

Abu Zubaydah and the Caterpillar

Neel Ahuja

On 16 April 2009, the U.S. Department of Justice began releasing a series of memos drafted under the direction of Bush administration lawyer John Yoo outlining U.S. legal justifications for coercive interrogation in Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) prisons. One of the most widely cited of these memos, dated 1 August 2002, addressed to General Counsel John Rizzo of the CIA, and signed by Assistant Attorney General Jay Bybee, describes proposed CIA torture techniques for Zayn al-Abidin Muhammad Husayn (Abu Zubaydah), a prisoner who was shot and apprehended by the CIA in Faisalabad, Pakistan, in March 2002.¹ Before being subjected to indefinite detention as a so-called enemy combatant in the U.S. prison at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, Abu Zubaydah was tortured within the CIA's offshore prison network: he was reportedly incarcerated in Thailand, Poland, Jordan, and Diego Garcia, among other locations.² The memo gained international media attention for its description of a variety of proposed CIA torture techniques and the conditions under which the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel understood them to be permissible. It lists ten techniques: "(1) attention grasp, (2) walling, (3) facial hold, (4) facial slap (insult slap), (5) cramped confinement, (6) wall standing, (7) stress positions, (8) sleep deprivation, (9) insects placed in a confinement box, and (10) the waterboard."³

Of the techniques described in the Bybee memo, the practice of confining the detainee with an insect stands apart. It is the only technique not used within the military's own counter-torture training. The description of the act is the only one of the ten that has been partially redacted by the Obama administration.⁴ Confinement with an insect is one of only two

techniques, the other being waterboarding, whose utility is explained with reference to the detainee's fear rather than by producing stress or impaired judgment during the interrogation.

The unredacted text of the memo claims that the CIA suspects Abu Zubaydah has a fear of insects. It thus proposes enclosing him in a cramped confinement box, telling him that a stinging insect would be placed inside, but instead placing a "harmless" insect, such as a caterpillar. As part of the justification for the use of this and other torture techniques, the memo constructs a portrait of a mentally and physically strong man whose resilience allows him to withstand normal interrogation techniques, but whose minor neuroses—such as entomophobia—can be exploited for the cause of national security. A later memo claims that the CIA canceled the proposed confinement with insect "for reasons unrelated to any concern that it might violate the [torture] statute."⁵ Yet the imagined insect is conjured within the U.S. imperial archive at a moment of extreme violence, and appeared until 2009 to be threatening enough to be made a state secret.

Abu Zubaydah's torture has occupied a privileged position in the public debates about U.S. state violence since 9/11, with declassified memos, human rights reports, and transcripts from the prisoner's military tribunal publicly airing a variety of forms of state coercion ranging from the denial of diary privileges to the use of confinement boxes to sleep deprivation and the waterboard.⁶ Confirming the normative public discourse that reads horror against torture in terms of castration or emasculation, Abu Zubaydah himself has reportedly described the assault on his body by claiming, "year after year, I am losing my masculinity."⁷ Articulated in such gendered language, the focus of public debates over torture has been the scope of morally and legally acceptable state violence, with Abu Zubaydah's body often providing support for claims that U.S. practices are either relatively humane or sadistic. Yet less has been written about the emergent technologies of biopower that publicization of Abu Zubaydah's torture reveal—technologies that work to quarantine the figure of the male Muslim terrorist, tapping social fears organized by dominant knowledges of race, sexuality, ability, and species. While, following much contemporary political theory, Abu Zubaydah's torture may be interpreted as simply one more example of the necropower of U.S. imperialism,⁸ the spectacular power to coerce and kill targeted populations is always produced dialogically with state, interstate, and extrastate practices for the management, extension, securitization, and use of other domains of life, including animal life. Torture, then, is best understood within a broad spectrum of practices regulating life that constitute a biopolitical formation such as the war on terror. Biopolitical analysis attends not just to violence, but also to the utopianism, or imagined efficacy, of contemporary impe-

rial governmentality—buttressed in this case by the very publicization of torture as a spectacle of state power.

The imagined scene of insect torture within the Bybee memo demonstrates the centrality of particular normative knowledges of embodiment to the state's affective management of security, in this case literally fleshed out through the exemplary body of a single detainee. Applying principles of military psychology to an emerging profile of Abu Zubaydah as the embodiment of the Muslim monster-terrorist, the Bybee memo portrays an affectable racial subject whose composure is rooted in a deep sense of independence that can be compromised not through brute force, but by subtly exploiting his deviant psyche through a scene of bestial touch.⁹ Figuring the insect as an affective weapon, the case for torture is established on two registers. First, assimilating Abu Zubaydah's supposedly excessive physical and psychic composure into an orientalist theory of the terrorist's "blind faith," the state argues that managing a space of transpecies intimacy within the torture chamber can bring about the psychic "regression" of the prisoner, who will in turn produce reliable speech. Second, as the insect is understood to produce a truth-speaking enemy, it is used in the name of protecting both the bodies and the ways of life attributed to the securitizing mass national subject. As a spectacle of animalization, caterpillar torture operates within a broader discursive framework that figures the tortured body as a tool for managing the circulation of fear and hope in public culture. The state's use of the insect attempts to redistribute fear to the detainee and his social networks. It helps to accrue hope and fellowship to the nation, but it also risks unleashing spectacles of animality that disrupt the consolidation of affective capital.

While state apparatuses have promoted a racialized equation between torture and truth since the announcement of a global war on terror, the scene of caterpillar torture can also be read from other perspectives that propose alternative renderings of space, sensation, and connectivity. Drawing on detainee poetry and on writings on the insect body in the biological sciences and posthumanist theory, I reflect at the end of this article on the possibilities of posthumanist critique for rethinking political mobilization within contemporary, more-than-human biopolitical formations. Posthumanist discourses that celebrate the alterity of animal bodies as a signpost for an affirmative biopolitics have too often idealized transpecies connectivities without sustained attention to the emergent posthumanism of capitalism and the state. At the same time, by displacing dominant visual metaphors of the political (including those that work to animalize populations targeted for premature death), posthumanist discourse points to some subsumed logics of space, sensation, and connectivity that may challenge the power of torture spectacles to constitute their objects.

Profiling Abu Zubaydah

Denial of the other's pain is not about the failings of intellect, but the failings of spirit.

—Veena Das, *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary*

The legal framework of the war on terror envisions politics against a state of siege. United States officials produce a narrative of American exceptionalism by constructing the psychic difference and embodied vulnerabilities of the terrorist figure against the “soft” forms of coercion by the state. The Bybee memo provides a psychological profile of Abu Zubaydah, followed by discussions of whether specific techniques amount to physical or psychological torture. The memo's depictions of Abu Zubaydah as an al-Qa'idah leader, as an expert in counter-torture psychology, and as possessing knowledge of militant plots have been debunked.¹⁰ These depictions, however, continue to circulate in the media and underline justifications for Abu Zubaydah's torture and quarantine as a living figure of terror.

