

# Collateral Afterworlds

## *An Introduction*

---

**Zoë H. Wool and Julie Livingston**

### A Litany

I remember him falling beside me,  
the dark stain already seeping across his parka hood.  
I remember screaming and running the half mile to our house.  
I remember hiding in my room.  
I remember that it was hard to breathe  
and that I kept the door shut in terror that someone would enter.  
I remember pressing my knuckles into my eyes.  
I remember looking out the window once  
at where an ambulance had backed up  
over the lawn to the front door.  
I remember someone hung from a tree near the barn  
the deer we'd killed just before I shot my brother.  
I remember toward evening someone came with soup.  
I slurped it down, unable to look up.  
In the bowl, among the vegetable chunks  
pale shapes of the alphabet bobbed at random  
or lay in the shallow spoon.  
—Gregory Orr

During a recent discussion of the defining ordeal of his life—the hunting accident in which at age twelve he unintentionally shot and killed his younger brother—the American poet Gregory Orr noted that trauma, violence, and death shatter meaning.<sup>1</sup> In the disorienting aftermath of this tragedy his parents each retreated into their own torment, as did Orr in his terror and alienation. Orr eventually found his way to poetry, to art, which have sustained but not, in his words, “healed” him. His poetry is a

struggle toward meaning but not a story of redemption, or a testimonial to the strength of family and community in the face of grievous harm.

This special issue of *Social Text* takes up the all too timely problem of meaninglessness, ethical disorientation, and the insufficiency of social life across contexts tied together by a pervasive sense of precarity and relentless uncertainty that puts meaning and the social itself in question. We suggest that such afterworlds are characteristic of a broader historical moment characterized by the proliferation of disasters that are lived as endemic conditions: mass extinctions,<sup>2</sup> infrastructural ruin,<sup>3</sup> national economic and geopolitical failure,<sup>4</sup> the legal and scientific sanctioning of state torture and murder,<sup>5</sup> unprecedented displacements of those seeking refuge from war, poverty, and the drying up or flooding out of life possibilities,<sup>6</sup> even the end of the hospitality of the very earth itself.<sup>7</sup> Activists, activist-scholars, and revolutionaries may seek to transform the disasters of the present into a rock-bottom or dialectical turning point from which a better world will rise. But our effort here is to convey something of the lives and worlds that endure out of the way of such redemptive possibilities—not beyond their reach but that roll along off to the side of efforts to stabilize, repair, and improve any collective lot in the name of the future. These are collateral afterworlds, marked especially by the temporality of a difficult present where life is unhinged from the pervasive hope for a better tomorrow.<sup>8</sup> In them, we seek to examine chronic, ongoing experiences in which sociality fails to redeem experiences of injury, vulnerability, and loss. In doing so we ask how and why people act toward themselves and others in contexts where such redemption is not recognized as immanent or expected as forthcoming. How do people take up or sidestep the problem of being, in contexts where they enjoy neither a progressive telos nor a radical political vision to orient their efforts and offer hope of meaningful futures? How do these efforts remind us (yet again) of the falsity of assuming any clear divide between the worlds of the living and the dead, the ontological status of being and not being?

Because of this very challenge to meaning that Orr describes, rupture, schism, and violence have long been a particular fascination for those of us with an interest of one sort or another in the warp and weft of a social fabric. The *social* in *Social Text* marks a major center of gravity in political and academic thought. The dual problems of accounting for social coherence and social change have animated many of the founding moments of social theory. And yet our current political moment, like the era that birthed academic social science, is simultaneously characterized by the paradoxical relationship of endemic suffering and narratives of social progress (albeit a progress now in jeopardy). As such, it calls for renewed attention to the problematic vicissitudes of social relationships, their uneven valuation, and their ethical entailments. How is it that a

mode of living, a social world, endures, accommodates, or is disintegrated by what appear to be crises? What if the very existence of that social world is toxic, threatening, such that isolation rather than proximity is sought? What happens to sociality as it unfolds in spaces of slow death?<sup>9</sup> What genres of entextualization are available to us as critical scholars seeking to get a hold on how these precarious worlds are lived and died? Orr stood as a child at the center of a terrible personal accident, a tragedy, a fluke powerful enough to unravel his world entirely. What about worlds in which such experiences of loss and alienation reflect the steady state of social and political life? In the US context, these questions are being powerfully taken up in thinking about the necropolitical disregard for black bodies and lives, as well as a host of brown, queer, and disabled ones newly targeted by the current regime.<sup>10</sup> Our inquiry dovetails with that one and also extends it geographically and analytically, exploring different national and biopolitical locations and raising questions about the implications for the concept of the social, questions that find a unique articulation when grounded ethnographically, as we describe below.

