 4). There is no specific evidence tying that new actual awareness to the change in coverage, but it is certain that there was a change in coverage on the rare occassions that the papers discussed vegetarianism, as reporting vascillated between approval and dissent of the practice. There was in the coverage of vegetarianism a more pronounced moral schizophrenia, as the newspapers demonstrated less of a guiding principle in conditioning their analysis than they did when treating animal cruelty.

In a 1907 bible lesson published in the *Afro*, for example, the author acknowledges that a reader of Genesis 1:29 “might be led to suppose that the writer was announcing a vegetarian diet as a divine decree,” but dismisses such suppositions out of hand without really making a case against it. “It is likely that in the peaceful early days they did like the fruits of the earth,” he said, “but the writer cannot be accused of making a pro vegetarian argument” (*Afro-American*, 1907: 6). In the same edition, the paper reprinted a *London News* article that gave results from a supposed medical experiment. “If vegetarians would eat their vegetables

and say less about it they would do well," the article claimed. "Many vegetarians were not as robust mentally as physically" (*Afro-American*, 1907: 7).

In January 1909, however, the paper reported on 113-year-old Goddard E. Diamond, a Los Angeles vegetarian who had helped build the country's first railroad. The inherent message of the brief piece was that vegetarianism could increase longevity (*Afro-American*, 1909: 7). The following year, it was even more direct. "A change of diet is a good thing," went one statement. "Most people eat too much meat; a vegetarian diet also is a good thing. Beef trusts will then fail" (Beckett, 1910: 4).

Again, though, when it came to this particular form of coverage, there was no determinative framework of consistency. Just three months after its advocacy of the vegetarian diet, the *Afro* reprinted a *New York Press* editorial that argued that "vegetarians are sentimentalists." Science did not justify vegetarian advocacy, the article proclaimed. Animal advocates often pointed to vegetarian peasants in places like Norway and Sweden, but the comparison wasn't valid. When such Scandinavian vegetarians arrived as immigrants to the United States, "their lungs melt away like ice cream in hungry boys." The science behind the lung-melting claim was not cited, but the new message was now one clearly opposed to vegetarianism (*Afro-American*, 1910: 6).

Two years later, the pendulum swung again, an *Afro* article defending vegetarians against the charge that "the non-flesh eater is a 'mollycoddle'." In fact, many "would change their diet and other habits if they had the courage needed" (Allen, 1912: 2). Such was the nature of black press coverage. In 1913, the *Chicago Defender* published an article on the variety of different diets in the world. It cited a Philadelphia doctor who advised that people "should live entirely on a

vegetarian diet and never touch meat in any circumstances." In opposition to vegetarian advocacy in the same article, the paper cited "a New York Woman" who "believes that there is nothing like fine chops and glasses of beer." It created a false equivalency that conflated a considered medical opinion with that of a non-expert specifically because the non-expert advocated the common American diet, and it was a demonstration of that pendulum swing in microcosm (*Chicago Defender*, 1913: 3).

The following year, for example, the paper seemed again to back the medical benefits of vegetarianism by arguing that vegetarian hearts beat on average fifty-eight times per minute, "while that of the meat eater averages 72, a difference of 20,000 beats in 24 hours" (*Chicago Defender*, 1914: 6). In 1915, however, the paper published an anecdote of a woman rejecting vegetarianism for her family. "Couldn't think of it," she said. "What I'm tryin' to do now is to persuade John to take to beefsteak and quit tryin' to live on liquor and tobacco" (*Chicago Defender*, 1915: 4). Avoiding harm to nonhuman animals, the message went, was a luxury that most simply did not have.

But it was something that humankind had done before. In an article about medical and anatomical curiosities, the *Defender* explained that the human appendix "we could do quite well without. It is a relic from old vegetarian days. It has been workless ever since mankind started meat eating and is apt to get in the way" (*Chicago Defender*, 1915: 6). Inherent in the claim was an assumption that early humans were vegetarian, a claim that was in many cases true, but one that is still being adjudicated today (Weyrich, et al., 2017; Robinson, et al., 2017; Melamed, et al., 2016). It was, in that sense, a backhanded accidental endorsement of the vegetarian diet.

But once again that message changed four years later, when an article in the *Defender* explicitly stated, “We do not advise any of our readers to become VEGETARIANS.” It was better instead to adopt a mixed diet that included meat and vegetables (Williams, 1919: 20). Three years after that, in 1922, the paper tried to have it both ways, arguing that a man of sedentary occupation, such as a bookkeeper, needs to eat more meat in order to provide bodily warmth than a man engaged in hard outdoor labor.” An outdoor laborer, however, “is kept warm by his hard work and should have more of a vegetarian diet” (*Chicago Defender*, 1922: 13).

Celebrity only exacerbated such confusions. In December 1924, for example, Theodore “Tiger” Flowers fought former middleweight champion Johnny Wilson in Madison Square Garden and received the requisite press (*Chicago Defender*, 1924: 1, 10). Tiger Flowers was a boxer from Camilla, Georgia who rose through the ranks in the early 1920s. After defeating Wilson, Flowers would be declared *Ring* magazine’s number-one contender for Harry Greb’s middleweight title. “He is a strict vegetarian,” the *Afro* reported in its description of his knockout victory, “and opposed to meat in any form” (Mackey, 1924: 5). James J. Corbett, famed former heavyweight champion, wrote a biographical piece for King Features Syndicate printed in the *Defender* that assumed Flowers was “the only strict vegetarian in the ring game. He will not eat meat of any sort because of an aversion to eating the flesh of anything that has been killed” (Corbett, 1924: 10). That emphasis on the ethics of animal consumption was a shift from the common press mentions that focused on the potential health benefits of the practice.

Having a legitimate black contender was important in Jim Crow America and sports pages often featured Flowers’s exploits, and almost as often featured his

vegetarianism (Kaye, 2004: 110). The “Georgia Deacon,” as Flowers was known, finally got his shot at the title in March 1926 (*Afro* Sports Editor, 1926: 8). He had lost to Greb on points in years past, though the media and Greb himself thought he won that first fight. “Flowers is the greatest boxer I ever faced in the ring,” said Greb. “He can beat Heavyweight Jack Dempsey in a contest of ten rounds” (Mackey, 1924: 5). It was high praise, and Flowers lived up to it by winning the title in 1926 and becoming the first black middleweight champion. He would die unexpectedly in November 1927 from complications from a seemingly simple surgery, but in his short time at the top of the boxing mountain, his reign was itself an advertisement in the black press for the benefits of vegetarianism (Kaye, 2004: 141-143).

The *Defender* also carried features on the House of David baseball team, a white group representing an obscure Michigan religious sect that barnstormed throughout the country playing all of the major and minor Negro Leagues baseball teams. The team was known for the long beards of the players and its strict adherence to vegetarian principles based on both the biblical mandate not to kill and on Isaiah 66:3, “He who slaughters an ox is like one who kills a man; he who sacrifices a lamb, like one who breaks a dog’s neck.” The baseball team was talented and one of the only white teams consistently playing against black teams, giving it plenty of attention in the black press, attention that almost always mentioned the team’s vegetarianism (*Chicago Defender*, 1922a: 10; *Chicago Defender*, 1922b: 10; Siriano, 2007).

There were also female vegetarian athletic stars in the black community. Ella Abel won the national golf championship in 1934. The Indianapolis woman had only been playing professionally for a year when her victory came, and every

mention of her success included her short career, her history as a multi-sport athlete who had until discovering golf preferred volleyball, and her vegetarianism (Johnson, 1934: 7; *Afro-American*, 1934: 21).

In 1934, meanwhile, the *Atlanta Daily World* told a story that seemed to belie the athletic success of black vegetarians. It was the account of an African-American woman in England who met a group of Indian students while there. The Indians complained that they were "a worn out race. Vegetarianism and religious fasting have reduced us from men to spirits." On the other hand, they said, "You American Negroes have your splendid bodies. Your men are great, strong, handsome men." The black woman was circumspect in response. "Our ancestors were not vegetarians." The honesty of this portrayal is questionable at best, but its message is not. Vegetarianism creates weakness, and it is not part of the black legacy (*Atlanta Daily World*, 1934: 2).

It may, however, have been part of the biblical legacy. That year the *Defender* published a lengthy analysis of the Bible's relationship with vegetarianism, a revision of the 1907 exegesis featured in the *Afro*. It included no advocacy for the diet, to be sure, but noted that carnivorousness in humans does not appear in the Bible until after the great flood. The Israelites became meat-eaters during their time in Egyptian captivity. Jesus, the analysis claimed, ate fish "in the immortal state after the resurrection," leaving the author admitting that arguments for vegetarianism were strong, but it was not necessary for salvation (Holliday, 1934: A5). In many earlier chain of being debates, religion served as a functional code for civilization, and that ethos was also, perhaps inevitably, part of vegetarian discussions.

Hearst columnist Arthur Brisbane, for example, insulted Ethiopians in 1935 by referring to them as "hippopotamus-eating barbarians," and *Amsterdam News* columnist Theophilus Lewis took him to task. Americans "love to devour the corpses of cows, swine and chickens. The French eat frogs and snails." After all, "the kind of dead animal a man eats has nothing to do with the level of civilization he has reached. If consuming flesh is a mark of barbarism, the only civilized people are vegetarians and Bernard Shaw ought to be emperor of the world"[14] (Lewis, 1935: 8).

In 1938, author Sara Neely wrote in the *Afro* about a variety of "diet fads," including vegetarianism. Adherents were "sure that the eating of meat is a deterrant [*sic*] to health, and they go to all sorts of extremes to make what they call delectable dishes and what I sometimes call, messes" (Neely, 1938: 6). But such insults were followed by articles that called into question that original skepticism. In 1939, the *Afro* reported on fifty-three year old Joseph B. Mason, a vegetarian first-time competitor who successfully completed the Baltimore Marathon against much younger and more experienced competition (Carter, 1939: 23). The coverage did not emphasize his vegetarianism, but in bringing it up and citing it as a contributor to his success, it helped normalize the practice and provide a quasi-endorsement of its benefits. The paper's next edition featured a full profile of Mason's diet and training regimen. "Under no circumstances does he eat meat, and has not touched the part of any animal in two years." He entered the race specifically "in hopes that his feat would exemplify his kind of living as the right kind." The paper marveled that he "has never been sick" and gave his life and accomplishments full

[14] George Bernard Shaw was an influential Irish playwright known in particular for his vegetarianism (Peters, 1996; Holroyd, 1997).

biographical treatment (Carter, 1939: 21). It was another in the many turns of vegetarian portrayals—this one toward its positive aspects—turns that, unlike the myriad back-and-forths of animal abuse coverage, had no guiding argumentative thread, largely because animal abuse was ubiquitous, a constituent part of everyone's lives, while vegetarianism was something viewed from afar, a seemingly foreign anomoly for most of the papers' readers.

Table 2: REPRESENTATIONS OF "VEGETARIAN," PRESENTED IN SIX NEWSPAPERS FROM 1893-1939

	ONE	TWO	THREE	FOUR	FIVE	SIX	SEVEN	EIGHT	NINE	TEN	ELEVEN	TWELVE	THIRTEEN
Afro-American	7	1	3	0	7	0	3	0	4	6	1	1	4
Atlanta Daily World	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1
New York Amsterdam News	0	0	1	9	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Chicago Defender	3	0	1	1	7	2	5	1	7	11	2	1	1
Pittsburgh Courier	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	3	7	0	0	1
Los Angeles Sentinel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

1. Vegetarian diet as beneficial
2. Complimentary coverage of vegetarian restaurants
3. Vegetarian Recipes
4. Vegetarian food advertisements
5. Vegetarian celebrities
6. Vegetarianism as element of charitable people
7. Vegetarianism in other animals
8. Ethics of vegetarianism
9. Vegetarianism overseas
10. Vegetarians in metaphor or played for humor
11. Vegetarianism and the Bible / history
12. Vegetarianism and Seventh Day Adventist Church
13. Negative depictions of vegetarianism

Less interesting to the black press but still present in its coverage was the phenomenon of vivisection and the campaign against it. Animal testing began in earnest during Reconstruction following the Civil War. Inspired by Britain's 1876 Cruelty to Animals Act, which began the nation's attempt to regulate animal testing, the American Anti-Vivsection Society was founded in Philadelphia in 1883 first to place restrictions on animal testing and later to ban it altogether. The group was, like so many similar organizations of the period, organized and funded by middle and upper-class whites (Davis, 2016: 51-59; Beers, 2006: 46). Thus the movement was, if not anathema, then at least foreign to a black population dealing with the onset of Jim Crow segregation laws and southern voting restrictions.

In 1901, the *Afro-American* reported on Massachusetts passing the first law prohibiting vivisection in schools (*Afro-American*, 1901: 3).[15] In 1930, it reported on a Baltimore woman's offer to sell herself to a hospital for experimental purposes. She wanted $5,000 to become the subject of vivisection. It was less a protest against vivisection, however, than one against the slow progress of the Baltimore police department in solving the murder of the woman's sister and nephew (*Afro-American*, 1930: 6).

In 1936, the president of the Maryland Anti-Vivisection Society published a letter in the *Afro*. "Every year more and more vivisection is practiced and now the courses in our public high schools here in Maryland include vivisection. Can't something be done about it?" The article claimed that vivisection did gross harm to children and asked the paper to publicize facts about the practice to keep it in the

[15] And, of course, the American anti-vivisection relationship with Britain would continue. See the Brown Dog riots of 1907 discussed in Chapter 2.

public eye (Martin, 1936: 4). While it publicized the letter, however, the newspaper never further publicized facts about vivisection. None of the black newspapers did. It was a subject that was discussed briefly and discarded. Such was what the vivisectionists wanted, to keep animal testing out of the public eye and therefore out of mind. The black press, whether wittingly or unwittingly, obliged.

Table 3: REPRESENTATIONS OF “VIVISECTION,” PRESENTED IN SIX NEWSPAPERS FROM 1893-1939

	ONE	TWO	THREE	FOUR	FIVE	SIX	SEVEN	EIGHT	NINE	TEN	ELEVEN
Afro-American	2	1	1	1	0	1	4	2	1	0	0
New York Amsterdam News	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Chicago Defender	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Pittsburgh Courier	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0

1. Celebrities against vivisection
2. Vivisection laws
3. Cosmetic vivisection
4. Negative depictions of vivisection
5. Positive depictions of vivisection
6. Advocacy of vivisection on criminals instead of animals
7. Vivisection played for laughs
8. Anti-vivisection groups
9. Anti-vivisection protests
10. Vivisection in non-animal context
11. Vivisection and Nazis

While the black press discussed various aspects of animal issues, the animal press was also commenting on race. One of the leading publications of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries was *Our Dumb Animals*, a publication

founded in 1868 by George T. Angell and presented by the American Humane Education Society, the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (MSPCA), and the American Band of Mercy. Angell was a Boston lawyer who devoted much of his life to animal welfare, working across the United States and England. He had been decidedly opposed to slavery, but had, like most white Americans in the nineteenth century, a complicated relationship with race, one visible in his editorial choices for his organization's magazine (Davis, 2016: 26-27, 42-44; Beers, 2006: 48-50).

In March 1892, *Our Dumb Animals* described a black teamster who actively stopped his boss from whipping his mules. The sentiment demonstrated that black teamsters, who were usually scapegoated as perpetrators of animal abuse, were also the ones who stopped it. At the same time, however, the magazine clearly played on racial tropes. "Hole on dar, boss, don't whip dem mules," the dialogue went. "Who curry dese mules down ebery morning? Who gib dem dere oats twice er day? Who takes 'em to der spring? What yer hitched to dids wagon for, anyhow? Jes you stop fooling, and take it out of dis mud good and quick" (*Our Dumb Animals*, 1892: 115). It was a demonstration that while the organization was willing to report on the positive actions of black teamsters in the face of generally negative publicity, it also carried a substantial racist bias in its portrayal of black speech patterns and accents.

The year prior, the magazine argued that *Black Beauty* did for horses what *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, "Harriet Beecher Stowe's world-renowned pen picture of the negro," did for slaves (*Our Dumb Animals*, 1891: 46). It was a comparison more apt than it might originally seem. At the time of its publication in 1877, Anna Sewell's children's pseudo-autobiographical novel about the life of Black Beauty

was advertised as “The Uncle Tom’s Cabin of the Horse.” It was, like Stowe’s novel, best-selling popular fiction in aid of a political cause. Throughout *Black Beauty*, the title character suffers abuse at the hands of a cruel owner and suffers as a London cab horse, and the book served as an argument for the humane treatment of animals in the same way that *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* served as an argument for abolition (Sewell, 1877). Tess Cosslett has explained the many similarities between anti-slavery literature and animal autobiography. “Sewell is using the emotive power of anti-slavery discourse,” Cosslett argues, “and applying it to another cause” (Cosslett, 2016: 78). Such is not to say that they were equivalent in their trajectory. Abolitionist literature was arguing for total freedom from ownership. Humane novels like Sewell’s never were. “The subjection of horses to the whim of their human owners,” in *Black Beauty*, explains Robert Dingley, is “simultaneously deplored as an injustice and celebrated as a natural bond” (Dingley, 1997: 247).

Still, in 1908, *Our Dumb Animals* reported on a “negro teamster” who was killed by an army mule, describing the incident as a form of divine justice because he “used to pound that mule unmercifully.” The mule, according to the story, remembered his former abuser and “let fly with both heels, caught that negro in the pit of the stomach and stretched him out as dead as a hammer” (Brown, 1908: 38).

In 1910, however, the magazine changed its contested, inconsistent message when Francis H. Rowley took the reins of the American Humane Education Society. He replaced the organization’s founder George Angell and expanded its reach. He acquired an ambulance for the group and helped organize the Angell Memorial Animal Hospital in 1915. He also created the first animal shelter to care for retired police horses and other animals employed by

municipalities (Davis, 2016: 97-98, 100-101; Finsen, 1994: 52). In one of the first editions of *Our Dumb Animals* after Rowley took over as editor, he noted that “absolutely of one blood did He make us, whatever our race, Caucasian, Mongolian, or Negro” (Rowley, 1910: 40). In another article, the magazine lamented “that so many look with indifference upon the widespread attempt to disfranchise the negro and to treat with contempt the fifteenth amendment to the Constitution” (Rowley, 1910: 58). *Our Dumb Animals* became a legitimate champion for black rights as time passed, reporting on the horrors of lynching and highlighting black kindnesses to animals (Krause, 1911: 19; Rowley, 1911: 74; *Our Dumb Animals*, 1912: 147; *Our Dumb Animals*, 1912: 20; Rowley, 1912: 40).

Historian Janet Davis, however, does not see a Rubicon crossed in Angell’s replacement. Instead, she interprets far more continuity in the animal rights movement’s anti-racist activism. She argues that both Rowley and Angell saw that “animal advocacy and civil rights activism were inseparable” (Davis, 2016: 100). There is, however, little continuity in historical interpretations of the humane movement’s racial trends. Diane Beers, for example, has argued differently than Davis. “Few African Americans contributed their money and time to the cause,” Beers explains. She argues that the artificial poverty imposed by Jim Crow economics surely played a role in the dearth of black donations to the animal welfare cause, “but most blacks probably believed that there was a much larger and more relevant battle for them to wage--that of their own civil rights.” Groups like the Women’s Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals planned humane society programs designed specifically for black communities, but the plans dissipated before ever being tried (Beers, 2006: 52-53).

Davis, in contrast, points to the tireless work done by black animal advocates, particularly in the American South, and the willingness of *Our Dumb Animals* to highlight that work. She emphasizes the efforts of several different activists. Frederick Rivers Barnwell was a Texas minister and field officer for the American Humane Education Society who worked through black churches and schools to preach animal kindness. John W. Lemon did much the same while based in Virginia and Alabama. Seymour Carroll was a South Carolina-based field representative for the AHES who gave speeches and created Humane Societies. Their work was by no means uniform--Carroll, for example, was a racial accommodationist in the style of Booker T. Washington--but each made an effort for humane education and to tie a rejection of animal cruelty to a push for an end to Jim Crow segregation and racial violence (Davis, 2016: 100-103). Davis notes that African American ministers and teachers throughout the South served as field secretaries for the AHES, their speeches across the region preaching "a conservative message of animal mercy, self-help, and racial uplift. They traveled widely by car, which represented a potentially dangerous show of black upward mobility in the rural Jim Crow South, especially when their lectures discussed exploitative practices such as debt peonage and sharecropping" (Davis, 2015). Dangerous or not, however, their message, unlike that of the black press, was after 1910 consistent in its advocacy for black rights.

"This magazine has stood, from the day of its inception, for justice and fair play. It has by no means confined its interest to animals," *Our Dumb Animals* proclaimed in 1915. "It has never been able to understand how anything but a man's inner spirit could be the measure of his manhood, or anything but the fruit of his creed the test of his religion." The article went on to vilify DW Griffith's *Birth of a*

Nation, the infamous feature film that glorified the Ku Klux Klan (Rowley, 1915: 8). The MSPCA, one of the publishers of *Our Dumb Animals*, would join the NAACP in calling for a boycott of the movie (Davis, 2016: 103).

The work of *Our Dumb Animals* was also noticed by the black press. In 1905, the Baltimore *Afro-American* urged its readers to "never forget to look at the horses and hire those that look the best and have no docked tails" when hiring a carriage and cited the magazine as a source (*Afro-American*, 1905: 4). The paper, along with other black newspapers, also directly reprinted articles from the magazine (*Afro-American*, 1906: 7; *Afro-American*, 1910, 3; *Afro-American*, 1934: 14; *Chicago Defender*, 1912: 4; *Chicago Defender*, 1912: 2; *Chicago Defender*, 1912, 3; *Chicago Defender*, 1933, 16; Chapman, 1938: 12; Maysi, 1938: 12). In addition, a 1932 edition of the *Afro* published an article titled "Our Dumb Animals." "Domestic animals," it argued, "seem to be almost as dependent upon kind treatment and affection as human beings" (Lewis, 1932: 20).

Then there was the *National Humane Review*, published by the American Humane Association beginning in 1913. Its editor, and president of the association, was William O. Stillman, a New York physician and animal advocate. Stillman also led the New York State Humane Education Committee and the international Federation of Societies for Animal Protection. Two years after the magazine's founding, he would create Be Kind to Animals Week (Coleman, 1924: 115-142; William Olin Stillman Papers).

In July 1913, Stillman's magazine highlighted the work of Richard Carroll, a Columbia, South Carolina preacher. The son of slaves "has the confidence and esteem of the white and colored races" and "during the past twenty-five years he has delivered, at least, one humane lecture a week" (*National Humane Review*,

1913: 165). Still, the next month the *Review* described an attack on an agent of the Children's Aid and Protective Society by "a burly negro who had been forced to support his family through a court order." It was a demonstration of the kind of indirect white supremacy that still governed much of Progressive Era activism, and it was happening years after the full turn to racial uplift by *Our Dumb Animals* (*National Humane Review*, 1913: 177).[16]

The first two decades of the twentieth century were dominated by a push for a variety of social and political reforms. During this Progressive Era, prohibition and the push for women's suffrage dominated much of the larger efforts. Settlement houses like Hull House, led by Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr, became symbols of the age. Groups like the American Humane Association demonstrated that animal protection was an important part of the era, as well. Like settlement houses, suffrage, and prohibition, however, the animal protection movement was guided in large measure by the white middle and upper classes, which helped condition its racial mores (Hofstadter, 1954; Lears, 2010; McGerr, 2005).

Still, despite some occasional racial missteps, the *Review* was more consistent than most in towing a strong line in racial advocacy. In January 1914, the magazine featured JB Rayner, a black teacher from Texas associated with the Negro Farmers Improvement Society and "interested in furnishing humane education to his people" (*National Humane Review*, 1914: 9). Later that year, the *Review* featured an in-depth exposé of the "terrible inhumanity on convict farms in Arkansas" (*National Humane Review*, 1914: 152).

[16] Earlier in the group's history, Edwin Brown, president of the American Humane Association, described the Gilded Age fight to get better treatment for farmed animals being transported by railroad to their deaths as "akin in magnitude to the overthrow of slavery (quoted in Freeberg, 2020: 131).

Convict lease had, by 1914, run its course in the South (see Chapter 2), but it had been replaced by the chain gang and convict camps that disproportionately incarcerated black southerners, often on the slightest of pretenses. Exploiting a Thirteenth Amendment that barred human bondage “except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted,” white southerners in the wake of Reconstruction in places like Arkansas realized that the imposition of a new free labor regime in the region would require convicting former slaves of crime. Former Confederate states made vagrancy, public drunkenness, gambling, and even “improper conduct” illegal and prosecuted extensively (Aiello, 2019; Novak, 1978; Taylor, 1942). Convict lease put those prisoners in private hands and led to a disturbingly high death rate that led to reform efforts to end the practice, but reforms did not slow the prosecutions themselves. What resulted were convict farms and camps in southern states that treated prisoners, as described by the *National Humane Review*, “with terrible inhumanity” (Novak, 1978; *National Humane Review*, 1914: 152).

There is, inherent in such statements, a diminution of nonhuman life by setting humanity as a standard, but the largely white groups doing such advocacy were not making a case for animal equality any more than white abolitionists in the antebellum period had been making a case for African American equality. They wanted an end to cruelty, whether to nonhuman animals or to black prisoners, but the end of cruelty did not constitute for any who published in magazines like the *National Humane Review* a belief in functional equivalency.

And so, in 1919, the magazine reported on work in Norfolk, Virginia to introduce “humane work” to the city’s black population (*National Humane Review*, 1919: 200). It also, like its black press counterparts, reported on fines issued to

black teamsters for abusing mules and horses (see, for example, *National Humane Review*, 1919: 212; *National Humane Review*, 1920: 117).

That year was characterized by the wave of race riots that James Weldon Johnson named Red Summer. Democracy seemed far from reality for millions of Americans in 1919. Hundreds of thousands of black southerners fled the South during the war, continuing a Great Migration into northern and western urban hubs (see Chapter 5). Meanwhile, black soldiers returning from war had been invigorated by the confidence that came from surviving battle and experiencing a functional equality overseas. After a war to make the world safe for democracy, the situation at home seemed immanently problematic. Of course, as more and more black southerners moved north, the limited number of jobs available led to both labor and racial unrest, ultimately spilling over into a summer-long wave of race violence across the nation (Dunkley, 2004: 1052-1056).

On May 10, for example, a group of white servicemen, angered by a supposed attack on a naval officer by a local black man, stormed a Charleston, South Carolina black neighborhood, killing two and wounding many others. Meanwhile, the work of Booker T. Washington’s National Negro Business League had given black farmers in Longview, Texas a leg-up in negotiating lower farm prices. When one of those businessmen was found dead and mutilated, black leaders demanded justice. After an article in the *Chicago Defender* publicized the lynching, a white mob beat the local agent for the newspaper. The agent and his doctor then defended themselves in July in a shootout with angry whites, which soon led to the burning of black neighborhoods and other massive racial violence. Then there was Washington, DC, Chicago, Illinois, Omaha, Nebraska. There was Baltimore, Houston, Little Rock, New Orleans, New York, along with dozens of

lynchings and more isolated forms of mob-related racial violence. It was, according to David Levering Lewis, an act of “collective barbarism,” a massive conflagration that left a death toll in the thousands[17] (Norvell and Tuttle, 1966; Stockley, 2001, Dunkley, 2004: 1052-1056).

But the *Defender*’s involvement in the Longview incident was telling. The black press had always built itself on a foundation of protest against the prevailing racial mores of the day, even from its initial nineteenth-century founding. In 1827, John Russwurm’s *Freedom’s Journal* argued that the public had “been deceived by misrepresentations” for too long (Painter, 1971). Later, in 1884, T. Thomas Fortune, editor of the *New York Freeman* (renamed the following year the *New York Age*), published a civil rights advocacy book called *Black and White: Land, Labor, and Politics in the South*, and in 1890 he formed the Afro-American League, a protest organization that served as a forerunner to groups like the Niagara Movement and the NAACP (Fortune, 1884; Aiello, 2016; Harlan, 1983; Justesen, 2008). As the black press continually worked for a measure of racial equality, however, they did so most consistently in the pages of their weekly editions. Their most effective fights were waged with words, with metaphors.

The animal advocacy press was also consumed by their own metaphors. The *National Humane Review* was predictably angered by the violence of Red Summer. “There can be no justification of mob rule, and the hanging and burning of people in this period of human development,” the magazine explained. “How shall we stop it? Why, by introducing humane education in every school in the land and especially instructing children to condemn and prevent mob violence” (Stillman, 1920: 31).

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[17] Lewis’s words are part of the review commentary printed in Stockley, 2001.

It was the epitome of the intersection of race and species concern in groups like the American Humane Association. The *National Humane Review* advocated for race rights in brief spurts, usually only when spurred by extraordinary violence, and while maintaining an all-white leadership and publishing group. Meanwhile, the black press advocated for species rights in brief spurts, usually in between condescension about the privileging of nonhuman animals over human race rights, and while maintaining a healthy skepticism of white leaders of animal advocacy. Both positions resulted from crafting targeted responses to the biopolitical discourse that served as the locus of their primary concern. Consistent race policy for the black press necessarily created inconsistent discussions of animal abuse, vegetarianism, and vivisection. Consistent advocacy for animal welfare necessarily created inconsistent discussions of race rights and race-based human dignity. It was a bifurcation that would only continue into the 1940s, one that would become magnified because of the Second World War, creating new terms for human and animal destruction and generating American policy that would largely ignore black rights and simultaneously multiply the systematic killing of farmed animals.

CHAPTER 4

The Bifurcated Path:
Human Rights and Animal Rights In the Wake of World War II

In November 1944, Franklin Roosevelt won an unprecedented fourth term as president of the United States, defeating Republican Thomas Dewey in a landslide. It allowed the long-serving leader to continue prosecuting the American effort in World War II and in February 1945 to attend the Yalta Conference to help shape the peace in Europe following the war's end. Part of that reconstruction project included a commitment to national self-determination and assurances that the kinds of human violence witnessed during World War II would never happen again (Daniels, 2016; Reynolds, 2006; Harbutt, 2010; Preston, 2019).

November 1944 also gave those seeking such goals a new term. That month, Polish lawyer Raphael Lemkin published a study of occupied government in Europe during World War II. *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation, Analysis of Government, Proposals for Redress* would become a landmark text, published by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Steel magnate and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie had spent much of the early century building libraries across the country. In cooperation with Booker T. Washington, he built twenty-seven buildings on the campuses of historically black colleges and universities. In 1910, he looked beyond the borders of the nation to create his Endowment for International Peace, and a generation later, in November 1944, the Endowment published Lemkin's *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*. The book coined a new term, "genocide," to describe "the destruction of a nation or of an ethnic group"

(Lemkin, 1944: 79). The word “does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killing of all members of a nation,” wrote Lemkin. “It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves.” Lemkin’s genocide occurred in two phases, the first the “destruction of the national pattern of the oppressed group,” and the second “the imposition of the national pattern of the oppressor” (Lemkin, 1944: 79).

It was an influential neologism, but it was not the only one appearing that month. Also in November 1944, a schism in Britain’s Vegetarian Society came to a decided head. Several months prior, some members of the group sought a section of the newsletter to represent vegetarians who abstained from dairy and other animal products. The society rejected the proposal, and in response Donald Watson, secretary of the Leicester branch of the society, created a new newsletter first published in November. *The Vegan News*, as he called it, defended the practice of abstaining from all animal products and named those of similar belief “vegan.” Watson explained that there was “very strong evidence to show that the production of these foods involves much cruel exploitation and slaughter of highly sentient life. The excuse that it is not necessary to kill in order to obtain dairy produce is untenable for those with a knowledge of livestock farming methods and of the competition which even humanitarian farmers must face if they are to remain in business.” Watson explained that lacto-vegetarians had understood the inherent relationship between “the flesh-food industry and the dairy produce industry” and that “in some ways they subsidised one another. We accepted, therefore, that the case on ethical grounds for the disuse of these foods was exceptionally strong, and

we hoped that sooner or later a crisis in our conscience would set us free" (Watson, 1944: 1).

Thus it was that in one month in 1944, both the terms "genocide" and "vegan" were coined and the ground was laid for the creation of the United Nations and its constituent emphasis on human rights. It was, in many ways, a payoff on the work of black journalists and animal welfare journalists of the preceding decades while still maintaining the obvious divide that existed between the two types of publications. And it was an emphasis that would develop over the proceeding two decades, beginning with the creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and culminating in the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. That insistence on humanity as the standard for worth would move parallel to the development of the other neologism from November 1944 but overshadow it because of the support of the United Nations and the searing memory of the public human atrocities of World War II. Thus veganism grew much slower than the emphases on human rights, allowing the onset of an American industrial agribusiness and factory farming regime in the interregnum between the UN's seminal human rights documents. And it was a regime that mimicked for animals the Nazi tactics that originally spurred terms like "genocide" in the first place. Even more galling, the human supremacy at the heart of the disconnect between human and nonhuman concerns continued despite scientific developments in the period that allowed for its rectification. In 1960, for example, the first advanced weather satellite sent images of earth from a perspective to which humans had never before had access. "Technology offered a view of the planet previously beyond human comprehension," explains Annie Jacobsen, "a new and spectacular perspective on Mother Earth" (2018: 94-95). The

differentiation between human thinking about genocide and about the mass killing of animals disallowed that wonder to become a broader recognition. It served as a barrier to the combination of genocide- and vegan-thinking, despite a demonstration from satellite imagery that humans were simply animals like any other, with no legitimate claim to superiority, walking around on a small, insignificant floating ball in the sky.

The divergence of human thought in the postwar period was exemplified in particular by the actions of two humans with stakes in the game. On one trajectory of that bifurcated path was Eleanor Roosevelt. She was a civil rights advocate, a defender of African Americans during the harshest years of Jim Crow, and ultimately the driver of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. On the other trajectory was Ezra Taft Benton, a Mormon white supremacist opposed to civil rights who became Secretary of Agriculture in the Dwight Eisenhower administration of the 1950s. Roosevelt would stand as a symbol of civil and human rights; Benton would begin the process that would ultimately lead to American industrial agribusiness and the factory farming of animals, a nonhuman version of genocide that embodied everything Roosevelt sought to prevent among humans. Still, both tracks of the bifurcated path engrained speciesism in their own way, evincing a biopolitics that played on different attitudes toward the human to cement a singular attitude toward the nonhuman.

Including nonhuman animals in discussions of genocide and holocaust has a contentious history of its own, independent of the individual development of the two distinct trajectories described in this chapter. This account, however, does interpret the institutionalized mass killing of farmed animals, and the primary exacerbation of that institutionalization in the wake of World War II, as a

phenomenon similar to and resonant with the Holocaust whose organized cruelty defined the war era. That being the case, it is important to situate that interpretation within the debates surrounding tangential uses.

While the term "holocaust" was used prior to World War II—and comes from the ancient Greek holocaustos, meaning "to burn a dead animal" (Kolozova, 2020: 110-111)—it has come almost uniformly to be associated with the Nazi mass murder of European Jews. "Genocide" was created specifically in reference to that mass murder but was intended to be able to broaden its scope to other instances of such killings. Both have historically been associated solely with human groups. Still, "the use of Holocaust analogies in the context of animal rights and environmentalism is a widespread practice" (Buettner, 2011: 106), and one that has proven problematic for two principal reasons. First, as in slave references to animal rights, human trauma associated with the comparative event is still lived by those who experienced it or whose ancestors experienced it, and that human ability to experience historical trauma creates an important sensitivity on one side of the comparison (see trauma discussion in Introduction).

Second, the use of such comparisons has been applied inconsistently, often without a considered understanding of that use. Deploying terms like holocaust and genocide usually falls along two decidedly different tracks. The first employs a metaphorical comparison of mass animal killing to mass human killing; the second argues that the act of mass animal killing is itself a tangible, definable genocide. An example of the former can be seen in works like JM Coetzee's *The Lives of Animals*. "We are surrounded by an enterprise of degradation, cruelty, and killing which rivals anything that the Third Reich was capable of," argues the fictional Elizabeth Costello (Coetzee, 2000: 22). Coetzee's protagonist admits that the Nazi

Holocaust was devoted solely to eliminationism, to death for death's sake, while the animal killing industry is in large measure devoted to killing as a form of life-giving, as a creation of products for human use, but such was "little consolation to those victims" suffering the fate of the slaughterhouse (Coetzee, 2000: 23).

An example of the second is the argument of Steven Wise, who makes a legal case for the personhood of bonobos and chimpanzees. That personhood, then, puts them squarely within the framework of the term genocide in relation to their suffering under a variety of scientific vivisection efforts. He makes the case that both bonobos and chimpanzees share a culture that is functionally eliminated in those campaigns (Wise, 2000: 265-266). The question that arises from critics pertains to the intent of human perpetrators, as none of the vivisectors, despite their cruelty, seeks to eliminate the presence of the animals from the earth (Buettner, 2011: 109).

Nigel Pleasants (2016), for example, has explained that "whereas most people believe that animal kinds *per se* have intrinsic moral value whilst their individual members have none, with regard to social kinds and human individuals it is vice versa, or rather that human individuals have much greater value than the social kinds that they constitute." But despite the fact that it is "the intention to kill a social kind as such that makes genocide *categorically* singular," he notes that "what makes genocide *morally awful* is the way in which it is pursued, and the harm it causes is indeed borne by individual members of the targeted kind" (emphasis in original; Pleasants, 2016: 304).[1] Individual members of nonhuman

[1] Pleasants (2008) has made a similar effort at comparative analysis between animal advocacy and abolitionism, arguing that "the ideas and injunctions of [animal] liberationists have been effective, to the extent that they have, only because they have been able to claim the non-necessity of animal utilization and its replaceability by plausible alternatives that the capitalist mode

communities are neglected as carriers of intrinsic moral value, making their suffering less meaningful to many human commentators. That said, scholars like David Nibert (2002) have argued that broadbased similarities between the mass killings of human and nonhuman animals, like the deaths themselves and the capitalism that undergirded much of the violence, to more specific similarities like the role of barbed wire in farmed animal containment and German concentration camps, makes the comparison viable (Nibert, 2002: 71-73).

The debates surrounding such terminology are significant, as they are surrounding slave comparisons, but what neither of them do is situate historically the relationship of those terms to the events the terms originally described. The physical act of animal confinement and killing on an institutionalized scale happened in similar form and function to--and simultaneous to--acts against human populations in World War II that drove specific responses to eliminate such behavior. As in the Wise and Coetzee examples, of course, one of the principal differences between those simultaneous developments was that industrial agriculture was not eliminationist in its intent, and it did not seek death solely for death's sake, but as Elizabeth Costello would have countered, intent claims would have been "little consolation to those victims" (Coetzee, 2000: 23).

The seeming coincidence of the simultaneous creation of the terms "genocide" and "vegan" was actually the result of the historical progression of ideas surrounding animal protection and human rights. The genesis of the human rights tradition is largely credited to ancient Greece. Plato's *Republic* defended equal

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of production has made possible and developed." In the same vein, the abolition of slavery was not built on a belief in human rights. Instead, that belief was an outgrowth of a "change in social and economic practice that enabled some especially critical people to see that slavery could be dismantled and replaced with something better" (Pleasants, 2008: 211).

human rights for the governed (Plato, 1881). Aristotle differed with Plato on the best method of government to achieve such ends, but very much corroborated the validity of the ends themselves, though he did support slavery as a valid human project (Aristotle, 1888). The Roman thinkers who followed the Greeks continued their political tradition. Then the Judeo-Christian tradition emerged, arguing not only about the best methods of governance to create human rights, but claiming that humans were made specifically in God's image, giving them authority over all nonhumans and a duty to equal treatment among all humans (Hansen, 1999: 11-14). Meanwhile, documents like the Magna Carta took up the rights-based way of thinking about human equality from the Romans (King John, 1215). Then there was the English common law. John Locke's natural rights (Locke, 1689). Jean-Jacques Rousseau's social contract (Rousseau, 1762).[2] Such thinking ushered in the Enlightenment and the Revolutionary Era, creating a foundation upon which humans incrementally expanded rights to various dispossessed human groups throughout the modern era (Hansen, 1999: 15-44).

Meanwhile, many of the most influential progenitors of the human rights doctrine also argued for the humane treatment of nonhuman animals. Pythagoras, one of the intellectual figureheads who helped shaped Platonic thinking, developed the notion of "metempsychosis," "the notion that all living things are kindred, and the corollary that it was wrong to cause suffering to animals" (Stuart, 2006: 41).

[2] Social contract thinking did not directly include human-animal relationships, but scholars like Clare Palmer, have made the case for social contract theory in relation to those relationships, has argued that original intent is not relevant in such modern discussions. "The idea of any kind of human/animal contract was not in the minds of the great social contract theorists is not in itself, of course, a reason for rejecting such a model. Early rights theorists equally did not envisage that rights theory would one day be extended (albeit controversially) to include animals," she writes. "Given the popularity of contract language and widespread concern about the moral status of animals, further exploration of ideas about animals and contracts seems, *prima facie*, to be justified" (Palmer, 1997: 412).

And he was not alone. Socrates and Diogenes made similar claims. The work of Pythagoras became the basis of Plato's thought, and then from there to Aristotle's. Then Plotinus, then Porphyry. Seneca, Ovid, and Plutarch (Stuart, 2006: 76, 144, 217). The concept of the moral crime of eating animals also moved into the Christian tradition as early as there was a Christian tradition; leaders like Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea and perhaps most importantly, St. Jerome, advocated for kindness to animals and became the lodestar for Christian vegetarians (Stuart, 2006: 43; see also Lindzey and Cohn-Sherbok, 1997; Jones, 2009).

The one thing all of these early thinkers had in common was a reverence for India, the land of Buddha, and the core of that reverence was for the doctrine of ahimsa, total nonviolence. It was the impetus to "do no harm," the foundation of Buddhism, Hinduism, and Jainism, the notion that "the spark of divine spiritual energy" is in all living beings, and so "to hurt another being is to hurt oneself" (Molina, 2019: 164; see also Hurn and Badman-King, 2019). And that reverence continued into the American twentieth century, found most commonly in the classical southern civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. It is no coincidence, for example, that Coretta Scott King was a prominent early American vegan, understanding that her husband's civil rights efforts were foundationally dependent on the doctrine of ahimsa (Iacobbo and Iacobbo, 2006: 69). Martin Luther King, Jr., reached the doctrine through the work of Mohandas K. Gandhi, leader of the Indian independence movement of the 1920s and 1930s, who also naturally included all animals in his vision of nonviolence[3] (Chakrabarty, 2013).

[3] Interestingly, one of Gandhi's early teachers was Leo Tolstoy, and an elderly Tolstoy corresponded with a young Gandhi (Murthy, 1987). Gandhi credited Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God is Within You* as helping him to form his thinking on nonviolence. (Tolstoy, 1894) Tolstoy was devoted to what today we could call veganism. "A man can live and be healthy without killing

These early thinkers, of course, were not using the term vegan. Vegetarians tended to also avoid eggs and dairy, but those who avoided them at all costs were known as strict-vegetarians. One of the most influential of the early strict-vegetarians in the United States was Amos Bronson Alcott, an ally of Ralph Waldo Emerson and a leading Transcendentalist thinker. He was also the father of novelist Louisa May Alcott. In 1834, he founded the Temple School in Boston, a controversial experimental school that included among its experiments strict-vegetarianism. Ten years later, in 1844, he founded Fruitlands, a utopian community that banned the use of all animals for any purpose[4] (Dahlstrand, 1987; Francis, 2010; Sears, 1915).

In the Gilded Age, the torch would be carried by readers of the British reformer Henry Stephens Salt, the first activist credited with talking specifically about the rights of animals. In his famous 1894 treatise on the subject, Salt said, “If we are ever going to do justice to the lower races, we must get rid of the antiquated notion of a 'great gulf' fixed between them and mankind, and must recognize the common bond of humanity that unites all living beings in one universal brotherhood”[5] (Salt, 1894: 8). Prompted by such thinking, the movement grew substantially in England, with a popular Vegetarian Society growing in membership throughout the early twentieth century until the schism that ultimately created

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animals for food,” he argued, “therefore, if he eats meat, he participates in taking animal life merely for the sake of his appetite. And to act so is immoral” (Tolstoy, 1911: 43).

[4] The community failed, but not because of its veganism. Alcott also banned, for example, any form of artificial light so that nothing would “prolong dark hours or cost them the brightness of morning.” They weren’t allowed to drink anything but water. Such restrictions led to frustration that ultimately disbanded the group (McFarland, 2004: 81).

[5] Humanity, in its strictest definition, might not seem to make a lot of sense in the context of Salt’s quote, but what he meant was what today we would call personhood.

Watson's screed. Both of those historical strains--one emphasizing human rights, the other emphasizing the sentience and value of other species--crossed paths briefly in November 1944 with the work of Watson and Lemkin before moving along decidedly different trajectories in the years that followed.

Lemkin's description of genocide, for example, was the logical consequence of that human rights progression. He acknowledged that there had been other terms to describe the kind of ethnic cleansing he introduced, but those terms made specific reference to the behavior of individual nations rather than naming a generalized broad phenomenon. That said, his treatment of "Axis rule in occupied Europe" obviously targeted the genocide authored by the Germans in the still ongoing Second World War. Genocide as Lemkin defined it, using Nazi occupation as an example, was a total strategy that encompassed political, social, cultural, economic, biological, physical, religious, and moral aspects of the lives of those marked for annhiliation (Lemkin, 1944: 82-90). Genocide was "a composite of different acts of persecution or destruction" (Lemkin, 1944: 92). The author acknowledged that aspects of genocidal behavior were covered by specific precedents in international law, but "the entire problem of genocide needs to be dealt with as a whole" (Lemkin, 1944: 92). He encouraged a consideration of his thesis in the development of international law at war's end, a request that would be taken up by the United Nations.

Meanwhile, Watson defined his own new term, like Lemkin putting a name to something that had existed in various forms for a long time. His was, like Lemkin's, an effort at advocacy for a change in definitions, but unlike "genocide," the term "vegan" was a declaration of schism. Watson made the case that veganism was "moral, safe and logical," and condemned "the use of dairy produce

and eggs," and in the process the vegetarians who consumed them. "It will be no concern of ours if we fail to convert others, but we do think it should concern them if, deep in their hearts, they know we are right." He conceded that "there need be no animosity between ourselves and the 'lactos'," but despite a lack of overt animus, Watson and the vegans still abjured what they saw as an insufficient activism. "To resign oneself to lacto-vegetarianism as a satisfactory solution to the diet problem is to accept a sequence of horrible farmyard and slaughter-house incidents as part of an inevitable Divine Plan," Watson explained. "Need it be added that it would imply too accepting the spectacle of a grown man attached to the udder of a cow as a dignified and rational intention on the part of Nature!" He encouraged a consideration of his thesis in the development of a more moral and complete animal rights philosophy (Watson, 1944: 2-3).

The simultaneous calls for justice for two categories of the world's dispossessed groups, however, did not move along parallel lines, the immediacy and uniqueness of the Nazi genocide keeping human slaughter at the front of human minds. Three years prior to Lemkin's creation of the term "genocide," in his January 1941 State of the Union address, Franklin Roosevelt proclaimed, "In the future days, which we seek to make secure, we look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms. The first is freedom of speech and expression," he said. The second was freedom to worship, the third was freedom from want, and the fourth was freedom from fear. "That is no vision of a distant millennium. It is a definite basis for a kind of world attainable in our own time and generation" (Roosevelt, 1941: 44-47).

Those freedoms were very different, for example, from the five freedoms recommended for farmed animals adapted from a 1965 British report on farmed

animals led by Roger Brambell. The Brambell Report explained that “an animal should at least have sufficient freedom of movement to be able without difficulty, to turn round, groom itself, get up, lie down and stretch its limbs (1965: 13). The UK Farm Animal Welfare Council then adapted the conclusions of the larger document into five specific freedoms for farmed animals: freedom from hunger or thirst, freedom from discomfort, freedom from pain, injury or disease, freedom to express (most) normal behaviour, and freedom from fear and distress (Farm Animal Welfare Council, 1979: np). They were, unlike Roosevelt’s human proclamation, the freedoms of the slave, efforts to improve the conditions of those to be killed. The passing of decades and the change in species had made freedom something fundamentally different when referring to the victims of the factory farming regime.

Back in 1941, an August meeting between Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill produced the Atlantic Charter to clearly enunciate the aims of the nations in a postwar world. Among those aims, the charter emphasized the freedom from fear and freedom from want (Mower, 1979: 4).[6] Three years after the Charter, as Roosevelt was running his reelection campaign while prosecuting the war, he proclaimed in May 1944 his intention to help create an organization akin to Woodrow Wilson’s League of Nations to serve as an agent of peace in the world. But unlike Wilson, Roosevelt would ensure that the United States were a part of the revised version (Mower, 1979: 4-5).

The result of that desire was the United Nations Conference on International Organization, and among the early proposals at the conference that would

[6] While that ideological stand dominated the narrative, Churchill was overseeing a colonial empire that diminished the lives of a variety of different groups and Roosevelt was prosecuting the war with a segregated military.

ultimately create the United Nations was a declaration of human rights to be attached to the group's charter. Concerns about national sovereignty, however, kept an early version of that declaration from happening (Mower, 1979: 7-8). "The United States wanted an international organization," explains historian A. Glenn Mower, "but not one with power to commit the country to policies or programs which it considered counter to its interests or to interfere with the American government's handling of its internal affairs" (1979: 9). That did not mean that the US was antithetical to human rights provisions. The preamble to the UN charter affirmed "faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person" (United Nations Charter, Preamble). Article Fifty-Five discussed human rights "without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion" (United Nations Charter, Article 55; Mower, 1979: 8-9).

And so in the years that followed, a nonbinding declaration that ensured national sovereignty and expanded on the United Nations Charter became a priority for the new body. Four years after his fourth electoral victory--and after the simultaneous creation of the terms "genocide" and "vegan"--Roosevelt's four freedoms became the basis for the preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, enacted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1948 (Wilde, 1999: 60).

Those freedoms were intended to be, in the words of Ralph Wilde, "the basis for the new world order," as was the United Nations itself, created by the Allies in the wake of World War II. In April 1945, James Shotwell, director of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace's Division of Economics and History, participated in drafting the UN Charter and pushed in the negotiations for a permanent commission on human rights as part of the organization (Josephson,

1975; UNESCO Archives; Columbia University Archives). It was the same organization that published Lemkin's "genocide" neologism, and now it was advocating for a solution to the problem. And Shotwell's advocacy worked. The UN created a Human Rights Commission that would ultimately draft its declaration, and it appointed Roosevelt's widow (the president had died in 1945), Eleanor Roosevelt, as its chair (Glendon, 2001: 35-51; Wilde, 1999: 61).

Roosevelt's history and reputation prepared her for such a role.[7] As a part of a patrician New York family, a teenage Roosevelt moved to England to attend Allenswood School where she first encountered a female desire for civic engagement, a marked difference from the detachment preached by the women of her own family (Roosevelt, 1984: 20-32). After her marriage, she began learning the ropes of politics when Franklin became a New York state senator in the 1910s. He was a vice-presidential candidate in 1920, which first exposed her to national politics (Roosevelt, 1984: 99-113). She worked for women's rights within the structure of the Democratic Party. She met with impoverished workers, advocated for unions, fought for free speech and against illiteracy. One of the human rights issues she worked on for much of her time as First Lady, however, was the civil rights of African Americans (Kirkwood-Tucker, 2011: 245-248; Mower, 1993: 14-22).

That work took a variety of forms. She gave a White House garden party for a group of black girls from a Washington reform school, which scandalized many of the president's white constituents (Roosevelt, 1949:164). At a segregated meeting

[7] The literature on Eleanor Roosevelt is voluminous, and much of the seminal biographical work on her life is to be found in the references of this chapter. For a beneficial primary source introduction to Roosevelt's life and work, however, see The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project, an effort of the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences at George Washington University, https://erpapers.columbian.gwu.edu/ (accessed 13 March 2020).

of the Southern Conference of Human Welfare held in Birmingham, Alabama, she sat in the black section of the meeting, defying police orders to move (Mower, 1993: 22-23; Roosevelt, 1949: 173-174). Perhaps most famously, she resigned from the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) in 1939 when the organization refused to accomodate a performance of famed black soprano Marian Anderson in Constitution Hall, a DAR-owned auditorium in Washington. Instead, she worked with Walter White and assistant secretary of the interior Oscar Chapman to hold the performance on the Washington Mall in front of the Lincoln Memorial. More than 75,000 people attended the free concert, and later that year, Roosevelt presented Anderson the Spingarn Medal, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's highest honor (Cook, 2016: 32-36; Bell-Scott, 2016: 41-44). Roosevelt had been a longtime member of the NAACP board of directors, and that kind of advocacy for black rights often alienated her from much of the white southern base of the party. It made her and her advocacy a legitimate political risk in a political party dependent upon the votes of white southerners (Arsenault, 2009; Black, 1990). Roosevelt, however, was undeterred. She used her position in the White House to lobby her husband and other members of the executive branch. In one particularly contentious episode, for example, she lobbied Harry Hopkins about a black tenant farmer condemned to death in the South after a murder trial in front of an all-white jury (Mower, 1993: 26-30). Hopkins, head of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and, later, the Works Progress Administration, didn't need much lobbying. He often acted in concert with Roosevelt on racial matters. "I wonder if you will watch the colored situation quite closely," she asked Hopkins, "and let me know from time to time how things are going" (Cook, 1999: 154).

Roosevelt also worked to benefit Howard University, a historically black college in Washington, DC (see Chapter 3). She lobbied for better appropriations for the school, spoke there whenever possible, and collaborated with its administrators about best practices (Hareven, 1968: 117). As Tamara K. Hareven has explained, Roosevelt's "commitment to Negro [*sic*] rights is perhaps the best expression of her social thought and activities; it is the cardinal point upon which the various aspects of her thought converge," such thought centering on democracy, social justice, and pluralism (1968: 112).

In 1934, she met with black leaders at the White House to discuss unemployment, lynching, housing, and other problems facing the African American community. It was an important symbolic gesture having Walter White, the executive secretary of the NAACP, the presidents of Atlanta University, Tuskegee, and Howard, and other black powerbrokers in a meeting at the White House in the heart of Depression-era Jim Crow, but the meeting itself was substantive and helped Roosevelt develop a policy perspective that she would take into lobbying efforts with her husband (Cook, 1999: 153). It was she, for example, who pushed for Mary McLeod Bethune's inclusion on the National Youth Administration, which helped form Franklin Roosevelt's famed Black Cabinet (Cook, 1999: 158-161). She also met regularly at the White House with groups like the National Council of Negro Women (Cook, 2016: 343). More substantively, Roosevelt also played a role as emissary and advisor for a variety of New Deal programs designed to help the poorest and most vulnerable (Cook, 1999: 165-174).

Her relationship with Walter White was also significant. White and the NAACP had been at the forefront of a movement for a federal anti-lynching law since the 1910s. In the United States, murder was a crime prosecuted at the state

level, and since white southern law enforcement and state governments tended to look the other way when white mobs killed black victims, those lynching crimes almost always went unpunished. The fix to such a problem was an anti-lynching law that would allow the federal government to intercede and prosecute such cases. By the time Roosevelt reached the White House, one still had not become law, and she worked closely with White to try to get one enacted[8] (Cook, 1999: 177-188, 243-247; Hareven, 1968: 120-123; Lash, 1971: 595-596, 647-648). The effort failed, but that did not stop Roosevelt from continuing to push.

