

# Security Bonds: On Feeling Power and the Fiction of an Animal Governmentality

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## FIGHTING POWER, Feeling Power

In the theatre of the unconditional War on Terror declared by the U.S. after the 9/11 attacks on its homeland, few spectacles can rival the raid on Osama bin Laden's living quarters in Pakistan in May of 2011. Although this paramilitary drama seemed to embroil exclusively human actors, news quickly spread through the global media that one member of the elite team of U.S. Navy SEALs that descended on bin Laden's Abbottabad compound was *canine*. Cairo, a Belgian Malinois whose tracking sense proved vital in the deadliest manhunt of the early twenty-first century, emerged from the U.S. mission a national hero thanks to his zealous part in "sniffing out" the founder of al-Qaeda.

Dogs have become visibly embedded in the groundwork and fantasy of a state of security that, radiating out from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, is today global in its means and effects. Other Military Working Dogs (MWDs) besides Cairo have figured prominently in a post-9/11 order of security. Perhaps most notorious are those German shepherds shown with their human handlers in trophy photographs taken by American soldiers at Abu Ghraib, poised to unleash their powers of psychic and physical terror on Iraqi prisoners. MWDs and police dogs

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are now routinely referred to in the idiom of security as K9s, an abbreviated homophone for canines that places them in technological series with other weaponry like the M-16 family of combat rifles or the UH-60 series of Black Hawk helicopters used in the raid on bin Laden's compound. That is, security dogs are fetishized as optimally efficient fighting machines whose performance is augmented by sleek layers of combat gear supplied by military outfitters like K9 Storm, a Canadian-based company in the business of cladding the new dogs of war.

Alongside the valorization of dogs' fighting power in the service of global policing and security, in what follows I begin tracing a particular genealogy of biopower in which it is not only dogs' powers of detecting and detaining but simultaneously their *feeling power*, and more specifically their capacity for loving attachment, that is cultivated as an instrument of unconditional security. This particular genealogy of feeling power sparks the much thornier, speculative question of how we might think of other species as subjects of, and subject to, governmentality, a question prompted by the participatory spirit that seems to animate other species' involvements in modern states of war and peace.<sup>1</sup> Cairo's role in the bin Laden raid, for instance, appeared to be more than that of a K9 machine expertly trained to follow orders but, rather, to be that of a keen, self-motivated animal subjectively identified with the spirit of the mission.

The genealogy of feeling power that I set out to trace through modern dog stories nests inside—even as it complicates—the remarkable history of governmentality that Foucault traces in his Collège de France lectures, where he distinguishes regimes of sovereign and disciplinary power from biopolitical apparatuses of security that begin to emerge in Europe in the eighteenth century (*Security*). Foucault links the rise of police and security to a form of political reason concerned with management of the (human) population at the level of its species existence, a biopolitical model of government whose techniques he traces back to the early pastoral power of the Church. In Foucault's analysis, the figure of a human shepherd is metaphorical of an art of government that caringly ministers to a flock of sheep, itself metaphorical for the population as a new "subject" of State

<sup>1</sup> While the notion of governmentality has been extended to the study of environmental(ist) subjectivities and crises in the notions of green governmentality and environmentality (see the work of Timothy Luke and Arun Agrawal, for instance), the notion of an animal governmentality differs in that it is not concerned solely with the making of human subjects who care about animals but also the cultivation of animals as biopolitical subjects who undertake to govern themselves and subjectively participate in political "mentalities."

biopower (*Security* 11). Yet there is no mention in his lectures of the role sheepdogs literally and historically play in pastoral economies, where they function as the prosthetic strong-arm of a shepherd.<sup>2</sup> This omission in his study of pastoral power is doubtless due, first, to the fact that Foucault treats “the sheep-fold” (130) solely as a political metaphor and, second, to Foucault’s view that pastoral power in its secular, state form does not require (law) enforcement since governmentality operates by inculcating the very “conduct of conduct,” that is, the self-conduct of subjects who govern themselves.<sup>3</sup>

As Susan McHugh notes, while “The practice of using dogs in war has ancient roots in the empires of Assyria, Babylon and Egypt ... the modern historic institutionalization of dogs in war was initiated through a network of German villages that were nationally subsidized from the 1870s” (115). The birth of the German shepherd as a breed around the turn of the twentieth century is indeed indicative of a particular moment of biopolitical modernity. German shepherds were originally bred for traits that would assist humans in the herding and guarding of sheep, but these traits would prove equally useful in the work of policing human populations. As Foucault has noted, techniques of policing were formulated in most detail in the German *Polizeiwissenschaft* of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, although he neglects to mention the importance of canine breeding programs to the modern “science of police” (*Security* 318). Yet it is less as practical instruments of the modern policing of animals and humans that dogs compel attention and more as animals that themselves become uniquely subject to governmentality. Certain dogs are arguably themselves born, along with certain humans, as subjects whose obedience no longer needs to be externally policed once it comes to be rendered freely. As well as serving pastoral or police states, modern dogs arguably themselves become subjects of (and to) a liberal concept of freedom and a governmental reason that views efforts to exhaustively

<sup>2</sup> Canines certainly do populate Foucault’s lectures as political metaphors, if not as historical subjects in their own right. They appear, among other places, in the metaphor for the laissez-faire art of “least” government that Foucault reads in Robert Walpole’s maxim “let sleeping dogs lie” (*Birth of Biopolitics* 10) and in a practice of cynic *parrhesia* modeled upon a “dog’s life” (*The Courage of Truth* 190).