The essays collected here explore experiences of living in collateral afterworlds—sites of disaffection and stasis in the shadow of large-scale political and economic forces. From Inuit teenagers living in the suicidal detritus of settler colonialism in northern Canada (Stevenson) to Mexican drug addicts whose families had them kidnapped to closed, informal institutions as a form of treatment in Mexico City (Garcia), these are experiences that are poorly accounted for by a full faith in the hope of the social, and by “strong theories” of historical, social, or cultural change.<sup>11</sup> Through an ethnographic fidelity to the uneven textures of life, we question how to make sense of the social in the absence of a tightly focused vision of human life as properly and collectively sustained by agglutinating forces of community, kin, or other reliable and iterative superorganic social forms. It is not that social life is absent (as if it could ever be) but, rather, that the familiar alliance of sociality with social and biological life and of fragmentary solitude with social and biological death doesn’t quite fit.

Our return to the “everyday” of *Social Text* conjoins us as ethnographers and anthropologists to the journal’s interdisciplinary public,<sup>12</sup> and we write both within and at odds with anthropology as social science. Anthropology has a many-storied history—orientalist phantasmagoria, handmaiden of colonialism,<sup>13</sup> epistemologically, materially, and psychically invested in the “savage slot.”<sup>14</sup> Through careful, anxious, angry, and sometimes mournful reflection on this legacy, the discipline has become more attuned to the power and politics of knowledge, becoming a key voice in calls to provincialize and provisionalize knowledge.<sup>15</sup> Anthropology’s particular contributions to these discussions have emerged largely

from the centrality of ethnography to our discipline, a practice that comprises both dwelling and writing.<sup>16</sup>

And yet, the commitment to meaning, to a patterned coherence, continues to orient the discipline. What to do, then, with contexts of profound precarity, such as that Orr describes, in which the chronic instability of meaning is essential to the experience? Anthropology is currently grappling with the implications of this question for itself as a discipline.<sup>17</sup> But this is also where we think ethnography, unbound from strict limits of a disciplinary conversation, might have something more to offer. As a broad range of critical thinkers take up urgent questions about the necropolitics and debility currently proliferating across zones and conditions of dispossession, abandonment, and vulnerability,<sup>18</sup> we suggest ethnography—with its ability to sit amid the intimacies of the everyday—might be a valuable inflection point for critical analysis. The small acts and complex feelings that make up vulnerable or lonely lives are not merely building blocks of “gigantic histories,” be they of trauma or resilience.<sup>19</sup> We suggest that, even as everyday life registers the divisions of contemporary necropolitics, it would behoove us to insert some friction into any analytic desires to slot precarious life into grand narratives of history.

The forces of colonialism, capitalism, and their various complexes clearly condition the zones of life described in the contributions to this issue of *Social Text*. Yet by attending to the incommensurabilities and confounding potentialities of life and death within them, the authors collected here encounter ethical spaces of the ordinary that are *not* fully captured by grand narratives of social change and do not have a proper part within the division of the sensible that would make them known as good or bad for, or even part of, any larger social project at hand. The common senses and accompanying ethics discerned in these ethnographies are porous, open-ended, and decidedly small scale. In their varied forms, the contributions here endeavor to find ways not so much of writing worlds (as anthropology might have it)<sup>20</sup> but of conveying discordances, full of fragments, sounds, affects, images, gestures, ghosts, and memories, maintaining their ambivalence and interrogating their significance while keeping meaning undecided. The knowledge project of ethnography written in this mode is one that, like the particular forms of poetry we have included, push back on the foreclosure of meaning, insisting that “we *are* more than we *know*.”<sup>21</sup>

We see the concept of the social as the place where many disciplinary conversations and legacies converge. It is also the place where our attention, as anthropologists, to the politics of writing knowledge and, as ethnographers, to the difficulty of meaning in the midst of precarity might open up the most productive questions across a wider range of modes of inquiry. As Elizabeth Povinelli suggests in the afterword to this issue, one “reason to dwell critically in these spaces is simply to insist that their exis-

tence have a public. And this insistence that these spaces be able to claim space within the public of critical thought is indeed increasingly necessary given the forms of institutional erasure arising from the intersection of legal preemption and liberal ‘protection.’” Another is “to show that the condition of life within these spaces provides a critical perspective on the formation of late liberal power” and, we would add, the concept of the social that subtends other efforts at this same critical project.