Within the logic of the memo, Abu Zubaydah must be presented as psychologically healthy, able to withstand significant physical and mental stress, and eminently rational in his thought processes while simultaneously subject to a set of minor neuroses that can be exploited through insect torture as well as other “enhanced interrogation techniques” in order to obtain information. Such psychopathologies are advertised within a rhetoric of the detainee's “blind faith” that works to unite the portrait of a deviant psyche with a monstrous, eroticized, and animalized body that has come to represent the Muslim monster-terrorist. Thus, while he is “self-directed” and “prizes his independence,” Abu Zubaydah suffers from narcissistic and compulsive traits evidenced in his attempts to control his appearance, image, and surroundings: he is “a perfectionist, persistent, private.”¹¹ Several paragraphs of the Bybee memo's psychological assessment discuss Abu Zubaydah's deep commitment to the al-Qa'idah cause, his participation in every major al-Qa'idah attack, and the interrogators' suspicion that he authored an al-Qa'idah manual on techniques of resistance to torture. This depth of commitment, as well as the ability to resist interrogation, inheres in a blind faith to the cause of “jihad.”¹² The memo claims,

Zubaydah stated during interviews that he thinks of any activity outside of jihad as “silly.” He has indicated that his heart and mind are devoted to serving Allah and Islam through jihad and he has stated that he has no doubts or regrets about committing himself to jihad. Zubaydah believes that the global victory of Islam is inevitable. You have informed us that he continues to express his unabated desire to kill Americans and Jews.¹³

Notably, the memo presents no explanation of the claim that Abu Zubaydah is entomophobic. It does briefly mention a different instance of “sympathetic nervous system arousal,” translated as “fear,” in Abu Zubaydah’s response to a prior interrogation.¹⁴ Ultimately, the unsubstantiated claim of entomophobia may reveal more about the production of the psyche as an object of knowledge reliant on an insect other. Insects, for Carl Jung, embodied instinct and thus became apt metaphors for childhood states. As a discipline coeval with the emergence of both entomology and evolutionary theory, psychoanalysis portrays gregarious insect life as an evolution of mechanistic social organization over primitive animal instinct. Sigmund Freud saw the organization of bees, ants, and termites as a model for human evolution from primitive to civilized states.¹⁵ The theory of the psyche could alternatively produce the modern subject as a sign of suppressed or displaced insect instinct or compare developed, “civilized” psychic traits as evidence of evolutionary processes coexistent in insect life. Such metaphoric relations of insects to the psyche and the unconscious buttress two divergent renderings of Abu Zubaydah’s vulnerability: one based on his excessively composed psyche that must be broken down and the other on his neurotic tendencies that reveal hints of his improper psychic development.

In their article “Monster, Terrorist, Fag: The War on Terrorism and the Production of Docile Patriots,” Jasbir K. Puar and Amit S. Rai give context to such animalizations of the terrorist figure.¹⁶ Puar and Rai argue that popular media, state experts on terrorism, and the academic discipline of terrorism studies each rely on a racialized and sexualized figuring of the male Muslim terrorist as a gender-crossing, human-animal hybrid against which a masculinist, heteronormative, and white supremacist national narrative can take shape. A provincial, “Western” notion of the psyche, according to the authors, becomes the basis for constructing the deviance of the terrorist-monster in terms of an animalistic failed heterosexuality. Puar and Rai’s reading resonates with the Bybee memo inasmuch as the memo describes a monstrous excess of composure linked to an irrational, blind faith in global dominance of Islam and the specifically homosocial “camaraderie of like-minded mujahedin brothers.”¹⁷ Though the memo is careful to never mention that the interrogation techniques would compromise Abu Zubaydah’s mental state, the introduction of the caterpillar would presumably weaken the prisoner’s excessive composure—rooted in narcissistic and compulsive tendencies—enough to allow him to “rationalize” the airing of key information as a “temporary setback” on Islam’s inevitable path to universal domination.¹⁸

Notably, the rhetoric of blind faith that shores up both Abu Zubaydah’s resistance to interrogation and his supposed neurotic, compulsive, and irrational commitment to militant Islam is linked via disability to

earlier representations of the Muslim monster-terrorist. As Ileana Porras writes, in the 1990s, the figure of Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman, the man charged with plotting the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, became synonymous with the threat of Islamic militancy. In particular, Porras notes how representations of Abdel-Rahman's blindness, dress, and facial expressions consolidated long-standing orientalist representations of Islamic irrationality:

It is his turbaned and robed blindness that is immediately familiar. He is more recognizable than the other fourteen accused co-conspirators because he is bedecked with the attributes of his frightening otherness, the cruel Ottoman. The turban and the robe of that other fanatic, nemesis of the west, the Ayatollah Khomeini. Sheik Rahman is frequently described as blind, self-exiled and smiling. These are the further attributes of his fanaticism. The blindness of terrorist violence is visibly conveyed. . . . The Sheik's capacity to continue smiling, in the face of the horrors of which he is accused, suggests that he is "crazy" and/or morally degenerate, and therefore, dangerous.¹⁹

With its contradictory descriptions of Abu Zubaydah's strength and weakness, the memo launches a set of psychological arguments that can only be resolved by the hybrid figure of the monster-terrorist. Abu Zubaydah is at once vulnerable due to his composure; calculating in his responses to U.S. authorities yet blind in his faith; irrationally entomophobic yet rationally able to both understand that he is not in physical danger and to justify his disclosure of information to U.S. authorities.

The Insect and the Affective Economy of Security

The sting of the native quarter, of breeding swarms . . . those hysterical masses, those faces bereft of humanity, those distended bodies which are like nothing on earth, that mob without beginning or end, those children who seem to belong to nobody, that laziness stretched out in the sun.

—Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*

What, then, is the particular efficacy of the insect in the scene of torture? CIA manuals present no discussion of the uses of insects or other animals in coercive interrogation, and the description of the insect confinement technique in the Bybee memo is partially redacted. One public allegation by Majid Khan suggests the torture, using ants, of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed's young children in an attempt to locate him before his arrest in Pakistan.²⁰ A former guard at Abu Ghraib, herself convicted of prisoner abuse, has also described finding a young prisoner screaming in the dark, swarmed by ants.²¹

In the public discourse on the war on terror, the insect works as a

security technology precisely because of its mobilization of fear and hope within a post-9/11 biopolitical formation. In her article “Affective Economies,” Sara Ahmed describes the process of racialization in terms of the consolidation of affective capital at the site of particular marked bodies. In Ahmed’s examination of public discourse on immigration, bodies move through a field of affective relations in which they are relationally “stuck” with specified affects. “Fear works to restrict some bodies through the movement or expansion of others,” writes Ahmed.²² Public discourse on the figure of the Muslim monster-terrorist similarly works to mark and regulate particular types of bodies and social networks as agents of fear, recalling Frantz Fanon’s description of a colonial racial fear that conceives of the colonized using insect metaphors of swarming, alien, stinging bodies.²³ In this case, racial power traffics in both images of the “blind” terrorist-monster and the purportedly hyperorganized, antlike monster-terrorist organization that hides from plain sight until it swarms.²⁴ Although racial figures like the monster-terrorist are often grasped in their singularity, the racialization of the brown-Muslim multitude—the terrorist “network,” the “underground organization,” the mujahedin “brotherhood,” the warriors “hidden in caves”—justifies the targeting of the purported terror-inducing individual *as well as his animalized social networks*.²⁵ Following the double structure of metaphoric relations of insects to the terrorist psyche, the insect is both the weapon against an enemy and a description of that animalized enemy; the monster-terrorist is an insect that must be squashed, paradoxically by the threat of insectivity to his masculine self-image.

