

Activism,
Anthropocentrism,
and an Ethics
of Exclusion



WHAT COMES AFTER ENTANGLEMENT?

EVA HAIFA GIRAUD

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a Cultural Politics book

Edited by John Armitage,
Ryan Bishop,
and Douglas Kellner

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EVA HAIFA GIRAUD

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For Greg

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Introduction

Some things are impossible to disentangle. It has become increasingly commonplace to argue, for instance, that humans are never autonomous beings who act against an essentialized natural world; instead, the human is only realized by and through its relations with other entities.¹ Animals, of course, play a significant role in constituting what it means to be human—inhabiting positions that range from valued domestic companions and livestock to nuisance “trash animals” or uncharismatic invasive species—but so too do technologies, microbes, and minerals.² The labels that are used to designate other creatures and materials betray further complications, by pointing to the role of all manner of taxonomies, values, cultural associations, and practices in shaping how particular human communities relate to other beings.³

Yet, although some entanglements might be too messy to unpick, they have also offered a source of ethical and political potential.⁴ By foregrounding the ways that human existence is bound together with the lives of other entities, contemporary cultural theorists have sought to move beyond a worldview where the human is seen as exceptional. Narratives of entanglement have, in such contexts, proven important in implicating human activities in ecologically damaging situations and calling for more responsible relations to be forged with other species, environments, and communities.⁵

Actually meeting these responsibilities, however, is not a straightforward task. Irreducibly complex situations—where human and animal lives, ecological processes, and technical arrangements are impossible to meaningfully separate—cannot be settled by neat solutions that focus on one factor alone. From this perspective, issues such as seaborne plastic pollution cannot be solved by placing the blame on poor waste disposal practices on the part of

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certain communities, as this masks the role of particular relations of production, leaky plastic recycling chains, and the material properties of plastic itself in constituting the crisis.⁶ Likewise, singling out specific agricultural chemicals as to blame for declines in biodiversity fails to recognize how agricultural practices are bound up with commercial infrastructures, animated by more-than-human agency, and imbricated in geopolitical inequalities.⁷ These are just two examples that speak to a broader theoretical emphasis on the need to avoid imposing simplistic solutions on difficult, multifaceted problems—solutions that not only fail to do justice to these problems but can actively cause damage in their moralism.⁸

While emphasizing the complex, more-than-human entanglements that constitute lived reality has proven politically and ethically important, such an approach also carries dangers. Though it might be important to recognize the nuances of a given situation, this can also make it difficult to determine where culpability for particular situations really lie, let alone offer a sense of how to meet any ethical responsibilities emerging from these situations.⁹ Irreducible complexity, in other words, can prove paralyzing and disperse responsibilities in ways that undermine scope for political action.¹⁰

My aim in posing the question “What comes after entanglement?” is not to deny the entangled complexity of the world, therefore, but to explore the possibilities for action amid and despite this complexity. Throughout the book I elucidate a number of tensions that have emerged in relation to existing attempts to ground an ethics and politics in the recognition of relationality. These tensions have not been caused by the act of acknowledging the complex, coconstitutive relations that tie diverse actors together, but have been generated by the assumption that more ethical—or at least less anthropocentric—modes of action necessarily follow from this recognition. The phrase “what comes after,” then, is not just intended to underline the need to develop a fuller account of the types of ethics that can emerge from relationality, but to pose deeper-rooted questions about the value of a relational emphasis for grounding ethico-political practice.

In response to this line of questioning, I argue that in order to create space for intervention, there is a need for a conceptual reorientation.¹¹ Rather than focus on an ethics based on relationality and entanglement, it is important to more fully flesh out an ethics of exclusion, which pays attention to the entities, practices, and ways of being that are *foreclosed* when other entangled realities are materialized.¹² By developing this argument throughout the book, I elucidate that although narratives of entanglement grasp something impor-

tant about the world, they do not capture everything. Attention also needs to be paid to the frictions, foreclosures, and exclusions that play a constitutive role in the composition of lived reality. Centralizing and politicizing these exclusions, I contend, is vital in carving out space for intervention.

As a whole the book is concerned with this broader conceptual attempt to engage with exclusion as a means of grappling with the paradoxes of relationality and attendant difficulties associated with action and intervention. To underpin this overarching theoretical focus, however, I draw particular inspiration from activist practice. Each chapter engages with interrelated instances of anticapitalist, animal, and environmental activism, moving broadly chronologically from the 1980s to the present day: from anticapitalist pamphleteering campaigns, activist experiments with digital media, and food activism in protest camps, to controversies surrounding laboratory animals and popular environmentalisms on-screen. Some of the practical difficulties faced by particular groups, related to resourcing, discursive constraints, or infrastructural limitations, might appear mundane. I argue, though, that even the most everyday problems hold significant theoretical implications by elucidating the frictions—and even dangers—in realizing relational modes of ethics within concrete contexts of political contestation. The specific difficulties faced by the groups I engage with are not just informative in themselves, therefore, but speak back in productive ways to work that has grappled with the political and ethical implications of living in entangled worlds. This work has been undertaken across the humanities and social sciences, including in science and technology studies, animal studies, the environmental humanities, more-than-human geographies, and bodies of cultural theory such as new materialism and posthumanism.

As well as foregrounding the difficulty of acting amid complexity, the activist groups to whom I turn highlight how paying more conceptual attention to exclusion can provide a route beyond these difficulties. Any given socio-technical arrangement—from a fast-food restaurant to a media technology—materializes a particular way of doing things and creates norms and standards. If these norms are taken up on a large scale, they can easily become *normative*, presented as an inevitable or even natural way of organizing everyday life. As Susan Leigh Star argues, the congealment of infrastructural norms has ethical ramifications for those who do not fit with, or those who are excluded by, the systems at stake.¹³ These arrangements, moreover, are often entangled with ways of thinking and acting that naturalize them and that themselves become difficult to challenge. The forms of environmental, anticapitalist, and

animal activism I discuss throughout the book offer conceptual inspiration through the ways they engage with precisely this task of making particular norms visible in order to denaturalize them, ask questions about who or what is excluded, and—more important—find ways of contesting these exclusions (often by presenting alternatives).

Exclusions, however, are not just created by systems and institutions in ways that foster marginalization or oppression. As I illustrate throughout this book, it is important to recognize that all epistemologies or political and ethical approaches—even complex, pluralistic, and seemingly open ones—carry their own omissions. Any attempt to highlight or oppose systems that are perceived to be oppressive necessarily creates exclusions of its own, as it is sometimes necessary to contest certain relations in order to clear space for alternatives (indeed, this is often central to feminist and antiracist struggle). In such contexts, therefore, particular forms of exclusion, refusal, and opposition play a productive and creative, rather than wholly negative, role.

The inevitability, and indeed constitutive role, of some form of exclusion in any situation or environment means that it is neither something that can be avoided nor something that is intrinsically negative. What I argue throughout this book is that it is nonetheless important to make exclusions visible, in order to foster meaningful forms of responsibility for and obligation toward them. The problem, in conceptual terms, is that it is precisely this task of making exclusions visible that is difficult to realize if the conceptual emphasis is placed on relationality and coming together. An emphasis on the entangled relations that compose a given situation is not enough to bring the equally critical exclusions that are forged by it into view. This emphasis can also obscure who bears the greatest burden of these relations. Centralizing exclusions, in contrast, holds potential for opening them to future contestation and the possibility of alternatives that could better spread these burdens. As I elucidate throughout the book, therefore, emphasizing and politicizing exclusion is not just a means of complicating narratives of entanglement but offers alternative trajectories for grounding ethical and political intervention.

Before I develop these arguments, it is thus useful to gain a clearer sense of why it is so urgent to find an alternative means of supporting political and ethical action, once the entangled composition of the world has been acknowledged.

