

WHO'S LOOKING AT WHOM

Zara Dinnen

Rachel E. Dubrofsky and Shoshana Amielle Magnet (eds), *Feminist Surveillance Studies*, Durham and London, Duke University Press, 2015, 304pp.

Rachel Dubrofsky and Shoshana Magnet's introduction to *Feminist Surveillance Studies* begins with a description of an academic scene:

At a recent roundtable of academics and privacy advocates discussing surveillance studies and inequality, the conversation variously turned to consumer surveillance, new technologies, and the weakened legislative climate on privacy in both the United States and Canada. While we share the interests of the discussants, we wonder at the place of feminist concerns about surveillance and issues of inequality (p1).

I turn to the resulting book *Feminist Surveillance Studies* off the back of a similar scene - an academic symposium on transparency and secrecy - with similar questions. As Rachel Hall notes, in her chapter for *Feminist Surveillance Studies* on the use of full body scanners in US airports, transparency is a threshold concept for all those interrogating public practices of surveillance and governance. Hall writes that an 'aesthetics of transparency' can be defined as the forcing of 'a correspondence between interiority and exteriority on the objects of the preventative gaze, or better yet, to flatten the object of surveillance' (p127). What this new collection convincingly asserts is that the demand for transparency placed on people by governing regimes does not affect all equally; that 'correspondences' are forced and made in service of different ideological ends; and that the academic and activist methods we might have for analysing, interrogating and countering regimes of transparency and surveillance must be able to engage 'terms of gendered, sexualized, raced and classed representations of bodies' (p2).

Feminist Surveillance Studies is a collection of eleven chapters that model different ways of doing Feminist Surveillance Studies. The chapters are varied, and include writing on surveillance as an apparatus for making colonial violence thinkable, and actionable; on surveillance and the work of anti-sex-trafficking advocacy in the mid-twentieth century; on the birth certificate as surveillance apparatus, as highlighted in the legal history of a transgender persons' right to have their birth certificate changed; on transnational surrogacy and new media communications; on police photos of 'the battered face of the popular U.S. singer Rihanna Fenty', and the way the police camera 'flash regulates skin colour to produce the subject of domestic abuse' (pp107-8). Although the chapters vary by subject and methodology they speak to

and across each other and together they model the precise and provocative benefits of a feminist intervention in surveillance studies.

The collection is also committed to underscoring the historical, or rather foundational, aspect of surveillance. As Andrea Smith argues in her chapter on settler violence and surveillance, '[t]here is not a pure or benign state beyond its strategies of surveillance' (p35). This kind of critical insight runs throughout the collection and frequently stems directly from fields of discourse beyond the discipline of surveillance studies. This is particularly the case in chapters by Andrea Smith, Laura Hyun Yi Kang, Lisa Jean Moore and Paisley Currah and Kelli D. Moore which write through the intersections of anticolonial, legal, feminist and media frameworks. It is further evidenced in Yasmin Jiwani's chapter on honour killings and 'interlocking surveillance(s)'. In her analysis of a case of femicide in Canada in 2009 that was presented in the media and court as an honour killing, and so an exceptional event, Jiwani argues '[t]he mediated emphasis on "honour killing" as a particularly exotic variant of femicide contributed to the hypervisibility of the Shafia case against the unstated and muted backdrop of the everyday gendered violence that women experience, or of the prevalent femicide of specific groups of women' (p80). Throughout, this collection demonstrates the ways a feminist surveillance studies enables academic discourse to register and act on what is not seen, or unseen, in the construction of a dominant optic.

The final third of the book is dedicated to chapters working 'toward a feminist praxis in surveillance studies'. In their chapter for this section Kevin Walby and Seantel Anaïs set out a methodology for surveillance studies, a version of Canadian Sociologist Dorothy E. Smith's 'Institutional Ethnography' which 'examines how sequences of texts' in institutions, for example the documentation of an employee generated by Human Resources management, 'coordinate consciousness, actions, and ruling' (p214). For Walby and Anaïs a new methodology is necessary in order to evidence the value of surveillance studies as distinct from policing, security, and intelligence studies. Such a distinction, whilst important for the veracity of emerging scholarship, is always also in tension with the intra-disciplinarity of the work on display in this collection. In addition to the concerns this collection shares with recent work in critical media studies, and visual culture studies, the book as a whole is an intervention as an intersection: *feminist surveillance studies*. Each contributor supports Dubrofsky and Magnet's introductory statement that 'the ways in which supposedly "neutral" technologies are used requires a feminist analysis to access issues of disenfranchisement' (p5). The book does have a disciplinary coherence and it comes from the way feminist analysis is leveraged as the primary interrogative method. Critical feminism is revealed as a distinct enough aspect to hold together the disparate studies represented here, to make a consistent claim about an emerging discipline, and not compromise on the significant contribution this book also makes to intra-disciplinary study.

The book presents a mix of social sciences and cultural studies methods. The foreword and afterword, by Mark Andrejevic and Lisa Nakamura respectively, reference these methods as concerns of media. Andrejevic and Nakamura are both well-known for their work on new media and popular culture and so although these only occasionally come together as sites of analysis in the book (mainly in Dubrofsky and Wood's chapter on celebrity women on twitter, Kelli D. Moore's chapter on Rihanna and images of domestic abuse, and Sayantani DasGupta and Shamita Das Dasgupta's chapter on transnational surrogacy blogs) critical new media/media studies of contemporary culture begin and end the book, serving as a key disciplinary frame.

It is testament to the structural intra-disciplinarity of *Feminist Media Studies* that the subject categories this book is labelled with - Gender Studies, Surveillance Studies, Cultural Studies - don't cover the half of it. These framing points are enriched by the various socio-historical contingencies presented throughout. The multiple critical connections are precisely what is so vital about the book, and a reason I would include chapters from this book on reading lists for a general new media studies course, or contemporary literary studies and visual culture courses. In Lisa Nakamura's afterword, legacies of disenfranchisement by surveillance-state-building are accounted for in today's issues of internet access and digital literacy:

lack of access to digital tools and techniques, the industry practice of shipping smartphones and other devices preloaded with applications like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, and, most important, a lack of awareness of options and training in how to seek out and install alternative platforms makes it unlikely the most-surveilled populations in Canada and North America can escape from the 'walled garden' of social media (p224).