This dual process of torture-as-animalization begins in detention with the regulation of the targeted prisoner, whose pain and fear are subsequently advertised to broader social networks. In the case of caterpillar confinement, the detainee is deprived of sensation, primarily visual sensation.²⁶ The confinement boxes are described as small enough to just allow the detainee to stand (the eighteen-hour box) or sit (the two-hour box) without contorting his body. Abu Zubaydah, already figured as spiritually “blind,” is unlikely to see either his own body or the body of the insect. Next, the caterpillar enters, creating a space of intimacy between human and insect. In opposition to the highly composed terrorist masculinity described in the psychological profile, Abu Zubaydah will be subjected to an unpredictable scenario of bestial touch, heightened by the assertion of the stinging nature of the insect. Within the logics of military torture, a description of such a scene of unpredictable bestial intimacy inevitably treads the borders of the erotic and the phobic. The caterpillar, with no hum of wings, no piercing sting—only the tickle of innumerable legs; the soft brush of fuzzy sensory hairs; the probing of tentacles; and perhaps a secretion, occasionally toxic—is meant to orient Abu Zubaydah’s body, to materialize his body as uncomposed, flinching against the horizon of

bestiality. The insect's performance in the scene of torture consists in the disruption of the routine unfolding of time and space as experienced in detention, the composure of the sexual self, and the integrity and independence of a normative able body.

To describe insect torture in this way as an affective weapon works against the state understanding of torture as a mechanism for the production of truth. The state rationale is based on an understanding that sophisticated psychological coercion is especially effective in producing a truth-speaking subject. Jefferey A. Lockwood argues that the Bybee memo's proposal of insect torture is unique in that it "appears to be the first case in which insects would have been used to inflict psychological terror" as opposed to physical torture.²⁷ Yet such Cartesian distinctions between physical and psychic torture also lie at the heart of the American exceptionalist construction of liberal state violence as a clean and effective form of coercion, leaving no marks on the body. Whereas the memo's discussion of physical suffering quickly dismisses the possibility of physical torture in this instance, given the "harmless" nature of the caterpillar, its definition of psychological torture turns on whether a "reasonable" observer could interpret the insect's presence as a threat of severe harm or death, whether this threat would actually constitute long-term mental harm, and whether such harm would radically affect the senses or personality. Such parsing strategies have been historically fruitful in limiting protections against "cruel and unusual" punishment, focusing on specific parts of the punishment process rather than viewing it holistically.²⁸ Minimizing the violence of fear, stress, or anxiety (distinguished from the privileged category of physical pain), the state definition of "mental suffering" returns to severe physical suffering or a threat of it, or otherwise a profound disruption of the senses or personality—profound mental debility.²⁹ The supposedly minor responses of fear, stress, and anxiety are described as "weakening" detainees, breaking their resistance to interrogation and aligning them with truth.

This conception of psychic violence as a legal, clean, and effective form of coercion has historical roots in the CIA's cold war interrogation practices. According to the CIA's handbooks, the psyche is situated on a continuum between instinct and civilization. Under the duress of coercive interrogation practices, the truth of the unconscious may be projected outward: "A person cut off from external stimuli turns his awareness inward, upon himself, and then projects the contents of his own unconscious outwards, so that he endows his faceless environment with his own attributes, fears, and forgotten memories."³⁰ *Regression* implies "a loss of autonomy, a reversion to an earlier behavior level," or, more bluntly, a loss of civilization and humanity: "The result of external pressures of sufficient intensity is the loss of those defenses most recently acquired by civilized man: ' . . . the

capacity to carry out the highest creative activities, to meet new, challenging, and complex situations, to deal with trying interpersonal relations, and to cope with repeated frustrations.’”³¹ Regression (as primitivization) is accomplished through “the three Ds” (debility, dependency, and dread), which break down resistance to the interrogator.³²

A rich line of feminist criticism disputes this logic that unites torture and truth. Elaine Scarry, for one, insightfully describes torture as the “conversion of real pain into the fiction of power.” For Scarry, the speech of the tortured is important more in form than in content. The tortured’s dependency and subjection to speech (“cooperation”) is the aim of torture, rather than “intelligence.” Scarry is less convincing when describing pain as both “real” and universal, existing in an “inexpressible” realm that reduces the subject of pain to a prelinguistic condition. For Scarry, torture “announces its own nature as the undoing of civilization.”³³ By retaining a distinction between physical and psychological pain, Scarry, like Lockwood, comes dangerously close to the reasoning of military psychology, which retains its Cartesian distinctions in order to conceal the effects of power. Still, Scarry’s description of torture as a fiction of power does help to describe a certain affective economy through which torture proceeds. Contemporary torture, as Page duBois reminds us, aims for the production of spectacle rather than truth. Unlike the classical Greek conception of torture, which figured the tortured slave as the most compelling source of truth, contemporary torture is linked to the state of siege, extreme forms of necropower, and the spectacle of punishment aimed at communities tied to the tortured. For duBois, modern political torture consists in the “domination of an unpalatable truth” of dissent rather than the collection of truths by the state.³⁴ This domination is effected by the advertisement of the totalizing power of the state over the detainee’s body. Insect confinement is only one of many torture techniques, many of which are not so “soft.” Waterboarding, cramped confinement, slapping, stress positions, nudity, food deprivation, sleep deprivation, sensory deprivation, and temperature controls have been used on Abu Zubaydah, while attack dogs, electrocution, restraints, beatings, chemical attacks, sodomy, and forced genital touching are other alleged tactics from CIA prisons.

