Colonialism, Domestication, & Extinction: A Pre-Mortem for Our Ecological Futures

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Abstract: This paper engages with Ghassan Hage's concepts of 'ungovernable waste' and 'generalized domestication' to think critically about the sociopolitical position and futures of farmed animals in the context of ongoing climate and ecological crises. Against the erasure of farmed animal subjectivities, we posit that there is much to learn by turning to farmed animals as sources of wisdom, as unique knowers with lessons to teach us about extinction. We consider how Andil Gosine's radical suggestion to embrace animality as a refusal of the civilizing discourses of colonialism, and as an act of solidarity with nonhuman animals, constitutes a critical step towards realizing multispecies justice and a move towards interspecies solidarity with farmed animals. Here Gosine provokes us to reconsider our attitudes towards animals facing extinction in varying contexts under colonial-capitalism.

Keywords: animality, subjectivity, multispecies, solidarity, farmed animals, extinction

'All flourishing is mutual.'

— Robin Wall Kimmerer (20)

A premortem is the hypothetical opposite of a postmortem. A postmortem in a medical setting allows health professionals and the family to learn what caused a patient's death. Everyone benefits except, of course, the patient. A premortem in a business setting comes at the beginning of a project rather than the end, so that the project can be improved rather than autopsied. Unlike a typical critiquing session, in which project team members are asked what might go wrong, the premortem operates on the assumption that the 'patient' has died, and so asks what did go wrong. The team members' task is to generate plausible reasons for the project's failure. (Gary Klein, 1)

Introduction

We begin with three basic premises. First, we are in the midst of a global climate catastrophe, which has been unfolding inequitably since the emergence of settler colonialism of the Americas. Second, what is at stake, including our own species extinction and mass incalculable suffering, extends well beyond the reaches of humanity into the habitats, bodies, and lifeways of myriad other forms of nonhuman life. Third, the first two premises are intimately connected: those positioned outside of 'the human' in the liberal Western tradition are rendered exploitable, and ultimately disposable, due to their predetermined ontological failure to achieve human status.

For this paper, we build upon ideas from the article 'Multispecies Disposability: Taxonomies of Power in a Global Pandemic' (Chang & Corman), especially concentrating on disposability as it applies to 'farmed animals'[1] and extinction. Following Ghassan Hage, we consider what his examination of 'ungovernable waste' implies for farmed animals' present and future, and how this relates to disposability and extinction. One of our primary concerns is how current thinking about farmed animals in the context of ecological crisis already displays and reproduces established violent logics of extermination; humans and nonhumans whose

populations and existence are deemed 'excess' are often subjected to such oppressive logics, sometimes even promoted by those with good intentions. In conjunction, we also explore Hage's notion of 'generalized domestication', explained more fully later, which Hage contends that 'racism reproduces, and in so also reproduces and revitalises the harmful modes of relating to the environment that plague our world today' (16).

Additionally, Andil Gosine's embrace of animality as a refusal of the civilising discourses of colonialism informs our work. We note, though, that Gosine's analysis is mainly focused on the 'onus placed upon Caribbean people to be *human*, *not animal*' (emphasis in original, 133), thus illuminating the workings of European colonialism and power, and the centrality of the human/animal binary within the colonial project. We want to be cautious here, given these legacies of racism and colonialism, which chiefly produce racial categories through metamorphizing humans as animals to rationalise subjugation (see Kim).

For instance, the weight of these metaphors is stressed by both scholars and advocates who urge the renaming of 'monkeypox', arguing that the name is racist, homophobic, and stigmatising (Sibbald), not to mention inaccurate. In a recent interview with NPR (National Public Radio), global health equity advocate and senior New Voices fellow at the Aspen Institute, Ifeanyi Nsofor emphasizes, 'First, there is a long history of referring to Blacks as monkeys. Therefore, "monkeypox" is racist and stigmatizes Blacks… Second, 'monkeypox' gives a wrong impression that the disease is only transmitted by monkeys. This is wrong' (as cited in Chappell). Like Gosine, and as the 'monkeypox' example suggests, we are keenly aware of how '[s]ome people get to embrace their animality more than others, depending on the context in which they live', and how the '[p]rivileges of masculinity, able-bodiedness, class, heterosexuality, and whiteness allow some people to "get on like animals" without consequences that could be terminal for marginalized subjects' (141).