In this collection Nakamura's research on race and new media today exists in a generative constellation with Andrea Smith's histories of surveillance and colonialism. Significantly for anyone concerned with and by 'aesthetics of transparency', the discourse that emerges from such a constellation asserts that the very privacy which new media modes of surveillance violate today, is itself the production of foundational regimes of surveillance.

Throughout the collection, discourses of visibility - gazes, ways of seeing, mechanics for visualising - are put into play with verbal literacies. As Ummni Khan writes, with reference to her work on surveillance of sex industry clients, '[...] the glitz of high-tech surveillance should not prevent us from also paying critical attention to surveys as a traditional form of (and etymologically connected to) surveillance' (p192). Khan's work on the survey builds on the collection's recognition that surveillance is not just being looked at, but being called to show, being called to speak, and having that speech and that demonstration already framed within categories of surveillance. In Khan's analysis the sex industry clients surveyed by the prohibitionist group

Prostitution Research and Education, are shown to have been denied their agency by the problematic methods of the surveys themselves, and by the subsequent representation of their data. Khan's description of these surveys is proximate to the descriptions of the flattened image-object of surveillance discussed in the other chapters; all the contributors forcibly interrogate the function of given 'correspondences'. In addition, in an uncanny aspect, the work of demonstration and surveying is reflected in the book project as a whole; the academic researcher is also a kind of surveillance apparatus. Anxiety about this academic position is perhaps detectable in Mark Andrejevic's suspicion of the collective 'we' produced by methods of surveillance (pxvii), and in Dubrofsky and Magnet's description of the roundtable on surveillance studies and inequality. In this reflexive vein, a criticism of the book I had intended to make was that the images included are black and white and could maybe serve the analysis better in colour - particularly in Kelli D. Moore's chapter on Rihanna and police photography. But this material manifestation of the problematic of looking, and the questions it raises - should the object of surveillance be reproduced? How? - only serves to deepen the case made throughout the book for the value of feminist surveillance studies.

Zara Dinnen is Lecturer in Modern and Contemporary Literature at the University of Birmingham.

SHAPE-SHIFTING

Geoff Eley

David Glover, *Literature, Immigration, and Diaspora in Fin de Siècle England: A Cultural History of the 1905 Aliens Act*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012, x + 229 pp., £53.99 hardback.

When the issue of immigration exploded across British politics in the mid-1960s, initiating the now-familiar dialectics of fear-mongering, moral cowardice, rightward regrouping, and ensuing legislation, historians understandably turned for illumination to the main earlier precedent, namely the 1905 Aliens Act and the large-scale Jewish immigration that brought it to the agenda. In the meantime, the resulting scholarship on the latter has tracked the shifting historiographical landscape in fascinating ways. First, concurrent with the immigration crisis of the 1960s itself, came the rise of social history: pioneering works by John Garrard and Bernard Gainer were quickly joined by monographs that widened their approach from the parliamentary arena to the social analysis of immigration and its longer-term effects, reaching their apogee with David Feldman's authoritative study of 1988.¹ Yet Feldman's approach was already reaching forward, joining the fine-grained treatment of party politics, government, and the consequences of social change to a critical history of political languages and their grounds of continuity and fracture.

By this time, in other words, historians were starting to respond to what we now call the cultural turn. Contemporary crises of cultural diversity at the end of the twentieth century increasingly challenged conceptions of 'Englishness' and its former stabilities: if anti-racism and 'blackness' assembled the ground of a critical multiculturalism during the 1980s (as the 'empire struck back'), historians working out of cultural studies (in particular those attached to the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies) found the early twentieth-century talk about foreignness to be an excellent means of critical recuperation, showing how national identity had rested on some vital contingencies during the very moment of its modern formation.² By getting inside the proliferating fin de siècle discourse around Jews, Jewishness, and 'the Jew', for which the 1905 Aliens Act offered such rich opportunities, historians were able to question the seeming solidities of Englishness in that earlier time while introducing comparative insights. In the best of such analysis the meanings of anti-Semitism and the Jewish difference were harnessed for larger purposes: if 'alien' Jewish immigrants were 'flocking' across Britain's borders, then the Englishness of the nation's integrity was already being challenged from those borderlands - imperial,

1. John A. Garrard, *The English and Immigration 1880-1910*, Oxford University Press, London 1971; Bernard Gainer, *The Alien Invasion: The Origins of the Aliens Act of 1905*, Heinemann, London 1972; David Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews: Social Relations and Political Culture 1840-1914*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1988.

2. See especially Centre for Contemporary Culture Studies (eds.), *The Empire Strikes Back: Race and Racism in 70s Britain*, London, Hutchinson, 1982; Paul Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack: The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1987.

geographical, cultural, social, sexual - long before the latter-day eruption of postcolonial discontents was to occur.³

During the past two decades the literatures dealing with 'England and its others' in this late-Victorian-Edwardian setting have become legion, whether in history or all across the humanities and social sciences, especially in cultural studies, which continues to creatively confuse those distinctions. David Glover's excellent new book pulls these strands together in a tightly organized study using the 1905 Aliens Act as both a watershed moment in the treatment of immigration and a lens through which debates then and now about nationhood and citizenship, borders and belonging, may be focused. At the centre of that discourse was the freshly constructed figure of 'the Jew', the epitome of the 'undesirable alien', into whose racially marked presence multiple anxieties and antipathies were convened. During the 1880s and 1890s, Jews leaving the Russian Empire were entering Britain at a rate of some 3,000-8,000 a year, hitting a peak in 1903-06 in the immediate setting of the 1905 Act, raising the overall Jewish population from 42,000 in 1880 to around 300,000 by 1914 (three fifths of whom lived in London). In the process, older stereotypes were replenished and remade into a new repertoire of negatively shape-shifting representations, whose elements ranged from the 'destitute alien' and 'incurable pauper' to the cynical exploiter of sweated labour, and from the unpatriotic money-making plutocrat to the rootless and dangerously subversive anarchist. The most lurid versions added the manipulator of international conspiracies, the money-grubbing loan shark, and the blood-sucking, plague-bearing parasite.

