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*Capture: American Pursuits and the Making of a New Animal  
Condition* by Antoine Traisnel (review)

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Configurations, Volume 30, Number 1, Winter 2022, pp. 107-110 (Article)



Published by Johns Hopkins University Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/con.2022.0005>

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in her sixties" (p. 43) or "cow-colored pit bull-type dog we [rescue staff and volunteers] guesstimated to be about three years old" (p. 128). While the move to describe people and dogs in a similar fashion underscores the need for equitable relations and should be applauded, such descriptions, when used repeatedly, tend to flatten the complexity, messiness, and mutability of identity, and run against the very arguments of the book. A better approach could involve taking more space to tell the stories of individuals through their own words, or, in the case of canine informants, to describe their lives using the best information available and in ways that center their perspectives. The monograph could have also situated multispecies justice within the existing body of research constituting this field and elaborated on such work within the contexts of dog rescues and cultures. Weaver correctly attributes the concept to Haraway, his graduate mentor, in a footnote buried within the introduction and then briefly revisits the term in the final pages of the book where he invents the phrase "multispecies transformative justice" (p. 184). At no point, however, is the larger body of work associated with multispecies justice—or with multispecies studies and multispecies ethnography, for that matter—mentioned or engaged, even though *Bad Dog* participates in these areas of thought. Despite constituting part of the title, the field of multispecies justice is conspicuously absent from the rest of the book. Engaging the work of David Naguib Pellow, David Schlosberg, Kyle Whyte, Ursula Heise, Sunaura Taylor, Thom van Dooren, and Danielle Celermajer—to name a few—would have not only placed *Bad Dog* in conversation with the growing field, but also explicitly placed multispecies research that remains hesitant to focus on race, sexuality, ability, class, and gender in conversation with feminist and queer theory that continues to overlook the roles of other species. Indeed, the absence of multispecies literature points to an institutional gulf separating multispecies research from the social justice-oriented scholarship that guides the book.

*Bad Dog* insists that the pursuit of equitable, multispecies worlds requires departing from the confines of disciplinarity to instead coinhabit the mutual, multi-sited, multispecies spaces that dogs and people make together every single day. In doing so, Weaver's book exemplifies the participatory, public-facing scholarship needed to assemble more accountable modes of thinking and relating.

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Antoine Traisnel, *Capture: American Pursuits and the Making of a New Animal Condition*. University of Minnesota Press, 2020, 296 pages, 28 b&w photos, 4 color plates. \$108 cloth, \$27 paper.

By the time Frederick Jackson Turner offered his famous "Frontier Thesis" in 1893, declaring that the disappearance of the frontier line marked the end of a formative period in American democracy, no more territory was figured as "unknown," and millions of animals had been captured, catalogued, and consumed by settlers. What did this end of the "frontier" mean for animals—including those animals who did not become extinct but were instead raised and reproduced for human benefit? In *Capture: American Pursuits and the Making of a New Animal Condition*, Antoine Traisnel offers a brilliant historical and theoretical analysis that begins to answer this question. Offering rigorous, compelling readings of literary and scientific texts, images (both still and moving), and key historical developments of the nineteenth century, Traisnel

demonstrates how animal representations both documented and produced crucial shifts in how animals were known.

Traisnel's analysis reveals that animals—including endangered species—were increasingly rendered as entirely subject to human understanding. To frame his analysis, Traisnel develops a "theory of capture": "Capture names the paradoxical regime of vision by which animals came to be seen as at once unknowable yet understood in advance—a frame by which we continue to encounter animals today" (pp. 5, 29). Traisnel describes how this new "capture regime" differs from—or rather "sublimates" (p. 8)—a previous "hunt regime" (p. 2). By 1817, when hunting game laws were beginning to be established, hunting became increasingly cast as an unnecessary and "primitive" (p. 9) method of catching animals; this shift in perception resulted from both a drastic decrease in the number of game animals left in the wild and an increase in the number of livestock animals raised for human benefit. Whereas hunting granted animals a certain level of autonomy within their own territory, allowing for the possibility of escaping their human pursuers, capturing instead precluded such a possibility, for animals were always already caught in the grasp of human power and knowledge. This shift was at once quite literal (in terms of material practices) and epistemological. While many animals were indeed physically captured—placed, for example, within such spaces as zoos or museums—even those that ostensibly escaped being confined in a physical space were nevertheless always presumed to be "at hand" (p. 10) in the sense of being apprehensible even before they were physically and individually seen.