Rather than being prescriptive, we are interested in the possibilities of opening to animality as one way of defying the colonial logics that give rise to global environmental crises, crises that disproportionately affect racialized people and nonhuman animals, and moving away from multispecies disposability toward multispecies justice. By questioning the constructions of

nonhuman animals within the liberal Western tradition (and necessarily the corollary construction of 'the human'), we pull at the threads of the human/animal binary and hope to further unravel the co-constituted ecological and racialized harms enacted under these signifiers.

Among those most profoundly desecrated through these logics are farmed animals. Their desecration turns on the belief that what separates 'man' from 'animal' acquits one from all but cursory ethical responsibility, itself easily dissolved through precedential appeals to 'standard industry practice', which leaves nonhuman nature open to pillage. We centrally posit that there is much to learn by turning to 'farmed animals' as sources of wisdom, as unique knowers with lessons to teach us about problems of extinction. By turning to those who have been so debased and profoundly instrumentalised through Western cosmologies and practices, we directly confront the ideologies that manufacture life as fungible: under Western colonial capitalism, farmed animals matter only in their service to others, their subjectivities hollowed out of flesh.

Although not overtly framed through the lenses of animal liberation, rights, or welfare, we are forwarding a position in which domesticated animals are understood as subjects, beings with a wellspring of insights who could help mediate the environmental crises in which we are embroiled. We acknowledge a vibrant body of research dedicated to better understanding and improving the lives of farmed animals. We recognize the worthiness of these pursuits, but our argument diverges from specific arguments for legal rights, improved welfare, or even animal liberation broadly conceived, as these are positions that typically centre the plight of animals themselves,[2] and perhaps the ethical betterment of the human species. Said differently, our paper extends beyond the important interest in farmed animal welfare, rights, and liberation, and contemplates the implications of farmed animal subjectivities, resistance, and agency in relation to ecological crises, especially species extinction writ large. In the concluding section, we reflect on how Gosine's call to embrace and claim our own animality might provoke different ways to appreciate farmed animals and forge solidarity between humans and nonhumans.

Animals as Guides

Western societies largely do not engage with farmed animals as beings, only as objects; their lives recede into the background as their bodies, as products, are relentlessly foregrounded in advertisements, food, and metaphors. That these animals, who are often ignored as beings from whom we might learn, are equally as erased in mainstream culture as within even radical forms of thought and practice should give us pause. This double-invisibility serves as an echo-chamber, in which the parameters of our debates presume that farmed animals are both outside of ecological niches as well as our ethical ones (Davis). Yet, it is not only these animals who suffer the consequences of this, but so do we and the environment more generally. In matters of extinction, the *subjective* lives of farmed animals are remarkably erased.

Relatedly, farmed animals nonetheless appear in discourses about extinction through two major concerns: 1) animal agriculture as a precipitator of biodiversity loss, and 2) rare farm animal breed extinction. On the first point, for example, the often-cited 2021 Chatham House report concludes, 'Land-use change from natural to managed habitats always creates a cost to biodiversity because crops or farmed animals dominate the space and use up resources, leaving less of both for wildlife' (Benton et al.). Referencing the Chatham House study, the UN Environment Programme (which supported the report) declares, 'Our global food system is the primary driver of biodiversity loss, with agriculture alone being the identified threat to 24,000 of the 28,000 (86%) species at risk of extinction' (United Nations Environment Programme).

On the second point, typical of the discourse regarding breed extinction, NPR journalist Alastair Bland laments:

> The Red Wattle, a pig with exceptionally juicy flesh, and the Randall Lineback, a cow that produces beautiful rose-red veal, are two success stories – breeds that were close to oblivion but that foodie ranchers have revived. But others haven't been so lucky. And it may be because lately no one has wanted to eat them.

Advocacy work on breed extinction centrally includes arguments by the Rare Breed Survival Trust (RBST) (Jones) and the Livestock Conservancy that consuming threatened breeds and their products helps preserve them (Jones), and breed preservation builds resiliency into the

food system (The Livestock Conservancy, 'Our Mission'). In conversation with journalist Alastair Bland, Ryan Walker of the Livestock Conservancy urges, 'We sometimes say, "You need to eat them to save them – just don't eat them all."'