By the early 1900s, Glover argues, this novel anti-Semitic formation (the term itself only migrated to Britain in the 1880s from Germany, where it was coined a few years before by Wilhelm Marr) had come to deliver the malleable language through which the immigration was now mainly understood, supplanting the older and looser terms like 'Judeophobia' or 'Jew-baiting'.⁴ Thus 'anti-Semitism was part of a wide-ranging and deeply contested racial imaginary, with its own distinctive debates, polemics, idioms, and practices'; it 'formed a cultural matrix that allowed the possibility of anti-alien legislation to become thinkable' (p80).

The specificities of what changed are broached by Glover's brilliantly nuanced reading of George Eliot's 1876 novel *Daniel Deronda*, whose complex relation to Jews, Judaism, and modernity establishes the sympathetic ground of secular liberalism and associated philosophical convictions from which the Jewish predicament could previously be addressed, until almost immediately afterward the reverberations of the large-scale Jewish immigration began taking it away. Deliberately set in 1866-68, on the cusp of what had seemed an indefinitely unfolding liberal future, *Daniel Deronda* used its sympathetically drawn Jewish characters to stage a series of debates 'about the relationship between national allegiance, citizenship, and birthright in a post-revolutionary era, questions that Britain sought to resolve in the 1870 Naturalization Act'

3. See here Janet Wolff, 'The Failure of a Hard Sponge: Class, Ethnicity, and the Art of Mark Gertler', *New Formations*, 28 (Spring 1996), 46-64; David Feldman, 'The Importance of Being English: Jewish Immigration and the Decay of Liberal England', in David Feldman and Gareth Stedman Jones (eds.), *Metropolis - London: Histories and Representations since 1800*, Routledge, London 1989, pp57-58.

4. See Moshe Zimmermann, *Wilhelm Marr: The Patriarch of Anti-Semitism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1986.

5. Aristede R. Zolberg, 'Global Movements, Global Walls: Responses to Migration, 1885-1925', in Wang Gungwu (ed.), *Global History and Migrations*, Westview Press, Boulder 1997, p303.

(p11). Yet, ironically, Eliot's world of relatively free international movement across borders and accompanying ethics of tolerance was even then coming to an end. The intensifying of mass migration on a global scale now increasingly placed earlier assumptions about freedom of movement under duress, leading quickly to 'a global network of barriers that successfully confined most of the world's population in their countries of birth', presaged in the US Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and with sharp international peaks of anti-alien initiatives in 1894-97 and 1905-08.⁵ Glover tracks the 'long and unusually complicated afterlife' of Eliot's novel through the following decades, exploring the 'range of responses and identifications it elicited - from Judeophobic parody, to assimilationist self-justification, to proto-Zionism' - including the translated excerpts circulating widely among eastern European Jews (pp17, 10-11). In the end, though, it was the dissolution and disavowal of Eliot's liberal and broadly humanist view of the world that Glover most wishes to emphasize, for the new outlook behind the 1905 Aliens Act ratified the disappearance of that world - 'a world of mobile subjects who can move across Europe and beyond without let or hindrance, a world in which national allegiances might still retain a certain fluency' (p46).

Subsequent chapters take us through the social topography of the East End ('Palaces and sweatshops: East End fictions and East End Politics', pp47-79); the new 'counter-publics of anti-Semitism' (pp80-121); journalistic, literary, and political accounts of the migrant's journey ('Writing the 1905 Aliens Act', pp122-51); the passage and fallout from the Act per se ('Restriction and its Discontents', pp152-89); and a brief 'Afterword' (pp190-200), reflecting succinctly on the paranoid imagination of the invasion fictions of the pre-1914 decade, from James Blyth and William Le Queux to H. G. Wells and Saki (H. H. Munro). The result is a detailed mapping of the reactions to the Jewish immigration as they related to beliefs and assumptions about the nation, its moral authority, and its terms of inclusion and belonging. A particular strength of Glover's treatment is in the diversity of published sources he uses to track those ideas as they circulated through the public sphere. If, in excavating the coherence of the discourse, he privileges literary sources (understandably enough for a literary scholar), then the breadth and vision of his learning keeps this grounded in a wide and dense diversity of other materials and contexts - canonical and obscure literary works, popular fictions and theatrical performances, writings of the anti-Jewish campaigners, newspaper reportage, letters and diaries, travel narratives, Royal Commissions, Parliamentary Reports, and House of Commons debates. The cumulative effects of so much varied and vociferous talking about the nature of the Jews and the consequences of their presence, worked to structure anti-Semitic tropes and figures of thought into the basic languages of national security, national health, and national belonging on the eve of the war. By that time, the 'political myth of national betrayal' had placed the figure of the Jew ('clandestine, devious, and utterly rapacious') at the very centre - 'the

Jew is everywhere, but you have to go far down the backstairs to find him', in the words of John Buchan's secret agent in *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (1915) (p14).

There are many strengths to this important book. *First*, it provides splendid vindication for cultural studies as an overall approach. If the latter's maximal interdisciplinary constellation contains many differing possibilities, then Glover's particular mix combines an especially rich literary archive, subtly deployed social and cultural theory, and a rich grounding in relevant historiography. If, in principle, the potential archive of published written sources is expanded far beyond any older conventions of literary studies then the interpretive surefootedness presumes all of the historian's contextualizing knowledge and familiarities too. Likewise, the impressive theoretical facility is used deftly and tellingly when needed (rather than beating the reader around the head), whether via Michel Foucault on 'the liberal system of governance' (p39), Giorgio Agamben on 'bare life' and the condition of being 'foreign' under the 1870 Naturalization Act (pp136-37), or the many other instances one might cite. The analysis, in Chapter 2, of the East End, using the writings of Walter Besant (*All Sorts and Conditions of Men*, 1882), Margaret Harkness/'John Law' (*In Darkest London*, 1889/1891), and Israel Zangwill (*Children of the Ghetto*, 1892), owes everything to that same combination, where the persuasiveness of the close readings builds off their author's deep knowledge of the social histories involved. Contextualized readings of this kind are the spine of the book - fictions by Joseph Conrad ('Amy Foster', 1901 and *The Secret Agent*, 1907) and Rudyard Kipling (*Puck of Pook's Hill*, 1906), for example; or theatrical stagings of Jewishness in performances like Dion Boucicault's *After Dark: A Drama of London Life in 1868* (1868, revived 1891), Paul Potter's adaptation of George Du Maurier's 1894 bestseller *Trilby* (1895), John F. Preston's *Soldiers of the Queen or Briton and Boer* (1900), and Arthur Shirley's *The Absent-Minded Beggar; or For Queen and Country* (1900). The entire treatment of anti-Semitism shows the same strengths, especially the extended accounts of the ideas and impact of Major William Evans-Gordon and Arnold White.

