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## **Deleuze, Haraway, and the Radical Democracy of Desire**

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# Deleuze, Haraway, and the Radical Democracy of Desire

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**ABSTRACT:** In response to suggestions that Deleuze and Guattari are the “enemy” of companion species, this essay explores the tension between Donna Haraway’s attacks against Deleuze and Guattari and their philosophy of becoming animal. The essay goes on to contextualize Deleuze and Guattari’s statements against pet owners through a discussion of the psychoanalytical refiguration of desire and shows how their ostensible attack against pet owners fits into their larger critique against capitalism. The essay illustrates why Deleuze and Guattari and Haraway are more in agreement than first meets the eye, finding commensurability through Haraway’s early work on embryology. Becoming animal does not begin and end with either humans or animals, and the essay explores the high stakes of focusing on intensities rather than actual animal bodies.

When the discussion turns to dogs and cats, Donna Haraway does not see Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari as allies. Her agitated finger seems to jump off the pages of *When Species Meet* (2008) when she writes: “‘Ladies and Gentlemen, Behold the enemy!’”<sup>1</sup> Haraway openly wonders why Deleuze and Guattari leave her “so angry” in their well-known plateau on “Becoming Animal,” especially since “what we want seems so similar.” Haraway’s polemic against Deleuze and Guattari is waged along the distinction between their philosophy

1. Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), p. 27.

and the “mundane” animals who populate her book.<sup>2</sup> Haraway characterizes Deleuze and Guattari’s philosophy as being “of the sublime,” full of “scorn for the homely and the ordinary.”<sup>3</sup> Too abstract, it is disconnected from the everyday concerns of “[l]ittle house dogs and the people who love them.”<sup>4</sup> It is neither of the “earth” nor of the “mud.”<sup>5</sup> Her comments against Deleuze and Guattari contain a number of startling accusations. For example: “I am not sure I can find in philosophy a clearer display of misogyny, fear of aging, incuriosity about animals, and horror at the ordinariness of flesh, here covered by an anti-Oedipal and anti-Capitalist project. It took some nerve for Deleuze and Guattari to write about becoming woman just a few pages later!”<sup>6</sup> We readers of *When Species Meet* wonder, why do these sections in *A Thousand Plateaus* to which she refers make her so angry?

The explanation Haraway offers comes when she tells her readers that she has found the “key” to reading Deleuze and Guattari’s becoming animal through their plateau “One or Several Wolves?” Here, Deleuze and Guattari leverage an attack against Freud in the famous case of the “Wolf Man.” For Haraway, Deleuze and Guattari’s philosophy of becoming animal does not value what it means to be animal from within the point of view of “companion species”—in which two different species co-mingle in “naturecultures” in a “becoming-with.” Haraway explains that the key to this “unearthly” and “sublime” philosophy is contingent upon, or “feeds off a series of primary dichotomies figured by the opposition between the wild and the domestic.”<sup>7</sup> This binary is incompatible with the “becoming-with” of companion species. Haraway concludes that Deleuze and Guattari lacked the “courage to look . . . a dog in the eye,”<sup>8</sup> presumably because they were not interested in what a dog may think. Beyond these few comments, however, Haraway does not offer much explanation and does not undertake a deliberate investigation into this ostensible incompatibility.

Haraway’s influence has sent ripples across animal studies, depriving the field of potential growth that could otherwise benefit

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., pp. 28–29.