Entanglement

The fragility of particular forms of life and ways of living has been brought increasingly to the fore, not just in the biological and earth sciences but across work within the social sciences and humanities.¹⁴ In response to growing concerns about anthropogenic problems—from mass extinction and climate change to more everyday but equally contentious issues surrounding everyday practices in farms and laboratories—the past three decades have seen the emergence of new interdisciplinary fields. The rise of animal studies, the environmental humanities, and extinction studies, for instance, has resulted in difficult questions about human obligations being brought to the fore. Beyond early transhumanist and posthumanist interventions, a burgeoning body of work has emphasized the ways that human existence has *always* been knotted together with the lives of other entities.¹⁵ The purpose of emphasizing these histories of entanglement is to move beyond discourses of human exceptionalism, which can be used to justify practices that are damaging to those deemed nonhuman, other-than-human, or less-than-human.

Although the significance of more-than-human agencies has long been recognized in certain strands of science studies and geography, within the growing fields of animal studies and the environmental humanities such understandings are increasingly positioned less as making conceptual or ethical claims about reality and more as offering a simple recognition of the way things are.¹⁶ The manner in which the more-than-human has been figured in theoretical contexts, then, has evolved conceptually, with a gradual shift from narratives of hybridity to assertions of entanglement.¹⁷

Hybrid figures and environments, from genetically modified mice to cityscapes, have been central to critical-feminist theory since the 1980s and played an important role in challenging the notion of the epistemic purity of categories (chief among them nature and culture).¹⁸ Entanglement furthers this line of argument by encapsulating the myriad of world-making relationships that constitute environments, relationships that are irreducible because they are not just interactions between discrete actors that can be disentangled with the right conceptual or indeed political tools.¹⁹ These relations are, instead, the site through which subject (and object) positions, identities, and even materialities themselves emerge. Undergirding these developments, therefore, is a departure from the sort of epistemological concerns central to Bruno Latour's *We Have Never Been Modern*, toward Donna Haraway's ontological assertion that "we have never been human."²⁰

By engaging with these developments, I am not seeking to homogenize a heterogeneous body of work, which has evolved in different ways in different disciplinary contexts, but rather to explore the far-reaching implications of tendencies that are shared across these approaches. These tendencies, broadly speaking, involve decentering the human as the locus for ethics and politics through recognizing—and often celebrating—relationality.²¹ The act of foregrounding the entangled composition of particular environments has, in turn, led to a rejection of totalizing ethical frameworks that are insufficiently responsive to this dynamism and complexity.

Attempts to move beyond the human are thus bound up with broader attempts to move beyond the humanist epistemologies that are seen to support anthropocentrism. Nonanthropocentric perspectives have worked to respond to the complex set of environmental problems that—it has been alleged—are underpinned by liberal-humanist modes of relating to the world.²² The use of humans as a benchmark for all ethical concerns is seen to have had catastrophic consequences, because this exceptionalist logic ensures that, no matter how messy ethical decisions are, as long as they benefit humans in the last instance, then the problems caused for nonhumans are a necessary (if sad) sacrifice.²³ This is not to say that from a humanist perspective the problems facing nonhumans do not matter, are not seen as damaging, or are seen as not having significant consequences, but that the logic of human exceptionalism ensures that human benefit is the ultimate arbiter.

For example, from a relational, more-than-human perspective, it is human exceptionalism that inhibits restrictions on emissions, reductions in consumption, or further regulation of human engagements with animals within the agricultural-industrial complex. Humanist commitments ensure that issues, conversely, are made to matter politically only to the extent that they impact humans; in line with this perspective, for instance, climate change is seen as warranting action only if it affects people and perhaps even then only certain types of people (with economic benefit often triumphing over environmental concerns).

To combat these problems, there has been a push to unsettle anthropocentric humanism in favor of a more relational understanding of the world that recognizes and engages with more-than-human agencies. Indeed, some of the most urgent conceptual work has aspired to make critical interventions beyond theoretical debates, in settings ranging from conservation and environmental activism to neuroscience, pedagogy, fine art, and quantum theory.²⁴ This work has proven critically important in conceptualizing the entangled

composition of lived reality and the dynamics of knowledge production. The problem, I suggest, lies in work that has made assumptions about the types of ethics and politics that follow from these entangled onto-epistemologies. In general terms there is still a tendency to celebrate entanglement—or treat it as a good in itself—with questions about intervention hinted at but ultimately left underdeveloped.²⁵ Yet simply acknowledging that human and more-than-human worlds are entangled is not enough in itself to respond to problems born of anthropogenic activity. As Alexis Shotwell argues in her otherwise-sympathetic engagement with relational ethical perspectives: “The specifics of how we would understand and act on the specifically ethical call [these bodies of work] make are somewhat thin. In these texts, theorists do not tell us how to parse the specifics of the ethical call, or the relational economy toward which we might aim to behave more adequately.”²⁶ It is dangerous to assume, therefore, that less anthropocentric forms of ethics and politics automatically proceed from the recognition of relationality, at least not in a straightforward sense. The problem is that relational approaches do not just make intervention difficult but actively problematize conventional modes of ethics and politics because relationality—as a conceptual commitment—is, in part, constituted by a resistance to ethico-politics that is perceived to lack this complexity. The paradox of relationality, in other words, is that it struggles to accommodate things that are resistant to being in relation, including forms of politics that actively oppose particular relations.

Obligation and Responsibility

Action and intervention are especially hard to accommodate within relational, more-than-human theoretical work because of the way that resistance to anthropocentrism is bound up with a broader wariness of humanism. From this theoretical perspective, commonplace political frameworks for extending questions of justice beyond the human are inadequate. The extension of rights to animals and environmental actors is treated with suspicion because such a stance mirrors an exceptionalist logic that shores up human privilege.²⁷ This line of argument is typified by Haraway’s claim that “we do not get very far with the categories generally used by animal rights discourses, in which animals end up as permanent dependents (‘lesser humans’), utterly natural (‘nonhuman’), or exactly the same (‘humans in fur suits’).”²⁸ This argument speaks to a broader point about the devastating consequences of species hierarchies that can arise when, for instance, certain charismatic megafauna

(usually those attractive to humans) are afforded protection while other animals and ecosystems remain “killable.”²⁹ Exceptionalism can also reinscribe colonizing and indeed colonialist logics, as with clumsy attempts by large nongovernmental organizations to raise awareness of practices such as seal clubbing or dog meat production, without attending to the way these tactics can be damaging for Indigenous communities or perpetuate ethnocentric stereotypes.³⁰

The other reason why narratives of rights have been problematized, which has been stressed in the posthumanities in particular, is that such expansions can lead down a conceptual rabbit hole where the central preoccupation is who (or what) gets to count as having rights once the concept is applied to animals. Do invasive species count? Do mosquitos? What about deadly viruses?³¹ Although questions of “where rights end” might seem facetious, they point to important concerns about the dangers (as Jamie Lorimer puts it) of grounding “appeals for animal rights on the comparable existence of essential human characteristics in non-humans” and thus only “extending the franchise to certain privileged others.”³²

Where relational approaches to ethics have been critically important is in drawing attention to some of the tensions associated with frameworks such as rights, in ways that hold implications for particular instances of activism and advocacy.³³ What becomes concerning is when these arguments move beyond the contestation of *specific* modes of advocacy or argumentation, to become a more broad-brush condemnation of so-called totalizing critique, as crystallized by Latour’s infamous “critique of critique” or illustrated by the splintering off of critical scholarship within particular fields such as animal studies.³⁴ Though these developments have led to some productive academic and activist trajectories, the treatment of work labeled “critical” as somehow marginal and lacking nuance has had worrying consequences, especially when it comes to addressing questions of action and intervention.