Second, in the early twentieth-century narrative of state formation the Aliens Act amounted to a major institutional accretion. As Glover says in his opening paragraph, it was 'the first recognizably modern law that sought permanently to restrict immigration into Britain according to systematic bureaucratic criteria that were usually administered and interpreted by a new kind of public functionary: the immigration officer' (p1). But this was more than just the invention of a new administrative function. In light of contemporary anxieties about 'national efficiency' and 'degeneration', addressed to some degree via the chapters on anti-Semitic counter-publics and the Act's reception, the anti-alien panic signified far more widely, linking to worries about poverty, demoralization, and the social pathologies of the city. Indeed, the campaign against aliens worked powerfully with the grain of broader social concerns. As Glover says, 'immigration laws create borders

- not in the sense of national frontiers or territorial divisions, to take the two commonest meanings of the term, but borders as sites of discrimination, zones in which migrants are granted or denied a provisional legal status' (pp1-2). Amid a much wider set of interventions - from civil servants, journalists and social critics, social investigators and social workers, medical professionals of all kinds, various categories of new expertise - the immigration officer had a key role in constructing the social in that sense.

Third, the discursive complexities surrounding the Act revealed the self-deceptions and contradictions of avowedly liberal politics as it entered the early twentieth century. In the languages of public contestation - whether inside Parliament or in the press and the meeting halls - an acute defensiveness around perceived traditions of British tolerance kept anti-Semitism rhetorically at arm's length as a 'European' (French, German, Russian) but decidedly *not* a native British current of thought, a nervousness that could on occasion extend even to the avowed anti-Semites. The earliest studies of the Aliens Act - Garrard and Gainer, notably - sought to hold open that space of liberal values of tolerance and their enduring efficacy, pointing to the Act's provisions in formalizing a claim to refugee status and asylum. The case for restriction likewise invoked British freedoms: if the Act's opponents saw it as severely eroding British liberties, supporters found it essential for their preservation. As Glover observes, commentators could be at pains to distinguish between 'alien' and 'Jew', or between 'legitimate' and disreputable anti-Semitism, rhetorical constraints that even figures like White and the British Brothers' League (BBL, formed 1901) tended to observe.

Moreover, not only did the Act finally pass only after repeated earlier setbacks, but it was also immediately followed by the Liberal landslide of 1906. Yet, the ground of liberal practice had now decisively shifted. If the tolerant nation was still a shibboleth for a Liberal Government now taxed with implementing the new Act, liberals had long struggled to make sense of 'difference' and this was a challenge posed by the Jew/alien in especially troublesome ways. 'Liberal' and 'illiberal' assumptions about foreignness and immigration now inhabited common discursive terrain. This is where Glover's argument about the anti-Semitic counter-public becomes so important. For 'those members of the political class who were disillusioned with the policies of the Conservatives and Unionists' now functioned 'as a loose oppositional network aiming to bring about a decisive shift in the climate of opinion, working through a variety of campaigns and forums', an incipient Radical Right, for which Joseph Chamberlain, Leo Maxse, and Rudyard Kipling became voices in their respective ways. If that project remained 'incomplete or only partially successful', it was nonetheless effective in remaking the political ground (p12).

If liberals and anti-liberals were now converging around the bases of racialized understanding, *finally*, they were doing so under the emergent circumstances of a freshly forming and institutionally elaborate mass

democracy. In the early twentieth-century context, this was less a matter of the franchise per se than the coalescence of new popular publics brought into being via schooling, literacy, railways, urban sociability, new forms of associational life, and a mass-circulation commercial press, who were constantly invited to see themselves as citizens of a far-flung global-imperial project. On the one hand, anti-Semitism ‘belonged to a new moment in national-democratic politics when a new calculus for winning electoral and extra-parliamentary victories came into being using the emotive and aggressive appeal of racial fantasy’ (p86). On the other hand, Bill Schwarz reminds us, those same processes worked by ‘inventing structures of inclusion and exclusion. Enmities are part of the necessary dynamic of a popular politics. In the classic age of empire, the idea of the frontier was one which was active in holding the line between “us” and “them”. Yet this was never simply a matter of the frontier “out there”, but of interiorized frontiers which criss-crossed the domestic polity, and held the modern citizen in place’.⁶ The most vociferously inventive of the anti-alien agitators, Arnold White, failed parliamentary candidate first for the Gladstonian Liberal Party in Mile End (1886), then for Liberal Unionists in Tyneside (1892, 1895), made his first anti-Semitic foray with *English Democracy: Its Promises and Perils* in 1894, just as the BBL chose the People’s Palace for its inaugural rally in 1902. *Mutatis mutandis*, Glover’s rendition of White’s purposes has obvious resonance for today: his ‘ambition was to produce a kind of racial common sense that would alter the climate of opinion in which immigration and pauperism were discussed, nudging it closer towards the putative sciences of race’ (p86).

6. Bill Schwarz, ‘Politics and Rhetoric in the Age of Mass Culture’, *History Workshop Journal*, 46 (Autumn 1998), p132.

Geoff Eley is Professor of Contemporary History at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

LUDIC HANDWAVING

John Ó Maoilearca

Brian Massumi, *What Animals Teach Us About Politics*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2014, 137pp; paperback, £14.99

Most philosophers don't like animals. This truism is all the more evident if one looks at the manner in which animals have appeared in the history of philosophical anthropology. Traditionally and in separatist mode, these appearances have most often been to inflate the human at the animal's expense. The human is defined in wide-ranging ways, with some depictions simply opposing properties attributed to 'animals' (man as the non-animal, the immaterial, the preternatural, and so forth), while others offer continuist images of humans as sentient animals, conscious animals, rational animals, linguistic animals, political animals, temporal animals... Hence, Aristotle describes humans as exclusively political, Descartes as exclusively conscious, Kant as exclusively rational, Heidegger as exclusively temporal, Davidson as exclusively linguistic, and so on. This positive account consequently provides us with another list of attributes for the animal: the non-political, the non-conscious, the non-rational, the non-temporal, the non-linguistic, etc. And alongside these prosaic descriptions one can line-up all the more fanciful ones - of the human as the animal who has the right to make promises (Nietzsche), or who is what it is not and is not what it is (Sartre), or even who goes to the movies (Agamben).