<sup>3</sup> On this first point, see Anand Pandian’s article “Pastoral Power in the Postcolony: On the Biopolitics of the Criminal Animal in South India,” where he contends that Foucault’s “genealogical account excises practical relations with animals from its narrative economy, reducing pasturage to nothing more than a political metaphor for most of Western history” (90).

regulate populations as “pointless” (Foucault, *Security* 344), appreciating instead the importance of non-interference in relation to natural processes that should be allowed to run their course. This *laissez-faire*, neoliberal reasoning that Foucault correlates with security is one of the contexts within which I elaborate the notion of feeling power.

While conjuring the older Marxian concept of labour power, the concept of feeling power thus draws more heavily upon Foucault’s analysis of governmentality to examine the subsumption of non-humans’ social affection into the boundless task of securing life. Securing life boundlessly against what? Against what Brian Massumi simply calls “the figure of today’s threat,” namely, a sense of threat “coming anywhere, as out of nowhere, at any time” and indiscriminately encompassing everything from war to the weather (73, 154). Immediately, the notion of security has at least two valences in relation to feeling power, associated not only with the art of “least” government described by Foucault (*Birth* 53) but with the mobilization of sovereign force in response to perceived global threats to life. This double valence of security recalls what Elizabeth Povinelli has termed the “catachresis between the security state and the neoliberal market, between the sovereign state and the biopolitical state” (511). Whereas Povinelli traces Australia’s lethal relationship to indigenous and immigrant populations in relation to the catachresis of “state killing and letting die” (511), I aim to historicize how non-humans get physically and psychically caught in the middle of, and mixed up by, fighting and feeling power.

One of the limitations of Marx’s labour theory of value when it comes to tracking the work of feeling across these dichotomous contexts of security is that it protects an idea of human species-being at its centre, a life activity or “deep existential constant,” in the words of Fredric Jameson, anchored in the body and in use-value (20). Marx termed this existential constant “quality,” that is, “human time itself, whether in labor or in the life outside of labor” that is alienated and converted into “quantity” by an abstract system of exchange-value that renders things equivalent and exchangeable (Jameson 20). Human labour power is only alienable in the Marxian view because it is first deemed an *unalienated* capacity rooted in human nature.

By contrast, a theory and critique of feeling power challenges the humanist presumption that feeling is a capacity, or power, inherent to the subject. Feeling is arguably the sign, instead, of subjects’ un-power or incapacitated being, a mark of their ontological indebtedness or contingency upon others. In devising the term feeling power to explore the involvement of other species in sovereign and biopolitical states of security,

I follow Rei Terada's remark that "*Feeling* is a capacious term that connotes both physiological sensations (affect) and psychological states (emotions)." Writes Terada, "Although philosophers reserve 'feeling' for bodily conditions, I use it when it seems fruitful to emphasize the common ground of the physiological and the psychological" (5). I also follow Terada's contention that the normative belief that emotion belongs to a subject is largely the possessive effect of an "*ideology of emotion*" (3); against this effect, Terada traces poststructuralist discourses that demonstrate that feeling is nonsubjective or "subjectless" (6).<sup>4</sup> If poststructuralist theory reveals, in Terada's view, that "we would have no emotions if we *were* subjects" (4), when it comes to examining how an ideology of emotion imbricates non-humans it is crucial to brush history against the grain by questioning the "positive" progress that has been made over the twentieth and twenty-first centuries in gaining recognition of other animals as subjects. A critique of feeling power is wary of the fortification of the category of the liberal subject over the course of modernity as it expands to include non-humans previously barred from forms of subjecthood deemed exclusively human. Whereas an ideology of emotion supports the progressive inclusion of non-humans in the universe of liberal subjectivity according to the logic of "animals feel, therefore they too are subjects," the attempt here will be to keep open the unsettling counter-stance that "animals feel, therefore they too are non-subjects." Derrida argues something along these lines in "The Animal That Therefore I Am (More to Follow)," by contending that the ability to suffer that other animals share with humans cannot be understood in terms of "the power one possesses (as in the power to reason, to speak, and everything that implies)" but only in terms of an inability, a "not-being-able" (396).

At the same time, it is crucial to resist the suggestion that because feeling is not the property of a subject it escapes or exceeds power; even the bonds of ontological debt that accompany affective relationships and that betray the idea of a self-constituting subject represent a value that is potentially redeemable for the work of security. Indeed, in the current state

4 Not unlike Terada, Sara Ahmed has challenged the idea that emotion "positively resides" inside human subjects by advancing an economic model of emotion. She posits that "emotions work as a form of capital: affect does not reside positively in the sign or commodity, but is produced only as an effect of its circulation" (120). Continues Ahmed, "Another way to theorize this process would be to describe 'feelings' via an analogy with 'commodity fetishism': feelings appear in objects, or indeed *as* objects with a life of their own, only by the concealment of how they are shaped by histories, including histories of production (labor and labor time), as well as circulation or exchange" (120–21).

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of security interspecies love bonds are made operational, or redeemed, when they yields results in the Global War on Terrorism.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, contemporary K9s are not solely composed of armour-clad specimens who fight overseas on the front lines but include therapeutic contingents of Welcome Home Dogs that greet U.S. soldiers when they set foot back upon American soil. Consisting most often of ranks of golden retrievers, these dogs-of-peace are deployed to welcome soldiers back from their tours of duty with uncritical, healing doses of affection that work to redeem a humanity that has been rendered dubious by war.