If the understandings of torture as spectacle and as affective weapon move against rhetorically aligning torture with truth, they also open the question of the performative aspects of torture and torture discourse, especially as torture memos are written with their eventual publicization in mind. While the publicization of torture risks threatening the state’s authority in continued coercive treatment of prisoners, it also furthers the goal of producing a spectacle of its violence against bodies materialized as the enemy. Having thoroughly associated Abu Zubaydah with the figure of the monster-terrorist—the source of fear—the imperial state’s justification

for torture can give the nation the assurance that fear will be redistributed to the detainee and his broader networks. This is the importance of Abu Zubaydah's purported entomophobia. The novel logic of the Bybee memo as compared to previous CIA renderings of confinement is to make fear (rather than stress or other responses) the central technique of psychological regression. It counters like with like, terror with terror, fear with fear itself, rather than deploying other punishments. In this sense the management of affective economy carries a fantasy of justice. This dovetails with the work of mourning the nation after 9/11 (which in the logic of security must be made perpetual, melancholic); mourning thus becomes the work of collecting hope and fellowship to the nation while simultaneously returning fear to sender. Of the many Web sites mourning the 9/11 attacks, Jim R. Long's online collection of melancholic images is useful in articulating the slippery relation between mourning, fear, love, and hate. Collages of a weeping bald eagle mourning the site of the twin towers, interspersed with battle images of the eagle targeting the monster-terrorist bin Laden, eerily demonstrate this affective conjunction.³⁵

The security apparatus uses the insect to manage the distribution of fear both at the site of the tortured body and in a broader public culture of security. In his recently published lectures, Michel Foucault describes a political-economic rhetoric of securitization that invests the liberal subject with a responsibility of capitalist economic activity.³⁶ In the context of the war on terror, this would require that citizens go about their daily business, travel, and spend—or else succumb to fear and lose their way of living. Such acts—which serve as imperial governmentality's regulation of the domestic population—must be iterated perpetually. Securitization, in its persistent deferral of future harm, transforms the balance of political economy into an unending battle against an object—the terrorist as “agent of extreme fear.”³⁷ The insect, then, both redistributes the fear accruing to the image of terrorism (a fantasy of returning terror to its purported sources, fleshed out through racial codes) and works to securitize a neo-liberal way of life, described in a rhetoric of liberal civilizationism. The detainee will be punished, but could have fared worse. As Talal Asad puts it, the supposed legitimacy of state violence as opposed to violence by nonstate actors derives from “a combination of cruelty and compassion that sophisticated social institutions enable and encourage.”³⁸

Of course, there are other layers to the affective economy here, layers that complicate the possibility that the insect will be properly received by the securitizing nation. Torture was initially kept an open secret, in which the knowledge of state torture was disseminated, but the specific techniques of torture—including the insect body—were kept secret. If torture functions as spectacle, advertising state power via intimate, public, semipublic, and private connectivities, then the event of the liberal-democratic state's

confession of “abuse”—the public release of the torture image, video, or memo—is a biopolitical moment that the state will police with great care. The Bush administration’s very public debate about torture advertised its existence, but the particular images of torture were often closely guarded. Thus an event like the unauthorized publication of Abu Ghraib images or torture memos at once extends state power and opens an excess of signification that could threaten it.

On one hand, the neoliberal state’s media presence at the virtual confessional reproduces the scene of necropower. Media and war technologies are linked in making the world a “target”; visualizing the tortured in one sense proceeds directly as necropower, where “politics is therefore death that leads a human life.”³⁹ The technofanaticism of empire—its own sort of “blind faith,” visualized as shock and awe—is continuous with the visual media technologies that disseminate the spectacle of torture. A number of critics have observed the racial power inherent in the circulation of the images and descriptions of violence at Abu Ghraib.⁴⁰ These critics often relate the publicization of U.S. torture to the dual histories of lynching postcards, which specularized community endorsement of racial terror, and orientalism, which has produced Muslim, Arab, and South Asian men as improperly masculine others, simultaneously weak and menacing. “Torture reduces the particularity of difference, of otherness, to the fact of being tortured.”⁴¹ Publics eagerly consume torture spectacles, arguably at the expense of the political visibility of ongoing mass violence (such as the Obama-Zardari colonization of northwestern Pakistan, mass imprisonment, violence against women in military and prison operations, aerial bombing, indefinite detention, etc.).

Yet on the other hand, the specifically animalizing, eroticized, and debilitating scene of torture disrupts the circulation of hope and fellowship that binds bodies to institutions such as the family and that structure normative bodily and sexual scripts. This was quickly confirmed by the commonplace media comparison of Abu Zubaydah’s proposed caterpillar torture to the rat torture of the character Winston by the totalitarian government depicted in George Orwell’s novel *1984*. Also, the images of Abu Ghraib notably united a racialized discourse on sexual transgression (presuming the extreme phobias of homosexuality, female domination, and anal penetration among Muslim men) with the imagery of dog training and animal electrocution, both of which recall a material unconscious of species violence underlying contemporary torture methods. The two key images—one of Lynndie England holding a leash wrung around a detainee’s neck, and the other, the “Vietnam,” a hooded man standing, christlike, with electrodes suspending wires from his body—work to both reify the perverse masculinity of the terrorist-monster and quarantine his threat.⁴² At the same time, terror spectacles like the Abu Ghraib images

and the torture memos allow the state to produce a simultaneous image of whiteness that transfers responsibility from the state to individuals, stressing the “exceptional” errors of “bad” lawyers or military police.

On the Optics and Optimism of Posthuman Embodiment

Bodies as well as objects take shape through being oriented toward each other, as an orientation that may be experienced as the cohabitation or sharing of space.

—Sara Ahmed, “Orientations: Toward a Queer Phenomenology”

The fact that modern state torture is organized around the suppression of dissent poses problems for political mobilization against torture, either from within the global supermax prison industry or in public campaigns to make torture visible.⁴³ First, torture practices often become public only after the torture has been committed. Second, when torture becomes public, it may accomplish the very act it intended—terrorizing an extended community. Pain is not an internal phenomenon exploited by the torturer—it circulates within and between bodies as it helps structure collective identity. If responding to torture requires “learning to hear torture victims and read their bodies,” then “creating common political space” might require orienting bodies differently in space and time, recouping modalities of experience that are written out of the dominant narratives of the political.⁴⁴ Thus, while the spectacle of caterpillar torture works by violating normative organizations of space and embodiment, everyday practices through which subjects and bodies relate across such architectures of limitation may prove useful for contesting the Cartesian logics that give torture its affective power.

In her attempt to articulate the political out of the perspectives of Filipina workers, artists, and revolutionaries, Neferti Tadiar writes that subaltern logics of labor and time within neoliberal capitalism tend to “fall away” from the purview of both mainstream and Left accounts of the global.⁴⁵ In this final section, I trace similarly subsumed logics of space, connectivity, and sensation that may help articulate alternative formulations of community, knowledge, and embodiment. I draw here from two seemingly unrelated domains of cultural production—prison writing and writings on animal embodiment in the biological sciences and posthumanist theory. Each of these domains offers anti-Cartesian renderings of embodiment and affect that challenge the dominant optics of the political. While these two domains of writing must be treated as distinct, they suggest that the intimacies forged through shared spaces of violence may unfold in ways other than those anticipated by the dominant logics of biopolitical regulation. These points of departure will also help

us return to the ways in which transpecies embodiments can help us read power and violence.