In thinking through the widespread scholarly investment in the force of the social, we want to point out two things. First, while anthropologists, ethnographers, historians, and others attending to human experience under the sign of the social have long felt free to think past the holism of the foundational social sciences of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, we retain, perhaps of necessity, a legacy of something we might call social integralism. This term marks a loyalty to the integrity of the magic math that makes people (and their metaphysical companions—ancestral shades, nonhuman animals, things, plants, and other matter) add up, and add up to more than the sum of their parts; to a culture, a way of life, a historically situated social world. Boundaries might be contested, but as such they nonetheless mark worlds. Even within the Manchester school of social anthropology, which put internal conflict and renegotiation at the center of social life, there is the comforting promise of renewal and the reproduction of a dynamic and fraught but thereby cohesive world.<sup>22</sup> Social relations may break down or be systematically wanting (as went the perverse logic of the Moynihan Report), but they remain the fetish on which so many hopes are pinned. This social integralism is perhaps the most fundamental of Durkheimian gifts and not one that is easily refused. Yet we posit here that some modes of writing experience might better keep the question open.

Second, there is a certain alliance between biological life and social life inherent in this integralism, one that sees sociality as bound to biological life and social disintegration as bound to biological death, such that at the level of one particular life—the life of one person, say—social death and biological death run together. There is obviously both truth and significance to this. We ought not ignore or deny, for example, the many ways that colonial interventions into indigenous forms of sociality continually produce new forms of violence and death,<sup>23</sup> or the ways that late modern sovereignty hinges on the social interplay of death, killing, and terror,<sup>24</sup> or the ways that the social death of the prison, the asylum, and the nursing home produce biological vulnerability.

And yet, the insistence on the vitality of social life, and the binary opposition of life and death, suspends the substantial body of feminist, anthropological, and historical work that interrupts such a metaphysics, revealing this opposition to be but yet another of modernity’s folk idioms.

Indeed, ethnography, like that collected here, is increasingly sensitive to the ways that life and death, ruin and resurgence, comprise ever present “waxing and waning intensities.”<sup>25</sup> The fact is that many people live not in spaces of vitality or in the face of imminent death but in lasting zones of precariousness, temporalities of impasse or slow death,<sup>26</sup> or within the continuous present tense.<sup>27</sup> Even as experts and governors deploy machineries and logics of crisis on their behalf,<sup>28</sup> such conditions do not, indeed cannot, raise alarms beyond the sort that Orr evokes for the people existing in them. The blood seeps, the ambulance comes, someone brings a bowl of soup, a world is fragmented, and so it goes. Family, community, and kin are insufficient, absent, and at times deadly, yet nonetheless imperative. Our aim here is to work against the false dilemma that emerges in social theory between vital forms oriented toward the future and the unproductive dead ends of a toxic or melancholic present. That these are two sides of the same coin is precisely what we mean by collateral afterworlds. And so we seek to examine and to narrate how people go about acting in that in-between space, the place of circularity, of enforced idleness.

Let us be clear: it is not our aim to vacate the social as a meaningful category. Personhood is inherently relational; so too is ecology. Rather, we refuse to assume the durability or depth of a world that is shared, or the instability or thinness of a world that is not. Instead, we take these as ethnographic questions. We are interested in registering all sides of the contradictions of care, obligation, and investment that shape such worlds and their conjoined aspects of “for better” and “for worse.”

There are important echoes of queer theoretical debates about the antisocial thesis here, and also of queer efforts to make worlds amid an epidemic. Many Japanese, for example (see Allison’s contribution in this issue), are remaking their social attachments both in life and in death as marriage and workplace are eroding as the dominant social anchors. Broadening our scope, we might understand such queer interventions as part of a minor history of sociality and decay in social theory to which we seek to contribute the ethnographic texture of the contemporary.<sup>29</sup> To do this, we trace world-making attachments that ambivalently crisscross being with others, being alone, and being with death, as well as varied kinds of others to whom attachment may count as ethically significant, from dogs and maggots to intensely copresent strangers, dreamt familiars, and even corpses. As we trace these attachments through daily life across continents, classes, institutions, and genres, we hope to give an emergent sense of these afterworlds as ethical spaces, even as we see how the coordinates of the social that usually direct ethical investment are disoriented and unsteady.