The more recent 'animal turn' in philosophy and critical theory, therefore, would presumably temper this form of animal abuse, given its tendency now to inflate, or restore, some value to the animal. And yet this shift in position is arguably no less a form of abuse, at least conceptually. Deleuze's 'becoming-animal', Agamben's 'bare life', or Derrida's 'animal that therefore I am', can be seen to transform the animal into one more normative and metaphysical idea (albeit now to its advantage rather than its detriment). Philosophy continues to mediate the animal for its own purpose by seeing it as only one instance of aporetic *différance* (Derrida), proliferated becoming (Deleuze), or bare life (Agamben). Yet any reduction of the animal to that of a proxy for *différance*, rhizomatics, bare life, or whatever else arguably gains its force by disregarding other aspects of the animal that are placed in the background, namely those that do not fit (or resist) the philosopher and his/her favoured philosophemes. Where Derrida focuses on the suffering and death of the animal, Deleuze concentrates on (its) life. Hence, despite even Badiou's depiction of Deleuze as a philosopher of 'the Animal' (opposed to his own of 'Number'), the fact remains that Deleuze

also abuses animals, in his own way.

There are kinds of animal that Deleuze (even when working with Guattari) prefers over others in his notion of all-encompassing molecular becoming: domesticated (pitied) and individuated (molarised) animals are unhealthy, reactive, and sad - this being the motive behind the infamous proclamation that 'anyone who likes cats or dogs is a fool'. Likewise, state animals (the lions, horses, and unicorns of empires, myths, and religions) are to be disavowed. It is the 'demonic' or pack animal that is the Deleuzian favourite, the *philosopher's* pet. So, *qua animal* becomings (rather than the becoming-animal of humans), the true animal is always a multiplicity (as in a wolf pack) and a process (every such pack is a *wolfing*). Indeed, it is pack animals, animals as assemblages of other, smaller (molecular) animals, that precisely marks out Deleuze's preferential treatment. Wolves, cockroaches and rats are the stars of his menagerie (especially rats).

So how does Brian Massumi's new collection of essays - *What Animals Teach Us About Politics* - fare on the animal front? Its first key concept, the 'supernormal', is Deleuzian in complexion (like all Massumi's work), though its origins are in zoology. And what animals teach us is how to be supernormal, that is, how to manifest a kind of instinctive behaviour that, far from being one-tracked and mechanical, as per its comprehension in the popular understanding of biology, actually generates creative responses in relation to a complex environment. Their supernormal behaviour teaches us 'a *topology of experience* in which the diverse elements in play are swept together in the direction of their own integral variation, in a dynamic state of mutual inclusion' (p16). This is a symbiotic, immanentist, and creative form of behaviour, one naturally prone towards an egalitarian and somewhat anarchic micro-political stance.

In this short work (its four essays come to less than 120 pages), we are shown a world of animals and animal behaviour that must implicate us: humans are on the animal continuum and are resolutely animalized (Massumi seeing no qualitative divide between nature and culture as more classical philosophy would have it) but without this being a reduction with deleterious effects so much as an ecstatic reinsertion that should be celebrated. This animality is one that is extremely 'rich in world', so to speak - creative, personalized, unpredictable, and energetic. Animals are not less than 'us' (uninventive, sub-personal, automated, and generally impoverished in every important faculty compared to the human) - they are us 'plus', still in possession of all that we have lost through millennia of self-imposed exile. Where we do remain exceptional, and so form a strange exception on the continuum of animality (and indeed of 'life' itself - for plants too are on this broader spectrum) is in the misuse of our faculties of abstract language and reflection that have alienated our self-image from our physical natures.

The charges of anthropomorphism normally attendant upon such an enriched view of the animal are nicely sidestepped by Massumi given that

any projection - of poverty or of riches - is just that: an attribution that will always be underdetermined by facts in the last instance. Given the posture adopted in Massumi's politics, then, it is obvious that what we share with other animals outweighs what differentiates us, at least when it comes to the core values animating a political outlook that is of Deleuzian hue. Those looking here for any subsequent political programme, however, will be disappointed: as Massumi says, his essay is 'an extended thought experiment in what an animal politics can be' (p3) - and so it does not attempt to give us any more than a bare outline of an animalised polis.

Significantly, the first and longest essay, which lends its title to the collection, 'What Animals Teach Us About Politics', expends a small amount of time on such a programmatic, leaving it to the final piece 'Six Theses on the Animal to be *Avoided*' to specify some concrete proposals (concerning the inadequacies of human speciesism, posthumanism, the (fallacious) priority of the symbolic, or the environment, or the inorganic). The first essay does, however, conclude with fourteen 'Propositions': though they are again forwarded as a mere 'sketch', these propositions expand upon the other key concept of Massumi's book - the *ludic*. This notion of undirected playfulness - especially as seen in various animal gestures (when playing) studied by zoologists - is given centre-stage in Massumi's analyses and is no longer deemed frivolous but paramount in political world-making. The affirmation of contingency, of spontaneity, of non-utility and light-hearted inventiveness is forwarded to bring much-needed movement to our inert political stage. In fact, one of these Propositions states precisely that 'the political animal *does not recognize any rigid opposition between the frivolous and the serious*' (p40). Such a deconstruction of a standard binary is par for the course for an immanentist approach such as Massumi's (where all dualisms remain the enemy, as they were for Deleuze), but it does not, he claims, come at the cost of any resulting quietism: as another of the propositions announces, 'non-normative, ethico-aesthetic politics is not without criteria of evaluation'. Crucially, the main criterion is an affective one, that is, 'the degree to which the political gesture carries forward enthusiasm of the body' (p41).