I turn first to works of poetry that, in translation into English, have recently been advertised as the “voice” of Guantánamo detainees like Abu Zubaydah. I cannot address this problematic formulation in depth here.⁴⁶ My point in referencing the poems is to suggest secondary affect-economies that take shape in the space of confinement, materializing bodies in geographically and historically specific ways unexpected by the logic of torture. Such logics remain unknowable to theory when it analyzes violence only on a macropolitical scale. Yet the Defense Department confirms the power of such sites of intimacy, claiming that “poetry . . . presents a special risk, and DoD standards are not to approve the release of any poetry [from Guantánamo] in its original form or language.”⁴⁷

The cup poem is an example of how alternate embodiments may take shape in spaces of confinement. Numerous poems composed in Arabic and Pashto were circulated on styrofoam cups, secretly, at Guantánamo. The cup, as a material object that interacts with the body, fissures space and time within detention, offering a site of alternative embodied connectivity. Cup poetry is brief and, made for quick dissemination, can poignantly capture the sensory experience and forms of mourning that shape bodies within detention. A cup poem by Sheikh Abdurraheem Muslim Dost, a religious scholar and writer formerly detained at Guantánamo and now held in Pakistan, registers connectivity out of loss, and out of particular sensory experience within the space of incarceration: “What kind of spring is this,/Where there are no flowers and/The air is filled with a miserable smell?”⁴⁸ This short cup poem displays a connectivity between inmates who experience loss of visual pleasure and who, though they may not enter each other’s visual fields, are linked by smells, touch, and the possibility of communication despite the regulations of confinement.

Two cup poems as well as twenty other poems were translated, declassified, and published in the 2007 collection *Poems from Guantánamo: The Detainees Speak*. Of the many themes raised in these writings, I want to focus on two: first, the connectivities that, though enabling torture to constitute its objects, also form the basis of alternative readings of power; and second, the displacement of the visual as the privileged sensory field of the political. Taken together, these themes are useful in rethinking Abu Zubaydah’s torture, particularly as they displace the racialized spectacles through which the prisoner is made into the monster-terrorist and through which torture gains its affective power. I am most interested in poems that lay bare the body in the face of violence and darkness, at times figuring collectivity via smell, sound, and the imagined touch of persons, spirits, and objects outside the space of confinement. For example, Saudi

detainee Abdulaziz's poem, which sacrificially embraces darkness, envisions freedom via the dissolution of materiality itself. The "fading away" of the world and the rise of a spiritual community transgress the borders of confinement:

O prison darkness, pitch your tent.
We love the darkness.
For after the dark hours of the night,
Pride's dawn will rise.
Let the world, with all its bliss, fade away—
So long as we find favor with God. . . .
Even though the bands tighten and seem unbreakable,
They will shatter. . . .
O crisis, intensify!
The morning is about to break forth.⁴⁹

In contrast to Abdulaziz's writing, such sacrificial discourse can, at times, work within the visual paradigm, laying forth the bare life of the tortured body in a spectacle intended to challenge imperial power. Jumal al-Dossari, a Bahrainian detainee who survived several suicide attempts at Guantánamo, writes, "Take my blood/Take my death shroud and/The remnants of my body./Take photographs of my corpse at the grave, lonely./Send them to the world. . . ."⁵⁰ Yet in other poems, that which remains *invisible*, the spiritual links of shared suffering, is the site of redemptive power. In "Lions in the Cage," Ustad Badruzzaman Badr, brother of Dost and a Pashtun nationalist, portrays the detainees' "patience" as well as the "whirlpool of tears" as "power" of opposition:

The Chief of the White Palace,
Like other sinful chiefs,
Cannot see our patience.
The whirlpool of our tears
Is moving fast towards him.
No one can endure the power of this flood.⁵¹

There is a reversal of the rhetoric of blind faith, making the U.S. president blind to the unfolding of resistance; yet the futures of the tortured body are not returned to the visual field.

While these poems easily lend to a historicist reading linking the suffering depicted in prison writing and poetry to the production of various nationalisms and pan-Islamic consciousness,⁵² the poems from Guantánamo also display other transnational linkages, most notably citing the detainees' Caribbean context and histories of migration. British-Zambian detainee Martin Mubanga's rap, "Terrorist 2003," situates the war on terror within a broader cartography of imperial violence, using Caribbean-

inflected English to link crackdowns in Palestine and the Rodney King uprising in Los Angeles.⁵³ Ibrahim al-Rubaish's "Ode to the Sea" describes the Caribbean Sea as "taunting" the detainee, refusing to acknowledge the marking of the Cuban landscape by histories of colonial violence.⁵⁴

The Guantánamo poems, then, offer diverse bases for rethinking the political around embodied and imagined connectivities that move away from the visual spectacles of torture, the imagery of caterpillars and waterboards, the limited architectures of confinement and deprivation. "Architecture is not justice," writes another detainee poet, Sami al-Haj, a journalist from Sudan.⁵⁵ Reading the tortured body requires interacting with it on multiple sensory and affective registers, understanding how it exceeds the prison in colonized Cuban space, the walls and ocean borders of which are traversed in the subsumed economies of affect that poetry registers.⁵⁶

The power of the sacrificial body to create the basis of transnational connectivities stands in stark contrast to the gothic scene of caterpillar torture, in which the supposed flexibility of the body actually legitimates violence in an attempt to access the detainee's mind. To mitigate the appearance of any bodily damage that might inhere from stress positions or confinement, the Bybee memo claims, "Zubaydah remains quite flexible, which would substantially reduce any pain associated with being placed in the box."⁵⁷ Flexibility, an essential neoliberal concept, does for the body here what it elsewhere does for capital accumulation and sovereignty—it disperses force across lines of difference, generally to disperse risk to state and capital formations. It is notable that elsewhere in the security apparatus, the caterpillar is being drawn into the logics of biopower to offer a different kind of flexibility. Bioengineers at Tufts University have been producing simulated caterpillars in the hope that an understanding of caterpillars' complex musculature and flexible motion—their "soft bodies" which lack joints and bones for leverage—can be used for, among other things, military applications (search and rescue, explosive identification, etc.).⁵⁸ A new trend in technoscience, "biomimicry," attempts to learn from the embodied structures of animals in order to apply "natural" solutions to physical problems within materials engineering, robotics, and other fields. This raises a number of questions: If caterpillar bodies can be imagined and integrated into security discourse in different operational contexts, in one case a blunt instrument of torture and in another a highly flexible, modern, and reproducible body, what further biopolitical logics might we draw from a discussion of Abu Zubaydah and the caterpillar? And how might we understand a certain fascination with the insect among posthumanist theorists?