Here, our experiments with and across genre are especially important. The contributions mix evocative ethnography, philosophy, and social

theory in diverse ways and bring film and other archives into the space of ethnography. In part, this is an attempt to convey the “difficulty of reality” that ethnography can render<sup>30</sup> and to refuse the convenient fiction that the meaning of worlds appears in coherent fashion even to its most astute observers. Ethnography has a long relationship with poetry, especially those forms that seek to register the disorientations of lived moments and disrupt our ability to diagnose a situation or to know precisely what has happened or what it means.<sup>31</sup> Such writing, ethnographic and poetic, attends to the dreamlike and the sensory activity through which the social world is lived while remaining anchored in experience. Particularly important to our effort to register the characteristics of such labor of life in the contemporary moment, this writing conveys a sense of the uncertain temporalities and patterns that characterize the unintended collateral effects created by liberal yearning toward the good life. These gaps themselves are constitutive of rather than contra the social fabric, equal to any seemingly reliable threads of kinship, affiliation, memory, or law that supposedly make it hold. The poems in this collection push us to reflect on those gaps in meaning, reflecting how history and biography intrude to make a moment feel both small and supervalent (Sharif, “Planetarium”; Joudah, “Thank You”) and questioning the sources of meaning that subtend authoritative archives of life and death (Joudah, “Footnotes”).

Ethnography, a mode of writing-dwelling that is in itself inherently, awkwardly social, is particularly well suited to such tasks, especially when it grounds itself in the haze, even the incomprehensibility, of experience.<sup>32</sup> In this mode, the political romance of human endurance and resilience falls away in the ambiguous texture of the collateral afterworld. Sticking close to experience helps slow the rush to transform endurance into transcendence, keeping hope in abeyance without insinuating the meaninglessness of worlds that are not suffused with it.

Such ethnography also allows the question of meaning to reappear in various guises, not least of which is a consistent attention to the forms of life and life-forms worthy of living at all. The people we encounter here do not find answers to that question but are feeling out ways of being and not being in relation to it: lonely citizens of a Japan whose ways of death have been undone by economic collapse (Allison); Mexican families whose forms of care uncannily redouble the violence of drug wars that have put them at risk (Garcia); Inuit generations whose accounts of time are full of ghost voices speaking into the aporia of colonial silence and death (Stevenson); Indian animal workers who minister to death-bound life (Dave); injured American soldiers whose precarious investment in the present is tethered to impossible fantasies of the future (Wool).

By positioning our collected ethnographies under the heading of

collateral afterworlds, we focus our attention on the fact that modes of sociality, forms of life, and ethical investments that have nothing to offer liberalism's continually failing vision of a better tomorrow are accorded little value by those who continue to romanticize social integralism. Their relegation—through targeted action or active neglect—to social and material spaces of worthlessness is justified in a language that speaks, full of hope, in the future anterior tense.<sup>33</sup> Historians have upended the telos of progress that authorizes such divisions, and we wish to pursue the implications of the metaphysics of a stalled present on sociality itself.<sup>34</sup> The ethnographic worlds we explore here are structured by such efforts to clean up the mess of liberal governance, culling forms of life (and death) that are perceived as threatening or that are not legible as worthy. In these worlds, such forms of life may be salvaged, but they may also remain unruly, unpromising, and ambivalently situated somewhere off to the side of dominant good-life imaginaries of the future. Our explorations, therefore, home in on a different tense, that of endurance in which life goes on and on amid the damage, regardless. Pustule-riddled and starving stray dogs may be dewormed on the open streets of Delhi (Dave) only to carry on the same. Wounded US Army veterans may be “rehabilitated” at Walter Reed Army Medical Center (Wool) only to be shed by the military “family.” Meanwhile, the production of such forms of life continues apace.

This temporal vantage point is crucial, which is again where ethnography provides insight. Crisis moments seem at first glance to be moments like Orr's: instances in which it seems the social might fall apart, in which ritual fails to reconstitute meaning. But the diagnosis of those moments on a broad scale as crises belongs, as Janet Roitman notes,<sup>35</sup> to a particular historical ontology, one shared by forms of modern liberal expertise from the social sciences to public policy. The diagnosis is itself a practice of making history, conforming narrative to its salvific telos. While such a diagnosis has many effects on those living within it, it also has the effect of abridging the protracted moment of living they are in. Crisis, that is, is an attempt to cleave before from after. The present becomes nothing more than a fault line. Yet Orr, like many of the interlocutors engaged in this collection of essays and poems, would have us know that time can stretch and loop; the present can be relentless.

Crisis is invoked as a moment when the truth is laid bare, as a moment of revelation. But the worlds the authors pursue here are made up of uncertainties, ambivalent meaning, and the quotidian unfolding of many chronic and acute destabilizations of life, akin to and as unique as Orr's. Mothers, wives, and children taken away without warning (Stevenson); bodies and worlds upended by war (Wool); murdered neighbors, relatives, and friends (Garcia); animals dramatically killed, cared for, and

let live or die (Dave); reclusive, hermetic children and isolated, lonely seniors (Allison). Taken together, they pattern the present into something far more persistent than a fault line beyond which lies a revelatory after in which meaning is reanchored. While these moments and spaces may, in other circumstances, be considered as evidence of crisis, we consider them here as emplotted in a rather different temporality:<sup>36</sup> the temporality of the afterworld, the wake, the slow space, a stickiness left by the structural and, yes, more historic shifts that created these conjunctures of instability, of precarity.