And so we turn to the elephant in the room, or at least in this collection (though elephants are actually few and far between in its pages): how are we to negotiate that other, old, duality, between *fact and value*? How are we to commend any form of behaviour (or derive a value from a fact)? Because it is an animal behaviour and 'we' are animals? But if we are already animals (and Massumi is adamant about this throughout), then whatever we do is already animal behaviour too. Even if that behaviour is *to alienate ourselves from other animals* - at least in our own minds - and all the terrifying results that follow on from that (especially for those other animals) - it is still a form of animal behaviour, it is natural to appear 'unnatural'. Of course, with Nietzsche we can diagnose our condition as one of disease, humanity being the diseased animal. Or as Massumi puts it, 'human politics is *antilife*' (p69). But how can

anyone establish what is and is not a 'disease' immanently (where Massumi lives), that is, from *within* the animal/plant/life continuum (or *in media res* - in the *included* middle, as Massumi acknowledges)? Is it merely statistical, with the outliers (*Homo sapiens*) being somehow 'less' natural? If this is the case, then so much for inventiveness at the margins, so much for minoritarianism (when it *does* concern minorities). Conversely, why might our disease not be the next stage in life's irrepressible creativity, even with all the suffering - reactivity, sadness, general unhealthiness - that that entails? Because such things are unbecoming for a Deleuzian?

Ultimately, some kind of transcendent gesture or authoritarian decision must be made - *this* is life, *this* is antilife, and *this* is enthusiasm. And Massumi makes it. Admittedly, he also accepts that his is a thoroughly 'pragmatic' approach (p53), though he rests his position on an unsaid notion of what it is that works, or what is politically practical. Moreover, apart from making a few rather abstract points about the paradoxical nature of humans being both qualitatively and quantitatively different from other animals (as all animals are to each other), the problem of establishing a politics based on how the animal mainstream putatively behave is left untroubled by Massumi. The founding gesture of this form of socio-biology is itself ludic, then (only in a less complimentary sense): as regards any self-imposed rationale for wanting to take lessons from the 'animals' (whatever and whoever they are deemed to be), it amounts to an interesting form of hand waving. If one finds it convincing, it is because one has oneself, already, mediated the animal through a shared set of philosophemes (many of them Deleuzian). So simply saying that 'everything is political' (p96), even if it is with Deleuze, is not enough: we need to know whose politics, which polis, and why. In this respect, Massumi's approach belongs to those well-meaning philosophies that still try to capture the animal in their epistemological, ontological, or metaphilosophical nets. What remains unthought here, as elsewhere, is the possibility of an animalised philosophy that would reshape the very idea of philosophy itself - and with that our image of what is thought and what is pedagogic, be it human or nonhuman. All that said, though, *What Animals Teach Us About Politics* remains a very interesting example of its species, being both informative and entertaining in its account of animal lessoning.

John Ó Maoilearca is Professor of Film and Television at Kingston University, London, and author of *All Thoughts Are Equal: Laruelle and Nonhuman Philosophy* (University of Minnesota Press, 2015).

ENTANGLEMENT

Sam McBean

Ken Hillis, Susanna Paasonen, and Michael Petit (eds), *Networked Affect*, Cambridge, MA, MIT Press, 2015, 267pp; £24.95 hardcover.

Networked Affect contributes to a growing body of scholarship which brings together the study of affect, emotions, and feeling with new media and digital scholarship. The editors begin with the insistence that networked communication is compelled by, works through, and produces, affective attachments and investments. In the words of one of the contributors, Jodi Dean, online platforms and social network sites 'produce and circulate affect as a binding technique' (p90).

The collection's insistence on the need to theorise the affective facet of networked communication builds on each of the editor's individual publications in the field and also finds company with recent publications including Athina Karatzogianni and Adi Kuntsman's edited collection *Digital Cultures and the Politics of Emotion: Feelings, Affect and Technological Change* (2012) and Joanne Garde-Hansen and Kristyn Gorton's *Emotion Online: Theorizing Affect on the Internet* (2013).¹ *Networked Affect* starts with a comprehensive introduction to the field of affect theory and to why it might matter for online research and theorizing, and the essays are then organized into three sections - intensity, sensation, and value. Essays in the first section consider how online exchange works through the production of various forms of affective intensities, while the second focuses more on the materiality (notably the connection between non-human and human bodies) of online networks, with the final section turning to consider the production of affective value as central to networked technologies (here, Facebook is the case study for three essays).

The introduction considers the stakes of affect theory for internet research. While outlining that affect studies is a diverse field (i.e. there is no *single* approach or agreed upon definition of affect), the editors explain that affect has been seen as a useful approach to cultural theory in the face of a 'growing awareness of the limits to knowledge production inherent in research focused principally on representation, mediation, signification, and subjectivity' (p4). In other words, attention to affect offers a rejoinder to approaches that might be described as 'textual' (focused on ideology, meaning, representation) and captures instead, what might be missed from these analyses, namely the material and the embodied - the intensities that escape and exceed what Eve Sedgwick describes as more 'paranoid'

1. Joanne Garde-Hansen and Kristyn Gorton, *Emotion Online*, Basingstoke and London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2013; Athina Karatzogianni and Adi Kuntsman (eds), *Digital Cultures and the Politics of Emotion: Feelings, Affect and Technological Change*, Palgrave Macmillan, London 2012.

approaches to research.² Importantly for the collection's concerns, the editors explain that affect theory often focused on networks, assemblages, and open systems. This focus has particular resonance with developments in theorising networked technologies and applications, which have moved away from ideas about an autonomous user separate from the machine she is using. In other words, networked technologies are widely conceptualized as 'not merely instrumental but as generative of sensation and potentiality' (p10). At this juncture, the editors posit that affect theory becomes a useful methodology to theorise how individual agency is always entangled 'in technological networks of transmission and communication, as well as in the (social) networks of privilege and inequality' (p10).

The book should be applauded for its transnational scope (articles focused on Finland and Turkey widen the reach of the collection) and for bringing together more established academics with graduate students. The result is a rich collection of essays that tackle heretofore under (and sometimes un) theorized new media objects and platforms (such as Tumblr, GIFs, online steampunk cultures, and software art), as well as practices (including pedagogy with screens, avatar identification, and online debate), convincingly arguing for the necessity of foregrounding affect to understand these objects, processes, and practices.