4. Ibid., p. 30.

5. Ibid., p. 28.

6. Ibid., p. 30.

7. Ibid., p. 28.

8. Ibid., p. 29.

from engaging the philosophers' works. Like Haraway, Richard Iveson reduces becoming animal to a wild/tame division, a reading that asserts that Deleuze and Guattari's ethics "reiterate structures of oppression."<sup>9</sup> Xavier Vitamvor draws upon *When Species Meet* extensively and determines that Deleuze and Guattari's thinking is a "philosophical mess" that is "muddled by obscurantist reveries." For Vitamvor, their work is not worth further study: "bringing Deleuze and Guattari into the mix is like adding dross instead of sifting ore."<sup>10</sup> Well intentioned as it may be, the specificity with which Iveson and Vitamvor determine that animal studies would be better off ignoring Deleuze and Guattari breeds a thread of anti-intellectualism that actively undermines a field seeking to advance knowledge. It should be no surprise, then, that defenders have voiced their concerns in resistance against Haraway's influence.<sup>11</sup> Among others, Alain Beaulieu argues that the philosophers show both curiosity about and fascination with animals and that Haraway reveals "an almost malicious misunderstanding" of their project.<sup>12</sup> Zipporah Weisberg gives a detailed and charitable intertextual reading of Haraway's major works, yet still concludes that Haraway's dog-training program is incompatible with the concept of companion species, as such a program constitutes "a form of instrumental domination."<sup>13</sup>

The secondary literature goes on, and it is easy to see Haraway's comments as polemical, but I would rather see them as operators, as what Deleuze and Guattari call in *Anti-Oedipus* "desiring machines."

9. Richard Iveson, "Deeply Ecological Deleuze and Guattari: Humanism's Becoming Animal," *Humanimalia* 4:2 (2013): 34–53, quote on p. 34.

10. Xavier Vitamvor, "Unbecoming Animal Studies," *Minnesota Review* 73/74 (2009): 183–187, quote on p. 184.

11. See Rosi Braidotti, who either takes a neutral position between Haraway and Deleuze and Guattari in "Animals, Anomalies, and Inorganic Others," *PMLA* 124:2 (2009): 526–532; or reads them as allies in "Posthuman, All Too Human: Towards a New Process Ontology," *Theory, Culture & Society* 23:7–8 (2006): 197–208. Linda Williams, in "Haraway Contra Deleuze and Guattari: The Question of the Animals," *Communication, Politics, and Culture* 42:1 (2009): 42–54, attempts a positive reading but finally concludes that Haraway's response does not do justice to Deleuze and Guattari's "poetic call for a creative shift" from anthropocentrism to inhuman relations. I take up the notion of "inhumanities" in the last section of this essay.

12. Alain Beaulieu, "The Status of Animality in Deleuze's Thought," *Journal for Critical Animal Studies* 9:1/2 (2011): 69–88, <http://www.criticalanimalstudies.org/volume-ix-issue-iii-2011/>, quote on p. 80. Beaulieu concedes, however, the point that animals serve a "conceptual" function rather than a material one. I mention it below and return to a fuller discussion of this point toward the end of this essay.

13. Zipporah Weisberg, "The Broken Promises of Monsters: Haraway, Animals and the Humanist Legacy," *Journal for Critical Animal Studies* 7:2 (2009): 31.

Desiring machines produce and invent. Reading Haraway's comments productively asks one to sidestep the dialectical need for a reactive defense and to engage in a more affirmative reading. An affirmative reading does not concede agreement, but rather recognizes that her comments are producing lines and flows through the fields within which her discourses circulate. There are more ideological similarities than differences between the two projects, however, and readers on both sides of the controversy would benefit from a more targeted explanation of how animals fit into Deleuze and Guattari's larger project. It is true that they engage animal becomings more than the fleshy, individuated animals that Haraway asserts to be one of her main priorities. But their lack of *attention* to actual animals can easily be misunderstood as a lack of concern. It is not enough to grasp becoming animal at the sub-animal level of intensities and affects. It is also necessary to add that these intensities and affects have everything to do with the composition of actual, corporeal bodies. By unraveling the associated discourses of becoming animal and without discounting Haraway's position (though disagreeing with her specific attacks against Deleuze and Guattari), I hope to find another productive dimension, a third way, by which to engage this discussion.