The construction of certain types of animal life (especially insects and invertebrate sea life) as alien, standing outside our normative concep-

tions of space, sensation, and communicability, makes animal bodies easy figures both for modes of thought that break out of humanist moorings and as guides for novel understandings of embodiment. Such ways of thinking are common in both the contemporary applied biological sciences and posthumanist theory. In science, as Karen Barad recounts, there is a broad capital and intellectual investment in biomimicry, which increasingly sees military, agricultural, and medical applications of animal physiologies. The brittlestar, a sea animal whose entire skeleton forms a compound eye, is an example in which animal physiology is becoming a model for technological development (in this case, new visual technologies for producing a super-panoptic 360-degree image).⁵⁹ Posthumanist theory also shares this fascination with alterity. Steven Shaviro argues that “insects are radically ahead of humans” in terms of “radical becomings,” the spontaneous mutations that preclude the hierarchies configured around biological permanence and language.⁶⁰ In their discussion of “becoming-animal,” Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari recognize the violence of incorporating animals into “family institutions, State apparatuses, war machines, etc.”⁶¹ but also ecstatically idealize “becoming-animal,” which consists in a metaphor of social organization and nonsexual kinship in the figures of the wolf pack, the insect swarm, and the virus. Deleuze and Guattari ultimately evacuate the lived intimacies of species and thus the affective constitution of transpecies formations. Instead, they claim, “the insect is closer, better able to make audible the truth that all becomings are molecular.”⁶²

The dominant metaphors of insectivity remain racialized and integral to the psychological discourse on torture. Yet there may be other models for understanding embodiment in violent architectures of space such as torture, especially if we think the imagined scene of the detainee and the caterpillar with the body of a “real” caterpillar, one whose materiality might also pose some futures for the political.⁶³ In terms outlined by Henri Bergson in *Creative Evolution*, transpecies affect-economies can move outside the confines of consciousness, rationality, and speech. In contrast to the human economies of knowledge, Bergson identifies *sympathy* (in which an affective relation across bodies precedes speech) as an alternative form of knowing. Bergson contrasts the entomologist’s view of the caterpillar with that of the insect’s predator, the *Ammophila* wasp, who displays a sympathetic becoming with the caterpillar in the process of paralyzing it and embedding its larvae in the caterpillar body for nourishment. For Bergson, while the entomologist’s knowledge of the caterpillar is based on a self-aware, disengaged perception of the body of the other, the wasp attains embodied knowledge of the exact site of the caterpillar’s vulnerability through an act of becoming with the caterpillar. Bergson describes the transpecies becoming of the wasp and the caterpillar as such:

Suppose a *sympathy* . . . between the *Ammophila* and its victim, which teaches it from within . . . concerning the vulnerability of the caterpillar. This feeling of vulnerability may owe nothing to outward perception but result from the mere presence together of the *Ammophila* and the caterpillar, considered no longer as two organisms, but as two activities. It would express, in concrete form, the *relation* of one to another.⁶⁴

In conjuring Bergson's metaphor of sympathy, I do not intend to figure either the caterpillar or the detainee as the penetrated "victim" who teaches the other through suffering. Instead, I hope to make a case for embodied connectivities or sympathies permeating the architectures of contemporary necropower, crossing the boundaries of the prison and other spaces of confinement (the school, the slaughterhouse, the workspace, etc.). These connectivities represent the contradictions of the field of biopolitics. The challenge in thinking the dialectics of biopower and necropower together is to uncover some of the translocal connectivities from which we might respond to geographies of violence, bearing in mind that violences including torture are deeply linked to life-optimizing processes elsewhere in a biopolitical formation. This is why I contrast the caterpillar of the confinement box with that of the laboratory, the debilitated detainee of the CIA black site with the detainee poet who cannot see his or her prison-mate but can reach across bodies via the touch of the cup. Reading the tortured body requires a broader cartography of governmentality. Populations, human and animal, are certainly materialized in relations of enmity but are also subjected to reorientation and repopulation along other lines; it is the task of political mobilization to trace subsumed models of politics that might cross increasingly segmented biopolitical fields.

In closing, I offer some final words on social theory in light of the unexpected linkages between species, disability, race, and sexuality that the Bybee memo opens. As I have said, much posthumanist discourse continues to invest the breakdown of species "boundaries" with a certain idealism. In *When Species Meet*, Donna J. Haraway suggests a new ethico-politics oriented around the figure of companion species, tracing the practices of "becoming worldly" through the transspecific formations that constitute everyday life and labor. Species, for Haraway, must be unmoored from the division of life via taxonomic systems (a discursive process I call *speciation*), incorporating the "crowd" of beings—including various categories of humans—who traverse the segmentations of life into biologically reproducing communities.⁶⁵ While this formulation is essential for reconceptualizing bodies around the various "species" of materiality that constitute them, the idealism of this queering of the category *species* is also anticipated by the very logics of biopower, the capital and state

formations that increasingly express a political orientation toward the posthuman.⁶⁶ Despite the importance of posthumanist discourse in helping to articulate the emergence of more-than-human governmentalities, one impetus of this article is a recognition of the subtle ways in which posthumanism—and a certain animal activist tendency in “animal studies” more specifically—reinforces neoliberal and neocolonial trajectories of contemporary biopolitical formations. In a still-common gesture of recognizing necropower over animal life, a line of animal studies scholarship displays idealism about the critical act of deconstructing the “Western” (post)Enlightenment division of human and animal. In such works, all variants of biopolitical targeting, from racism to sexism to colonization, have been ahistorically and Eurocentrically distilled as effects of speciation. These linkings of species power to other forms of social power usually fail to recognize the violence of incorporation, the subjection inherent in drawing animality into the horizon of biopower; furthermore, they conflate humanism and anthropocentrism, arresting difference within the category of the human in order to rhetorically produce an excluded animal. This also offers little attention to the processes of speciation through which these bodies are discursively materialized. (It is no surprise that companion animals, farmed animals, and charismatic “wildlife” species—physiologically close enough to humans for us to imagine certain interests—appear most often in animal studies.)

However, tracing the imbrication of ostensibly nonhuman life into contemporary biopolitical circuits—including their deployment in the war on terror—does require theorizing some of the basic ways in which species—as both material assemblages and representational figures—are brought into discourse. With Haraway’s writing as a notable exception, it is commonplace for the key texts being canonized as the theoretical lineage of animal studies in the United States to construct human discrimination against animals as the discursive basis of racism. While Nicole Shukin’s brilliant book *Animal Capital* has opened important conversations regarding the cultural politics of animal symbolization within neoliberal capitalism, it—as well as key texts by Cary Wolfe, Steven Best, and Robert Goodin, Carole Pateman, and Roy Pateman—figure racism as an instance of speciesism, in the process arguing that racial violence is only a small subset of the unimaginable scale of violence (mainly against animals) unleashed by the discourse of species.⁶⁷ This argument relies on a mathematical accounting of death, an ahistorical and Eurocentric assimilation of racial discourse into species discourse, and a disinterest in the geographies by which humans are positioned differentially in relation to other species.⁶⁸ This last point is especially important given the history of humane activists’ representation of the colonial civilizing mission as aiding white men to save animals from brown men.⁶⁹

Yet if we observe a politics in which limited personhood for non-human animals emerges geographically alongside human populations subjected to death, and in which the capitalist appropriation of nonhuman species accelerates the processes of mass coercion and killing, how can we theorize the coproduction of species and other logics of difference within imperial governmentality? I have argued that it is necessary to take into account the complex materialization and segmentation of bodies in relation to spaces and institutions. In order to do the work of reading power and violence as they materialize specific bodily orientations and assemblages (and thus produce the field of biopolitics), it is necessary to attend to the subsumed logics that constitute novel, multispecies counterpublics in their moment of subjection. This is true even when such counterpublics fail to occupy a single space or discourse, but offer new logics of embodiment from their segmented positions in the field of biopolitics.