As I illustrate throughout the book, both certain strands of academic work and particular modes of political intervention are routinely sidelined for being overly critical. To revisit the example of critical animal studies (CAS), for instance, although certain strands of CAS display a blanket suspicion of theory, other work with critical commitments has engaged more sympathetically with relational ethics.³⁵ Yet the important conceptual interventions that have been made by this body of critical work are often not taken seriously within “mainstream” animal studies or allied fields; instead work that critiques contemporary human-animal relations is routinely portrayed as stemming from a naive

commitment to totalizing frameworks (and dismissed on this basis).³⁶ This body of scholarship, in other words, is portrayed as failing to do justice to the nuance of multispecies entanglements, which means the specific content of critical arguments can then be neglected.

As I argue within the main body of this book, CAS is just one example of critical, oppositional thought and practice being marginalized because of its lack of fit with relational modes of ethics. These forms of marginalization are concerning as they can inadvertently reinforce existing social inequalities that make it difficult for certain communities to articulate a critique of particular social norms.³⁷ What is especially dangerous about the marginalization of these forms of critique is that it marks a failure to do justice to the epistemological and ethical work that overtly critical perspectives—perhaps even those incommensurable with relational approaches—can accomplish.

These dangers are elucidated by Maria Puig de la Bellacasa, who foregrounds how theoretical work that insists on complexity, nuance, and “a balanced articulation of the involved concerns” is often incompatible with the sort of critical perspective that can “produce divergences and oppositional knowledges based on attachments to particular visions, and indeed that sometimes presents its positions as non-negotiable.”³⁸ For Puig de la Bellacasa, the omission of critical perspectives is worrying because “these are voices required to support a feminist vision of care that engages with persistent forms of exclusion, power and domination in science and technology,” and this potential can be shut down if only perspectives that are articulated in nonanthropocentric language are engaged with.³⁹

The apparent incompatibility of particular ethical stances and forms of political intervention with relational approaches, therefore, actively places epistemological limits on theoretical work that seeks to move beyond the human. In addition, foreclosing dialogue with critical work also has stark ethical implications, and it is these implications that become apparent when shifting the focus away from what sort of ethics can emerge from the entanglement in itself, to instead flesh out an ethics of exclusion.

The Work of Exclusion

A small, but critically important, interdisciplinary body of scholarship—spanning more-than-human geographies, the environmental humanities, and science studies—has called for greater recognition of the undesirable nature of certain forms of relation and the need (in certain contexts) to preserve dis-

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tance, alterity, and separateness.⁴⁰ Rosemary-Claire Collard's important research on the global wildlife trade, for instance, elucidates the dangers of predicating an ethics on entanglements and encounters between species. As Collard argues: "An essential part of forming animals' commodity lives in global live wildlife trade is that their wild lives are 'taken apart' in that they are disentangled from their previous behaviors and ecological, familial, and social networks."⁴¹ For particular, commodified, relations to emerge, others have to be undone. These processes of commodification, moreover, can never be fully unpicked, with wildlife rehabilitation centers struggling to reentangle primates with the relations they were removed from. For Collard, notions of naturecultures give little sense of how to distinguish between these two very different "relational economies" (to revisit Shotwell's turn of phrase). While remaining suspicious of essentializing notions of nature, therefore, Collard suggests that some notion of wildness might nonetheless be worth recuperating in order to oppose particular relations that, once accomplished, cause harm or violence that can never be completely reversed.

Tensions associated with relational ethics are not just evidenced by dramatic examples such as the global wildlife trade; Franklin Ginn, for instance, elucidates how even everyday activities such as gardening result in all manner of encounters where distance and exclusion offer more ethical purchase than being in relation. Ginn's theoretical intervention "Sticky Lives" engages with the slug as a figure whose relations with gardeners are fraught with ethical difficulties, due to the incommensurability of particular forms of relation. Simply put, plants, gardeners, and slugs cannot thrive in the same place at the same time, so the act of tending to a garden necessarily involves decisions about how to manage these slimy gastropods. Despite the damage slugs wreak, Ginn found that gardeners were reluctant to kill them outright and engaged instead in all manner of experiments to create a slug-free space: from throwing them over fences for birds to eat, to creating physical barriers, or even cultivating herbaceous borders entirely from plants disliked by slugs. Ethical connection with slugs, in other words, was negotiated not through attachment but through finding alternative ways to *detach* slugs from gardens. The desire for nonrelation, or, as Ginn beautifully phrases it, the way that gardeners "create spaces around hoped-for-absence rather than relation," elucidates the inevitability of exclusion, then, but also its ethical potential.⁴²

Though the global wildlife trade and everyday practices in gardens might be very different examples, they both point to particular forms of work that can be accomplished by exclusions. For Collard, refusing or opposing par-

ticular relations (through recuperating some form of alterity and wildness) is necessary in order to preserve others, while for Ginn exclusions play a constitutive role in creating the garden as a space where certain plants (and indeed those who tend to them) can flourish. These sorts of examples do not just point to the need, in certain instances, for distance or disentanglement, then, but foreground that the act of excluding certain relations is precisely what creates room for others to emerge, or for existing forms of life to be sustained. Exclusion can also, therefore, be a site where accountability is taken not just for who or what is classified as an actor worthy of moral consideration, but—more fundamentally—for which worlds are materialized over others.⁴³

Building on these arguments, I suggest there is a need to recognize not just the constitutive role of certain exclusions but their productive role: that purposeful acts of contesting particular relationships are sometimes necessary to create space for alternatives to emerge. It is important, however, not just to recognize the role of exclusion but to foreground its ethical and political significance. It is in addressing questions of the ethical and political *work* that certain exclusions accomplish that informative lessons can be learned from activist practice, as elucidated through turning to some commonplace issues within women's and anticapitalist movements. These tensions are encapsulated by Jo Freeman's classic text, "The Tyranny of Structurelessness," which illustrates a tension at the heart of movements that aspire to reject social hierarchies. Her focus is on groups that are organized in a structureless, leaderless way and in which decisions are reached by consensus and everyone—ostensibly—has the right to speak. Freeman points out, however, that structurelessness brings its own tyrannies. The problem is that "contrary to what we would like to believe, there is no such thing as a 'structureless' group. Any group of people of whatever nature coming together for any length of time, for any purpose, will inevitably structure itself in some fashion."⁴⁴ Unlike the hierarchies Freeman's women's groups are working to contest, these emergent structures are informal and born, for instance, of friendships that might exist externally to the group, of the confidence or rhetorical abilities of particular group members, or even of technical skills that particular members have (or are perceived to have). For all their informality, these hierarchies have very concrete consequences and inform how roles are distributed within groups, whose voices are heard the most clearly, and whose ideas ultimately inform practice. Inevitably, these relations tend to be imbricated in classed, raced, and ableist inequalities. Making space *available* for people to speak in the group itself, therefore, is not enough, as relations that existed before or

outside of the group situation continue to foreclose possibilities for certain participants to take up these opportunities, while making it far easier for others. These barriers, crucially, cannot necessarily be seen when focusing on encounters or relations within the group itself but only become visible on tracing longer intersectional histories.

What is especially pernicious about informal hierarchies is that because they occur in an ostensibly structureless or nonhierarchical space, the persistence of inequalities is often rendered invisible. The disproportionate influence of certain people's opinions, or heightened perceptions of their abilities, can thus be naturalized (with particular individuals perceived as having the best ideas, or being best suited to a particular role). What is still more problematic is that within a nonhierarchical situation these informal hierarchies cannot be challenged, as no one has the authority to do so, and any such attempt is perceived as reinserting or imposing authority in a space that explicitly opposes such expressions of power. These problems are intensely difficult to negotiate and have resonance beyond women's groups, with Freeman's arguments regularly drawn on to account for informal hierarchies that emerge in contexts from digitally mediated activism to university classrooms.⁴⁵

Yet, just as the problems associated with informal hierarchies have persisted in contexts beyond activism, Freeman's tactics for navigating them also have wider purchase; she argues, for instance, that certain structures are necessary, but only if they are designed to distribute power evenly and make it visible. Any rules should ensure that "the group of people in positions of authority will be diffuse, flexible, open and temporary" so that privileged individuals "will not be in such an easy position to institutionalize their power."⁴⁶ To be structureless in any meaningful sense, for Freeman, then, requires a degree of structure to ensure accountability and responsibility.