As interspecies bonds become resources of both terror and healing in the current era, it is not simply a question of how the social affection of other species is *unwittingly* instrumentalized or dumbly conscripted into serving the ends of security; also at stake is the possibility that non-humans are themselves treated as amenable to techniques productive of subjectivities that experience the state of security as their own desire. Fantastic as it may sound, rather than addressed solely to human “souls” (Foucault, *Security* 193), governmentality arguably extends to a host of potentially ensouled species whose subjectivization promises to harmonize more and more of animal life with political rationalities. Feeling power gives name to one particularly potent relationship through which other animals become subjects of, and subject to, governmentality, *regardless of whether or not their subjectivity is deemed a fiction*. After all, the post-structuralist discourses traced by Terada reveal the truth of the human subject to be a fiction, something that underwrites Foucault’s understanding of governmentality as a power of fabricating subjects, producing truths, and exciting subjective states. Far from disqualifying humans as material upon which governmentality has purchase, the fictive character of human subjectivity is at once a condition and effect of this type of power. Why, then, would declaring animal character or subjectivity a fiction (or perhaps, a pathetic fallacy) represent a limit within a type of power for which it is axiomatic that the subject does not pre-exist its effects? Only if one hangs on to a humanist notion of those exclusive abilities posited as absolutely distinguishing humans from other animals (speech, *logos*, self-consciousness, and most importantly, *auto-affection*), which Foucault ostensibly does not, can one say that humans alone are amenable to the “conduct of conduct.”

<sup>5</sup> Ahmed notes that her “economic model of emotions suggests that while emotions do not positively reside in a subject or figure, they still work to bind subjects together.... Indeed, to put it more strongly, the nonresidence of emotions is what makes them ‘binding’” (119).

The cultivation of interspecies feeling power as a resource of security arguably has a genealogy in twentieth-century American literature and, more specifically, in popular dog stories where the fiction of an animal governmentality is etched. In a moment I will turn to Jack London's 1906 naturalist fiction *White Fang* as a pivotal site in which to read the early signs of a fantasy of security that inscribes the possibility of "governmentalizing" an animal's dual capacities for fighting and feeling. Imperial dispatches that tout the value of K9s in our current day arguably have a genealogy in the modern fable of unconditional security popularized by *White Fang*. This entails reading London's novel as itself an "agent of governmentality," in the words of Donald Pease ("Pip" 329). Pease's elaborations of "novel governmentality" and of the "states of fantasy" of American exceptionalism represent two particularly rich critical tools for illuminating the relationship between the history of biopower and literary history, particularly modern fiction.<sup>6</sup> Referring "to the role that novels in particular play in shaping and altering the conduct of conduct," in Pease's words, novel governmentalities that specifically reshape human conduct by reimagining human-animal relationships also get "conducted" or relayed to animals (domestic animals, at least) through the practices and affects of the humans with whom they intimately interact (328). Animals may not read novels, but they do take a reading off humans whose "structures of desire and affective protocols" have been reshaped by fiction (328).

## Fables of Security

London's dog stories challenge us to account for the presence of canines in what Pease calls the shifting "state of fantasy" of American exceptionalism. According to Pease, state fantasies "lay down the scenarios through which the state's rules and norms can be experienced as internal to the citizens' desire. Fantasy endows the state's rules and laws with the authority of the people's desire for them" (*New* 4). He explores how fantasies that manage antagonisms in the political culture of the United States reach into "the most intimate recesses of its subjects' psyches" (14), that is, how they

6 Other noteworthy efforts to reopen the history of the novel as a history of biopower include Arne de Boever's *Narrative Care: Biopolitics and the Novel* (2013) and Ivan Kreilkamp's reading of Victorian novels alongside the institution of pet-keeping, "two cultural forms" which Kreilkamp argues "developed not just in parallel but in tandem" (87). Kreilkamp's reading of *Wuthering Heights* and domestic pet-keeping in relation to the rise of British anti-cruelty and anti-vivisection movements proposes that the biopolitical aim of the novel form is ultimately "to place the reader herself on the operating table," that is, to make readers sympathetically feel the unbearable pain of animal vivisection (106).

governmentalize “the people” (4). According to Pease, the state fantasy of American exceptionalism operating between the end of the Cold War in 1989 and the beginning of the War on Terror just over a decade later constituted a massive “disavowal of imperialism” by U.S. citizens who interiorized the rationale for imperial intervention, indeed affectively experienced it as a realization of their own will rather than as “an imposition of the state” (23, 6).

The dog stories that regularly feature in dispatches from the War On Terror cue me to the possibility that the seeds of today’s dominant state of fantasy were sown in an earlier period of American culture, through the work of one author who played a singular role in initiating canines into new biopolitical states of security. How might tracing current-day stories back to London’s fiction throw into relief the ways that animals are ambivalently imbricated in the shifting fantasy of American exceptionalism, something that propels consideration of how more than “the people” may be governmentalized by state fantasies? By approaching *White Fang* as a precursor of today’s fables of security, I affirm Pease’s claim that literature is a key agent of governmentality. But when an early twentieth-century animal fable is the literary agent in question, it is important to go a step further and consider how its moral animal characters constitute more than just ciphers for human self-conduct. Modern animal fables of the kind posed by *White Fang* arguably bring animals themselves into biopolitical existence as moral subjects, ensoul animals by fictionalizing them as in possession of a subjectivity that is responsive to the call of self-government.