Significantly, while animals' subjectivities are largely absent from discourses about biodiversity loss and extinction, there are many turning to nonhuman beings to seek knowledge and wisdom, recognizing them as our teachers. For instance, in Alexis Pauline Gumbs' (2020) *Undrowned: Black Feminist Lessons from Marine Mammals* and Robin Wall Kimmerer's (2013) *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants*, the authors draw deep, radical lessons from more-than-human species. Gumbs observes:

> The adaptations that marine mammals have made in relationship to breathing are some of the most relevant for us to observe, not only in relationship to our own survival in an atmosphere we have polluted on a planet where we are causing the ocean to rise, *but also in relationship to our intentional living, our mindful relation to each other.* (emphasis added, 21)

Similarly, Kimmerer, a member of the Citizen Potawantomi Nation, contends:

> Learning the grammar of animacy could well be a restraint on our mindless exploitation of land. But there is more to it. I have heard our elders give advice like 'You should go among the standing people' or 'Go spend some time with those Beaver people'. They remind us of the capacity of others as our teachers, as holders of knowledge, as guides. (58)

Kimmerer further reflects:

> Many of our traditional teachings recognize that certain species are our helpers and our guides. The Original Instructions remind us that we must return the favour. It is an honor to be the guardian of another species – an honour within each person's reach that we too often forget. (151)

Yet, despite commitments to consider other species as teachers and guides, domesticated animals remain largely excluded from our collective reflections and explorations. This is consistent with some who pursue rights, liberation, and justice for other animals and the environment, but who nonetheless accept the idea that the status of domesticated animals, particularly 'farmed animals', is a sort of 'fall from grace' in contrast to their wild counterparts, rendering domesticated existence less valuable (see Davis).

Specifically, within the Western human-animal binary the categories of 'human' and 'animal' are not homogeneously constructed (2015). Through such stratification, farmed animals fare among the very worst in the hierarchization of life. For instance, Karen Davis clearly delineates the values assigned to 'farmed' versus 'wild' animals within Western environmental thought:

> …farm animals are relegated to the wasteland of foregone conclusions in which they are considered to be not only ecologically out of tune but too denatured and void of autonomy for human morality to apply to them… The situation of these animals, within themselves and on the planet, does not appear to exact contrition or reparations from the perpetrators of their plight, while the victims are per se denied 'rights,' of which the most elemental must surely be the right of a being to be perceived before being conceptually trashed. (198)

While not all within the environmental movements so acridly regard farmed animals, Davis accurately diagnoses a significant impasse: Western environmentalism has largely been preoccupied with the plight of wild species rather than the subjectivity of individual animals, especially 'farmed animals', often denigrating them along the way. Davis links these tendencies to the legacies of key figures, such as Aldo Leopold, and his 'categorical imperative' articulated through the Land Ethic in his 1949 *A Sand County Almanac*: 'A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise' (224-225). Although many environmentally oriented people may be sympathetic to the suffering of farmed animals, their placelessness in respect to ecological niches leaves their relevance to traditionally 'environmental' concerns out of reach, or renders them as existential threats.

Alternatively, with our attentive listening, we believe farmed animals can offer a vital redress to the colonial havoc besieging the planet. In the first chapter of *Undrowned*, Gumbs also begins with listening. Crucially, she asks, 'How can we listen across species, across extinction, across harm?' (15). She adds, 'Listening is not only about the normative ability to hear, it is a transformative and revolutionary resource that requires quieting down and tuning in' (15). For the purposes of this paper, we ask, 'How might farmed animals help us address pressing issues of extinction?' Before we offer a preliminary answer to this driving question, we examine how farmed animals are especially vulnerable to logics of violence, given that they are so 'conceptually trashed' (Davis).

Generalized Domestication / Ungovernable Waste

Fields of study critically engaging with the topic of human-nonhuman relations have established bodies of work that convincingly argue how different forms of domination not only share similarities in their logics and patterns, but they also actively rely on, reinforce, and reproduce one another across cultures and institutions. Ghassan Hage's *Is Racism an Environmental Threat?* is a recent example in this line of analysis, wherein Hage argues that the racial and ecological crises 'not only happen to have an effect on each other, they are in effect one and the same crisis; a crisis in the dominant mode of inhabiting the world that both racial and ecological domination reproduces' (14). Hage traces the root of both Western/white racism and environmental domination to what he calls 'generalized domestication', defined as 'a mode of inhabiting the world through dominating it for the purpose of making it yield value: material or symbolic forms of sustenance, comfort, aesthetic pleasure, and so on' (87).