Although Freeman's conception of informal hierarchies has had a profound legacy within social movements, I argue that her arguments also hold conceptual significance in the context of relational, more-than-human theoretical work. What Freeman's work foregrounds is that in order to create alternative ways of being, it is necessary to make decisions not only about which relations to prefigure and enact but about which to exclude. These decisions, however, need to be temporary, contingent, and open to contestation to ensure they do not congeal in ways that allow normative social relations to simply reimpose themselves and reinscribe existing inequalities. If these arguments are related back to the theoretical contexts at stake here, this points to a particular conceptual problem: as Ginn puts it, an emphasis on entangle-

ment and relationality can “ignore the non-relational, what may not be vital, and what may precede or be obscured by existing relations.”⁴⁷ At present, I argue, the exclusions fostered by relational theoretical work itself are insufficiently visible, because attempts to engage in such criticisms are frequently—to use Puig de la Bellacasa’s evocative turn of phrase—thrown out “with the corrosive bathwater of critique.”⁴⁸ If these tensions in relational, more-than-human perspectives are read against Freeman, what emerges as important, then, is recognizing that purposive decisions to exclude certain relations do not have to be negative, and are indeed inevitable, but that it is nonetheless critically important to find clearer ways of fostering responsibility for these exclusions. It is in realizing ways of taking responsibility that especially important lessons can be learned from the instances of activism discussed within this book.

Finding Affinities (and Frictions)

As hinted at by the insights that can be gained from Freeman, throughout the book I tease out some of the ways that activist work can offer insight into how to act in contexts that are resolutely complex, by revealing barriers in translating theory into practice and tactics for negotiating these barriers. There are, therefore, numerous reasons for finding affinities between particular strands of theory and practice, but one particular factor makes achieving this dialogue both especially helpful and especially difficult: the way that very different perspectives share a superficially similar vocabulary. The language of openness, riskiness, experimentation, and ecology is used by some of the social movements I draw on and by social movement theories, as well as relational, more-than-human approaches. As I make explicit, however, it would be a mistake to assume this shared terminology equates to shared meaning, and rather than neatly mapping theory onto practice (or vice versa), it is necessary to adopt a more diffractive approach.

Karen Barad, following Haraway, advocates an approach that moves beyond reflexive approaches to cultural theory in favor of diffractive ones. To elucidate what a diffractive methodology entails, she describes the process of two stones being dropped into water. Each stone creates ripples, but as they come together, a more complex diffraction pattern emerges as the two sets of ripples converge and complicate one another. By attending to the pattern that emerges as the ripples meet, Barad suggests, it is possible to learn something of the apparatus that produced it. This diffractive methodology offers a means

of “reading insights through one another in attending to and responding to the details and specificities of relations of difference and how they matter.”⁴⁹

The process of understanding how subtly different perspectives and practices can occupy shared spaces and complicate one another captures something of the messy relationships between the strands of theory and practice I discuss throughout this book. The activist initiatives discussed here often adopt communicative tactics, or share vocabulary and values, which seem to have a sympathetic relationship with theoretical work. For instance, as I elucidate throughout the book, particular activist communities appear to share the theoretical concern with complexity, storytelling, openness, nonhuman agency, care, and affect. In practice, however, the tactics used by activists often cut against the types of politics and ethics called for in theoretical contexts, due to being grounded in normative appeals to social justice or questions of suffering. In focusing on these tactics, then, I aim to attend to the sort of specific differences that Barad describes in order to explore how and why these emergent tensions matter in conceptual as well as practical terms.

The tactics I draw on as a lens through which to diffract tensions between theory and practice are derived from an interrelated range of initiatives, where activists have sought to communicate their arguments to wider publics. Beginning with anticapitalist fast-food activism, which originated in the 1980s (in chapter 1), I then move on to early activist experiments with digital media (chapter 2), performative activism within protest camps and free-food giveaways (chapter 3), tactical attempts to contest mainstream media discourses about antivivisection activism (chapter 4), and social media campaigns surrounding laboratory beagles (chapter 5). The book culminates with a focus on popular media where arguments articulated by early grassroots movements seem to have gained mainstream attention via Hollywood-backed features and globally marketed documentaries (chapter 6).

The instances of activism engaged with in each chapter offer privileged sites for drawing out tensions associated with core theoretical debates. The first chapter, for instance, traces affinities and tensions between work in feminist science studies that has emphasized relationality and entanglement and tactics engaged in by activists locked in a court battle with the fast-food corporation McDonald's. Bringing these perspectives into conversation highlights some of the core difficulties in articulating issues without reducing their complexity or smoothing out their messiness. Indeed, what is argued in this chapter is that insisting on a particular model of articulation (that takes relationality as its baseline) can sometimes make it difficult for particular communities

to speak at all. This problem is picked up in the second and third chapters, which focus on groups who have sought to actively transform the infrastructures that make complex articulations and interventions difficult, by creating alternative arrangements to provide food, communication networks, and even sewerage systems. These examples appear to embody cosmopolitical modes of risky, experimental politics. They also, however, foreground dangers that can arise when risks are not spread evenly, due to being distributed in ways that reinscribe gendered, geopolitical, and racial inequalities.⁵⁰

The second half of the book develops these arguments further and explores particular tensions that have emerged in relation to the politics of care and emotion, first as knowledge politics, then in relation to somatic ethics, and, finally, in the context of affective media imagery.⁵¹ The fourth chapter turns to controversial campaigns surrounding primate research and situates them in relation to speculative care ethics, to highlight the ways in which particular theoretical arguments can inadvertently foster hierarchies of care that delegitimize the emotional and affective work engaged in by activists. The final chapters then tease out the stakes of these hierarchies of care by tracing how particular tactics (such as an emphasis on suffering) and emotional registers (such as uses of sentimentality) are positioned negatively in relation to embodied modes of care and affect that have been advocated in theoretical contexts. While I aim to recuperate these concepts, my aim is not to do so uncritically but to simply pay greater attention to the work that they achieve in order to explore the potential for pushing them in less anthropocentric directions.

The Personal and the Political

In addition to being an especially useful site for making the ethical stakes of intervention and exclusion visible, the movements focused on here have been selected, in part, due to my own engagement with animal activism. Particular groups have been focused on due to issues that emerged through my own participatory action research with grassroots food activists, which led to me either working with or becoming aware of the campaign tactics engaged in by affinity groups working on different issues. My work with these groups necessitated an understanding of the longer histories of anticapitalist fast-food campaigning, which are the focus of the first chapter. I also had to make extensive use of the activist media technologies that are foregrounded in the second chapter (as well as becoming acutely aware of the strengths and

shortcomings of these media). My discussion of food and media activism in chapters 2 and 3 draws extensively on my experiences facilitating free-food giveaways, and the tensions we had to negotiate in realizing these actions, while particular affective experiences inform the final chapters.

As will be elaborated on throughout the book, I am drawing attention to my involvement with some of the groups I discuss here for three key conceptual reasons. First, it is politically and ethically important to situate this book. Although particular experiences help to anchor some of the theoretical arguments made throughout each chapter, this approach necessarily has its limitations, and a notable issue here is that I predominantly focus on groups working in the Global North (although this is not universally the case). It is thus important to situate my arguments in this context. Despite the limitations of a situated approach, it is important in refusing a universalizing stance, even as I work to cautiously tease out the more profound provocations particular groups offer to contemporary theoretical work.