The collection provides new language and methodologies through which to theorize the affective specificity of the internet - including, but not limited to Dean's contribution which, echoing ideas published elsewhere, uses the language of 'drive' to explain the often compulsive relationship we have with social media or Michael Petit's term 'digital disaffect', which helps to name how boredom or underwhelming feelings coexist with the affective jolts the internet seemingly offers.

Jussi Parikka's chapter on the necessity of framing software as 'completely entangled with human worlds of affective relations' (p103), or Melissa Gregg's consideration of how GTD ('Getting Things Done') apps propagate neoliberal feelings of productivity and individualism, flesh out the multiple and varied ways that we might use affect to think through our relationship with code (and code's relationship with us). Paasonen's essay charts a case study of an online debate in Finland and is a cogent analysis of how affect is produced and circulates on social media debates. Drawing on Ahmed's understanding of 'stickiness', Paasonen maps how certain subject positions become materialised in online debates, while also exploring how Facebook as a platform, is implicated in the shaping of the circulation of affect (here, due to the primacy it gives to the most recent comments on long threads). Ken Hillis explores the relationship between online avatars and the bodies of users. Foregrounding the allegorical nature of the avatar, Hillis outlines a compelling argument about the avatar as an affective trace of the user - a trace which both commands affect at a distance, while also offering the promise of mobility, liveliness, and self-control. Throughout the collection,

2. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*, Duke University Press, Durham 2003, pp123-152.

affect theory becomes a means to make sense of or give shape to the virtual, while also pushing affect theory's focus on circulation into movement across and between human and non-human actors.

Other chapters experiment with the subjective qualities of affect research, writing themselves explicitly into their work. Notable here is Alexander Cho's piece on Tumblr, an essay which stands out not only because it is the only chapter to engage with the question of queerness and affect, but also because it is the most experimental in terms of its writing style - moving from field notes describing specific encounters on Tumblr to more academic analyses of Tumblr's temporalities. Using 'queer reverb' as a term to describe the circulation of images on Tumblr, Cho considers how the past reverberates through Tumblr in ways that, drawing on recent queer temporality theory, we might understand as queer. Jenny Sundén's work also involves an immersion in an online culture, here steampunk. In her contribution, she explores the relationship between the digital and the analog, considering the simultaneous circulation of both in steampunk culture. While at first the valorization of the materiality of analog technology in steampunk culture (here, for its material presence and the feelings this provokes) seems like a rejection of the more ephemeral materiality of the digital, Sundén convincingly argues that the digital has been a necessary site for the imagining of analog futures. Sundén thus coins 'transdigital' (p146) as a way to capture the nuance of the relationship between the digital and the analog, resisting reading the digital as devoid of affect or immaterial.

I came to this collection not long after attending a workshop on affect theory, a workshop in which I watched and participated in debates about what an affective methodology might be and indeed, what we might want it to do for us as researchers (across the humanities and social sciences). Having come to affect through feminist and queer theory, influenced by approaches to affect such as Ahmed's (2004) or Clare Hemmings' (2005), it seems important to remain productively skeptical about what we think a 'turn' to affect might accomplish - particularly as it often seems to promise a way out of the constraints of ideology or the social simply through its invocation.³ No matter how many articles or books I read or conferences I attend on 'affect' (or for that matter, how many times I use it in my own writing), I still have trouble grasping it, getting a hold on what it is, or perhaps on what I want it to do. Similarly, I might also not always know what the 'internet' is or what kind of object 'digital culture' might be. For me then, some of the most compelling arguments and productive case studies in *Networked Affect* produce work which brings together the often ephemeral/immaterial facets of 'affect' and 'networked communication' and shows how placing these two objects in conversation might materialize each other in meaningful ways.

Or, in other words, at its best this collection contributes to giving shape to not only the internet through affect theory, but to affect through its online and networked case studies.

3. Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2004; Clare Hemmings, 'Invoking Affect: Cultural Theory and the Ontological Turn', *Cultural Studies*, 19.5, 2005, pp548-567.

There is work that remains to be done, particularly around questions of affect, technology and difference. For instance, one only needs to have a passing knowledge of the raced (and gendered) stakes of Twitter wars, to insist on the need to continue to theorize in particular the entanglements of race/technology/affect. On the whole though, *Networked Affect* is a welcome contribution to the study of affect theory and networked existence, and would be of interest to scholars and students of affect, new media, cultural studies, and internet studies.

Sam McBean is Lecturer in Modern and Contemporary American Literature at Queen Mary University of London, and the author of *Feminism's Queer Temporalities* (Routledge, 2016)

BOOKNOTE

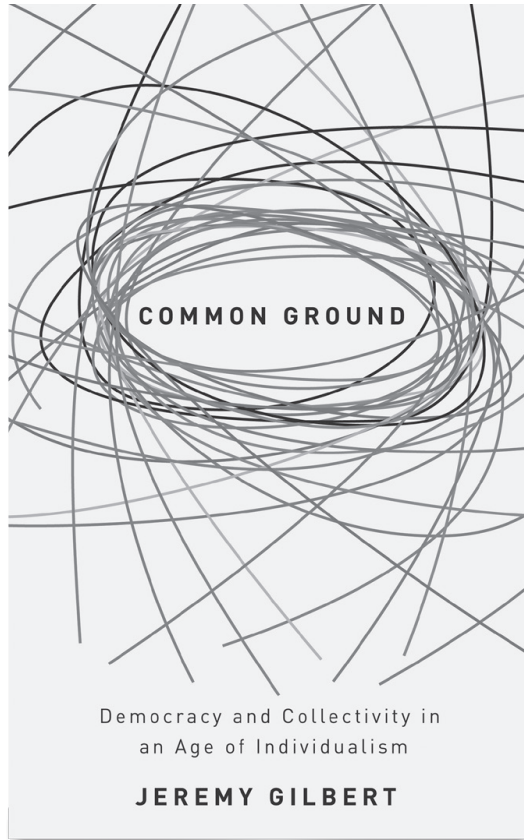
Ben Highmore

Simon Stewart, *A Sociology of Culture, Taste and Value*, Houndmills, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

Today it would be impossible to write a book about cultural sociology and the role of taste and value without devoting considerable space to the work of Pierre Bourdieu. Bourdieu's work, with its repetitive phrasings ('structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures') and intricate lexicon of interlocking terms (*habitus*, *field*, and *capital*) can become, for some, all-encompassing. For many it offers the most persuasive and complete account of culture as an arena for social reproduction and for taste as 'culture's way of masking domination' (as Antoine Hennion put it). The more difficult task is to find room for other accounts of culture, value and taste once you have let Bourdieu loose.