Notes

Thanks to Julie Livingston, Jasbir Puar, and the *Social Text* collective for helpful revision suggestions. Special thanks to Page duBois, whose own writing on torture inspired this piece.

1. Jay Bybee, "Memorandum for John Rizzo, Acting General Counsel of the Central Intelligence Agency," U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Legal Counsel, 1 August 2002, 1, www.aclu.org/safefree/general/olc_memos.html. This is sometimes described as "the second Bybee memo" and should be distinguished from the 1 August 2002 interrogation opinion addressed to Attorney General Alberto Gonzales and signed by Bybee.

2. Brian Ross and Richard Esposito, "Sources Tell ABC News Top Al Qaeda Figures Held in Secret CIA Prisons," ABC News, 5 December 2005, <http://abcnews.go.com/WNT/Investigation/story?id=1375123>; Jason Burke, "Secret World of U.S. Jails," *Guardian*, 13 June 2004, www.guardian.co.uk/world/2004/jun/13/usa.terrorism.

3. Bybee, "Memorandum for John Rizzo," 2.

4. *Ibid.*, 3.

5. Steven Bradbury, "Memorandum to John Rizzo, Senior Deputy General Counsel, Central Intelligence Agency," U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Legal Counsel, 10 May 2005, 9n13, <http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-files/Guardian/documents/2009/05/05/bushmemos.pdf>.

6. International Committee of the Red Cross, "ICRC Report on the Treatment of Fourteen 'High Value Detainees' in CIA Custody," February 2007, www.globalsecurity.org/intell/library/reports/2007/icrc-report_hvd-cia-custody-2007.htm.

7. U.S. Department of Defense, "Verbatim Transcript of Combatant Status Review Tribunal Hearing for ISN 10016," 27 March 2007, 22, www.aclu.org/pdfs/safefree/csrt_abuzubaydah.pdf. David Eng argues for the necessity of moving beyond discourses that "uncritically subsume" the complexity of social differences "into the framework of sexual difference." David Eng, *Racial Castration: Managing Masculinity in Asian America* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), 5. See also the critique of sexual-exceptionalist responses to torture in Jasbir Puar, *Terrorist*

Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), chap. 2.

8. See Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998); Agamben, *State of Exception*, trans. Kevin Attell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); Roberto Esposito, *Bios*, trans. Timothy Campbell (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008); Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics," *Public Culture* 15 (2003): 11–40. Alternatively, on the flexible neoliberal exercise of biopower, see Aihwa Ong, *Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006).

9. Denise Ferreira da Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007). Silva argues that post-Enlightenment racial formations have often presupposed the particular affectability of racial subalterns.

10. Peter Finn and Joby Warrick, "Detainee's Harsh Treatment Foiled No Plots," *Washington Post*, 29 March 2009.

11. Bybee, "Memorandum for John Rizzo," 8.

12. *Jihad* here stands as a racialized placeholder for *war*. On the concept of jihad, including its shifting relationships to law, identity, and war, see Talal Asad, *On Suicide Bombing* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), chap. 1.

13. Bybee, "Memorandum for John Rizzo," 7.

14. *Ibid.*, 8.

15. Charlotte Sleight, "Inside Out: The Unsettling Nature of Insects," in *Insect Poetics*, ed. Eric C. Brown (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 281–97. See also Carl Jung, *On the Nature of the Psyche* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969); Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents* (New York: Norton, 1962).

16. Jasbir K. Puar and Amit S. Rai, "Monster, Terrorist, Fag: The War on Terrorism and the Production of Docile Patriots," *Social Text*, no. 72 (2002): 117–48. Puar and Rai's analysis follows related work by Ileana Porras on the popular figure of the terrorist as "foreign/barbaric/beast" in the 1990s. See Ileana Porras, "On Terrorism: Reflections on Violence and the Outlaw," in *After Identity: A Reader in Law and Culture*, ed. Dan Danielsen and Karen Engle (New York: Routledge, 1995), 294–313.

17. Bybee, "Memorandum for John Rizzo," 8.

18. *Ibid.*, 8–9.

19. Porras, "On Terrorism," 303.

20. Ali Khan, statement, U.S. Department of Defense, Combatant Status Review Tribunal, http://ccrjustice.org/files/Ali%20Khan_Father%20of%20Majid%20Khan_Statement%20from%20CSRT.pdf (accessed 14 May 2009).

21. The scene is described by Sabrina Harman in Errol Morris's documentary film, *Standard Operating Procedure* (2007).

22. Sara Ahmed, "Affective Economies," *Social Text*, no. 79 (2004): 127.

23. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove, 2004 [1963]), 7.

24. On the post-9/11 racialization of Islamic militancy and Arab, South Asian, and Muslim populations more generally, see Leti Volpp, "The Citizen and the Terrorist," *UCLA Law Review* 49 (2002): 1575–1600; Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*; Puar and Rai, "Monster, Terrorist, Fag"; Porras, "On Terrorism"; Ahmed, "Affective Economies"; and Muneer Ahmad, "Homeland Insecurities," *Social Text*, no. 72 (2002): 101–16.