The other two reasons for adopting a situated approach pertain to the way that my own experiences triggered particular conceptual questions, which motivated me to write this book. Even though the groups I focus on are working within very particular contexts, they still unsettle certain ways that intervention and action are currently conceived in theoretical contexts. My own personal experiences of food activism have provided insight into the differences between, on the one hand, the ways activists are represented (in both mass media and theoretical contexts) and, on the other hand, the mundane practicalities of activism, particularly when it comes to the task of self-representation. Activism is messy, and activists are often constrained by particular legal systems, media narratives, and communications infrastructures, to name just a few commonplace barriers. When one is engaged in campaigning work, it is easy to resort to emotive imagery and abstract slogans, just to make some sort of a difference while working within and against the constraints of a given system. The pragmatic compromises resorted to by protest movements are precisely what has led to these groups being criticized within contemporary cultural theory for promoting overly simplistic solutions to irreducibly complex problems. These everyday constraints, therefore, are not just practical problems but conceptual ones, in actively inhibiting the aspirations to practice that are hinted at by the theoretical work at stake here.

The final reason why I have drawn attention to my own experiences pertains to the relationship between affect, emotion, and praxis. The value of recognizing the role of affect, and creating space for emotion in a more sus-

tained way, has been seen as pivotal to activist practice, especially in relation to public engagement; there has, correspondingly, been a push to legitimize affect and emotion, in order to counter technocratic discourses that portray activist perspectives as irrational due to their emotional commitments.⁵² In theoretical terms there has been a parallel move to foreground the importance of emotion, with recent conceptual work aiming to legitimize emotional responses but deconstruct the dichotomy between “rational” science and “emotional” publics by foregrounding the (often-valuable) role of emotion in scientific practice and transspecies communication.⁵³

There are again, however, tensions between theory and practice regarding how different forms of affective or emotional encounter are depicted and understood. In theoretical contexts the mundane affects that are generated as experts or specialized workers interact with animals in their everyday caretaking and conservation work are often portrayed as holding ethico-political potential, in giving rise to sustained relations of care.⁵⁴ In contrast, activist emotions are often portrayed as lying at the root of paternalistic or irrational responses to political issues, or even as giving rise to problematic forms of anthropomorphism wherein human emotions are attributed to animals.⁵⁵ Often the specific emotional responses activists describe when viewing certain images, or engaging in certain practices, are precisely what is sidelined in theoretical texts, after being cast as sentimental and anthropomorphizing (even as the role of emotion is valorized in other contexts).⁵⁶

Overall, therefore, it was often the disjunction between particular practical experiences, and emotions, on the one hand, and the ways these forms of activism were represented in theoretical contexts, on the other, that motivated me to explore the stakes of these tensions. In asking questions about these issues, I am not straightforwardly defending ethico-political frameworks that are routinely used in problematic ways, but working to create space for understanding specific instances of critical, oppositional, and activist thought in more ambivalent ways. Refusing to sideline “critical” perspectives out of hand means that the insights gained from them can be taken seriously in conceptual terms and offer productive ethical and epistemological provocations for contemporary theoretical work.

In general, therefore, while findings from participatory action research have informed my arguments about how tensions between theory and practice manifest themselves in activism, the purpose of this book is not to provide an ethnographic or auto-ethnographic account of specific movements. Instead, I aim to draw inspiration from situated practices in the work of par-

ticular groups and use them to flesh out informative tensions between theory and practice. Teasing out these relationships, in turn, helps to lay the groundwork for crafting an ethics grounded in the recognition of not entanglement but the constitutive and in some instances creative role of exclusion.⁵⁷

A (Final) Note on Tactics

The word *tactic* is used throughout the book to characterize approaches that have proven valuable in navigating the core problems that each chapter focuses on. The term has been chosen deliberately, due to its connotations of contingency and resistance. Tactics, to echo Michel de Certeau, offer context-specific approaches for resisting power.⁵⁸ Though de Certeau is not drawn on in a sustained way here, as some sort of conceptual touchstone, the notion of tactics nonetheless captures something of the approaches outlined throughout the book, which do not offer a universalizing template for political action but emphasize context-specific praxis. At the same time, tactics are a useful concept in maintaining a focus on how praxis is framed by power. *Power* itself is a term that—like activist standpoints—has sometimes been ejected from relational theories due to being perceived as a totalizing explanatory framework that lacks context-specific nuance.⁵⁹ De Certeau, in contrast, offers an alternative trajectory for conceiving of power, where the term does not serve as a totalizing category but is indicative of attempts by certain actors to control others by imposing regulatory strategies on their movements and cultural practices. Urban planning, for him, is the archetypal example as roads, pavements, and barriers are all put in place to encourage certain movements and discourage others. Tactics (which could include everything from leaping over barriers, crossing the road somewhere other than a crossing, or engaging in more creative acts such as parkour) are the processes of resistance to these strategies, which reveal their fissures and points of weakness.⁶⁰ While for de Certeau tactics are all manner of everyday microsociological processes of resistance (conscious or not), I am using the term here in reference to more conscious and critical forms of activism.

Though the recurring argument made throughout the book is that activist practice is conceptually informative, the text is not designed to generate one-way traffic and treat practice as simply a tool that enhances theory. The hope is that theory can also help to foreground particularly valuable tactics for decentering the human, amid the myriad of approaches that constitute activist protest repertoires. This approach, however, demands a reevaluation

of the notion of tactics itself; as discussed above, in de Certeau's use *tactics* refers to acts that take place within the confines of a system or territory and that are engaged in by those who do not govern this territory or set its rules. If understood in line with this specific understanding of *tactics*, therefore, the work of activists is seen as operating on a terrain in which their actions can navigate preexisting structures, and toy with these structures, but as lacking the capacity to reshape the territory itself. De Certeau's formulation is thus a useful starting point, but the approaches advocated in this book aim to go beyond simply acting within territory, in order to actively *intervene* in it. Though they do not change the overarching rules of the game wholesale, I nonetheless argue that the tactics explored throughout the book can make (and have made) interventions that prompt responses, instigate material-semiotic reconfigurations, and open possibilities for political change.

Haraway argues that "some actors, for example specific human ones, can try to reduce other actors to resources—to mere ground and matrix for their action. . . . [S]uch a move is contestable, not the necessary relation of 'human nature' to the rest of the world." Moreover, "other actors, human and nonhuman, regularly resist reductions. The powers of domination do fail sometimes in their projects to pin other actors down."⁶¹ The tactics outlined throughout the book evoke different ways of approaching the project articulated by Haraway, offering different means through which activists and researchers can "increase the failure rates" of actors attempting to reduce others to "mere ground and matrix" for their action. Unlike strategies, tactics do not seek to impose their own way of doing things (and thus become activist norms in themselves) but suggest how context-specific and contingent practices could be used to contest the processes through which social actors—both human and nonhuman—are treated as resources.

The "tactical interventions" I foreground, therefore, are not intended to be prescriptive but are nonetheless valuable in drawing attention to and contesting different modes of conceptual and sociotechnical exclusion. This approach is important in light of the sympathetic critique of particular modes of more-than-human, relational ethics that underpins this book: the recognition that no form of relation is innocent is insufficient in accounting for the exclusions that are bound up with any form of relation. The need to take responsibility for exclusions, however, does not mean that they are a bad thing; as well as being constitutive, they can also be creative and ethically important. Certain exclusions, in certain situations, might be necessary in spreading the burden, resisting oppressions, and creating space for new ways of doing things

to come into being. It is nonetheless vital to find far clearer ways of fostering obligations toward these exclusions. What I elucidate throughout the book is that the recognition of entanglement—in particular, the entanglement of humans and other actors—does not intrinsically create room for such obligations, or necessarily give rise to less anthropocentric ways of thinking and acting in the world. Indeed, in some instances affective relations and entanglements can be instrumentalized or can marginalize critical perspectives.