With London’s fable, the wolf-dog enters into modernity not just as an object of feeling (whether cruelty or kindness) but as a fellow subject of both feeling and reason who is unchained from the old mechanistic laws of nature and freed into an equal opportunity to realize life’s love-potential. Readers of London’s work such as Pease, Mark Seltzer, and more recently, Catharine Malabou, have glimpsed in his wolf-dogs a canine cryptogram of unregulated Deleuzian affect, Taylorist disciplinary individualism, and plasticity, respectively.<sup>7</sup> I perceive in the figure of White Fang a made-in-America fantasy of security that finds in the love bond between man and animal a reserve of feeling that promises to serve its political ends (and, in London’s naturalist universe, it is invariably men who are representative of the human). Yet to say that this fantasy is made in America

<sup>7</sup> Malabou engaged with both London’s *White Fang* and *The Call of the Wild* in a seminar she taught at UW–Madison in 2011 on “Plasticity, Epigenesis, and Life.” A description of the seminar can be found at <http://humanities.wisc.edu/seminars/scholars-in-residence/catherine-malabou>.



needs qualifying, since it is invariably when America is not at home but, rather, imperiously extending itself abroad, that its most potent fantasies of exceptionalism and security are forged. While canines moving back and forth between domestic and wild spaces makes a species imagination into the privileged vehicle of American exceptionalism in London's work, this species imagination is always inextricable from imperialist constructions of the racial and national superiority of white American manhood.

As Pease notes, Jack London himself traveled to the Klondike in 1897, and "By the time he returned to California in 1898, he had discovered his subject matter as well as the figure that would become his totem animal and literary trademark—the Klondike wolf" (*Encyclopedia* 672). As with *The Call of the Wild* (1903), a large portion of *White Fang* is set against the backdrop of the Yukon gold rush. However, the latter novel reverses the narrative trajectory of the former by depicting the traps and lures that draw a wolf-dog into the domesticated southland rather than into the wild. London writes to his publisher in 1904: "Instead of the devolution or de-civilization of a dog, I'm going to give the evolution, the civilization of a dog—development of domesticity, faithfulness, love, morality, and all the amenities and virtues" (*Letters* 18). He gives birth, that is, to an animal subject that no longer requires leashes, kennels, or bonds, in the old disciplinary sense, once it has undertaken its own virtuous self-containment.

Although in its opening pages the free indirect narration of *White Fang* is channeled through a human perspective, with Henry relaying his and Bill's harrowing encirclement by a pack of starving wolves as they drive their sled-dog team north, the narration soon shifts indifferently to the perspective of a she-wolf in the pack and then once again to the point of view of her cub, White Fang. This indifference to species distinctions at the level of narrative point of view is one of the ways the novel equalizes humans and animals, both of whom negotiate an inexorable wild that plays no favourites amongst the living. In its narrative effect of leveling humans and animals to a species existence in which a rudimentary, non-sentimental psyche is allowed, London's literary naturalism functions as a discourse of biopower by virtue of addressing humans as a species, while granting non-humans a share in simple reasoning and stoic subjectivity.

There is no question that London's animal stories introduced a "novel governmentality" into turn-of-the-century American culture. President Theodore Roosevelt and fellow conservationist John Burroughs reacted vociferously to London's work, denouncing the extravagant fiction of animal subjectivity that London's fiction advanced as non-sentimental fact. Their attempt to discipline the distinction between fact and fiction—and

retain mastery over the truth of animal life—likewise reveals the threat posed by a model of animal government that no longer relied for its epistemological force on claims to objective knowledge of other species. The reactions of Roosevelt and Burroughs to what they saw as a sham genre of realistic animal story (denouncing London's wild animals as little more than wild anthropomorphisms<sup>8</sup>) is perhaps the clearest indication of the radical shift catalyzed by London's work; what London himself described as Roosevelt's "fantastic hysteria" in the face of stories told from an animal point of view is a symptom of the hegemonic displacement of a sovereign power over animals exemplified by the President. Blood sport, zoological collection, and conservation in the name of vanishing species were the arts authorized under Roosevelt's rule, a mode of government aptly nicknamed by Donna Haraway "Teddy Bear Patriarchy." Into this sovereign order London introduced animal point of view, self-conduct, and interspecies feeling, that is, he introduced the biopolitical outlines of a new rule of love and self-government vis-à-vis animal life. To be sure, exercises of sovereign power over animal life persist in manifold ways in the present, but one telltale sign of its displacement as a dominant state of fantasy was Roosevelt's apoplexy.

This displacement is at once effected by and allegorized in the novel. London's fable follows the trail of a wolf-dog who is born into a North governed by the merciless natural laws of meat and of the market. Separated from his mother at an early age, White Fang is thrown into a range of human social orders that test his will to survive, starting with a Native camp in which he is taught strict lessons in obedience at the hand of his first human master, Gray Beaver. Also routinely punished by the camp dogs for his difference as part-wolf, White Fang begins honing the art of fighting that will not just keep him alive but turn him into a sovereign killing machine. Hardened by his environment into a malignant terror, he begins to incisively deliver death to the dogs he encounters in the North, particularly the soft canine newcomers that blithely trundle off the steamers bringing men in search of gold. A good deal of the story's interest is generated by the tremendous affective as well as geographical distance that White Fang must traverse to leave the rule of fighting power behind and realize himself as a subject of feeling power, a journey that will

<sup>8</sup> London published a rebuttal to Roosevelt's accusations of anthropomorphism in the *Collier Weekly* in 1908. Entitled "The Other Animals," in it London defended the realism of his animal characters and described *The Call of the Wild* and *White Fang* as "a protest against the 'humanizing' of animals" (103).

culminate on the California estate of White Fang's "love-master," Weedon Scott (*White* 209).