Capture thus functions as a biopolitical operation, for it is premised upon the ordering of life and relies fundamentally upon representation. In offering his theory, Traisnel remains in direct conversation with Michel Foucault's *The Order of Things*, in which Foucault describes how the natural sciences came to "mean, in a movement that makes analysis pivot on its axis, to relate the visible, to the invisible, to its deeper cause, as it were, then to rise upwards once more from that hidden architecture towards the more obvious signs displayed on the surfaces of bodies."<sup>4</sup> Traisnel deepens this historical awareness by analyzing how the linguistic and visual capturing of animals has effectively, and paradoxically, rendered animals invisible in the sense that they are categorized and understood within a biopolitical apparatus; he considers "what representation, as a biopolitical dispositif of capture, effectively does to animals. If the animal enters the biopolitical stage as it disappears—indeed, by disappearing—then we must consider what stubbornly eludes biopolitics, what it is in principle incapable of representing" (p. 21). As Traisnel recognizes, his argument builds on previous work by Colleen Glenney Boggs, Nicole Shukin, Cary Wolfe, and others. I would argue that his book is in especially interesting conversation with Boggs's work in *Animalia Americana: Animal Representations and Biopolitical Subjectivity* (2013). Whereas Traisnel places more of his emphasis upon genre and visibility, Boggs considers "the crucial role animals play for the psychosexual formation of biopolitical subjectivity," arguing that "animal representations form the nexus where biopolitical relationships get worked out."<sup>5</sup> While I think Traisnel would agree that representations are where these relationships are negotiated, he also raises the provocative question of whether such representations can even be said to "represent" animals at all.

Traisnel moves adeptly across mediums and genres as he traces the evolution from the "hunt" paradigm to the "capture" paradigm during the nineteenth century. The book is divided into two parts: "Last Vestiges of the Hunt" and "New Genres of Cap-

4. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 249.

5. Colleen Glenney Boggs, *Animalia Americana: Animal Representations and Biopolitical Subjectivity* (New York: Columbia U. Press, 2013), pp. 11, 13.

ture." Part 1 includes analyses of John James Audubon's work for *The Birds of America* (1827–1838) series and James Fenimore Cooper's *The Prairie* (1827). Traisnel considers how Audubon relied upon killing and positioning his avian subjects in order to make his "lifelike image[s]" (p. 36), thus depending upon the hunt as a way to catalogue animals; in the case of *Golden Eagle* (1833), Traisnel traces its fascinating development, for this particular bird had been accidentally caught in a trap, purchased by a museum director, sold to Audubon, and then stabbed (after an unsuccessful attempt at asphyxiation) by the artist in his own house so that the animal might be more accurately drawn. The hunter's disappearance from the background of the painting once it was published, Traisnel convincingly argues, symptomatizes a movement from the individual hunt to the all-seeing, ostensible objectivity purported by capture. Turning in chapter 2 to Cooper's frontier romance novel, Traisnel demonstrates how the story pits Natty Bumppo's hunting rifle against the naturalist Obed Bat's pen; characterized as an expiring figure of the hunt, Bumppo transforms into a proto-trapper—exemplified by a key moment of encounter with a herd of that most iconic of American frontier animals, bison. The novel thus demonstrates how "the hunter—too liminal, too literal, too animal—must disappear" (p. 76). Although the Pawnee Hard-Heart takes up Bumppo's legacy, he is figured as "unfit to survive in a corrupted modern world" (p. 77) and thus, according to the novel's logic, must necessarily disappear as well—a troubling index of how Indigenous peoples were routinely figured during the period.