25. See my discussion of animalization and racial form in Neel Ahuja, "Post-colonial Critique in a Multispecies World," *PMLA* 124 (2009): 557–58.
26. On the history of the CIA confinement box, see Darius Rejali, *Torture and Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 368–73.
27. Jefferey A. Lockwood, "The Scary Caterpillar," *New York Times*, 18 April 2009. See also Lockwood, *Six-Legged Soldiers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
28. Colin Dayan, *The Story of Cruel and Unusual* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007).
29. Bybee, "Memorandum for John Rizzo," 11–12.
30. *KUBARK Counterintelligence Interrogation Manual*, Central Intelligence Agency, 1963, www.kimsoft.com/2000/kub_ix.htm (accessed 27 May 2009).
31. *KUBARK Counterintelligence Interrogation Manual; Human Resource Exploitation Manual*, Central Intelligence Agency, 1983, National Security Archive, George Washington University, www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB122/#hre (accessed 25 July 2010).
32. On the history of the three Ds, see Michael Otterman, *American Torture: From the Cold War to Abu Ghraib and Beyond* (London: Pluto, 2007), 50–53.
33. Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 27, 38.
34. Page duBois, *Torture and Truth* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 149.
35. "September 11th Tribute," http://jimrlong.us/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=67&Itemid=60 (accessed 23 August 2010).
36. Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population* (Houndmills, UK: Palgrave, 2007); Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics* (Houndmills, UK: Palgrave, 2008).
37. Ahmed, "Affective Economies," 129, 128.
38. Asad, *On Suicide Bombing*, 3. See also Rejali, *Torture and Democracy*, chap. 20.
39. Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 14–15. On technological targeting, see Rey Chow, *The Age of the World Target* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), esp. 27–35.
40. See, as examples, Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*, chap. 2; Dora Apel, "Torture Culture: Lynching Photographs and the Images of Abu Ghraib," *Art Journal* 64 (2005): 88–100; Liz Philipose, "The Politics of Pain and the Uses of Torture," *Signs* 32 (2007): 1047–71; Hazel Carby, "A Strange and Bitter Crop: The Spectacle of Torture," *Open Democracy*, 11 October 2004, www.opendemocracy.net/media-abu_ghraib/article_2149.jsp.
41. duBois, *Torture and Truth*, 153.
42. On the homonormative discourse on sexual violation in the images of Abu Ghraib, see Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*, chap. 2. Spectacles of animal violence—particularly involving dogs and elephants—are key elements in the history of the torture and execution of humans in the Americas. See Sara Johnson, "'You Should Give Them Blacks to Eat': Waging Inter-American Wars of Torture and Terror," *American Quarterly* 61 (2009): 65–92; Miguel León-Portillo, *Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico* (Boston: Beacon, 1962); Rejali, *Torture and Democracy*, chap. 6; Nicole Shukin, *Animal Capital: Rendering Life in Biopolitical Times* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 131–61; Michael Lundblad, "The Progressive Animal: Sex, Violence, and the Discourse of the American Jungle" (PhD diss., University of Virginia, 2006). Arguably, part of the affective power of the Lynndie England image inheres in the publicization of everyday sadism

with dogs as “the family pet.” See Marc Shell, “The Family Pet,” *Representations* 15 (1986): 121–53.

43. On the globalization of U.S. prison violence, see Avery Gordon, “Abu Ghraib: Imprisonment and the War on Terror,” *Race and Class* 48 (2006): 42–59; on the Du Boisian concept of “abolition democracy” as a response to prison-industrial violence, see Angela Davis, *Abolition Democracy: Beyond Prison, Torture, and Empire* (New York: Seven Stories, 2005).

44. Rejali, *Torture and Democracy*, 31.

45. Neferti Tadiar, *Things Fall Away: Philippine Historical Experience and the Makings of Globalization* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009). See also Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).

46. Mark Falkoff, ed., *Poems from Guantánamo: The Detainees Speak* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2007). While it is a useful suggestion that poetry, along with other forms of cultural production, may emerge as speech capable of challenging power, it is necessary to resist the temptation to universalize poetry’s affective power or to suggest that prisoners speak in a singular voice. Ariel Dorfman and United Kingdom poet laureate Andrew Motion, for example, interpret the Guantánamo writings as expressing universal human truths and emotions—a position that elides geographic and political specificities underlying these complex writings.

47. Leonard Doyle, “Inmates’ Words: The Poems of Guantánamo,” *Independent*, 21 June 2007, www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/06/21/2017.

48. Sheikh Abdurraheem Muslim Dost, “Cup Poem 1,” in Falkoff, *Poems from Guantánamo*, 35.

49. Abdulaziz, “O Prison Darkness,” in Falkoff, *Poems from Guantánamo*, 22.

50. Jumah al-Dossari, “Death Poem,” in Falkoff, *Poems from Guantánamo*, 32.

51. Ustad Badruzzaman Badr, “Lions in the Cage,” in Falkoff, *Poems from Guantánamo*, 28.

52. See Flagg Miller, “Forms of Suffering in Muslim Prison Poetry,” preface to Falkoff, *Poems from Guantánamo*, 7–18.

53. Martin Mubanga, “Terrorist 2003,” in Falkoff, *Poems from Guantánamo*, 56–57.

54. Ibrahim al-Rubaish, “Ode to the Sea,” in Falkoff, *Poems from Guantánamo*, 65–66.

55. Sami al-Haj, “Humiliated in the Shackles,” in Falkoff, *Poems from Guantánamo*, 42.

56. It is possible to view my focus on the poetics of an injured body—rather than moments of strength and resistance—as a concession of power to torture. However, Cartesian political logics of able-bodiedness make torture attractive to states and empires, allowing the spectacle of the tortured body and racialization of the “blind” terrorist-monster to unfold in the first place.

57. Bybee, “Memorandum for John Rizzo,” 10.

58. Michael Blanding, “Make Like a Caterpillar,” *Tufts Magazine*, Winter 2007, www.tufts.edu/alumni/magazine/winter2007/planet-tufts/caterpillar.html (accessed 30 May 2009).

59. Karen Barad, “Queer Causation and the Ethics of Mattering,” in *Queering the Non/Human*, ed. Myra Hird and Noreen Giffney (Hampshire, UK: Ashgate, 2008), 320–38.

60. Steven Shaviro, “Two Lessons from Burroughs,” in *Posthuman Bodies*, ed.

Judith Halberstam and Ira Livingston (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1995), 48.

61. Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 243.

62. *Ibid.*, 308. See N. Katherine Hayles's critique of *A Thousand Plateaus* in "Desiring Agency: Limiting Metaphors and Enabling Constraints in Dawkins and Deleuze/Guattari," *SubStance* 94/95 (2001): 144–59.

63. In a more fruitful metaphor referencing arthropods' compound eyes, Barad has proposed diffraction as a model for rethinking the political. Barad, "Queer Causation," 328. See also Donna J. Haraway, *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium. FemaleMan®_Meets_Oncomouse™: Feminism and Technoscience* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 16.

64. Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, trans. Arthur Mitchell (New York: Henry Holt, 1911), 173–74.

65. Donna J. Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

66. See Sarah Franklin, *Dolly Mixtures: The Remaking of Genealogy* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), which builds on Sara Ahmed's theory of orientation to describe the more-than-human futures of biopolitics. Ahmed's unfortunately deploys a specifically visual sense of orientation that I seek to disrupt (Sara Ahmed, "Orientations: Toward a Queer Phenomenology," *GLQ* 12 [2006]: 552).

67. Shukin, *Animal Capital*; Cary Wolfe, *Animal Rites* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003); Steven Best, "The Killing Fields of South Africa," *Fast Capitalism* 2 (2007), www.uta.edu/huma/agger/fastcapitalism/2_2/best.html; Robert Goodin, Carole Pateman, and Roy Pateman, "Simian Sovereignty," *Political Theory* 25 (1997): 821–49.

68. I am indebted to internal queer, race-critical, and feminist critiques of animal advocacy and am particularly influenced by the activists who met outside the unapologetically class-elitist, white-male-dominated conference "Animal Rights 2000" and subsequent AR conferences. While I am skeptical of the lifestyle and identity politics, as well as occasionally reductive "intersectional" approaches to difference within these spaces, they have originated the most sustained critique of the relation between sexuality, race, imperialism, and species to date, and they are often ignored within the scholarly field of animal studies.

69. See Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's shorthand for the British abolition of Indian *sati* as "white men saving brown women from brown men." Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 93.