Beyond the usual readings of White Fang's journey from the North to the southland, the novel can be read as dramatizing the birth of feeling power in animal others, a reading that among other things suggests that the capacity for feeling is historical and contingent rather than given. In contrast with the power of the wild or of cruel masters to drive an animal back upon the resources of its machinic body, London's novel introduces readers to a love-master whose techniques uncannily resemble the art of governing that Foucault traces back to the Christian pastorate. If on the one hand pastoral power's "conduct of souls" migrates into a secular form of governmentality that individualizes subjects, Foucault claims that biopower also refers to "how, starting from the eighteenth century, modern Western societies took on board the fundamental biological fact that human beings are a species" (*Security* 193, 1). Previously consigned to a prepolitical, biological substrate, certain animals likewise begin to be addressed by modern Western societies as individual subjects with a *bios*, with social lives that are even exemplary. At the same time, animals become biologically subject to techniques that manage them as a species, a population. London's novel offers a remarkable thematic exploration of the first of these—of biopower's individualizing effects on other animals—even as animal stories like his can be counted as one of its primary means.

The novel dramatically juxtaposes White Fang's dual potencies: that of a killing machine whose reflexes can be sharpened through violent blood sport and that of a fellow feeling creature whose potential for unconditional love can be realized through a different set of techniques. These techniques fall not under the sovereign power of the human hand to strike but under its power to stroke, no longer commanding obedience but arousing an animal's *desire* to freely submit and serve. An animal governmentality is sounded, here. In the story of White Fang's progression through a series of human gods and in the stark difference, particularly, between his subjection to the cruel Beauty Smith and his subjectification by the kind Weedon Scott who patiently plumbs the wolf-dog's depths of feeling, one can read the historical emergence of a new set of positive techniques for socializing animal affect. One can also read budding interest in the new kinds of work that social animals like White Fang might freely render (eagerly, and without pay) under the rule of love which begins to govern human-animal relationships in the twentieth century in tandem with a growing animal welfare movement and modern practices of pet-keeping, among other things.

The hegemonic shift from an animal's sovereign subjection to its biopolitical subjectification is effected by a narrative that undertakes to morally *reform* the hand of man. The first beating into submission he receives as a puppy is from Gray Beaver, the least among the gods according to the novel's racial (and racist) hierarchy of humans. Disciplined for the transgression of biting Gray Beaver's hand, White Fang accepts the justice of his punishment; he also accepts that while "Gray Beaver never petted nor caressed," the hand of this master could at least judiciously protect him and reward fidelity with meat (64). His second beating, however, is at the hands of the sadistic white Beauty Smith, who buys White Fang from Gray Beaver to exploit his killing power in a dog-fighting enterprise. The submission that is extracted by Beauty Smith hinges on this "mad god's" power of death over White Fang, a lesson the wolf-dog is taught through a beating that nearly kills him (98). The hand of Beauty Smith is indeed metonymic of sovereign violence; like a disembodied threat, "The hand continued slowly to descend, while he crouched beneath it, eyeing it malignantly" (95).

Between Gray Beaver and Beauty Smith, White Fang has come to know all too well "the hands of gods, their proved mastery, their cunning to hurt" (113). Hence the suspicion with which White Fang views his encounter with Weedon Scott and Scott's insistence on stroking rather than striking the animal that he saves from the ring:

The hand descended. Nearer and nearer it came.... He shrank down under it.... It was a torment, this hand that touched him and violated his instinct. He could not forget in a day all the evil that had been wrought him at the hands of men.... And yet it was not physically painful. On the contrary, it was even pleasant, in a physical way. (116)

As the canine subject of feeling himself subsequently reflects (through the mode of free indirect discourse that gives readers access to his psyche): "It was the beginning of the end for White Fang—the ending of the old life and the reign of hate. A new and incomprehensibly fairer life was dawning" (117). "With kindness," Scott "touched to life potencies that had languished and well-nigh perished. One such potency was love. It took the place of like, which latter had been the highest feeling that thrilled him in his intercourse with the gods" (118).

However, it is only with the events that conclude the novel that a fantasy of unconditional security comes into view, riding on the development of feeling power and on the possibility of an animal governmentality.

It begins with a passage in which White Fang puts his head into Scott's arms in an expression of "absolute self-surrender, as though he said, 'I put myself into thy hands. Work thou thy will with me'" (123). In the seeming contradiction of exercising his will by choosing to be putty in the hands of his beloved—that is, in the perfect oxymoron of a *willed submission*—it is possible to glimpse the outlines of a fantasy of unconditional security that over the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries will increasingly appear to be naturalized, or legitimized, by animal desire.

When a convict reminiscent of Beauty Smith escapes from jail to take vengeance on the judge who sentenced him—none other than the love-master's father, Judge Scott—the value of an achieved animal governmentality finally becomes explicit. As the dangerous felon sneaks into the Scott's home, White Fang shows that if interspecies feeling has instrumental value, it is domestic security in the form of a biological system that comes with the metaphysical guarantee of unconditional love. White Fang defends his love-master with a sacrificial devotion to precision security, drawing upon his old fighting powers to fell the intruder and taking a bullet in the act. In line with Foucault's own caution against thinking that sovereign power disappears with the rise of biopower, in White Fang's sacrifice we see that feeling power serves, among other things, to morally justify the exceptional use of violence when securing life against threat.