Perhaps, then, asking what sort of ethics and politics can emerge from entanglement is the wrong framing of the question. Although some things are impossible to disentangle, recognition of this complexity does not capture everything about material reality, and, as such, this emphasis does not offer as helpful a foundation for ethics and politics as it might seem. Instead, more concerted efforts need to be made to render visible—and assume ethical responsibility for—the exclusions that play an equally constitutive role in materializing particular realities at the expense of others.

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- 1 Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008). Haraway's opening arguments in this text are a key point of reference for these developments.
- 2 For example, Kelsi Nagy and Phillip David Johnson, *Trash Animals: How We Live with Nature's Filthy, Feral, Invasive, and Unwanted Species* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013); and Jonathan L. Clark, "Uncharismatic Invasives," *Environmental Humanities* 6, no. 1 (2015): 29–52.
- 3 The emphasis here should be on the word *particular*; as Juanita Sundberg argues, it is important to recognize the colonizing move that is made when certain theoretical perspectives present themselves as reacting against dualistic thought. In the very process of criticizing dualisms, this line of argument can inadvertently present dualistic thinking as the universal ground it is reacting against. As Sundberg points out, such claims both neglect diverse nondualistic ways of thinking that have always existed (especially outside of an Anglo-European tradition) and also obscure the debt that contemporary nondualistic thought owes to Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies. This argument is also revisited in the next chapter. See Juanita Sundberg, "Decolonizing Posthumanist Geographies," *Cultural Geographies* 21, no. 1 (2014): 33–47.
- 4 For an overview of the hopes attached to relational, more-than-human ethics, see Eva Giraud et al., "A Feminist Menagerie," *Feminist Review* 118, no. 1 (2018): 61–79.
- 5 For an example of how relational ethics has been put to work as a means of cultivating responsibilities toward multispecies and more-than-human communities, see Deborah Bird Rose, Thom van Dooren, and Matthew Chrulew, eds. *Extinction Studies: Stories of Time, Death, and Generations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017).

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- 6 For analyses of the complexities of plastic, see Stacy Alaimo, *Exposed: Environmental Politics and Pleasures in Posthuman Times* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016); Deirdre McKay, “Subversive Plasticity,” with Padmapani Perez, Ruel Bimuyag, and Raja Shanti Bonnevie, in *The Social Life of Materials: Studies in Materials and Society*, ed. Suzanne Küchler and Adam Drazin (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 175–192; and Alison Hulme, *On the Commodity Trail: The Journey of a Bargain Store Product from East to West* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015).
- 7 Thom van Dooren’s *Flight Ways: Life and Loss at the Edge of Extinction* offers an instance of the complexity of extinction, tracing how the sharp decline of vultures in India—though in part due to the use of a particular agricultural chemical—needs to be situated in relation to longer histories of multispecies relations as well as social justice issues, such as the impact of poverty on farming practices. Thom van Dooren, *Flight Ways: Life and Loss at the Edge of Extinction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 45–62.
- 8 A helpful critique of this form of moralism can be found in Alexis Shotwell, *Against Purity: Living Ethically in Compromised Times* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016).
- 9 In her otherwise-sympathetic appraisal of relational ethics, Shotwell notes that such approaches remain unsatisfactory with regard to their ability to make ethical differentiations between distinct types of relations; this argument is explored in more depth in chapter 1. Shotwell, *Against Purity*, 117.
- 10 Michelle Murphy makes this point about complexity as dispersing responsibility in *Sick Building Syndrome and the Problem of Uncertainty* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 149; I pick up this argument in more depth in chapter 3.
- 11 *Intervention* here is used in a generic sense of attempting to intervene in a particular political situation; I unpack my understanding of the term toward the end of this introductory chapter in relation to activist tactics. The concept has a more specific meaning in science studies that I do not explicitly draw on here; see Teun Zuiderent-Jerak and Casper Bruun Jensen, “Editorial Introduction: Unpacking ‘Intervention’ in Science and Technology Studies,” *Science as Culture* 16, no. 3 (2007): 227–235.
- 12 This notion of an ethics of exclusion is derived from collaborative work I engaged in with colleagues, when reflecting on the contributions Karen Barad’s work has made to science and technology studies. See Gregory Hollin et al., “(Dis)entangling Barad: Materialisms and Ethics,” *Social Studies of Science* 47, no. 6 (2017): 918–941. For further elaboration on what it might mean to centralize the notion of exclusion, as worked through in the context of diagnosis, see Gregory Hollin, “Failing, Hacking, Passing: Autism, Entanglement, and the Ethics of Transformation,” *BioSocieties* 12, no. 4 (2017): 611–633.
- 13 Susan Leigh Star, “Power, Technology and the Phenomenology of Conventions: On Being Allergic to Onions,” in *A Sociology of Monsters: Essays on Power, Technology and Domination*, ed. John Law (London: Routledge, 1991), 26–56.
- 14 For a critical engagement with these developments, see Claire Colebrook, *Death of the PostHuman: Essays on Extinction*, vol. 1 (Ann Arbor, MI: Open University Press, 2014).
- 15 “We Have Never Been Human” is the title of the first section of Haraway’s *When Species Meet* (3–160).

- 16 This sort of ontological claim is found, for instance, in Haraway's discussion of sympoiesis in *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), 58–98.
- 17 A shift away from hybridity is argued for explicitly in Jamie Lorimer, *Wildlife in the Anthropocene: Conservation after Nature* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015), 17.
- 18 The most famous figuration is perhaps Haraway's cyborg. Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century," in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women* (London: Routledge, 1991), 127–148. For a contemporary elucidation of the power of figurations, see Michelle Bastian, "Fatally Confused: Telling the Time in the Midst of Ecological Crises," *Environmental Philosophy* 9, no. 1 (2012): 23–48.
- 19 Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007).
- 20 Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); and Haraway, *When Species Meet*.
- 21 For instance, though primarily engaging with different traditions of thought, the argument that underpins texts such as Cynthia Willett's *Interspecies Ethics* and Lori Gruen's *Entangled Empathy* is that the recognition of entanglements between human and nonhuman animals can give rise to less anthropocentric forms of ethics and politics. As I argue throughout the book, these are just two instances of texts that adopt this line of argument. Cynthia Willett, *Interspecies Ethics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014); and Lori Gruen, *Entangled Empathy: An Alternative Ethic for Our Relationships with Animals* (Brooklyn, NY: Lantern Books, 2015).
- 22 The clear point of reference here is the emerging body of work focused on articulating ethico-political responses to the Anthropocene, an era in which human action impacts all life on the planet. See Jamie Lorimer, "Multinatural Geographies for the Anthropocene," *Progress in Human Geography* 36, no. 5 (2012): 593–612.
- 23 This argument underpins Rosi Braidotti's arguments in *The Posthuman*, especially her claim that a nonanthropocentric theory is vital in providing a conceptual challenge to climate change and sharp declines in biodiversity. Rosi Braidotti, *The Posthuman* (London: Polity, 2012).
- 24 See, in relation to conservation politics, van Dooren, *Flight Ways*; neuroscience: Felicity Callard and Des Fitzgerald, *Rethinking Interdisciplinarity across the Social Sciences and Neurosciences* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); fine art: Deborah Frizzell and Harry J. Weil, curators, *Women in the Wilderness*, exhibition, Wave Hill, Glyndor Gallery, New York, April 9–July 9, 2017; and quantum physics: Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*.
- 25 An argument about the lack of space for intervention in the context of posthumanism is made persuasively by Helena Pedersen (although this argument has broader relevance to relational, more-than-human theories), "Release the Moths: Critical Animal Studies and the Posthumanist Impulse," *Culture, Theory and Critique* 52, no. 1 (2011): 65–81.
- 26 Shotwell, *Against Purity*, 117. It is important to reiterate that this is a highly sympathetic critique of relational frameworks, which maintains a clear sense of their