All such efforts conditioned Roosevelt to spearhead the UN effort on human rights. She led a commission that represented countries from Europe, Asia, South America, Australia, and the Middle East to draft the document, a representation of unity, as Wilde explains, “before the tensions of the Cold War became so pronounced that international consensus was impossible.” Still, the Cold War had decidedly started, leading to real conflict between the Soviet Union and others about a variety of proposals included in the declaration. It was Roosevelt who steered the declaration to passage by making it a nonbinding resolution of the General Assembly, which allowed representatives of nations to vote in the affirmative despite reservations because the Universal Declaration of Human Rights would not be binding international law. It would then be followed by a covenant or group of covenants that countries would ultimately sign based on their

[8] It was an effort that demonstrates Roosevelt’s racial bonafides, but it was one that was ultimately unsuccessful. A federal anti-lynching law was never passed in the twentieth-century. Still, Roosevelt would continue her push. In 1935, she attended an NAACP art exhibition titled, “A Commentary on Lynching,” which featured a variety of works depicting racial violence in the South (Kirkwood-Tucker, 2011: 247).

willingness to adhere to the principles therein[9] (Wilde, 1999: 62; Mower, 1993: 55). Roosevelt also became the compromiser-in-chief, agreeing to the economic and social rights championed by the Soviets while hueing to a more Western-style limited-government role in pushing back against government guarantees of such rights. Her experience in fighting for various racial and economic causes gave her the experience to negotiate compromises between antagonists, and the draft of the document she oversaw passed her commission without a single dissenting vote (Mower, 1993: 55). "One cannot understand and appreciate the substantial gains made for human rights in the UN's early years," explains Glenn Mower, "apart from an understanding and appreciation of Eleanor Roosevelt" (1993: 11). None of those disputes, however, fell along the fault lines of the human-nonhuman divide. While many nations disputed what their obligations might be under such broad-brush principles, none contested the human supremacy at the root of the document (see below).

It was an absence that could be seen elsewhere, as well. Simultaneous to the work of the more celebrated Commission on Human Rights, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) initiated a survey of intellectuals to parse the intricacies of the philosophical basis for human rights. Leading thinkers like TS Eliot, Melville Herskovits, WH Auden, Arnold Schoenberg, Aldous Huxley, and Mahatma Gandhi, along with many others, all contributed by writing responses that demonstrated a lack of full unanimity on the universality of human rights. Despite those differences, however, none of the responses--

[9] The covenants that would become part of actual, binding international law would not be completed until 1966, demonstrating the difficulties of getting such agreements passed, even when the core human supremacy of them is agreed to by all parties.

including that of Gandhi--included a critique of universal human rights built upon, or even mentioning, the rights of nonhuman animals and their absence from such claims. Critiques of the universality of human rights were built on different human customs and human cultures that conceived of rights in unique ways but ignored the massive glut of earthlings not included under such "universal" umbrellas[10] (Goodale, 2018).

It was the legacy of the horrors of war that created such blinders. The trajectory of thinking about the commission was decidedly conditioned by the crimes of the Nazis, which centered almost solely on human victims. Secretary of State George C. Marshall, for example, stumped for the United Nations by declaring it "fundamentally wrong that millions of men and women live in daily terror of secret police, subject to seizure, imprisonment, or forced labor without just cause and without fair trial." He argued, Germany at the front of his mind, that "governments which systematically disregard the rights of their own people are not likely to respect the rights of other nations" (Mower, 1993: 33-34).

Roosevelt's role as chair of the Commission on Human Rights actually limited the freedom she had formerly found as First Lady. In this role, she was an agent of the United States, which was fundamentally worried about any potential abrogation of American national sovereignty. She complained that when she was the wife of the president, she was ostensibly a private citizen, "and for that reason was freer than I am now" (Mower, 1993: 37). Still, she accepted the role and

[10] The same could be said for conservative opposition to human rights treaties and covenants that came in the 1950s. The Genocide Convention and Human Rights Covenant faced massive opposition from conservatives in congress and the American Bar Association centered on national sovereignty and the slippery slope of policing the customs of other cultures. None sought to include condemnations of the killing of nonhuman animals in such documents as part of their broader critique (Kaufman, 1990).

worked to include her own desires where possible. After all, as Mower has explained, there were no real disagreements between Roosevelt and the State Department on "the fundamentals of what a UN human rights program should be" (Mower, 1993: 39). And so she learned from position papers and government officials her task as a public emissary representing the United States (Cook, 2016: 557-558; Mower, 1993: 41-46).

She was a substantial influence, particularly in crafting a human rights position over and against the reluctance of the federal government, which grew increasingly hesitant about the potential consequences of some kind of declaration (Glendon, 2001: 53-72; Cook, 2016: 558-559). Roosevelt had, in the words of Durward Sandifer, Deputy Director of the State Department's Office of UN Affairs, "strong feelings about the declaration and almost every item in it, and she didn't hold them back."[11] Her influence on the document and on disgruntled US administrators was palpable (Mower, 1993: 49; Lash, 1972: 61-66). She faced opposition about crafting a document at all, about working in conjunction with ostensible enemies like the Soviet Union, and about individual provisions like those dealing with economic and social rights. The former threatened to validate Russian economic theories and the latter threatened to turn a microscope on the widespread systemic racial segregation in the United States. "Without her," explained James Hendrick, American representative on the commission, "the

[11] Sandifer worked closely with Roosevelt in her work on the commission. "We spent three months in the Third Committee," he remembered, "meeting twice a day, and sometimes at night, debating every sentence, word, phrase in that Human Rights Declaration. It was a constant head-on collision between the United States and the Western Powers, on the one side, and the Russians on the other" (Sandifer, 1973: 99-101).

whole project might have fallen into bits and pieces"[12] (Mower, 1993: 50-51). Not only did she have the gravitas and influence of her vaulted place in the American hierarchy because of her long role as First Lady, but she also wrote a syndicated weekly newspaper column, "My Day," that gave her a national bully pulpit on the issues she hoped to champion (Glendon, 2001: 53-72; Lash, 1972: 61-66; Mower, 1993: 48-50).

Those issues emphasized human rights built on capitalist models of individualism, free enterprise, and property ownership, in contradistinction to communist models of group rights, economic equality, and collective property ownership. It was Roosevelt who helped steer the document to a decidedly western model, leading the Soviets to ultimately abstain when the final vote took place (Wilde, 1999: 62-63). To get what they wanted, representatives from the Soviet Union often countered Roosevelt's arguments with charges about American racial cruelty. In her role as an agent of the government, she tended to walk a fine line on the point, arguing that racial discrimination was ugly and common but that it was the result of bad actors rather than national policy. Such disputes within the commission narrowed generally to a difference over protecting the rights of the state against protecting the rights of the individual--or, the rights of a human creation against the rights of humans themselves (Glendon, 2001: 35-41, 100, 110; Morsink, 1999). It was a significant split between the Western and Eastern blocs, one that Roosevelt would ultimately win, but it was also a significant demonstration of the assumed status of nonentity that nonhuman animals held. Debates about the

[12] For more on Hendrick and the Commission on Human Rights through his perspective, see James P. Hendrick Papers, 1941-1984, Box 2, United Nations Commission on Human Rights, 1946-1958, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, Independence, MO.

potential rights of states, themselves simply manifestations of human cognitive ordering systems rather than any tangible thing, were given pride of place in discussions while the nonhuman beings living alongside humans as actual feeling entities with their own independent interests were completely and totally ignored.

The declaration's preamble describes "all members of the human family," it advocates "human rights," denounces "barbarous acts" that insult "the conscience of mankind," and celebrates the "dignity and worth of the human person." It proclaims freedom as being under the purview of human beings (Universal Declaration, 1948: Preamble). It is an introduction that makes clear a baseline assumption of human supremacy that guides the reasoning of the body of the document. Article One in particular sets the parameters for inclusion in the scope of human concern. "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights," it states. "They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood" (Universal Declaration, 1948: Preamble). The article makes clear that "reason and conscience" are the qualifiers for participation in a particular brotherhood that earns one "dignity and rights." Nonhuman animals, colloquially derided as not having human versions of reason and conscience, therefore are not included among those deserving of dignity. There had been spirited debate among the framers about the terminology of the article. Originally, the draft claimed that "all men are born free and equal." After discussions about gendered caveats, about including a rejected proposal to add "sisterhood" to the "brotherhood" claim, the framers settled on "human beings" as a broad, gender-neutral term (Wilde, 1999: 75; Morsink, 1999).

But they did not debate terms that would include nonhumans. Quite the contrary. As Ralph Wilde has made clear in his analysis of the declaration, the nod

to reason and conscience was a deliberate rejection of nonhuman participation in the moral universe of human thought. “It is the ability to reason, to know the difference between right and wrong, and to be aware of other human beings and their needs, that distinguishes humans from animals,” he wrote. There was debate about attributing this human supremacy to a divine source like God, a creator, providence, or nature. “Nature” was the candidate most likely to be included, but ultimately the framers eliminated it from the draft “so that the declaration would not enshrine a particularly rigid definition of the basis for human rights” (Wilde, 1999: 75).

Such speciesist reasoning would continue throughout the document. Article Five denounced “torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment,” tacitly acknowledging the cruel and degrading treatment regularly practiced on nonhumans (Universal Declaration, 1948: Article 5). Article Six espoused the doctrine of personhood before the law, fundamentally tying the notion of personhood to humans and implicitly leaving nonhuman animals out of such paradigms.

The imprint of speciesist thinking on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was overt, but so too was the imprint of chairwoman Roosevelt. There were only two direct mentions of race in the document--Article Two explained that all humans were entitled to the rights and freedoms included in the declaration without regard to “race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”; Article Sixteen discussed the right to marry “without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion” (Universal Declaration, 1948: Article 16)--but American thinking about race rights was evident throughout. Humans had a “right to life, liberty and security of person” (Article 3).

No one could be held “in slavery or servitude” (Article 4). In a clear distillation of the American Fourteenth Amendment, Article 7 of the declaration said, “All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law.” Humans were innocent until proven guilty in courts, they had freedom of movement, freedom of thought, and the right to own property. They had freedom of expression and freedom of assembly (Universal Declaration, 1948). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, then, was built largely from the American Reconstruction Amendments and the legacy of abolitionist racial politics that was at the same time guiding the birth pangs of the classical civil rights movement (see Chapter 2).

And it passed the body even as both of the two major powers in the Cold War were constantly demonstrating authority by engaging in destructive nuclear testing. In the late 1940s, for example, the United States dropped twenty-three atomic bombs on the Marshall Islands in the Pacific Ocean. While the native humans in places like Bikini Atoll were evacuated for such tests, which continued into the 1950s, the nonhumans were not. In fact, scientists were interested in how pigs experienced the blasts because porcine biology was so close to that of humans (Weisgall, 1994). Prompted by Pig 311, an animal who survived nuclear testing on Bikini Atoll in 1946, military scientists decided to expose more pigs to the blasts. Nuclear testing in Nevada in 1957, codenamed Operation Plumbbob, exposed corrals of 1,200 pigs to fallout radiation to test their reactions and the time it took them to suffer and die (Mizelle, 2012: 109; National Library of Medicine, 2012). It was a demonstration of the human assumption of the expendability of nonhumans, even in aid of experimenting with methods of killing humans. But there

were also other, more widespread ways for speciesism to manifest in demonstrations of biopower against nonhuman animals.

Christopher Delgado, writing for the International Food Policy Research Institute, credited the rise in meat consumption and the corresponding growth in factory farms to the rapid population growth in the postwar world. It was a population that was far more urban than its predecessors, with higher incomes to spend on delicacies like meat, and that urbanization and relative prosperity occurred in both powerful and developing countries. The rise in meat consumption, then, was one built on consumer demand, and that demand augured the rise of factory farming, CAFOs, concentrated (or confined) animal feeding operations (Delgado, et al., 1999; Nierenberg, 2005: 10-11).

Industrial meat production in the United States began with the late-nineteenth century western spread of railroads.[13] At the end of the Civil War, there were 3,272 miles of railroad track west of the Mississippi River. By 1890, there were 72,473. The spread west of the railroads, combined with a growth in the mining and ranching businesses, spread the country farther and farther west (Schivelbusch, 2014; Balliet, 2013). The major mining project in the region was copper, facilitating the technological revolution. In 1876, Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone (Gray, 2011). In 1879, Thomas Edison invented the incandescent light bulb; in 1881, the electric generator (Morris, 2019). All required copper as a conduit metal. Meanwhile, the new advancements in railroads and

[13] Such is not to say that the use of animals for food, labor, and other products hadn't existed since prior to the country's founding. For an examination of the early use of animals in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, particularly in urban areas, and its relation to city planning, see Brinkley and Vitiello, 2014.

electrical power facilitated the ranching industry.[14] Prior to the Civil War, ranching in the Far West was unprofitable because of transportation problems, but when the railroads came, beef could be transported back east. Cattle cars on railroads took cows to the intersecting points of the railroads, namely Chicago. It was this ranching boom that grew the infamous Chicago stockyards, making Chicago the animal-killing and meat-packing leader in the entire world, and inspiring horror stories like Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*.[15] It was Chicago's growing meat industry, then, that combined copper conduits and railroads and prompted the 1870s innovation of refrigerated railroad cars, taking processed meat to retailers all over the country. Like dominoes, innovation led to innovation, growing America's technical capacity and its wealth, in all ways to the detriment of nonhuman animals, and in many ways to the detriment of dispossessed human groups (Barrett, 1990; Cronon, 1991: 207-259; Skaggs, 1986; Nierenberg, 2005: 12).

The Jungle was a watershed moment in the history of American animal agriculture. First published in 1905 as a serial novel in a socialist newspaper, *Appeal to Reason*, it appeared in book form the following year. It described the difficulties of the immigrant workforce in Chicago's meat-packing industry, chronicling the low pay and unsanitary conditions of the factories. While telling the story of the travails of Jurgis Rudkus, the novel's Lithuanian-immigrant protagonist, however, Sinclair also inevitably highlighted the dangers to consumers of the

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[14] As Andrew Sluyter has shown, the black population was instrumental in the development of the ranching industry. It too was a racialized endeavor in North America (Sluyter, 2012).

[15] Hog processing facilities were gender-coded, as was everything else in the early twentieth century. Men took the killing and trimming positions. White women worked to package the bacon, a point of industry pride in the 1920s. After World War II, the United Packinghouse Workers of America were able to open bacon-packaging to black women, as well (Mizelle, 2012: 86; Horowitz, 2005: 68-69).

products made in those factories (Sinclair, 1906). While the Bureau of Animal Industry vehemently rejected Sinclair's characterization of the industry, public outcry forced the government's hand, leading to the Meat Inspection Act, which provided safety regulations and inspections for the corpses of nonhuman animals handled in factories, and to the Pure Food and Drug Act, which ultimately established the influential Food and Drug Administration (Øverland, 2004; Young, 1985). As sympathy for human workers drove the legislation, none of it worked to benefit the animals who were the most dramatically affected victims of the system.

A generation after publication of *The Jungle*, in 1936, John Tyson drove a load of five hundred chickens from Arkansas to Chicago, bypassing local slaughterhouses in an effort to get a better price for the birds. It was a transformational moment, one that "broke the tight bond between local farmers and slaughterhouses." Tyson began a massive acquisition program and a vertical integration hierarchy to consolidate the raising and killing of chickens for human consumption. That effort, combined with the demand prompted by World War II, led breeders, many of whom worked for Tyson, to develop new strains of chickens with overly-large breasts and far less need for food (Nierenberg, 2005: 14-15; Laidlaw, 2003; Striffler, 2005: 32-52; Roberts, 2000: 120-121). It was Davenport's eugenics mapped onto the lives of chickens (see Chapter 1). Such breeding experiments in United States chickens occurred as German experiments were attempting similar achievements with human beings, also based on American eugenic theory, with similar disastrous results (Whitman, 2018). The short lives of chickens were made even more miserable as they were packed into wire cages without the ability to stand upright or spread their wings. It was, as it was with the Nazis, torture for the presumed benefit of corporatitons and the state.

But it was successful for the humans who ran such operations and did not carry the stigma attached to similar Nazi experimentation. Thus it was in the postwar period, even after the creation of terms like “genocide” and “vegan,” even after the horror of Nazi death camps led to an international emphasis on human rights, that successful application of factory farming techniques in poultry production was expanded to the rest of animal agriculture, and to the farming of pigs and cows, in particular (Nierenberg, 2005: 15; Blanchette, 2020). Much of the impetus for that change was fostered by the Secretary of Agriculture under President Dwight Eisenhower, serving from 1952 to 1961: Ezra Taft Benson.

Benson was born on a small farm in southeastern Idaho, one of eleven children in a devout Mormon family. He grew up during Theodore Roosevelt's Country Life Movement, which sought to bring small landholders the newest technology to support the perpetuation of small farms. After being raised as a farmer, he studied agriculture in college, earning a bachelor’s degree from Brigham Young then a master’s from Iowa State[16] (Cannon, 1019: 25; Pusey, 1956: 68). He would spend much of his career proclaiming the virtue of the family farm as a bulwark against communism, but would simultaneously lead the move away from smallholding with his deregulatory policy in the 1950s. He was an arch-conservative. His Mormon faith was paramount to him, and his faith was one, in direct contrast to the work of leaders like Eleanor Roosevelt, that saw the black population as inferior, as marked by God for the race’s former sins (Schapsmeier and Schapsmeier, 1979: 531-533). It was a faith that also made Benson reluctant

[16] Benson’s thesis was directly related not to crop production but to animal agriculture. It was titled, “The Beef Cattle Situation in the Northern Range Area in its Relation to the Iowa Feeder” (Schapsmeier and Schapsmeier, 1970: 371).

to take a government job. “I wonder about the wisdom of calling a minister of the Gospel to be a Secretary of Agriculture,” he told Eisenhower. The president, however, convinced him. Benson reluctantly accepted the position (Pusey, 1956: 67-68).

It didn’t take long after coming into office before Benson had shown his conservative hand and the inherent speciesism in the business of modern agriculture. After being confronted at a 1953 luncheon by a group of legislators concerned about the decline of beef prices, Benson announced, “We’ll do everything practical to help beef producers, but we are not going to put the government into the meat business.” Though Benson’s political ideology did bolster such a statement, however, and though he did work to remove price controls from the cattle industry, he and the Eisenhower administration were most certainly in the meat business (Bergera, 2008: 95). They responded to rancher concerns by pushing beef sales to the armed forces, by buying more beef for school lunch programs, and by shipping more beef overseas. The government expanded an emergency beef purchase program, buying 250 million pounds of beef--the equivalent of roughly 850,000 cows--to help struggling farmers. Even more, Benson’s agriculture department worked with the beef industry to market the processed corpses of dead cows. In 1952, Americans ate roughly 61.5 pounds of beef per person per year. In 1953, that number rose to 76.5 pounds, Benson proudly noting that the figure “set a new record as of that time. The American people literally ate their way out of the beef problem” (Benson, 1962: 90-91). Or they killed their way out of it. Benson’s program exacerbated a demand for the lives of cows that would only rise in the years and decades to come.

In 1956, a similar cry came from hog farmers. They sought price controls to remedy a lagging market as had the cattle industry three years prior, and again Benson rejected the idea as anathema to his economic thinking. But he did all the same things for pork that he had done for cows. The government purchased pork for school lunch programs and other federal food initiatives. It launched an effort of "vigorous market promotion" to help boost demand, fomenting human consumption and exacerbating the organized killing of pigs (Benson, 1962: 297-299).

During Eisenhower's second term, farmers were hurting predominantly because of overproduction, which dragged down prices for crops and animal products. 1958 witnessed, in the words of Benson, "one of the greatest spurts in agricultural production in history," which led to substantially lower prices for hogs, chickens, turkeys, eggs, and crops not specifically related to nonhuman animals (Benson, 1962: 444). At the same time, farming costs were at record highs. Benson's plan to fix the problem was to reduce price supports to farmers and thus discourage the planting of certain crops (Cannon, 2019: 23; Schapsmeier and Schapsmeier, 1975: 190; Schapsmeier and Schapsmeier, 1970, 371-373). It was a plan that would necessarily favor large-scale farming operations that didn't rely on price supports to make ends meet. Or, as Bret Mizelle has explained, Benson "told farmers to 'Get big or get out'. Government subsidies and relaxed regulation enabled the meat industry to consolidate and grow rapidly" (Mizelle, 2012: 77). Millions of small farmers abandoned agriculture in the 1950s, and many blamed Benson's fiscal conservatism for the exodus. Representative Henry S. Reuss of Wisconsin complained that under the leadership of Benson, "the family-sized farmer has been consistently discriminated against" (Schapsmeier and Schapsmeier, 1975: 194; Cannon, 2019: 23). There was a heavy push even within

Eisenhower's own Republican party to convince the president to replace his agriculture secretary, fearing that electoral retribution from rural areas would ultimately allow the opposition party to flourish (Schapsmeier and Schapsmeier, 1975: 196-200). Eisenhower demurred, however, and Benson went on the offensive by attacking the National Farmers Union, which he charged with "misinformation and untruths" about Benson's plans in aid of creating a socialist agricultural system (Benson, 1958b; Schapsmeier and Schapsmeier, 1975: 205-206). While he was a strong supporter of farm cooperatives, Benson tended to want the free market to do the lion's share of regulating farm behavior, and that almost always redounded to the benefit of large producers. The secretary even argued that one of the reasons for overproduction was that small-scale farmers, depending on price supports, used the new agricultural technology to grow more food than ever before, creating a glut of excess foodstuffs and driving prices down, only further exacerbating the need for more price supports (Schapsmeier and Schapsmeier, 1975: 211-213). "Today's farm worker provides food and fiber for himself and twenty-three other persons," Benson proudly said in 1958. "Never in history have so many depended on so few to feed and clothe us so well" (Benson, 1958).

To that end, he continued to support the free market as the chief regulator of agriculture. "No man can make full use of the God-given talents with which he is endowed unless he has freedom to make his own decisions--and learn from the consequences, good or ill," he wrote to one supporter (Benson, 1959). Benson served in 1960 as part of the Republican National Committee's Cabinet Committee on Price Stability for Economic Growth, where he crossed swords with the vice president and Republican presidential nominee Richard Nixon. Still, the

committee's report concluded that "economic progress requires that we also promote competition, reduce wasteful subsidies," and free the market to allow the best equipped to thrive (Paarlberg, 1960; Schapsmeier and Schapsmeier, 1975: 248). And Nixon came around to Benson's way of thinking. Though he distanced himself from the unpopular agriculture secretary when conducting his 1960 campaign, Nixon would carry through on Bensonian farming policies after successfully winning the presidency eight years later (Schapsmeier and Schapsmeier, 1975: 250).

Benson's manifesto on the subject was a book-length manuscript titled *Freedom to Farm*, published in 1960, which made his position clear. "American farmers are equipped to produce in abundance," Benson wrote in the book's introduction. "It is unnatural for them to subject themselves to the heavy hand of bureaucratic restrictions" (Benson, 1960: 13). The book rehearsed a history of American farm legislation, again focusing on the ingenuity and effort of farmers in spite of regulatory policy rather than because of it. At the height of the Cold War, he compared the American system to the "authoritarian agriculture" of the Soviet Union and unsurprisingly found Russian farm policy a failure (Benson, 1960: 202-204). He predicted that the move toward larger farming operations would continue, "a process that is bound up with the technological revolution in agriculture" combined with his own deregulatory bent. Livestock farmers, for example, could not in good conscience ignore the antibiotics, hormones, vitamins, and enzymes used in modern feed systems. Such advancements reduced feed amounts, quickened the killing process, and encouraged farm growth. "The alert efficiency of our farmers has resulted in a rising tide of production," he argued (Benson, 1960: 216-217). Harnessing that efficiency required reducing price supports and

regulatory policy, which would ultimately redound to the growth of modern large-scale agribusiness. "This may surprise the non-farm reader," he argued, but "some of the most expensive things that the government does for farmers are unwanted and in the judgment of the majority of farmers are unneeded" (Benson, 1960: 13). The controversy Benson courted as agriculture secretary demonstrated that his assessment of the opinions of the majority of farmers was wrong, but the ideology that underlay his assumptions would guide his tenure in office.[17]

That freedom to farm clearly favored large operations with economic advantages already in place. In 1961, when his tenure as Secretary of Agriculture ended, there were roughly a million fewer farms in the United States than there had been when he started the job in 1953. The total had dropped twenty percent, and the total of small farms with sales of less than $2,500 had fallen by almost forty percent[18] (Cannon, 2019: 45). It was a program that created, in the words of Rosemary-Claire Collard and Jessica Dempsey, "live commodities whose capitalist value is derived from their status as living beings" (Collard and Dempsey, 2013: 2684).

Factory farming only grew from there. To keep up with the new demand borne of consolidation, large-scale operations moved to confinement systems that

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[17] As he was writing the book in 1959, he testified before the House Committee on Agriculture about the farm proposals of the Eisenhower Administration. In that testimony, he gave voice to the ideas he was writing in what would become Freedom to Farm, focusing in particular on flexibility in price supports and strengthening the rural development program. While his testimony dealt in large measure with crops rather than animals, the underlying ideology would have its effect on both (House of Representatives, 1959).

[18] Cannon qualifies these statistics by arguing that ninety percent of America's farms were still family-owned, defending the conservatism of Benson's policies. He admits that "Benson likely hastened the departure of some struggling farmers," but decides that "their ultimate exodus was likely inevitable." That inevitability was surely real, but Benson's policies did begin the move to large-scale agribusiness that ultimately eroded small farming in the country, many of those companies remaining family-owned, thus giving lie to that ninety percent figure (Cannon, 2019: 45).

took away all elements of the natural lives of pigs, chickens, and veal calves. Larger animals like cows stayed in traditional grazing systems for much of their artificially shortened lives, but were moved to concentrated feedlots for the final months before their slaughter (Fraser, et al., 2001; Rossi and Garnar, 2014: 482-485; Saitone and Sexton, 2017: 3-5). As the expansion of such organizations came during the time of growing vegan and animal welfare movements, and an increased emphasis on human rights stemming from the horrors of Nazi death camps, there was a simultaneous effort of these operations to hide their actions from the public (Fraser, 2005: 3). They knew, as David Fraser has explained, that there were two dominant western traditions that gave the industries cover if they were able to hide the worst manifestations of the system: Biblical assumptions of dominion justified killing animals if they were treated well in their lives (Preece and Fraser, 2000), and farmers were venerated as the bedrock of American morality and work ethic (Inge, 1969). Such assumptions could do the work of masking the realities of CAFOs (Fraser, 2001).

Benson, meanwhile, would maintain his conservative political stances in the years following his tenure as Secretary of Agriculture, drifting farther into the anticommunist identity politics that helped create the culture wars of the 1970s and would ultimately bring arch-conservatives like Ronald Reagan to power (Goldberg, 2019: 68-69). He was a prominent member of the John Birch Society and railed against civil rights leaders as communist dupes and proxies. His radicalism on communist and racial issues coalesced in October 1967, when Benson gave a speech to the General Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Civil rights leaders, he argued, wanted “a Communist program for revolution in America.” If not put in check, they would destroy “water supplies,

power grids, main rail road [lines] and highway arteries, communication centers, and government buildings." He presented a post-apocalyptic vision of riots in the streets, buildings on fire, black hands looting from white businesses, all leading to "more government housing, government welfare, government job training." It was a white supremacist diatribe cloaked in the flag, and its dismissal of nonwhite lives was a fitting mimic of Benson's dismissal of nonhuman ones in his days as agriculture secretary. The LDS church, itself a hub of racial bigotry until the late-twentieth century, published the speech as a pamphlet, *Civil Rights: A Tool of Communist Deception* (Harris, 2019: 136-137; Benson, 1968).

It is unsurprising that Benson's racial animus, so different from the racial views of Eleanor Roosevelt, would find a mirror in his animus toward nonhuman animals, just as Roosevelt's views would play a distinct role in her belief in human rights. Ultimately, animal-killing industries that built their modern models under Benson's watch would follow the example of Tyson. Smithfield Foods, for example, began its pig slaughter business as Smithfield Packing Company in 1936, at the same time that John Tyson made his infamous drive to Chicago (Mizelle, 2012: 77). Also that year, the agriculture department collaborated with several states to create the Regional Swine Breeding Laboratory in Ames, Iowa, home of Benson's Iowa State University, to help create pigs who would produce more meat more efficiently. With pork lagging in popularity to the corpses of cows and chickens, there was a massive public and private effort to boost pork and to breed animals that humans would want to eat in large numbers[19] (Anderson, 2009: 30-31).

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[19] For more on the growth of factory farming in the second half of the twentieth century, and into the twenty-first, see Silbergeld, 2016; Lymbery, 2014.

In 1946, the Hormel Company revived its National Barrow Show, which had been dormant during World War II, in an attempt to encourage the production of lean hogs with less fat. Hog farmers from thirteen states participated in the event held in Austin, Minnesota. The hogs were killed at the Hormel plant in Austin and judged based on meat-to-fat ratios in various parts of their bodies, a high percentage of lean meat and a low percentage of fat bringing prizes to the humans who brought the pigs in their care to be killed. The world was still recovering from the horror of Nazi experiments, the Neurenberg Trials were still ongoing, and the United Nations Commission on Human Rights was being formed, but contests that killed pigs for sport were so normalized in the American mind that those involved could not see the clear correlation (Anderson, 2009: 32).

Smithfield participated regularly in such trends. In the early 1980s, to create a Tyson-style "total vertical integration," Smithfield began to raise hogs itself, thereby controlling every stage of production from birth to death. Small hog farmers essentially became contract workers for Smithfield and many left the business entirely. In the late 1970s, there were more than 650,000 hog farms in the United States. By the onset of the twenty-first century, there were less than 70,000, and Smithfield killed more than one-fourth of all pigs in the country. Two-thirds of American pork in the twenty-first century is generated by only four companies[20] (Mizelle, 2012: 77; Blanchette, 2020).

That consolidation coalesced in the cattle industry, as well. As Josh Ozersky has demonstrated, the rapid expansion of beef production in the postwar world was fueled by Cold War propaganda that portrayed hamburgers as the quintessential

[20] That business is unsurprisingly grotesque. For a detailed description of one such operation, see Pachirat, 2013.

American food, making their consumption ostensibly a patriotic act (Ozersky, 2008). As the twenty-first century began, four animal operations controlled 81 percent of the beef market in the United States (Hendrickson and Heffernan, 2007).

This bifurcated path, with the side of human rights led by Eleanor Roosevelt and the active expansion of animal killing programs led by Ezra Taft Benson, did have opportunities to coalesce through a recognition of the personhood of nonhuman animals. The creation of the term “vegan” to describe lacto-vegetarians and their resulting organization during the war made the case even as the Nazi project continued that animals daily suffered versions of a holocaust. It gave humans the tools to rectify the speciesist thinking that drove both of those paths. But new tools would continue to come.

On April 1, 1960 the Television-Infrared Observation Satellite, TIROS I, first launched (Stroud, 1960: 293). It was a program created by the Pentagon’s Advanced Research Projects Agency, the first advanced weather satellite, and in its brief time in orbit around the earth, a total of seventy-six days, it beamed 22,952 images back home. The images were unlike anything humans had been able to see before. Prior to TIROS I such views of the earth were unknown (Jacobsen, 2018: 94-95). “The world has had its picture taken,” wrote WG Stroud in *National Geographic*. “For the first time in the millions of centuries that our planet has been whirling around the sun, we can see our home as it looks from a tiny companion in space” (Stroud, 1960: 293). TIROS I was a collaboration between public and private entities. RCA helped develop the satellite with NASA. Its rocket guidance system was developed by Bell Telephone Laboratories (Stroud, 1960: 294).

The satellite carried two television cameras, one with a wide-angle lens and the other designed for greater detail, and both taking a photograph once every thirty seconds, covering roughly 140 miles between images (Stroud, 1960: 293, 298). “In these pictures the maps we studied in school days seem to come alive,” Stroud explained with a fitting sense of wonder (1960: 297). Humans could now see the world from above, could see themselves as small specks in a broader system, just as vulnerable as any other animal on the planet. It created what astronauts later named the “overview effect,” a cognitive shift in human awareness after viewing the earth from space, an understanding of the world’s frailty and smallness (White, 1987).

Less than two months prior to the TIROS I launch, on February 8, H. Jay Dinshah and his fiancé Freya Smith created the American Vegan Society, the United States version of England’s Vegan Society, founded by Donald Watson upon the creation of his original neologism in 1944. Smith was from England, and her parents had been part of the early development of Watson’s group. The American version of the society was not the first vegan organizing effort in the US--the original was a short-lived group formed in 1948--but it would become the leading vegan activist organization in the country, publishing pamphlets, giving speeches, and holding annual conferences (Iacobbo and Iacobbo, 2004: 167-168; Dinshah and Dinshah, 2014). The creation of the first significant vegan organizing effort at the same time that TIROS I was preparing to beam back the first pictures of earth seemed to mirror the timing alignment that took place in November 1944 and created a real opportunity to ameliorate the ontological divisions in human thinking about the inherent value of humans and nonhumans, to classify the farming of animals as a genocide, marrying the two terms created that year.

That the opportunity wasn't likely doesn't make it any less an opportunity. American humans had been conditioned to eat meat and disregard the interests of farmed animals. They had, for the most part, never allowed themselves to seriously challenge their beliefs. There was, however, a likelihood that most Americans had been presented with arguments against the practice, whether from historical knowledge of Amos Bronson Alcott's Fruitlands (Francis, 2010), American editions of the work of Henry Stephens Salt (1894), the autobiography of Benjamin Franklin (2008), or the literature of Leo Tolstoy (Donovan, 2009; for more on the subject see Chapter 3). To claim likelihood as a check against the legitimacy of possibility is a common mistake, one that that has parallels in the history of race. When the *Comité de Citoyens* in New Orleans, for example, decided to institute a lawsuit against Louisiana's Separate Car Act of 1890, its opening salvo in Jim Crow segregation, it was unlikely that the case would strike down the law. And it didn't. The case ultimately yielded the Supreme Court decision *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), which validated segregation and codified white southern policy for the next seventy years (Hoffer, 2012; Luxenberg, 2020). The doom that faced such a suit from a predominantly white southern Supreme Court does not point out the *Comité de Citoyens* as quixotic historical figures because the possibility of success was unlikely. They are celebrated for taking what possiblity was there. Similarly, historical understanding of the region in the same 1890s that gave us *Plessy* presents a violent and intransigent apartheid regime that generated 188 lynchings per year (Brundage, 1993; Waldrep, 2004; CSDE Lynching Database). The history of that period implicates the entirety of whites in the region, even those who did not specifically participate in overt acts of violence, and even if there was a

unlikelihood that they would turn against their friends and family, against the dominant thinking of their peers.

White supremacy was lived in the region as a colonial relationship, and as Aimé Césaire has argued, colonization "dehumanizes even the most civilized man; that colonial activity, colonial enterprise, colonial conquest, which is based on contempt for the native and justified by that contempt, inevitably tends to change him who undertakes it" (2000: 41). Individual outgrowths of racialized violence, the symptoms of the colonial disease, have a virology that spreads to everyone involved. Thousands of white people participated in southern racial violence and thousands more participated tangentially in the act by approvingly visiting the sites of the deaths. That participation, and even the tacit approval given by the broader white populace that wasn't physically present but saw no need for legal remedy, served as its own form of trauma, the creation of Cesaire's colonial monsters. They were, as Michael Rothberg has described, "implicated subjects." A white citizen of the region who did not participate in the violence was not a direct victim or perpetrator, "but rather a participant in histories and social formations that generate the positions of victim and perpetrator." Implicated subjects, as defined by Rothberg, "help propagate the legacies of historical violence and pop up the structures of inequality that mar the present" (Rothberg, 2019: 1).

Thus is was that the unlikelihood of a given white southerner's participation in such violence was not a historical pass for complicity in the system. There was a high likelihood that those white southerners had heard arguments against the racial caste system they propagated, and a commensurate unlikelihood that they would be convinced by such claims. But we do not treat them historically as victims. They are implicated subjects, adding to the racial trauma of those dispossessed by their

beliefs and actions. Similarly, when such potential vegan moments presented themselves in history, the likelihood of revelatory change is no less a strike against the existence of the opportunity.

But it was, like *Plessy* before it, an opportunity missed. The ultimate mission of the satellite was to model weather patterns. "The weatherman has been like the proverbial blind man who tries to describe an elephant by feeling its trunk," explained NASA's chief meteorologist. "Now, for the first time, his eyes are being opened to a view of the entire animal." It was a fitting metaphor, as for the first time the relative smallness of the earth and all of its inhabitants was able to be seen, not in drawings or other illustrations, but in actual photographs. It provided another epistemological bifurcated path. The views from TIROS I could, on one hand, demonstrate a human superiority that allowed the species to capture such images. On the other, they provided the opportunity to see humans and nonhumans as part of the same system, as functional equals. The TIROS I pictures, then, had the potential ability to slow Benson's deregulatory policy that pushed the factory farming of nonhuman animals. It could also, however, demonstrate to the members of Roosevelt's UN Human Rights Commission the human exceptionalism buttressed by the scientific project that launched the satellite in the first place. While there is no evidence that the Commission had any formal position on the satellite imagery, it was clear that human supremacy had won the day. In the *National Geographic* issue just prior to the display of the TIROS I pictures, the magazine playfully described the tortured and terrified Miss Sam, a rhesus monkey rocketed into space. "Dressed for take-off in a custom-tailored space suit," the article said, "Miss Sam smiles like a model in a toothpaste advertisement. Her scientist friends say she will marry Sam, a rhesus monkey who survived an earlier

rocket voyage" (Fisher, 1960: 56). Miss Sam did not survive, and her "smiles" in the disturbing images included with the article were demonstrations of extreme stress, not happiness, a reality clearly understood by the scientists but ignored in both practice and publicity. The barriers to that potential vegan moment, stabilized by the bifurcated path of human rights and factory farming, were simply too great.

And they would remain through the 1950s and 1960s. That fully established separation was demonstrated most readily in the final months of 1966, a generation after the revelatory moment in late 1944. On August 24, 1966, President Lyndon Johnson, intellectual inheritor of the mantle of Franklin Roosevelt, signed the Animal Welfare Act of 1966. The new law regulated animal transport and use in laboratory testing or exhibition. Animal dealers were required to secure licenses and were subject to monitoring by federal regulators. The law set minimum standards for the treatment of tested or exhibited animals (Brown, 1997: 1-2). It was a law pushed by public pressure. In February, a *Life* magazine exposé titled "Concentration Camps for Dogs" described the treatment in animal dealer and breeder facilities and featured pictures of skeletal starving dogs on chains and in squalid conditions (Wayman, 1966: 22-29). It was an apt comparison, to be sure, and helped spur the public outcry that generated the Animal Welfare Act, but the exposé stopped at the water's edge of irresponsible dog breeders who sold animals to testing facilities. By 1966, CAFOs had begun to dominate the meat industry, and if dog-breeding facilities compared to concentration camps, then factory farming created situations that compared to Nazi extermination camps. Such factory farming facilities, however, were not included in *Life*'s exposé, and they were not included in Animal Welfare Act. The law excluded laboratory rats and mice, birds, reptiles, and all farmed animals. The trajectory of

the legislation was not directed at stopping the killing of animals but was instead an effort to provide brief respites to their suffering, largely for the purpose of avoiding negative publicity[21] (Stevens, 1990: 66-111).

Just over two months later, the national midterm elections took place. While Democrats held both houses of Congress, Republicans gained fifty seats. It was the first national election since the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the exclamation point on the end of the sentence that was the classical civil rights movement (see Chapter 5). The law was part of Johnson's larger domestic policy program that he called the Great Society, so named because he desperately wanted to revive the legacy of Franklin Rooseelt's presidency. Thus it was that in the shadow of the first major piece of animal welfare legislation since the nineteenth century, the United States carried out its first election ever with full black participation, paying off on an executive branch liberal agenda begun with Eleanor Roosevelt (Busch, 1999: 100-106; Garrow, 2015).

A month after the election, in December 1966, the United Nations General Assembly adopted two covenants intended to make binding many of the articles presented in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Originally conceived as one covenant, differences among nations concerning civil and political rights, on one hand, and economic, social, and cultural rights on the other led them to divide the covenants. Both were adopted on December 16, 1966. The preamble to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights announced a "recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the

[21] This kind of emphasis on humane treatment rather than nonhuman animal liberation had a long history, spanning well beyond the timeframe and scope of this study. See, for example, Kean, 1998.

human family" as "the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world." It argued that rights stemmed from "the inherent dignity of the human person" (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966: Preamble). The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights was more of the same. Its preamble was identical to that of its counterpart (International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966). They were documents rooted in human supremacy, one that demonstrated the trend that built from both of the speciesist paths developing since 1944. They were dramatically important for so many dispossessed humans, as was the American Voting Rights Act, but they ignored the holocaust hiding in plain sight. So too did the American Animal Welfare Act.

By the time those new covenants appeared, the factory farming techniques of industrial agriculture had begun, creating massive killing centers for nonhuman animals that resembled in so many ways the horrible human atrocities that generated the movement for human rights in 1944. By 1966 weather satellites like TIROS I had allowed humans to see the earth in all of its smallness, to interpret their own insignificance, their plodding similarity to all of the other earthlings who surrounded them. But the bifurcated path of human rights and animal agriculture in the wake of World War II prevented that recognition. It was, in that sense, a missed opportunity, one that failed to pay off on the promise of that fateful November twenty-two years prior, when the neologisms "genocide" and "vegan" seemed to offer the real possibility that human and animal rights could be intertwined in the human mind, and the fourth election of Franklin Roosevelt and his wife Eleanor laid the groundwork for internationalizing American civil rights efforts into a broadbased push for human rights. And by cementing the separation of human and animal

rights and facilitating a factory farming system that would further normalize nonhuman inferiority, it opened the scope of American semantics to trade in animal metaphors in new more prevalent ways.

CHAPTER 5

Like Animals:
The Rhetoric of Race and Animality in Civil Rights Era Newspapers

In the 1960s, as the civil rights movement found itself in full swing and factory farming began in earnest, there was a demonstrable profusion of the phrases “like animals” and “like an animal” in a variety of American newspapers, a marked increase from previous decades that inaugurated a decades-long growth in the frequency of the comparison. The phrases were used in many different contexts, but when actual, nonmetaphorical mentions of animals are omitted from various samples, the overwhelming number of instances of such rhetoric are rooted in racial discrimination. The timing of the spike in phrasing corresponds less with the new profusion of factory farming (see Chapter 4), which was kept largely from the sight of mainstream viewers, and more with the concentrated efforts to gain black rights that began with the classical civil rights movement in 1955 and continued with the Black Power movement a decade later. Racial justice movements led to both an increased national sensitivity to racial discrimination and a simultaneous backlash against racial advocacy that continued the profusion of racial animal comparisons in the news media. The use of animals to represent and denigrate undesirable aspects of humanity has existed since human societies first organized (Leach, 1989; Halverson, 1976), but the new profusion of such representations in the 1960s demonstrated an increased use of speciesist language in direct correlation to the racial explosion of the decade.

The factory farming regime that developed at the degregulatory hands of Ezra Taft Benson took actual animal lives, and took them en masse. It did so hidden behind the walls of slaughterhouses, but benefited tremendously from the public use of animals as scarlet letters for dispossesed human groups. “Because grammar remains at this unconscious level it is much more likely to convey latent ideology, an ideological stranglehold which joins hands with commonsense,” Andrew Goatly argues, “and which is therefore more powerful and potentially dangerous” (Goatly, 2002: 5). That danger stems from the power of language to normalize implicit bias. It is the “underlying conceptual distinctions” built into grammatical categories, explains Stephen Levison, “that may, by virtue of their obligatoriness, repetition and unconscious nature be especially inclined to induce distinctive habits of thought” (Levinson, 1996: 135). And when racial coding was already built into American grammatical categories, the negativity attached to dispossessed humans and nonhumans reified each other through the public use of animal metaphors against black activists seeking to overturn systemic bigotry. It only compounded the problem for farmed animals entering the new factory farming system because it publicly coded nonhumans as subhuman through public shaming , providing a self-justification for humans who benefited from the less public slaughter of those animals. It also damaged the black activist push for civil rights by associating them with a group destined for an unremarkable death.

The effort for civil rights has many genesis points, depending on its historical framing. The organized effort to push back against racial discrimination in the twentieth century, however, began with the Niagara Movement of WEB Du Bois in 1905, followed by the formation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909 (Greenidge, 2019; Lewis, 1994; Sullivan, 2009;

Sklaroff, 2009). The classical civil rights movement, however, began in the wake of the Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* decision in 1954, in which the justices unanimously invalidated segregated education in American public schools. "Does segregation of children in public schools solely on the basis of race, even though the physical facilities and other 'tangible' factors may be equal, deprive the children of the minority group of equal educational opportunities?" asked Chief Justice Earl Warren. "We believe that it does." The decision only technically applied to educational facilities, but what the Court seemed to imply was that separate was not equal in any scenario. "To separate them from others of similar age and qualifications solely because of their race," wrote Warren, referring to public school students, "generates a feeling of inferiority as to the status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone" (*Brown v. Board*; Wilkinson, 1979; Kluger, 2004). *Brown*, then, wasn't just a blow to white southern conceptions of public education; it was a blow to white southern conceptions of public life.

Thus it was that white southerners began a campaign of massive resistance to enforcement of the ruling. Southern legislators denounced the Court's opinion in a document that became known as the Southern Manifesto, promising support for any state willing to "resist forced integration by any lawful means" (Day, 2014: 107). There was a resurgence of terrorist groups like the Ku Klux Klan as well as new, more pseudo-respectable organizations like the White Citizens' Councils, dedicated to promoting white supremacy and manning the rhetorical barricades of segregation (Kluger, 2004; Rolph, 2018; McMillen, 1994).

The black South, however, buoyed by *Brown*, was ready to push back. The Montgomery Bus Boycott began in December 1955 when Rosa Parks famously

refused to give up her seat on a local bus, defying a segregation ordinance in Alabama's capital city and initiating a refusal by black citizens to ride the buses for 381 days. The protest crippled public transportation in Montgomery, along with much of the consumer economy, and made the city a pariah in the national and international news, forcing an eventual capitulation. The bus company agreed to integrate and hire black drivers (Burns, 2012; Robinson, 1987).

Along with that immediate, pragmatic success, the boycott also launched Martin Luther King, Jr., to stardom. He capitalized on the new influence stemming from his leadership of the effort in Montgomery to create in early 1957 the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, which would serve as a clearinghouse for much of the activity that would follow (Garrow, 1988; Fairclough, 1995). Later that year, the next major confrontation of the movement happened in Little Rock, Arkansas, when attempts to desegregate the city's Central High School turned violent. After a long and complicated ordeal, black students did finally enter and attend school at Central, but the recalcitrance of angry white parents demonstrated the hurdles that were still to come (Jacoway, 2007; Kirk, 2007; Bates, 1987). It was that anger that would generate the profusion of animal comparisons in American newspapers in the following decade, as a frustrated white population exploded in response to black advocacy for equal treatment. White students attending school with black students would be like attending school with animals, white administrators and parents argued. Black protesters acted like animals on picket lines (for examples of such rhetoric, see Vaden, 2014: 89; McMillen, 1994: 162-163). White supremacy dictated that in the great chain of being, black people were more like animals than white southern humans (see Chapter 1).

The decade of the 1960s was even more tumultuous. It was in 1963, for example, that the March on Washington brought more than 200,000 protestors to the nation's capital where they heard, among other things, Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech (Jones, 2013; Euchner, 2010). The momentum it generated helped lead to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which banned segregation in public accommodations and banned discrimination in federal employment (Loevy, 1997). After its passage, activists descended on Mississippi for a massive voter registration drive known as Freedom Summer. Six civil rights workers, black and white, were killed during the campaign. There were more than a thousand arrests and sixty bombings (McAdam, 1990; Watson, 2010). The violence again captured the attention of the nation and generated enthusiasm that resulted in the Voting Rights Act of 1965, mandating federal oversight of elections in the South (Garrow, 2015). Taken together, the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act mark the successful end of the classical civil rights movement.

Even as those victories made the news, however, many African Americans questioned the status of their success. In 1965, almost thirty percent of black households lived below the poverty line, while just about eight percent of white families did. The black unemployment rate was around 8.6 percent, double the 4.3 percent for whites. Kenneth Clark argued that "The masses of Negroes are now starkly aware of the fact that recent civil rights victories benefited a very small percentage of middle-class Negroes while their predicament remained the same or worsened" (Clark, 1968: 10). And many of those impoverished black residents, particularly in urban areas, began to show their displeasure in new ways. The people of Watts, Los Angeles, for example, cared little about the Voting Rights Act. Unemployment in Watts wasn't 8.6 percent. It was 31 percent. Watts was an inner-

city black neighborhood policed by whites, and police brutality was common. In August, after a traffic stop drew a crowd and the police called for backup, people began throwing rocks at the officers, leading to a full-scale uprising. It continued for a week, the governor of California calling in the National Guard to lock down the area. In the end, the Watts Riot caused almost forty million dollars in property damage. More than four thousand people were arrested, there were almost one thousand casualties, and thirty-four people were killed—some of them by the police and National Guard who were there ostensibly to protect them (Horne, 1995).

The socioeconomic situation of so many led to questions about the nonviolent strategy of the classical civil rights movement and ushered in the era of Black Power, wherein activists argued that assimilation and integration robbed African American people of the African part of that heritage. It was a conscious choice to nurture and promote black interests, values, and autonomy and was epitomized by groups like the Nation of Islam, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and the Black Panther Party (Joseph, 2007; see Chapter 7).

One of the core efforts of the civil rights movement and its Black Power inheritor was to reclaim the humanity of the black population, an emphasis on the human that would draw white supremacists to use animal metaphors to make their rebuttal. Animal metaphors allow humans to “chastise and censure those others who are thought incapable of controlling that which ‘society’ deems inappropriate or unacceptable,” Samantha Hurn argues (Hurn, 2012: 14). The discourse of animality created a biopolitical frame to situate a clear power hierarchy that placed white humans on top, animals on bottom, and other groups somewhere on the scale to bolster the hegemony of the powerful. “The felt sense that `human' designates a different order of being is plainly evident in popular circles,” explains

Kay Anderson (2000: 302), who remarks on the modern ubiquity of animal comparisons in the media. Intoxication from drinking or drugs can bring animality, as can disease, poverty, depression, or criminality. Torture or war or rape, childbirth or mental disability. “But so too have scholarly traditions (such as philosophical humanism) carried forward the idealising tendency to conceive of humanity by way of essential contrast to animality” (Anderson, 2000: 302; see Chapter 1).

It is a case made famously by Martin Heidegger who argued that humanism, particularly in philosophy and anthropology, has placed humans and humanity in a different category than animals and animality, building directly from claims of reason or language. This humanism, Heidegger argued, rejects the contention that “the essence of man [*sic*] consists in being an animal organism” as an “insufficient definition of man’s essence.” Thus humans attach “an immortal soul” to themselves, then relate that soul to the mind, then conclude by “singing the praises of the mind,” over and against the minds of other, nonhuman animals (Heidegger, 1978: 228-229; see also Glendinning, 1996). Before Heidegger, Freidrich Nietzsche (1882, 1886, 1887, 1896, 1918) went the other way, reveling in animality. “For Nietzsche,” explains Jennifer Ham, “man is ‘the not-yet-fixed animal,’ the ‘cruelest animal,’ the ‘bravest animal,’ the ‘most interesting animal,’ indeed the ‘superanimal,’ but also the ‘sick animal.’ No other thinker in the Western tradition, except perhaps Aesop, has donned animal masks and animal speech more often than Nietzsche” (Ham, 1997: 155).[1] Importantly, however, both

[1] Ham’s quotes of Nietzsche appear in various publications: “The not-yet-fixed animal” (1886: 62), the “cruellest animal” and the “bravest animal” (1896: 3), the “most interesting animal” (1918: 14), the “superanimal” (1882: 1), and the “sick animal” (1887: 13).

philosophical strategies--fully separating animals from humans or manipulating animals as masks for humanity--left nonhuman animals as the principal point of differentiation with humans.

Even earlier, Aristotle made a “like animals” case in relation to slaves, the diseased, or the disabled. He argued that such people could apprehend reason, and therefore were not nonhuman animals, as such. But they were like animals in that they could not generate their own reason. They were in an interstitial subhuman space between normal humanity and advanced animality (Pagden, 1982: 43; see also Taylor, 2017). Using this philosophical base, Aristotle was able to argue that slavery was beneficial for slaves, a claim made by his intellectual inheritors in colonial America, and that institutionalization was beneficial for the mentally ill, one taken up later in the early republic (Garnsey, 1996: 113-114). “They are,” said Aristotle of the underdeveloped and insane, “those who by nature are thoughtless and live by their senses alone are brutish, like some races of the distant barbarians, while those who are so as a result of disease (e.g. of epilepsy) or of madness are morbid” (Aristotle, 350: Book VII, 5(1)).

Dominant cues are “proximity to `nature', infantility, eroticism, and absence of civilised manners. Human beings `in the raw’--supposedly motivated in their conduct by naked impulse rather than rational deliberation--have included those variously savage peoples, the mentally disordered, some women, and the so-called dangerous classes who in different ways have been deemed either beyond, or potentially improved by, the cultivation of self-government” (Aristotle, 350: Book VII, 5(1)). Race in its American context resides in a liminal space between all such categories. Association with Africa gave black Americans, beginning in the earliest days of slavery in the seventeenth century, a stereotyped image of the ‘primitive’

directly related to an assumed proximity to nature.[2] Slaves were not only portrayed as infantile, but slaveowners developed paternalistic attitudes based on what they considered fatherly relationships with the slaves in their care. It was from such attitudes that the "Sambo" myth of the docile slave developed (Elkins, 1959; see Chapter 8). The eroticism of blackness was largely compensatory, a psychological cover for the consistent rape of black women by white slaveowners, but it had far-reaching consequences (Thompson, 2012; Hutchinson, 1999). The myth of overt black sexuality and supposed need to protect the virtue of white womanhood became the excuse for the vast majority of American lynchings in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Hall, 1993; Wood, 2009). African Americans have also been identified, again in the words of Anderson, "with the discursive spaces of `wild' nature (as distinct from that proud monument of `civilisation' known as the city or, alternatively, those counterpoint spaces like `ghettoes' within the city's `dark side')" (2000: 302). Thus it was possible to perceive African Americans as fully part of every Aristotelian category of animalistic difference. "Animality," Anderson argues, "has been a crucial reference point for constructing sociospatial difference and hierarchy in Western cultures. Its meanings have circulated across the nature border and into a politics of sociospatial relations" (Anderson, 2000: 302).

[2] In a pre-Victorian context, that association was more damaging in that it was with wilderness rather than nature. Prior to the antebellum period, the woods and its corollaries were "wilderness," a place that was wild, that was evil. The wilderness was where witches plotted, where Indians planned attacks on white people. It was a frightening and problematic place, and it was with that version of wilderness that slaves were associated. The shift in nomenclature from wilderness to nature was popularized in the nineteenth century by Transcendentalist thinkers like Emerson and Thoreau, who described such areas as places for religious contemplation. Nature became a place where one could find God, rather than a place where one could find the devil. By that time, however, American slavery had existed for more than two hundred years and the more harrowing "wilderness" association was already complete. (Nash, 2014; Steinberg, 2002; Cole, 1836; Macnaghten P 1993)

The history of sociospatial relations in the United States is complex, built along the fault lines of what David Sibley has called “geographies of exclusion” (Sibley, 1998: 119). But in its modern incarnation, that history developed around responses to the Great Migration. The exodus of slave descendants out of the South began slowly in the late nineteenth century in response to post-Reconstruction retrenchment. In order to reimpose a version of slavery in the region, white leaders added restrictive provisions to state constitutions that disqualified black men from voting. They passed the first of what would become a litany of segregation laws. And they began the process of convict lease, which would force hundreds of thousands into a state of uncompensated forced labor (see Chapter 3). When combined with systemic poverty and racial violence, realities of life in the South prompted many to leave. From 1890 to 1910, about 200,000 migrated, but ninety percent of the black population was still decidedly southern. The major waves of the Great Migration accompanied the two world wars, as the promise of good pay and factory job opportunities drew black southerners north (Wilkerson, 2010; Harrison, 1992).