Simon Stewart's book carefully places Bourdieu at the centre of his account while also allowing room for other accounts of taste and value to circulate. Perhaps most usefully he shows us the limits of Bourdieu's enterprise. Rather than simply rehearse the surface criticisms that have been made of *Distinction* (that it is dated, only applies to France, and so on), he cuts to what is crucially missing in that book: Bourdieu actually tells us very little about what it feels like to like something. Bourdieu tells us a lot about the difficulty of having the confidence to like opera, for instance, without also having the sort of upbringing that makes that a comfortable possibility. He gives us a sense of the way that cultural preferences can open you up to the disdainful opprobrium of those whose tastes are deemed superior. But as far as being able to explain or even describe the raptures and disappointments of the person who loves to cook or who loves opera *despite* the obnoxious social scene that surrounds it, Bourdieu has little to say.

Stewart's response to this is to suggest 'zooming-in' on the event of taste. It is a clunky phrase but you get the picture. Taste needs an attention that can grasp it up-close, that can attend to it as an activity that may take an 'innocent' from incomprehension and alienation to acquiring a 'taste for' something. It is too easy (and we have to thank Bourdieu for this) to see a preference for improvised jazz as the expression of a disposition of a member of the 'dominated faction of the dominant group' (however true that may be). It is much harder to describe how our sensorium changes as those saxophone squawks and bleeps are transformed from noise to sensual forms. Stewart's book is an accessible guide to the sociology of culture that takes us from Weber to issues surrounding globalisation and value. It offers a critical account of some of the central ideas of the discipline and opens up a space for new sociological enquiries that may be more attentive to the phenomenal forms of taste.



Nov 2013 // PB 9780745325316 // £19.99 // 272pp
also available as an eBook

*'We live in an interregnum. The old is not yet dead
and the new is yet to be born. No one understands this
moment better than Jeremy Gilbert.'*

- NEAL LAWSON, CHAIR FOR COMPASS

*'A bold, brilliant and ultimately hopeful attempt to
build a critique of liberalism and neoliberalism on
different foundations.'*

- MARK FISHER, AUTHOR OF *CAPITALIST REALISM:
IS THERE NO ALTERNATIVE?* (2009)



Pluto Press
www.plutobooks.com

FROM PUSKAS TO IBRAHIMOVIĆ



The first Spaniard to play in the English league? A refugee from the Spanish Civil War. Scorer of Blackpool's fourth goal in the 'Matthews Final'? A refugee from the racist South African regime. From Puskas to Ibrahimović, refugees have always been part of the football family. All profits will help fund the Doctors of the World UK unit, the only medical aid operating in the Calais Refugee camp, as well as in others across North Africa, the Middle East and Europe.

Available from www.philosophyfootball.com or call 01255 552412

Supported by



philosophyfootball.com

sporting outfitters of intellectual distinction

Soundings

'*Soundings* is
defining the new
politics - spread
the word'

Jon Cruddas MP

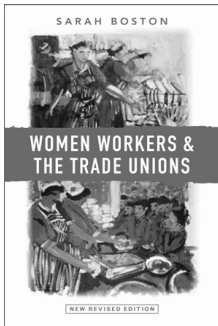


**Recent themes have included: recession
economics, the personalisation agenda, international politics,
cultures of capitalism, wellbeing, the future of the left**

Soundings is thinking ahead

To subscribe and for more information about *Soundings*, including access to many free-to-view articles, go to <http://www.books.co.uk/journals/soundings/contents.html>

NEW BOOKS FROM LAWRENCE AND WISHART



Women Workers and the Trade Unions

Sarah Boston

£20 New revised edition

'Sarah Boston's classic study of women workers and trade unions from the 1830s to the present is an exhilarating and essential history for those who want to understand the economic conditions in which we live today. ... Indispensable.'

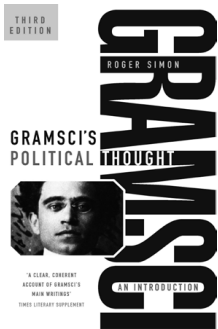
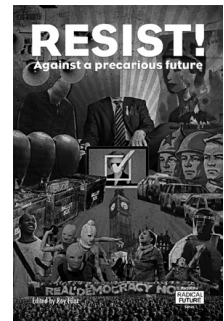
Sally Alexander, Emeritus Professor of Modern History, Goldsmiths, University of London

Resist! Against a precarious future

Ed. Ray Filar

£13.99 Third in the Radical Future series

The young generation aren't apathetic. We're disenfranchised, under or unemployed, insecure and anxious. But we're also angry. We know there are alternatives to the political consensus, but voices calling for comprehensive radical changes are ignored. The question that we are all asking in this book is: how can we fight back?



Gramsci's Political Thought: An Introduction

Roger Simon

£10.99 Third edition

'A political book in the best sense ... explains the most important ideas from Gramsci's works in simple, straightforward language, considering their relevance for a left strategy in Britain.'

Professor Anne Showstack Sassoon, author of Gramsci and Contemporary Politics

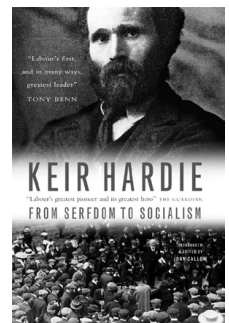
From Serfdom to Socialism

Keir Hardie

£12.99 New edition with introduction by John Callow

'The first man from the midst of the working class who completely understood them, completely championed them ... never deserted them, never turned his back on a single principle which he had professed, never drifted away from his class in thought, in feeling or in faith.'

John Bruce Glasier



For more information, please go to www.lwbooks.co.uk