- value as well as suggesting that a more concrete idea is needed about how to respond to the ethics they push for.
- 27 For an explanation of why activism can inadvertently reinforce humanist norms by placing humans as privileged advocates for nonhumans, see Donna Haraway, "Species Matters, Humane Advocacy: In the Promising Grip of Earthly Oxymorons," in *Species Matters: Humane Advocacy and Cultural Theory*, ed. Marianne DeKoven and Michael Lundblad (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 17–26. These specific criticisms of animal rights activism have since been tempered by Haraway in a recent interview with Sarah Franklin, but the underlying suspicion of rights as a framework has been retained. See Sarah Franklin, "Staying with the Manifesto: An Interview with Donna Haraway," *Theory, Culture and Society* 34, no. 4 (2017): 49–63.
 - 28 Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 67.
 - 29 The distinction between killing and "making killable" was articulated in Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 80; the latter refers to the process of rendering a particular life-form as legitimate to kill without ethical reflection. For Haraway, making killable is more ethically problematic than the act of killing other species in itself, and her sympathetic criticisms of activism often hinge on the way that certain tactics might oppose the killing of specific species (often those easiest for humans to relate to) without unsettling the logics and systems that render other species killable.
 - 30 Shotwell, for instance, though sympathetic to vegan politics (and vegan herself), criticizes the specific way that certain organizations have tried to promote veganism, arguing that PETA, for instance, is "an organization that . . . has done more than any other, through a series of video and performance interventions, to convince people that vegetarians and vegans are clueless racists unable to take a feminist stance on body politics." Shotwell, *Against Purity*, 121.
 - 31 Lorimer notes that the difficulties posed by life-forms that are harmful are a particular problem for relational, more-than-human approaches to ethics. Lorimer, "Multinatural Geographies." This issue is also noted by Uli Beisel, "Jumping Hurdles with Mosquitos," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28 (2010): 46–49. It is this difficulty of where to draw the line that Cary Wolfe focuses on in *Before the Law: Humans and Other Animals in a Biopolitical Frame* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012).
 - 32 Lorimer, "Multinatural Geographies," 604.
 - 33 It is important to note, moreover, that relational approaches are not the sole purveyors of these criticisms; indeed, the frequent positioning of these fields as distinct in making this argument has been accused of masking other traditions of thought that have never been grounded in distinctions between nature and culture. See again Sundberg, "Decolonizing Posthumanist Geographies." For important criticisms from Indigenous scholars, see Zoe Todd, "An Indigenous Feminist's Take on the Ontological Turn: 'Ontology' Is Just Another Word for Colonialism," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 29, no. 1 (2016): 4–22; and Kim TallBear, "Beyond the Life/Not Life Binary: A Feminist-Indigenous Reading of Cryopreservation, Interspecies Thinking, and the New Materialisms," in *Cryopolitics: Frozen Life in a Melting World*, ed. Joanna Radin and Emma Kowal (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017), 179–200.

- 34 Bruno Latour, "Why Has Critique Run Out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern," *Critical Inquiry* 30, no. 2 (2004): 225–248. I elaborate on debates surrounding Latour's "critique of critique" in chapter 4. For a polemical argument for the need for a more critical field of animal studies, see Steven Best, "The Rise of Critical Animal Studies: Putting Theory into Action and Animal Liberation into Higher Education," *Journal for Critical Animal Studies* 7, no. 1 (2009): 9–52.
- 35 The relationship between critical and mainstream animal studies is fleshed out in chapter 3. To sketch out some important arguments, though, work in CAS is committed to principles of social justice in relation to animals. As with Best's "The Rise of Critical Animal Studies," this political stance can manifest itself as a wholesale criticism of theory (particularly work from a poststructuralist lineage). Other work has adopted a more sympathetic relationship with theoretical work and has instead pushed on conceptual contradictions and tensions within relational ethics. Helena Pedersen warns, for example, that "rather than disturbing species boundaries," an uncritical celebration of human-animal relations "does a colonial work of reinscribing them." Zipporah Weisberg, similarly, criticizes theories of companion species for colluding with "structures of domination" by undermining any capacity to enact a structural critique of speciesism, and Carol J. Adams suggests that practices explored by Haraway (such as hunting and animal breeding) intrinsically position animals as killable resources in precisely the manner that Haraway otherwise condemns. Other thinkers have adopted approaches with a clear affinity for feminist science studies, working critically with more-than-human theoretical work: as in Erika Cudworth's use of posthumanism to develop a complex intersectional critique of human and animal oppressions, or Tom Tyler's critical attempts to move beyond anthropocentric philosophy. See Pedersen, "Release the Moths," 72–73; Zipporah Weisberg, "The Broken Promises of Monsters: Haraway, Animals and the Humanist Legacy," *Journal for Critical Animal Studies* 7, no. 2 (2009): 22; Carol J. Adams, "An Animal Manifesto: Gender, Identity, and Vegan-Feminism in the Twenty-First Century," interview by Tom Tyler, *Parallax* 12, no. 1 (2006): 120–128; Erika Cudworth, *Social Lives with Other Animals: Tales of Sex, Death and Love* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); and Tom Tyler, *CIFERAE: A Bestiary in Five Fingers* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012).
- 36 For instance, Henry Buller offers an overview of ethical developments in animal studies that crystallizes common ways in which CAS is portrayed. Buller argues that the need for a critical animal studies is predicated on a mischaracterization of an apolitical mainstream animal studies. More significantly, he characterizes CAS as undercutting its own aims by appealing to biological distinctions between species (rather than acknowledging multispecies entanglements) and by predicating its ethics on normative, humanist models of subjectivity at precisely the moment these models need to be unsettled. These arguments are underlined with reference to Haraway's criticism of totalizing ethical frameworks. To give another example of how work in CAS can be bracketed to one side: aside from Adams, work perceived as belonging to CAS is often not engaged with substantively within so-called mainstream animal studies. More, the extensive citing of Adams carries a distinct citational politics. As Carrie Hamilton argues, attention needs to be paid to the "cu-