While war created labor demand, however, prior to its onset racism kept factory owners from hiring black workers, fearing that the products made in the factory would be associated in the American mind with blackness. Society took its cues from there, urban racism leading to a de facto residential segregation. That segregation created pockets of urban poverty and the various socio-economic problems that came with it (see Chapter 3), but it also created a nascent black middle class built on selling products and services to a largely captive black customer base. Harlem in New York, Chicago’s South Side, Paradise Valley in Detroit, the Hill District of Pittsburgh, all shaped those “geographies of exclusion”

that created autonomous economic vehicles. That autonomy, however, kept much of the black population, North and South, from the fruits of the broader economic success of white, mainstream America (Grossman, 1989; Rothstein, 2017).

“The sources of the anxious displacements of racialised otherness in Western colonial cultures lie less in the frozen chambers of the white unconscious and not only within the by now much studied logics of race and power formations,” says Anderson. They also reside in what she calls “microarchaeologies of the (white) self” (Anderson, 2000: 303), constituent in the American history of residential segregation, racially restrictive housing covenants, and the practice of redlining.

Racial minorities “enter the psyche as objects which cause unease and discomfort,” writes David Sibley. “These feelings are projected onto others who are defined as abject,” a condition that remains like a scarlet letter on its victims. “Anxieties about abject difference,” he explains, “will not go away'” (Sibley, 1998: 119). Julia Kristeva’s work on abjection confirms those anxieties. The distinction between humans and animals, for Kristeva, mirrors the difference between God and human, between flesh and blood. Blood is an indication of the impure, the animal, she argues. But it can also refer to women and fertility. “It thus becomes a fascinating semantic crossroads, the propitious place for abjection where *death* and *femininity*, *murder* and *procreation*, *cessation of life* and *vitality* all come together” (Kristeva, 1982: 96; emphasis in original). The dissonance is matched in the United States by that of white and black, another interstitial space where difference is mediated by animality.

Many scholars have made a similar racial case in the context of the European colonial project in Africa. “With animality posited as something inferior to

humankind, and as something to be conquered and exploited," Molly Mullin argues, "early modern Europeans made concerted efforts to maintain distinct boundaries between themselves and animals" (Mullin, 1999: 204). Anne McClintock and Patrick Brantlinger have argued that there was in the colonial endeavor a sublimated sexual fantasy about both the conquering of new land and the exoticism of the conquered. At the same time, and because of the guilt associated with those sublimated desires, blackness was rhetorically coded as sinful and backwards--not just as other, but as lesser. That broader western attitude was also clearly part of white American ideology, as well, particularly in the colonial period (McClintock, 1995; Brantlinger, 1986; see also Fredrickson, 1981; Jordan, 1968). People of African descent were beasts or brutes, which exacerbated fears of miscegenation and its consequences because it tied such sexual behaviors to concepts of bestiality[3] (Anderson, 2000: 311; Anderson, 1991; Brantlinger, 1986).

Seeing people residing in colonial spaces as somehow evolutionarily beneath those of European descent, and thus by default closer in kind to nonhuman animal life, "echoed and relied upon a myriad of similar divisions used to separate some humans from others (primitive versus modem, civilized versus savage, heathen versus Christian)," explain Glen Elder, Jennifer Wolch, and Jody Emel. That division between human and animal, "construed as a continuum of both bodily form and function and temporal stage in evolutionary progress, was used to reinforce intrahuman categorizations and interpret them in temporal, evolutionary

[3] Such fears would continue to and through the Supreme Court's *Loving v. Virginia* (1967), in which the Court struck down state laws banning interracial marriage on grounds of the Fourteenth Amendment (Wallenstein, 2014; Cashin, 2017; Newbeck, 2008).

terms rather than solely social or geographic ways" (Elder, Wolch, Emel, 1998: 192).

The discourse of nonhuman animality was used to belittle human groups to maintain power. Such Foucauldian discourses mapped onto assumptions about human groups in a way that made them virtually inextricable. Foucault has described the elasticity and legacy of such namings, for example, in relation to madness, and how changing perceptions and semantic constructions around mental illness provided keys to a particular kingdom with better and worse outcomes (Foucault, 1968). The discourse of nonhuman animality worked similarly to create socially constructed linguistic standards that gave those on the right side of them the ability to wield power over those on the wrong side. That discourse, according to Elder, Wolch, and Emel, functioned in three principal ways. "1) By using animals as absent referents or models for human behavior; 2) By imputing similarities in behavior or bodily features and/or associations with the animal world; and 3) By viewing people (and cultures) through the lens of specific human practices on animal bodies" (Elder, Wolch, Emel, 1998: 194).

Frederick Law Olmsted, for example, writing of his travels through the antebellum slave South, told the story of asking an overseer whether it was difficult to continually whip and punish slaves. "I think nothing of it," the man responded. "I wouldn't mind killing a nigger [*sic*] more than I would a dog" (Olmsted, 1953: 452). The brazenness of the overseer's statement is an indictment of the racism present in the slave South, but less discussed is its revelation of the precarious lives lived by dogs in the region. Karl Jacoby cites the historical treatment of domesticated animals and the ties of slavery to the development of sedentary agriculture as genesis points for the frequent comparison between slaves and animals. That it

“occurs in such different time periods and in such different locales suggests that it is more than just an isolated linguistic or cultural quirk,” he argues. “Rather, it appears that something about slavery as an institution frequently led to a blurring of the line that has traditionally separated human beings from domestic animals” (Jacoby, 1994: 90). And when domestic animals and human beings were placed in the same categories, both sides of that blurred line experienced overt and often deadly bigotry.

“In most interpretations of the human-animal ranking,” notes Anderson, “the animal-like status of certain categories of human has been conceived pejoratively” (Anderson, 2000: 310). There were, of course, many variations on the theme, racial metaphors centering around apes and monkeys. Various animals featured in other human insults. Annoying people were pests or badgers, informers were rats. Unscrupulous men were sharks or snakes. Women were also frequent targets of attacks, accusations that were often gendered in the same way that others were coded racially. Women could be bitches or bunnies or cows. Gendered insults toward effeminate men like “pussyfooting” developed in the 1890s. Many were considered chickens. Women as objects of desire were treated “like meat” (Dunayer, 1995; see also Adams, 1990).

As Sunaura Taylor has explained, animal comparisons are also prevalent in the history of disability, as the medical and scientific thinking developing in the nineteenth century tended toward chains of being in both human and nonhuman groups (see Chapter 1). “There was Otis the Frog Boy, Mignon the Penguin Girl, Jo-Jo the Dog Faced Boy, Darwin’s Missing Link, and of course the Elephant Man. In sideshow culture, disability oppression crashed head-on into racism, sexism, classism, and I would say, speciesism.” There were also animal names given to

diseases and deformities—"elephantitis, ape-hand syndrome, lobster-claw syndrome, pigeon chest, goosebumps, chickenpox, and phocomelia (seal-like limbs), to name just a few" (Taylor, 2011: 192-193). Thus it was that "the disabled person becomes a body to be cropped, numbered, and labeled—not unlike a butcher's diagram" (Taylor, 2011: 194).

"Why should expressions like 'you son of a bitch' or 'you swine' carry the connotations that they do, when 'you son of a kangaroo' or 'you polar bear' have no meaning whatever?" asks Edmund Leach (1989: 153). He argues that when such metaphors are marshalled in aid of control or power, "it indicates that the name itself is credited with potency. It clearly signifies that the animal category is in some way taboo and sacred. Thus, for an anthropologist, animal abuse is part of a wide field of study which includes animal sacrifice and totemism"[4] (Leach, 1989: 153).

And the mediation provided by totemism and other folk forms plays a role in how humans make and receive such comparisons (see Chapter 8). Wolves, for example, bear little resemblance to what Mary Midgley calls "the folk-figure of the wolf" (1973: 114). The same is true for other often-caricatured animals. "But *it is the folk-figure that has been popular with philosophers*. They have usually taken over the popular notion of lawless cruelty which underlies such terms as 'brutal', 'bestial', 'beastly', 'animal desires', etc., and have used it, uncriticized, as a contrast to illuminate the nature of man. Man has been mapped by reference to a landmark which is largely mythical" (Midgley, 1973: 114; emphasis in original).

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[4] A more scientific effort to make this point in long form comes from the discipline of molecular anthropology (see Marks, 2002).

To make her case, Midgley uses the image of Nietsche's lion in *Thus Spake Zarathustra*. The spirit becomes a camel, the camel a lion, and the lion a human child. "To create for itself freedom for new creating, for that the lion's power is enough," Nietszche writes (Nietszche, 1896: 27). His was animal as human symbol, his mysterious spirit. "But in the world there is no such beast," says Midgley. "To talk of a Beast is to talk of a thing with its own laws. If lions really did not draw the line at anything--if they went about mating with crocodiles, ignoring territory, eating poisonous snakes and killing their own cubs--they would not be lions, nor, as a species, would they last long. This abstract Beast is a fancy on the level of the eighteenth century's abstract Savage, whether Noble or otherwise" (Midgley, 1973: 118; see Chapter 1).

It was, then, a fiction. Beasts without law would not exist outside of 'man' in reality, but they had a proscriptive power in metaphor. A reasonable response would be, for Midgley, to argue that "the beast within us gives us partial order; the business of conceptual thought will only be to complete it" (1973: 118). That, however, did not happen. Instead, "the opposite, a priori, reasoning was the one that prevailed. If the Beast Within was capable of every iniquity, people reasoned, then Beasts Without probably were so too. This notion made man anxious to exaggerate his difference from all other species, and to ground all activities he valued in capacities unshared by the animals" (Midgley, 1973: 118). Transgressions of assumed norms, then, were rhetorically animalized, and in the United States, as white culturemakers created the norms, that rhetoric was inevitably coded racially.

Midgley interprets such codings as evasion, "our horror at the things we do" (1973: 119). It is fear of guilt that drives such metaphors to something foreign and

other, something marked scientifically and assuredly as different than human. "Beasts Within solve the Problem of Evil," she argues, a solving that is beneficial to the human "because it shows the power of his [or her] conscience, but all the same it is a dangerous fib." For Midgley, these fibs act "as a scapegoat for human wickedness" (Midgley, 1973: 119). If that theory is to be believed, racialized animal metaphors are rooted in a tacit acknowledgement of the problematic nature of the motivating force behind the metaphor itself. It is, in the American context, a difficult argument to justify, given the intentionality of racism and its evolution from slavery through Jim Crow. Those American metaphors offer instead a reflection of the country's racist roots rather than any effort to evade them.

This kind of intentionality also works in the other direction. In his study of media portrayals of British hunting, for example, Konrad Lorenz notes that an average person "does not judge the fox that kills the hare by the same standard as the hunter who shoots one for precisely the same reason, but with that severe censure he would apply to the gamekeeper who made a practice of shooting farmers and frying them for supper!" (Lorenz, 2002: 172). And then there was the effort at killing foxes themselves (Marvin, 2001; Stewart and Cole, 2016). The problems of foxes and hares were innate, biological; they were inherently problematic to many in England. But at the same time, there was an undeniable moral component to the coverage, that foxes were evil, that they were willfully dangerous to humans. That willfulness was itself a fiction, but the ascription of intentionality to the othered group was, in one sense, an attempt to evade the guilt associated with killing the foxes, but in another it was a reflection of the negative human attitude against foxes, a lived reality of real disdain (Hurn, 2013).

The othering of nonhuman animals like foxes made an additional rhetorical move when representations of those animal others were applied to human others. And the use of the representations of those animals to belittle black Americans do intersect at a point of intentionality. “While humans are free agents in making their own sociocultural history,” explains Barbara Noske, “animals are unfree in that their (natural) history is made for them” (Noske, 1997: 76). In a similar statement made generations prior, WEB DuBois made the case that “men confidently assert that Negroes have no history” (Du Bois, 2005: 61). It was the semantic similarity in how such othering worked that drew the connections between both human and animal dispossessions.

After all, “Every attribute that it is claimed we uniquely have,” writes Tim Ingold, “the animal is consequently supposed to lack; thus the generic concept of ‘animal’ is negatively constituted by the sum of these deficiencies” (Ingold, 1994: 3). The work of M. Reza Talebinejad and H. Vahid Dastjerdi has similarly demonstrated, though in a different context, that “anthropomorphization of animal attributes and behavior is almost always an input condition for the metaphorical applications of animal names” (2005: 145). It is not, however, the only input. Since the application of such names centers not on the animal but on the human individual or group being described, any number of inputs can be a sufficient “condition of metaphoricality” (Talebinejad and Dastjerdi, 2005: 145).

Mary Midgley draws a corresponding conclusion about rumors of cannibalism in the colonial period. The “human outsiders were ruled not to be really human at all,” she explained. “They could thus be placed, along with the animals, outside the species-barrier, at a distance which–it was hoped–would prevent their troubling anybody’s conscience ever again. And in this way unnumbered atrocities

have been justified"[5] (Midgley, 1994: 193). It was the act of justification, one always centered on human behavior, that became the driver of such metaphors, making actual animal behavior beside any intended point.

Those who are not cannibals still participate in acts of alterity on a regular basis. "In the process, these 'others' are relegated to the status of lesser beings, typified in many contexts by animals," Hurn argues (2012: 25). "Thus the objectification of 'others' – human or nonhuman – in the past and in the contemporary world, justifies their treatment in the eyes and minds of the 'abusers'" (2012: 25). Animality as a useful metaphor in this regard "boils down to a 'chicken and egg' conundrum; we might draw on the longevity of dualistic thought, which allows for objectification and the exploitation of others based on perceived 'difference', but it might also be the case that human exploitation of 'others' leads to the development of a system of dualistic thought based on difference" (Hurn, 2012: 25-26). As with acts of justification, neither calls to historical longevity nor the motivation to exploit others relate directly to any given animal behavior. It is a caricature of animals that serves to caricature the human or human group. It is distortion upon distortion.

Such comparative work only has the impact it does through media outlets like newspapers. There is, for example, no code for events that categorizes some as newsworthy and others as not. "News," argues Stuart Hall, "is the end-product of a complex process which begins with a systematic sorting and selecting of events and topics according to a socially constructed set of categories" (Hall et al.,

[5] Kajsa Ekholm-Friedman argues that viewing cannibalism as barbaric "is, to be sure, a remarkable opinion in a culture that has been capable of the most extreme cruelty and destructive behaviour, both at home and in other parts of the world" (Ekholm-Friedman, 1991: 220).

1978: 53). The discourses created by those media categories, then, create a horizon line for how animals are portrayed, or how representations of animals appear in relation to subsets of human behavior--how those distortions move through public information networks[6] (Molloy, 2011: 13).

And such representations are not uniform. Nor are they conditioned by objective factfinding. In newspapers, for example, expertise is bestowed through authorship, not through credential. “The use of poignant anecdotes in place of scientific evidence, the christening of isolated incidents as trends, depictions of entire categories of people as innately dangerous” can influence a presentation and its public reception (Glassner, 2009: 208). Such distortions create what Hall calls “signification spirals,” as increased reporting and further comparative modeling only drives readers further from verifiable reality (Hall et al., 1978). A “news wave” then develops, wherein intensive coverage builds on itself, the reporting on the story aiding the development of the story itself, becoming part of it, creating a “self-referential system,” as Peter Vasterman explains, with “positive feedback loops, expanding the news wave”[7] (Vasterman, Yzermans and Dirkzwager, 2005: 111).

The feedback loop that governed the “like animals” and “like an animal” representations in American newspapers spiked dramatically in the 1960s, following the first years of the civil rights movement. This study analyzed sixteen

[6] For further examples of newspaper studies including animals, see Podberscek, 1994; Herzog and Burghardt, 1988; Herzog and Galvin, 1992; Cassidy, 2012.

[7] It is a phenomenon that Stig Hjarvard has called the “mediatization of society” (Hjarvard, 2008: 105). Because of this news wave, media-centred studies of human-animal relations “attend to various relations between the economics of (media) production, the aesthetics and conventions of representational practices, the norms of human–animal relations and the historically situated discourses that connect and contextualize them” (Molloy, 2011: 10).

different newspapers, as well as the Newspapers.com database, which houses 15,748 newspapers, and the Readex African American Newspapers Database and its 282 newspapers. Of the sixteen specific papers, eight of the white newspapers and three of the black newspapers demonstrated a large enough sample to be instructive, showing a substantive rise in the use of “like animals” and “like an animal” metaphors in the 1960s. Taken in full, however, the set demonstrates an incremental rise in use of the phrases from the 1880s to the 1950s before a substantial increase of mentions in the 1960s. The 1,455 uses of the metaphor in the 1960s was roughly 70 percent higher than the 867 uses in the decade prior.

Table 4: TOTAL MENTIONS OF “LIKE ANIMALS” AND “LIKE AN ANIMAL” FROM DELINEATED NEWSPAPERS

	1880s	1890s	1900s	1910s	1920s	1930s	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s
TOTAL FROM DELINEATED NEWSPAPERS	103	251	278	348	451	611	711	867	1455	2085	2365
Atlanta Daily World						16	22	16	2	15	11
Atlanta Constitution	7	22	26	30	33	18	70	73	118	156	127
Bal. Afro-American			5	0	6	15	12	15	14	13	10
Boston Globe	8	19	22	39	79	101	90	99	137	198	233
Chicago Defender				3	3	6	10	21	44	23	
Chicago Tribune	5	53	43	37	36	42	82	112	267	346	257
Christian Science Monitor				8	16	28	49	43	42	60	36
Los Angeles Sentinel							1	4	13	15	23
Los Angeles Times	9	22	35	21	47	69	55	71	180	411	542
New Orleans Times-Picayune	13	36	26	43	50	51	53	143	146	177	248
New York Amsterdam News					2	4	12	10	18	37	18
New York Times	42	46	35	55	60	90	106	103	246	295	380

New York Herald Tribune	12	32	36	56	68	99	94	75	29		
Pittsburgh Courier						6	15	9	8	13	10
Wall Street Journal			1	4	3	0	0	4	14	20	22
Washington Post	7	21	49	52	48	66	40	69	177	306	448

Analyzed white newspapers are represented in blue. Analyzed black newspapers are represented in pink. Those in yellow included incomplete samples and thus are not included in the analysis. Three of the papers that don't follow the pattern are black newspapers. One of the white newspapers, the *Herald Tribune*, stops in 1962. The *Christian Science Monitor* stays consistent. But it is the only white paper that does so.

Visualizing the differentiation in the eight white and three black newspapers with substantial numbers makes the distinct 1960s expansion clearer.

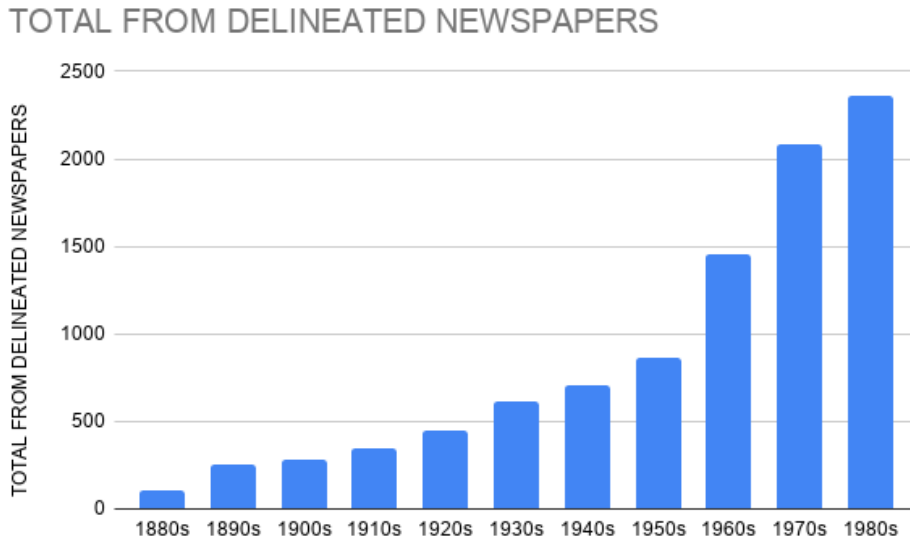


Chart 1: Total Mentions from Delineated Newspapers

The totals from the Newspapers.com database mimic that rise.

Table 5: TOTAL MENTIONS OF "LIKE ANIMALS" AND "LIKE AN ANIMAL" FROM NEWSPAPERS.COM DATABASE

	1880s	1890s	1900s	1910s	1920s	1930s	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s
TOTAL	14903	23511	30527	29406	32452	44178	30793	44816	65854	71327	81462

The database contains 15,748 newspapers, but the dates of those newspapers run from the American colonial era to the present, many that only have scattered issues and many that do not lie within the specified dates.

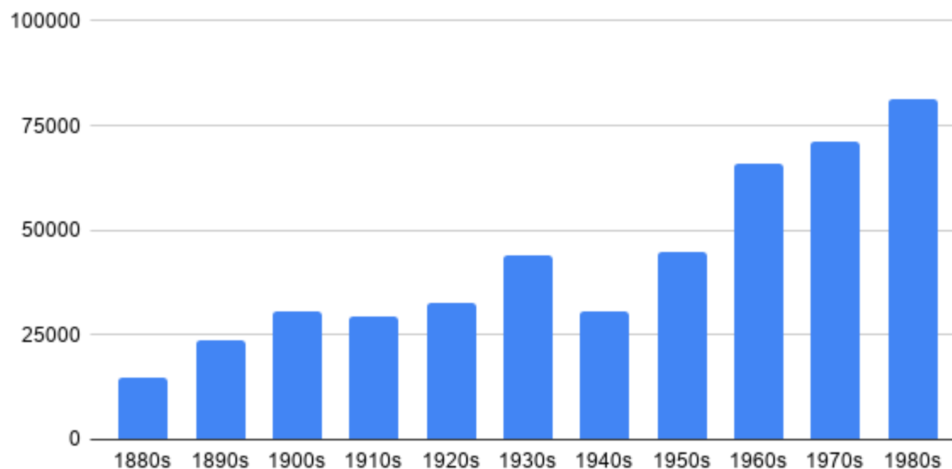


Chart 2: Total Mentions from Newspapers.com Database

The Readex database was less instructive, as the coverage of the black press was sporadic and the papers did not include coverage within the timeline.

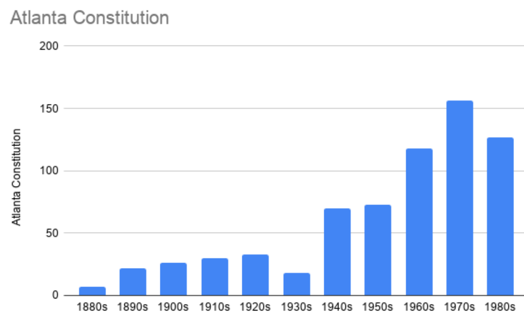
Table 6: TOTAL MENTIONS OF "LIKE ANIMALS" AND "LIKE AN ANIMAL" FROM READEX.COM DATABASE

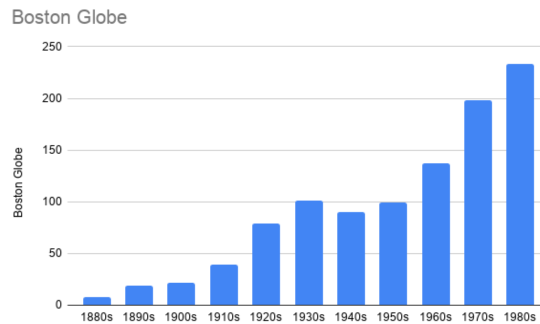
	1880s	1890s	1900s	1910s	1920s	1930s	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s
	7	13	26	13	6	3	11	2	8	17	10

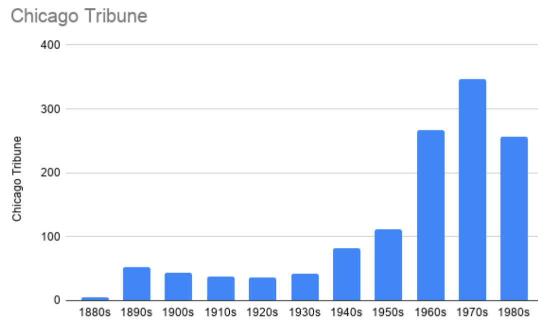
The database contains 282 newspapers, but the dates of those newspapers run from the nineteenth century to the present, many that only have scattered issues and many that do not lie within the specified dates.

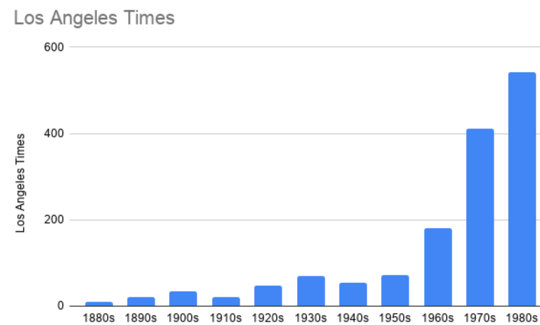
More helpful are analyses of the eight white and three black individually analyzed newspapers, demonstrating the expansion of “like an animal” and “like animals” metaphors in the 1960s.

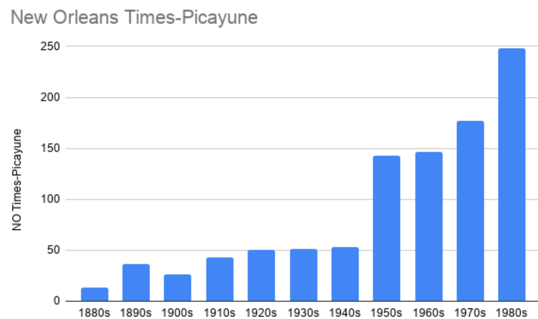
The eight white newspapers:

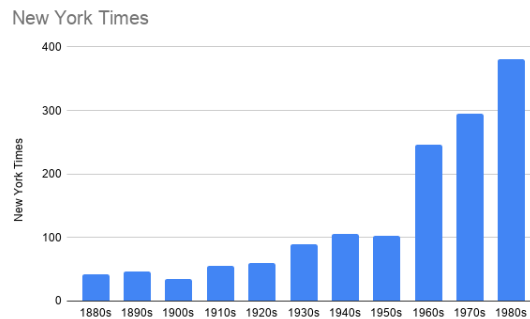


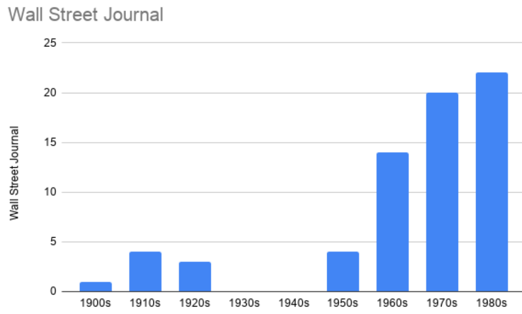


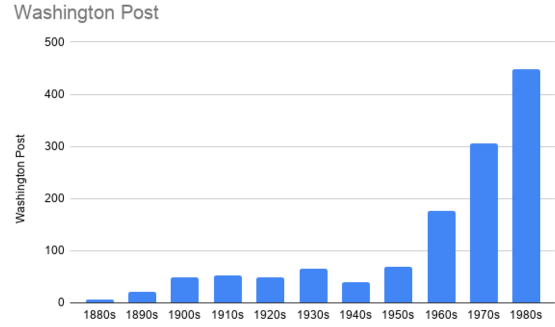






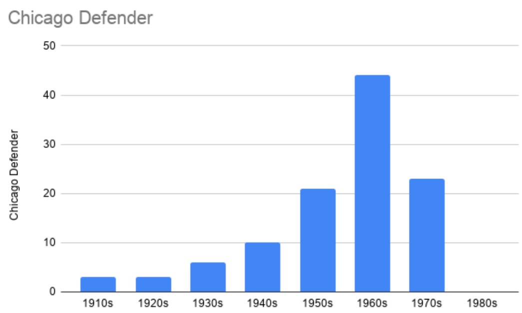


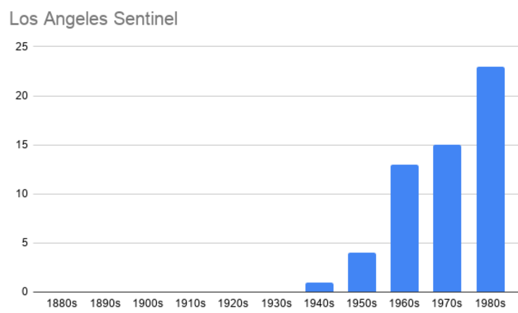


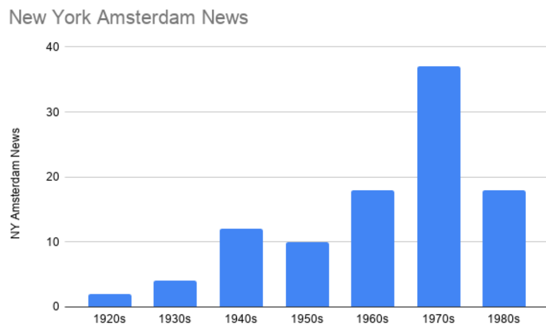


Charts 3-10: White Newspapers by Decade

There is a consistent escalation in usage of the phrase “like an animal” and “like animals” in these white newspapers. While the rise in some is more pronounced than in others, the rise is there in all of them, a clear pattern in the major American mainstream press. The same could be said of the three black newspapers included in the study:







Charts 11-13: Black Newspapers by Decade

Within the bounds of the decade itself, the animal metaphors also grew in frequency, with higher totals at the end of the decade than at the beginning.

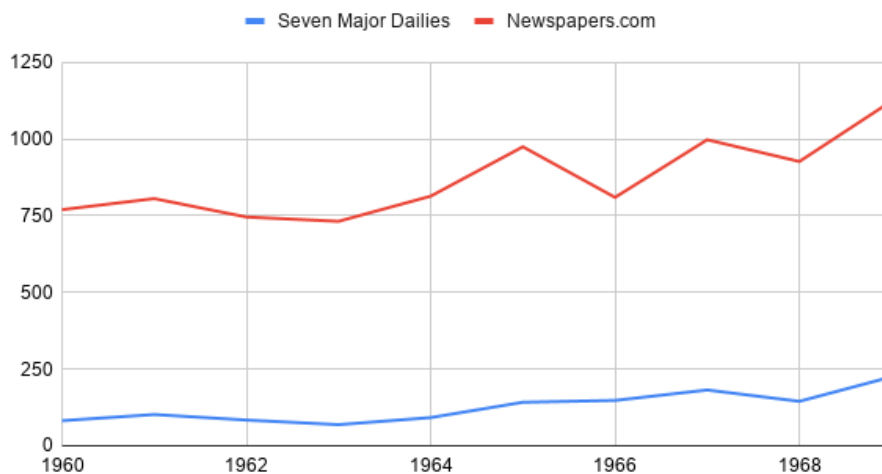


Chart 14: “Like an Animal” Mentions in Seven Major Dailies and Newspapers.com in the 1960s

Though the focus of this particular study is newspapers, there was a similar spike towards the end of the decade in the use of such phrases in books, as an n-gram view of the Google Books database, which carries millions of books from all over the world, not just the United States, demonstrates. The largest spike for international English-language books happens earlier than it does for newspapers, coalescing at the onset and conclusion of World War II, but the growth in use in the second half of the 1960s not only tracks, to a lesser degree, the semantic model of American newspapers, it rises at the same time that the term Negro falls from favor as a term of respect in the country.

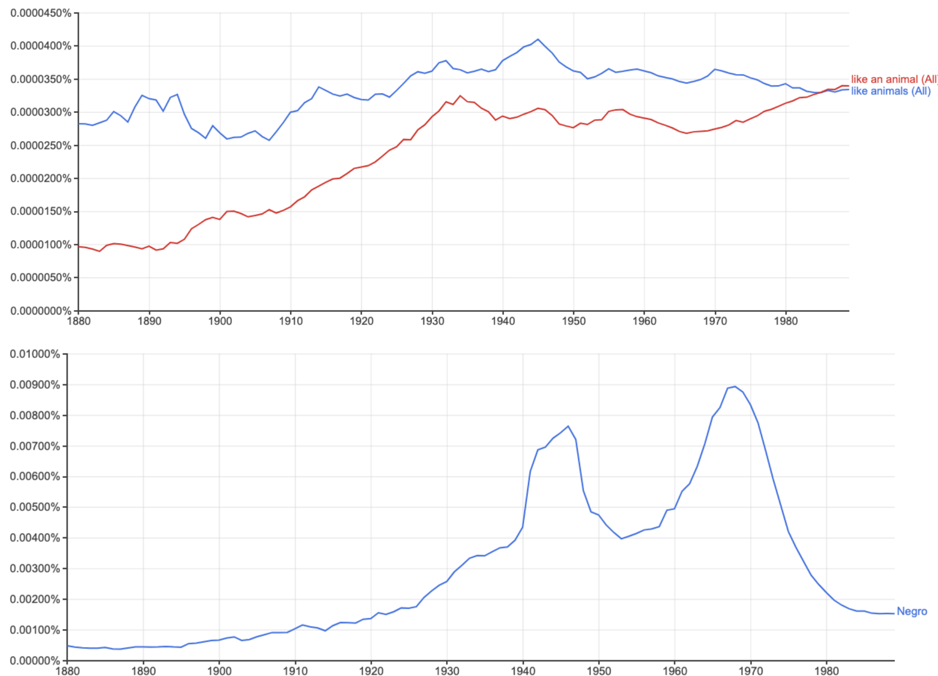


Chart 15: Book Comparison with Use of the Word “Negro”

Of course, the rises and falls of phraseology, particularly in relation to American newspapers, only makes sense if contextual usage can be tracked. Categorizing the kinds of mentions in the newspapers helps demonstrate the role the civil rights movement played in creating the exacerbated references. Many of the phrases referred to actual animals in articles or classified advertisements. When those are factored out of the paradigm, however, it is clear that race and other racially-motivated categories are drivers of the increased usage. All mentions of “like animals” and “like an animal” were tracked in the eight white and three black newspapers with statistically significant results, then divided into categories based on the intent of the given metaphor.

Table 7: CATEGORIES OF “LIKE ANIMALS” AND “LIKE AN ANIMAL” MENTIONED IN TEN REPRESENTATIVE PAPERS

	NYT	CT	LAT	WP	NOTP	BG	AC	CD	NYAN	LAS	
Classified	104	110	52	75	38	15	7	5	0	0	406

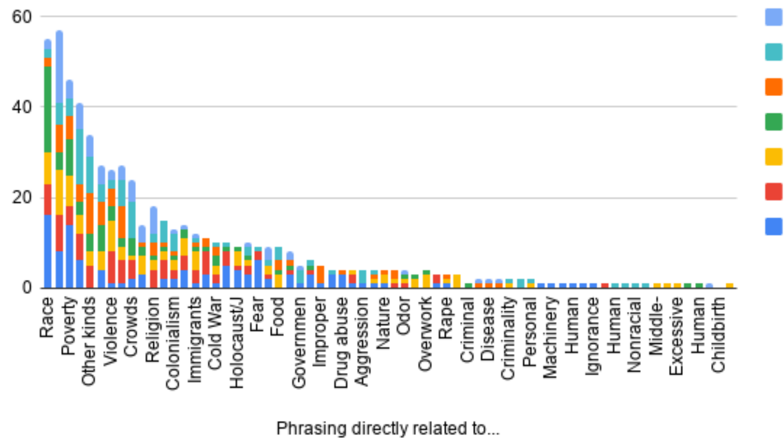
Relating to actual animals	28	70	32	26	39	33	39	6	0	1	274
	NYT	CT	LAT	WP	NOTP	BG	AC	CD	NYAN	LAS	
				RACE AND RACE-ADJACENT MENTIONS							
Race	16	7	7	19	2	2	2	17	9	6	87
Poverty	14	4	7	8	5	4	4	1	2	0	49
Imprisonment	6	6	4	3	4	12	6	4	0	0	45
Violence	1	7	7	3	4	2	2	2	0	0	28
Protest	3	0	4	2	1	0	4	1	3	4	22
Colonialism	2	2	2	1	1	4	1	1	0	0	14
Native/aboriginal peoples	4	3	4	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	14
Immigrants	1	3	4	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	13
Holocaust/Jewishness	4	1	3	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	10
Foreign groups	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	4
											286
					GENDERED MENTIONS						
Parenting	3	5	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	11
Children	1	5	3	2	7	6	3	1	0	0	28
Sexual activity (willing)	2	1	2	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	9
Rape	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
Childbirth	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
											52
					VIOLENCE AND CAPTIVITY						
War	8	8	10	4	6	5	16	2	0	0	59
Other kinds of confinement	0	5	3	4	9	8	5	0	0	0	34
Sports	4	0	4	6	5	4	4	0	0	1	28
Viciousness	2	4	2	1	1	5	0	0	0	0	15
Being brutalized	3	2	1	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	10
Riot behavior (nonracial)	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	5
Criminal justice system	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	3
Fear	6	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	9
Torture	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Nuclear war	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
											165
					HUMAN FRAILTY						
Drug abuse	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	4
Suffering	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Aggression	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	4
Bodily functions	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	4
Improper behavior	1	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	5
Food etiquette	0	0	3	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	9
Instinctiveness	0	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	4
Human appearance	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Depression	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Disease	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Human relationships	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Criminality	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Anger	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2

Personal freedom	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Visibility	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Overwork	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Waiting	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Lack of past and future sense	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Ignorance	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Fatigue	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Human choice	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Mental retardation	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Nonracial bigotry	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Deliberateness	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Middle-class morality	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Dependence on others	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Excessive energy	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
											67
					POLITICS AND RELIGION						
Cold War politics	1	2	2	2	2	1	0	1	0	0	11
Religion	0	4	2	1	3	2	6	0	0	0	18
Government overreach	1	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	1	0	6
											35
					LITERARY MENTIONS						
Anthropomorphism in fiction	5	3	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	10
Literary metaphor	3	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	6
Comparison irony	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
											17
					OTHER						
Odor	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	4
Evolution	3	1	0	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	8
Nature	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	4
Machinery	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Entertainment industry	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Human clothing	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Human achievement	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
											20
TOTALS	**RACE**	**GENDER**	**VIOLENCE**	**FRAILTY**	**POLITICS**	**LITERATURE**	**OTHER**				
	286	**52**	**165**	**67**	**35**	**17**	**20**				

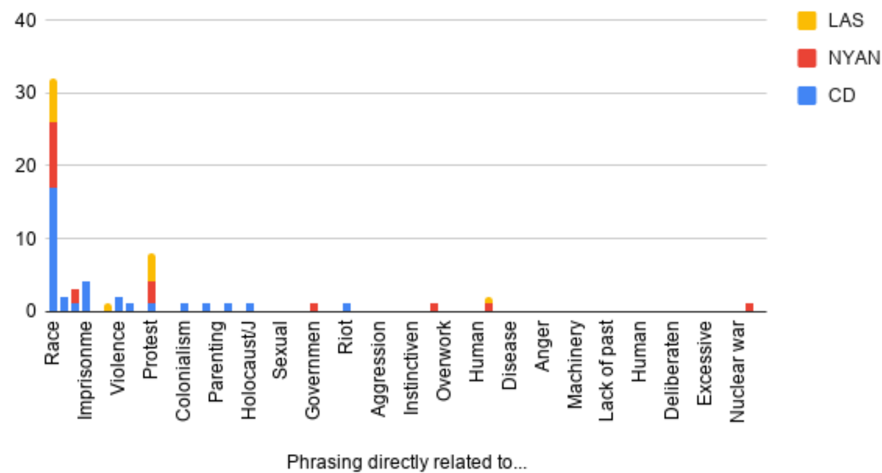
The categories listed often crossed over. In those cases, the primary focus of the particular metaphor was used to catalog it.

The major listed categories like “race and race-adjacent mentions,” “gendered mentions,” and “violence and captivity” are divided into a variety of subsections that probably defy replication, but they are presented here to demonstrate the multitude

of ways that, for example, “race and race-adjacent mentions” appear in press coverage. When race-based animalizations come in so many disparate forms, the baseline assumption of the tie between them is consistently reified, as readers see such presentations in one form and use it for context when they read a linguistic tie between race and animality in another form. And race dominates in both white and black newspaper comparisons with animality, though there are more uses of the phrases in white papers:

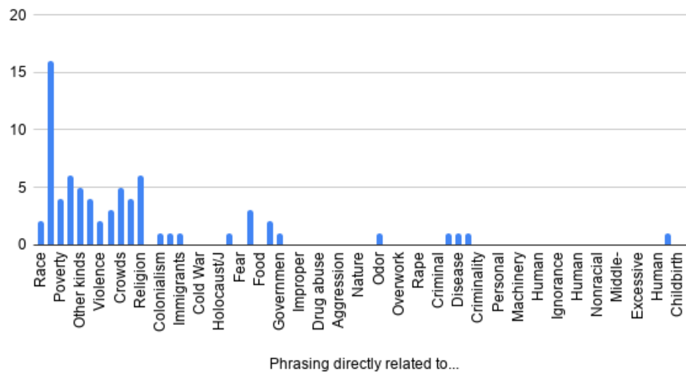


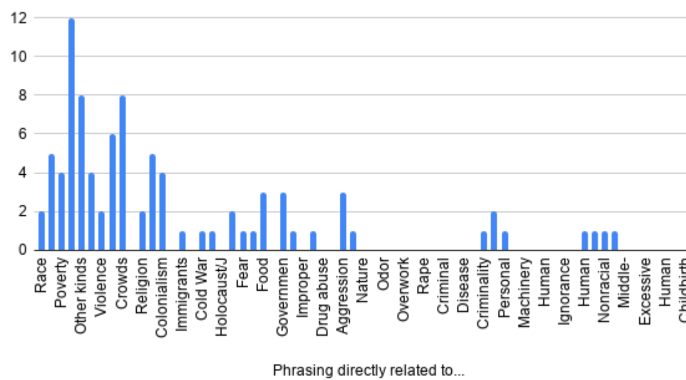
Blue: New York Times; Red: Washington Post; Yellow: Chicago Tribune; Green: Los Angeles Times; Orange: New Orleans Times-Picayune; Teal: Atlanta Constitution; Turquoise: Boston Globe.

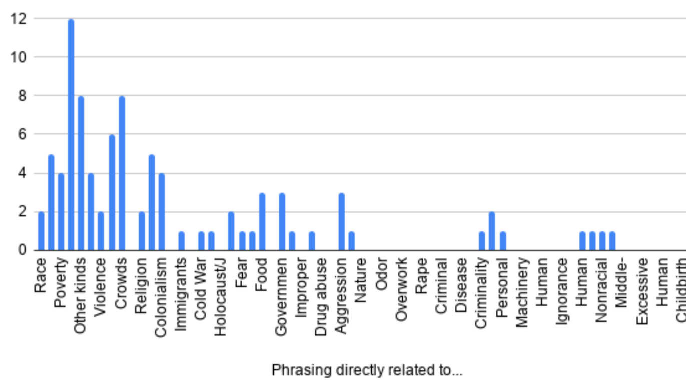


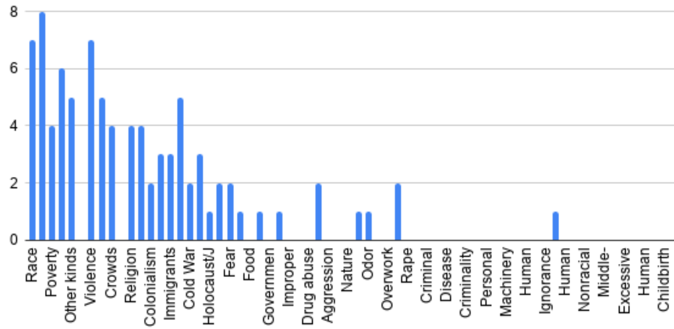
Charts 16 and 17: White and Black Newspapers by Phrasing Category

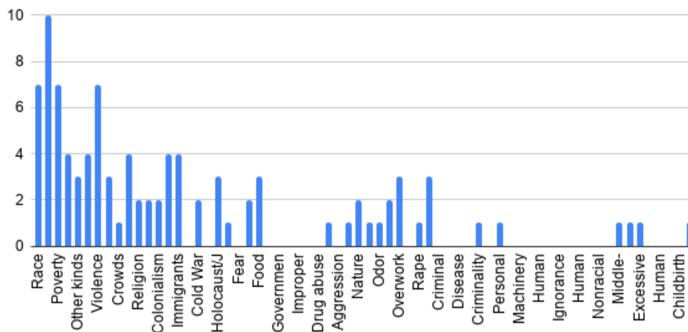
The totals are more easily understandable when divided by individual white newspaper, a division that shows the different priorites of each and, despite those differences, the predominance of race in all of them.

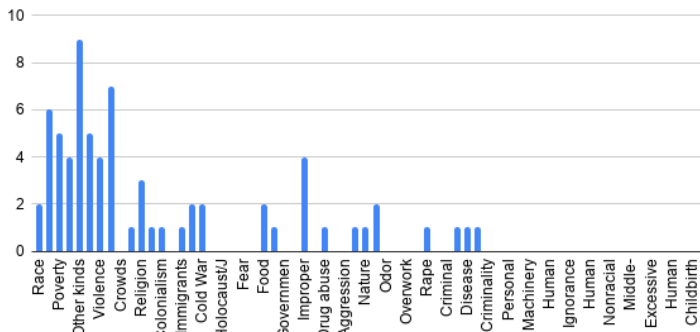


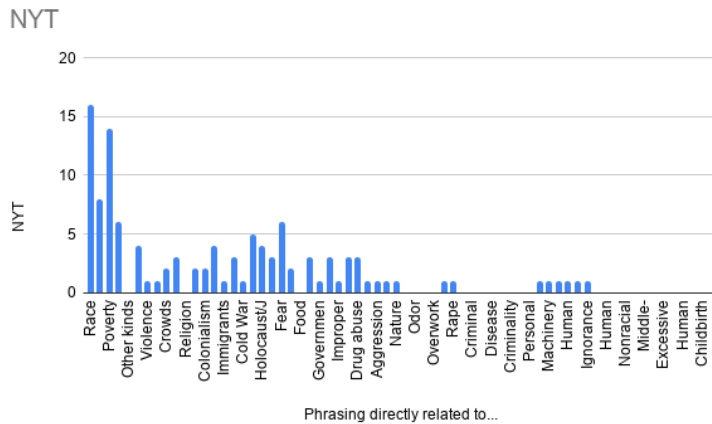


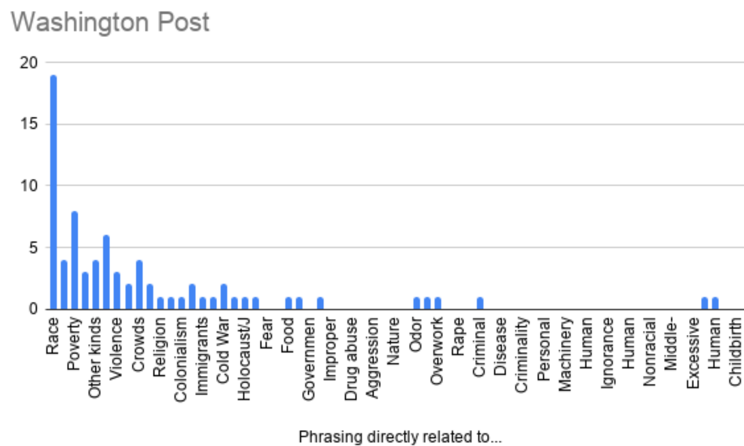



Chicago Tribune
8
6
4
2
0
Race
Poverty
Other kinds
Violence
Crowds
Religion
Colonialism
Immigrants
Cold War
Holocaust/J
Fear
Food
Governmen
Improper
Drug abuse
Aggression
Nature
Odor
Overwork
Rape
Criminal
Disease
Criminality
Personal
Machinery
Human
Ignorance
Human
Nonracial
Middle-
Excessive
Human
Childbirth
Phrasing directly related to...


Los Angeles Times
10
8
6
4
2
0
Race
Poverty
Other kinds
Violence
Crowds
Religion
Colonialism
Immigrants
Cold War
Holocaust/J
Fear
Food
Governmen
Improper
Drug abuse
Aggression
Nature
Odor
Overwork
Rape
Criminal
Disease
Criminality
Personal
Machinery
Human
Ignorance
Human
Nonracial
Middle-
Excessive
Human
Childbirth
Phrasing directly related to...


New Orleans Times-Picayune
10
8
6
4
2
0
Race
Poverty
Other kinds
Violence
Crowds
Religion
Colonialism
Immigrants
Cold War
Holocaust/J
Fear
Food
Governmen
Improper
Drug abuse
Aggression
Nature
Odor
Overwork
Rape
Criminal
Disease
Criminality
Personal
Machinery
Human
Ignorance
Human
Nonracial
Middle-
Excessive
Human
Childbirth
Phrasing directly related to...





Charts 18-25: White Newspapers by Phrasing Category

And so in the 1960s, the nation's preeminent white newspapers included stories of humans who were "like animals" in a variety of different ways, but emphasized that comparison in racial references the majority of the time. Black newspapers, meanwhile, reported on the comparison almost exclusively.

The decade began with the sit-in movement. On February 1, 1960, four black students at North Carolina A&T College in Greensboro sat down at a Woolworth's lunch counter and asked for service. When they were refused, they didn't leave, and they didn't chant protest slogans. Instead they sat, politely, until the police came and arrested them. It was the first in what would become a regional effort, where young activists would challenge local segregation laws by

demanding equal access to public facilities. The students in Greensboro were members of the NAACP, but they were acting independently (Chafe, 1981). That North Carolina effort would spark a movement across the South, centered in particular on college students. Nashville, for example, had several historically black colleges and universities. Local minister James Bevel led students to sit-in protests throughout the city. Atlanta was in a similar situation. Black college students in the city began a vigorous sit-in campaign that year, led by students Julian Bond and Lonnie King. And the activism worked. Greensboro integrated its lunch counters. Restaurants in Nashville did, too. In Atlanta, the protest expanded to include all public facilities, and in September 1961, Atlanta gave in and integrated (Morgan and Davies, 2013; Schmidt, 2018; Carson, 1995).

In response to the sit-ins, Georgia senator Richard Russell denounced what he interpreted as a "provocation." Continued actions like those of the students could only lead to rioting, he argued. Southern white people were "being baited like animals" (*Atlanta Constitution*, 1960 1A). It was an attempt to shift the locus of aggression to the peaceful protesters instead of the violent whites responding to them, but it was also a tacit approval of baiting animals, a group who always received the short end of the metaphorical stick in such situations.

Racial codings of the "like animals" metaphor in white newspapers of the 1960s took a variety of forms, but the vast majority were not the result of white racist victimhood. They were instead focused on the black experience, and one of the most common efforts was in relation to slavery. In 1961, for example, the *New York Times* reported on black progress, citing a history professor who noted that less than a century prior, the African American population was "bought and sold

like animals"[8] (*New York Times*, 1961: 21). There were, however, variations on the theme. At the end of the decade, a black laborer in New York said, "I spent a lot of time doing slave work: pullin' jacks, pushin' skids, working like an animal" (Hunter, 1969: 39). The inherent assumption in such statements, of course, is that nonhuman animals exist to serve at the pleasure of human beings, just as the common white assumption in early America was that black labor existed to serve at the pleasure of whites. In pushing back against one form of bigotry, such metaphors brought users to another form. When a Chelsea theater produced LeRoi Jones's play, *Slave Ship*, the *Times* explained, "We see the slaves, chained, humiliated, treated like animals, behaving like animals, being brought in long tortuous pain to America. We witness," the reviewer wrote, "their degradation" (Barnes, 1969: 46). Slavery was associated with degregation and degredation was associated with that-which-is-not-human.[9] Such theater could provide versions of reckonings with the former slave system, but the degradation of animals remained, and remained unquestioned.

The following year, 1961, was known primarily as the year that students adapted the sit-ins to cross-country buses, crossing state lines through the South, breaking federal law, and using those "Freedom Rides" to force the government's hand to aid black efforts at civil rights. It was also the year that John Howard Griffin came to public notoriety with the publication of his book, *Black Like Me*, which

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[8] James Baldwin repeated this phrase, a common one, in 1965 explaining slavery (Sommerville, 1965: 2).

[9] Another play on this theme came from the *Chicago Tribune*, who argued that "the war freed the slave only from his shackles and the social system that forced him to breed like an animal; but since he had no land to till, he was forced to become a sharecropper" (*Chicago Tribune*, 1963: 24). Here the slave-animal comparison describes breeding, a comparison perhaps apropos, as both were forced regularly to breed. Still, the inherent thrust of the message is that the problematic actions were directed toward the slave but not the animal.

described the white author's time spent in the South passing as a black man. He expressed his shock that "my own people could give the hate stare, could shrivel men's souls, could deprive humans of rights they unhesitatingly accord their livestock" (Griffin, 1961: 63). The celebrity of the book gave its author a bully pulpit to discuss racial issues, issues that were easily framed with animal metaphors. In evaluating white and black groups in the United States, he asked in one 1963 article, "How can these two blocks of humanity keep from crashing into one another?" Griffin described a dream he had in which he developed a program for racial harmony. Representatives from groups like the Ku Klux Klan and the White Citizens' Councils rejected it. "But they breed just like animals," one woman told him. "And just how do you breed, Madam?" he asked in response (Griffin, 1963: E5). It was a commentary on how race thinking equated subaltern groups with a status below human, and that all nonhuman animality fell into that category, but Griffin's response was a reminder that even humans with the most privilege and refinement were also animals, also bred like their fellow mammalian species (see Griffin, 1961).

The year of Griffin's article, the country's attention was focused on Birmingham, Alabama, where violent responses to organized protests made the Alabama city the focus of the national and international media. More than twenty thousand were arrested. Ten people were killed in one of the most violent summers of the Civil Rights Movement. Birmingham Public Safety Commissioner Eugene "Bull" Connor had a different relationship with animals and protest than the surrounding newspapers. He used police dogs to attack protestors, and after he filled all of the county jails throughout the area with adult protestors, he placed

black child protestors in outdoor animal pens at the Alabama State Fairgrounds located in the city (McWhorter, 2001; Eskew, 1997).

While most civil rights protests did not include actual animals and animal cages as a constituent part of the official response, racial uprisings would almost always bring animalized commentary. One of the most prominent came in Harlem in 1964, following the police shooting of an African American boy (Flamm, 2016). During the uprising, protesters described police culture as hunting culture, one policeman telling them, "I'm going to get me a nigger tonight." The original officer, the protesters explained, didn't have to wait for nightfall. "He got his nigger in the morning." That hunting ethos, then, turned its subjects into animals. Harlem, according to psychologist Kenneth Clark, "is a product of violence and its existence is a symbol of inhumanity and injustice" (Edstrom, 1964: A1). Even among the advocates of the victims of racial policing, humanity became the standard by which decency was judged. "How could the city expect the Negro to behave sensibly?" asked civil rights leader Bayard Rustin. "He behaved desperately because of the desperate situation" (Edstrom, 1964: A4). That kind of framing, from both the hunters and hunted, even led the *Washington Post*'s news reporting on the violence to engage in the metaphors. Harlemites, one article explained, cared less about civil rights legislation and more about poverty and the need for food. "And if some Harlem youth are acting like animals today, it could be because some of them sell themselves to homosexuals" for sustenance (Edstrom, 1964: A1, A6).