There is no revelatory truth we are after here. While this collection characterizes some of the collateral effects of our recent moment of liberal optimism (a moment that has now been superseded by the rise of a new global authoritarianism and plutocracy), it also aims to help us think through a broader set of irresolvable tensions within scholarly considerations of the social.<sup>37</sup> Such tensions have been present in other epochs, where they have been narrated and ethically accounted without liberalism's progressive telos. But in our current moment these tensions take their "untimely" force<sup>38</sup> from the way they muddle the telos of social emergence—the very telos that so many students of the social (and narrators of crisis) tend to find comforting.

In those stories of social emergence, sociality, that mode of being bonded with others, offers hope for (human) communities to come.<sup>39</sup> Sociality is vested with special value, sometimes through its ability to make social forms endure, sometimes through its ability to produce enduring social transformations. As the force of that magic math that aggregates and secures life into the wholly social, sociality promises to buoy people across contemporary landscapes in which even the rock bottom of life threatens to be turned to quicksand. But, in the shadow of social integralism, there is also an increasing sense by many that we must both twist and multiply our modes of attention. Social and political enfranchisement may hang itself on the bareness of life;<sup>40</sup> a superpower can compulsively restage its own destruction to "constitute pleasure and national community";<sup>41</sup> optimism can be cruel;<sup>42</sup> care can be violent;<sup>43</sup> violence can be domestic.

One axis revealed by ethnography that we pursue across these essays is physical proximity. What are its effects, its possibilities? The sensory dimensions of sociality—haptic, aural, visual, kinesthetic—upon which proximity's immediacy is constituted distort, fray, and vanish across space, producing relief, loss, or some combination of the two. When Indian activists touch wounded, rotting animals (Dave), when a Japanese monk insists that he will only communicate face-to-face (Allison), proximity becomes an end in itself. When an Inuktitut voice recording of a mother removed to a colonial sanatorium travels the unbridgeable distance between her body and that of her child, the absence of proximity is the wound that kills (Ste-

venson). When rain deluges Mexico City and urbanites huddle together under awnings in fleeting moments of proximity, the city briefly coheres (Garcia). Yet that same physical copresence can overwhelm and stress into the visual and sensory exposures of mutual confinement or surveillance (Garcia) that may secure life even as they exacerbate its discomforts. The essays collected here further suggest that the gap that emerges across space is such that words may not hold their meaning and that reconfigurations of distance and proximity may condense meaning in ways too potent for some to tolerate (Wool, Stevenson, Allison). Attention to such modes of being with others, of viscerally experiencing the intensities that make up a moment in a world, analytically sharpens our sense of the fragility of forms of relationality—especially kinship—that we might usually count on for systematic social mapping.

The ethnographies collected here thereby extend recent attention to zones of precarious living where abandonment, withdrawal, severance, and solitude might seem to place life at the very boundary of the social.<sup>44</sup> In such zones, a social imagined as having been durable, knowable, fecund, and densely populated may now be imagined as destabilized by violence, rupture, and crises both endemic and acute.<sup>45</sup> Figured as ethical thresholds where the value and limits of life are rendered questionable, existing registers of ethical attachment seem to collapse, suggesting the decomposition of populations into an inscrutable and unwieldy multiplicity of solitudes. Life is made to teeter precariously on the verge of becoming and unbecoming.

And yet, explorations of even the starkest of such verges show we are wise to slow the jump from thin or indiscernible sociality to utter failure and social death. Recognition and intimacy can be grounded in or eked out of suffering, victimhood, violence, or death.<sup>46</sup> Solitude can capacitate shared sexuality.<sup>47</sup> Ethical attachments may arise within and across apparent ontic or species divides.<sup>48</sup> Such attachments may prove fickle, but also flexible and capacious, invigorating new forms and values of life while leaving others to rot.<sup>49</sup> Sociality abides, sometimes hopefully, sometimes toxically, always multivalent, in the thinnest spaces of life.

Rather than judge the relative success or failure of social worlds, the essays collected in this issue of *Social Text* ask about what attachments and disconnections do. What are the affective attachments and ethical entailments of being with others in spaces where the life-sustaining bonds of sociality are strained or contorted by necropolitics, the politicization of life, and seductive forms of death-bound subjectivity? What are the stakes and ambivalent meanings of being in common with others when the coherence of community is illusive, undesirable, or iatrogenic?