However, according to Hage, in the eyes of the domesticator, beings who can no longer be controlled and managed to yield value, whether humans or nonhumans, become ungovernable waste, which exposes them to the logics of extermination (77-80). One of our main concerns here is how the current disposability of farmed animals might result in them slipping further into the category of 'ungovernable waste' throughout their lifecycles, particularly amid accelerating extinction and climate crises. What we mean is that farmed

animals might come to be categorized as ungovernable waste not only by those who benefit directly from their exploitation, but also, sadly, by those who may not be entirely sympathetic to their continued existence for arguably legitimate reasons, such as some environmental activists who care about the negative impacts of animal agriculture, or even animal activists who care about ending the mass suffering of animals.

By ungovernable waste, we are not just referring to the waste that farmed animals themselves generate, such as excrement, nor are we specifying other waste materials produced by animal agriculture; we mean that farmed animals themselves as living beings could also be figured as waste. To be clear, we are not arguing that most people who care about the environment or animals already consider farmed animals to be waste, and actively push for their complete extermination, though people who believe their extermination would ultimately be in the best interest of planetary and animal wellbeing certainly exist, which we address in the next section. Rather, we anticipate how existing logics could produce possible extermination events, such as mass culling for the purpose of intentional extinction or sterilisation of farmed animals, especially when compounded with the devaluing and erasure of farmed animals that already persists.[3]

The current and potential future categorization of farmed animals as ungovernable waste becomes intelligible when we recognize the states of governing and being governed as primarily a relational affair. As Hage states, '[w]hen something is ungovernable it reflects some of its qualities in relation to the capacity of the apparatus trying to govern it. What is ungovernable for one apparatus does not have to be so for another' (46). On one hand, the animal agriculture industry may believe that all farmed animals are governable and fully within the industry's control. Applying Foucauldian scholarship to analysing animal agricultural practices, Chloë Taylor and Dinesh Wadiwel demonstrate how the animal agriculture industry exercises a range of powers (sovereign, disciplinary, regulatory, pastoral, and biopower) to attain an extreme level of control over farmed animal lives.

On the other hand, those who see the sheer biomass and populations of farmed animals as part of an ongoing ecological crisis and/or a crisis of mass suffering, would likely consider farmed animals to be ungovernable and unmanageable. As an earlier example, commenting on the lauded work of environmental philosopher, J. Baird Callicott, Davis observes:

> According to Callicott, the treatment of hens on a factory farm has not been morally important in the development of environmental ethics. Ecologically, [hens], like other domesticated 'farm' animals, [are] not on a moral par with the authentic and autonomous creatures of the world but with all of the intrusive human technologies, from dune buggies to hybrid corn, *doing their dirty work of contributing to the despoliation of the biotic community into which they had been inserted*. (200, emphasis added)

A more recent example of such rendering involves Greenpeace International co-founder Rex Weyler. Summarising Bar-On et al.'s study in which they assembled a census of biomass distribution on Earth, Weyler emphasises that farmed animals 'account for 59.9% of all mammal biomass on Earth', humans 'account for 35.9%', while '[a]ll wild mammals, marine or terrestrial, account for only 4.2% of mammal biomass'. This information appears in Weyler's article about humans' environmental impact, in essence guiding the reader to interpret farmed animals as belonging to the same category as other harmful anthropogenic pollutants contributing to ecological crises. In the context of the ecological catastrophes we face, Hage asks, '[f]or what is the ecological crisis if not a crisis of ungovernable waste, whether in the form of plastic in the oceans, toxic chemicals in the rivers and the soil, or greenhouse gases in the atmosphere?' (49).

On Extinction: A Couple Caveats

Before proceeding, it is crucial to address a couple of anticipated concerns. First, we imagine people who would claim that they value the lives of animals, recognize their sentience, and would never identify animals as 'waste' in ways that the category has been attributed to other pollutants, might still view the 'excess' of farmed animals (i.e., their population and impact on the environment) as an ungovernable crisis. Popular documentary *Cowspiracy: The Sustainability*

Secret (2014) serves as one example, where filmmaker Kip Andersen both demonstrates love and care for farmed animals and recognizes their growing population as unsustainable and ecologically destructive.