It was a demonstration of the declension inevitable in animal metaphors. Comparisons of police brutality to hunting were not unjustified, but they led to claims of inhumanity, which led to comparisons of inhumanity to desperation, which then ended in comparisons of black behavior to that of animals and the absurd

notion that their animalistic behavior was represented by the poor "selling themselves to homosexuals," an act of selling decidedly unrelated to nonhuman animal species.[10] The reason that association existed was because of that particular problematic declension, but also because human society had been conditioned to see any behavior that skirted societal norms as nonhuman, as animalistic, despite the lack of any real resemblance to actual nonhuman animal action. It was not, then, a metaphor based on realistic comparisons. It was a metaphor based solely on bigotry, against the human or human group in the comparison, and to all nonhuman animals. And the only group in that particular paradigm without the ability to push back against such framing were the animals.[11]

As Mary Midgley has explained, "When human beings behave really badly, they are said to behave 'like animals', however unlike their acts may be to those that any other species could perform. This is a way of disowning the motives concerned and distancing them from the rest of us," the effort at moral superiority and political superiority trumping the need for one-to-one correlation (Midgley, 1994: 192).

"Animal" is an epithet reserved for the most "horrible human beings" and "heinous criminals," Jim Mason argues, particularly when "we want to describe their egoism, insatiable greed, insatiable sexuality, cruelty, senseless slaughter of other beings, and the mass slaughter of human beings," (2007: 38) behavior that is

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[10] While the act of selling was not a nonhuman animal trait, and while the author had no intention of making the comparison, many other species engage in same-sex acts for various reasons, including sociopolitical reasons (Sommer and Vasey, 2006; Bagemihl, 1999).

[11] There was a similar response two years later when a black uprising began in Omaha, Nebraska after an overwhelming, aggressive police presence in the African American section of town stirred the frustrated, poverty-stricken residents. The trouble started "when policemen started parading up and down the street," said one woman interviewed by the *New York Times*, "ordering people around like animals" (Janson, 1966: 23).

actually rarely the product of nonhuman beings. Animalizing such behavior, then, has nothing to do with the actual relationship to animals. Mason calls the general corpus of negative portrayals and ideas about nonhuman animals “misothery.” Misothery “reduces the power/status/dignity of animals and nature and so aids and abets the supremacy of human beings in our dominionist culture” (Mason, 2007: 38). It was that attitude that helped formalize the move to sedentary agriculture and create modern human societies. Debasing animals to elevate humans helped define culture and encourage domestication, which in turn created terminology that demeaned human beings with animal tropes even though the actions presented in the tropes had no specific relation to animals. “Before domestication,” Mason argues, “the powerful souls or supernaturals (or gods) were animal, and primal people looked up to them; after domestication, the gods were humanoid, and people looked down on animals” (Mason, 2007: 38-39).

This lack of direct correlation, in the words of Samantha Hurn, “goes some way towards explaining why human characteristics and actions such as rape and murder at one end of the spectrum, and sexual promiscuity or bad table manners at the other, are often labelled as animalistic.” By framing select humans as nonhuman animals, the framers “chastise and censure those others” considered outside of socially constructive norms (Hurn, 2012: 14). Animality, then, becomes a signpost of difference rather than the correlative comparison assumed by most metaphorical work.

An excerpt from James Baldwin published in the *New York Times* in 1964 synthesizes much of the frustration felt in Harlem over signposts of difference and

their disastrous consequences.[12] “Here in this ghetto I was born,” he wrote. “And here it was intended by my countrymen that I should live and perish. And in that ghetto I was tormented. I felt caged, like an animal. I wanted to escape. I felt if I did not get out I would slowly strangle” (Baldwin, 1964: X11). While Baldwin’s lament could have applied directly to Harlem’s uprising, it worked in a different way in relation to animals. In this quote, urban poverty is a stand-in for a form of bondage, as with animals in zoos. Baldwin follows with an explanation of his hope that education would be his way out of such bondage, a solution significant because it is one unavailable to most other caged beings he describes, none of whom have the option of making such decisions for themselves. There was in such comparisons no awareness that the pain and psychological strangulation felt by those like Baldwin were, it would stand to reason, faced by the animals they saw as convenient referents for caging. Though the author displayed plenty of transgressive behaviors that skirted societal norms, as in the *Washington Post*’s semantic declension about the Harlem uprising, his use of the animal metaphor didn’t result from those transgressions. Instead, his was an ackowledgement that being metaphorically caged was torture without an acknowledgement of those actually being caged. An article in the paper the following year made the comparison even more explicit, a critic of Lyndon Johnson’s Office of Economic Opportunity accusing “the antipoverty program of treating Negroes ‘like animals in a zoo’” (Wehrwein, 1965: 27).

Martin Luther King made a similar comparison in describing black attempts to register to vote in Selma, Alabama in 1965. Potential registrants were “herded

[12] For more on Baldwin, see Leeming, 1994; Boyd, 2008.

into an alley like animals” to wait their turn for what became a frustrating and failed attempt to register (*Chicago Tribune*, 1965: 1). The metaphor was apt, as many animals were subject to herding and corralling that limited their range of motion (see Jones, 2003), but its use elevated the frustrated black Alabamians at the expense of nonhuman animals, who were not part of King’s stated concern. It was a subtle belittling, but it was a belittling.

Ultimately, that mistreatment led to violent conflict in Selma. After the murder of a black man, King’s SCLC planned a march from Selma to Montgomery for Sunday, March 7, 1965—a day that would become known as “Bloody Sunday.” As the protesters approached the Edmund Pettus Bridge, police forces, led by sheriff James G. Clark, beat and tear-gassed the protestors. It was all captured on television, creating a crisis point in the civil rights movement. The protesters did eventually make the Selma to Montgomery March, and the violence they faced helped generate momentum for the Voting Rights Act of 1965. It also, however, opened up protestors to racist comparisons with nonhuman animals (Thornton, 2002; Pratt, 2017).

Racial animal comparisons, however, could also be positive. In one account of racial trouble among children in Queens, the *New York Times* told the story of a thirteen-year-old girl who was accosted by her classmates because she was black. She was not to be intimidated. “I said what my mother told me. People are different colors like animals and flowers. And, anyway, brown is nicer than white.” Nonhuman animals in this metaphor provide a positive model for humans, their many colors a mirror for the many colors of bipedal animals who attend school and suffer teasing. Such positive racial animal comparisons, however, were decided anomalies (Watkins, 1967: 137).

In October 1967, the *Washington Post* reported on the Cleveland mayoral campaign of Seth Chase Taft, grandson of the former president, who was running against Carl B. Stokes, a black candidate. Taft used overt and ugly racism against his opponent. Stokes's tagline was "Don't vote for a Negro! Vote for a man," emphasizing that it wasn't the color of someone's skin that made him a good candidate, but his policies. Taft sought to turn the slogan around. "'Don't vote for a Negro! Vote for a man,' he says in his ads. I agree with that." Taft insinuated that he was a man, while Stokes was something less. His base of support was clearly supportive of the notion. "We have to have a change," said one Taft supporter. "Just look at this damn neighborhood. They are only a block away," he explained, referring to the proximity of the closest black residential area. "These people are vicious; they're just like animals" (Glass, 1967: B1). While Stokes would ultimately win the election, becoming the first black mayor of a major metropolitan area in the United States, the race-baiting of Taft and his supporters demonstrated the power of animal metaphors to stoke human bigotry.[13] In this instance, however, use of the "like animals" phrase was an apt comparison, as the racist Taft supporter who made the claim reviled a group for living in simple proximity to him, an attitude suffered by nonhuman animals since the dawn of sedentary life and the civilizations that followed.

That same month, Maryland circuit court judge William B. Bowie made national news when he refused bond for a black woman accused of manslaughter after stabbing her boyfriend. "If they (Negroes) want to live like animals, let them stay in a pen," he announced from the bench. "They have got to learn to live like

[13] For more on Stokes's mayoral victory, see Moore, 2003; Stradling and Stradling, 2015.

other people live, and they have got to stop using knives." Bowie's overt racism laid bare what was assumed by many to be a regular if silent part of American judicial thinking. In an interview after his tirade, Bowie referred again to the animal behavior and use of knives by black defendants. "White people don't go around doing that, and the Negroes do" (Jay, 1967a: A1). It was in its unapologetic human bigotry a clear example of how animal comparisons were used in service to such ends. Even the angry responses to Bowie's behavior played on the theme. The president of the local NAACP chapter, for example, complained that the judge's comments "undermine the efforts of responsible citizens to improve human and race relations." The emphasis on "human" relations was deliberate, an effort to rebuke the "animal" claim of the white judge (Jay, 1967b: B1).

The NAACP was not alone. A variety of black advocacy groups denounced Bowie's comments from the bench[14] (*Washington Post*, 1967, B2). "Justice in this case is not only blind," the *Chicago Defender*'s Doris Saunders proclaimed, "but stupid" (Saunders, 1967: 12). The *Washington Post*, the region's largest, most influential newspaper, announced in an editorial in response to the "animal" comment that the judge "is without qualification to dispense due process of law in his courtroom to any Negro in the future, or for that matter, to anyone" (*Washington Post*, 1967, A14). Even Maryland governor and future vice president Spiro Agnew branded the outburst "a most unfortunate incident which undercuts efforts to promote understand among the races"[15] (Barnes, 1967a: A1). Ultimately, the

[14] The *Washington Post* also featured a variety of letters to the editor all appalled by Bowie's comments (see Cornely, 1967: A18; Davis and Davis, 1967: A18; Brown, 1967: A18; Watkins, 1967: A18).

[15] The *Chicago Defender* rightly doubted Agnew's sincerity, as his racist record gave lie to such concerns. The paper argued that he "had the national elections in mind when he responded so

state's Commission on Judicial Disabilities investigated Bowie's remarks, but it was a perfunctory investigation at best, the body finally applying no penalty to the wayward judge. The report produced by the panel claimed that "the facts do not disclose any such prejudice on the part of Judge Bowie," and that his "remarks were not intended to give offense to or denigrate the Negro race or Negroes in general" (Barnes, 1967b: B1; Drosnin, 1967: A1). It was, in other words, an excuse not only for Bowie's racism but also for the animal comparison that framed it.[16]

The following month, in November 1967, Harry Edwards, sociology professor at California's San Jose State University who led the movement for a black boycott of the 1968 Olympic Games in response to American racism, asked during a planning meeting that was reported on in the *Washington Post*, "Is it not time for black people to stand up as men and women, as human beings and refuse to be utilized as performing animals for a little extra dog food?" It was a synthesis of the long history of the racialized animal metaphor. "Perhaps now is the time for us to get up off all fours and show the world that we are men. Perhaps only then will the white man stop treating us like animals," he said[17] (Rogers, 1967: B8).

The claim was that black athletes performed for largely white audiences, receiving individual plaudits within a very specific context while black lives

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promptly" to Bowie's remarks. The paper was correct, and the next year, Agnew would become Richard Nixon's vice presidential candidate (Datrooth, 1967: 2).

[16] The report by the Commission on Judicial Disabilities was so unsatisfactory and the public response to it so outraged that the case was referred to an eight-judge panel assigned to review Bowie's decision. He had sentenced the woman to eight years in prison, despite a guilty plea predicated on a sentence of probation. The panel cut that sentence to three years, the first time judicial review had ever resulted in a revision in that county (*Washington Post*, 1967: A16; *Washington Post*, 1968: B2; *Washington Post*, 1968: A3; *Washington Post*, 1968: D27; Drosnin, 1968: A3).

[17] For more on the plan for the boycott, its ultimate failure, and the protests of black athletes at the games themselves, see Bass, 2004.

remained belittled (Edwards, 2017). The comparison with animals, then, worked on two levels.[18] First, animals were represented as performers for human entertainment. Second, they were degraded, that degradation symbolized by being on all fours. This language harkened to early American bloodsports wherein the urban poor sacrificed themselves or their nonhuman animals in fighting contests for the enjoyment and gambling of the wealthy. Slaves, for example, spent much of their free time cockfighting, dogfighting, and wrestling (Wiggins, 1980). But success at such activities could bring cooption by owners, a phenomenon epitomized by the character Chicken Jim in Alex Haley's novel *Roots* (Haley, 1976). Such animal contests eventually led to slaves being pitted in opposition to one another in fights, usually against their will, when violence against nonhuman animals failed to adequately tantalize their white masters (Gorn, 1985). Such bloodsports continued as the nation began to urbanize during the antebellum era, where working class neighborhoods developed a culture of manliness and physical prowess in opposition to the exclusions of the middle and upper classes that faced them everyday. Again cockfighting and dogfighting accompanied an interest in human contests that gave way to boxing, a British import wherein working-class athletes fought, often for the gambling interests of the wealthy (Brailsford, 1985). Thus the correlation between rich and poor, human and animal, maintained continuity through the colonial and antebellum periods, through rural and urban situations, and through the boycott effort for the 1968 Summer Olympics.

[18] The claims of Edwards would be repeated often. In August 1968, when advocating for black athletes playing for the St. Louis Cardinals football team, Edwards told the media that "the brothers back there are treated like animals. The racist crackers that own the St. Louis team will be dealt with one way or another" (*Washington Post*, 1968: E3).

Humans were validated as the wealthy in comparisons like that of Edwards because they stood on two feet. Though the distinction is arbitrary in judgements of superiority, it does provide a bar that humans can surpass over many of their nonhuman animal neighbors. By playing on historical degradations and using arbitrary skeletal formations as indices of success, Edwards's rhetoric summoned black pride at the expense of animals, using one bigotry to obviate another, backing those seeking racial justice in their assumptions of nonhuman animal inferiority and, in the repetition of such tropes, validating that those assumptions were already rooted enough in the minds of those who would attend Olympic boycott meetings to make such metaphors rhetorically effective.

The most visible outgrowth of the would-be boycott was the protest at the Games of sprinters Tommie Smith and John Carlos, who raised gloved fists during the American national anthem following gold and bronze medals in the 200-meter dash. The blowback from mainstream white America was intense, prompting many black Americans to defend the protest. "We are alien people in this country," wrote one letter-writer to the *Boston Globe*, "brought here as slaves, worked to death, terrorized, forced to believe in a religion we have no part of, raped, murdered, slandered, and treated like animals. Yet, we built your country" (Levy, 1968: 30). It was a true statement, but it also placed animal treatment on par with rape, murder, and slander. Nonhuman animals were, in fact, treated in those ways, but the statement demonstrated no concern for the comparative animals, instead focusing its frustration on the subjects of the comparison.

In Chicago that year, a similar sentiment came from a seemingly sympathetic white citizen. "I came from a slum area and I can understand the Negro plight," he said. "You treat people like animals, and they are going to live like

animals." The statement was designed to support public housing reform in the city, but "animals" in this context was intended to signify dirt and sloth, disorder and crime (Phillips, 1968: S13). While laying the blame for such behaviors at the feet of the white power structure, the supposedly supportive statement still ascribed the traits to the black population and to do so had only to use the phrase "like animals." The coding was so ingrained, so often repeated in the pages of major white daily newspapers, that all of the potential behaviors associated with the phrase were well-known to readers. The code was clearly in place, to the detriment of clumsy statements of support but also to the detriment of nonhuman animals, whose status as a crib for decay had become fully ingrained in the American human mind. That being the case, in response to an uprising in Fort Lauderdale, Florida the following year, a local NAACP attorney explained the protests as responses to oppression. "You pen people up in a cage and they're going to act like animals--I don't care what color they are" (*Los Angeles Times*, 1969: 25). The structure and sentiment were nearly ubiquitous in such cases.

In a 1969 long-form interview with poor black residents of the city, the *Washington Post* highlighted the problems of the city's impoverished neighborhoods. "If you were hungry, or your kids were hungry, how do you think that would make you feel?" asked one respondent. He handed the interviewer a newspaper clipping. "It tells you how a white school in Bethesda imports ex-convicts and colored kids so they can be studied by the white kids like animals under a microscope" (*Washington Post*, 1969: 33). Again, in using animal metaphors to describe the diminishing of black lives, the respondent diminished animal lives by framing them as valued only in reference to vivisection.

Because the crib had become so ubiquitous, however, it could also be marshalled in the other racial direction. In 1966, Mississippi Ku Klux Klan bomber Henry Allen Lee wrote a letter taking credit for a series of Klan bombings. “I will hold up my head and spit in the eye of anyone who tries to integrate me,” his letter claimed. “We have a police state here now and a white man is treated like an animal if he doesn’t get along with the NAACP” (*Chicago Tribune*, 1966: A12; Gould, 1966: sec 2, p.2). As Georgia senator Richard Russell had done years prior, Lee sought to turn the animal metaphor on its head, using it to depict violent white racists as victims. It was a grotesque display, but it was also an admission that nonhuman animals are victims of human behavior. As with all racist screeds, however, any victimhood aside from that of white people was beside the author’s point.

Such racism was not given the available page space in the black weekly press. African American newspapers were in large measure a compensatory press, an advocacy outlet designed to supplement coverage in mainstream dailies that often ignored meaningful news about black lives and interests (see Chapter 2). That being the case, they looked fundamentally different than their white counterparts. Black newspapers were, for the most part, weekly publications, focussing less on the day-to-day minutia of the news and instead on the meaning of the news for the black community.

Black newspapers were also understandably centered on racial issues in a way that white newspapers never were, and their use of animal metaphors to describe the nation’s racial unrest was more focused, more powerful, and because of that, more detrimental to the assumed status of nonhuman animals. An early example was a 1960 letter to the editor printed in the *Chicago Defender* that

proposed a hypothetical situation wherein a black man went to a white neighborhood on the northside of the city and knocked on doors claiming he was the new precinct captain. “He would no doubt be chased like an animal, beaten over the head, thrown in jail” (Mays, 1960: 11). It is clear from the use of “like an animal” that the phrase’s only role in the hypothetical is to signify diminution. There was no regular occurrence wherein a human would chase and beat over the head a nonhuman animal before throwing that animal in jail. The phrase, then, was not intended to reference any specific situation or any specific species. It was instead a placeholder only for lesser status.

Usually, the metaphors in the black weekly press mirrored in form those in the white dailies, while exceeding them in frequency and intensity. “What other race of people would allow themselves to be restricted to a certain area of the city like animals in a zoo,” asked another letter to the *Defender* the following year, “while the whites own and control all, except a few, of the paying establishments in a black ghetto?” (Marshall, 1961: 11) The explicit blame of white people and the use of “like animals” to describe the broader existential situation of black neighborhoods rather than a specific incident exacerbated the power of a phrase used to reference zoos in an ostensibly similar way to references in white mainstream newspapers.

There were also the mentions of slaves being “sold and bred like animals” (Aiken, 1963: 21). In the violence of Birmingham, Alabama in 1963, “two Negro boys were shot down like animals” (*Amsterdam News*, 1963: 2). There were also differentiations between different types of animals. In Selma 1965, for example, “The Negro people are being stepped on and treated like animals. Not dogs or cats either. They are being treated like rodents,” wrote a correspondent to the New York

Amsterdam News. “At least dogs and cats are treated with some kind of human decency, but rodents are treated like they are menaces to society” (Hamilton, 1965: 50). There was in the lament a common rhetorical maneuver, but it evinced almost a sympathy with the rodents used in the comparison, a sympathy not often present either in animal comparisons or in pragmatic dealings with rodents (see Chapter 6).

The *Los Angeles Sentinel*, for example, published the remarks of a white city councilman who railed against Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) demonstrations in Los Angeles. “I saw some of the demonstrations of CORE which was most disgusting, un-American and indecent. They are subversive people. They are more like animals than human beings” (Meriwether, 1964: D6). CORE was a product of World War II, founded in Chicago in 1942. It was a biracial organization designed to stage nonviolent protests against segregation, and it would be integral to the development of the civil rights movement to come. It was CORE, for example, that put the focus of southern civil rights on the nonviolent tactics of Gandhi and helped facilitate the sit-ins after Greensboro (Farmer, 1985; Meier and Rudwick, 1973). The white racist belief that CORE demonstrators were un-American or subversive was common. CORE grew alongside the post-World War II anticommunist McCarthyism that defined the late 1940s and 1950s. But mixing the metaphor to include un-American activity and subversion alongside a relation to nonhuman animals, while absurd, demonstrated that the labeling was intended as a negative catch-all, and in that grouping, animals fell into a category with disgust, indecency, and subversion.

In 1963, the *Defender* published a series of racist letters sent to Faith Rich, a white worker with the Congress of Racial Equality. “You are a disgrace to the

white race, living with them dirty animals," said one. "They live like animals and will never be civilized because they are apes. All they believe in is raping white women and stealing. Take them to the jungle where they belong" (Cofield, 1963: 9). In the racist context, the animal reference was intended to be literal, relying on the legacy of social Darwinism to make its point (see Chapter 1). Black people were apes and belonged in a jungle. Carrying the metaphor to its logical conclusion, black neighborhoods could be considered functional zoos. Such racist uses had the power to turn representations on their heads, make them literal for minds that interpreted political issues as bold melodrama rather than nuanced struggle. Another such white supremacist comparison printed in the *Defender* several years later made the same ape analogy, but then went further. "A few Negroes might have some degree of intellect," said George Lincoln Rockwell, racist founder of the American Nazi Party, "but most Negroes live only in the present, like animals"[19] (Washington, 1966: 8). In this analogy, black people existed in an eternal present, as did nonhuman animals, with no cognitive ability to contextualize their own situations. It was a conclusion that faltered on the merits in its assumption about humans and nonhumans alike because, like so many who made uninformed assumptions about nonhuman animals and humans of different races, it took as evidence only surface evaluation. "In jail I have seen them just as patient, eyes staring ahead, a blank expression on their faces, just like Trooper," said Rockwell, pointing to his dog (Washington, 1966: 8). It was observation without testing, a literalism that eliminated the benefit of the doubt for all humans outside of his white

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[19] For more on Rockwell, see Schmaltz, 1999.

supremacist orbit and eliminated it for Trooper, as well, whose inner life he also completely devalued.

It was a literalism, however, that could in the right hands be marshalled for black rights. The *Defender* quoted James Baldwin later that year describing the situation of the black man more than a century after being “brought here in chains.” He “believes he is an animal because he’s told that he’s an animal and he’s treated like an animal”[20] (Slack, 1963: 4). Baldwin’s phrasing carried with it a metaphorical use, but was also relying on literalism. The black man was told that he was an animal. The pages of 1960s newspapers are replete with such tellings. When combined with the academic racism of social Darwinian thought, the notion that he believed himself an animal could be both literal and metaphorical simultaneously, a syllepsis that encapsulated African-American double consciousness.

It was a concept first elucidated by Du Bois. Black Americans were forced to represent their thought in one way for a white or mixed audience, and in a very different, more honest way in the company of their own race. He also described the phenomenon as a veil separating white and black Americans. He was a Negro. He was an American. And the attendant meanings those words carried with them disallowed the author from seeing himself as both (Du Bois, 1903; Shaw, 2013). That double consciousness could be applied to nonhuman animals, as well. When a 1966 *Defender* article described white behavior toward black customers at Chicago’s Midway Airport by claiming the white employees “treat them like animals,” a similar syllepsis occurred (Shirley, 1966: 12). White workers treated black customers as if those customers were animals, they treated them like they

[20] Slack’s article was also reprinted in the *Amsterdam News* (Slack, 1963: 21).

would treat animals, and they were animalistic in the way they treated the customers. All three scenarios could describe actual nonhuman animal behavior and treatment. Humans often treated nonhuman animals poorly, and many nonhuman animals could be aggressive to or dismissive of humans in their presence. There was in the metaphor, however, no intent to elucidate any of those specific behaviors. Possible comparative models existed in theory alongside a foregrounded attempt to shorthand negative treatment. Treatment “like animals” was assumed in the metaphor to be negative, which indicted the white airport employees but also the animals who were the object of the comparison, who existed in a liminal space between literal and figurative representation, a double consciousness of their own that, like Du Bois’s model, only offered negative options for them.

Those sylleptic comparisons, however, did not necessarily have to castigate nonhuman animals. A 1968 *Defender* account of black poverty in Beaufort, South Carolina included the testimony of a doctor who explained that he “came from Nebraska where we have better pig pens than these people have homes.” People “pretend they’re treating Negroes like humans when they’re treating them like animals” (Golden, 1968: 13). There was an inherent metaphorical denunciation of the treatment of poor South Carolinians in the rebuke, but the reality also existed that most pigs did not require the same accoutrements for a comfortable life than did humans. By naming a specific nonhuman animal in a specific context, the rhetorical damage done to those animals was mitigated. More problematic was the story of a white bus driver attacking black children on his bus. “That’s the problem with you people, you want to be treated as humans, but you act like animals,” he said. “So if you want to be an animal, then I’ll treat you like one” (Howard, 1969: 8).

The racial horror of the incident is obvious, but so too was its assumption about nonhuman animals. If by “act like animals,” the driver meant that the children were not adhering to artificial conduct norms created by humans, then perhaps there was a literal element to his comparison, but the overwhelming thrust of the attack came in the threat of treating a child like an animal. It was a threat precisely because of the human assumption that animals were treated violently by humans.

Just as in white papers, the “like animals” metaphor could in the black press be turned from black to white subjects. “Remember these people, who are the cause of our suffering,” said one New York *Amsterdam News* letter to the editor, referring to white people, “will, like animals--even after a lifetime of being cared for and fed--turn on us in the end” (*Amsterdam News*, 1963: 10). It ascribed a duplicitousness to white people that was surely justified, but by using animals who turn on caretakers as a model of comparison, the metaphor mischaracterized the vast majority of companion animals who lived with human caretakers.

In one *Defender* letter to the editor, a correspondent questioned the Martin Luther King, Jr., strategy of nonviolence in the face of racist aggression. “When white men behave like honorable men, then they should be treated the same way,” the letter said. “But when they behave like animals who can show no decency or compassion, then Negro men have the same obligation to protect their women and children as any other race of men would have” (Thomas, 1965: 9). The metaphor here treats white men with the same broad brush with which black men are often treated in such instances. In the same way, it also redounds negatively to nonhuman animals, who are depicted as devoid of decency and compassion, a depiction decidedly as bigotted as those targeting other human groups and one, as with most bigotted statements, decidedly untrue.

The following year, the *Defender* reported on a black family that moved into a white Philadelphia neighborhood and became the subject of mass protests by their white neighbors. “They act like animals, like they had no education,” the mother of the family said (Ranniello, 1966: 1). While it was true that most nonhuman animals received no formal education, the mother intended instead an inversion of the dominant white “animal” standard in making the comparison. Similarly, when racists attacked a white family in Fullerton, California who adopted a black child, commentary in the *Los Angeles Sentinel* was unequivocal. “People are just like animals. Can you imagine anyone being so cruel and so inhuman as to harass this couple simply because they had enough love in their hearts to adopt a homeless little Negro boy?” (Robertson, 1966: A7) In this scenario, being animalistic or inhuman was associated specifically with cruelty and harassment. While the racists were certainly cruel, however, there was nothing in their behavior that directly related to the behavior of nonhuman animal species.

A similar characterization appeared in a New York *Amsterdam News* description of a racist attack on a black woman. “If you had seen the look in those men’s eyes,” she said, “they looked like--like animals. There was so much hate” (Edwards, 1967: 2). The ascription of hatred to nonhuman animals in aid of a comparison with white people was unfair to the animals, but its use in this context demonstrated the assurance that readers would understand the reference, would associate hatred with the stare of nonhuman animals and sympathize.

Added to this particular critique is one not present in white accounts, that of black critics using the “like animals” comparison toward other black citizens. A 1968 *Defender* article described those who would engage in such comparisons as “the ‘Un Negro’ Negroes! The ‘I’ve-got-it-made’ type who doesn’t want those ‘low

types' to rock the boat." They were middle class African Americans with a vested interest in the status quo and thus interpreted uprisings as riots, black protesters as being "like animals." It was this group who was "trying so hard to identify with the power structure and so very, very hard to deemphasize their Negroness" (Helem, 1968: 18).

It was a critique common to Black Power advocates, distilled most famously by Malcolm X in his 1963 "Message to the Grassroots" speech. "Whoever heard of a revolution where they lock arms," he asked, "singing 'We Shall Overcome'? You don't do that in a revolution. You don't do any singing, you're too busy swinging." He described the differences between Field Negroes and House Negroes during slavery. Field Negroes worked in the hot sun. They experienced brutality, malnourishment. Because of that, they were intelligent and crafty. Field Negroes despised white masters, concocted plans to escape, and committed acts of sabotage. House Negroes, meanwhile, ate the scraps from the master's table, enjoyed a modicum of liberty, and identified with whites. If something bad happened to the master, the House Negro prayed for his deliverance. The comfortable black middle class, the NAACP, Martin Luther King, and others like them, in Malcolm's conception, were House Negroes. The black masses, however, were Field Negroes, willing to push back against bigotry in ways that House Negroes were not (X, 1963; Joseph, 2007: 89-92).

It was a powerful critique using, when the history of the rhetoric of slavery is considered, a pseudo-animal metaphor to make its case. But such criticisms could also go the other way. The following year, for example, a letter writer to the *Los Angeles Sentinel* proved willing to admit to such biases against the new radicalism. "We, the Negro women of America, would appreciate it if our men would

discontinue imitating the savages of deep, dark Africa," she wrote. Black men "roam the streets, looking like shaggy dogs. And as long as they insist on looking like animals, e.g., apes, monkeys and gorillas, the police will give them the inhuman treatment they claim to receive" (Bowman, 1969: A7). It was a reification of the sylleptic attacks often framed by white commentators, and it was not a commonly stated view in the black press. But the press in general had a history of upholding middle class norms and the black population had a much longer history of white comparisons with nonhuman animals, making such commentary understandable if unwarranted.

Of course, the coding of articles as charted in the above graphs does not provide for the inevitable bleed across categories. Many of the articles included in the protest, poverty, violence, and imprisonment categories were inherently racial. One *Amsterdam News* description of a 1963 protest in Plaquemine, Louisiana, for example, described "Negro men, women and children" being "gassed, beaten and treated like animals" (Matthews, 1963: 19). It was a common trope, and the treatment was the result of protest, which is why it is coded as a protest reference, but the fact that the protesters were black makes the mention inherently racial. Black columnist William Raspberry, in a *Washington Post* commentary on imprisonment, reminded his readers "that you can't treat a man like an animal when he's in prison and expect him to behave like a human being when he's free" (Raspberry, 1969: B1). Another play on the common zoo analogy to describe incarceration, Raspberry used many of the earlier paragraphs of his column to emphasize the racialized problems of the carceral state, making the animal reference inherently racial, as well. An article in the *Defender* described historical violence in New York in 1863 wherein black men "were hunted like animals and

lynched" (Nordholt, 1962: 11). As the emphasis of the metaphor is on the violence, hunting the locus of the animal comparison, the article is coded as one describing violence, but the hunting was for one prey in particular.

That prey suffered greatly at the hands of various violent actors, but it also suffered as a consequence of the metaphors used to define the population. Nonhuman animals were metaphorically attached to that-which-lies-outside-of-human-social-norms, regardless of whether that attachment had any biological validity, and then representative metaphors used the image of those animals to demean various human groups. The presentation of such images are most easily tracked in media content, and in American newspapers, there was a substantial spike in uses of comparative phrases "like animals" and "like an animal" in the 1960s, corresponding to the growth and development of the civil rights movement. It was a melding of American bigotries that worked to the detriment of both the black population fighting for its rights within human social constructs and the nonhuman animals coded as aberrant and used to brand them as problematic.

Those fights would also expand past the level of metaphor, as protest ultimately led to legislation. But legislation could also meld those bigotries, could also serve as an agent to demean both human and animal groups.

CHAPTER 6

"Civil Rats":

Animals, Race, and the Rat Extermination Act of 1967

In 1967, as part of a plan to revitalize impoverished urban areas in his broader war on poverty, Lyndon Johnson proposed the Rat Extermination Act, a bill to provide $20 million for eliminating rats in a variety of neglected neighborhoods across the country (Wood, 1968). Taking place amid a series of urban uprisings, uprisings that had prompted so many "animal" comparisons in the national media, the bill was derided by its opponents as the "Civil Rats" bill (Hunter, 1967: 19). The Rat Extermination Act, and the American mid-century relationship with its rat population, has been studied for its proximity to poverty programs, urban renewal, and race,[1] most comprehensively by historian Dawn Biehler (2013). Biehler's scholarship is invaluable, and forms the secondary source base for a portion of this chapter, but the one group that does not receive treatment as an equal agent in the historical narrative surrounding race and rat extermination is the vulnerable population of rats themselves. Rats became a symbol of American poverty, a scarlet letter that demonstrated to many that certain segments of the human population were, in fact, "like animals." It was an association that led to the mass killing of rats for the proclaimed cause of human decency.

Rats have been part of the human built environment for as long as a built environment existed. They have been seen as "an object of defilement," explains

[1] See, for example, Hirsch and Mohl, 1993; Self, 2003; Sugrue, 1996; Georgakas and Surkin, 1975; Lukas, 1985; Von Hoffman, 2008; Jaffe and Sherwood, 1994.

Jonathan Burt, "and because notions of defilement and dirt are very much bound up with key symbolic boundaries of clean and unclean crucial to a general sense of order, then the rat logically should take its place on the far side of a border separating it from the clean or the good. But the symbolic order as much as the physical order is frail and can be easily threatened, especially around dangerous ideas that are so often associated with the horror of the rat: unbounded sexual reproduction, a limitless appetite, and dirt" (2006: 12).

The two dominant species were the black rat, *Rattus rattus*, and the brown rat, *Rattus norvegicus*, the black rat being the smaller of the two, but the brown rat being the most common in tales of urban decay. It bred year-round, living in sewers and basements, under floors and in walls, and dispersed quickly throughout the globe, largely as a result of its ability to stow away on human ships (Burt, 2006: 21, 30-32). While rats can be found in almost every environment, the human built environment has historically been a comfortable place for the small animal to scavenge food and find shelter. When that built environment began to expand in the United States during the country's late Industrial Revolution in the second half of the nineteenth century, the rat population expanded with it, surviving on the garbage generated by metastasizing urban citiscapes and the mass production that made much of it possible. The explosion in the rat population, in other words, was a direct result of the explosion in the human population. Rats found in humans and their built environment an opportunity to survive. Theirs was a world of welcome possibility as metropolitan areas grew. While rats were carriers for some diseases that affected humans, the dependence of those rats on humans and the human population's propensity to generate refuse meant that there was no

biological hostility of rats toward humans; there was no intent to harm[2] (Lentini and Mouzon, 2006: 80; Belman, 2015).

Rats are by no means alone in such an endeavor. Samantha Hurn has described the survival of Chacma baboons on South Africa's Cape Peninsula, for example, through "their ability to adapt to increased urbanization through, amongst other techniques, the exploitation of non-traditional foodstuffs appropriated from their human neighbours," which "places them in often mortal danger of retributive attacks–they have, quite literally, become victims of their own success." Unlike rats, the human contact came to baboons, not the other way around, but like rats in US urban centers, they were as a result classified as "pests" and "vermin" (Hurn, 2015: 152, 153).

Still, rats have been stigmatized by humans throughout history. Birgitta Edelman has described the brown rat in particular as having arrived in England in the eighteenth century, becoming a part of the cultural mind through industrialization and urbanization in the Victorian era. Rat-killing and rat-catching became professions during the period, but at the same time, so too did rat-breeding, fulfilling a pet-keeping demand. Rats were also used as bait in animal bloodsports. Edelman thus concludes "that by the end of the 19th century the rat had established a dual identity as both dangerous vermin and cherished pet" (Edelman, 2002: 5). Those bloodsports were associated with working class life, and in a Victorian era that celebrated clean middle-classness, rats would become associated with the sociopolitical problems that came with class stratification and

[2] The common conflict in this regard is the bubonic plague, attributed to rats in the fourteenth century. Despite modern research that argues that gerbils, not rats, were carriers of plague in medieval Europe, the presence of rats was generated by a human presence and the disease that was carried by either gerbils or rats was a human disease (Schmid, et al., 2015).

urbanization, and thus reviled. It was another example of the biopolitics of difference, and rats as a result became symbols of dirt and disease, representations in fiction of evil, violence, and decay. As it did in the United States, that representation then fed back upon the working-class humans who were in closest proximity to those considered vermin (Edelman, 2002: 3-8).

Edelman carried her claims farther several years later, arguing that in post-Victorian Britain the rat was a “symbolically loaded pawn into a novel social discourse,” but one that moved from the subject of human disgust to one of acceptance and, in some circles, reverence in the late twentieth century, noting in particular the rise of scientific experimentation, the recognition of rat intelligence, and the keeping of rats as pets. In Edelman’s account, socio-economic democratization, which “increasingly blurred class distinctions,” made that transition possible (Edelman, 2005: 119, 133). In the United States, there were, simultaneous to such changes in Britain, increased vivisection efforts with rats and the keeping of rats as trendy pets, but the civil rights movement, the racialized narrative about urban substandard housing, and the political expediency of responding to those concerns emphasized the negative symbolism in social discourse about rats over and against any legitimizing narrative. The rhetorical biopower of race and alterity governed the public face of human-rat interactions far more than the physical dominance of the scientific laboratory, though that physical dominance was always consequential for rat victims of vivisection.

Negative rat symbolism first appeared prominently in the United States at the dawn of Gilded Age industrialization and the impoverished metropolitan

citiscapes that accompanied it.[3] New York's Richard Toner took the lead in eradicating rats, declaring them poisonous to humans in 1876. He forewent poison as a weapon against them in favor of stunning them and grabbing them, then selling those who lived to help train rat-catching dogs[4] (Biehler, 2013: 82; *New York Times*, 1876: 10). It wasn't necessarily the mass killing of rats that would emerge in the twentieth century, but it was mass killing nonetheless. Thriving rat populations in urban areas were understood to be creations of the human built environment, but those punished were the rats themselves.

Using human intelligence standards to justify killing such beings is and was common. Rats were not just different than humans; they were subhuman. At other times, however, there were tacit admissions of rat intelligence. When a rat "realizes that other rats have been killed or threatened, it is quick to seek a safer locality," explained a post-World War II report on a Chicago infestation, admitting the intelligence and strategic thinking of the animal. "The rat may burrow into the ground or under a sidewalk or building only a few feet from the alley line and continue its existence unmolested." Not only were rats intelligent by human standards, they were outsmarting the humans. Such admissions, however, were never a cue for any leader--rich or poor, white or black--to defend them (Biehler, 2013: 87; Essex, 1949: 320-321).

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[3] Rats were not alone in urban citiscapes. Nineteenth-century Paris did a hygiene and security removal of stray dogs by capturing and killing them, using their nuisance value as a justification. It was, in a way, similar to US twentieth century rat efforts (Peterson, 2018: 240). Of course, in rare cases throughout history, rats were also defended. In 1508, for example, Bartholome Chassenee earned fame and fortune for his eloquent representation of the rats of his French province. These rats had been charged with destroying the barley crop and also with ignoring the court order to appear and defend themselves. Bartholome Chassenee argued successfully that the rats hadn't come because the court had failed to provide reasonable protection from the village cats along the route (Evans, 1906: 18-20).

[4] New York had had a "rat court" since no later than 1920, which addressed sanitary violations including rats (Cobb, 1920).

Rats were cited as carriers of typhus and bubonic plague, also making them the targets of public health agencies. San Francisco, for example, responded to cases of plague in 1907 with organized rat eradication programs that coincided with paving efforts, improved garbage disposal, and the scapegoating of immigrants who kept live chickens[5] (Biehler, 2013: 83; Risse, 1992). Such became the basic formula that city governments and civic organizations took for the first half of the twentieth century, combining mass killing programs with moderate efforts at prevention by health agencies, efforts always given greater attention after sensationalized cases of rats biting human children. By 1932, the worst year of the Great Depression, rats caused roughly $240 million in property damage every year (Biehler, 2013: 83; Kraut, 1995).

US health agencies weren't alone in public hand-wringing about the potential of disease. "The material organisation of homes creates many possibilities for risky contact, including through food storage practices, the use of everyday domestic objects, and sleeping or resting arrangements," wrote a group of European researchers studying human-rodent contact in virology and zoonosis in relation to hemorrhagic fevers in Africa, echoing the talking points of American officials. "The material and symbolic dimensions of domestic spaces shape opportunities for disease transmission in ways that are compounded by socio-economic constraints" (Brown et al., 2015: e0003652).

Closer to home, though less centered on the possibility of disease, was the mid-century US battle over city pigeons. Colin Jerolmack, in his studies of the cultural geography of pigeons in twentieth-century urban spaces in the West,

[5] See also Craddock, 2000; Shah, 1999; Dyl, 2006.

demonstrates that problem species like pigeons grew to be disdained over the course of the century, framed in the beginning as welcome visitors and by the 1960s as dangerous nuisances, exposing “culturally derived modernist conceptions of proper, morally appropriate, spatial relations between animals and society” (Jerolmack, 2008: 73; Jerolmack, 2013: 72-73). The apotheosis of that turn against metropolitan pigeons came in 1966, when New York City parks commissioner Thomas P. Hoving denounced pigeons as “rats with wings.” It was a designation, as Jerolmack notes, that marked them as “menacing vermin to be exterminated.” While the campaign against pigeons only metastasized from that point, gaining widespread attention from urban reformers because pigeons were just as prominent in upper-class neighborhoods as in those without similar resources, it is telling that the scarlet letter for the species was an association with rats, already assumed to be “menacing vermin to be exterminated”[6] (Jerolmack, 2008: 81; Jerolmack, 2013: 227-228). The phrasing linked pigeons to marginality, to decay, and only reinforced that rats were signposts of such socioeconomic realities.

In a study of the geography of British urban spaces and their relationship with water voles and other “wild things,” a group of researchers in 2005 lamented the dearth of habitats for wild things in urban areas. Water voles, for example, are herbivores who tend to avoid open spaces, “fastidious creatures” to the point of having “designated latrines” (Hinchliffe, 2005: 647). Rats, on the contrary, are omnivorous and bolder, certainly not fastidious enough for designated latrines. That being the case, though water voles and brown rats are not dissimilar in many other ways, brown rats are in no danger from a lack of potential habitats in urban

[6] For a similar analysis of urban feral cats, see Griffiths, et al., 2000.

spaces. They thrive without protection in a society, whether in the United Kingdom or the United States, that would ultimately welcome their extinction outside of the research laboratory. Such does not signal their immunity from the issues of the water vole. The brown rat eats water voles, for example, making the survival of predation species wholly within the broader biological interest of the rat. But in some circumstances, like that in Birmingham, England, rats have shared tunnels and functionally cohabitated with water voles. So water voles exist in "nonhuman spaces" within the broader context of urban human geography, but brown rats, while clearly affected by geographical change, exist largely within the artificial boundaries of the human built environment[7] (Hinchliffe, 2005).

Still, the midcentury United States demonstrated no concern for "urban biodiversity" or "recombinant ecology." Rats were one of many "biological communities assembled through the dense comings and goings of urban life," as Steve Hinchliffe and Sarah Whatmore have described, but their numbers thrived without the kinds of protections considered and implemented in twenty-first century metropolitan spaces (Hinchliffe and Whatmore, 2006: 123). Such ecological considerations were not part of mainstream city planning in the 1960s, replaced instead with a broader imperative to rid such spaces of nonhuman animal presences (Barker, 2000: 21-24). "The invisibility of liminal animals does not just lead to indifference or neglect. Much worse, it often leads to a de-legitimization of their very presence," argue Sue Donaldson and Will Kymlicka. "Since they do not

[7] That said, the survival of species like water voles, resulting from changes in urban geography, does fundamentally affect rat populations despite their generic species-wide immunity to human assaults. A similar argument has been made focusing on nineteenth-century debates about urban slaughterhouse policy in London and Chicago. See Philo, 1995.

belong in our space, we feel entitled to eliminate these so-called pests in the animal equivalent of ethnic cleansing" (2011: 211).

As Biehler has demonstrated, one of the early battlegrounds in the human assault on rats came in Depression-era Baltimore. A 1930s US Public Health Service program worked to prevent rats from entering buildings, but also poisoned thousands of rats with carbon monoxide and cyanide gasses and killed thousands more with conventional rat traps. They were the weapons of human war, used to great and gruesome effect in the Great War just over a decade prior. One state report singled out black neighborhoods as breeding grounds for rats, explaining that the contagion in those neighborhoods could spread to white neighborhoods, as well. It was an early example of a long history of official statements tying negative rat stereotypes to negative African American stereotypes to the detriment of the images of both[10] (Biehler, 2013: 83-84).

As explained by Kay Anderson, marginalized groups have "been variously identified with the discursive spaces of `wild' nature (as distinct from that proud monument of `civilisation' known as the city or, alternatively, those counterpoint spaces like `ghettoes' within the city's `dark side'). Animality has been a crucial reference point for constructing sociospatial difference and hierarchy in Western cultures. Its meanings have circulated across the nature border and into a politics of sociospatial relations" (Anderson, 2000: 302). The black population was using animals, in this case rats, as a point of differentiation even as the broader populace was animalizing them in other ways.

[10] The use of cyanide gas and other toxins demonstrated the level of human disregard for rats, as it had earlier demonstrated the human disregard for opponents in war (Millspaugh, et al., 1956: 3). For chemical weapons in World War I, see Haber, 1986; Faith, 2014.

To that end, Baltimore officials mandated that all homes be "rat-proofed." Inspectors inspected blocks of housing in black neighborhoods to "remove the last of the rat-harboring nuisances" (Biehler, 2013: 84; City of Baltimore, 1943: 17, 39, 73, 235). Even the Baltimore *Afro-American* took up the crusade, arguing that rats "can be seen walking about our streets and alleys at almost any time of the day or night," and chided its readership about cleanliness and prevention. Rat infestation was "a moral problem and in community life it becomes a social one. One dirty yard can spoil a neighborhood" (Holmes, 1944: 4). That kind of moralizing demonstrated the way black residents of the city internalized the racist rat equations coming from the biopolitical discourse of city and state government, but it did nothing to counter such claims with a more positive equating of the plight of black Baltimore with white supremacy and the plight of rats with speciesist human assumptions about their place in the animal hierarchy and the cavalier attitude with which humans took their lives.

Maintaining boundaries between races being paramount in postcolonial societies, "animal practices, interpreted as 'out of place' by dominant groups, position subaltern groups at the very edge of humanity," explains Glen Elder, Jennifer Wolch, and Jody Emel. "These groups are racialized and dehumanized through a complicated set of associations that measure their distance from civilization and the ideals of white America" (Elder et al., 1998: 185). In the United States, and particularly in urban environments, "racialization of others is fostered by postcolonial interpretations of the human-animal boundary or divide, under time-space conditions of postmodernity. Many forms of racialization have relied on human-animal boundaries--namely the dichotomous division of sentient beings into categories of human and animal" (Elder et al., 1998: 192). As Elder, Wolch, and

Emel have explained, “Animal bodies have become one site of political struggle over the construction of cultural difference and help to maintain white American supremacy” (Elder et al., 1998: 194).

“Places can be imbued with negative characteristics because they harbor feared or disliked animals,” explains Elder, Wolch, and Emel. “People who live in or near these places become associated with dirty, polluted, or dangerous aspects of the place (and its animals).” They use as an example marginalized human groups like gypsies, who “are often relegated to residual places (such as dumps), often inhabited by animals perceived as dirty and disease-ridden, like rats. Thus a dirty-unsafe-rats-gypsies association arises.” The same could be said for neglected socio-economic regions in American urban centers. “This type of associational process has long been used to link poor or subaltern people to ‘dirty’ animals (‘pest’ species). The result is typically strenuous avoidance of such animal-linked people by the less marginalized to maintain social boundaries and preclude abjection”[11] (Elder et al., 1998: 197).

There was a similar legacy in Chicago. As early as the Great Depression, residents of the city’s South Side were complaining of a scourge of rats, threatening their children and food supply, a problem exacerbated by municipal cuts to inspector budgets. In 1933, however, the Woman’s City Club and the Chicago Board of Health got an extermination grant from the Civil Works Administration, hiring one thousand unemployed men to kill the rats. There was no effort at prevention, which would have allowed the rat population to migrate away pragmatically, nor at relocation, which was not even considered. The plan was to

[11] See also Kristeva, 1982.

use the vulnerability of the unemployed to create killing agents. It was an effort, to be sure, aided by the general human revulsion for rats, but economic vulnerability certainly became the final push for any indigent job-seeker who otherwise might have been dubious about taking a job that required him to kill animals. The success of the Chicago program, then, led to similar efforts in other metropolitan areas, unemployed men hired locally with federal dollars to exterminate rats[12] (Biehler, 2013: 86).

The desensitization caused by killing is described in a variety of contexts, but most commonly in relation to slaughterhouse workers. Human workers in killing fields become, in many instances, numb to the brutality of their work, but at the same time suffer stigmas for the work they do. Killing jobs from rat exterminators to slaughterhouse workers are occupied for the most part by those who need the work, not by those enamored with the act of killing. Noelie Vialles describes a “highly complex system of relationships and representations” that “is capable of legitimising (or at least making acceptable) the slaughter of animals” (Vialles, 1994: 124). Studies like hers, combined with more recent efforts like that of Timothy Pachirat, describe the work of slaughterhouse employees, but the same kind of moral compromise plays out in all socially acceptable killing practices[13] (Pachirat, 2011: 108-123).

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[12] There is a comparison to be made between this effort and the use of the military in human-killing efforts, particularly in the nation’s pending conflict, World War II, with patriotism and hatred of Japan and Germany standing in for revulsion for rats as a secondary motivator to employment. See Kriner and Shen, 2010.

[13] And, as Alex Blanchette has shown, this kind of “posthuman labor” can become a site not only of human stigma, but one of real human danger--nothing as compared to the danger to the pigs in the slaughterhouse or the rats in the walls, but danger nonetheless (Blanchette, 2015).

That effort to take advantage of the desperation of the unemployed to create contract killers of rats led the National Association of Exterminators and Fumigators to challenge the program as a government intrusion into private industry, of essentially stealing the jobs of already-employed exterminators to hire those without the requisite experience. Eventually, in 1938, the Chicago Chamber of Commerce backed the exterminators and the federal money stopped (Biehler, 2013: 86). Throughout the dispute, however, arguments only centered on who had the right to kill rats, never on the needless deaths of the rats themselves.

In 1940, a young black girl died of “rat bite fever,” and the *Chicago Defender* complained that she and other poor residents of the city were being victimized by the government’s willingness to divert money to a European war effort “to kill men” while ignoring the “need” to kill rats at home (*Chicago Defender*, 1940: 14). Again public funds were diverted, again exterminators protested, but chastising war spending while simultaneously declaring a war on nonhuman sentient beings demonstrated the disconnect in human thinking. The young girl’s death was a tragedy, as were the deaths in World War II (Biehler, 2013: 87). As Edmund P. Russell has explained, “The ability of human beings to kill both national and natural enemies on an unprecedented scale, as well as fears about those abilities, developed in the twentieth century partly because of links between war and pest control” (Russell, 1996: 1508). But tens of millions of rats had been killed in the United States alone in the first part of the century. There was no reciprocal relationship in the ways that leaders visualized deaths, nor could there be, because

the girl's killer lacked intentionality, unlike the killers of rats and of men in the World War II era.[14]

The human belief in nonhuman animal agency had undergone a variety of changes throughout the centuries.[15] Nothing, for example, demonstrated the nod to animal intentionality as did the criminal prosecutions of animals in the medieval age. In 1508, for example, Bartholome Chassenee earned fame and fortune for his eloquent representation of the rats of his French province. These rats had been charged with destroying the barley crop and also with ignoring the court order to appear and defend themselves. Chassenee argued successfully that the rats hadn't come because the court had failed to provide reasonable protection from the village cats along the route. The court obliged the order and mandated the housing of cats so that the rats could appear at trial. Still they refused to show. Eventually they were convicted in absentia. But the proceedings demonstrated a real assumption of animal intentionality (Sykes, 2011: 283-284; Evans, 1906: 18-23).

By the World War II era, however, imagined assumption of murderous intent on the part of rats themselves had long since gone by the wayside, and the actual murderous intent of exterminators had been excused, which set the stage for moral

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[14] Rat bite fever, either Streptobacillus moniliformis or Spirillum minus, is characterized by fever, shivering, joint pain, and headaches. Streptobacillus moniliformis is also known as Haverhill fever and can also be caused by ingesting contaminated milk products. Both forms of rat-bite fever are technically not caused by rat bites themselves, but instead by the trading of bodily fluids, usually either the urine or mucous of rats (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018; Cole et al., 1969; Blattner, 1965).

[15] Of course, as Esther Cohen has shown, in examples as early as medieval *exempla* literature animals showed a human understanding of nonhuman agency. In one such tale, for instance, storks "deserted their nest on top of an excommunicated man's house, returning only when the excommunication was lifted" (Cohen, 1994: 62). It was an acknowledgement of intentionality on the part of nonhuman animals. Cohen explains that "late medieval popular culture" also "attributed transcendent characteristics to the live animals that surrounded the humans of the time, even to the point of heretically assuming that animals had souls" (Cohen, 1994: 63). In fables, animals "acted in all human spheres, and in a manner hardly complimentary to humans" (Choen, 1994: 64).

panics when little girls died of rat bite fever. Adriana Mica's study of stray dogs in Romania and Moldavia has demonstrated that fears of actual danger posed by nonhumans living in human spaces create cultural moral panics that only drive public fears drifting beyond the bounds of the actual risk posed by the nonhuman presence. In such panics, it is the marginalized nonhuman group that always suffers as a result, even when, for example, the victim of rat bite fever is poor and black. Or perhaps because she was poor and black[16] (Mica, 2010).

So officials at both the federal and local level responded by promoting programs of extermination, along with programs of prevention, such as encouraging cleanliness and providing lidded garbage cans. There was no overt distinction between killing and prevention, though one succeeded in the task of segregation without violence, and even when humans attempted to make such distinctions, arguments against killing did not use the morality of killing as a base. "Rat campaigns with the purpose of killing rats are largely useless, because fecundity is the rat's main weapon," said Chicago exterminator Hugo Hartnack. "The right kind of community effort is valuable. I mean by this, uninterrupted daily efforts, ratproofing, informing, keeping clean" (*Chicago Tribune*, 1946: 16). The distinction wasn't moral. It was based solely on the effectiveness of eliminating an enemy. Fecundity was even compared to weaponry, to a tool of war.