Yet curiously enough, while London's animal fable calls to be read biopolitically (and not just allegorically) as an agent of governmentality that involves animal desire in the practical work and cultural legitimation of a fantasy of security, it also reveals that a new species of insecurity riddles the fantasy. It appears in the form of a nightmare that plagues White Fang while he is recovering from his bullet wound:

[T]here was one particular nightmare from which he suffered—the clanking, clanging monsters of electric cars that were to him colossal screaming lynxes. He would lie in a screen of bushes, watching for a squirrel to venture far enough out on the ground from its tree-refuge. Then, when he sprang out upon it, it would transform itself into an electric car, menacing and terrible.... It was the same when he challenged the hawk down out of the sky. Down out of the blue it would rush, as it dropped upon him changing itself into the ubiquitous electric car. Or again, he would be in the pen of Beauty Smith.... He watched the door for his antagonist to enter. The door would open, and thrust in upon him would come the awful electric car. (268–69)

On the one hand, the nightmare offers readers additional proof that the wolf-dog has become a fully modern subject of desire, complete with an unconscious. But even without broaching the antagonism between Foucault and Freud's conceptions of the subject, it is clear that the representation of an unconscious, of repressed insecurities, complicates the fiction of animal governmentality; it unsettles the possibility that *any* subject can be governmentalized into a political fantasy without some affective remainder. Perhaps most startlingly, however, White Fang's nightmare reveals a psychic vulnerability in the face of the unfeeling Cartesian animal with which he had once been likened when he himself was reduced to a fighting machine. Threatened again and again by an animal that morphs into an electric car, his nightmare raises the spectre of a sheerly mechanical animal, a modern force of technological mobility that possesses the physical prowess of an animal without, significantly, the handicap of feeling.<sup>9</sup> The electric car has all of the signs of life (especially when, in London's view, life is equivalent to movement and death to stasis), but none of the subjective interiority that has been cultivated in White Fang, a distinction which suddenly appears not to be to White Fang's advantage but rather to his paralyzing disadvantage.

With the inclusion of this nightmare does London's novel seek to protect a strata of animal affect that exists beyond the reach of governmentalization? In his reading of *The Call of the Wild*, Pease argues that the relationship between the wolf-dog Buck and the love-master Thornton ultimately escapes attempts at regulation, the first of which is posed by a panoptic narrator who has creative control over the animal psyche and the second of which is posed by critics like Mark Seltzer who regulate interspecies affect on a "meta-conceptual," or interpretive, level ("Psychoanalyzing" 19). Pease proposes that because the bond between man and dog is finally expressed through an unmediated language of the drives, a language of libidinal "tensors" that defies control, their relationship is characterized by an "unregulatable excess of affect" (33).

Although persuasive, in the riddle of White Fang's dream we are arguably presented not with an outside or limit to the governmentalization of interspecies affect but with a literary prophecy of the psychic ramifications for other species of their subjectivization into a fantasy of security, a fantasy that allows for the exceptionality of sovereign killing. After all, if it is actual animals that this fantasy affectively bonds—no longer unfeeling

<sup>9</sup> London himself appeared to be fascinated by the encounter of animal and machine, specifically dog and car, an encounter that also figures in the story of Rolf that he relates in "The Other Animals."

Cartesian machines of the kind figured by the electric car, which remains monstrously invulnerable—does not the work of killing in the moral cause of security necessarily effect a haunted subjectivity? Reading the fable of *White Fang* back into the future of our present-day practices of security, the novel can be said to offer a proto-diagnosis of the psychic states of  $\kappa$ 9s like Cairo and other animals in whom feeling has been cultivated precisely so that as technologies of killing they are *more* than merely (or monstrously) machinic. This *more*—this supplementarity of feeling and killing—both promises to metaphysically enhance techniques of security and renders the animals who supply this surplus prone to its internal contradictions.<sup>10</sup> It is in this sense that animals get mixed up in and by the catachresis of sovereign power and biopower.

The kind of diagnosis that modern fiction can give of the psychic states of other animals is, crucially, never an authoritative knowledge claim but an exercise of the imagination that complicates the fiction of the subject. In this hallucinatory passage London's fable reveals itself to be more of an ambivalent agent of animal governmentality than it might at first appear, since it simultaneously works to subjectivize animals into a political fantasy of loving security *and* hints that when other animals historically achieve this oxymoronic state they become potentially unreliable, to the extent that feeling dispossesses rather than fortifies the self-same subject. No longer an automaton or automobile (a self-sufficient moving body), *White Fang* has passed through the achievement of auto-affection to a state of hetero-affection that strips him of his "powers." The counter-moral of the story is that investing in the potential returns that might spring from interspecies feeling, as a form of affective insurance or bond that guarantees the political dream of security, is a much trickier biopolitical gamble.

Taking *White Fang* as my guide, I have been suggesting that with the rise of a liberal, sympathetic mode of government dogs' affection emerges as a potential that resides inside the canine subject, that positively flourishes under the right kind of care, and that in flourishing becomes equivalent (ideally) to an enhanced home security system. At this point it is worth recalling Foucault's assertion that

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ously works  
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<sup>10</sup> Pease has explored similar psychic intricacies in relation to human subjects governmentalized by the shifting fantasy of American exceptionalism. Tracing how subjects affectively identify with the state's "power to declare itself an exception to its own rules" (*New* 16), he notes that "Identification with this desire involves the subjects in an ambivalent process whereby the subject simultaneously obeys yet transgresses the law" (15).

freedom is nothing else but the correlative of the deployment of apparatuses of security. An apparatus of security ... cannot operate well except on condition that it is given freedom, in the modern sense [the word] acquires in the eighteenth century: no longer the exemptions and privileges attached to a person, but the possibility of movement, change of place, and processes of circulation of both people and things. (49)

The freedom for feeling to flow across species lines should not be underestimated when it comes to the reasoning of security. In fact, it is crucial to consider that the workings of security might be positively aligned with an ethics of “human-animal flourishing” affirmed, among others, by Donna Haraway (53).<sup>11</sup> Might not the ends of security be more optimally served by living beings who are free to realize their love-potentials than by those who are strictly obedient? At the same time, how does this specious freedom to feel potentially spawn a state of insecurity rather than of security?