We take up these questions across a range of sites, each with its own collateral position in the wake of contemporary promises and deferments

of the good life. Naisargi Dave plunges into the indistinctions of ethics of human and animal suffering in India; Lisa Stevenson ponders what it means to send one's voice across spaces of death wrenched open by colonial histories and legacies for Inuit in northern Canada; Anne Allison explores the problem of burial among lonely Japanese; Zoë Wool unfolds the vital and "in-durable" sociality among wounded American soldiers; and Angela Garcia explores an ethical horizon where violence is enfolded in care among addicts in Mexican drug treatment *anexas*. We conclude where we began—with poetry. Solmaz Sharif travels across the dream space between shared marvel and war where the sky is a locus of longing, violence, and a military occupation of the senses that repeats itself across life span and history. Fady Joudah opens up the uncertainties of death that medical knowledge would suture. He poses metatextual questions that redouble problems of historiography and meaning, blurring the epitaph and footnote, pushing us to consider the unstable meaning of deaths and what it might mean to know them well. He captures impossible intimacies given voice in the echoing of sacred texts read with gratitude across the bodies of cadavers.

## Notes

1. Orr, "When a Child Kills."
2. Dawson, *Extinction*; Kolbert, *Sixth Extinction*.
3. Allison, "Reflections on Welfare"; Adams, *Markets of Sorrow, Labors of Faith*. See also Anne Allison's contribution in this issue.
4. Lewis, *Big Short*; Roitman, *Anti-crisis*; Varoufakis, *And the Weak Suffer What They Must?*
5. Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*; Hajjar, *Torture*; Soldz et al., *All the President's Psychologists*.
6. De León, *Land of Open Graves*; Lucht, *Darkness before Daybreak*; Dewachi et al., "Changing Therapeutic Geographies."
7. Nixon, *Slow Violence*; Chakrabarty, "Climate of History"; Scranton, *Learning to Die in the Anthropocene*.
8. See Povinelli, *Economies of Abandonment*.
9. Berlant, "Slow Death."
10. See, e.g., Taylor, *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*; Coates, *Between the World and Me*; and Winters, *Hope Draped in Black*. For a global black position and radical vision, see Moten and Harney, *Undercommons*.
11. Sedgwick, "Paranoid Reading," 133–36.
12. Edwards, "Social Text."
13. Said, *Orientalism*.
14. Trouillot, "Anthropology and the Savage Slot."
15. Chakrabarty, "Postcoloniality"; Clifford, *Partial Truths*.
16. Clifford and Marcus, *Writing Culture*; see also Povinelli, *Economies of Abandonment*.
17. Robbins, "Beyond the Suffering Subject."
18. Haritaworn, Kuntsman, and Posocco, *Queer Necropolitics*; Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*; Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus*.

19. Ko, *Cinderella's Sisters*.
  20. Abu-Lughod, *Writing Women's Worlds*.
  21. Cohen, "Gut Wisdom."
  22. See, e.g., Turner, *Schism and Continuity*.
  23. Povinelli, *Empire of Love*; Fassin, "Humanitarianism as a Politics of Life."
- See also Stevenson's contribution in this volume.
24. Mbembe, "Necropolitics."
  25. Das and Han, *Living and Dying*, 30; Tsing, *Mushroom at the End of the World*.
  26. Berlant, *Cruel Optimism*.
  27. Povinelli, *Economies of Abandonment*.
  28. Fassin and Pandolfi, *Contemporary States of Emergency*; Ticktin, *Casualties of Care*; Roitman, *Anti-crisis*.
  29. See, e.g., Lingis, *Community*; Lingis, *Deathbound Subjectivity*; Eng and Kazanjian, *Loss*; and Butler, *Precarious Life*.
  30. Diamond, "Difficulty of Reality"; see also Stevenson, *Life beside Itself*, 31.
  31. See Rosaldo, *Day of Shelly's Death*.
  32. See, e.g., Stewart, *Ordinary Affects*.
  33. Povinelli, *Economies of Abandonment*, 12–13.
  34. Palmie, "Historicist Knowledge"; Koselleck, *Futures Past*; Schoenbrun, "Conjuring the Modern in Africa"; and Sewell, *Logics of History*.
  35. Roitman, *Anti-crisis*.
  36. Stewart, "Trauma Time"; Stewart, *Ordinary Affects*.
  37. Arendt, *Human Condition*.
  38. Rabinow, "Foucault's Untimely Struggle."
  39. Biehl and Locke, "Deleuze and the Anthropology of Becoming."
  40. Fassin, *When Bodies Remember*.
  41. Masco, "Engineering the Future."
  42. Berlant, *Cruel Optimism*.
  43. Mulla, *Violence of Care*. See also Angela Garcia's contribution in this issue.
  44. See, e.g., Allison, *Precarious Japan*.
  45. See, e.g., Biehl, *Vita*; and Chua, *In Pursuit of the Good Life*.
  46. See, e.g., Garcia, *Pastoral Clinic*.
  47. Coleman, "Being Alone Together."
  48. See, e.g., Bennett, *Vibrant Matter*; Kohn, *How Forests Think*.
  49. See, e.g., Povinelli, *Empire of Love*; Tsing, *Mushroom at the End of the World*.