This relates to the second concern, which is that the same people who value the lives of animals, despite advocating for the extinction of all domesticated animals, likely believe their stance to be an unfortunate necessity catalysed by the mass forced breeding and exploitation of animals. Ethical philosopher Frauke Albersmeier, for example, has defended this position (known as 'extinctionism') on four main grounds, arguing that domesticated animals would remain perpetually vulnerable in relation to humans, that they would remain severely dependent on humans with very limited autonomy, that institutionally it would be challenging to implement ways to hold humans accountable to ensure proper care, and that allowing domesticated animals to reproduce would lead to their overpopulation; therefore, according to Albersmeier, it is extremely challenging for domesticated animals' to realise any sense of justice so long as they exist.

We acknowledge these positions and want to clarify that we are not equating or conflating the stance of individuals who care about animal lives, such as some environmental and animal activists who believe that extinction is the best option for most domesticated animals, with fascistic views that certain living beings deemed inferior must be exterminated. The differences in the intentions and values behind these positions cannot be overstated. Whereas fascism is driven by hateful myths constructed about others, pro-extinction animal advocates such as Gary Francione and Frauke Albersmeier are propelled by care for animals and responding to brutal realities, wherein for these scholars, the extinction for certain species is understood as a compassionate and merciful, albeit tragic, necessity. Similarly, we also acknowledge that the existing overpopulation of farmed animals due to the forced reproduction demanded by capitalism is a real crisis to planetary life, including the farmed animals themselves, and agree that justice for farmed animals would require an end to their industrial reproduction.

Nonetheless, we cannot ignore the reality that oppressive logics are pervasive and that movements motivated by justice are certainly not immune to reproducing their harms. As stated earlier, the fact that farmed animals are still routinely invisibilized in otherwise critical or radical

works relating to human-nonhuman relations only further solidifies this concern. Part of our intention here is to urge those who care about animal lives and justice across species to reflect on their own positions and approaches when relating to farmed animals.

Wisdom of Farmed Animals

Instead of acting in complicity in modes of thought and action that negate and degrade farmed animals, either directly through derision or through a chronic erasure of their rich presence, what would a justice politics look like that included these animals as knowledgeable kin, who have something important to contribute to the conversation, including conversations about extinction?

Our proposition may seem absurd, but it is precisely the potential laughability inspired by this argument that points to the fulcrum on which colonial necropolitics teeters: never secure in its position, the human subject is haunted by 'the animal' (Lippit), in which animals (and humans cast within animality's long shadow) are intensely exploited not only for their commercial value, but also their figurative value as 'Others' used to define the fully human (white, male, straight, cis, able-bodied) subject. Although we might perceive wild animals, with their dizzying perceptual multiplicities (Yong), as providing insights into how to be in better relation with them and with each other, animals brought into the fold of the domestic are largely understood as pitifully bereft of such potential wisdom. This is our loss, as well as theirs.

Our imperative suggests we seek a consultative relationship with farmed animals in respect to extinction, and imbricated environmental concerns. How might we proceed? We propose a two-pronged approach: First, we must consider farmed animals' experiences under industrial agriculture, and attend to the agential ways they resist, relate, and inhabit those circumstances. This includes consideration of how they navigate their lives in relation to other human and nonhuman animals, and the practices and technologies meant to control and manage them. We must attempt to understand them in these worlds, as impoverished and excruciating as they may be, both for the animals' sake and for their instructive value to us.

Second, as Corman has argued, we must embrace an 'including but beyond suffering' approach that refuses the tendency to reduce animals to pure victimhood, in which suffering alone represents the totality of their subjectivities. This involves seeking out research and stories about farmed animals from sanctuaries, cognitive ethology, and personal experiences that speak to the complexity of farmed animals' lives. So, too, such an orientation means recognizing that even within industrial conditions, farmed animals' internal lives do not match the debased way industrial farming treats and portrays them: as producing objects whose subjective experiences, as 'welfare', is all but an addendum to the primary goal of profit.

We want to turn towards the beings that capitalism shouts do not matter beyond their market value. What if we took the risk to perceive farmed animals before, as Davis admonishes, they are 'conceptually trashed', including within discourses of extinction? What if we conceptually reversed the perspectives deemed most *irrelevant*, and we recognized farmed animals at the centre of extinction debates as subjective beings whose inclusion is directly relevant to mediating environmental crises?