That military comparison was not rare. In the late 1940s, the Rockefeller Foundation openly suggested the possibility that "the enemy might resort to germ warfare, using rats to spread Bubonic plague." The National Research Council "sought the most efficient wholesale way of destroying this tough and wary animal,"

[16] For another example of moral panic related to stray dogs, this time in Victorian England, see Walton, 1979.

itself a declaration of war against a "tough and wary" group (Rockefeller Foundation Records). That phrase, "tough and wary," is one commonly used to describe human survivors of trauma (see, for example, Buchan, 1923: 263; Dicks, 1980: 19; Monroe, et al., 1988: 51), a complimentary phrase denoting one's ability to overcome various obstacles and justifiable caution when approaching others. It was a phrase that acknowledged rat intelligence, if not intentionality, as humans willingly began to acknowledge such qualities only after extermination efforts and the wars they parroted and were underway.[17]

Back in Baltimore, things had not improved. "Baltimore's housing problem and rat problem came up about the same time," explained the *Afro-American*. Noting that the rat traps being used by the city looked like houses in miniature, the paper quipped that "there will be no special houses for white or black rats" (*Afro-American*, 1943: 9). Even anthropomorphizing rats, even comparing their condition to that of the black community, did not create requisite concern for their wellbeing. The speciesist disconnect was too powerful in human minds.[18]

Leaders in Baltimore blamed the poor themselves for rat infestations. "In these heavily rat-infested districts," went one such claim, "most people apparently accepted rat bites as being inevitable" (Biehler, 2013: 89). Equating the presence of rats with poverty not only stigmatized the poor, but it also stigmatized rats using

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[17] Their efforts helped develop alpha-naphthyl thiourea, ANTU, which became the dominant rat-killing chemical in the mid-twentieth century (Biehler, 2013, 88). For examples of the usage of "tough and wary" in American literature, any Google search will produce hundreds of results.

[18] Here the *Afro* is literally anthropomorphizing rats, describing them as humans living in segregated housing, but anthropomorphism broadly considered is contested ground in animal studies. As Kay Milton has explained, much of that contestation comes from differentiations between how humans understand animals and how they represent them, focusing on the use of the term "anthropomorphic" to describe understanding. Here, however, the *Afro*'s anthropomorphization is solely a representative act (Milton, 2005).

a trope of societal derision, making them as disposable as the impoverished themselves. The bites of such rats were common in Baltimore, causing problems as mundane as irritation and as serious as typhus, occasionally even causing death. There was, however, no reciprocity in the human response. It was mass killing in response to occasional and accidental death.[19] Such instances were reminiscent of retributive overreactions just south of Baltimore two hundred years prior. During the Stono Rebellion outside of Charleston, South Carolina in September 1739, for example, a group of Angolan slaves ambushed a warehouse then led a group toward Florida, killing twenty-five. In response, precisely because slaves were below white people on the chain of being (see Chapter 1), the following year authorities arrested 150 slaves without cause and hanged ten every day for two weeks. It was the asymmetric response of unequals[20] (Hoffer, 2010; Shuler, 2009).

Asymmetries of power, of course, are present in all killings, but in 1943 Baltimore, just as in 1739 Charleston, retributive biopower was marshaled for punitive mass killings. In the former, pesticides, literal chemical weapons, were used in the maintenance of human hegemony over rats, while in the latter, biopolitical framing justified the murders by arguing that people of African descent were not rebelling against unjust treatment but were instead an innately violent

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[19] Common ailments like salmonellosis, leptospirosis, and rat-bite fever were not the kinds of illnesses that would spread to epidemic level like bubonic plague, for example, or typhus, so the notion of rat-killing as preventative of a broader medical contagion was not a viable argument, and with the semantic emphasis on poverty, was not an argument that was made (Richter, 1945).

[20] Similar instances occurred throughout the slave period. There were retributive killings after the planned revolts of Gabriel Prosser and Denmark Vesey and after the revolt of Nat Turner. Colonial rebellions tended to happen in waves, from 1710-1722 and again from 1730-1741. There is a problem for many in making comparisons between nonhuman animals and human animals because of the stigma that can still affect human animals in relation to such comparisons, and while such problems are relevant in advocacy settings, comparisons are a vital part of historical scholarship. They will continue to be used here.

threat to white civilization, that the act of rebellion was itself a justification for the maintenance of slavery. It was claim in 1739 that denied environmental factors in human development in favor of a belief in a priori inherency that made all slaves vulnerable to possible extermination (Shuler, 2009). In 1943, that same biopolitical framing ascribed sinister motivations to rats' behavior in ostensibly human spaces, denying the environmental factors that created that behavior to justify another asymmetric killing campaign. There were myriad differences between the two events, to be sure, but in both cases, those in power relied on biopolitical arguments conditioned by white and human supremacy to control populations dispossessed by the very biopower their actions threatened.

In the eighteenth century, of course, there wasn't an institutionalized effort at continuous widespread extermination, as slavery existed as a function of white supremacy chiefly to maintain a pliant labor force. Twentieth-century responses to urban rat populations, however, were far more concerned with continuous if not permanent extermination. The Rodent Ecology Project at the School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins, for example, studied the effectiveness of various killing campaigns. Poisoning programs killed roughly sixty percent of rats, a population that recovered within a year. The Rockefeller Foundation agreed. "Killing procedures merely make room for more rats to grow up and actually increase the yield of rat flesh per acre per year," the foundation reported. Killing rats "proved an almost endless, tedious, highly repetitive, and expensive job" (Rockefeller Foundation Records). It was Hannah Arendt's banality of evil, the normalization of violence to the point where its repetition hid its grotesquery. Arendt used her "rule of Nobody" to describe the possibility of bureaucracy to allow people to destroy lives as part of assumed functionary duties. "The essence of totalitarian

government, and perhaps the nature of every bureaucracy, is to make functionaries and mere cogs in the administrative machinery out of men, and thus to dehumanize them" (Arendt, 1977: 289). The emphasis on dehumanization obviously does not fit in the context of killing rats. But when violence is routinized, when plausible deniability exists that allows functionaires to either deflect blame or demonize victims, tyranny and mass murder are possible. Rats were lesser than humans, their deaths were necessary to help ease human racial and housing problems, others were technically doing the killing. Killing rats became "almost endless, tedious, highly repetitive" (Arendt, 1977: 289).[21]

Still, the crux of such thinking was that rat infestation was a human problem, that litter and refuse and lack of sanitation created rat populations. So Baltimore's fight against rats became one dominated by code enforcement rather than mass poisoning--not because of a revulsion against killing animals but instead because of the effectiveness of a more comprehensive approach to widening the proximity between humans and rats (Biehler, 2013: 91-92).

The *Baltimore Sun* continued the trend. "Rats do not check in at the resettlement office to discuss desirable housing vacancies," the paper wrote in 1952. "When the razing crews start to work, the rats high tail it into nearby blocks, taking their fleas, lice, ticks, and disease potential right along with them" (*Baltimore Sun*, 1952: 2). After the program had run its course in Baltimore, the *Sun* reported that "the new cement in the back yards began to crack. Some of the yards filled up with trash again. The rats, sensing perhaps that the humans' guard is down again,

[21] There is obviously much more that could be said about bureaucracy and banality and its relationship to violence, particularly through the lens established by Arendt. See, for example, Arendt, 2005; Neiman, 2010; Scheper-Hughes, 1995).

are finding easy pickings in the garbage-strewn alleys, burrowing under once-new concrete yards" (*Baltimore Sun*, 1954: 4). Not only was the rat problem a human problem, but the paper was clearly ascribing human-graded intelligence to the rats, whose senses were simply leading them to their own best possible situation. The ascription was much like historical attacks on human cases of asylum seekers. After the rise of bacteriology and the Immigration Act of 1891, for example, government oversight of immigration led to medical inspections and the assumption by anti-immigration talking heads that immigrants and asylum seekers, particularly those from regions beyond western Europe, would cause contagions in the United States. While the number of contagious immigrants were few, and most were screened out at the border and sent home, such assumptions generated fear, and that fear led nativists to scapegoat immigrants for potentially intentionally bringing diseases into the country. Possible infection led to sinister motives (Markel and Stern, 2002; Molina, 2010). The same was true of rats, though their status as carriers of diseases that might make humans sick was more plausible than that of demonized immigrants. The *Sun*'s narrative, for example, sold rat intentionality as, first, existing, and second, sinister--another human-graded intelligence--as the rats were "sensing the humans' guard is down" and took the opportunity to take advantage of their lack of concern (*Baltimore Sun*, 1952: 2). Ascribing sinister motives to rat behavior was itself an argument by a human standard against killing them, but counterintuitively became the justification for such killings. All arcs in the biopolitical frame bent toward extermination.

Meanwhile, in Chicago, similar discussions were ongoing. The *Chicago Tribune* explained that rats "are a symptom, not a cause, of slum housing. The principal cause of slum conditions is the disposition of owners of property in

blighted neighborhoods to operate it so as to liquidate their capital, instead of maintaining their property and earning a return upon the investment" (*Chicago Tribune*, 1947: 10). Rats were a human problem, they were a scarlet letter, and despite the human blame, it was the rats who were to pay the price for such signposts of human-framed degradation.

But then there was New York. In 1957, the *Amsterdam News* ran a photo of a woman holding a rat who she killed. Eva Ray stood defiantly holding the dead rat. "'I'm not afraid of any rat,' said Mrs. Ray, which is an unusual statement to come from a woman" (*Amsterdam News*, 1957: 16). The photo is a semiotic oxymoron, its sexist caption at odds with the image of female empowerment. But the strength of the woman comes at the expense of the dead, diminished rat that she holds. It is semiotically oxymoronic in a speciesist sense, then, as well. The dead rat in the photo is weak and insignificant in contrast with the defiant Ray, but her lack of fear in the photo's caption indicated that such animals were a monstrosity to be feared. In both a feminist and anti-speciesist reading of the photograph and its caption, rats are the losers. And in the content itself, that particular rat is the loser, his or her dead body displayed as a meaningless nuisance.[22]

The *Amsterdam News* sustained its anti-rat crusade throughout the late 1950s. In an October 1957 editorial, the paper described a rat eating the leg muscle of a sleeping four-month-old boy. "If you have red blood in your veins," the paper explained, the situation should make readers angry. "It should, for if you are

[22] The common refrain from critics is, "That's because a human dead body is different than a rat's dead body. It means more." That response, as a gut reaction, is completely understandable. But it is an example of speciesism and preferential thinking that has neither scientific nor moral backing. The claim of this paper is that there is no moral difference between humans and rats. Both are living, thinking, feeling beings who want to live.

a Negro, it could have been but for the grace of God, your child" (*Amsterdam News*, 1957: 6). The editorial demonstrated the racialized nature of the human response to rats, but forgot that rats, too, had red blood in their veins. Still, it was clear that a lack of response to human-rat interactions in inner-cities was not based on concern for rats, but instead on a lack of concern by the predominantly white government for the predominantly black humans living in certain impoverished New York neighborhoods. The racialized nature of the fight over rats among humans was real, and would continue to sway policy decisions. Regardless, the rat-bite incident led to a special program on Harlem housing on New York's CBS television station (Hicks, 1957: 7).[23] In early 1958, the paper reported on three more rat bites, all in aid of a broader study of the deteriorating and fundamentally racialized housing situation in Harlem. "You'd better watch out," the report began, "the rats will be running up the stairs soon!" (Nall, 1958: 1). Again it was rats themselves that became the signposts of human, racialized failings.

In 1959, in a story about miniscule five and ten-dollar fines given to landlords for building code violations, the *Amsterdam News* claimed that "vicious, flesh-loving rats chalked up 442 bite victims in Manhattan last year, the majority in the Harlem area." The small fines for slumlords provided "Baby Flesh At $5 A Bite!" and created "Conditions Which Enable the Rats To Live Better Than There [*sic*] Victims." The report included pictures of human children who were "The Rats' Victims" (*Amsterdam News*, 1959: 10). There was no doubt that the problems were real, and that they disproportionately affected black neighborhoods, but the

[23] The paper published an additional commentary by a Harlem social worker blamed the parents of the small child, adding another layer of mediation to the public discourse around human-rat interactions, but like its predecessors ignoring the fate of rats themselves (Jackson, 1957: 6).

presentation of rats as “flesh-loving” monsters hoping to feed on human children, rather than as innocent animals taking advantage of whatever circumstances available to them to survive in the face of an overwhelming genocide that greeted them with myriad unnatural and painful deaths, was inaccurate.[24]

Such uses of children as points of leverage in extermination campaigns are not rare. In 2001, for example, Queensland, Australia initiated a culling of area dingoes after a highly publicized attack that killed a young boy (Peace, 2002). There was a narrative of retribution in the cull, but also a clear desire to demonstrate an overwhelming response in an effort to protect the region’s tourism industry. It was not an action taken among the urban poor demanding that dangerous representations of decay be eliminated from their midst. It was instead an effort to protect the business interests of established economic entities in the region. Still, it came with all of the moral rhetoric and panic that accompanied similar “cullings” of rats in American inner cities.

And so the “flesh-loving” monster rhetoric wasn’t necessarily intellectually disingenuous because the disconnect in human thinking about the functional equality of animals simply wasn’t there. 442 bite victims certainly suffered and deserved better from the racialized politics of red-lined white supremacy, but so too did the millions of rat victims killed in response not just to those bites. The biopolitics of species and race ensured that the dispossession of one group would create a self-fulfilling prophecy for the other. Suffering begat suffering. Red-lining, realty discrimination, and the de facto segregation created by both were intentional acts by white leadership to reshape the environment inhabited by impoverished

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[24] For more on why such mass exterminations could never be considered “genocide,” see Chapter 4.

black residents of urban areas. That racialized act of biopower, then, generated a speciesist response by those humans traumatized by dilapidated conditions. As a check against that justifiable anger, the same actors who opened the circle with the biopolitics of race then closed it by committing a deadly act of speciesist biopower. It was a demonstration in microcosm of the mutually sustaining nature of the biopolitics of race and species. "Baby Flesh At $5 A Bite," after all, demanded nothing less than a disproportionate response from officials, as it always had in response to perceived attacks from those they deemed less than human or less than white. In that same edition of the *Amsterdam News*, the paper apologized for "devoting so much of its front page and its Society Page to rats." But "ridding this community of the rats which plague our children" was too important. It included photos of all of the city commissioners with a role to play in slum maintenance. The only black face included was that of the man soon to take over as Welfare Commissioner from the currently-sitting white figure. Again, juxtaposed with the real racial politics of government apathy about black housing conditions was the scapegoating of rats as a "plague," calling back to a medieval Europe where one-third of the continent's population died (*Amsterdam News*, 1959: 1), a visual representation of the self-fulfilling prophecy generated by the closed circle of race- and species-based biopower.

Another 1959 headline trumpeted "The Rats Who Run Harlem," accompanied by photographs of the corpses of dead rats. One letter to the paper responding to the presentation of dead rats on the front page expressed frustration with the human politicians blamed for the problem, arguing, "Let's get a companion picture for the four-legged rats on your front page--one with the two-legged rats" (Ferribee, 1959, 10). Not only were the bad guys framed as those who weren't

aggressively killing rats, but they were signified as bad guys by naming them "rats." And as Edmund Leach has argued, when animal names like "rat" are used "as an imprecation, it indicates that the name itself is credited with potency. It clearly signifies that the animal category is in some way taboo and sacred." It was a self-fulfilling prophecy (Leach, 1989: 151).

After the state Department of Health adopted a plan to require landlords to pay for rat extermination, the *Amsterdam News* reported the news approvingly along with a photo of two humans, one black and one white, holding a program sign that read, "RATS ARE KILLERS--drive them from your home" (*Amsterdam News*, 1959, 2). Such was consistent with the narrative the paper had presented for years. Racial animus between white and black humans could be improved by slaughtering rats, the one group in the paradigm with no intentional antagonism.

In the 1960s, 62 percent of black families and 35 percent of white families lived in substandard housing, making them vulnerable to at least 14,000 rat bites in the decade, more than half of the victims under the age of two. Those bites could cause rash, vomiting, diarrhea, and other symptoms that needed to be cured with antibiotics. Rat-bite fever, leptospirosis, and salmonellosis were common (Scott, 1965; Hurley, 1997; Clinton, 1969). Importantly, and undiscussed at the time, all of those diseases were curable with antibiotics and none the result of malicious intent. When humans could not afford antibiotics or were left vulnerable to rats, the culprits were other humans and the imagined economies that created that imbalance. Rats, however, would be the ones to pay the price for those victims of human imagination.

In October 1961, for example, 650 students stayed out of PS 119 in Harlem after promised repairs were discovered to not be completed. Nicknamed the "rat

school," mothers again used rats as signposts of a decidedly human failure (Fulbright, 1961: 1). "We can discover the origins of the practice of racial dehumanization in our long history of managing the nonhuman animal world," argues Kalpana Rahita Seshadri. She sees a real "similarity between our exploitation of nature and animals and of 'inferior' peoples. Yet the exchange between those who work on questions of race and those who concern themselves with animality and human propriety has been minimal." It is a situation "attributable to the fact that the concepts of 'race' and 'animal' are anthropological/political and ontological categories, respectively, and are therefore tacitly indifferent, if not exclusive, of each other" (Seshadri, 2012: 7).

Activist Jesse Gray led the Harlem Community Council on Housing in the early 1960s. In Fall 1963, he led a rent strike among impoverished city-dwellers, and in protests and eviction hearings often used dead rats as props to demonstrate substandard housing conditions to local judges. When Gray and the strikers marched on Albany for remuneration, the press nicknamed the action the "rat march" (Biehler, 2013: 109-110; *Chicago Defender*, 1963: 27; Todd, 1963: 1; *Amsterdam News*, 1964, 3; *Chicago Defender*, 1964, 1). During the strike, the CBS drama *Eastside/Westside* won an Emmy Award for an episode that dramatized a baby killed by a rat bite. The strike was a success and soon spread to Chicago. Meanwhile, *Eastside/Westside* further galvanized activists as southern CBS affiliates had the show cancelled over its progressive themes[25] (Perl, 1963).

[25] For further discussion of Gray and the rent strikes, see Jackson, 2006; Sullivan, 2004: 59-68. Sullivan calls Gray an "interpreter of rats" for his ability to represent the political and cultural meanings of rats.

In response to such activism, New York embarked on a variety of rat killing programs, destroying the symbol of decay rather than the decay itself, and in the process destroying the lives of thousands of rats. New York mayor Robert F. Wagner "spoke dishearteddly of the enormous amount of public housing that New York City has and how the houses are not kept up after the tenants have been in them for some years," said Lady Bird Johnson. "It was a very discouraging picture." (Johnson, 1964) Activists did not concern themselves with the deaths of the rats, but they did point out the city's problem of treating a symptom rather than the causes of urban poverty. "What good is getting rid of rats when you haven't got any heat or lights?" asked one resident. "We can beat off the rats with a stick, but how are we going to keep warm?" (Schanberg, 1964)

Similar action took place in Chicago in the mid-1960s. In the summer of 1964, CORE demonstrators marched on city hall to push back against substandard housing. Protestors carried signs saying, "Mayor Daley, Do You Want a Rat for a Roommate?" They also brought a large wooden cross and nailed the bodies of four dead rats to it. Several carried rat corpses in their pockets, entering the building and putting the dead bodies on the desks of administrators. The protestors were black; the administrators were white; the racial symbolism was palpable. Meanwhile, the dead rats were a symbol, an afterthought, their lives considered meaningless by comparison (*Amsterdam News*, 1964).

Responding to long-held complaints by civil rights leaders in 1965, mayor Richard Daley directed the city's Board of Health, Department of Streets and Sanitation, and Department of Buildings to undertake what the *Chicago Defender* called a "3-way assault on rats," an "inner city war." It was the language of human

combat, a way of coding rats as an enemy with ill intent (*Chicago Defender*, 1965: 3).

Exacerbating the perceived urban problems was federal inaction. "One of the things that slipped through in the early days was a letter drafted somewhere in the bowels of that organization to one of the better mayors in the United States," recalled James C. Gaither, special assistant to the president, "who had written the Secretary saying, 'I've just been told that HEW [the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare] will not continue funding of the rat extermination program in'--whatever the city was--'because we've been too successful, and I'm enclosing a copy of this incredible letter that I've received from HEW.' And a letter went back from me that somehow got through to him saying, 'Dear Mr. Mayor, I congratulate you on the wonderful rat extermination program you've run for that city.' It was absolutely awful" (Gaither, 1980).

Meanwhile, in summer 1964, research at the University of California at Berkeley demonstrated that rats developed larger brains when provided richer lives with more experiences and stimulation (Diamond, 1964). It was a glaring scarlet letter that demonstrated that rats were thinking, feeling creatures with similar opportunities for neural growth to humans. And yet at the same time extermination talk in neighborhoods and governments in places like Harlem only grew louder.

The disconnect was also apparent in Washington, DC. While lamenting the District of Columbia's lack of funding for rat control, the *Washington Post* described Clarence Travis, the district's Health Department Vector Control Division Director, the leader of the department tasked with rat prevention and eradication, as "the District's Lord High Executioner of Rats" (*Washington Post*, 1964: A1). It was a clever phrase, and effectively true, but if, for example, the paper referred to the

leader of the district's branch of the Humane Society as the Lord High Executioner of Dogs in response to euthanizations of abandoned pets, the population would have been up in arms and the Humane Society probably would have sued. Again, the linguistics of the rat discourse created a chain of value among living groups of animals, a chain where rats were always at the bottom.

"There were lots of programs about dealing with rats, and you found them in the Interior Department under one rationale and in the Agriculture Department under another rationale and at HEW someplace else," remembered Ronald Goldfarb, then director of the Brookings Institution. "It was smart and wise and sensible that we would do something about the problems of rats, but no one had heard of the other one's program, it seemed, and so it was operating kind of catch as catch can and in not such an effective way. And that, in a small way, I thought was duplicated in a lot of other situations" (Goldfarb, 1980).

It was a disconnect that could also be seen in cultural production. In 1940, Richard Wright published *Native Son*, the story of Bigger Thomas. As part of the depiction of the Thomas family's poverty, the family found a "huge black rat" and cornered him. Thomas then "took a shoe and pounded the rat's head, crushing it, cursing hysterically" (Wright, 1940: 10). As James Smethurst has described, "A black rat appears, both terrified and terrifying. In the first moment of doubling in the text, Bigger kills his rat double, who attacks Bigger in a fit of terror, hunger, and defiance. Bigger goes on to terrify his sister with the dead rat, enjoying her fear." The rat, in Smethurst's analysis, was scared, hungry, and acting out of understandable desperation. Bigger responds with killing. Bigger uses his victim to further scare his sister. The doubling here is the partial death of decency, which portends Thomas's tragic end. Smethurst compares Wright's portrayal of the

“endless stream of hungry and fearful rats” to the similar stream of disaffected and dispossessed black men in urban poverty (Smethurst, 2001: 36).

Such comparisons are always in aid of depicting the problems with poverty; never with the vulnerability of rats. But such comparisons could have been made. Both populations were vulnerable, one far more so--one punished with mass extermination simply for existing. But that most vulnerable of populations does not receive the benefit of such comparisons because the effort would, based on that original vulnerability, stigmatize the impoverished human population even further, because assumptions about rats are so ubiquitous that such language--itself a human phenomenon--would only redound to diminish whatever human group was used as a comparison control in the effort. It is the discourse of biopower, an understandable semantic dilemma, but the losers in that dilemma are unquestionably the rats themselves, the sentient beings struggling to survive in a world where the sources of sustenance are also the sources of death.

And so the comparison only went one way, as pundits and activists portrayed rats as symbols of institutional racism in both private and political sectors. Or they were symbols of danger and decay. In HP Lovecraft’s 1923 short story “Rats In the Walls,” the protagonist discovers during a home renovation a mass of rats feasting on the skeletons of humans and other animals. The presence of the rats eventually drives him mad (Lovecraft, 1999). Hugh Sykes Davies’ *The Papers of Andrew Melmoth* (1961) tells a science fiction story of a scientist who moves to the sewers to live with rats, assuming that nuclear war and the apocalypse that follows will ultimately leave rats to run the world (Davies, 1961). In Gunter Grass’s *The Rat* (1986), the animals are similarly the last to survive on the planet, over and against human survival (Grass, 1986). As Jonathan Burt has

noted, novels like Albert Camus's *The Plague* (1947) and George Orwell's *1984* (1949) both picture a world wherein "rats threaten the human order physically, culturally and psychologically" (Camus, 1991; Orwell, 1949; Burt, 2006: 78). Then there was James Clavell's 1962 novel *King Rat* and the movie adaptation of the book three years later. Allied prisoners in a Japanese POW camp during World War II breed rats to sell to unsuspecting officers, then leave the remaining rats caged after the camp's liberation, allowing them to ultimately feed on one another until there is only one remaining, the king rat[26] (Clavell, 1986).

Two years after the publication of *King Rat*, as James Bond escapes Turkey with the Russian consulate clerk Tatiana Romanova in 1964's *From Russia With Love*, the precariousness of their situation is emphasized by a horde of rats that flood the screen. Every reference to rats in politics and economics was reinforced by such negative cultural representations of rats in literature and film. *From Russia With Love* was the first James Bond film of the Lyndon Johnson presidency, and the novels of Davies and Clavell both appeared during his tenure in the White House[27] (Young, 1964).

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[26] These are not the only such instances. In 1954's *Lady and the Tramp*, for example, which appeared the same year as *Brown v. Board of Education*, Lady and Tramp are romanticized as heroes when they save their human's baby from a rat (Hirschman and Sanders, 1997: 61). After the 1960s, such instances continued. In his *Invisible Cities*, published in English in 1974, Italo Calvino described the fictional city of Theodora, which fought to exterminate various animals. "For many long years," Calvino wrote, "it was uncertain whether or not the final victory would not go to the last species left to fight man's possession of the city: the rats. From each generation of rodents that the people managed to exterminate, the few survivors gave birth to a tougher progeny, invulnerable to traps and resistant to all poison. In the space of a few weeks, the sewers of Theodora were repopulated with hordes of spreading rats. At last, with an extreme massacre, the murderous, versatile ingenuity of mankind defeated the overweening life-force of the enemy" (Calvino, 1974: 159).

[27] The scene was first attempted in Turkey, with white rats painted to appear brown. When that did not work, the scene was reshot in Spain. It could not be filmed in England, as the nation's film commission disallowed filming with wild rats. See the audio commentary on *From Russia With Love* (2008) MGM Home Entertainment Ultimate Edition DVD.

Thus it was that early in Johnson's administration, his Office of Equal Opportunity attempted a series of rat-killing programs under the title Operation Rat. "A rat eradication program for the American People," Operation Rat started in early 1965 (Scott, 1965). Johnson's rival Robert Kennedy had been using rats as rhetorical metaphors of urban, racialized poverty that year in response to the Watts uprising (see Chapter 5), noting that appeals to rioters for law and order neglected that the legal system had not protected poor black residents "from having to keep lights turned on the feet of children at night, to keep them from being gnawed by rats" (Schmitt, 2010: 120). Meanwhile, Johnson's State Department had been following the progress of India's National Rat Control Committee as a model for its own potential efforts. As early as April 1966, Lady Bird Johnson was at the State Department discussing the scourge of rats in Chicago. In August 1966, special assistant to the president Joe Califano asked Sargent Shriver about the costs of a larger, more comprehensive "program to exterminate the rats in our ghettos throughout the country" (Califano, 1966). Johnson was convinced about the need. He shared "a deep concern over the human injury and anguish brought about by this shameful condition in our cities" (Wood, 1967).

And so the Rat Extermination Act would be broader, falling under the aegis of the new Department of Housing and Urban Development. "The genesis of the rat control business or the rat aid or what-have-you goes back to [the Connecticut Senator Abraham] Ribicoff hearings with the Senator's exchange with John Gardner about rats. It shook John fairly strongly and John went back and set up a task force," remembered Robert C. Wood, then the Undersecretary of HUD. The task force, in turn, recommended an extermination program to be operated by Housing and Urban Development. "In 1967, I really regarded this essentially as the

OEO poverty year which it turned approximately to be," said Wood. "We allowed an impression that this program was not significant, and indeed rats were kind of funny. You know, after the Model Cities." The lives of rats were a functional afterthought (Wood, 1968).

"Then we agreed to a legislative strategy recommended by House staff of separating out the rats from the omnibus bill on the ground that the omnibus bill was kind of technical and inconsequential," Wood explained, "that there were a lot of things the people didn't like about it, and Congress was in a bad mood but everybody had to be in favor of rat eradication, and let's get that out and have a nice easy one out" (Wood, 1968). But it would not be an easy one out.

Originally part of that Office of Economic Opportunity spending package, the now freestanding rat bill would have allotted forty million dollars over two years for killing rats in poor human communities, but conservative representatives balked (Califano, 2000). The bill came to the House floor just three short days after the conclusion of the Newark riots. Newark was a majority-black city policed by a majority-white force. Unemployment was high, redlining commonly used to protect the property values of white citizens and keep the black citizens in poverty. The frustrated population was responding to those realities, but most immediately, it was responding to another in a long line of police brutality incidents, when two white officers beat a black taxi driver named John Smith. Four days of violence followed, leaving twenty-six people dead and hundreds injured (National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 1968; Mumford, 2007).

The country had been in flames for much of the previous several months. In a period known as "The Long, Hot Summer," there were more than 150 racial uprisings across the country. In June, for example, there was a week-long uprising

in Cincinnati, aided by visiting leaders like H. Rap Brown. Then there was Detroit. There was Milwaukee (McLaughlin, 2014). In Atlanta, SNCC leader Stokley Carmichael told an audience, “We are not concerned with peace. We are concerned with the liberation of black people. We have to build a revolution” (National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 1968: 56). The day prior to the House vote on the rat legislation, the same body voted overwhelmingly for an anti-riot bill designed to punish “professional agitators” who “inflame the people.” New Jersey’s Frank Thompson derided the effort as a “bill of attainder aimed at one man--Stokely Carmichael” (Edsall and Edsall, 1991:64). The anti-riot measure passed 347-70, with almost unanimous support from southern legislators. In the face of the uprisings and of official white hostility toward them, passing any measure seen to benefit those communities was unlikely (McLaughlin, 2014).

“The rat smart thing to do is to vote down this civil rats bill, rat now,” joked Virginia congressman James Broyhill (Hunter, 1967: 19). “I must say, that's the darndest title for a legislative proposal that you could ever come up with,” said Larry O’Brien, then serving as the Postmaster General. “That opened itself up to some sick humor. Some wise guy said why don't we just enlist all the cats in the program; we could save a lot of money. It was subjected to a lot of ridicule until we began to look at some of the appalling statistics regarding this problem” (O’Brien, 1987). *The Democrat* magazine lamented, “To the vast majority of Republicans in the House of Representatives, rats in slums are a matter of great amusement” (*The Democrat*, 1967: 3).

While the Johnson administration and its allies saw rats as both a detriment and symbol of class and racial injustice, conservative critics saw them as the consequences of the failings of inner city residents to keep up their neighborhoods.

Neither side of the debate, however, sided with the rats. All saw them as a problem to be fixed rather than a group of innocents seeking survival, the same project in which humans were engaged and which legislative leaders were tasked with aiding. “We are spending federal funds to protect our livestock from rodents and predatory animals,” Johnson said. “The least we can do is give our children the same protection we give our livestock” (Johnson, 1967). Rats were predatory animals rather than victims of similar circumstances that created human poverty. Thus the debate juxtaposed images of children who had been deformed or killed by rat bites against congressmen making jokes about “civil rats.” Both sides assumed human supremacy. No one was concerned about the fate of the rats.

There was concern, however, about credit for the bill. “It was said that I had opposed the rat control legislation and that this had come from the geniuses in the White House,” claimed HUD Secretary Robert Weaver. “In fact, nobody in the White House had heard about a rat control program until I suggested it, and they had nothing to do with it” (Weaver, 1968).

But his was not the only version of the story. “Others have gained credit for it, but basically it’s myself and, I guess, Sherwin Markman and Willie [Louis] Martin,” remembered Clifford Alexander, then a deputy special assistant to the president. “We went out, some White House staff did, and went to black communities throughout this country and did some sizing up of what the leadership was saying it needed. I think President Johnson then used these reports” (Alexander, 1971).

Original optimism, however, soon gave way to caution. “So it was only a couple of days before that I realized that we might have some problems, and began to do the work that you have to do on a piece of legislation,” Wood

remembered. Those problems were more than just congressional disregard for the lives of rats and the comfortable housing of marginalized human groups. Influential leaders like Milwaukee congressman Henry Reuss, for example, wanted the program housed in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. “And Henry and I got a little bit heated toward one another on that one, because I regarded his view as an obsessively academic discussion that far down the line.” Even Reuss, however, wanted the rats killed (Wood, 1968).

Humorist Art Buchwald further drove home the point, satirically blaming the bill’s failure on “U.S. rodent lovers who have been militantly fighting any legislation to control rats.” He told the story of the National Rat Association, led by Walter Ferret, who claimed, “The Constitution provides that everyone shall have the right to keep rats in his home, and the NRA has been leading the fight to protect this constitutional guarantee.” Even the basic idea of recognizing rats as fellow animals was so beyond the thought of most humans that Buchwald could play it for laughs. “Whenever anyone starts talking to them about anti-rodent legislation,” the fictional Ferret announced, “I wish they would keep the NRA slogan in mind: ‘The rats you save may be your own’” (Buchwald, 1967: A13).

Civil rights leaders, meanwhile, saw the rat bill as a race issue. In the wake of Newark and other violent uprisings over the summer of 1967, Jesse Gray protested at the Capitol that “rats cause riots” (Kahrl, 2018: 81). Maimie Reese, leader of the National Association of Colored Women’s Clubs, explained that her group had been founded “for the purpose of raising the standard of living for the Negro family. Controlling the rat menace is in line with this goal” (*Chicago Defender*, 1967: 15). For rights leaders, rats were associated with racism, with

white conservative politics. For white conservative politicians, rats were associated with self-made urban decay. Every side used the rat as the symbol of failure.

On July 20, the House officially killed the "civil rats" bill 207 to 176 on a procedural vote. Fifty-six Democrats and 151 Republicans voted against the bill. Of the fifty-six Democrats, forty-seven were southerners (Large, 1967). Assistant Attorney General Barefoot Sanders argued that the defeat was the result of bad strategy. The rat provision had originally been part of omnibus housing legislation, but had been separated from the original bill because it was assumed that rat extermination would not draw hostile amendments from Republicans. Sanders argued that it was the separation that opened the bill to ridicule. Rat killing should have remained as part of the broader housing bill (Sanders, 1967).

A frustrated Robert Wood, meanwhile, blamed himself. "That's the only one we lost; we lost it not because the Secretary didn't take the initiative, or because we had to be pushed by the White House, or what have you, but essentially because on the whole theory of the span of attention and how much time you can devote to what issue, I didn't rate it the level I should have," he said. "I think we won the political issue; we got the bill at the end through HEW; we now have an interagency agreement on HEW with it. I regard it, as a matter of administrative indifference which department runs it, and we only were following the original task force; and I'm sure we got better politics out of just the defeat. But that's essentially where the slippage came" (Wood, 1968).

The vote came accompanied with more joking language of "a high commissioner of rats" and "a rat bureaucracy." Proponents of the bill, however, were frustrated. "Seldom does one find such inconsistency in such a short period," said Republican Theodore Kupferman. "Yesterday, you voted to establish Federal

supremacy to suppress violence [with the anti-riot bill]. Today, you voted to incite violence." Kupferman's interpretation of violence, of course, was solely an interpretation of violence against humans, as the bill itself was nothing if not a revelry in violence against an unsuspecting rat population. Similar frustration came from Michigan Democratic representative Martha W. Griffiths. Rats bred rapidly "and have been known to gnaw through four feet of reinforced concrete," she said. "And they carry the most deadly of diseases." All animals carried deadly diseases, including humans, but the distinction wasn't present. "If you're going to spend $79-billion to kill off a few Vietcong," she argued, "I'd spend $40-million to kill off the most devastating enemy that man has ever had." Griffiths' analysis was the broader American view in microcosm. There were levels to the value of life. Vietcong humans had a lower value of life than American humans. Rats had a lower value than Vietcong. Added to her gradations of worth, Griffiths coded rats as overtly hostile to humans, more dangerous than Vietcong and therefore more worthy of death. They were "the most devastating enemy that man has ever had" (Hunter, 1967: 1). It was the Great Chain of Being redux.

Ohio Democratic senator Stephen Young was also dismayed by the bill's failure. "There are from 100 to 200 million rats in our Nation," he said. "Each rat causes $10 a year in damages--food eaten, food contaminated, and property damage. One hundred million rats cause at least $1 billion damage a year. The actual damage is probably greater." On top of that, "there were more than 14,000 reported cases of ratbites last year. Only a few of the many cases are reported." Rats carried typhus, plague, tapeworm, ratbite fever, rabies, "and other horrible and terrifying maladies." The federal government spent "more than $80 million each day in our involvement in an ugly civil war in Vietnam," but couldn't muster

$20 million "to kill rats in various cities" (Young, 1967: 24691-24692). Again, Young ignored that humans were also carriers of such diseases, that the spread of rats was a functionally human problem. And again, he equated the lives of rats with those of the Vietnamese. It was a framing that ensured that even those on the right side of the racial and military debate would be antagonistic to rats.

"You go in and clean up a neighborhood because it's unhealthy, but you can only go so far with this," remembered the Public Health Service's Richard A. Prindle. He saw the rat legislation as a "health gimmick" and lamented "having to write a justification as to all the disease that rats caused, when really it obviously wasn't the diseases that the people were concerned with. The rats were a symbol of a lousy neighborhood, and that's all they were. Trying to justify and trying to carry out a program as I had to, or at least I felt I had to, on the basis of how many diseases these rats were causing in northwest or northeast Washington was just impractical" (Prindle, 1969). The rats weren't lives; they were symbols.

Beginning in July, after the bill's original failure, the White House began receiving letters from citizens and congressmen expressing support for federal rat extermination.[28] Bill Scott, vice president of Straus Broadcasting Group, was also frustrated with the failed vote and represented much of the commentary entering the White House. "There are probably no cases of congressmen being bitten by rats while sitting in the House of Representatives," exclaimed an on-air editorial that ran on stations across the country. "And it is probably fair to say that the 207 who voted against the bill do not go to bed each night wondering if they will be

[28] For examples of such letters, see Subject Files, Agriculture, NAID 582583, AG 5-1, Pest Control, Box 8, White House Central Files, Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library, Austin, Texas; and Subject Files, Legislation, NAID 591585, LE/AG 5-1, Pest Control, Box 27, White House Central Files, Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library, Austin, Texas.

awakened by screams, to find their youngsters bitten, mutilated and perhaps killed by rats" (Scott, 1967). It was a common opinion, demonstrating a concern for the impoverished through the demonization of rats, the most vulnerable of all the groups in the station's editorial.

The administration paid attention to such editorials, to stories of rat bites and the public fears of rats.[29] It also hoped to participate in crafting the public conversation. A frustrated Johnson administration prepared an advertisement that featured a menacing photograph of a rat. "Cut this out and put it in bed next to your child," the ad read. "Go ahead. Try it if you have the stomach for it. Lay it next to your baby and let him play with it.

"You can't?

"Then you have a lot more imagination than some of the members of our House of Representatives.

"They don't even think real rats are anything to worry about."

The ad listed all of the members of Congress who voted against the bill. Johnson nixed the advertisement as too strong, but it demonstrated the administration's thinking. Frighten humans with rats, then scapegoat the rats for human social problems (Cut this out and put it in bed next to your child, 1967; Johnson, 1967a). At a Minnesota speech on urban renewal in August 1967, Lady Bird Johnson said, "There is no secret in this land that many of our cities are beset with problems that breed crime: bad housing, rats, pollution, congested traffic, streetside boredom--perhaps the most dangerous of all" (Johnson, 1967b).

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[29] See, for example, Hedge, 1967.

Though the advertisement never ran, Johnson was still dedicated to eradicating rats and reemphasized his plan in a wide-ranging policy speech to Congress on urban and rural poverty at the end of August. “The knowledge that many children in the world’s most affluent nation are attacked, maimed and even killed by rats should fill every American with shame. Yet, this is an everyday occurrence in the slums of our cities,” Johnson proclaimed. “There is no excuse for this national disgrace.” He had proposed the Rat Extermination Act to foster both rat prevention and extermination programs. Better garbage collection, code enforcement, and public education campaigns would accompany “house-by-house, block-by-block extermination programs in rat infested neighborhoods”[30] (Johnson, 1967c: 24691-24692).

As explained by Philip Lee, Assistant Secretary for Health and Human Services, Johnson was still heavily invested in the success of some version of the rat bill, and thus was willing to negotiate (Lee, 1968). When a compromise was finally reached, Congress moved the rat measure to a health bill, taking it out of HUD and instead sending federal grants to local health departments, where Harry Reuss had wanted it in the first place (Memorandum, 1967). “There was always this tug between the people who were interested in health and the people who were interested in housing,” said Sidney Saperstein, deputy general counsel at the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The administration reluctantly

[30] It wasn’t the administration’s only foray into the rat-killing business. “Oh, in 1964 probably, USAID said, ‘Hey, the reason South Vietnam has become a rice-deficient nation is that damn rats are eating 26 per cent or something of the crop every year,” remembered journalist Frank McCulloch. “What do we do? Hey, let’s give it a profit motive. That’s a good American approach. So we’ll pay five piasters per rat tail for farmers to turn in rats, and we’ll reduce the rat population and have more rice.’ The program was launched. I want to tell you, the rat tails came in by the ton, and rice production seemed to keep dropping, and finally somebody figured out that the farmers had quit raising rice and were raising rats. (Laughter) Because they could make a lot more money off of rat tails than they could anything else” (McCulloch, 1985).

decided to support the health bill amendment, realizing that passage "would be interpreted as a victory for the Administration" (Saperstein, 1986). Even then, the funds only passed by a slim one-vote margin. The Urban Rat Control Program would ultimately fund fifty-two killing and prevention projects in different American cities (Burke, 1967: 1; Biehler, 2013: 113).

And so such discussions would continually repeat themselves. In 1968, after the rat extermination money made it through congress, Boston playwright Julie Portman produced *Riot*, a series of racially-charged historical vignettes that included a white senator complaining about the "civil rats" bill (Sayre, 1996: 252). Also that year, Johns Hopkins and WJZ television in Baltimore ran a documentary titled, "Rats, Rats? Rats!" that described the city's failings in rat eradication and the economic and human toll it took on residents of the city (*Afro-American*, 1968: 32). Despite the program's title, of course, it was not concerned about the wellbeing of the rats themselves. Quite the contrary. Washington, DC's Anacostia Neighborhood Museum featured a 1969 exhibit to encourage the government's War on Rats[31] (Kinard and Nighbert, 1972). On the other side of the debate, the Black Panther Party provided "pest control" as part of its aid to inner-city residents in places like Detroit and Houston. The People's Free Pest Control Program provided free extermination services to those in vulnerable neighborhoods. "Every effort is made to destroy the nesting and breeding places of harmful pests," the program's founding document proclaimed (People's Free Health Control Program, 2008).

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[31] See also The Rat: Man's Invited Affliction exhibition records, ACMA.M03-081, Anacostia Community Museum Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

The Panthers' Minister of Culture was Emory Douglas, a revolutionary artist who often depicted the consequences of urban poverty for black America in illustrations and posters (see Chapter 7). The evolution of the rat debate can even be seen in the evolution of his work. In the 1960s, for example, rat imagery in his illustrations symbolized the greed of politicians. Richard Nixon, John Mitchell, and others were portrayed as rats. But as the 1960s became the 1970s, images of rats in Douglas's work accompanied black slumdwellers. In an image from July 1970 titled "We Want Decent Housing Fit for Shelter of Human Beings," a woman is seen fighting off a horde of rats with a broom and a bucket while standing on a shabby table in a rundown tenement. The caption reads, "When I spend more time fightin the rats, than taking care of my children you know, it makes me realize that I have a right to kill the greedy slumlords who forces me to live in these inhuman conditions." Months later, in September, he produced a similar poster titled "Kill the Greedy Slumlords!" wherein a woman sits with a shotgun while her baby nurses on a bottle next to her. Rats are just below, trying to get the child. The caption reads, "Just wait till that landlord comes around with his hands all stuck out--smiling talkin bout, 'Why Mrs. Mae what a lovely day.'" In a poster from 1971, a woman holds a large rat. The script ironically reads, "Black Misery! Ain't we got a right to the tree of life?" It was a powerful image to humans who had been conditioned to equate rats with human social problems, but it was at the same time literally encouraging the death of an animal as part of "a right to life" (Douglas, 2007: 38-39, 45, 80-81, 103; Gaiter, 2012).

Things changed little after the decade turned. Gilles Deleuze and David Guttiari describe the 1971 film *Willard*, wherein the main character spares a rat named Ben after killing many others in his house. After the death of his mother and

the greedy attempt of a businessman to takeover the house, Willard takes Ben and his new rat pack to the businessman, whom they mercilessly kill. Spending more time with the rats, Willard becomes more and more ratlike, but after an incident that kills Ben's principal companion, he gets his revenge on Willard by luring him to the basement, where the rat pack devour him. "The proliferation of rats, the pack, brings a becoming-molecular that undermines the great molar powers of family, career, and conjugality; there is a sinister choice since there is a 'favorite' in the pack with which a kind of contract of alliance, a hideous pact, is made; there is the institution of an assemblage, a war machine or criminal machine, which can reach the point of self-destruction"[32] (Deleuze and Gutiarri, 1984: 233). More pragmatically, the film, taking place in the midst of Black Power housing protests, played on tropes of rats as a destructive force and magnified them by anthropomorphizing the animals, giving them insidious intent. It was intent, more than the deaths themselves, that presented the most horrific possibility in *Willard*.

Meanwhile, the government continued developing new, cheaper, and more efficient methods of mass extermination, accounts of its efforts to streamline killing on a grand scale reading like accounts of similar attempts by the Nazis to find the most efficient methods of mass extermination for human groups that they saw as dangerous pests.[33]

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[32] There was a sequel in 1972, *Ben*. Both were based on the 1968 novel *Ratman's Notebooks* by Stephen Gilbert (Gilbert, 1968).

[33] As Alex Hershaft, survivor of the Warsaw ghetto during Nazi occupation, explained, "'Never again' is not about what others shouldn't do to us. It's about what we shouldn't do to others. 'Never again' means that we must never again perpetrate mass atrocities against other living beings. That we must never again raise animals for food or any other form of exploitation" (Neveragain.org.il). Though Theodor Adorno was able to escape the Holocaust, he believed the same. "Auschwitz begins whenever someone looks at a slaughterhouse and thinks: they're only animals" (Patterson, 2002: 109). Hershaft would go on to found the FARM animal rights movement. See, for example, Patterson, 2002.

Jonathan Burt has called the rat “a totem animal for modernity.” The rat “cannot be separated from human achievement, yet it also stands as a symptom of human destructiveness,” he argues. It “adapts with humans to the ever more complicated structures and networks that are produced by modernization.” And “like other dangerous objects, the rat constantly pushes at the edges of the borders set to contain it” (Burt, 2006: 12, 15, 18). Hans Zinsser has characterized rats as a destructive companion to a destructive species. “Man and the rat are merely, so far, the most successful animals of prey. They are utterly destructive of other forms of life.” Both species “have spread across the earth, keeping pace with each other and unable to destroy each other” (Zinsser, 2007: 208-209). As Robert Sullivan has explained, “Rats live in man’s parallel universe, surviving on the effluvia of human society.” Sullivan “think[s] of rats as our mirror species, reversed but similar” (Sullivan, 2006: 2). Still, it is clear, again in the words of Burt, “Whether the rat is treated as vermin or hailed as a scientific hero or heroine; in all cases the human intention is always eventually to kill it” (Burt, 2006: 15).

“I remember the rat incident,” said Leo Gehrig, at the time the Deputy Surgeon General, speaking about the “Civil Rats” bill. “There are occasions where something becomes a convenient vehicle for what is otherwise somebody’s idea. I guess we’ve all come to learn that man may be smart but he’s not smarter than a rat. The ability to get that critter out of the way really has not been reached yet” (Gehrig, 1990).

Man may be smart but his intelligence is fundamentally different than that of a rat. Those differences, combined with historical and social coding, turned rats into symbols of urban decay and racialized poverty in the mid-twentieth century, culminating in the 1967 Rat Extermination Act. Arendt described “the practice of

self-deception" as a powerful and common astringent in the germination of banal evil. The evolution of rats in human minds from beings into symbols was one such banal self-deception, and like others, including the German self-deception described by Arendt, it led to unnecessary and vulgar mass extermination (Arendt, 2005: 47).

Thus, the "Civil Rats" law appears different when nonhuman animals are considered. "The Satanic rat with its connotations of archaic bestiality," Jonathan Burt has explained, "is only one strand of a complex of ideas according to which the rat is a dangerous object circulating within various networks and structures, almost like a debased currency, constantly inflating and yet always worthless" (Burt, 2006: 20). In playing to racial fears stoked by riots and the tenuous danger of living in poverty, municipal and federal governments launched an asymmetrical killing campaign against an animal that was relatively harmless, a human nuisance with a historical stigma only attempting to survive. The number of dead can never be known, but estimates place the number of rats in the United States as roughly similar to the human population, fitting the animal's status as a dependent, and thus the number of dead just in the period spanning from the Great Depression to the Rat Extermination Act was orders of magnitude more than every human killed in every American war combined. For image. In the name of reciprocity.

That image had been influenced greatly by Emory Douglas and by Black Power thinking more broadly, but rats were not the only animal that became part of the symbolic language of the movement. The image of pigs would play an even larger role as metaphors for officers of law enforcement, which ultimately marked pigs for rat-level mass extermination.

CHAPTER 7

Death to Pigs:
Animal Imagery and Naming in the Counterculture and Black Power Movements

“What happens,” asked political scientist Charles V. Hamilton, “when a Black Panther is shot and he knows that his own good credit rating is good at Macy’s, but has no value to the policeman who sees a black man when he sees him?” (Hamilton, 1970: 45)

It was the question that underlay much of the argument that pushed protests for rat extermination at both the municipal and federal level, a question about the value of black and impoverished life to those in power. But it was also the question at the heart of the black radical use of “pig” as an epithet for police. If the policeman could not see value in black life, then black commentators would interpret no value in police life. It was, however, a simple equation that seemed justifiably retributive when only the humans on both sides were taken into account. When the pigs themselves complicated that equation, the method of retributive attacks seemed less justifiable. The behavior of law enforcement against groups like the Black Panthers was unconscionable, including dozens of murders and assassinations and even more gratuitous prison sentences, but the “pig” appellation used by the Panthers and other groups only associated such bad behavior with a nonhuman animal who demonstrated none of those problematic qualities and who was killed by the millions every day. The use of “pig” as a charge against authority put the protagonists of an ugly racial story in the role of

antagonists in a simultaneous and intersectional species story. It became a linguistic version of the self-fulfilling prophecy of species and race, the biopolitical environmental degredation of black life by the white powerful leading black activists to use speciesist language to push back against the strictures imposed against them.

That charge played out through the late 1960s and early 1970s in the countercultural student movement and the Black Power wave of the civil rights movement. It spread throughout the nation in fiction, music, and art, but its most complete representation came in the illustrations of Emory Douglas, Minister of Culture for the Black Panther Party. Pig imagery served as a successful crib for a wider and more complex critique of American policing and imperialism, but in making that crib it belittled pigs themselves, only making a vulnerable nonhuman animal all the more vulnerable.

The genesis of such imagery in the late 1960s is often attributed to the Black Panther Party, founded in Oakland, California in October 1966 by Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale (Van Deburg, 1992; Joseph, 2007; Austin, 2008), but while the group certainly popularized the insult and helped it spread to radical political organizations and student protest groups across the nation, it was not new. As early as 1546, pigs were being used as derogatory terms for boorish men, and the epithet continued through the centuries (*Oxford English Dictionary*, 2006). Images during the French Revolution, for example, depicted Louis XVI as a pig (Mizelle, 2011: 132).

Figure 2: Louis XVI as a pig during the French Revolution. Photo copyright Musée Carnavalet / RogerViollet / Rex Features, Paris, France.

Beginning in 1811, the term first appeared in print as an insulting stand-in for police officers. The *Lexicon Balatronicum* was “a dictionary of buckish slang, university wit, and pickpocket eloquence” compiled by England’s Francis Grose. It was an urban dictionary of sorts that listed a pig as “a police officer” (Grose, 1811). The term continued across the centuries and across the ocean, in regular use as synonymous with the police through the Progressive era (*Oxford English Dictionary*, 2006).

Pigs are, explain Peter Stallybrass and Allon White, “a site of competing, conflicting and contradictory definitions.” They became exemplars of poverty, filth, and vice, meaning that disassociation from pigs in an age of social mobility could become a marker of proper middle-classness[1] (Stallybrass and White, 1986: 49). It

[1] That association with the dirt and filth of the lower classes and the otherwise dispossessed remained with pigs from the medieval period through the nineteenth century, from the writing of John Gower in 1381 to that of Frederich Engels in 1844 (Mizelle, 2011: 118-120). For more on the broader role of pigs as symbols in the United States, see Horwitz, 1998: 23-30.

was a similar phenomenon to that suffered by rats in the legislative disputes of the 1960s. (See Chapter 6) At the same time, pigs stood as symbols of gluttony, whether for food or for sexual conquest. It is no coincidence that at the same time black activists were referring to policemen as “pigs” in the 1960s, feminists coined the term “male chauvinist pig” (Mizelle, 2011: 122-123; Adams, 2015: 161). Again, rats experienced liminality based on a similar naming phenomenon. Tora Holmberg has described the relationship between laboratory work and euthanization of rats and mice and that work’s relationship to the discursive practices human use to describe them (Holmberg, 2008). The laboratory became a representative version of the streets of Baltimore and Chicago. For pigs, less prevalent in the lab and absent from the street since the early nineteenth century, semiotics and nomenclature was all that remained for them.

The concept of such epithets are Cartesian at their heart. As Keith Thomas has explained of early modern England, the division between man and beast proposed by thinkers like Descartes was a project of defining the human self against the other, an other that of necessity had to be animalized (Thomas, 1983: 30-41). He isn’t alone. Barbara Noske, Harriet Ritvo, Roy Willis, and Richard Tapper have all made much the same point (Noske, 1989; Willis, 1974; Ritvo, 1987; Tapper, 1988). “In each constructed world of nature,” explains Mary Douglas, “the contrast between man and not-man provides an analogy for the contrast between the member of the human community and the outsider” (Douglas, 1975: 289). That contrast between man and not-man is not always negative, as the totems described below attest, but it tends in capitalist culture toward signifying alterity in both the animal and the animalized human.

In his study of the visuality of mental disability, John Derby describes an animality-patriarchy that dispossessed those seen as having a variety of deficiencies of mind. In paintings, illustrations, and photographs, animality was “a prominent dehumanizing theme in the representation of madness” (Derby, 2014: 20). In that case, as described by Foucault, such representations were in aid of binding mental illness and a corresponding lack of reason to the unreason of beasts (Foucault, 1988). It was an attempt by the powerful to demean the already powerless, one that was present against former slaves in postbellum pig laws and against nonhuman animals in newspaper representation. In the former example (see Chapter 2), animals were the cudgel by which white powerbrokers diminished sharecroppers, in the latter (see Chapter 5), the semiotics of animality demeaned the black population to the detriment of both humans and animals. The use of pig imagery against police officers and other authority figures provided a different kind of animality-patriarchy, however, a biopolitical act that used animality to push back against the patriarchy itself. Though it was an inversion of the original human-directed antagonism, however, calling police officers “pigs” did the same work against nonhuman animals as when the human-powerful used such imagery against the human-powerless.