In part 2, Traisnel considers the "new" genres of the detective short story (Poe), the romance/not-romance (Hawthorne), and the moving image (Muybridge); in common with each of these genres and figures is an attention to what is unseen and therefore tracked or impossible to track. In chapter 3, Traisnel moves us into the heart of the city and the domestic home-space as he focuses primarily on Edgar Allan Poe's detective story "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" (1841). Traisnel rigorously investigates how Dupin's focus on detection and tracking remains rooted in a history of slavery and subjugating, or hunting, racialized and animalized populations; he "is a harbinger of this new type of hunt" (p. 97), one that finds and captures—both epistemologically and physically—the animalized criminal. Poe's consideration of cats in his other writings similarly places the animal in the home-space and both "inside and outside (the space of) the human" (p. 107): "the animal appears as an untraceable frontier" (p. 112). Chapter 4 returns to the genre of romance and shows how Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun* (1860) actively resists taxonomies and the "capturing" of animals: Donatello cannot be precisely placed in a Cuvierian category. Referred to by Traisnel as "a poetic and ethical calculation" (p. 132), Hawthorne's use of "the untimely genre of romance" (p. 136) ultimately resists a capture paradigm. In the final chapter, Traisnel turns to Eadweard Muybridge's experiments with moving images to consider how attempts to capture animal movement relied upon both "capturing" this movement and the participation of the animal. He returns here to the grid, employed by Audubon in his painting process and invoked by the land topologies in Cooper and Poe; Traisnel tracks how Muybridge grids his animal subjects to then reproduce their movement, which must depend upon a distance—however small—between each frame. Muybridge's experiments "show that the 'real' is not a data so much as a *capta*, not a given but a taken" (p. 165). With the camera, Traisnel posits, we can see capture's potential undoing, for it can be employed to consider what cannot be known or seen by humans, as Jakob von Uexküll's chronophotographic experiments show.

In his concluding meditation upon Martha, the last known passenger pigeon, Traisnel helps us to see that although capture has directly led to the suffering, extinction, and, in the case of animals raised for slaughter, an endless "reproducibility" (p. 175) of dying, "capture does not have to be elegiac. As capture defines a new epoch in the history of animality, it also provides the basis for an ethics of life in capture"

(p. 193). Such an ethics remains rooted in a respect for the “unbridgeable distance between living beings” (p. 195), one that we can see, Traisnel insightfully notes, in the ethology of Uexküll. Traisnel’s theory of capture and his interest in genre provoke two important questions that future work must consider. While Traisnel tracks the afterlives of capture in the present-day factory farming industry, one wonders about how this theory of capture might apply to the proliferation of pets at the turn of the century (many of whom were and are literally “captive,” as it were, in houses); at the end of the nineteenth century, the pet industry began to burgeon into existence and thereby dramatically reconfigured human relationships with animals. How, then, does capture—“from *capere*, meaning to seize with one’s hands,” as Traisnel reminds us (p. 18)—apply to these domesticated creatures raised by hand, as it were? Traisnel’s book also provokes questions about the genre of poetry, most especially when one arrives at the conclusion and reads the haunting epigraph from Dickinson: “I held it so tight that I lost it / Said the Child of the Butterfly / Of Many a vaster Capture / That is the Elegy —.” If Hawthorne’s “poetic” speculations resist a paradigm of capture, then how did poems in the nineteenth century resist and perhaps participate in this same paradigm? Future answers to these questions must rely on the help of Traisnel’s remarkable new book.

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Vincent Ialenti, *Deep Time Reckoning: How Future Thinking Can Help Earth Now*. The MIT Press, 2020, 208 pp. \$25.00 paper.

The year 2020 will likely be remembered as a year of reckoning. Humanity faced a global pandemic, economic collapse, environmental crises, and a massive uprising in the United States against structural racism. According to many, we are well into the Anthropocene, a new geologic epoch marked by humanity’s dominant and destructive ecological footprint. In scientific debates about the origins of the Anthropocene, some suggest that the beginning of nuclear weapons testing in 1945, which dispersed human-made radionuclides around the globe, represents a significant marker of human-induced change to earth systems. Long-lived radionuclides like plutonium 239 take 24,000 years for half of their content to decay to a safe state. The safe and ongoing storage of nuclear waste is one of the central concerns of the Anthropocene, and it requires a wider, more expansive view of time than most of us are used to.

In *Deep Time Reckoning: How Future Thinking Can Help Earth Now*, Vincent Ialenti looks to Finland’s nuclear waste “Safety Case” project for lessons that might be applied to wider issues of the Anthropocene. As a cultural anthropologist, Ialenti spent two years conducting ethnographic fieldwork with Finland’s nuclear waste experts. His goal was to glean “long-termist sensibilities” (p. xiv) to help address the ecological crisis we face in the Anthropocene, and also to address what he names the “deflation of expertise” (p. xiii)—an overall denigration of expert authority. He combines the methods of anthropology with a popular-science approach to writing in order to reach the widest audience. Each chapter explores specific lessons Ialenti culls from the Safety Case experts and ends with recommendations meant to be approached like a toolkit that the author calls “reckonings” (p. 8).