Our argument is not about instrumentalizing farmed animals in yet a new and creative way. Instead, we are concerned with closing the fictitious chasm that Western culture draws between humans and animals, the divide that cuts the world into subjects and objects. To resist the disposability of farmed animals in this way is to resist the human/animal binary that ranks life, renders categories of it disposable, and thus *precipitates* environmental crises. Among a growing body of scholarship, Sarat Colling, and Elisabeth Stoddard and Alice Hovorka's research provide accounts of farmed animals that profoundly disrupt the logic of 'generalized domestication'.

For example, Colling recounts a story of cows introduced to the coastal region of northwestern Italy who were designated to be used in a fire-risk-reduction project, which involved grazing open areas. After residents dispensed with the project, a group of cows inverted their domestication by escaping slaughter and forming their own autonomous community, finding solace in the rolling hills above the nearby village. These 'rebel cows' have gained the sympathy of locals despite frequenting their vegetable patches when food becomes scarce in the winter. To protect themselves from their legally sanctioned death sentence and the

threat of poaching, the cows have adapted by appointing a herd member as a lookout while others graze, and they have learned to stay in elevated mountains during daylight, only entering villages after dark.

Elisabeth Stoddard and Alice Hovorka's case study on North Carolina CAFOs (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations) and animal vulnerability in hurricanes also underscores the remarkable adaptation and resilience of farmed animals, highlighting the escaped pigs who joined feral herds after Hurricane Floyd: a government worker explained to the authors that, as great swimmers, many pigs escaped Floyd and 'moved into the swamps and woods of Eastern North Carolina, joined feral herds, and have been multiplying ever since' (Stoddard and Hovorka 159-160). As a non-native species in North Carolina, and North America in general, the success of feral pig communities in sustaining their lives outside captivity serves as a key example of animal agency in collective flight.

Comparatively, Sammy Jo Johnson stresses the need to extend understandings of animal agency beyond physical resistance. Writing specifically on zoos and circuses, Johnson draws on critical disabilities scholarship to demonstrate how works by authors such as Jason Hribal tend to reproduce a version of animal agency that is extinguished by the presence of disability. That is, primarily the able-bodied nonhuman animal is rendered as agential, as these animals are understood as capable of resistance. Calling for more nuanced understandings of agency, Johnson foregrounds Dinesh Wadiwel's work on fish resistance as one such example, in which the presence of technologies and tools directed toward fish capture and destruction serve as evidence of already-occurring sea animal agency: 'This focus on devices and tools of destruction can able us to see fish, commonly considered to lack the ability to suffer let alone fight against their capture, as expressing agency in more ways than a model of agency associated with physical resistance identified in moments of escape and violent behavior against trainers' (69). Citing examples of industrial animal farming technologies aimed at thwarting animal resistance, such as Temple Grandin's animal corral designs that facilitate cows' movement towards slaughter, or light-dimming to reduce chicken's vision and thereby limit their movements, Wadiwel similarly applies the above analysis to understanding farmed animal agency (11-12).

Farmed animals also offer us deep insights and guidance on how to proceed with life following immense collective traumas. Resilience and healing can be seen in the lives of animals living within farmed animal sanctuaries, where new and meaningful relationships are formed amongst human and more-than-human residents, and where formerly farmed animals are supported and empowered to exercise their agency to pursue their subjective goods (e.g., Orzechowski). A burgeoning body of literature and research focusing on farmed animal sanctuaries reveal that as experimental sites of alternative relations and lifeways, sanctuaries as communities can be invaluable to teaching the world beyond their physical boundaries how existing relations of human violence against farmed animals could instead be transformed into relations grounded in embodied acts of care, reciprocity, and interdependence (see Gillespie; Blattner et al; Abrell, for examples).

Possibilities of Embracing Shared Animality

As animal agriculture is increasingly held responsible for the material conditions it produces, including species extinction, we cannot assume that such material conditions can be resolved without challenging the root ideological forces that make such materiality possible. That is, how can we hope to confront the perils of extinction without also tackling the ideological orientation that foundationally undergirds it? Hage takes up this challenge, incisively illuminating 'generalized domestication'; this paper represents an attempt to extend his work by suggesting that the subjective lives of farmed animals are directly relevant to matters of extinction, the 'domesticated' animals at the heart of the extinction debates. We refuse the colonial capitalist lie that tells us that they have nothing to offer but their commodified bodies. Similarly, we refuse the extinction discourses, including the 'benevolent' environmental ones that reduce these beings to threats, or even rare 'breeds' worth saving, thereby re-producing colonial capitalist logics in a greenwashed form.