Steve Baker has produced the most systematic analysis of animal imagery as human insult. Such actions, he argues, “will call on common knowledge and received ideas,” but will also “offer unexpected insights into embedded but unstated cultural assumptions regarding the object-status of animals, and into how such assumptions are deployed either to bolster our own sense of identity or to undermine that of others” (Baker, 1993: 91). Such othering, in Baker’s understanding, is dependent upon theriomorphism, in which humans are presented

in animal form, or therianthropism, in which the form of the human and the form of the animal are intertwined (Baker, 1993: 108). His analysis of British political images demonstrates that the two are functionally mutually exclusive, but the art of Emory Douglas and the police-pig narrative of the late 1960s and early 1970s demonstrates that the line between the two forms was far more malleable in the American rhetoric of the age.[2] After all, as Baker explains, "the casting of a hated or despised human into the role or image of an animal" is not only common, but an "effective means of stereotyping them, of objectifying them, and of rendering them inferior" (Baker, 1993: 113). Animal symbolism could be both therianthropic and theriomorphic and could diminish its targets in a variety of ways.

When that animal symbolism represents pigs, the objectification and inferiority claim are of a specific, enhanced trajectory. "The object of man's [*sic*] peculiar cultural disdain for the pig," Milo Kearney has argued, "is less the beast itself than man's [*sic*] own speckled soul" (Mizelle, 2011: 122; Kearney, 1991: 322; Dawson, 1999). Kate Soper agrees. "The vilification of the pig can be attributed to the need to assuage the guilt of killing and eating such a commensual associate" (Soper, 1995: 88). Some of that vilification in the second half of the twentieth century can be laid at the feet of George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, first published in 1945, in which a group of farm animals rebel against a human farmer, only to see their rebellion usurped by a porcine cabal under the leadership of a pig named Napoleon (Orwell, 1945; Lynskey, 2019: 123-126). "By controlling the animals' daily lives and bodies, first with small interventions in their everyday activities and

[2] "Where animal imagery is used to make statements about human identity, *metonymic representations of selfhood will typically take theriomorphic form, whereas metaphoric representations of otherness will typically take therianthropic form*" (Baker, 1993: 108).

eventually by totally dominating every animal’s waking moment,” argues Andrew Byers, “the pigs come to transform the bodies and lives of all the animals on Animal Farm, creating loyal and obedient slave laborers, ensuring their own dominance” (Byers, 2018: 167). They are, in other words, symbols of repressive authority as were members of American law enforcement for so many in the decades following the book’s publication. Napoleon and the pigs were the embodiment of what Foucault would call biopower, the “explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugations of bodies and the control of populations” (Foucault, 1990: 140).

Orwell died four years after the publication of *Animal Farm*, leaving his legacy in the hands of a variety of competing political agendas. As Erik Jaccard has demonstrated, the reception of *Animal Farm* in the decades after its publication, particularly by the political left, was mixed. Many in Europe saw the novel as a gratuitous takedown of the Russian Revolution and the possibilities of communism, but the social politics of McCarthyism and the Cold War left radicals in the United States with no real overt public affinity with the methods of the USSR (Jaccard, 2018: 7-10). One of the principal legacies of the novel among the American left, then, was the symbolism of authoritarian pigs who threatened to usurp the goals of “the movement,” or of a variety of movements, writ large. In the words of Gregory Brophy, “The dominant reading of *Animal Farm* as historical parable understands the animals as decoys.” Even if pigs hadn’t been represented as tyrants, they would remain “human devices that serve human ends” (2018: 33). It was a reality that only made it easier for select groups of humans to demean pigs in service to demeaning other select groups of humans, particularly those seen to behave like Orwell’s tyrants.

Arran Stibbe studied the negative uses of phrases involving pigs in the British linguistic culture from which Orwell came and found sixty-two non-literal, negative uses of pig phrases in the British National Corpus (Stibbe, 2001: 376). In the Victorian era, prior to the publication of Orwell, “the inferior image of pigs presumably helped provide a barrier between humans and pigs, overcoming cultural taboos against killing those who are close to us. The discourse of the pork industry could be argued equally to provide a barrier between humans and pigs” (Stibbe, 2001: 379). Of course, the discourse of the pork industry was fundamentally different than that of Orwell’s animal farm. The author’s pigs were power-hungry superiors while those of the pork industry were meaningless inferiors, but the similarity came in the consistent negative portrayal of the animals themselves. And when combined with the long-held negative connotations associated with pigs, the negative portrayals from places of both power and inferiority made the image of pigs more socially tenuous than that of, say, cows or chickens, though the actual lives of all farmed animals were circumscribed by death en masse.

That Victorian legacy would carry through to Orwell and beyond. British playwright John Arden’s *Live Like Pigs* debuted in England in 1958, for example, but it made its first appearance off Broadway in the United States in 1966 (Canby, 1966: 48). The “pigs” in Arden’s play are actually the victims of the powerful, not the powerful themselves. The nomadic Sawneys are rousted out of their hobo village by “the Corporation” and placed into a modern housing development, where they are unable to fit in. The Sawneys are governed by such “disorderly urges as lust, the desire to kill, hunger, and pressure on the bladder,” explained the *Harvard Crimson*. “The bobbies are always poking around, and the building inspector keeps

checking up on the march of decay that is sweeping over the Sawneys' house. The Sawneys grunt, roll over, and start to rebel" (THC, 1967). They are eventually crushed by the ordered state, but even though the pig imagery is inverted from the powerful to the powerless, it still maintains a negative association with the actual nonhuman animals that does similar speciesist work despite the inversion. It was a statement about state and corporate power in the same way that other statements criticized police power, and both demeaned a functionally harmless nonhuman animal to make those claims. *Live Like Pigs*, then, was an inversion of other metaphors of the time, but had the same disastrous results. And it had them as anti-Vietnam protests were dominating much of the national news and as Black Power political ideology had begun taking over the civil rights narrative following the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (see Chapter 5).[3]

One anti-Vietnam protest in Times Square in August 1966, months before the founding of the Black Panthers, witnessed counterprotesters calling those who marched "Communist pigs" in an other inversion of what would become a far more common trope (Robinson, 1966: 1, 3). After Mississippi police killed a Jackson State student during a May 1967 uprising, flyers distributed at a protest in response defended the right to protest and the need to protect black citizens, but also denounced the war in Vietnam. Benjamin Brown, the shooting victim, was killed by "the same pigs we've been dying for in Vietnam," the flyer read, "and the same pigs that some of us are foolish enough to love." A quote from the flyer in the *New York*

[3] In a similar fashion, Magda Szabo's Hungarian novel *Night of the Pig-Killing* was translated into English and published in the United States in 1966. It was a Cold War novel that took place on the night of a pig-killing feast, the drama between the humans making the actual deaths of the pigs ancillary (Szabo, 1966).

Times was the first such use of “pigs” in that context in the newspaper (Roberts, 1967: 21).

Civil rights efforts, however, could also use pigs in different, but still demonstrably detrimental, ways. One of them, well-intentioned as it may have been, was Fannie Lou Hamer’s work at Mississippi’s Freedom Farms Cooperative. Founded in 1967, the cooperative was designed to aid impoverished residents of Mississippi’s Sunflower County. Malnutrition was common in the county and led to some of the highest disease rates in the nation. (White, 2017: 21) Historian Monica White has argued that “white elites used hunger as a weapon, starving anyone who sought the right to participate in the political process into compliance” (White, 2017: 21). Black residents of the county were made all the more vulnerable by their lack of education and dependence on white landowners for agricultural work. Ninety percent of black Sunflower residents had only six years or less of public schooling. Many responded to the economic crisis by leaving, joining what would become the last gasp of the Great Migration in the immediate wake of World War II. Those who stayed, however, were desperate[4] (White, 2017: 21; McCutcheon, 2019: 208).

Hamer was originally from Sunflower County, in more ways than one. She was the child of sharecroppers who worked the fields herself. She, too, had only a sixth-grade education. She suffered from polio in her young adulthood. She was involuntarily sterilized, like so many black women in the South (Bracey, 2011: 41-42). Still, in 1962, she attended a meeting of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating

[4] White has expanded the study cited in the text into a book that provides a broader insight into the daily working of the farm cooperative and its meaning to the civil rights movement. See White, 2018.

Committee and volunteered to be a field organizer for a voter registration drive. In response, she was told by her employer to either rescind her voter registration or be fired. She refused, and that firing led to a life of racial activism in Mississippi, including the Freedom Farms Cooperative in 1967[5] (White, 2017: 22; McCutcheon, 2019: 209-210).

Among the activities of the cooperative was a Bank of Pigs, started with a donation of fifty pigs by the National Council of Negro Women. Members of the community built pens for the pigs. Families took sows to a facility that housed boars for breeding. Of the litter of piglets born of that breeding, families placed two of the children in the Bank of Pigs and kept any others for themselves. By 1973, 865 families were part of the "pig bank" of the Freedom Farms Cooperative (Mizelle, 2011: 130; McCutcheon, 2019: 210; White, 2017: 28). The effort was a reversal of the general understanding of "pigs" that dominated the late 1960s and early 1970s. Here pigs were seen as a vehicle of salvation. The program, for example, was Heifer International's first domestic effort. But it was also a project for a version of racial justice, the "Freedom Hogs," as they came to be known, being the authors of racial equalitarianism rather than the purveyors of segregationist violence. Hamer's ''idea'' had been to feed poor people and ''make life better for ourselves and for the whites too.'' The pigs helped ''us toward real freedom,'' she once said, whether they ''knew it or not" (Stibbe, 2003: 384; Hedgepeth, 1978: 54).

The pigs helped them toward real freedom by sacrificing their own, or by having that sacrifice forced upon them. Harm to pigs was less semiotic in the

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[5] For more on the life and work of Hamer, see Mills, 1993; Brooks, 2014; Lee, 1999; Bracey, 2011.

Freedom Farm Cooperatives. It was immediate, real. It was visceral. Pigs were forcefully bred then killed so that their corpses could be consumed by the residents of Sunflower County. But semiotic representations could also be visceral and could also mimic a kind of immediacy. Emile de Antonio's Vietnam War documentary *In the Year of the Pig*, for example, appeared in 1968, criticizing the war in an expressionist style that was largely inaccessible to mainstream audiences but was popular with college audiences and the antiwar movement. Its title only further played on the use of "pig" as an epithet for the powerbrokers who were the authors of the violence featured in the film, reinforcing its other uses among students and activists (Hoenisch, 2013: 184-191).

That same year, during his effort to boycott the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City, sociologist Harry Edwards often referred to the police as "pigs in blue." Ronald Reagan, the governor of California, was "a petrified pig, unfit to govern" (Hano, 1968: SM41). Edwards was, in such efforts, tying all conservative leadership to the systemic problems of law enforcement, systemic problems that were symbolized by the image of the pig (see Chapter 5).

The racial line, however, was negotiable in such representations. In response to unrest at Columbia University, students hurled insults at the police. "How does it feel being beasts and inhuman pigs who club down college students?" they asked. The largely white group of students saved their most vitriolic words for the black police officers. "Hi dumb blackie. You helped beat up Black students earlier this morning, didn't you? Well, you've still got to go back to your ghetto community" (Slack, 1968: 42). While pig nomenclature was destructive to the lives of pigs when it came from the mouth of any human, it became even more problematic in the human context when white activists used it against black

officials, who had--and whose families had--experienced a variety of animal associations throughout American history.

The story that dominated the summer of 1968, however, was that of the presidential nominating conventions. On August 23, 1968, Abbie Hoffman's Youth International Party, the Yippies, announced at the Civic Center Plaza that they were running a 145-pound black-and-white pig named "Pigasus" as a candidate for president at the 1968 Democratic National Convention (Mizelle, 2011: 127; Kusch, 2008: 60; *Chicago Tribune*, 1968: 6). Abe Peck, Yippie editor of the Chicago underground magazine *The Seed*, promised reporters prior to the convention that Pigasus would be the group's candidate. "After we nominate him we will roast him and eat him," he said. "For years the Democrats have been nominating a pig and then letting the pig devour them. We plan to reverse the process" (Lukas, 1968: 64). Another Yippie leader announced that the group had telegrammed Lyndon Johnson requesting Secret Service protection for Pigasus. While five of the human Yippies were taken to jail, the pig was captured by police and taken to the Chicago Humane Society[6] (Kusch, 2008: 60).

[6] Eventually, the pig, along with two others seized in and around the protest area, were cared for and removed to a farm in Grayslake, forty-five miles north of the sight of the convention (*Chicago Tribune*, 1968: 3). Meanwhile, the ACLU made a film debuting in October comparing Richard Daley to Pigasus (Elmer, 1968: A8).

Figure 3: Pigasus. Photo copyright Julian Wasser/Time & Life Pictures/Getty Image

Two days later, the Yippies handed out flyers in Lincoln Park. “VOTE PIG IN 68,” they read. There followed a list of demands that included an end to the war in Vietnam, the legalization of marijuana, the abolition of money, and others. “Political Pigs, your days are numbered,” they closed. “We are the Second American Revolution. We shall win. Yippie!”[7] (Mailer, 1968: 137-138) On the night before the convention, protesters marched in Lincoln Park. When police refused to allow a flatbed truck so that protesters could stage bands, the assembled began hurling insults at them. “Who’s fuckin’ your wife this afternoon, pig?” screamed one protester. Tensions continued to rise. Chants of “pig, pig, fascist pig,” and “pigs eat shit, pigs eat shit” rang out from the crowd. While the incident did not end in violence, as did so many of the protests over the following week, the repeated emphasis on pig nomenclature, combined with the Yippies’ Pigasus stunt, ensured

[7] “Apparently these bearded, unkempt adolescents who like to regard themselves as iconoclasts are deluded by the popular misconception of the pig as a symbol of slovenliness, sloth, and gluttony,” responded the conservative *Chicago Tribune*. “Not so, as anyone on good terms with pigs will tell you. On the contrary, pigs are highly intelligent and, when not mixed up in political mud slinging, are models of decorum, cleanliness, and temperate personal habits--which is more than you can say for Yippies” (*Chicago Tribune*, 1968: 14).

that much of the convention narrative would center on epithets that diminished the lives of pigs (Kusch, 2008: 63).

Throughout the convention, Yippie protesters chanted "Pig! Pig! Pig!" at the riot police there to contain them (Buckley, 1968: 131; Kusch, 2008: 91). After the arrest of Tom Hayden, leader of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), protesters surrounded police headquarters where they met a wall of officers. "It's wall-to-wall pig," said one protester, before the group locked arms and chanted, "Pig, pig, oink, oink, sooie, sooie!" (Kusch, 2008: 71) Police officer Eddie Kelso remembered the trauma of the event and his inability to sleep. "I actually dreamed of pigs, and school-yard chants, and I was being taunted in the school-yard, I was a kid and I had on a cop uniform, and the taunts went on, 'Pig! Pig! Pig!'" Eventually, he looked down at his hand "and it held a gun, and I pointed it and began to shoot; kids were screaming, 'The pig is shooting!' and then I was awake, shaking, soaked." Even in dreams, pig semiotics created trauma, conjured images of unjustified death (Kusch, 2008: 93).

It did so in novels, too. In 1972, Al Morgan published *The Whole World Is Watching*, a fictionalized account of the 1968 Democratic National Convention. The protesters called policemen pigs and the Yippies introduced Pigasus to the nation. "We've had no trouble with our platform," said fictionalized Yippie co-founder Jerry Rubin. "Pigasus' platform is garbage, and who knows more about that than a pig? And if our President gets out of line, we'll eat him." In Morgan's version, the Yippies coated Pigasus with oil then released him into the crowd. The resulting commotion led several into police custody. "After the arrests," said Morgan's narrator, "Pigasus made a dignified retreat from history in the custody of the Chicago Humane

Society, and the crowd drifted away." But he didn't retreat. Novels like Morgan's only kept him in the public mind[8] (Morgan, 1972: 74).

Iviring Howe, editor of *Dissent* magazine, called the antics of the Yippies and others in the countercultural protest frenzy "a form of middle-class frivolity; a politics of the kindergarten." English writer David Caute was frustrated by the group's "irritable desire to inflict on an ostensibly sane society a form of chaos which, as a way of life, is superficial and nihilistic." It was, for Howe, a "confrontation politics" fundamentally different from that of Martin Luther King a generation prior, one that threatened to derail more serious arguments against the Vietnam War and racial inequality (Howe, 1968: SM27, SM139). It was an understandable charge, as students sought to break away from what they saw as the failed traditions of their parents, represented here by pigs in a Berkeley, California newspaper (Cobb, 1969: 2).

[8] At one point in the narrative, protesters are screaming at the "pigs." One screamed, "Kill the pig! Flush him out! Bring him in!" He nudged the narrator, standing next to him. "From Golding's Lord of the Flies." The narrator knew that, "but I doubt the cops do." It was a demonstration in microcosm that pigs had been literary foils since before the radical movement. William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, which featured a pig-killing scene, was published in 1954, the year of the Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* decision that gave rise to classical civil rights (Morgan, 1972: 104; Golding, 1954).

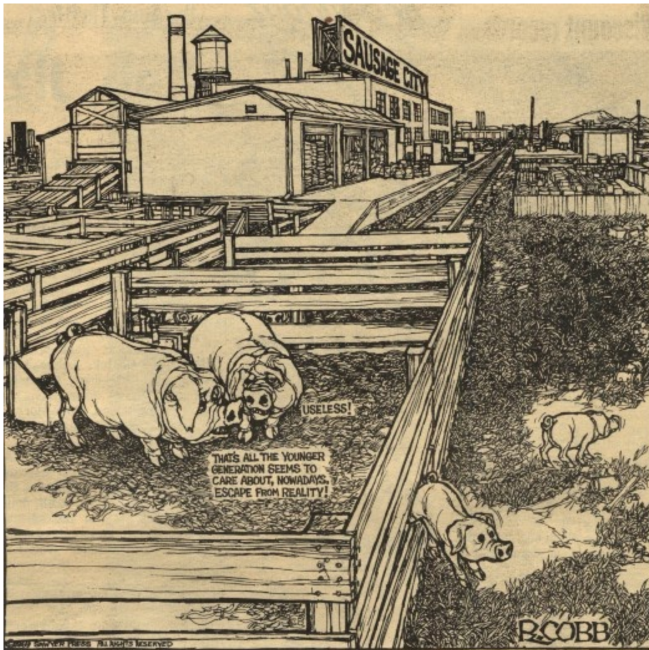

Figure 4: *Berkeley Tribe* (1969) Oct/Nov, p.2

As journalist Andrew Kopkind explained in 1968, “The history of the last three years is the chronicle of the ‘center’s’ disintegration, of the failure of the methods of political liberalism to cope with systemic disorders” (Kopkind, 1968: SM59). Chants of “Pig! Pig!” were common throughout the presidential campaign, including at protests of George Wallace rallies (Bigart, 1968: 32). It was, in its way, an inversion of common tropes of the totem. Totemism, as Emile Durkheim and so many others have explained, is the effort of various groups to use animal icons or representation to represent them (Durkheim, 1912; see also, for example, Hurn, 2012: 70-76). Calling police and other authority figures pigs is kind of a reverse totemism, using an animal representation to define a different group's identity.[9]

That emphasis on identity and difference in the cause of radicalism was often distressing to many. Earl Raab, executive director of the Jewish Community

[9] The term “reverse totemism” was first used to describe the American system of light-horse breed classification, in which nonhumans are classified using human standards (Borneman, 1988: 25-26).

Relations Council of San Francisco, for example, worried about increasing antisemitism among Black Power activists, who often pointed to Jews as financiers for much of what they interpreted as a corrupt and racist monetary system. With Jews associated with power-brokering authority, the same authority that generated insults built around pig symbolism, Raab pointed out that "Jew pig" had been normalized in much of radical culture, "a common variant of the standard expressivist metaphor." Raab described an expressive politics of the new radicalism, the core of its rhetoric "a hyperbolic, hyper-symbolic language." The constant refrain of "pig" as an epithet was "the definitive heart of the language, as in 'racist pig' or 'fascist pig'"[10] (Raab, 1969: 29).

That willingness to play with divisive language to create symbols also caused rifts within groups with ostensibly similar motives. The Black Panther Party and US, for example, were two groups founded in California after the assassination of Malcolm X, both ostensibly attempting to fill a power vacuum on the left wing of the broader black rights movement. The Black Panthers were founded in Oakland in 1966 by Newton and Seale, but developed a Southern California chapter two years later under the leadership of Alprentice "Bunchy" Carter. US, meanwhile, had been a Southern California operation from the start, headed by Hakim Jamal and Maulana Karenga. The two groups, however, were not allies, and their rivalry was only fueled by the FBI, whose COINTELPRO operation fanned the flames of their division by sending letters and cartoons to each group, purporting to be scurrilous

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[10] A.M. Rosenthal similarly lamented the evolution of such phraseology and the common use of the term "Jew pig" in a *New York Times* column appearing around the same time as Raab's *Commentary* piece (Rosenthal, 1969: 143).

material from the rival faction.[11] It was a rivalry that ultimately spilled over into violence on the campus of UCLA in January 1969 when an argument between representatives of the two groups at a meeting of the school's Black Student Union led to the murder of both Bunchy Carter and another Panther, John Huggins (Brown, 2003: 92-97; Churchill and Vander Wall, 1999: 77-81). While two brothers, members of US, were arrested for the crime and sentenced to prison, the Panthers announced publicly that the slayings were "political assassinations." A Black Panther spokesman denied that the killings were the result of a "black power struggle." The incident was, instead, "a political assassination by the US organization, ordered by the pig power structure," which was fitting, because members of US were "pork chop nationalists" with no ideology "except opportunism" (Caldwell, 1969: 20). The language used in the press conference was telling. Of course, both groups used pig metaphors to deride law enforcement and other governmental representatives, but here in response to the killings, the Panthers turned those metaphors on a rival group, its "pork chop nationalism" a phony rhetoric, a proxy for authoritarian ends. It was yet new work for the pig metaphor to take on in the wake of the killings, to the detriment of US, but also to the detriment of the image of the symbol being employed.

When asked in 1969 to differentiate between himself and Eldridge Cleaver, Julian Bond, a veteran of the classical civil rights movement then serving in the Georgia legislature, said, "I wouldn't call him a pig. That's the difference between

[11] Much of this information, and this kind of information, was made available through a special investigatory commission of the United States Senate, which examined abuses of all federal intelligence agencies. The report of that commission, commonly known as Church Committee report, as the group was led by Idaho Senator Frank Church, appeared in 1975 (Hearings, 1976). It also appears in FBI files of the COINTELPRO operation (Moore, 1968; FBI Director, 1968; SAC, Los Angeles, 1968).

the two of us" (*New York Times*, 1969: SM115). It was a brief but loaded statement, Bond making a case in microcosm that the militant Black Power movement had devolved to clichéd ad hominem attacks rather than substantive policy proposals. Thus it was that among many in the black mainstream evolutionary line of traditional civil rights activism, "pig" had become a symbol less of authority itself and instead a symbol of substanceless dogma, a weapon whose edges had dulled through repetitive use among those in the Black Power and countercultural protest movements.

To that end, in a letter to the editor of the *Chicago Defender*, a correspondent in 1970 urged readers, "Let's take the 'pig' out of policemen." It was a call to judge individual policemen without assuming their racism or corruption, but in practice it used the term "pig" to specifically represent their racism and corruption, tying semiotic pigness to the worst parts of the problems in policing (Beane, 1970: 15).

As Meredith Roman has argued, the Panthers' effort was an inversion of the reality explained by Franz Fanon (Roman, 2016: 12). "The terms the settler uses when he mentions the native are zoological terms," Fanon wrote in his *The Wretched of the Earth*. "He speaks of the yellow man's reptilian motions, of the stink of the native quarter, of breeding swarms, of foulness, of spawn, of gesticulations. When the settler seeks to describe the native fully in exact terms he constantly refers to the bestiary" (Fanon, 1963: 41). In taking the colonizer's effort and turning it around on them, Roman describes, "the party challenged the moral superiority that the police, supported by the mainstream press, had long claimed for themselves in their dealings with Black people" (Roman, 2016: 12). It was, against the critique of Bond and others, a postcolonial revisioning (see Chapter 2).

It was the Panthers who did the most to explain the use of the term and its role as a method of criticizing white authority. Usually directed at men, “pig” designated anyone nationally or internationally who violated human rights. Pigs were people concerned about protecting property over and against the lives of humans. “What Is a Pig?” asked one 1968 *Black Panther* article. “A low natured beast that has no regard for law, justice, or the rights of the people; a creature that bites the hand that feeds it; a foul depraved traducer, usually found masquerading as the victim of an unprovoked attack”[12] (*Black Panther*, 1968: 12). And as Roman has demonstrated, the term was designed to take power from intimidating figures like police officers, to make them less frightful to those who were at their mercy (Roman, 2016: 13).

Such definitions allowed “pig,” despite criticism, to remain a powerful metaphor for many in the movement. In May 1969, for example, students occupied six buildings on the Howard University campus for three straight days, leading the Washington, DC school to call in federal marshals. When authorities finally made their way into Locke Hall, a campus liberal arts building, they did so by shattering the glass doors, expecting to find disillusioned students in the darkened hallways behind them. There were, however, no students in the building. There was simply a message for the marshals written on a blackboard: “Welcome Pigs...Unity Is the Way” (Fraser, 1969: 14).

Sonia Sanchez published her first volume of poetry that year. Among the work in that book was “definition for blk/children,” which read:

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[12] It was a subject addressed often in the *Black Panther*, the official newspaper of the organization, each instance musing on the theme (1970: 2; 1969: 4; Donna, 1970: 10; Foster, 1970: 3; Fultz, 1970, 9; Gilmore, 1970: 2; Hilliard, 1969: 9; 1968: 14; 1969: 5, among many others).

a policeman

is a pig

and he shd be in

a zoo

with all the other piggy

animals. and

until he stops

killing blk/people

cracking open their heads

remember.

the policeman

is a pig.

(oink/

oink.) (Sanchez, 2007: 27)

Sanchez was the poet laureate of the Black Power movement and one of the leaders of the corresponding Black Arts Movement. Her reach was vast in that particular world, and hers was a language that, in the process of demeaning the violence of police against black bodies, perpetuating zoos and belittled nonhuman animals. And while Sanchez was an exceptional poet, her language in “definition for blk/children” was decidedly unexceptional. She intentionally used language that was common in the community that her work represented. Bobby Seale, one of the founders of the Panthers, lamented in 1969 the plight of nonwhite peoples “being cooped up in wretched ghettos and/or on Southern plantations and reservations

with the murdering, fascist, brutalizing pig, occupying the communities and areas just like a foreign troop occupies territory" (Tyner, 2006: 113). Again, the rhetoric demeaned as recompense for being demeaned, with pigs as collateral damage in what amounted to a verbal war.

During New York's first Afro-American Day parade, wherein more than 150 groups marched through Harlem in 1969, many screamed "kill the pigs" when they passed police officers along the parade route. No one was arrested for the threats, as by 1969 the terminology had largely become normalized through its constant use (Montgomery, 1969: 25). When squatters attempted to stop the building of a state office building in Harlem that year, police threats--and arrests--just days after the parade prompted chants of "power to the people" and "off the pigs" (Johnson, 1969: 41). Early in 1970, when a group of sixteen Black Panthers were put on trial for a series of planned bombings in New York, the defendants protested that their families and supporters could not be at the proceedings. They shouted at the judge, calling him a "fascist pig," and demanded that the "press pigs" be removed from the gallery to make room for Panther family members (Asbury, 1970: 20; Oelsner, 1970: 166). It was yet another modification of the "pig" epithet, this time directed at those who had made the group nationally influential. It was a term that continued to transform as it moved farther from its modern genesis point, but remained consistent in its detriment to both the term's intended human targets and to the millions of pigs killed every day because their lives were not taken seriously by humans.

The permissiveness toward porcine violence was inherent in such terms, but it could also lead to retributive violence toward the police. In response to the controversy surrounding the trial, a group calling itself Revolutionary Women

firebombed the home of First Deputy Police Commissioner John F. Walsh. No one was injured, and only the garage was damaged. Revolutionary Women claimed responsibility for the bombing in a letter to United Press International. “We women have attacked pig Walsh’s house as a counterattack to the imprisonment of the Panther 21,” the letter stated. “The law of this land is sexism and racism. The liberation of ourselves and our sisters will come as we step outside this law with revolutionary definitions of ourselves and our brothers” (Narvaez, 1970: 56). Revolutionary Women was not a long-standing rights group and seems to have been an appellation used specifically for the Walsh attack. The letter announcing its existence, however, was a statement of liberation through violence. The fire-bombing was a direct attack on “the pig Wash,” violence toward a pig, though this one a metaphorical pig. The attack, then, used a victim of unthinkable systemic abuse, bondage, and killing as the semiotic victim of an actual attack in the name of freeing a small group of humans from temporary bondage. It was a fool’s errand, regardless, but one that seemed particularly disjointed when all of the named victims were included in the analysis.

Meanwhile, the more established Weather Underground took responsibility for firebombing the home of the judge in the case. Within the group, however, there was a feeling of general disappointment over the action. “The feeling developed that because this action had not done anything to hurt the pigs materially it wasn’t very important,” claimed the Weathermen’s Bernardine Dohrn (Dohrn, 1971: 37). It marked a shift in the group’s strategy specifically because it didn’t hurt pigs. And even though the rhetorical intent was not directed at nonhuman animals, the continued diminution of those entities associated with the word “pig” could not but

necessarily diminish whatever constituted pigness in the minds of readers and listeners.

In October 1969, the Weathermen sponsored their “Days of Rage” in Chicago, seeking revenge for the Democratic National Convention violence of the previous year. “We are coming back to turn pig city into the people’s city,” said a spokesperson. Its first act in Chicago was exploding a police statue commemorating the Haymarket Riots of 1886. For the group, it was a “pig statue honoring the murders of Chicago strikers.” Their warning was clear: “PIG AMERIKA--BEWARE: THERE IS AN ARMY GROWING RIGHT IN YOUR GUTS, AND IT’S GOING TO HELP BRING YOU DOWN.” For the next year, the Weathermen made continual references to the “pig statue” they destroyed (Sommer and Forley, 2008: 17, 19-20).

That kind of violent rhetoric was given even more succor by voices of more established revolutionaries like Eldridge Cleaver, a radical racial theorist and leader of the Black Panther Party. “Far from being racist, we are on the front line of combatting racism,” Cleaver said of the Panthers while hiding from warrants in Algeria. “We have black people who are our deadly enemies. A black pig, a white pig, a yellow pig, a pink pig--a dead pig is the best pig of all. We encourage people to kill them, because the police constitute an army” (Cleaver, 1970: 112). It was a statement of human unity in the cause of killing police officers, and one that in the process belittled the lives of non-symbolic actual pigs. Cleaver, of course, had little use for such finer points in his exaggerated rhetoric, but for readers, the shock of understanding a call for the murder of police in what was framed as a war subsumed the other obvious takeaway from “a dead pig is the best pig of all.”

It was common language for Cleaver. During Huey Newton's murder trial in 1968, he lamented that Newton would "be judged by 'pigs' who befoul the very name of justice" (Jamal, 1968: B5). In a Chicago rally the following year protesting Newton's manslaughter conviction, policemen were "pigs," they represented the "capitalistic pig-power structure." The mayor of Chicago in that paradigm was "Pig Daley." It was a saturation that reinforced the notion that everything interpreted as negative was, in one way or another, pig (*Chicago Defender*, 1969: 1).

Newton was not the only Black Panther who went on trial in the 1960s and 1970s, of course. Oakland Panther leader David Hilliard was tried for attempted murder after an infamous April 1968 shootout with police in which officers killed Panther Bobby Hutton. At his trial, HIlliard was asked if he referred to the police as pigs and what that reference meant. Hilliard did use the term, he told the court; it meant "killer, brutalizer, homicide agents," a definition rife with connotations about the racial disparities in policing and their consequences, but one that was completely disconnected from the actual nonhuman animal who was neither brutal nor homicidal (*Chicago Defender*, 1971: 2).

That disconnection—that adoption of animal metaphors that did not actually translate to biological behaviors of the referenced animal—did work that was the linguistic approximation of stockyard and slaughterhouse consolidation at the turn of the century (see Chapter 2), further hiding animals like pigs from human sight. There is no documentary demonstration in the historical record that language used to attack the powerful translated into a willingness of activists to consume the animals represented in such statements (for at least an approximation of such substantive claims, see Sato et al., 2017; Essig, 2015). It is true that, for example, American pork consumption continued to rise during the period (see Chapter 4),

but that rise was the result of a nexus of factors largely related to government subsidies. There is, however, no question that the association of pigs with the violent and powerful was itself a consequential outgrowth of the continuously reifying interactions of race and species biopower, just as racist statements made in public have dramatic consequences for social understanding without necessarily changing public policy. The language of the Panthers was a direct result of dispossession created by racialized biopower that artificially impoverished black urban centers (see Chapter 6), and that language created its own speciesist dispossession of pigs in the critique. When the powerful use the language of diminution against the powerless, the act perpetuates bigotry. Thus it was that the self-sustaining feedback loop of race and species continued.

To that end, there was real if slight pushback against such depictions. New York *Amsterdam News* columnist Gertrude Wilson wrote around the time of the Hilliard trial, “There has always been something that seemed wrong to me about people who, for instance, call policemen pigs. The way they say it is a real insult to the poor pig. The way policemen react to it is even a worse insult to pigs.” After rehearsing facts about the intelligence and friendliness of pigs, Wilson concluded that “policemen should be flattered” to be associated with such an animal (Wilson, 1971: 15). Her article was in response to a more in-depth study of the virtues of pigs in the January 1971 *New Yorker*. William Whitworth admitted to being an admirer of pigs “in the abstract,” and lamented that “the animal’s reputation has gone from low to even lower, until now the word ‘pig’ is widely used as a term of abuse connoting not only filth but rapaciousness and brutality.” He responded by traveling to a farm to learn about pigs in a way decidedly not abstract. He discovered that despite the negative connotations foisted upon the animal, pigs

were in fact worthy of his admiration. Whitworth ended his account by quoting the farmer who hosted him: “There’s no *telling* what a pig can do” (Whitworth, 1971: 64, 69).

The narrative that used “pig” as a representative insult, however, was powerful and able to withstand such challenges. When the American Council of Education began a survey of campus unrest across the country, for example, SDS issued a directive for its members not to respond to the questions of the “surveyor pigs.” After all, such collected information would only be used against them. There was “no friendly, or innocent, or ‘objective’ discussion with The Man” (Brooks, 1969: SM14). The statement was emblematic on multiple fronts. First, the “pig” designation was used in relation to humans, in this case educational surveyors, who posed no direct threat to the students. Unlike elected officials, representatives of regulatory agencies, or members of various branches of law enforcement, surveyors, many of whom were students themselves, were simply collecting information for larger entities that themselves may or may not have been fitting representatives of such epithets. It is yet another demonstration of the way such animal symbols can move in society, attaching to groups not originally intended. Second, the statement is emblematic of the curious transubstantiation of such terms representing humans and nonhuman animals. The surveyor-pigs, like other representatives of pigness, were portrayed in plural, lower-case. Meanwhile, the same groups designated as pigs were also designated as The Man, portrayed in singular, upper-case. They were terms that could be used interchangeably, and in their use, they not only denigrated their particular semiotic targets, but also pigs. Placed in the same linguistic situation, the nonhuman animal term is pluralized, lower-case, generic, while its human counterpart term is singular, upper-case,

specific. The Man is an intimidating presence; pigs are afterthoughts to be derided. Even in such violent epithets, all directed at humans by humans, an inherent speciesism still diminished pigs by comparison.

It was in its way a similar inversion that showed up in contrasts like "power to the people" and "off the pigs." People were posed as the ideal, pigs a group to be killed. It was a symbolism that did its intentional work in belittling governors over and against the governed, but it did its unintentional work in propping up humanity as the standard of rights and legitimacy, thereby making any discussion of the rights of pigs anathema to those in the very political camp most likely to give those rights a fair hearing.

An even more overt inversion occurred in August 1969, when members of Charles Manson's "family" went on a killing spree in Los Angeles, California. Theirs was a crib, a caricature of the countercultural ethos, one largely in service to the cult of personality surrounding Manson himself. On August 9, members of the family killed five people at the home of director Roman Polanski, including Sharon Tate, Polanski's pregnant wife, and Abigail Folger, heir to the Folger's Coffee fortune. Manson told his family members to "leave a sign--something witchy," so one of the murderers, Susan Atkins, wrote "PIG" on the house's front door with Tate's blood. The next night, members of the family killed supermarket executive Leno LaBianca and his wife, dress-shop owner Rosemary LaBianca. In a similar act of exhibitionism, another of the killers, Patricia Krenwinkel used Rosemary's blood to write "DEATH TO PIGS" on the LaBiancas' living room wall. In another place, the killers wrote "POLITICAL PIGGY" (Bugliosi and Gentry, 1974: 42-43; Nielsen, 1984: 326; Guinn, 2013: 268-272). "'Pig' was a word used to describe the

establishment," Atkins later explained. "But you must understand that all words had no meanings to us" (Bugliosi and Gentry, 1974: 184).

Manson found inspiration for his crimes in several songs of the Beatles. He justified the killings using the song "Piggies" from the Beatles' 1968 *White Album*. "Have you seen the little piggies crawling in the dirt?" went the lyric.

"And for all the little piggies
Life is getting worse
Always having dirt to play around in

Have you seen the bigger piggies
In their starched white shirts?
You will find the bigger piggies
Stirring up the dirt
Always have clean shirts to play around in

In their styes with all their backing
They don't care what goes on around
In their eyes there's something lacking
What they need's a damn good whacking

Everywhere there's lots of piggies
Living piggy lives
You can see them out for dinner
With their piggy wives

Clutching forks and knives to eat their bacon" (Harrison, 1968).

"What they need's a damn good whacking." The song puts to music the chants of protesters over the previous years, using the pig metaphor to represent the powerful and suggesting that whacking them was a common good. Manson took the whacking line as a sign that the time had come to use his family to extract a bloody revenge on the piggies (Doggett, 2007: 305, 394; Guinn, 2013: 194; Nielsen, 1984: 326; Mizelle, 2011: 159). Meanwhile, a song sung by the most popular rock-and-roll band in history on one of the most influential rock-and-roll albums in history and used publicly as inspiration for one of the most infamous murder sprees in history derided "piggies" and reinforced the stereotypes developed in the second half of the 1960s.

Meanwhile, because of that exposure and use in popular media, the language spread even farther, appearing in the 1970 language of black radicals in the Caribbean. "The white pigs--you must hate them," said Clive Nunez, a labor organizer on the island of Trinidad. "You can't love your enemy. You must hate your enemy if you're to destroy him" (Johnson, 1970: 14). Caribbean radicalism had a long history that developed independently of, if parallel to, North American black radicalism, but the appearance of the "pig" terminology in the region was a direct result of media coverage of the Black Power movement and of songs like the Beatles' "Piggies," only spreading the tentacles of that particular brand of speciesist rhetoric farther.

The militant German activist group Red Army Faction also appropriated many of the tactics and language of Black Power groups like the Panthers. Members quoted Eldridge Cleaver, they openly carried weapons, they read black

literature and listened to black music, and they called policemen pigs. “Did the pigs, who shot first, really believe we would let ourselves be killed nonviolently like slaughterhouse animals?” asked RAF leader Ulrike Meinhof. “Gandhi and Martin Luther King are dead. The bullets of their murderers...have ended the dream of nonviolence. The one who does not resist dies” (Waldschmidt-Nelson, 2013: 88).

In Italy, Pier Paolo Pasolini’s 1968 film *Porcile* uses the epithet to criticize the Italian student movement. One of the film’s two interwoven stories features a wealthy young German, Julian Klotz, who rejects the privilege of received culture to take solace in sexual intercourse with pigs. The film’s title translates as “pigsty,” playing on the common use of “pig” as an insult for the very class of people represented by Klotz’s family. Early in the film, his father asks, “When is Julian going to start fattening like a pig? Or calling me ‘pig’?” (Bondavalli, 2010: 408, 412) Pasolini was a critic of the student movement, a controversial figure who courted that controversy as part of his public persona, but his use of sex with pigs not only critiqued the young left, but it also trivialized pigs, who served as nonconsensual sexual objects, vehicles of human criticism whose abuse was a human problem rather than one for the pigs themselves. It demonstrated not only the spread and influence of such language across the Atlantic, but also the malleability of such metaphors. Even their critique used pigs in ways that reinforced human supremacy.

In 1971, an exhibition of black American painters being shown in Geneva, Switzerland, was attacked by Swiss students. The group painted “black power” and “kill the pigs” outside the gallery before even seeing the show, assuming that it was not representative of the black protest movement in the United States (*New York Times*, 1971: 25; Shirey, 1971, D17). In London, Ed Belchamber’s cover of *Oz*

magazine's "Special Pig Issue" in May 1971, responding to the periodical's obscenity charge for its earlier "Schoolkids Issue," featured a pig dressed in a police officer's uniform, holding an edition of the "Schoolkids Issue," which itself carried images of two naked human women. Throughout the magazine, references to police were coded with "pig" terms, but it was the imagery of the cover that did the work of representing policemen as pigs and pigs as signposts of overbearing authority (Mizelle, 2011: 126; *Oz*, 1971).

Figure 5: Oz: Special Pig Issue, May 1971

The use of nonhuman animals as signifiers of negative human traits has real and universally negative consequences for the nonhuman animals themselves (Ornellas, 2007: 50-52).[13] The consequences for pigs remained predominantly in

[13] Of course, just as the use of "pig" to create negative associations in humans, ultimately redounding negatively to the nonhumans, is not a phenomenon limited to the United States, so too

the United States during the tumultuous 1960s and 1970s, and the imagery that did the most work to create such consequences was that of the Black Panther Party's Minister of Culture. Emory Douglas was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan in 1943 but moved as a child to San Francisco where he came under the thrall of Charles Wilbert White, the modernist painter of the black underclass (Moyer, 2007: 44). But there were other influences. "As a youngster growing up it was my mother," Douglas remembered. "She was legally blind and worked hard as a single parent." Then there was "an artist I knew named Charles Bible, he lived downstairs from where I lived and he would mass-produce multiple paintings of the same image of Malcolm X every year for the anniversary celebrations of Malcolm's life." Douglas would learn from him a variety of printing and painting techniques[14] (Daniel, 2014).

"As a youth I was in and out of detention centers, I will say for illegal activity not sanctioned by the state," he told an interviewer. "While there I would do mostly landscape art--nothing with any social meaning. A year or so after I got out I decided to attend City College of San Francisco" (Daniel, 2014). There he studied commercial art and began designing sets for radical plays by authors like LeRoi Jones and Marvin X and producing flyers for the college's Black Students

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is it not limited temporally to the twentieth century or zoologically to the pig. Keven de Ornellas has described a similar coding during the Renaissance in reference to cormorants, a bird castigated as a representative of gluttony, greed, avarice, and covetousness. In a variety of sixteenth and seventeenth century texts, authors used the commonly understood traits of the bird to represent such characteristics in people. "Men who are like cormorants experience not only their own insatiate lust for material excess but also the desire to deprive other men of their possessions," explains Ornellas. "The cormorant becomes a symbol for cruel exploiters of the poor" (Ornellas, 2007: 39). A commensurate veneration of pelicans by the same culture led to negative references to pelicans in the Bible being replaced in the 1611 King James version with cormorants. And the semiotic demonization of the cormorant and its use to demonize other humans had real consequences for the bird. The cormorant population diminished substantially through the nineteenth century and remains low throughout Britain in the twenty-first. One species of cormorant, which made a home near the Bering Strait, was hunted to extinction, and the possibility exists for those in Britain.

[14] Biographical and analytical work on the life and art of Douglas is myriad. Along with other work cited in this chapter, see also Gaiter, 2018; Gaiter, 2012; Duncan, 2016.

Association. In 1967, a year after the founding of the Black Panthers, Douglas met Huey Newton and Bobby Seale and agreed to design the *Black Panther* newspaper, which originally existed in its first two issues as a collection of meager typewritten pages (Baltrip-Balagás, 2006: 86-88). He would shape the periodical over the next twelve years and with it the image of the Panthers themselves, and he would spread that image to a larger and larger audience. By 1970, the *Black Panther* had a weekly circulation of 139,000 (Gaiter, 2005). “Although the use of the term *pig* to label the police is oft attributed to Newton and Seale,” explains Carrie Moyer, “the image that the word conjures up is all Douglas's own.” For Moyer, Douglas’s pigs “are crudely compelling as they totter about on their hind legs, surrounded by flies. Whether drunk with power or simply clueless, the beasts are drawn with a glee befitting a 22-year-old who has just been anointed First Revolutionary Artist by the Black Panther Party” (Moyer, 2007: 44).

“*Before* we coined and popularized the term ‘pig’ (in reference to ‘police who occupy our community like a foreign troop occupies territory’),” remembered Bobby Seale, “Emory was the key in our urgent need to counter the ‘Support Your Local Police’ campaign” that had been promulgated by the city government of Oakland. “Emory took a drawing of a four-legged, snout-nosed hog and drew on it a police cap, a star-shaped badge, and a police utility belt complete with revolver.” Seale, Huey Newton, Eldridge Cleaver, Bobby Hutton, and others were all impressed. He mocked up a page for the *Black Panther* newspaper, and Cleaver and others “wrote up the definition of a pig,” Seale explained, “which became synonymous with Emory’s image of the police (or a politician giving orders) brutalizing people and violating peaceful protesters’ constitutional rights” (Seale, 2007: 12-13).

Moyer explains that pig imagery spread to a variety of different figures of authority. “Pigs come in many guises,” she argues. “While the growing opposition to the war in Southeast Asia was central in the white alternative press, the *Black Panther* took coverage a step further, using the image of the pig to situate the daily humiliations suffered by its readers within the larger matrix of national and international politics” (Moyer, 2007: 44). As Collette Gaiter has explained, Douglas constructed “a visual mythology of power for people who felt powerless and victimized.” He was, in that sense, “the Norman Rockwell of the ghetto, concentrating on the poor and oppressed.” While police-related pig imagery existed before him, Douglas’s art would make it the dominant insult for law enforcement and “the entire capitalist military/industrial complex” over the following decade (Gaiter, 2005).

That pig imagery was unique in many ways, despite the common rhetoric that it generated. Joe Louis Moore, for example, has compared Douglas’s work with other artists of the Black Arts Movement like Samella Lewis and Ruth Waddy, both of whom use their art as advocacy for black America but do not include pig images as depictions of law enforcement and governmental authority (Moore, 1996: 269-271).

It is significant that both Lewis and Waddy are women, as part of such “pig” codings was decidedly masculine. Huey Newton argued that the black population was loathe to read long political diatribes and thus acknowledged the need to emphasize visual imagery to synthesize the party’s message and widely disseminate it. As Erika Doss has explained, “The pictorial, the visual, became an essential component of Panther ideology.” It provided a “dramatic redefinition of black identity” and an “assault on previously held assumptions of the passivity and

powerlessness of black men" (Doss, 1999: 248). In doing so, it was necessary to draw a contrast to reassert the humanity of those black men, and one of the easiest cribs for such assertions was to animalize those who sought to usurp that humanity. By creating pig imagery to represent the police, the Panthers situated their black victims as superior humans who had seen their role unjustly inverted through an inappropriate abuse of power. The inherent assumption of such imagery was that pigs (the nonhuman animals) were inferior to humans, and thus pigs (the police officers) ceded all moral authority to the human communities they policed.

Such assumptions can be seen in Douglas's own situated ideology. "Art has always been a manifestation of politics and society," he said. "There is no separation between the individual and the political, because politics is about people, whatever your alliances or principles" (Douglas, 2008: 41). It was a politics devoid entirely of nonhumans, thereby making representations of nonhumans symbolic of abject difference, of an existence outside the norms of both politics and personhood. "Because of the bitterness and suffering of poor people and black people in particular, black artists in America should strive to create images that will stimulate awareness of the wretched conditions that makes us the victims of America's racism," Douglas explained in a justification of his use of pig imagery in his art. "We cannot stimulate awareness of these conditions, for example, by painting landscapes that have no relationship to our survival" (Douglass, 1977: 55).

He was even more direct about that dichotomy in a 1968 position paper. "Revolutionary Art is learned in the ghetto from the pig cops on the beat, demagogue politicians and avaricious businessmen. Not in the schools of fine art," he argued. "The Revolutionary Artist hears the people's screams when they are

being attacked by the pigs. They share their curses when they feel like killing the pigs, but are unequipped. He watches and hears the sounds of foot steps of Black People trampling the ghetto streets and translates them into pictures" (Douglas, 1968). When later asked specifically about this emphasis on pigs, the artist explained that it came from a discussion about the role of the police between Newton, Seale, and Cleaver. "They began to define what a police was, and those kinds of words came into the statement," Douglas remembered. "Huey brought over an idea and told me he wanted me to do this pig drawing, which I did on four hooves." The imagery only grew from that original germ (Douglas, 2017: 51).

In its reclamation of black masculinity, Douglas's artistic critique included race, class, and gender, the three points of differentiation most examined when dealing with Black Power activism (Léger, 2011). Theorists like Slavoj Žižek have argued that such differentiation points are not measured with the same scales, that class is often given short shrift in analyses of the kinds of otherings presented by race, class, and gender (Žižek, 2004; Žižek, 2008). The real disappearing other, however, the dispossessed figure given the shortest of shrift, is the one that hides in plain sight, that of species, and while Douglas's art, for example, provides a social critique that pillories societal race, class, and gender norms, it opens itself to such a critique along species lines by instigating its particular fights by using nonhuman animals, and pigs in particular, as the foils for its criticisms.

Figure 6: Emory Douglas, "What Is A Pig?" In: Douglas E (2007) *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas*. New York: Rizzoli.

"What is a pig?" asks one of Douglas's images. He used the "low natured beast" definition that was a consistent part of the Black Panther lexicon. The injured pig in the poster is unkempt and surrounded by flies. The inference is that the pig is a figure of unjust authority, an enemy of minority rights and justice, injured because of "battle fatigue," as groups like the Black Panthers are having an impact and cracking the edifice of power that the pig represents. It is impossible to come away from such an image, however, without a disdain for pigs themselves, whatever they might represent. The pig's clothing bears no marks or symbols signifying that he is a stand-in for the police or other figure of authority. The image is

anthropomorphized, but the accompanying caption includes nothing that couldn't be said of a nonhuman animal. Thus the image works as a critique of authority if a viewer comes to it with requisite contextual knowledge of the pitched battle between the Black Panthers and the police in Oakland, but for others without such context it simply acts as a denouncement of pigs themselves. And even for those with an understanding of American racial codings, it would be impossible not to leave the image without negative connotations related to nonhuman animals.

Other of Douglas's images do much the same work while including more specificity about the human targets of his disdain. Perhaps the most common of his pig representations are members of the police.

Figure 7: Pigs as police. In: Douglas E (2007) *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas*. New York: Rizzoli.

They are depicted as violent and intrusive, but also as feckless and incompetent. They are thus to be resisted and despised, but also to be seen as fundamentally inferior, unable to complete decidedly human tasks. Such formations obviously do their work against the police, but the process of dehumanization combined with

clear inferiority claims do similar work against pigs. Incompetence, of course, does not just encourage disdain or pity for human manifestations of pigness, it also encourages active resistance.

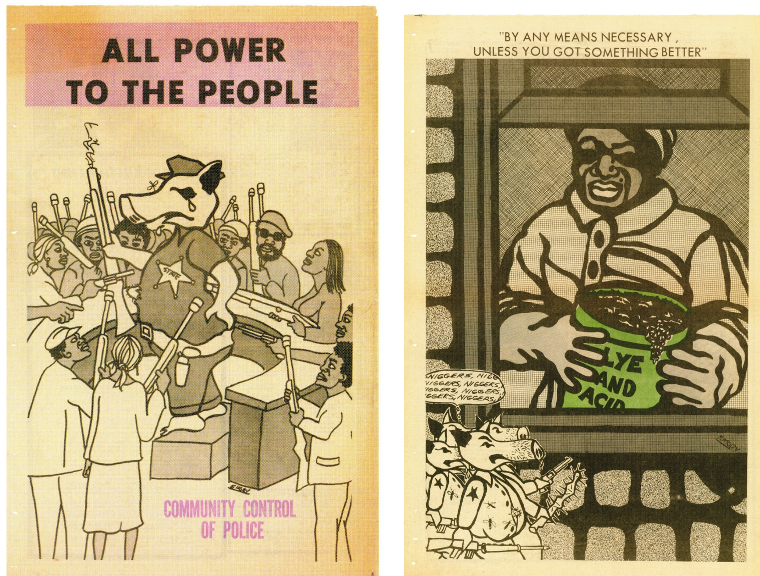


Figure 8: Pigs as police. In: Douglas E (2007) *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas*. New York: Rizzoli.

Pigs-as-police in one image use ugly racial invective to intimidate a working-class black human, who responds with lye and acid, presumably to kill them, and to do so “by any means necessary, unless you got something better.” In the other image, a pig-as-policeman stands on a pedestal seeking to intimidate a group of black humans, but the humans all have guns trained on the pig. “All power to the people,” the poster says. “Community control of police.” The “people” in this formulation are humans, the “police” the nonhumans. One has “all power,” the other is under “community control.”

Figure 9: Justice for Bobby Hutton. In: Douglas E (2007) *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas*. New York: Rizzoli.

The messages depicted in pig-as-police imagery are also combined in some of Douglas's work. This image repeats the definition of pigs, refers to them as fascists, and references in particular the April 6, 1968 murder of Black Panther Bobby Hutton by Oakland police and the lack of accountability for that attack. The poster depicts pig policemen as firing guns drunkenly. Flies buzz around them. Meanwhile, the mayor and chief of police, also depicted as pigs, agree not to prosecute those cops who actually murder members of the black community. It is a demonstration that pigness does not translate solely to law enforcement and those immediately involved in the brutality of black lives and bodies. Those representatives of authority seen to guide the hands (or hooves) of policemen are also depicted as pigs. Pigs are, in effect, representatives of the state.

Figure 10: Pigs as the state, pigs as victims. In: Douglas E (2007) *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas*. New York: Rizzoli.

These images elaborate on Douglas's broader police themes. "Community Control of Police" shows a pig depiction of the state being blown apart. "I Surrender" shows another pig depiction of the state running away in fear from the bullets and grenade of, the viewer is to assume, the Black Panthers. Finally, another image trumpeting "All power to the people" shows a panoply of guns trained on yet another pig depiction of the state. Pigs are not only representations of an unresponsive government, but representations of nonhumans who are justified subjects of normalized violence. And that kind of violence was inherently necessary in Douglas's estimation, because left to their own devices, the pigs-as-state would spread beyond the bounds of the city, the country, or even the world.

Figure 11: Pigs in space. In: Douglas E (2007) *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas*. New York: Rizzoli.

In “Whatever Is Good for the Oppressor Has Got To Be Bad for Us,” representatives of the pig state have taken a pig rocket to the moon and brought with them a group of black human slaves to help colonize it. The pig leader warns his compatriots to “handle those slaves with care” because “we’re going to need them for Mars, Pluto and all those other planets.” In “Whites Only,” the pigs have finally conquered the moon and have managed to segregate it. To that end, there are also in Douglas’s work pig representatives of the president of the United States for the first three years of the Panthers’ existence.