## References

- Abu-Lughod, Lila. 1993. *Writing Women's Worlds: Bedouin Stories*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Adams, Vincanne. 2013. *Markets of Sorrow, Labors of Faith: New Orleans in the Wake of Katrina*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Allison, Anne. 2013. *Precarious Japan*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Allison, Anne. 2016. "Reflections on Welfare from Postnuclear Fukushima." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 115, no. 1: 175–81.
- Arendt, Hannah. 1998. *The Human Condition*. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Bennett, Jane. 2010. *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

- Berlant, Lauren. 2007. "Slow Death: Sovereignty, Obesity, and Lateral Agency." *Critical Inquiry* 33: 754–80.
- Berlant, Lauren. 2011. *Cruel Optimism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Biehl, João. 2005. *Vita: Life in a Zone of Social Abandonment*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Biehl, João, and Joshua Locke. 2010. "Deleuze and the Anthropology of Becoming." *Current Anthropology* 51, no. 3: 317–37.
- Butler, Judith. 2004. *Precarious Life: The Power of Mourning and Violence*. New York: Verso.
- Chakrabarty, Dipesh. 1992. "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History." *Representations* 37: 1–26.
- Chakrabarty, Dipesh. 2009. "The Climate of History: Four Theses." *Critical Inquiry* 35, no. 1: 197–222.
- Chua, Jocelyn. 2014. *In Pursuit of the Good Life: Aspiration and Suicide in Globalizing South India*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Clifford, James. 1986. "Introduction: Partial Truths." In *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, edited by James Clifford and George Marcus, 1–26. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Clifford, James, and George Marcus, eds. 1986. *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Coates, Ta-Nehisi. 2015. *Between the World and Me*. New York: Spiegel and Grau.
- Cohen, Ed. 2013. "Gut Wisdom, or Why We Are More Intelligent Than We Know." *Somatosphere.org*. 21 October. somatosphere.net/2013/10/gut-wisdom-or-why-we-are-more-intelligent-than-we-know.html.
- Coleman, Leo. 2009. "Being Alone Together: From Solidarity to Solitude in Urban Anthropology." *Anthropological Quarterly* 82, no. 3: 755–77.
- Das, Veena, and Clara Han, eds. 2014. *An Anthropology of Living and Dying in the Contemporary World*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Dawson, Ashley. 2016. *Extinction: A Radical History*. New York: OR Books.
- De León, Jason. 2015. *The Land of Open Graves: Living and Dying on the Migrant Trail*. Oakland: University of California Press.
- Dewachi, Omar, Mac Skelton, Vinh-Kim Nguyen, Fouad M. Fouad, Ghassan Abu Sitta, Zeina Maasri, and Rita Giacaman. 2014. "Changing Therapeutic Geographies of the Iraqi and Syrian Wars." *Lancet* 383, no. 9915: 449–57.
- Diamond, Cora. 2003. "The Difficulty of Reality and the Difficulty of Philosophy." *Partial Answers: Journal of Literature and the History of Ideas* 1, no. 2: 1–26.
- Edwards, Brent Hayes. 2009. "Social Text." *Social Text* 27, no. 3: 231–34.
- Eng, David L., and David Kazanjian. 2003. *Loss*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Fassin, Didier. 2007. "Humanitarianism as a Politics of Life." *Public Culture* 19: 499–520.
- Fassin, Didier. 2007. *When Bodies Remember: Experiences and Politics of AIDS in South Africa*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Fassin, Didier, and Mariella Pandolfi. 2010. *Contemporary States of Emergency: The Politics of Military and Humanitarian Interventions*. New York: Zone Books.
- Garcia, Angela. 2010. *The Pastoral Clinic: Addiction and Dispossession along the Rio Grande*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Hajjar, Lisa. 2013. *Torture: A Sociology of Violence and Human Rights*. New York: Routledge.
- Haritaworn, Jin, Adi Kuntsman, and Silvia Posocco, eds. 2013. *Queer Necropolitics*. London: Routledge.