Although we do not presume that engaging farmed animals as subjects is the sole solution to the juggernaut of extinction, our proposition points to the urgency of corroding the human/animal divide within these ambitions. We believe that the inclusion of farmed animals'

subjective lives offers transformative potential for disengaging the human/animal binary that reinscribes ecological calamities. We may even consider claiming animality through this process, in solidarity with nonhuman animals and as a rewriting of the dominant Western human subject, positioned as uniquely distinct and above other animals. Gosine explains:

> The claim of 'animal' as an identity at this time is…an aspirational acknowledgment in two ways. First, it is a reach toward redemption from practices of excessive *discipline* and *production*. Second, it is a declaration of willful but not always achievable solidarity with all animals in a moment of global ecological crisis, when more than one million species are threatened with extinction – more than at any other moment in history. (emphasis in original, 143-144)

Here, Gosine stresses that his gesture of solidarity with animals is not benevolent; rather, it is a recognition that his survival actually depends on connections with other animals, 'both in the grander sense of planetary connectedness on which human life depends and in the most intimate sense', such as when his dog companion lifts him from feelings of despair (144). Critical disabilities scholar Sunaura Taylor and gender theorist Judith Butler similarly identify with, and turn toward, animality. During their conversation, Taylor reflects on her experiences of being compared to a monkey:

> ST: I'm just remembering when I was little, when I did walk, I would be told that I walked like a monkey, and I think that for a lot of, you know, disabled people, the violence, and the the sort of, that, the hatred exists a lot in in this reminding of people that our bodies are going to age and are going to die and… in some ways I wonder also just, you know, just thinking about the monkey comment, if it is also a level of, and this is just a thought off the top of my head, right now, but just, um, the sort of, where our boundaries lie as as a human and what becomes non-human.
>
> JB: Well, it makes me wonder whether the person was anti-evolutionary. Maybe they were a creationist. It's like, why shouldn't we have some resemblance to the monkey? I mean.

> ST: Well the monkey's actually always been my favorite animal to this day, actually, quite a lot of the time. I was flattered.
>
> JB: Exactly!
>
> (Examined Life Transcript, n.d.)

Whether claiming our own animality or fostering an appreciation for the wisdom of farmed animals, we are guided by a hope for mutual flourishing. Categories of disposability, perpetuated through colonial-capitalist modes of inhabiting the world, contradict what we recognize as our relational interdependence, not just with 'wild animals' but farmed animals and all other forms of life. Aspiring for futures in which no beings are categorised as disposable, in which the subjective lives of degraded beings could help catalyse change in regard to our most dire problems, including extinction, we propose that the form of recognition of shared animality that Gosine describes offers a critical step towards realising multispecies justice.

As Māori political theorist Christine Winter writes, multispecies justice as a framework includes humans in critical multispecies analyses, which produces the potential to undermine the '"racist-sexual-species-ableist-colonial" contract' (akin to philosopher Charles Mills' theory of the 'racial contract') that reproduces ignorance and keeps oppressive ideologies, structures, and relations intact (252). Against a generalized disposability of life, a multispecies justice lens (Celermajer et al.) prompts us to reconsider our attitudes towards those facing extinction in varying contexts under colonial-capitalism, including farmed animals.

Notes

[1] We follow Gillespie's and Colling's lead and use the term 'farmed animals' instead of 'farm animals', as the former points to a process rather than an inherent state.

[2] Generally, although rights, welfare, and liberationist perspectives and approaches are often blurred, and the popular use of these terms varies, animal rights advocates often employ legal frameworks to advance a range of positions such as the abolition of animals' property status, recognition (or reconceptualization) of animal personhood, right to liberty, etc. Rightists tend to centre the intrinsic or inherent worth of animals. Animal liberationists can embody many positions, including similar critiques of animal as resources, but support of direct action to physically free animals from conditions of exploitation helps define this approach. Animal welfarists forward arguments that do not fundamentally challenge animal use as human resources, although some advocates understand certain welfare initiatives as ultimately working toward the goals of rights and liberation.

[3] For example, 7.5 million chickens have just been culled in an attempt to contain two strains of avian influenza in South Africa (Imray).

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