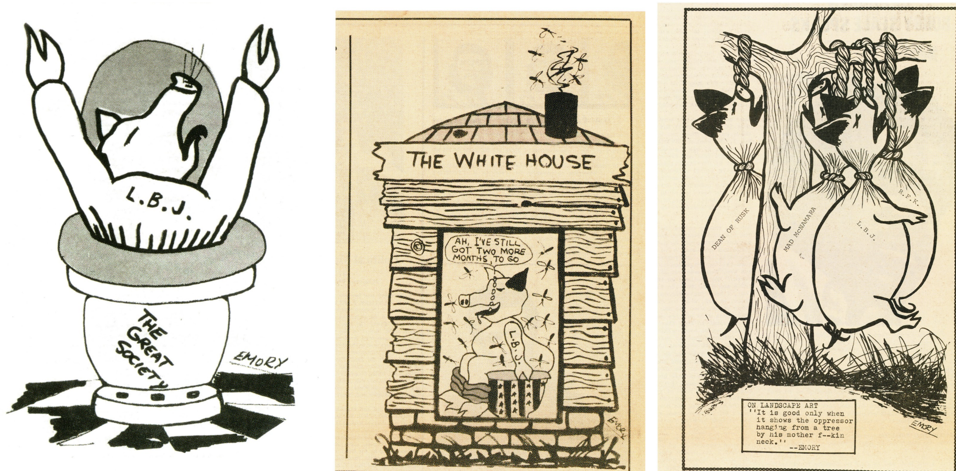


Figure 12: Pigs as a stand-in for Lyndon Johnson. In: Douglas E (2007) *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas*. New York: Rizzoli.

Two of the Lyndon Johnson images feature toilets, making scatalogical references to the president that also jibe with assumptions about pigs made apparent by slogans such as “happy as a pig in shit.” In one of the images, Johnson is being flushed down the toilet; in the other, he is defecating in an outhouse on a toilet crafted from an American flag. The third image, even more disturbing, features four lynched pigs, representing the political leaders assumed to be responsible for the worst abuses of the American fight in Vietnam: Johnson, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, and Robert Kennedy. The poster features a quote from Douglas himself, arguing that landscape art “is only good when it shows the oppressor hanging from a tree by his mother f--kin neck.” The stark imagery and the quote that accompanies it are an inversion of early-century imagery of black lynching victims so common in the United States. And it is, as Baker demonstrated, an example of theriomorphism, rather than Douglas’s more common therianthropism, where animal and human imagery is decidedly intertwined. It was not, however, the only such theriomorphic pig image.

Figure 13: Support your local police. In: Douglas E (2007) *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas*. New York: Rizzoli.

Of course, the vast majority of Douglas's representations were therianthropic, and they depicted politicians other than Lyndon Johnson, who left office in January 1969.

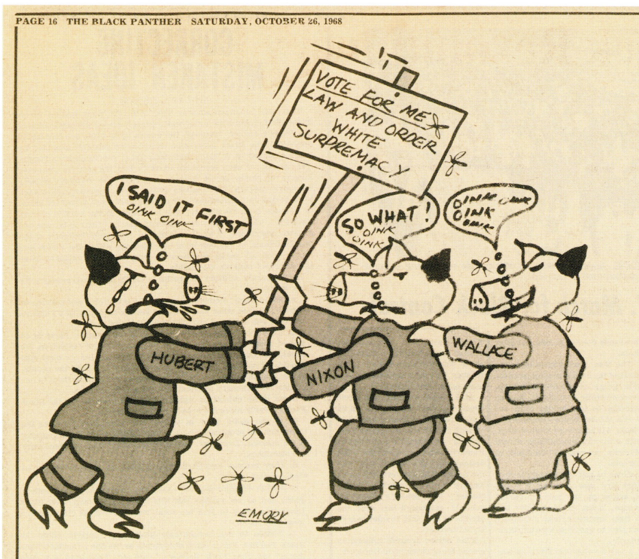


Figure 14: The 1968 presidential election. In: Douglas E (2007) *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas*. New York: Rizzoli.

This image portrays the 1968 election to replace Johnson, wherein Democrat Hubert Humphrey and Republican Richard Nixon fight over the mantle of white supremacy while arch white supremacist candidate George Wallace looks on. In attaching such values to pigs, the image belittles the prejudices themselves and portrays them as less than human, but at the same time it props up the assumption that "less than human" is an existing category and not its own form of supremacy. Human supremacy in aid of belittling white supremacy was effective for many because of cognitive dissonance and basic human assumptions about species superiority, but it was disastrous for the pigs themselves, who became the receptacles of all such negative connotations.

And many of those negative connotations related, as did some of the Johnson imagery, to the dangers of both domestic and international imperialism.

Figure 15: Pigs as imperialists. In: Douglas E (2007) *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas*. New York: Rizzoli.

The images of pigs as imperialists are also common in Douglas's art. Two of these images portray the same message: "Get out of the ghetto. Get out of Latin America. Get out of Asia. Get out of Africa." Such posters do the work of tying foreign imperialism to domestic white supremacy, interpreting the domestic police force that patrolled black neighborhoods as similar to the military force that invaded

a variety of nations in the Global South. Another image presents an axe chopping down the pig-tree of American imperialism, which places the weed of black capitalism in danger. It is a visual renunciation of the black middle class as dependent upon white supremacy for its success, a renunciation made for decades by black radical movements. It is, however, significant that in this new visual reformulation, even the image of a tree is coded as a pig to demonstrate its association with the imperial project. The final image, a cover for the Black Panthers' periodical, presents the United States as a mother sow suckling her children who represent other European colonial nations. Douglas also includes Japan and the apartheid states of Rhodesia and South Africa. The most prominent of the piglets, however, the one actually suckling at the teat of the US, is Israel. It is no surprise, then, that Douglas's takedown of imperialist thinking would also include a takedown of Zionism as another version of segregationist apartheid.

Figure 16: Pigs as stand-ins for Zionism. In: Douglas E (2007) *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas*. New York: Rizzoli.

In “Israel: Zionist Puppet State of Imperialism,” a group of pigs representing the United States, Britain, West Germany, and France, overfeed a pig representing world Zionism a bottle of money to support its efforts. It was a demonstration of the view of Douglas and the Panthers that military occupations and support for Israel were part and parcel of the same project. It was a manifestation of the black nationalist position that saw American mistreatment of its black population as working in concert with the kind of imperialist work done by the occupation of Palestine and other colonial projects. There was, however, an added element that played on fears of a Jewish cabal for domination and a stereotype of a Jewish hunger for money. That kind of problematic representation, both the message against imperialism and the Jewish stereotyping, covers the problematic representation that hides in plain sight in this and other Panther imagery, that of pigs as stand-ins for all figures and behavior perceived as problematic. And it is that porcine stereotype that left the highest of bodycounts, whether compared to American police actions against Black Power organizations, European colonial efforts, African apartheid states, or Israeli occupation.

In this image, for example,

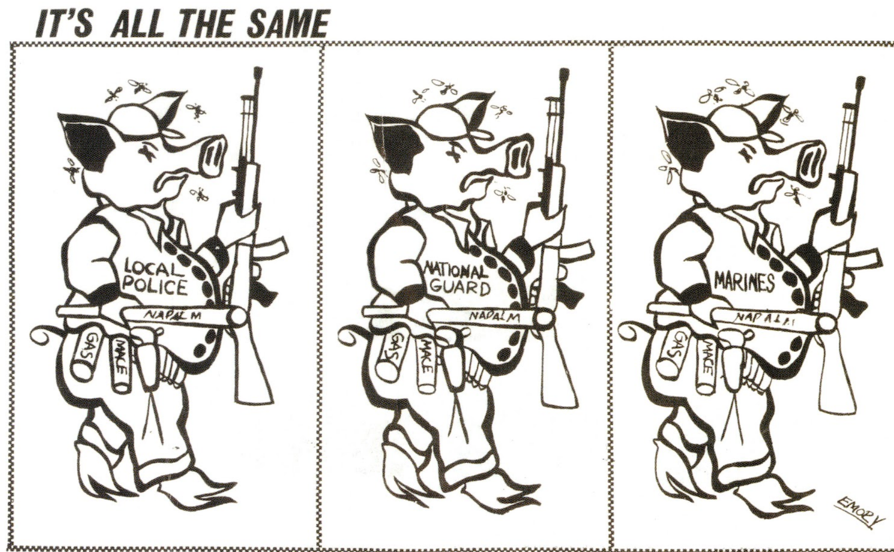


Figure 17: It's All the Same. In: Douglas E (2007) *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas*. New York: Rizzoli.

Douglas draws a direct line between local police and American soldiers, with a National Guard that worked in areas both foreign and domestic in between them. That kind of comparison and the emphasis on occupation ensured that the military would also be pilloried as pigs.

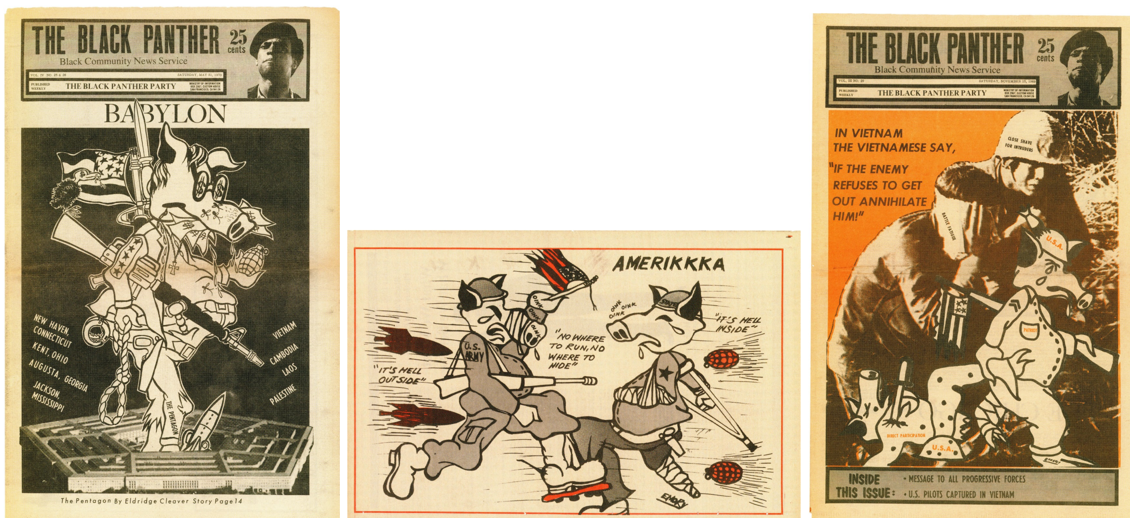


Figure 18: Pigs as military. In: Douglas E (2007) *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas*. New York: Rizzoli.

The images are by now familiar, but use pigs to represent soldiers rather than policemen as the target of their ire. In each, the pig-soldiers are either injured or being attacked. It was a common theme in Douglas's art.

Figure 19: Seize the time. In: Douglas E (2007) *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas*. New York: Rizzoli.

The real violence that happened against pigs everyday, however, was systematic killing on a scale that dwarfed any human body counts. Still, the real violence that affected everyone in inner-city black communities was driven by the poverty imposed on those neighborhoods through white supremacy, redlining, and sparse job opportunities. Because of that, Douglas's work also shows images of black life that include a similar if tangential diminution of pigs in violent words if not imagery. Many, like these, show portraits of black resistance with subjects wearing buttons that feature slogans celebrating the death of pigs, normalizing that desire for death, further associating pigs with legitimate and justified killing.

Figure 20: Pigs on buttons. In: Douglas E (2007) *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas*. New York: Rizzoli.

Other Douglas posters featured such justifications as frames for images that otherwise do not involve pigs as animals or pigs as police.

Figure 21: Pigs as frames. In: Douglas E (2007) *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas*. New York: Rizzoli.

Such depictions also placed pig rhetoric within the broader imagery that surrounded black urban residents in their everyday lives.

Figure 22: Woman in slum housing. In: Douglas E (2007) *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas*. New York: Rizzoli.

In this image, a woman in slum housing fights large rats in her tenement apartment, depicting the problematic poverty faced by so many of those who the Black Panthers claimed to represent (see Chapter 6). Pinned on the door behind her is the familiar image of pigs-as-police running from an attack and the ubiquitous slogan, “Death to pigs.” That kind of poster also demonstrates one final element of animal representation in Douglas’s art, that of other animals who are not pigs. In these images, the United States government and United States imperialism writ large are represented by a vulture and a rat, respectively.

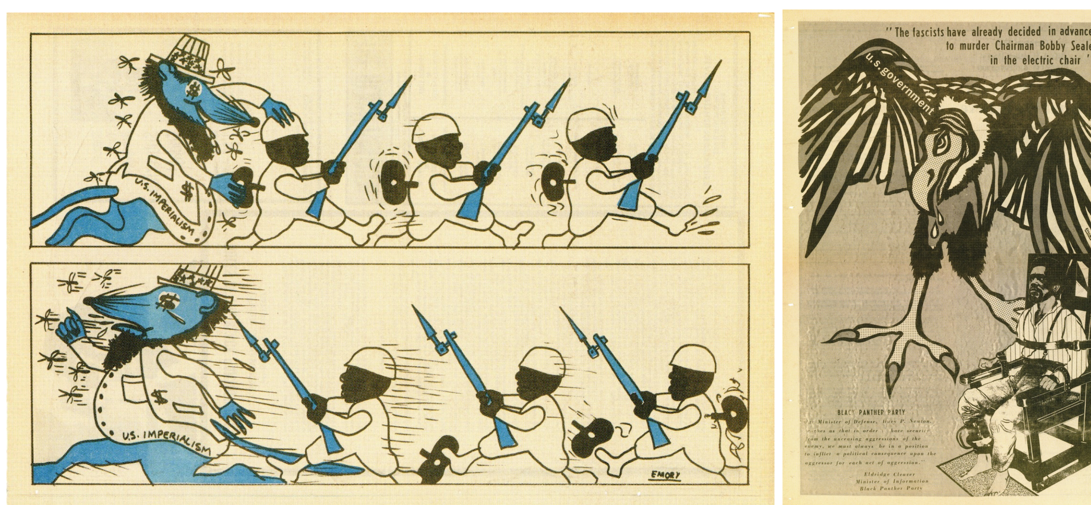


Figure 23: Other animals as representative of government. In: Douglas E (2007) *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas*. New York: Rizzoli.

The pictures were evidence that nonhuman symbols could be used to represent a variety of different human ills in a variety of different forms. The one commonality in these images and those that lament pigs-as-police is that nonhuman animals are

always representations of violence and negativity; human animals are always representations of protagonists, whether victims or defenders.

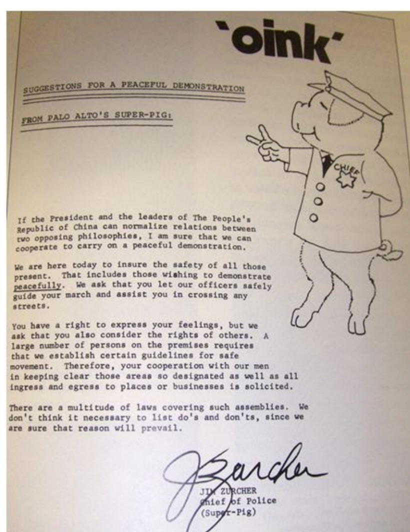
Douglas's artwork found common cause in the rhetoric of the era, coming both from the Black Power movement, and the Black Panthers in particular, and the countercultural student movement. That rhetoric appeared in music, fiction, and theater, only reinforcing the notion that pigs were part of the problem, that their deaths were to be encouraged. And nowhere was that rhetoric more normalized than in the language of the Black Panthers.

The Panthers understood that images of authority figures as pigs did semiotic work with an immediacy that political screeds could never match. To that end, they often printed thousands of copies of Douglas's posters and distributed them throughout urban black neighborhoods. "The community was the museum for our artwork," said Douglas (Doss, 1999: 257). It was, he argued, the first time that many experienced visual art, and certainly the first time that visual art spoke directly to them. That experience, then, turned others to art as a mode of expression, as murals and other forms of visuality appeared throughout American inner-cities (Doss, 1999: 257-258). And those murals replicated the semiotic language presented by Douglas and the Panthers, complete with representations of pigs as enemies of humanity, and thus of decency.

While the images would remain, as would the crib of "pig" as a representative of the police, the vogue of the term and the image would begin to fade in the 1970s. One of the leading progenitors of Black Power, the inventor and popularizer of the phrase itself, for example, was Stokely Carmichael. He first announced his ideology in June 1966 in Mississippi while participating in the March Against Fear as president of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.

From that point, SNCC turned to embody a Black Power aesthetic and Carmichael spent the rest of the decade deriding law enforcement and chanting about “pigs” (Carson, 1981; Murphree, 2006). By 1971, however, he had moved beyond such rhetoric. In a speech in Houston that year, Carmichael told his audience, “You will be disappointed if you came to hear me say, ‘Off the pigs’ and ‘Kill the honkies.’ We have moved beyond that level. The time of entertainment is over” (Waldron, 1971: 61).

Demonstrating the point, beginning in 1970, Detroit police and Wayne County sheriffs held an annual “Pig Bowl,” a charity football game between police officers and sheriff’s deputies that played earlier “pig” laments for laughs, making a joke of the epithet and taking away its power to demean law enforcement (Pig Bowl II, 1971: 3). When Jim Zurcher took over as Chief of Police of Palo Alto, California in 1971, he tried to diffuse some of the tension in the college town by referring to himself as the “Super Pig” and working with the leaders of protests to make everyone in the process feel heard (Zurcher, 1999).



'oink'

SUGGESTIONS FOR A PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION

FROM PALO ALTO'S SUPER-PIG:

If the President and the leaders of The People's Republic of China can normalize relations between two opposing philosophies, I am sure that we can cooperate to carry on a peaceful demonstration.

We are here today to insure the safety of all those present. That includes those wishing to demonstrate peacefully. We ask that you let our officers safely guide your march and assist you in crossing any streets.

You have a right to express your feelings, but we ask that you also consider the rights of others. A large number of persons on the premises requires that we establish certain guidelines for safe movement. Therefore, your cooperation with our men in keeping clear those areas so designated as well as all ingress and egress to places or businesses is solicited.

There are a multitude of laws covering such assemblies. We don't think it necessary to list do's and don'ts, since we are sure that reason will prevail.

JIM ZURCHER
Chief of Police
(Super-Pig)

Figure 24: Jim Zurcher, “Super Pig.” From Palo Alto History, http://www.paloaltohistory.org/jim-zurcher.php.

It is a legacy that would continue. At Georgia's Augusta University in the twenty-first century, campus police hold a charity barbecue called "Pork with the Po-Po," combining symbolic harm to pigs with actual harm to pigs.

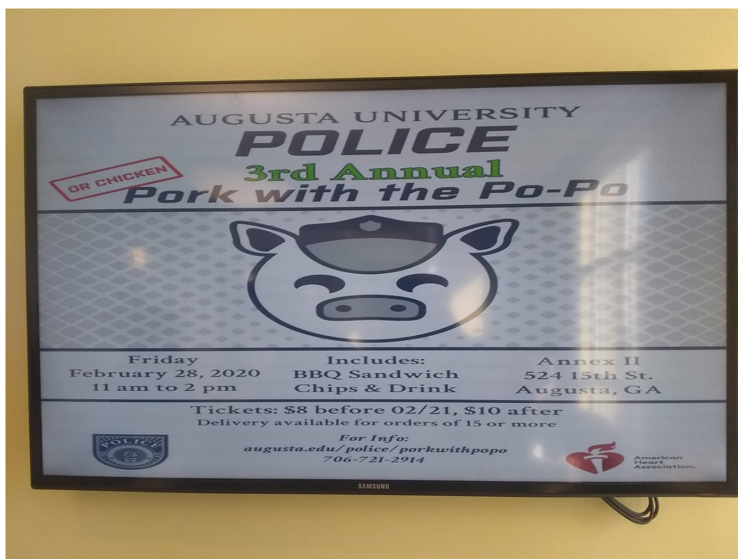


Figure 25: Augusta University, Pork with the Po-Po. Photo taken by author.

Such naming did not strip the term of its power to demean pigs themselves, they who were always afterthoughts in human critiques of authority. The police in Augusta were willing to make fun of themselves for a charitable cause using pigs as the vehicle for humor. All the while, the corpses of pigs on the plates of those who participated gave lie to the nonchalant humor of the event. It was an example of the legacy of animal imagery and naming in the era of Black Power. Even after the epithets of a given moment are reclaimed by their targets and fed back to those in the original angry group, there remains at base an understanding that the humans on both sides of a given divide are still subjects. The nonhuman animals, the epithetical terms themselves, are nothing more than objects, which left them on the plates of student protesters against the police in the mid-twentieth century and on the plates of student supporters of them in the twenty-first. Because the pigs in

such namings are the only group that consistently lose. It was the inevitable declension narrative associated with the intersectional confluence of species and race. Animal epithets used in service to fighting racialized acts of biopower would ultimately be appropriated by the powerful themselves, stealing their efficacy as critiques of the biopolitical frame and turning them into permissive jokes for consuming the corpses of the animals used in the original attack. Appropriation as a tool of diminution has been a tool of the powerful in almost all categories in almost all historical periods, and it only served in this case to magnify the consequences of the intersection of species and race. The vicious cycle, in that sense, became a downward spiral.

And the problematic naming that caused so many problems for pigs did not only come from the angry calls of protestors or from the pen of militant artists. The imagery that put the corpses of pigs on those plates also came in a less angry, more inviting form, presented to human consumers to entice them to eat. But even in that form, pig imagery would call on racist tropes and align itself with the history of of American racial symbols.

CHAPTER 8

The Great Hog-Eating Confederacy:
Sambo, Happy Pigs, and American Barbecue Signs

“The roads of the Southern United States are lined with a succession of grinning pigs,” writes historian Laura Dove, “advertising the availability of barbecue in countless restaurants” (Dove, 1995: 3). The signs featuring grinning pigs serve not only as symbols of the American dining experience, but also as symbols of the need to obviate the reality of what human diners are doing to the nonhuman animals inside. They provide a different kind of destructive symbolism than that of Emory Douglas and the Black Power advocates who associated pigs with law enforcement. They are instead a form of caricature as permission; they turn innocent lives into comedy to excuse the behavior of those who might laugh of any malice toward the group that is affected. In this way, pig-themed barbecue signs are imitative in both aesthetic conventions and supremacist intent of the racist kitsch and cartoons of the Jim Crow era, where the imagery of Little Black Sambo and exaggerated minstrelsy belittled black lives and customs and, by extension, gave license to whites to treat them as inherently inferior. The semiotics of difference that play out on barbecue signs give similar license to those who eat barbecue in their behavior toward pigs.

The prevalence of such establishments and their use of happy pig caricatures comes at the confluence of a series of historical strains. The carcasses of dead pigs became staples of southern foodways because they were easy to care for and procreated steadily. In the antebellum period, for example,

southerners consumed five pounds of dead pig meat for every one pound of dead cow meat (Taylor, 1982: 27; Bass, 1995: 307, 314). Because pigs were allowed to roam freely and were not fed by humans with anything resembling structure, they were far leaner, their musculature tougher (see Chapter 2). Southerners, then, used the slow process of barbecue to tenderize the flesh of the killed animals (Geiling, 2013). “Pig slaughtering became a time for celebration, and the neighborhood would be invited to share in the largesse,” Dove explains. “The traditional Southern barbecue grew out of these gatherings” (Dove, 1995: 4).

That traditional southern barbecue in the nineteenth century centered around community events like political rallies and church revivals, and in so doing tended to eliminate class as a bar for participating. Barbecue then, became a symbol of democracy in the region (Egerton, 1987: 150). After the country’s late Industrial Revolution during the Gilded Age, it also became a symbol of capitalism, as the first barbecue restaurants developed in the early twentieth century. National pork packing hubs like Chicago turned pig carcasses into marketable products. They were sold in grocery stores and, soon after, the first chain of supermarkets, spreading across the South and fittingly named Piggly Wiggly (Dove, 1995: 6-7; Bass, 1995: 301).

Piggly Wiggly was able to take advantage most readily of the early twentieth century decline of butcher shops, which ultimately gave way to supermarkets. Founded in 1916 by Charles Saunders in Memphis, Tennessee, the store’s name represented in Saunders’s mind the way piglets rushed to their mothers and shoppers similarly swarmed clerks at stores (Mizelle, 2011: 76; Bass, 2008, 376). Saunders had noticed a group of hogs rooting around on a farm near the railroad tracks while on a train ride. “He reflected on an interesting analogy: clerks had to

select merchandise for customers at the general store; when the store grew crowded customers flocked to the overwhelmed clerks like 'piglets to their mother sow'" (Bass, 2008: 379). It was an analogy that inspired the Piggly Wiggly name, but also its ethos. "Piggly Wiggly will be born," said Saunders, ''not with a silver spoon in his mouth, but a workshirt on his back.'' By 1923 Saunders's company counted more than twelve hundred stores[1] (Freeman, 1992: 163).

Figure 26: Piggly Wiggly. Photo taken by author.

It was an important evolution, and one that only increased the American taste for the flesh of pigs. The country's average contemporary consumer, for example, eats fifty-one pounds of pork per year. The poor eat more pork than the rich. Black consumers eat roughly fourteen more pounds of pork per year than white consumers (Mizelle, 2012: 65-67). Pork as a staple in the South ''survived the settlement years, a civil war, and more than a century of time to become a frontier 'relic' in the midst of twentieth-century American life," largely, argues Sam

[1] LIke Piggly Wiggly, Memphis barbecue restaurant Little Pigs attempted the same in the 1960s. The restaurant was exceedingly popular in its home city, but it overexpanded and was forced into bankruptcy by the end of the decade (Moss, 2011: 38-39).

Hilliard, because the region never saw the progress that came with urbanization and industrialization (Hilliard, 1972: 68-69). John S. Wilson, a doctor from Columbus, Georgia, noted in the late antebellum period, “The United States of America might properly be called the great Hog-eating Confederacy, or the Republic of Porkdom,” in explaining the quantity of pig carcasses consumed in his nation (Mizelle, 2012: 69; Wilson, 1860: 178).

Barbecue is one of the most common methods of pork consumption. “The cultural importance of barbecue in Southern foodways,” writes Laura Dove, “lies preeminently in its roots in festival and social ritual. The rites and customs which surround the preparation and consumption of barbecue today have roots in the cultural history of the South, with implications for traditional views of race relations, sex roles, and the formation of social relationships in the South” (Dove, 1995: 15).

“If then it is in the blood of some of us,” writes black poet Gerald Barrax,

“to lust after the ears the tails the snouts
the feet the maws & even the
chitlins of the filthy beast
forgive us…” (Barrax, 1994: 66).

“Whites figured blacks were good at barbecue,” said Lawrence Craig, owner of a small barbecue restaurant in DeVall’s Bluff, Arkansas. “Same as they figured we could sing and dance. They gave us the green light, like they did with heavy lifting, because they didn’t want to do the work” (Edge, 2011: 44). Craig’s was one of many mid-century, segregation-era black enterprises that built itself on the

preparation of the corpses of pigs, but which did not overtly revel in or distract from the deaths of nonhuman animals through the use of pig imagery (Edge, 2011: 43).

Figure 27: Craig's Bar-B-Q. Online image, public domain/no relevant third party. Image replicated frequently, but available at http://fcg-bbq.blogspot.com/2011/05/craigs-bar-b-q.html.

Jones Bar-B-Q in nearby Marianna, Arkansas is assumed to be the oldest surviving black restaurant in the nation, founded in 1910, and it too carries simple signage without pig caricatures (Edge, 2011: 43).

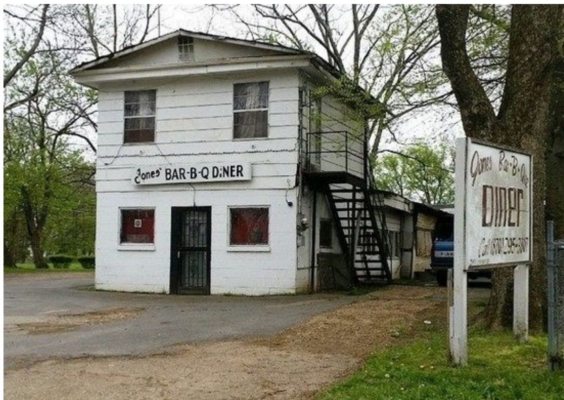


Figure 28: Jones Bar-B-Q. Online image, public domain/no relevant third party. Image replicated frequently, but available at https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/jones-bar-b-q-diner.

That said, there is no specific genesis point when barbecue restaurants began fetishizing images of pigs. The near-ubiquitous signage began to appear in the post-World War II period not because of new motivations, but instead because

such restaurants moved out of the segregated residential and business neighborhoods of the smalltown South and into the broader mainstream. Or, perhaps, it began to appear when such establishments became less associated with specific racial codings.

Those early racial codings were definitely there, however. A year after black Memphis native Henry Perry arrived in Kansas City in 1907, for example, he founded the city's first barbecue restaurant, helping define the specific taste of a city that would become indelibly associated with the distinct foodways of barbecue. Again, however, in the early century, when barbecue was black, the iconography associated with Perry's establishment was simple description (Worgul, 2001: 16-19).

Figure 29: Perry's Barbecue. 1940 tax photo, public domain.

The early development of barbecue restaurants was aided by the advent of automobile transportation and the growing road infrastructure that came with it. That led to expansion, which ultimately led to division. As Jonathan Bass has explained, as the twentieth century progressed, barbecue restaurants divided three ways, leading to black-owned businesses, upper-class white businesses, and their working-class counterparts, which themselves evolved into honky-tonks (Bass,

1995: 310-314). The human clientele who frequented such establishments in the first half of the century, however, was a multi-racial group--an affinity for barbecue being a similarity between the races, if not an actual tie that bound--a possibility allowed by the common take-out trade featured at such restaurants (Jones, 1995: 7-8; Egerton, 1987: 152). “Whites, in a strange reversal of Jim Crow traditions, made stealthy excursions for take-out orders” to black restaurants until the civil rights movement drove whites in the South to begin enforcing segregationist policy (Wilson and Ferris, 1989: 676).

Those new attitudes came to a head in 1964 when Ollie McClung, white owner of the Birmingham, Alabama restaurant Ollie’s Barbecue sued to protect his segregated establishment from the dictates of Title II of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which outlawed segregation in public accommodations like his restaurant[2] (Public Law 88-352, 1964: 78 Stat. 241). Ollie’s had always served takeout to black customers but now would be required to serve them in the restaurant itself. The case reached the Supreme Court in October 1964, and in December the Court ruled unanimously that the Civil Rights Act was constitutional and that Ollie’s Barbecue had to comply (*Katzenbach v. McClung*, 1964: 379 U.S. 294).

[2] “All persons shall be entitled to the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, and accommodations of any place of public accommodation,” Title II proclaimed, “without discrimination or segregation on the ground of race, color, religion, or national origin.” Those accommodations included “any restaurant, cafeteria, lunchroom, lunch counter, soda fountain, or other facility principally engaged in selling food for consumption on the premises” (Public Law 88-352, 1964: 78 Stat. 243).

Figure 30: Ollie’s Barbecue. Online image, public domain/no relevant third party. Image replicated frequently, but available at http://joshblackman.com/blog/2010/04/24/a-bottle-of-ollies-worlds-best-bar-b-q-sauce-for-the-winner-of-fantasyscotus-net/.

That same year, in Columbia, South Carolina, a four-store barbecue chain known as Piggie Park Enterprises refused service to a black customer, sparking a class action lawsuit. The owner of the restaurants, Maurice Bessinger, was among the early white barbecue entrepreneurs to make caricatured pigs part of his advertising. Referring to his restaurants as “Piggie Park” was a playful infantilization of their most tortured victims, the pigs killed for the store’s various dishes. On a different but still daunting level of victimization were the human customers enured to eating the carcasses of killed pigs but seeking to do so equally with the humans who had historically dispossessed them. Bessinger was one who had manned the barricades of white supremacy during much of the civil rights movement. He headed a racist group known as the National Association for the Preseveration of White People and even sold religious literature in the restaurants claiming that the bible justified slavery (Walsh, 2013: 206).

Figure 31: Piggie Park. Online image, public domain/no relevant third party. Image replicated frequently, but available at http://tyson-ho.squarespace.com/blog/2012/11/15/bbq-roadtrip-maurice-piggie-park-bbq.

The case against Bessinger and Piggy Park wound its way through the federal appellate system until finally reaching the Supreme Court in March 1968, when a unanimous body ruled not only that integration was the law of the land, but that Bessinger was required to pay the legal fees of those bringing the case (*Newman v. Piggie Park Enterprises, Inc.*, 1968: 390 U.S. 400). It was a crushing defeat for a restaurant chain that was engaged in the iconography of infantilization in relation to the victims it served at its tables and a more pragmatic, on-the-ground infantilization that it used to justify its harsh racial stand and segregationist policy. The latter would fall to judicial decree. The former would remain doggedly present in South Carolina, the South, and the nation.

Thus it was that barbecue intersected with racial politics in the nation's appellate courts. Its other principal intersection was more symbolic, as symbol became part and parcel of the American barbecue experience. It was a necessary

symbolism, as the industrial processing of the pigs whose bodies became the products of those restaurants were brutally killed in a way that customers wanted little part in seeing. “One could not stand and watch very long,” wrote Upton Sinclair of the hog processing apparatus, “without becoming philosophical, without beginning to deal in symbols and similes, and to hear the hog-squeal of the universe” (Sinclair, 1906: 41).

The symbols and similes of the universe’s hog-squeal are represented here by barbecue restaurant signs, in comparison with the racist Sambo and minstrel imagery of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Both symbols function as their own distinct hog-squeals, and both evince a clear disdain for the subjects of the representation. “Might disdain for pigs have to do with shame and guilt about our relationship with them?” asks Brett Mizelle. “Might this prevalence of imagery featuring happy pigs asking to be eaten represent an attempt to express respect for the pig amidst the larger denial of what is shared across species lines?” (Mizelle, 2011: 120-122)

Perhaps. Barbara Phillips has described “common cultural experience” as bearing on the “meaning ascription process,” even as individuals bring their own separate experiences to, for example, images of pigs on barbecue signs (Phillips, 2012: 10). But Sherryl Vint has argued that such imagery serves to draw a distinct line between human and nonhuman that justifies violence used against the nonhuman. It is a necessary line to draw, she argues, and it only really appears wherein “its existence needs to be constructed” to facilitate such violence (2007: 115). It is “used to dehumanize the other so that ethics do not enter into certain kinds of killing,” one such kind of killing being that which brings barbecue to American restaurant tables (Vint, 2007: 117).

Of course, such representations are not limited to modern barbecue signs, and just as barbecue itself has a clear historical development, so too does the representation of pigs to dismiss the pain of their treatment. In 1932, for example, a newspaper advertisement for hams from hogs that were fattened by feeding them peanuts featured a caricatured hog shaped like a peanut.

Figure 32: C.H. Bird & Co. Collection of Patricia B. Mitchell (Food History.com)

Mizelle has described the pig murals decorating the walls of the Clougherty Meat Packing Company and the Farmer John Brand in Vernon, California, which belie the torture that takes place inside, murals that appeared on the factory in the decades after World War II and remain in the twenty-first century (Mizelle, 2012: 9-11).[3] Such imagery would only metastasize in the unique representational phenomenon of the barbecue sign.

[3] Such problematic representations also occurred inside those spaces of animal abuse and death. Kathryn Gillespie describes attending a cattle auction. “On the walls of the hallway were posters advertising animal products, a few with the familiar ‘Beef: it’s what’s for dinner!’ tagline and a plate showing a giant steak or cheeseburger,” she writes. “Across the hall from the office was a restaurant that served burgers, fries, and pie” (Gillespie, 2018: 76).

Figure 33: Clougherty Meat Packing. Online image, public domain/no relevant third party. Image replicated frequently, but available at https://www.trip.com/travel-guide/los-angeles/farmer-john-s-murals-at-the-clougherty-packing-company-31694090/.

“Representations that imaginatively or literally rip animals out of their worlds and resituate them as subalterns, or fetishes, or ‘resources’ in our world spell trouble for our fellow species,” argues Randy Malamud (2020: np). He takes as his example Eadweard Muybridge's photography of animal locomotion in the late nineteenth century, arguing that the images he produced were “ultimately destructive to the animals he so keenly observed” because the photos represented the animals more than anything else for their use-value over and against anything else, and thus “he undercut the horse's essential horseness” (Malamud, 2010: np).

The individual attitudes humans bring to the site of animal death tend toward near-universal contradiction, largely because of what Jill Jepson calls “the flexibility of language to create and maintain power; bolster identity; banish certain attitudes or beliefs; support untested assumptions; and blind entire communities to alternative ways of thinking” (Jepson, 2008: 127, 129). Hers is a study of linguistic representation rather than that of images, but she notes a distinct representative difference in the terms used for killing humans and those used for killing

nonhumans. Those used to describe the killing of humans “are highly particularized. Each term refers to a specific type of killing, distinguished by contextual features, including the nature of the (a) agent, (b) patient, (c) motivation for the killing, and (d) speaker’s attitudes about the killing.” There is, in other words, inherent in the description an “ethical evaluation and emotional response” (Jepson, 2008: 134-135). Descriptions of nonhuman animal killing, however, “are used interchangeably, and they carry little information about the agent, the reason for the killing, the patient (except that the patient is an animal), or the speaker’s attitudes” (Jepson, 2008: 138). The imagery of signage also lacks that particularization, and most even take such cognitive blurrings a step farther by attempting to deflect entirely from the killing itself, using images to intimate a mortal process without an open admission of its brutality.

It is, in other words, a semiotics of biological power. Giorgio Agamben has argued that modern political life is guided by the application of such power, using language, images, and the human imaginary to separate biological life, interpreted as sparse and ontologically empty, from the life of the human citizen of a given socially constructed state (Agamben, 1998). It is a divide that puts humans above and beyond all other animals, those unassociated with citizenship or statehood, those locked instead in the different, other biological world. It is the maintenance of this separation, Agamben argues, that is "the decisive political conflict, which governs every other conflict"[4] (2004: 80).

[4] That conflict and the resulting alienation that stemmed from it has been interpreted as an existential human problem by many. One of them was Karl Marx, who expressed frustration in 1844 that the human engagement with nature as a mere object to be negotiated rather than a functional part of the human condition acted to devalue man’s own being. “Man lives on nature,” he wrote, “means that nature is his body, with which he must remain in continuous interchange if he is not to die.” A separation from nature (and, by association, the nonhuman animals that populate nature) is thus a separation from one’s self, a figurative covering of the forest because of so many culturally

To that end, Jonathan Burt has argued that the animal is "marked as a site where these symbolic associations collapse into each other. In other words, the animal image is a form of rupture in the field of representation" (2002: 11). Such is not to say that animals are thus null sets or floating signifiers. Instead, he sees the animal image as able to serve as a functional universal, that its meaning-making can break the bounds of a given image to highlight larger questions of animal interests and welfare more broadly (Burt, 2002: 11; Brower, 2009: 319). This rupture, this move to treatment or welfare, makes it necessary for barbecued animals be caricatured, samboized. It is a resort to caricature similar to early white expressions of black poverty. Actual pictures of black poverty would create potential recognitions of racial harm, thereby evincing the potential burden of shared guilt, so images of Sambo became the norm.

"The photograph shows us a catastrophe, the live image of the dead," writes Matthew Brower. "It gives us an image that is haunted by the inevitability of an impending death that has already occurred, an impending death that is also our own" (Brower, 2009: 320-321). It becomes the personal experience of, for example, John Dewey's Instrumentalism.[5] Or, as Roland Barthes has explained, the "reading of public photographs is always, at bottom, a private reading" (Barthes, 1982: 97).

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constructed and wholly artificial trees. That covering and the alienation that exists as a result "changes for [humans] the life of the species into a means of individual life." Separation begets separation, to the detriment of both human and nonhuman animals (Marx, 1964: 112).

[5] The University of Chicago's John Dewey studied under William James and carried on the pragmatist project begun by he and Charles Sanders Peirce. Instrumentalism, Dewey's version of Pragmatism, was like its forebears another criticism of traditional notions of truth. He argued that everything assumed to be truth is the product of individual thought, which automatically makes "truth" something that cannot be universal. Instead of making truth or knowledge the goal of logic, then, Dewey emphasized that inquiry itself should be logic's goal (Eldridge, 1998; Shook, 2000; Menand, 2002.

Barthes muses on these issues in his *Camera Lucida*, where he distinguishes between studium and punctum photographs based on how the images do their work in creating emotion. Studium photographs are characterized by what Brower has called “affective indifference,” thereby necessitating mediation to generate its particular call to action (Brower, 2009: 320). It is the semiotic version of Dewey’s Instrumentalism, requiring any given viewer to bring his or her own experience, a working contextual knowledge, to the image itself. “Emotion,” writes Barthes, “requires the rational intermediary of an ethical and political culture” (Barthes 1982: 26). That political culture is the known world of the human mind cognizing the image.

Then there is the punctum photograph, “that accident which pricks, bruises me” (Barthes 1982: 26). That prick is the image itself doing the work of carrying the viewer outside of the frame to the world it represents. Whereas the former imbues personal knowledge on the image to make its affective meaning, the latter challenges personal knowledge, uses the image to add to a given cognitive repository. In punctum photographs, the action works outward from the image to human cognition. In studium photographs, the action goes the other way, working inward from the contextual material individual cognitions bring to the image. It is the challenge that comes to individuals from punctum images that generates the pricks and bruises, the challenges to that original known world (Barthes, 1982: 111).

When, for example, one is confronted with the image of a dying animal, Barthes argues that there are two ways of mitigating the veracity of what he or she sees, generalizing the image and softening the blow it produces. Viewing it as part of a broader collection of imagery and therefore mundane in its presentation stunts

some of that affect. So, too, does generating the image repetition that creates film. “The cinema participates in this domestication of Photography,” Barthes argues, “at least the fictional cinema, precisely the one said to be the seventh art; a film can be mad by artifice; can present the cultural signs of madness, it is never mad by nature (by iconic status); it is always the very opposite of an hallucination; it is simply an illusion” (Barthes, 1982: 117). Barthes’s madness of cinema, in the context of the barbecue signage interrogated here, is replaced by the madness of caricature.

Derrida counters Barthes by seeing no real escape from the bruising by filmic transfer. “As soon as there is a technology of the image,” he argues, “we are already spectres of a ‘televised’” (Derrida and Stiegler, 2002: 115-117). Such images generate a spectral quality that haunts viewers like Dickensian Christmas ghosts, a quality with high stakes for Derrida, who argues that it is through such images that we experience death, the death of the other, which is the only death we can properly contemplate (Derrida, 1996). “This spectrality is wounding because technologies of the image offer an unreturnable look from outside that questions the surety of our identities,” writes Brower, “up to and including the stability of our distinctions between humans and animals” (Brower, 2009: 322; Derrida and Stiegler 2002: 122–123).

Our distinctions between humans and animals, of course, are not the only wounds of alterity. As linguist Robert Baker has explained, “There is a close connection between the way in which we identify things and the way in which we conceive them” (Baker, 1975: 48). The essay in which he made that case was principally concerned with the linguistic tropes that condition the diminution of women in human society, but one of his principal examples of the connection

between identity and conception was the effort in the late 1960s and early 1970s by black leaders to push back against understood “respectable” linguistic norms for African Americans like “Negro” and “colored” and to replace with them with terms like “Afro-American,” which met with little early success, and “black,” which met with more. Even with the change, the result of intensive effort by a dispossessed group, its use, Baker argued, was only partially the result of “black” being the opposite of “white.” After all, the skin color of no one designated as black is actually definitionally black. Nor is whiteness a technical or formal skin color designation. Instead, he argued, Black Power advocates making the case for new nomenclature benefited from the association of blackness with ideas considered sinister or evil. In the white mind, then, the historical connections to a color could be mapped onto a race through a form of linguistic transference. The semiotics of blackness made white speakers--and, through mainstream use, African American speakers not associated with the Black Power movement or its theoretical underpinnings--less reluctant to respond to changes in their own behavior demanded by the recipients of that behavior (Baker, 1975: 46-48). “Black,” in this case, was less a word than a symbol, a semiotic representation like minstrel imagery that produced in white humans a form of comfort that allowed them to safely occupy a particular social space.

The semiotic imagery of the barbecue sign does much the same work, generating comfort in the minds of members of the privileged group while simultaneously feeding their assumption that what they are doing is best for everyone. That the privileged group is human and the dispossessed porcine only exacerbates both the ease with which that comfort can be generated, as the lines defining the interstitial space between species are thicker than those between

races, and the stakes for the outcomes of such representations, as the lines defining the interstitial space between human-generated caricatures of pigs and the bodies of those they are supposed to represent mask a wholesale genocide.

As Edmund Leach explained in 1964, the human willingness to engage in various representations of animals depend largely on their assumed edibility, which itself is culturally constructed based on a variety of social and religious factors (Leach, 1964: 27-32). Such pig caricatures on restaurant signs, for example, could simply not exist in Israel or in the Muslim nations of the Middle East, in the same way that dog caricatures on restaurant signs could not exist in the United States (or, for that matter, in the Middle East), as dogs in the American cultural context are not categorized as edibie property. Leach describes the creation of linguistic categories that facilitate our treatment of different nonhuman animals. Pets are not just different than livestock, for example; they are in closer proximity to the human self. Wild animals would be considered even farther from the human self than livestock. Generating linguistic norms, then, which are themselves versions of caricature, creates the possibility of more visual caricatures that aid in the process of belittling and consuming animals farther from the human self than pets[6] (Leach, 1964: 34-38).

Arran Stibbe has tracked the negative representations of pigs in language, particularly in Britain, and has called on the work of linguists like Leach to argue that such negative representations were largely the result of guilt. “After all,” wrote Leach, “sheep provide wool, cows produce milk, chickens produce eggs, but we

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[6] This emphasis on the cultural contingency of such metaphorical representation is ground trod by many others (Hurn, 2012; Emanatian, 1999; Gibbs, 1999; Kovecses, 1999; Talebinejad and Dastjerdi, 2005).

rear pigs for the sole purpose of killing and eating them, and this is rather a shameful thing, a shame which quickly attaches to the pig itself” (1964: 51). Part of the effort to alleviate that attachment comes from hiding the use of pigs, as is the case in the modern ubiquity of gelatin and other animal-based substances found in a variety of foods (Blanchette, 2020). But much of that use is easier to recognize, and Stibbe notes that even though much of the guilt associated with our treatment of pigs has abated due to industrialized factory farming, the negative representations have remained (Stibbe, 2003: 376).

“The coercive power used to oppress animals depends completely on a consenting majority of the human population who, every time it buys animal products, explicitly or implicitly agrees to the way animals are treated,” Stibbe claims. “It is in the manufacturing of consent within the human population for the oppression and exploitation of the animal population” that language or other forms of semiotic representation, such as caricatured barbecue signs, play a role (Stibbe, 2001: 147). Or, perhaps, as Elizabeth Lawrence has argued, “Cultural constructs determine the fate of animals” (Lawrence, 1994: 182).

So, too, can physical constructs. The slaughterhouse buildings in which animals are killed are accompanied by the restaurant signs that proclaim the availability of the corpses of those killed, totems to the modern relationship between humans and nonhumans. "Can we show that totemism is a special form of a phenomenon which is universal in human society and is therefore present in different forms in all cultures?" asked Alfred Radcliffe-Brown in 1952 (123). "The only thing that these totemic systems have in common is the general tendency to characterise the segments into which society is divided by an association between each segment and some natural species or some portion of nature" (122). Totemic

myth is "both a language for analogically representing and reconstituting another reality--an hierarchical system of human differentiation--and a means by which that reality can be validated" (Borneman, 1988: 48). The pig signs at barbecue restaurants could also be interpreted as a version of totems (see Chapter 7). "All totemism is initially a kind of reverse totemism," writes John Borneman (1988: 28). The animal world is not ordered in any kind of fundamentally understandable way that humans would automatically comprehend. Scientists and other humans do not infer that order. Humans project it upon the animal world (Foucault, 1973).

And as Claude Levi-Strauss explained, totems, like American barbecue signage, "are codes suitable for conveying messages which can be transposed into other codes, and for expressing messages received by means of different codes in terms of their own system" (1966: 75-76). The mythology generated by such totems, he argues "has no obvious practical function." It isn't referencing a different reality. It is referencing an unreality, a world that does not exist and is desirable because of that nonexistence (1975: 10). Therein lies the totemic effect of pig representation in barbecue signs, the totem poles that create an unreality validating the imagined order projected on the animal world by humans.[7] Or, perhaps, in the words of Roland Barthes, "That is why myth is experienced as innocent speech: not because its intentions are hidden--if they were hidden, they could not be efficacious--but because they are naturalized." Mythology, for Barthes, and for those creating such myths in roadside barbecue signs, "harmonizes with the world, not as it is, but as it wants to create itself" (Barthes, 1983; 93).

[7] A similar argument has been made about racist kitsch, that there is "a totem-like quality to many of these items," though without any of the reverence that often comes with totemism (Goings, 1994: 13; Dubin, 1987: 132).

Generating such mythology is almost always morally problematic. A counter-example to pig signs are advertisements for lab animals in scientific research magazines. Arnold Arluke describes comical uses of animals or animals anthropomorphized in various ways, but those advertisements are specifically aimed at people all too aware of the very specific harm they are going to do to those nonhuman animals (Arluke, 1994: 145). There is, in other words, no attempt to deflect from problematic behavior because the point itself is problematic behavior. In one such advertisement for laboratory pigs, for example, a breeder's advertisement reads, "Go on. Admit it. You can't find one nice thing to say about the pig. You think it's big. It's messy. It eats too much and it's ugly. Well, we might agree with ugly." But the breeding company's new pig "eats like a bird. It's clean as a whistle. And is as light as a feather" (Arluke, 1994: 148). It is a caricatured representation, but one specifically touting features of bred pigs that make them ideal for vivisection. There is no deflection in the advertisement. There is only revelry in violence. Another ad touts pigs that are "barely bigger than a bread box." With the metaphor of pigs-as-bread established, the text continues that the pigs are a quality research choice "any way you slice it" (Arluke, 1994: 151).

It is a parading of the grotesque that is also common in advertising for animals-as-food. Artists, as Yvette Watt has explained, "use animals as metaphors or symbols for the human condition, or as generic signifiers for the natural world" (Watt, 2010: 77). Here, however, the signifiers use the human condition to remove animals from the natural world, to remove them from nature entirely. They aren't moving animals from subject to object, because they are already objects. Instead, it is a symbolic move from object to nonentity, excusing all behavior in relation to

them.[8] It is a sentiment put in economic determinist terms by Paul Burkett when he argues that "capital requires nature only in the form of 'separate' material conditions for its appropriation of labor power's use value, not in the form of an organic social and material unity between the producers and their natural conditions of existence" (1999: 62).

In describing the use of animals in television commercials, Jennifer Lerner and Linda Kalof have described an intentional distance created "by avoiding anthropomorphism in the animal as tool themed commercials. The absence of anthropomorphism in this theme is logical since humanizing the animal would make it more difficult to see it as a tool for consumption or recreation" (1999: 577). Elizabeth Hirschman and Clinton Sanders argue that the use of animals for consumption or recreation "is premised upon the emotional distancing of ourselves from them" (1997: 61). The barbecue signs, however, are turning this paradigm on its head, reveling in anthropomorphism specifically for the purpose of creating the distance that allows consumption.[9]

Barbara J. Phillips has noted that animal characters are often used in product advertisements because it encourages customers to associate the positive attributes of and assumptions about nonhuman animals with a given product

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[8] The study of the intersection of meat and restaurant advertising has been studied from a variety of angles, not just for the confluence of species and race (Freeman and Merskin, 2008).

[9] Lerner and Kalof acknowledge this possibility. In describing a television advertisement for an exterminator, for example, they describe anthropomorphized bugs packing up and leaving to avoid being killed, which "makes the message--this company will kill the bugs--more palatable by helping us to imagine that the bugs will not be hurt at all but will just leave the premises." It was a "guilt-assuaging mechanism" that "may reflect an ambivalence about our callous treatment of some animals. The portrayal of 'pests' as purposefully bothering humans may serve not to assuage guilt but as a narrative affirmation of the dominant belief that extermination is unquestionably acceptable, or perhaps as humor resting on this assumption" (Lerner and Kalof, 1999: 578). The same could be said for the cartoonish pigs of barbecue signs, this time making human consumption acceptable rather than extermination.

(Phillips, 2012: 9). In barbecue signs, however, the role of that imagery is again reversed, using humor or recognition to excuse the behavior of those viewing the image, because the advertising icon in this case is not a mascot but a visual caricature of the product itself. It is a form of gallows humor, itself indicative of excuse-making and coping in the face of various challenges. Nicole Piemonte has argued of gallows humor among medical professionals that it is indicative of "the failure to attend fully to the complexity and profundity of the lived experiences of illness, suffering, and death" (2015: 375). It is humor as permissive avoidance, present among all humans dealing with death or overwhelming trauma (see South, et al., 2020). In presenting animals to be killed and eaten in humorous ways, barbecue signs present their own form of gallows humor, a form of permissive avoidance for potential customers.

Paul Morris and his colleagues have argued that human descriptions of animals not only tend toward the anthropomorphic, but those anthropomorphic descriptions look remarkably consistent. That being the case, they argue, since we assume that such commonalities are indicators that "there must be something in the structure of human actions and posture specific to different intentions and emotions," the same could be said for animals since our reactions and interpretations remain generally consistent (Morris et al., 2000: 162). Which is to say that such consistent anthropomorphic defaults make the various pig representations on barbecue signs part of human understanding before customers even see them.

That visualizing of nonhuman animals "as less than," in the same manner that white societies dispossess other races as less than, is intentional, notes Joi Marie Probus (2009: 56). It makes it "impossible to empathize with their pain and

suffering," and thus allows that pain and suffering to metastasize. "This lack of empathy is a pathway to the atrocities committed against the oppressed, and in most instances is a justification of the perpetrators" (Probus, 2009:56). Such was the case in early twentieth century racist imagery and in early twenty-first century pig signage. Christopher House, for example, has argued in relation to racist kitsch in an argument that could simultaneously apply to modern barbecue signs that such caricatures engage in two rhetorical strategies, "symbolic annihilation" and "trivialization," both of which play on public memory by either eliminating or making meaningless the subjects of the caricatures (House, 2017: 3-4).

Thus it was that by the early twentieth century, as Upton Sinclair was lamenting the great hog-squeal of the universe, pigs had largely disappeared from the public view of most in industrialized cities. The keeping of pigs in urban settings came to represent squalor and poverty, and the mechanized killing floors of places like Chicago's Jungle allowed the wholesale slaughter of pigs to be kept away from the middle- and upper-class public. For them, there was no longer a hog-squeal to haunt them, no spectral Dickensian oinking to haunt their consciences. Pigs in their lived, bodily form became nothing more than representations, usually inviting the humans viewing such imagery to feast on the corpse of the one represented (Mizelle, 2011: 167).

Of course, there were other places to see such imagery, but they were far from reassuring salves against more problematic advertising representations. In 1933, Walt Disney produced a "Silly Symphony" animated short of the story "Three Little Pigs." One of the most recognized and celebrated cartoons of the century,

"Three Little Pigs" won the Academy Award for Best Animated Short in 1934.[10] Included in the narrative was an image of sausages framed on the wall of the pigs' home, labeled with the inscription "Father." It was a form of early caricature that helped condition children to the lack of value of pig life and made light of their deaths for food in a way that barbecue signs would do, as well (Disney, 1933).

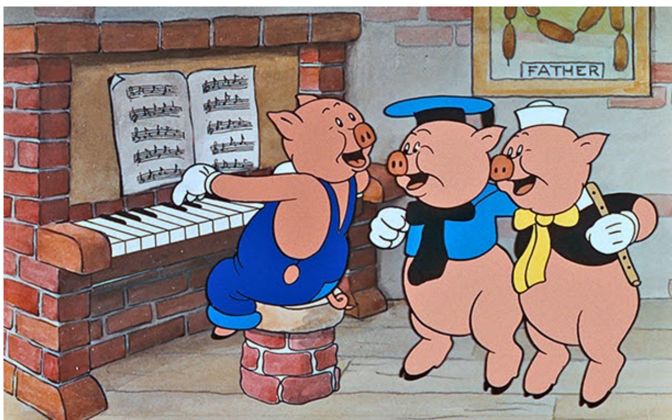


Figure 34: "Three Little Pigs." Disney W (1933) *The Three Little Pigs*. United Artists.