- Khalili, Laleh. 2012. *Time in the Shadows: Confinement in Counterinsurgencies*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Ko, Dorothy. 2005. *Cinderella's Sisters: A Revisionist History of Footbinding*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Kohn, Eduardo. 2013. *How Forests Think: Toward an Anthropology beyond the Human*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Kolbert, Elizabeth. 2014. *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History*. New York: Henry Holt.
- Koselleck, Reinhart. 2004 (1979). *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*. Translated by Keith Tribe. 2nd ed. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Lewis, Michael. 2011. *The Big Short: Inside the Doomsday Machine*. New York: Norton.
- Lingis, Alphonso. 1989. *Deathbound Subjectivity*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Lingis, Alphonso. 1994. *The Community of Those Who Have Nothing in Common*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Lucht, Hans. 2012. *Darkness before Daybreak: African Migrants Living on the Margins in Southern Italy Today*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Masco, Joe. 2013. "Engineering the Future as Nuclear Ruin." In *Imperial Debris: On Ruins and Ruination*, edited by Ann Laura Stoler, 252–86. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Mbembe, Achille. 2003. "Necropolitics." Translated by Libby Meintjes. *Public Culture* 15, no. 1: 11–40.
- Moten, Fred, and Stefano Harney. 2013. *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study*. New York: Minor Compositions.
- Mulla, Sameena. 2014. *The Violence of Care: Rape Victims, Forensic Nurses, and Sexual Assault Intervention*. New York: New York University Press.
- Nixon, Rob. 2011. *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Orr, Gregory. 2014. "When a Child Kills: Reflections on a Shooting Range, from One Who Knows." *New York Times*, 29 August.
- Palmie, Stefan. 2013. "Historicist Knowledge and Its Conditions of Impossibility." In *The Social Life of Spirits*, edited by Ruy Blanes and Diana Espiritu Santo, 218–39. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Povinelli, Elizabeth. 2006. *The Empire of Love*. Durham NC: Duke University Press.
- Povinelli, Elizabeth. 2011. *Economies of Abandonment: Social Belonging and Endurance in Late Liberalism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Puar, Jasbir. 2007. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Rabinow, Paul. 2009. "Foucault's Untimely Struggle: Toward a Form of Spirituality." *Theory, Culture, and Society* 26, no. 6: 25–44. dx.doi.org/10.1177/0263276409347699.
- Robbins, Joel. 2013. "Beyond the Suffering Subject: Toward an Anthropology of the Good." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 19, no. 3: 447–62. dx.doi.org/10.1111/1467-9655.12044.
- Roitman, Janet. 2013. *Anti-crisis*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Rosaldo, Renato. 2013. *The Day of Shelly's Death: The Poetry and Ethnography of Grief*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Said, Edward. 1979. *Orientalism*. New York: Random House.
- Schoenbrun, David. 2006. "Conjuring the Modern in Africa: Durability and Rupture in Histories of Public Healing between the Great Lakes of East Africa." *American Historical Review* 111, no. 5: 1403–39.

- Scranton, Roy. 2015. *Learning to Die in the Anthropocene: Reflections on the End of a Civilization*. San Francisco, CA: City Lights Books.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. 2003. "Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading, or, You're So Paranoid, You Probably Think This Essay Is about You." In *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*, 123–51. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Sewell, William H. 2005. *Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Soldz, Stephen, Nathaniel Raymond, Steven Reisner, Scott A. Allen, Isaac L. Baker, and Allen S. Keller. 2015. *All the President's Psychologists: The American Psychological Association's Secret Complicity with the White House and US Intelligence Community in Support of the CIA's "Enhanced" Interrogation Program*. assets.documentcloud.org/documents/2069718/report.pdf.
- Stevenson, Lisa. 2014. *Life beside Itself: Imagining Care in the Canadian Arctic*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Stewart, Kathleen. 2005. "Trauma Time: A Still Life." In *Histories of the Future*, edited by Daniel Rosenberg and Susan Harding, 321–39. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Stewart, Kathleen. 2007. *Ordinary Affects*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Taylor, Keeanga Yamahatta. 2016. *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*. Chicago: Haymarket Books.
- Ticktin, Miriam. 2011. *Casualties of Care: Immigration and the Politics of Humanitarianism in France*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. 1991 "Anthropology and the Savage Slot: The Poetics and Politics of Otherness." In *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*, edited by Richard G. Fox, 17–44. Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press.
- Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt. 2015. *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Turner, Victor. 1957. *Schism and Continuity in an African Community*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Varoufakis, Yanis. 2016. *And the Weak Suffer What They Must? Europe's Crisis and America's Economic Future*. New York: Nation Books.
- Weheliye, Alexander G. 2014. *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Winters, Joseph Richard. 2016. *Hope Draped in Black: Race, Melancholy, and the Agony of Progress*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.