### Welcome Home Dogs

Again, if the figure of White Fang is any clue, feeling power in action promises to realize the fantasy of an enhanced security system that, more than merely mechanical, has the metaphysical bonds of love behind it, a proposition that I want to draw back into relation with U.S. homeland security in the present. A zoo-reserve of feeling can and is being mobilized in the form of the keen service of K9s like Cairo. Military training of dog-human commando units is wholly sympathetic to the idea of human-animal flourishing; the sport of agility that represents a key site of flourishing for Haraway is in the first instance a military exercise.

Yet it is the other contingent of K9s, the Welcome Home Dogs lined up to greet American soldiers returning from tours of duty overseas, that perhaps embodies the deepest paradoxes of a fantasy of unconditional security. In both fighting K9s and Welcome Home Dogs, animals can be seen working not strictly obediently or automatically, like Cartesian machines, but rather passionately, as companion subjects of feeling, in defense of Western liberal democratic life. Because sovereign violence tends to receive most critical attention in critiques of the U.S.-led War on Terror, it is important to juxtapose spring-coiled K9s with their seemingly benign, biopolitical doubles, the dogs that re-sensitize soldiers to civilian life.

<sup>11</sup> Citing Vicki Hearne’s love of “cross-species achievement” (51), Haraway advances the idea that ethical interspecies relationships are ones that enable animals to seriously realize their potential.



Tremendous affective ground must be covered in quick time by soldiers who transition from the conduct of war to the conduct of peace upon their return from duty. The feeling power of Welcome Home Dogs appears to be valuable in mediating this emotional passage between the dramatically different spaces and social codes of conduct traversed by human soldiers. As if in a reversal of Weedon Scott's transformation of the hateful killing machine that was White Fang into a feeling subject, Welcome Home Dogs are tasked with demobilizing soldiers by converting hate into love, flipping an emotional switch. In the passage of human soldiers between fighting and feeling, a passage that looms like a routine traverse under the shadow of permanent war, what is unwittingly exposed is the contingent nature of human feeling. Far from positively residing in the subject, it would appear that the feeling of humans as well as non-humans can be deadened or awakened, turned off or on as soldiers move back and forth between military and civilian domains. Of course, soaring rates of post-traumatic stress disorder and suicide among human soldiers (we can only speculate about the psychic conditions of their animal companions) suggests that the dream of living beings who pass with minimal turbulence from military to civilian states, the increasingly indistinct poles of secured life, is truly a biopolitical fantasy.

But possibly the most paradoxical aspect of the work of Welcome Home Dogs concerns the way their ostensibly intrinsic capacity for unconditional love is used to certify the (uncertain) humanity of humans through proofs of interspecies affection. The feeling power of animals serves not only enhanced security but the ideology of human exceptionalism that underpins it, an ideology which deems the lives of humans to be superior by virtue of being culturally qualified. Human life is upheld as qualified in Western liberal thought not just on the grounds of the possession of *logos* or rational thought but also on the grounds of *feeling*; Colleen Boggs traces such a notion of the liberal human subject back to Locke, who believed that "we gain our humanity by performing acts of kindness to animals and located subject formation in the relationship among different species" (35). More, an ideology of emotion, one whose fundamental gesture "casts emotion as proof of the human subject" (Terada 4), is also perpetuated when Welcome Home Dogs draw spontaneous smiles and tears out of soldiers. Such scenes verify, both for the individual soldiers and for any observers, that a feeling humanity remains intact despite the ravages of war. Yet they also inadvertently reveal anxiety around the uncertain humanity of humans. Certification work of this kind is particularly high stakes in the context of a War on Terror that has been framed as a civilizational

contest between the properly human and the in- or sub-human. The power to prove the humanity of Americans and their allies is one that appears significantly reserved for dogs.

In 1989 the American Kennel Club started its Canine Good Citizen certification program, “designed to reward dogs who have good manners at home and in the community.”<sup>12</sup> Often the first step in becoming a registered therapy dog, the AKC program is a more recent agent of animal governmentality than London’s novel. The feeling power of registered therapy dogs was put to work when threats to security erupted from inside the U.S. homeland in 2012. Following a mass shooting at an elementary school in Newton, Connecticut, the Lutheran Church Charities (LCC) sought to minister to survivors with the use of K9 Comfort Dogs. The LCC’s gift to Newton of “therapy dogs—professional comforters,” recalls, or perhaps more accurately, forgets, a long history of the gendering of emotion and the feminization of affective labour.<sup>13</sup> The title given to Comfort Dogs appears oblivious, for instance, of the history of the comfort women commanded by the Japanese Imperial Army to sexually and affectively minister to World War II soldiers. Whereas Japanese comfort women were subjected to extreme sexual exploitation and violence, comfort dogs appear to effortlessly minister by simply being their loving selves. What is notable here, as well as in the case of Welcome Home Dogs, is that the affective labour of comforting soldiers during wartime evades politicization by virtue of being represented by animal powers of feeling that appear to be freely given. Such a remarkable transfer of the public burden of feeling suggests that women no longer convincingly embody the fiction of unconditional love. And by shifting onto dogs the labour and biopolitics of feeling risk going even more unrecognized than they have been in the history of women’s affective labour.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, thanks to the homosocial character of the dog-master relationship (reified by London’s animal stories, among other places), soldiers who regardless of their sex function as masculinized agents of war can be re-humanized through doses of animal feeling, without risk of being effeminized.