"Visual representations reinforce negative assumptions that fill the consumer's mind with misguided messages about normality and abnormality," explains Amber George. "Cartoons inscribe (human) normative relations, morals and expectations. Thus, anyone identified as deviating from the norm is different, deviant and abnormal" (George, 2017: 117).

But Disney was not the only perpetrator. In describing the Warner Brothers' character Bugs Bunny, George has argued that such comic representations "took a complex species and reduced it into simpler and misleading components which produce minimal diversity in the meaning of rabbitness" (George, 2017: 128). The comic representations on barbecue signs do much the same, taking a different

[10] Despite the imagery, the Disney film allows the two pigs who make their houses out of sticks and hay to survive. They join with the pig who makes his house out of bricks to defeat the wolf. In that imagery was a call to community in the face of the Great Depression (Brode, 2004: 30).

complex species and eroding diversity in the meaning of what constitutes a pig, thereby allowing consumers to enter the restaurant and participate in a different kind of reduction in pigness, one that so obscures the appearance of the carcass itself that humans can enjoy eating it. Such anthropomorphizations of animals on restaurant signs provide, in George's words, "a false sense of connectivity with nonhumans. When humans try to understand nonhumans, without the ability to communicate, anthropomorphism is used to compensate for limited knowledge" (George, 2017: 128), or, in this case, when humans want no part of understanding nonhumans, anthropomorphism is used to validate limited knowledge, to hide any further knowledge in aid of excusing pending cruelties.

It is used to create a carnival atmosphere that can do the work of such hidings. In Mikhail Bakhtin's analysis of the carnivalesque, for example, he reads "festivity" and "festival life" as "a peculiar quality of all comic rituals and spectacles" (1984: 8). American barbecue signs are a version of his comic spectacle, inviting festivity and, in the process, covering the physical and emotional toll that most festivities cover. After all, as Steve Baker has explained, "The animal is the sign of all that is taken not-very-seriously in contemporary culture: the sign of that which doesn't really matter" (Baker 1993: 174). Thus it is that the carnivalesque does not just diminish an animal's reality, it diminishes his or her significance. Baker describes this phenomenon as the "Disnification" of animals. Disney, in works like "Three LIttle Pigs," has "settled instead for a trivializing and sanitized cuteness which misses out on (or sometimes even contradicts) their mythological richness and their psychological depth" (Baker, 1993: 177).

John Simons would refer to such work, both in "Three Little Pigs" and on the glowing signs of barbecue restaurants across the nation, as "trivial

anthropomorphism" (2001: 119). He distinguishes such efforts from fables, wherein animals are prototypes for human character traits, and strong anthropomorphism, which "deals with animals as if they were humans," says Simons, "either to show how the non-human experience differs from the human or to create profound questions in the reader's mind as to the extent to which humans and non-humans are really different" (2001: 119). Trivial anthropomorphism, by contrast, "treats animals as though they were people" without making any effort to relay ethical principles (Simons, 2001: 119-120). Under the rubric established by Simons, Disney movies and barbecue signs are trivial in the extreme, barbecue signs perhaps more so because they take such trivializations a step beyond Simons's rubric by using the anthropomorphism specifically to deflect guilt about unnecessary animal abuse by those viewing the images. Such signs, then, could be seen to constitute a fourth category in such a rubric, deflective anthropomorphism, one which carries an intentionality not present in the other three.

While Disney cartoons constitute a trivial anthropomorphism, it is the pig caricature imagery on barbecue signs that truly evince such a deflective anthropomorphism. "Both symbolically and in reality the hog has become ingrained in the culture of the South," claims Jonathan Bass (2008: 372). William Byrd complained in the antebellum period that southerners ate so much pig flesh that it made them "extremely hoggish in their temper, and many of them seem to grunt rather than speak in their ordinary conversation" (Taylor, 1982: 2). Van Sykes of Bob Sykes Barbecue in Bessemer, Alabama, explained more than a century later that southerners "had an animal that had a million different uses.'' It was "the reason hogs became such folklore in the South" (Bass, 2008: 375). Use value,

then, was generative of the symbolism and caricature that permeated the region in relation to pigs. (The same could be said of the caricature in relation to slaves.) Unsurprisingly, Sykes's restaurant has a giant pig statue on the roof (Bass, 2008: 383).

Barbecue restaurant signs take a variety of forms, though they all do functionally similar work in anesthetizing those who see them to the reality of the brutal treatment of the killed animals inside the building behind them, a process facilitated by what Richard Bulliet has called post-domesticity, wherein the separation of humans from the process of animal-food preparation has elevated pets to an honorary human status while farmed animals are diminished, empty-signifiers that can be filled by human capitalist whims (Bulliet, 2005). The representation of pigs these restaurants present are best understood when divided into fourteen distinct categories. First, and most simply, are linguistic representations without accompanying imagery. There is a minimal amount of work done with such nomenclature, but there is work being done nonetheless. When, for example, psychologist Stanley Elkins described the dehumanizing effects of slavery as creating a Sambo character, a willing participant in his own demise after the psycological devestation of the institution, he needed no imagery to cause controversy with his interpretation. "Sambo, the typical plantation slave, was docile but irresponsible, loyal but lazy, humble but chronically given to lying and stealing," Elkins wrote. "His behavior was full of infantile silliness and his talk inflated with childish exaggeration. His relationship with his master was one of utter dependence and childlike attachment: it was indeed this child-like quality that was

the very key to his being"[11] (Elkins, 1976: 82). It was the description itself, his use of the word Sambo, that did such controversial work, conjuring the racist illustrations and minstrel performances upon which the term was based. In addition, says Michael D. Harris, "visual signs were reinforced by representations of black dialectical language as an aspect of the complex visual/verbal representation of race" (Harris, 2003: 3). In the same way, using the word "pig" in the names of restaurants that serve the corpses of those animals traduces the line created by traditional nomenclature like "pork" that serves in a different way to hide the reality of what is being consumed. It is in that line-crossing, as in other linguistic tropes like puns, that humor is created, thereby allowing people to laugh at and excuse what might otherwise be considered taboo or morally problematic. It is the guilty laugh of coconspirators, the nod of those who know they are breaking the rules. At the same time, however, the language of the signs reassures all of those in on the joke that the rules allow what they are doing. It is a taboo that is condoned, with all of the pleasure and none of the guilt.

[11] The principal counter to the Elkins claim came from Herbert Aptheker. For Aptheker, rebelliousness and slave agency was not simply present in revolts and runaways. Challenging the claims of docility from scholars like Elkins, he argued that rebelliousness was ever-present in slave life, as slaves attempted to reclaim the bulk of their humanity by committing acts of everyday rebellion--breaking tools, feining illness, slowing their working pace. "Discontent and rebelliousness were not only exceedingly common, but, indeed, characteristic of American Negro slaves," he writes (Aptheker, 1943: 374). It is this portrayal that won the argumentative day and persisted to influence generations of historians of slavery who acknowlege slave agency (Stampp, 1971).

Figure 35: Simple language. Online images, public domain/no relevant third party. Image 1: Asheville, NC; Image 2: Orlando, FL.

Other signs do their work with actual images, the simplest of those being basic non-anthropomorphized representations of pigs, which serve their ends in similar ways to linguistic markers. There is in their existence a tacit acknowledgement that a "pig" is the one to be consumed, but as with using the word "pig" in a simple linguistic sequence, that acknowledgement is a form of excuse, a way to cross a metaphorical line while knowing that what will happen in the building behind the signage is allowed. Fitting that description, most such imagery includes words on the body of realistically represented pigs, reassuring all that the pig is an object to be consumed rather than a living being. The pig situated on such a sign, then, is simultaneously situated as a sign, as a repository for words or for human hunger. It is the simplest form of semiotic othering.[12]

[12] In making such a semiotic move, these restaurant signs cut against the common effort of humans to disconnect themselves from the lives of the animals they eat. Anthropologist Noélie Vialles has distinguished between "zoophagy," which she describes as the process of eating recognizable animals, and "sarcophagy," or eating unidentifiable animal corpses, and argues that the shift to sarcophagi began in the early nineteenth century (Vialles, 1987: 19). While the food in these restaurants maintains a sarcophagi in its presentation, the signs drawing eaters to the establishment evince a zoophagy that doesn't exist on plates. The reasons for that disconnect are explained in the rest of the chapter.

Figure 36: Basic non-anthropomorphized. Online images, public domain/no relevant third party. Left to right: Image 1: Dayton, OH; Image 2: Presque Isle, ME; Image 3: San Antonio, TX; Image 4; Tuscaloosa, AL.

Another simple form of semiotic othering is symbolic, a clear reference to images of pigs without the actual pig, doing the same work with minimal display. The referent is the same, the coding of the metaphorical line more subtle.

Figure 37: Basic symbol. Online image, public domain/no relevant third party. Richmond, VA.

Barbecue signs, of course, also anthropomorphize pigs to further establish the epistemological and ontological distance between consumer and consumed. The most basic form of that anthropomorphizing comes from giving images of pigs human clothing or facial expressions. In so doing, that signage takes the guilty laugh of coconspirators and puts it in the forefront, using anthropomorphization to enhance the joke, to make it more public and obvious and thereby abrogate any responsibility for those who might respond to it by entering the restaurant with which it is associated.

Figure 38: Basic anthropomorphized. Online images, public domain/no relevant third party. Left to right: Image 1: Greer, SC; Image 2: Ocean Springs, MS; Image 3: Kansas City, MO; Image 4: Rock Hill, SC.

Such anthropomorphisms, however, are also specialized in very specific ways to do specific kinds of work. Two of those specializations are what I will call here the “cool” pig and the “fancy” pig. The cool pig is a common image that presents the pig representative on a given sign as popular and rebellious. The pig

representatives in this category typically wear sunglasses, smoke cigars, or both. They sometimes play musical instruments or stand mysteriously in a trenchcoat. The purpose of such imagery is not only to anthropomorphize the pig, but to do so in a way that makes him someone to admire as a rebel. In this category, not only are potential customers intended to identify with the restaurant’s mascot, but they are supposed to associate the pig, and thus by extension the restaurant itself, with a sly hipness that would presumably redound to the potential customer. By using the image of the pig to emphasize the coolness of the establishment itself, the restaurant is able to make the focus of the imagery the accoutrements that adorn the pig rather than the pig itself, thus deflecting from the reality of the death of such pigs inside.

Figure 39: The cool pig. Surfing pig photo taken by author. Microphone pig, Alamy stock photos. Other images online, public domain/no relevant third party. Left to right: Image 1: New Orleans, LA; Image 2: Boaz, AL; Image 3: Memphis, TN; Image 4: Memphis, TN; Image 5: Fremont, CA.

Or, perhaps, the imagery makes the act of consumption aspirational. The coolness of the mascot, even though it is representative of the animals killed and consumed, makes the acts of killing and consumption cool themselves. That aspirational identity is also clearly present in the “fancy” pig anthropomorphized specialization. In these representations, anthropomorphized pigs are portrayed in tuxedos or top hats. They are depicted as upper class, eliciting a similar response as does the “cool” pig. Viewer focus is drawn to the clothes and signifiers of wealth rather than to the pig himself, deflecting from the death of the animal and emphasizing instead the incongruity of a pig in fancy clothes or the aspirational value of associating consuming such animals in a given establishment with upper class respectability, a relationship antithetical to the working class history of barbecue. That history offers yet another interpretation of fancy pig imagery, an eat-the-rich sentiment familiar to the poor farmers and rural artisans of the South and West, the same sentiment drawing voters to populist candidates like Huey P. Long and George Wallace drawing them instead to the barbecue joints that dot the precincts that put such leaders in office.

Figure 40: The fancy pig. Pig n Whistle taken by author. Other images online, public domain/no relevant third party. Left to right: Image 1: Memphis, TN; Image 2: New York, NY; Image 3: Waterville, ME.

That image of poor farmers and rural artisans is also part of the visual nomenclature of barbecue signs, another category of anthropomorphization presenting pigs as representations of hillbillies. In this iteration, pigs feature overalls, straw hats, or other manifestations of rural poverty. They are the actual embodiment of the Sambo character, evincing a generic ignorance or simpleness, an evocation of the primitive. At the same time, however, the hillbilly symbol is the counter to the fancy pig, inverting the eat-the-rich motif to revel in those who would do the eating. Along with providing that class-based reverse of portrayals of the wealthy, the hillbilly image also serves, as does the Sambo imagery, to diminish those it intends to mimic by associating them with stupidity, thereby excusing any behavior that might redound negatively to them. It is the kind of alterity that signifies not just difference but diminished capacity, making mistreatment towards them justifiable. The Sambo caricature signified lack of humanity; the hillbilly pig caricature signifies lack of worthy life more broadly.

Figure 41: The hillbilly pig. Online images. Image 1: Jessica Wasson, https://dribbble.com/shots/3884177-BBQ-Hillbilly-Pig. Other images: public domain/ no relevant third party. Image 2: Columbia, SC; Image 3; Savannah, GA.

As Carol Adams and others have demonstrated, there is also a category of pig caricature that uses sexualized female imagery that serves much the same function as such imagery does when human females are sexualized (see Adams, 1990). It reduces pigs to bodies to be craved rather than individuals to be seen. Though Adams has demonstrated this "pornography of meat" (2015) in a variety of species and contexts, pig imagery on barbecue restaurant signs certain play on this trope.

Figure 42: The sexualized pig. Images individually submitted by readers from caroljadams.com

While all anthropomorphized pig imagery is by definition fanciful, some of that imagery is more fanciful than others. Some restauranteurs, for example, play on the metaphor of the flying pig. “When pigs fly” is a common phrase denoting a structural impossibility dating to at least the eighteenth century and still commonly used in the twenty-first (Ammer, 2013: 494). Referencing the phrase, some barbecue signs feature flying pigs, again emphasizing the fanciful to distract from the act of killing. Or, perhaps, the use of such caricatures reinforces the notion of impossibility, signifying that if a pig cannot fly, a pig cannot really be a tangible

victim of the dining experience. Either way, the use of the familiar flying pig trope is a common refrain on barbecue signage.

Figure 43: The flying pig. Online images, public domain/no relevant third party. Left to right: Image 1: Nashville, TN; Image 2: Warner Robins, GA; Image 3: Durham, NC.

In the same vein, pig representations on barbecue signs also play on other fanciful imagery. Such carciatures are not anthropomorphizations. Instead they are othermorphizations, using pigs in situations even less related to their original constitutions than that of human forms and symbols. An institution in Grafton, Ohio, for example, uses a pig head in the traditional place of a human skull in the pirate's skull-and-crossbones. In a technomorphization, a takeout restaurant in Bradenton, Florida uses an image of a pig-automobile as its mascot.[13] Such visual metaphors only expand the fancy that comes from flying pig images, pushing pig suffering further from the representation while still including the subject of that suffering in

[13] For more on technomorphizations, see Virilio, 1995; Lum, et al., 2011; Giaccardi, 2005.

the picture itself. There are in such images new but related forms of permission for the human customers viewing them.

Figure 44: Othermorphized/technomorphized pigs. Jones Bones online image, public domain/no relevant third party. Pigout taken by the author.

Perhaps even more problematic are the versions of barbecue signage that feature pigs playing a role in the barbecue restaurant process itself. One category of representation, for example, features pigs as consumers of the barbecue product, as, ostensibly, consumers of other pigs. In such depictions, anthropomorphized pigs carry silverware or napkins. It is in its way a depiction of cannibalism, wherein a pig prepares to eat another pig. Either the grotesquery of such symbolism is so hyperbolic that it serves the same purpose of fanciful depictions of pigs who fly, or the caricature places pigs in the roles of the potential human customers, reinforcing the notion that the pigs are in on the activity, thus dismissing any culpability in the human act against the dead pigs inside the restaurant.

Figure 45: Pigs as consumers. Top two images online, public domain/no relevant third party. Autry's taken by the author. Left to right: Image 1: Location unknown; Image 2: Saginaw, MI; Image 3: Valdosta, GA.

In an extension of that particular metaphor, many signs also portray pigs as cooks, reversing the metaphor and picturing or intimating pigs barbecuing other pigs. In these images, pigs wear chef's hats or carry cooking utensils. The caricatures do the same work as those of pigs-as-consumers, either horrifying through hyperbole or excusing every human who enters the restaurant because the pigs are supposedly part of the conceit.

Figure 46: Pigs as cooks. Online images, public domain/no relevant third party, except The Pig Bar-B-Q and Bar-B-Q Rib Shack, taken by the author. Left to right: Image 1: Asheville, NC; Image 2: Beaufort, SC; Image 3: Decatur, AL; Image 4: Jacksonville, FL; Image 5: Jacksonville, FL.

That being the case, it is unsurprising that there are several efforts at combinations of various categories that exacerbate the effect of various metaphors by combining them. The examples below feature two "cool" cooks and one "hillbilly" consumer.

Figure 47: Combinations of categories. Smokey's taken by the author. Other images online, public domain/no relevant third party. Left to right: Image 1: Harvey, MI; Image 2: Jacksonville, FL; Image 3: Wisconsin State Fair.

The final and most disturbing category of barbecue sign images is that which openly depicts pigs as the victims of the barbecue process, making a joke of their suffering, reveling in what actually happens to the pigs whose carcasses human customers are preparing to eat. There are two versions of such imagery. The first feature nonanthropomorphized pigs depicted as the objects of butchery.

Lines divide pigs into cuts of meat, which are labeled on the body, or the pigs are literally divided into more than one piece.

Figure 48: Nonanthropomorphized victims. Online images, public domain/no relevant third party. Left to right: Image 1: Iowa City, IA; Image 2: Unknown location.

The other, even more disturbing version of such signs feature anthropomorphized pigs negotiating in one way or another with the fire that will ultimately barbecue them. Some of them respond with confusion, some with fear, others with relaxed comfort. Those who seem to enjoy the heat are functioning in the same way that cook and consumer categories function, as a means of abrogating the guilt of human customers. Those who respond with confusion and fear are unique to the set, as the images are overt signposts of the brutality involved in barbecue, but that revelry in cruelty, despite its seeming semiotic differences, acts similarly to other caricatures. If such brutality can be mocked, the reasoning goes, then it cannot really be brutality, again invoking gallows humor as a form of permissive avoidance. By making a joke of the killing, horror becomes comedy. The cruelty, then, is the point.[14]

[14] In a similar vein, “The Pig and Butcher” tavern in Sussex, England has a sign with a pig begging for mercy on one side, and living it up with the butcher on the other, apparently after the butcher changed his mind about killing him (Mizelle, 2011: 164; Sillar and Meyler, 1961).

Figure 49: Anthropomorphized victims. Online photos, public domain/no relevant thirt party. Left to right: Image 1: Clemson, SC; Image 2: Lexington, KY; Image 3: New Orleans, LA; Image 4: Sayre, PA.

The signs are exemplars of what Cary Wolfe has called the "humanist and speciesist structure of subjectivization," a structure with consequences that spread beyond the parking lots that sit in the shadows of such signs. “As long as it is institutionally taken for granted that it is all right to systematically exploit and kill nonhuman animals simply because of their species,” writes Wolfe, “then the humanist discourse of species will always be available for use by some humans against other humans as well, to countenance violence against the social Other of whatever species--or gender, or race, or class, or sexual difference" (Wolfe, 2003: 8).

Ideologies that play on such social others are not themselves static or eternal. “An ideology must be constantly constructed and verified in social life,” says Barbara Fields. “If it is not, it dies” (Fields, 1990: 118). And so the stereotypes

built off of such otherings, claims Karla Holloway, “rehearse the narrative codes through which our cultures conduct their business” (Holloway, 1995: 38).

It is a common feminist piece of analysis, for example, that “American literature and popular culture generally reinforce the notion of men (and boys) as the central figures in society. Animal films—being metaphoric replicas of this human social structure—exhibit the same systematic bias” (Hirschman and Sanders, 1997: 65). The pig signs are for the most part all male, too. The gendered tropes of female vulnerability would more than likely make customers uneasy about eating their meals, as feeding on the cooked corpse of an innocent, of someone with a vested interest in its own survival, is a violative act, and violative acts are easier performed sometimes on the goofy, sometimes the cocky, but usually, inevitably, the male.

It is another social coding with deep racial roots. The animalization of the black male was built on the myth of white feminine virtue. To cover the common sexual transgressions of white slaveowners, narratives of black male sexual predators dominated in the antebellum period. And the transgressions of white slaveowners were legion. One of the most infamous cases was that of Celia, a Missouri slave purchased at age fourteen by sixty-year-old Robert Newsom in 1850. He raped her repeatedly until she finally killed him in 1855. She was put on trial for murder, and her lawyer argued that an 1845 Missouri law made it illegal to “take any woman unlawfully against her will and by force, menace or duress, compel her to be defiled,” and argued that because of that law, Celia had a right to defend herself. The jury, however, was constituted of twelve white males. Celia was convicted and executed (McLaurin, 1991).

The compensatory claims of aggressive black male sexuality that rose in the wake of such behavior led, following the Civil War, to violent defenses of the declared virtue of white womanhood, which manifested most readily and most notoriously in lynching, which ultimately killed thousands in the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth. Between 1889 and 1932, 3,745 people were lynched in the United States, an average of more than two per week. In the 1890s alone, the country averaged more than 180 lynchings per year[15] (Feimster, 2009). It was, as Stuart Tolnay and EM Beck have explained, a "festival of violence" (Tolnay and Beck, 1995).

"The production of visual images in media functions from within white imagination to exploit, sensationalise, placate, distort, and carnivalise representations of Africanness," writes Robin Chandler.[16] "The discourse fundamentally floats between folk and popular traditions and the construction and use of visual icons which embody the ways in which groups see themselves and others" (Chandler, 1996: 15-16). Chandler's discussion engages white supremacy in the production of images that constitute what she calls visual terrorism, "the production and use of visual images to express contempt for, to disempower and to terrorise members of a particular culture group, by another group" (Chandler, 1996: 17). The creation of such content is in aid of the white gaze that began by positioning itself as slaveowner, then warrior, litigator, or employer, always in a superior position to the subject, or rather object, of the gaze, thus giving tacit

[15] The literature of lynching is vast, tackling the practice from a variety of different organizing categories and temporal periods (Brundage, 1993; Brundage, 1997; Waldrep, 2006; Waldrep, 2008; Wood, 2009).

[16] Chandler here refers to the context of the United States, as does the bulk of the analysis that follows, but the racist kitsch tradition has not been limited to the United States. It also, for example, has evinced a substantial presence in Paris (Auslander and Holt, 2003).

permission to treat those featured in the imagery in ways that propped up assumptions of white supremacy and made the needs of the oppressed meaningless. It was a recapitulation of John Berger's "widespread commercial diffusion of animal imagery" and Foucault's panopticon (Berger, 1980: 26; Foucault, 2012). As Chandler concludes, "the strategy of visual terrorism insidiously perpetuates the disequilibrium of inter-group and society relations and systematic discrimination" (Chandler, 1996: 21). It is an analysis particularly transferable to happy pig iconography, as such signage preferences the human gaze in aid of positioning superiority that gives tacit permission to treat those featured in the imagery in ways that prop up assumptions of human supremacy and make the needs of the oppressed meaningless. It uses visual icons to distort and carnivalize representations of pigs, excusing pernicious behavior by assuring everyone who responds to such signage by turning into the given parking lot that everyone else is in on the conceit, as well.

Stereotypical images of pigs have existed for centuries, but the racist kitsch, the visual terrorism, that featured caricatured minstrel imagery dated from at least the late 1820s, though no scholar has pinned down a point of first instance. They appeared regularly in mainstream antebellum media and continued in the years after the war, corresponding with the rise and popularity of minstrelsy, a lived performance of such static images[17] (Harris, 1998: 28; Lhamon, 1998: 56-115; Taylor and Austen, 2012: 25-80; Goings, 1994: 1-18; Diawara, 1999; Boskin, 1986).

[17] The comparison of animal representations and blackface representations are not limited to pigs. Patricia Turner, for example, devotes a fascinating discussion to black characters being confronted by alligators. The alligator trope is also discussed by David Pilgrim (Turner, 1994: 31-40; Pilgrim, 2015: 86-94).

The first racialized consumer products, however, are easier to track. They appeared in the 1780s with Jasperware Wedgewood's medallion portraying a kneeling slave. "Am I not a man and a brother?" the medallion said (Nyong'o, 2002: 379). That artifact was not in service to racist ends. It was, instead, seeking to take advantage of revolutionary Enlightenment ideology to note the hypocrisy of "all men are created equal" claims made by the leaders of a country where owning other human beings was legal and encouraged. The transition such artifacts made into racial caricature occurred following the birth of minstrelsy in the 1830s (Nyong'o, 2002: 379; Boskin, 1986).

The Sambo character itself first developed in the era of minstrel shows and remained a staple of "popular culture between 1850 and 1920," explains Richard Siegesmund. "However, Sambo had not faded from the American consciousness with the demise of the minstrel show. The shuffling, slow-witted, character mutated like a cancer," appearing in movies, television, and radio (Siegesmund, 2007: 323).

Racist iconography built off of minstrel show performances were furthered in 1899 when Scottish author Helen Bannerman published *The Story of Little Black Sambo*[18] (Martin, 2007: 42; Bannerman, 1899). She was writing in an era of Social Darwinism (see Chapter 1), when dominant racial science combined with the overt popularity of minstrelsy to create formulaic assumptions about black behavior and appearance (Van Der Horn-Gibson, 2008). It was also the height of British colonialism in Africa and India. Bannerman's husband, in fact, was part of the Indian Medical Service, and she lived in India from the 1890s until World War I.

[18] Bannerman originally wrote the story for her daughters and did not originally intend it to be published. Her friend took the story to London and sold the rights to it for five pounds. Bannerman's story remained in print throughout the entirety of the twentieth century, but the author never saw any profit from it (Martin, 2007: 42).

Hers was the colonial gaze, that of white eyes seeing subjected peoples as diminished and caricatured beings (Yuill, 1976).

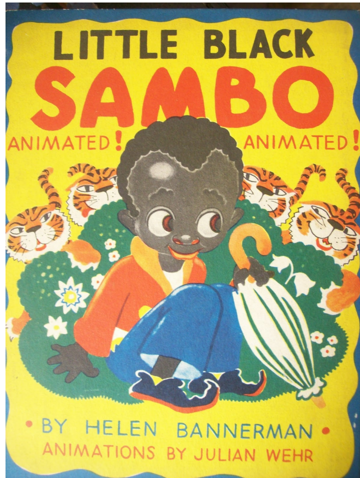


Figure 50: Bannerman H (1899) *The Story of Little Black Sambo*. London: Grant Richards.

The story of Sambo, as told by Bannerman, is one that diminishes nonhuman animals to food while diminishing black children to stereotypes. In the story, Sambo goes for a walk in new clothes, which are eaten off of him one by one by a series of tigers, before the tigers eventually melt into butter, which becomes the base for a meal for Sambo and his family. As Tavia Nyong'o has concluded, "The story defers and ultimately disavows its desire to eat Sambo, making a visual meal of the threatening tigers instead"[19] (Nyong'o, 2002: 378-379). It is, in other words, the melding of barbecue signs and racist kitsch, using caricature to damage respectability and justify the killing and eating of animals.

Racist kitsch tends to feature imagery of children like Sambo, or of stereotypical slave figures like Uncle Tom, Mammy, and Topsy, the degraded child

[19] It is significant that while the book was controversial for its portrayal of race and colonial stereotypes from its inception, it did not begin to face legal challenges attempting to ban it until the 1970s, after the advent of the Black Power movement that was, among other things, reforming the linguistic and semiotic use of pigs (see Chapter 6). Those challenges began from librarians in Chicago and spread to different parts of the country (Yuill, 1976b; Jarvis, 2017).

performer from Harriet Beecher Stowe's 1852 novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (Nyong'o, 2002: 375). "In its failed effort to move unobtrusively among the objects of our everyday encounter, racist kitsch unwittingly reveals itself to be profoundly laden with meaning," explains Nyong'o. "Attempting to remain ephemera at the periphery of our vision, racist kitsch in fact holds our gaze, stops our conversations, and in its demand for attention in spite of itself, is an equal embarrassment" (2002: 371). Nyong'o describes the strategies for overcoming disgust at racist imagery, an "oppositional gaze" that black viewers of such iconography embody but that is, importantly, unavailable to pigs who confront their own versions of such imagery in very different ways, usually on a slaughterhouse killing floor[20] (2002: 371-374). Such is the reason that critics like Robin Chandler refer to Sambo figurines and other kitsch as "visual terrorism" (Chandler, 1996: 17). There is no reason not to see pig-caricatured barbecue signs as a similar form of terrorism, if not a greater form, as it leads to far more institutionalized violence.

Nyong'o (2002: 377) explains that "the shiny, hard, and brittle surfaces of racist ceramic figurines reflect back upon the psychology of scapegoating black children." She sees them as a "racial simile" that provide "an alibi for racist violence," while meanwhile "salving the guilt that accompanies the wish to punish the black child purposelessly" (Nyong'o, 2002: 377). It is that very role that is played by pig imagery on barbecue signs. They do not, just as racist kitsch does not, divert from the subject and image of the dispossessed group, but they divert from the necessity to feel any broader concern about their treatment. Thus the salving of guilt is the work of both entities. "Even moments of jarring violence are

[20] That gaze can also be turned inward, as twenty-first century artists have used such imagery and language as a modern tool against the kinds of bigotry that the original kitsch was supposed to represent (Catanese, 2005: 699-714).

remembered as a charming encounter with a pickaninny," explains Nyong'o. "A bodily metaphor that people turn to in describing this pleasurable and guilty violence is eating. The performing black child is either hungry or eating or being eaten, or, ideally, all three" (Nyong'o, 2002: 378). Hungry, eating, eaten. It is a model that defines American barbecue signs, which have played clearly from the example presented to them by such racist imagery.

"Their seeming charm makes African-American visual stereotypes genuinely sinister," Siegesmund says. "In their original context, popular culture images of African-Americans were visually designed to be cute or benevolent." A smiling child would be eating watermelon or avoiding a tiger, for example. "The images seemingly evoke an idyllic, innocent world while subtly reinforcing the racist conception of African-Americans as infantile and subservient (Siegesmund, 2007: 324).

For Manthia Diawara, the "kitsch of blackness" is the "imitation of a discourse of liberation" in the service of "mass identification" (Diawara, 1992: 289). So too is the kitsch of pig caricature, presenting the imagery of happy pigs or cool pigs, but most certainly living pigs, to aid its own discourse of liberation for mass identification, in this case the identification of potential customers with that potential liberation and thus the assuaging of collective wrongdoing. Such symbolism uses "verbal/visual grammar" to reinforce existing constructs and engrain either white or human supremacy (Harris, 1998: 27).

Stereotypical representations of black lives and features were not limited to racist kitch and minstrel posters, of course. Ruth Thibodeau, for example, has described the evolution of black representations in *New Yorker* cartoons throughout the second half of the twentieth century, demonstrating that black

characters were rarely featured, and when they were, they were presented in stereotypical roles that pushed them to social margins (Thibodeau, 1989; Boskin, 1986). It is a demonstration that when racist tropes are presented as mainstream, they seep into every aspect of culture, even high brow fare typically unassociated with such codings. Speciesist tropes work the same way.

Like early pig caricatures in Disney movies, the racist imaginary was also given succor by filmmaking, which only magnified blackface stereotypes in the first three decades of the twentieth century (Bogle, 1992: 3-34; Boskin, 1986). Describing *Little Rascals*, a series of short films that ran from the 1920s to the 1940s, for example, Nyong'o writes, "The cultural work it seems to do is less a bolstering of claims to white supremacy, and more a production of the appropriate ambience for the insinuation of racially-unmarked innocence, an innocence predicated upon a forgetfulness of the past that is one of the greatest privileges of whiteness" (Nyong'o, 2002: 381). The cultural act of forgetting and the subsuming of guilt into privilege is aided equally by caricatured barbecue signs, allowing viewers not to directly engage in the atavism of the violence they are about to commit but instead to excuse that violence, to enact a forgetfulness that eases such behavior.

Nyong'o also explains that in many episodes of the film series, black little rascals are exposed to a variety of deaths in ways that white rascals never are[21] (2002: 381). Again there is an emphasis on the death of an other who is deemed less than, and the death is thereby excused through comedy or caricature. It is a visual trope all too familiar to those driving past barbecue restaurant signs.

[21] For more on this dynamic, see Lee, 2015.

“White ethnicity was built upon the imposition of a mythic black racial identity as a counter-distinctive threat,” argues Michael D. Harris (1998: 28). That was because of the inherent contradiction between the country’s stated Enlightenment ideals of liberty and freedom and the reality of the ubiquitous slave system present at the time of revolution (Harris, 1998: 29-30). It put white people in a difficult rhetorical and logical position in defending American ideals, a position aided by caricatures that reassured them that those scarlet letters of their own hypocrisy were so degraded that working to square white American morality claims with its rhetorical flourish was unnecessary. It was a demonstration of moral schizophrenia, a willing cognitive dissonance that willfully ignores the vulnerable to justify the individual’s role in the system that dispossesses them (see Chapter 3).[22] The moral schizophrenia of racist defenders of American liberty, propped up by iconography that belittles those not able to participate fully in the system, is matched by the moral schizophrenia of speciesist purveyors of pig corpses, propped up by iconography that belittles the lives of those consumed as trivial, comical.

The images of racist kitsch do not find a direct one-to-one correlation in every category of the images of pig representations on barbecue signs, largely because the viewers of such imagery are not being asked to physically consume the African American population. Still, the representations look strikingly similar, as they are borne of similar epistemic motivations. There were Jim Crow depictions with large simplistic grins that matched those of barbecue pigs. There were cigars,

[22] For more on this phenomenon and the effort of black artists to reappropriate and push back against it, see Wanzo, 2020.

there were serving and cooking metaphors, and there were watermelons. Always watermelons (Pilgrim, 2018: 67-94).

Figure 51: The Great Barbecue War. *Esquire* (June 1976): 72-73.

In this illustration from *Esquire* magazine in 1976, the pig barbecue caricature is mingled with the Sambo character directly, as he is depicted as a watermelon-tossing simpleton (Villas, 1976). The legacy of kitsch and cartoons depicting Sambo characters with watermelons are legion, playing on the common trope that African Americans possess an insatiable appetite for watermelon.

Figure 52: Watermelon images. From Pilgrim, 2015; Pilgrim, 2018; Levinthal and Diawara, 1999.

Combined with such imagery are depictions of the ignorant smiles that match those of smiling barbecue pigs.

Figure 53: Smiling images. From Pilgrim, 2015; Pilgrim, 2018; Levinthal and Diawara, 1999.

Then there are the primitive images that function as a predecessor for the hillbilly pig imagery.

Figure 54: Primitive images. From Pilgrim, 2015; Pilgrim, 2018; Levinthal and Diawara, 1999.

There are presentations of what would equate to pseudo-coolness,

Figure 55: Cool images. From Pilgrim, 2015; Pilgrim, 2018.

including the use of cigars and musical instruments.

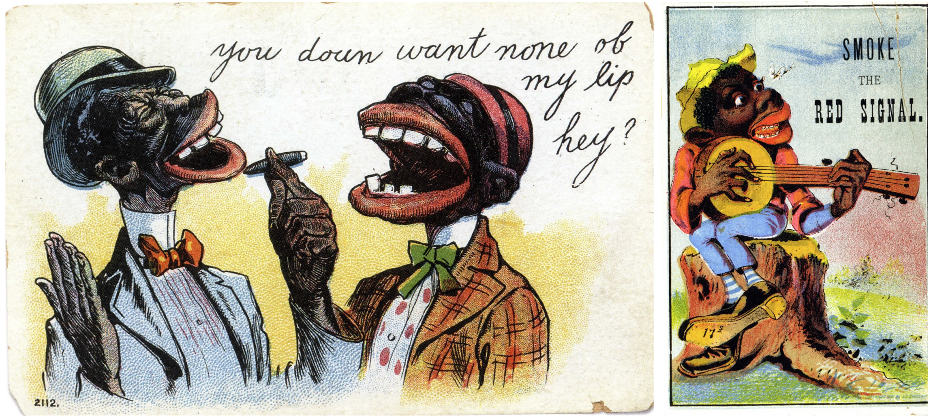


Figure 56: Cool images continued. From Pilgrim, 2015; Pilgrim, 2018.

And the fancy images.

Figure 57: "Fancy" imagery. From Pilgrim, 2015; Pilgrim, 2018.

Then there are the cooks.

Figure 58: Cook imagery. From Pilgrim, 2015; Pilgrim, 2018; Levinthal and Diawara, 1999.

And the servers.

Figure 59: Server imagery. From Pilgrim, 2015; Pilgrim, 2018; Levinthal and Diawara, 1999.

And sexualized imagery that made of black bodies their own sexual politics of meat.

Figure 60: Sexualized imagery. Online images, public domain.

There are even victim images, so disturbing and prevalent in barbecue pig signs, as well.

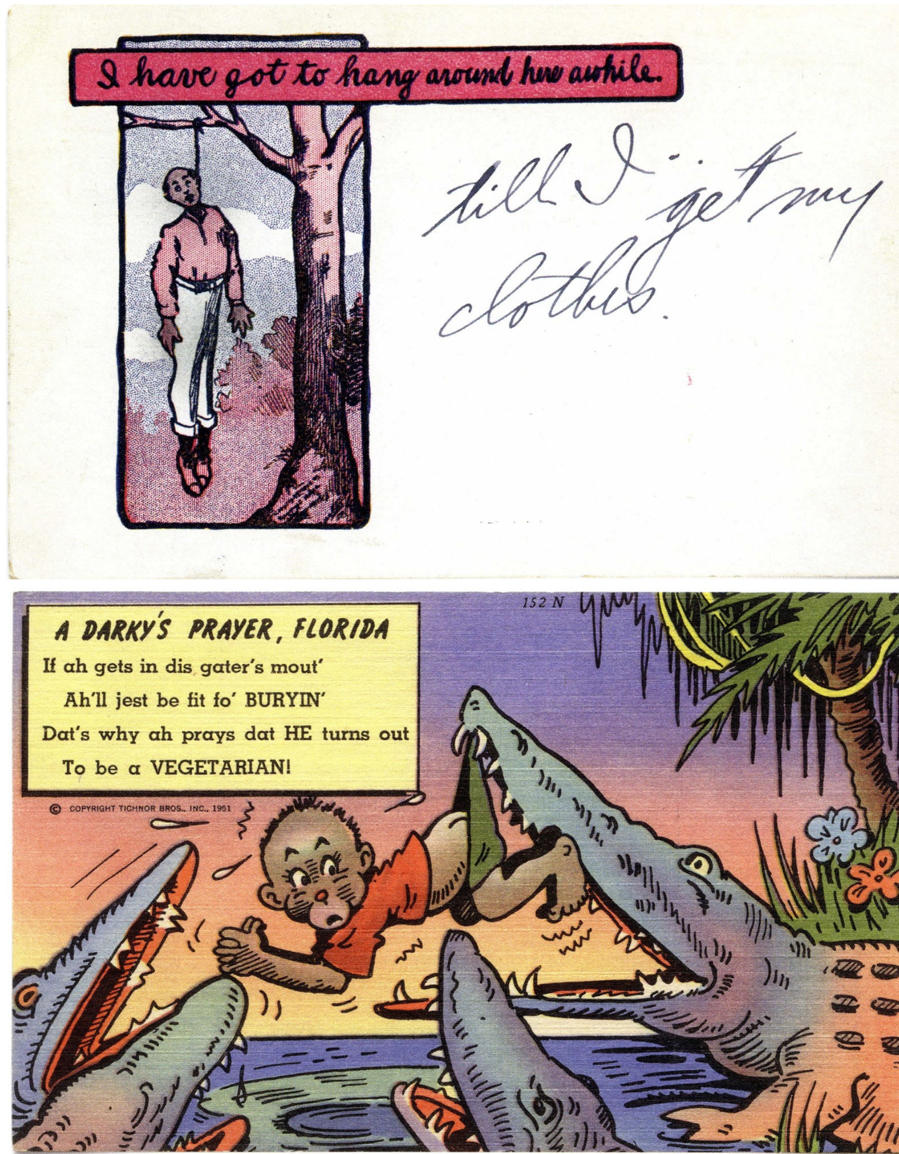


Figure 61: Victim imagery. From Pilgrim, 2018.

The images are played for laughs, working through their bigotry to obviate the guilt of those whose bigotry would allow them to laugh in the first place. It is no coincidence, after all, that the early picnics associated with the development of barbecue were mirrored in the "ritualized picnics" of the lynch party (Sharfstein,

2012: 669). The images are striking for their racism, for the legacy of the semiotics of Jim Crow, but also for the consistency that they share with the pig imagery on barbecue signs, which has mirrored in its speciesism the bigotry of its racist forebears. The categories, the style, and most importantly the intent are all the same. The Sambo imagery's ability to both rely on and simultaneously reinforce white supremacy is a demonstration of the same relationship that pig caricature barbecue signs have with human supremacy and speciesism. "The momentum of over 150 years of derogatory images and characterizations flowed down on our heads with real consequences because white power enforced and depended on black racial identity," Michael Harris explains of the fight against the visual presentation of white supremacy. "We reinvented ourselves repeatedly to resist and frustrate the oppressive systems and representations that circumscribed us collectively, acting on the belief that we either became coproducers or might change the worldview by our action" (Harris, 2003: 9). It was an effort at reinvention simply unavailable to the pigs caricatured in similar fashion. They were sign relations without recompense.

"When we turn an animal into a sign relation," Erica Sheen has explained, "we enhance its potential for abuse" (Sheen, 2005: 236). She makes her case in relation to the representation of dalmatians in Disney films and the negative consequences that redounded to actual dalmations as a result, but it is an analysis that works for pig representations, as well. Such animals become "society's unthought; those we cannot see but need to visualise," victims of an advertising

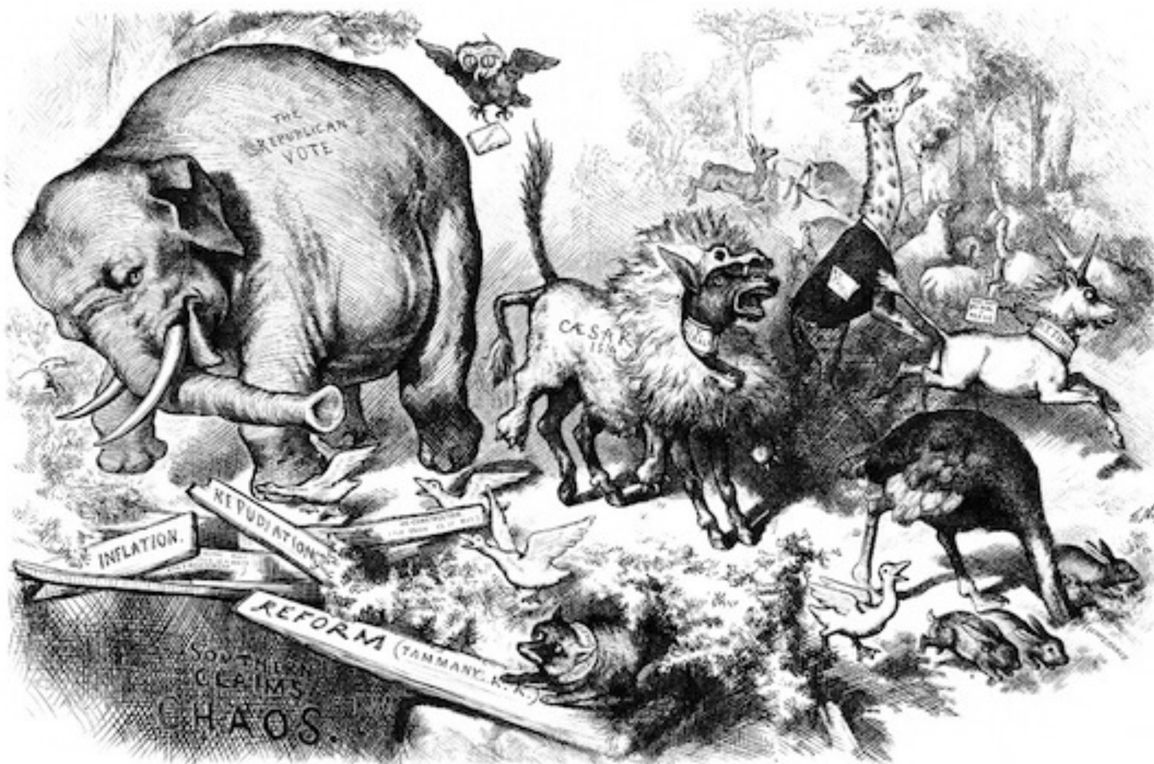
presence that becomes a simulacrum for the actual lives being lost as a result[23] (Sheen, 2005: 253).

The sign relations that create society's unthought line America's highways, doing much the same work that racist Sambo images did for another of society's unthought in previous generations, both in the forms of their presentation and in the intent to excuse consumption. In his 1952 novel *Invisible Man*, Ralph Ellison described the racial trauma of being black in white society, of being that unthought no matter the achievement that should have by all rights earned the respect of white thinking. It was the trauma of becoming invisible (Ellison, 1952). The pigs inside American barbecue restaurants were, in similar fashion, made invisible by the caricatured signs in the parking lots that pilloried their existence and made it easier for human consumers to forget. The United States may have been "the great Hog-eating Confederacy," the "Republic of Porkdom" (Wilson, 1860: 178), but barbecue signs cast a long shadow that silenced the hog-squeal of the universe and hid the actual hogs, the corpses that constituted the pork being served. Despite their near ubiquity, they, too, were rendered invisible.

[23] The relationship between edibility and its relationship to semiotic representation, whether visual or linguistic, has been a subject of several other studies, as well (Tambiah, 1985; Silverstein, 2004).

CONCLUSION

By 1874, cartoonist Thomas Nast had become frustrated with what he saw as a Democratic agenda by the press to stoke fear about the Republican administration of Ulysses S. Grant and the potential that he would run for a third term in office two years later. In “Third Term Panic,” Nast depicts a donkey, representing the Democratic-leaning *New York Herald* newspaper, wearing the skin of a lion and using the costume to scare the other animals. The elephant, representing the Republican vote, is sent running into a chasm of inflation and chaos. The donkey had been a symbol of the Democratic Party since 1837, but “Third Term Panic” was Nast’s introduction of the elephant as a symbol for the Republicans.



THE THIRD-TERM PANIC.

Figure 62: Nast T (1874) Third Term Panic. *Harper's*, 7 November, pp. 312.

The cartoon was a demonstration of the semiotic use of human-animal comparisons in microcosm. The Democrats themselves are represented by the fox in Nast's image, holding fast to the reform plank of the corrupt Tammany Hall machine government of New York. Meanwhile, the donkey in lion's clothes frightens away animals who represent other members of the New York media. An ostrich representing the temperance movement has his or her head in the sand. It is the Republican vote, weighted with the girth of an elephant, that is placed in the most danger by what Nast sees as false and dangerous journalism[1] (Nast, 1874: 312).

Such representations would continue through the rest of the nineteenth century, through the twentieth, and into the twenty-first. The semiotic interaction between humans and nonhumans in the United States dramatically affected both dispossessed human groups and all nonhuman animals. Race was the principal form of human dispossession in the country, ensuring that race and species would interact in ways that would drive further problems for both groups. Meanwhile, the white human population would monopolize the discourse representing racial minorities and nonhuman animals, a demonstration of the power available to those using a biopolitical frame to control narratives and maintain hegemony.

And this account in no way exhausts the myriad ways that race and species work to reify one another in society. Kelly Oliver (2012), for example, has described the national reaction to the abandoned dogs of New Orleans following Hurricane

[1] The caption states, "An Ass, having put on the Lion's skin, roamed about in the Forest, and amused himself by frightening all the foolish Animals he met with in his wanderings."-- Shakespeare or Bacon.

Katrina, how sympathy for the dogs far outpaced the sympathy directed at the black denizens of the city abandoned by a federal government that let them die. Such sympathy "is displaced onto their dogs, seemingly because many white Americans can feel more sympathy toward dogs than they can toward African Americans." It was a demonstration, for Oliver, of white "inability to properly include African Americans in the *moral community*" (emphasis in original; Oliver, 2012: 495).

It was an act of biopower that needs more historical attention. Marcus Baynes-Rock (2015), for example, takes issue with thinkers like Martin Buber who preferenced language as the be-all, end-all of subjective relations. Buber famously argued for a dialogue-based I-You relationship among human beings, a relationship that generates self-realization and thus selfhood itself. And it is a relationship in which nonhuman animals could never participate because they do not have access to the human language that makes such dialogues possible (Buber, 1958). But Baynes-Rock argues that human language is "communication by abstractions," inefficient as a form of communication and thus as a mode of distinguishing between subject and object. "When it comes to engaging with the other as a significant being, in all the immediacy of self-actualization, you need to reach beyond abstract language and engage with the whole other through your bodily self," he argues. "Only with the entire body can we comprehend the other as truly other coming toward self. This is the kind of encounter that engenders the I-You relation" (Baynes-Rock, 2015: 81).

He makes his case in relation to the status of hyenas (*Crocuta crocuta*) in Harar, Ethiopia, who live among the human citizens of the town in a unique situation governed by a history of socially constructed norms. But "the defined,

contested, but agreed-upon boundary was not only a social construction of the hyenas; it was also a social construction of the human population. Through experiencing the place and listening to stories of hyena clan wars, the people of Harar came to learn its significance. They in turn passed these stories on to others. More than that, though, the people who witnessed the clan wars participated in the perpetuation of the site's significance to hyenas" (Baynes-Rock, 2015: 134) The cultural history of linguistic and social semiotics, in other words, directly impacts the lived existences of both human and nonhuman animals in a given space. In Harar, those constructions worked largely in favor of hyenas. That was because "it took the participation of both humans and hyenas to construct the significance of that place for both species" (Baynes-Rock, 2015: 134). The naming, in language, symbol, and law, was reciprocal in a way that it was not in the culture of the United States. When animals became tools in the abuse of black America, they became victims of an abuse themselves, because unlike the hyenas of Harar, their role in language, symbol, and law was always as object. They were the named, never the namer.

And so the role of both African Americans and nonhuman animals suffered under the "nominalizations" that served to "fix, stabilize, and, most crucially, enable bounding" (Chen, 2012: 74). The semiotics of language, symbol, and law worked to enact reciprocal forms of alterity on both groups, but that alterity played out in unequal ways. Speciesism became a tool in the white arsenal in the project to control the black population, and the racism that resulted would become a tool itself in the diminution of nonhuman animal lives. It tagged many species with scarlet letters that made them more vulnerable, helping to ease the transition to an American factory farming regime that would kill farmed animals in unprecedented

numbers. The conflicts over naming in language, symbol, and law, redounded negatively to both human and nonhuman animals, creating a vulnerability to potential killing for the black population and a vulnerability to almost certain killing for farmed animals, rats, and other species deemed inferior and expendable under such rubrics.

In a 1974 parody article in the *Journal of Social History*, a pseudonymous Charles Phineas made a case for the historical study of pets and other animals. "It seems brash to suggest that pets become the next 'fad' subject in social history," he argued, "but, after running through various ethnic groups (and now women), historians may need a new toy." Phineas jokingly worried that "university administrators will be under no pressure to add courses on the history of pets, until such time at least as obedience schools are merged with standard undergraduate fare" (Phineas, 1974: 339). Almost half a century later, the attitude of such dismissive parodies has not completely dissipated (Wilkie, 2015). But no understanding of life on earth, including the social history of humans, can be complete without understanding the human relationship with nonhuman animals. Almost every human narrative has either a direct or indirect effect on nonhuman animals, and as those effects tend to be ignored by historians, there is need for a large-scale revisioning of what history looks like and what the limits of the historical project can be. As Hilda Keane has explained, "The experiences of those without a voice—animals and certain humans—have been marked in the landscape, in the material culture of the past. Hence, other histories are possible. The key component, however, is the question being asked" (Kean, 2012: s64). Or, perhaps, as Umberto Eco has argued, the best method of comprehending a society's values is to examine the stories it tells (Eco, 1966).

Telling better stories and asking better questions has been cyclical in historiographical trends. There was a time in the 1960s, for example, when social history came along and changed the historical questions being asked, successfully arguing that historians really couldn't understand what was going on without knowing what poor people were doing. There was a time in the 1970s when women's history came along and changed the questions again, successfully arguing that historians really couldn't understand what was going on without knowing what women were doing. More recently, beginning in the 1980s, environmental historians have come along and again altered how they asked historical questions, successfully arguing that historians really can't understand what was going on without knowing humans' relationship with their natural surroundings. While animal historians have done amazing work in helping to reframe questions to consider the nonhuman in many different time periods and locations, "we have not to date been particularly well served by the history of animals in the twentieth century"[2] (Burt 2009, p. 159).

The history of animals is ubiquitous in the twentieth century, if only we ask the right questions. As explained by Kristin Asdal, Tone Druglitrø, and Steve Hinchliffe, "the humanities and social sciences provide rich tools for the re-iteration of the will, not to re-define biopolitics, but to use excursions into human-animal worlds to make accounts that may move and create possibilities for thinking and doing politics of life again" (2016: 26). History, existing as it does in a liminial space that bounds both the humanities and social sciences, is poised perfectly to help make such excursions. The intersection of race and species as presented in this

[2] There are exceptions to this rule. For examples, see Nance, 2015; Brantz, 2010; Fudge, 2002; Fudge, 2006; Schiebinger, 1993; Biehler, 2013; Ham and Senior, 1997; Sax, 2000.

account is among many self-reinforcing intersections that exist in American society and human societies across the globe,[3] but there is much more work to be done. “We must write a history which refuses the absolute separation of the species; refuses that which is the silent assumption of humanist history,” writes Erica Fudge, the leading historian of animals in medieval Britain. “By rethinking our past—reading it for the animals as well as the humans—we can begin a process that will only come to fruition when the meaning of ‘human’ is no longer understood in opposition to ‘animal’” (Fudge, 2002: 16).

That act of rethinking creates the kind of Damascus moment that Reconstruction historiography underwent after the revisionists began a sustained critique of racist Dunning School history. When the freedmen became actors in their own narratives, when historians took their interests into account, our collective historical vision fundamentally changed. African American history, and American history as a whole, are ready for a new revisionism, one that finally sees nonhuman animals as actors in their own narratives, that takes their interests into account. “Then ‘human’ can be recognized as meaning something quite new: a being which only differentiates itself by being able to write and interpret its own history. If this is so, it is only right that we should ensure that this history is the one we deserve” (Fudge, 2002: 16). Taking animals seriously means assuming their interests are just as valid as those of any other, and acknowledging that validity means including those interests in historical narratives.

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[3] Sherryl Vint, for example, has argued that the science fiction work of Philip K. Dick provides a commentary on “our historical and current exploitation of animals, and also our exploitation of those humans who have been animalized in discourse, such as women, the working classes, and non-whites, particularly slaves.” When Dick writes of androids in his *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*, “the homologous situations of androids and animals draw our attention to the discourse of speciesism” (Vint, 2007).

And inclusion, as any freedman of the 1870s would tell you, is the first step away from slavery.

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