- mulative effect of citing Adams as the authority on veganism and feminism,” as this has resulted in other conceptually provocative work being neglected. Henry Buller, “Animal Geographies III: Ethics,” *Progress in Human Geography* 40, no. 3 (2016): 425; and Carrie Hamilton, “Sex, Work, Meat: The Feminist Politics of Veganism,” *Feminist Review* 114, no. 1 (2016): 112–129.
- 37 Again, *community* is used here in an expansive, more-than-human sense.
- 38 Maria Puig de la Bellacasa, “Matters of Care in Technoscience: Assembling Neglected Things,” *Social Studies of Science* 41, no. 1 (2011): 91.
- 39 Puig de la Bellacasa, “Matters of Care,” 91.
- 40 See, for instance, Joanna Latimer’s critique of Haraway’s “being with.” Latimer suggests that Haraway’s emphasis on relationality and hybridity can neglect the power-laden nature of particular encounters, and calls instead for preserving the “possibility of dwelling with non-humans” in ways that preserve “division and alterity as much as connectivity and unity.” Joanna Latimer, “Being Alongside: Re-thinking Relations amongst Different Kinds,” *Theory, Culture and Society* 30, no. 7–8 (2013): 98.
- 41 Rosemary-Claire Collard, “Putting Animals Back Together, Taking Commodities Apart,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 104, no. 1 (2015): 153.
- 42 Franklin Ginn, “Sticky Lives: Slugs, Detachment and More-than-Human Ethics in the Garden,” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 39, no. 4 (2014): 538.
- 43 This argument is revisited throughout the book, but I elaborate on it in particular depth in the conclusion.
- 44 Jo Freeman, “The Tyranny of Structurelessness,” in *Untying the Knot: Feminism, Anarchism and Organisation*, by Jo Freeman and Cathy Levine (London: Dark Star and Rebel Press, 1984), 6–7.
- 45 I have explored the way Freeman’s ideas have intersected with pedagogy in Eva Gi-raud, “Feminist Praxis, Critical Theory and Informal Hierarchies,” *Journal of Feminist Scholarship* 7, no. 1 (2015): 43–60. See chapter 2 (in this book) for elaboration of how these arguments have been related to digital culture.
- 46 Freeman, “Tyranny of Structurelessness,” 16.
- 47 Ginn, “Sticky Lives,” 533.
- 48 Puig de la Bellacasa, “Matters of Care,” 91.
- 49 Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, 71. As Felicity Callard and Des Fitzgerald’s work elucidates, Barad’s use of *entanglement* can be especially productive in the context of knowledge production: drawing attention to more expansive apparatuses through which knowledge is produced, to the relationships between different bodies of knowledge, and to affective dimensions of research. This specific use of *entanglement* contrasts, however, with the more wide-ranging uses of the term discussed throughout the book, to characterize environmental and multispecies relations (only some of which, such as Haraway, engage explicitly with Barad). Again, moreover, the issue is not with conceptions of entanglement in themselves but with particular ethical claims that have been grounded in appeals to irreducible complexity and relationality. Des Fitzgerald and Felicity Callard, “Social Science and Neuroscience beyond Interdisciplinarity: Experimental Entanglements,” *Theory, Culture and*

Society 32, no. 1 (2015): 3–32; and Callard and Fitzgerald, *Rethinking Interdisciplinarity across the Social Sciences and Neurosciences*.

- 50 Though the work of a range of different thinkers is synthesized in developing these arguments, Haraway and Susan Leigh Star have the greatest prominence in chapter 1; Karen Barad and Anna Tsing are the focus in the second chapter; and Isabelle Stengers’s cosmopolitical approach is at the heart of chapter 3.
- 51 Again a range of theorists and interlocutors in key debates are brought together in the final three chapters, but—broadly speaking—central to the fourth chapter is a sustained reading of Maria Puig de la Bellacasa’s conception of care against work in more-than-human geographies; and the final chapters draw together work focused on nonhuman charisma (notably Jamie Lorimer) and bodily encounters (such as Vinciane Despret) in particular.
- 52 The value of emotion has been reiterated by a number of thinkers, particularly in relation to developing sustainable forms of activism, for example, Paul Chatterton and Jenny Pickerill, “Everyday Activism and the Transitions towards Post-capitalist Worlds,” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 35, no. 4 (2010): 475–490; for further discussion of emotion and its value in engaging with publics, but also the ways it can be used to delegitimize activist perspectives, see Jeffrey Juris, “Performing Politics: Image, Embodiment, and Affective Solidarity during Anti-corporate Globalization Protests,” *Ethnography* 9, no. 1 (2008): 61–97.
- 53 A large body of recent research has highlighted the active role of care, emotion, and affective labor (and the relations between these qualities) within experimental research, in ways that belie the rational/irrational dichotomy between researchers and activists, for example, Martyn Pickersgill, “The Co-production of Science, Ethics, and Emotion,” *Science, Technology, and Human Values* 37, nos. 6 (2012): 579–603; and Des Fitzgerald, “The Affective Labour of Autism Neuroscience,” *Subjectivity* 6 (2013): 131–152.
- 54 Haraway, *When Species Meet*. For an overview of these debates that engages with Haraway’s influence, see Joanna Latimer and Mara Miele, “Naturecultures: Science, Affect and the Nonhuman,” *Theory, Culture and Society* 30, nos. 7–8 (2013): 5–31.
- 55 An argument made in Haraway’s *When Species Meet*, as noted above, but one that has a long history (as discussed in chapter 4 in this book).
- 56 It is this sort of routine characterization of certain practices as totalizing and essentialist (namely, those engaged in by activists) and others as situated, embodied, and responsive (in line with the approaches advocated in theoretical contexts) that I seek to unsettle throughout this book. Hamilton makes a similar argument in her sympathetic critique of Val Plumwood’s work, suggesting that Plumwood’s critique of veganism as a form of ontological purity “effectively reduces all veganism to its ‘ontological’ variety, failing to acknowledge alternative vegan traditions, including those within the food, environmental and social justice movements,” a move that Hamilton argues “represents a form of asceticism and alienation from embodiment [that] forecloses discussion of the different embodied experiences of vegans/vegetarians.” Hamilton, “Sex, Work, Meat,” 122. For Plumwood’s original critiques, see Val Plumwood, “Integrating Ethical Frameworks for Animals, Hu-

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- mans, and Nature: A Critical Feminist Eco-socialist Analysis,” *Ethics and the Environment* 5, no.2 (2000): 285–322; and Val Plumwood, “Gender, Eco-feminism and the Environment,” in *Controversies in Environmental Sociology*, edited by Richard White (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 43–60.
- 57 My primarily theoretical concerns here are the reason why I have focused on exploring the conceptual potentials of these tactics rather than elaborating on the specificities of each movement. For a sustained discussion of anticapitalist and environmental protest in the United Kingdom that provides further ethnographic context, see Chatterton and Pickerill, “Everyday Activism.” For further ethnographic detail about some of the key movements discussed here, see Eva Giraud, “Displacement, ‘Failure’ and Friction: Tactical Interventions in the Communication Ecologies of Anti-capitalist Food Activism,” in *Digital Food Activism*, ed. Tanja Schneider et al. (New York: Routledge, 2018), 130–150; and Eva Giraud, “Practice as Theory: Learning from Food Activism and Performative Protest,” in *Critical Animal Geographies: Politics, Intersections and Hierarchies in a Multispecies World*, ed. Kathryn Gillespie and Rosemary-Claire Collard (New York: Routledge, 2015), 36–53.
- 58 Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984); for a use of this approach to articulate relations with more-than-human actors, see John Law and Annemarie Mol, *Complexities: Social Studies of Knowledge Practices* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002).
- 59 Latour, “Why Has Critique Run Out of Steam?,” 229.
- 60 De Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life*, 30–37.
- 61 Donna Haraway, “The Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others,” in *Cultural Studies*, ed. Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paula Treichler (New York: Routledge, 1992), 311.

1. Articulations

- 1 Although Star’s precise articulation of this point was in 1991, this is regularly cited as one of the central concerns of feminist science studies (a point made by Maria Puig de la Bellacasa in “Matters of Care”) as well as science studies more broadly. See Star, “Power,” 38.
- 2 For an elaboration of why this process of articulation is so difficult for activists, see Pollyanna Ruiz, *Articulating Dissent: Protest and the Public Sphere* (London: Pluto, 2014).
- 3 As Dimitris Papadopoulos argues, seemingly mundane elements of activist practice often carry significance, as it is often at the everyday level—“beyond the radar of control”—that “creative social transformation” takes place. Correspondingly, barriers that inhibit practice at this mundane, everyday level also hold ethico-political importance, due to their capacity to undermine these transformative potentials. Dimitris Papadopoulos, *Experimental Practice: Technoscience, Alterontologies, and More-than-Social Movements* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018), 4.
- 4 While this framing of constraints as productive is Foucauldian in tone, I am drawing more explicitly on feminist-materialist rereadings of Foucault and Judith Butler that emphasize the relations between the material and the semiotic, and how these relations are productive of matter as well as discursive regimes of truth. For an