12 This description appears on the AKC’s website: [www.akc.org/events/cgc/program.cfm](http://www.akc.org/events/cgc/program.cfm).

13 See “The Healing Power of Dogs” by Amanda Fiegl, *National Geographic News*, 21 December 2012. <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2012/12/121221-comfort-dogs-newtown-tragedy-animal-therapy/#>.

14 As Donna Haraway notes, “Commonly in the US, dogs are attributed with the capacity for ‘unconditional love.’” (33). She makes a strong case for why “belief in ‘unconditional love’ is pernicious,” arguing that the “idea that dogs restore

This is not to suggest that love between humans and canines is therefore a construct or mockery. Rather, the possibility that a bond is genuine is precisely what guarantees and “redeems” its value within the time of security.

## Security Bonds

In financial lexicons, a bond signifies an instrument of debt security and an institutionalized species of IOU. Government bonds issued during wartime have historically served the dual purpose of funding nations’ war efforts *and* encouraging individuals’ safe savings. A human population’s economic self-interest and its affective identification with the decisions of a sovereign state are simultaneously achieved through the institution of war bonds.

Bonds also represent low-risk, reliable investments in risky times, not unlike the investments in feeling power that I have been tracing through figures of canine fidelity. Yet if interspecies bonds are in some respects the affective correlate of this type of debt security, the value of interspecies feeling power exceeds the economic analogy; their value can neither be guaranteed nor redeemed in any literal sense. Thinking through feeling bonds as a metaphysical instrument of security requires a theory of the value that springs from subjectivizing the lives and labours of other species into biopolitical states of fantasy.

Within the narrative scope of London’s *White Fang*, the value of gold is eclipsed by the biological capital of an animal’s seemingly inexhaustible fighting power, which in turn is eclipsed by the spiritual gold of his feeling power. The cultivation of White Fang’s love promises different returns than are promised under the laws of meat or gold. Indeed, the love-bond between Weedon Scott and White Fang represents a species of guaranteed investment whose value can be redeemed only through an unconditional expression of fidelity, something that would appear to be the most chancy and fictitious guarantee of return-on-investment imaginable. Yet the animal capital of the fantasy of security under examination here is arguably of this spiritualized ilk, and it is not surprising that our current-day fantasy of security owes a significant debt to fiction, as I have been suggesting.<sup>15</sup> However, while there is no way of predicting exactly

Bonds also represent low-risk, reliable investments in risky times.

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human beings’ souls by their unconditional love” is neurotic (33). Yet in proposing that by cultivating dogs’ potential for meaningful work one can escape the pernicious fantasy of unconditional love, Haraway arguably overlooks that fact that animals’ work is increasingly affective.

<sup>15</sup> I more extensively theorize forms of animal capital in *Animal Capital: Rendering Life in Biopolitical Times* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009).

how or when the speculative value of interspecies love might be redeemed as security, it is nonetheless possible to cultivate milieus and open up opportunities for intense connections to form between species, securing new social relationships in the very mode of encouraging them to flourish.

In closing, it is worth noting that far more than canines are enfolded into the work of security over the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The vitalities of a diversity of non-humans, as Jake Kosek and Neel Ahuja also show, are being rendered co-extensive with an order of security that seeks to become veritably ecological through its integration with life processes. In his 2010 article “Ecologies of Empire: The New Uses of the Honeybee,” Kosek writes that “as this article goes to press, honeybees have not yet been deployed alongside legions of dogs who work alongside U.S. soldiers to detect mines in the Middle East” (658). However, the fact that “Bees have almost as many olfactory receptors as dogs” has not escaped the notice of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, which states that “they are ‘deploying bees as efficient and effective homeland security detective devices’” (656).

Neel Ahuja, concerned with the U.S.’s employment of insects in its sovereign arts of torture, recalls the use of a caterpillar in the torture of Abu Zubaydah, a suspected member of al-Qaeda arrested in 2002. Ostensibly exploiting Zubaydah’s extreme entomophobia, interrogators confined Zubaydah Ahuja in a box with a caterpillar. As Ahuja remarks, this deployment of the insect as an “affective weapon” designed to excite fear is premised upon the interrogational logic that “managing a space of transpecies intimacy within the torture chamber can bring about the psychic ‘regression’ of the prisoner, who will then produce reliable speech” (129). Yet Ahuja argues that the necropolitics of torture needs to be understood in relation to “more-than-human biopolitical formations” that simultaneously cultivate positive “transpecies connectivities” (129). As he notes, the same military state that was testing the efficacy of insect torture upon Zubaydah was funding bioengineering research at Tufts University on simulated caterpillars in search of security applications that might be derived from their soft, “flexible” bodies (141). In Ahuja’s words, “in one case [the insect is] a blunt instrument of torture and in another a highly flexible, modern and reproducible body” (141). The challenge is thus to think “the dialectics of biopower and necropower together” by bearing in mind “that violences including torture are deeply linked to life-optimizing processes elsewhere in a biopolitical formation” (143).

If such an order of security—simultaneously optimizing the killing and healing potencies of “transpecies connectivity”—is now global in its

means and effects, I have proposed that a modern American dog story be counted among its cultural conditions of possibility. In London's animal fable the value of an animal governmentality for security is imaginatively redeemed, exciting a fantasy of security that remains active in the present. However, I can only point to the task that still remains of theorizing animal governmentalities *in the plural*, that is, to the mind-boggling task of historicizing the multitude of biopolitical techniques that begin to subjectively address a plurality of non-human bodies and souls at specific times and places, as well as to the task of searching for signs of the insecurities and defiances that surely accompany the governmentalization of other species.

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