To do so, this essay proceeds through three stages. First, I address the charge that Deleuze and Guattari are enemies of companion species. This ostensible rejection of pets is misleading. Companion species are not Deleuze and Guattari's enemy and neither is the family. The process of oedipalization is the target. Having sorted out this confusion, in my second discussion I frame their attack against oedipalization with their discussion of desire. One reason oedipalization was such a key issue in the first volume of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* was that orthodox psychoanalysis negatively impacted how desire would come to be understood. Through Freud, psychoanalysis defined desire as lack and attached desire to objects, an operation that the pair saw as having deleterious if not deadly effects upon desire's power. Desire became a lack that needed to be repressed—or, in the case of Lacan, a lack that could never be satisfied. In order to effect changes in the codification of power, a de-oedipalization and a reinvigoration of the productive machinery of desire was essential. As de facto extensions of the nuclear family, pets get caught in the crosshairs of Deleuze and Guattari's attacks against the rewriting of desire. The third section moves from the critical to the animal encounter and re-engages the discussion with Haraway by searching for commensurability between Haraway's contact zones of compan-

ion species and what Deleuze and Guattari call “zones of proximity” and “zones of indeterminacy.” A common operator is found through the figure of the embryo that was the primary research subject for Haraway during her early years as an embryologist, and the figure of the egg that is central to Deleuze and Guattari’s affective becomings. Here I draw upon the influences of Gilbert Simondon in order to introduce the pre-individual field that gives rise to the intensities that saturate and crisscross the egg, the human, and the animal. One of the powers of these pre-individual forces is *extensity*, the power to escape bodily integuments and to connect with affects exceeding animal, human, vegetal, and other bodies. Regardless of our own individuated concerns, these connections are always being made. They are machines that spin and whirl beyond human control. Attuning ourselves to them harbors significant potential not only because it allows the possibility of thinking of the human-animal relation on a molecular level, but also because it extends the human-animal relation to other *inhuman* registers. An essential step in becoming animal is considering animals in terms of animal desire, not human desire. Such a step opens the possibility of forging renewed ethical relationships with other species. But becoming animal harbors yet more transformative power. By attuning ourselves to the molecular revolutions that pass through us, my hope is not only that we reconsider our relationships to other species but that we begin to consider a much broader picture, one that includes the potential for social and ethical transformation across multiple registers.

### Companion Species

Deleuze and Guattari are not the enemies of house pets or their owners. Their attack is against the ways in which the nuclear family has been extended so that house pets are treated as members of the family. There is much that gets repressed within the nuclear family, but their primary concern is the repression of desire, for both human and animal. Insofar as it is an agent that does the work of propagating the social phenomena whereby people desire their own servitude or intentionally work against their own interests, *this role that the family plays* is the focus of their attack. As they see it, the family is a process that helps to complete the work of channeling desire so that one intentionally acts against one’s own interests. Whether the animal is a house pet, a wild animal, or the repressed animal within, it is an important figure because it swims in the same currents of desire. Deleuze and Guattari’s “becoming animal” is anything but a “philosophy of the sublime.” Regardless of Haraway’s comments, we

must look away from the sublime and into the mundane and everyday—where Haraway looks—and then a step closer, past things and their qualities, and into intensities.

It so happens that Haraway should be read much more in line with Deleuze and Guattari's thinking than she allows. While she does not participate in discourses of oedipalization, she is clearly against the notion that animals should be treated as children. As an example, here are just two passages among a number from *When Species Meet*:

We do not actually recognize our dogs' authority but, in spite of our best intentions, treat them too often like athletic toddlers in fur coats. It is hard not to do that when dog culture in America, even in agility, relentlessly refers to human partners as "mom" or "dad."

We do not get very far with the categories generally used by animal rights discourses, in which animals end up permanent dependents ("lesser humans"), utterly natural ("nonhuman"), or exactly the same ("humans in fur suits"). The categories for subjects are part of the problem. I have stressed kin making and family membership but rejected all the names of human kin for these dogs, especially the name "children."<sup>14</sup>

When Deleuze and Guattari say that "anyone who likes dogs and cats is a fool," they are speaking specifically about the very same people Haraway addresses. As the first quote above shows, Haraway admits that it takes a significant effort to resist oedipalizing one's dog, as "dog culture" in America continually pressures us to do so. Haraway's attribution of this phenomenon to culture is part of the analysis that Deleuze and Guattari take up in *Anti-Oedipus*.

Not only are they in agreement concerning those who treat animals as family members, they also agree concerning the kind of relationships humans should have with animals. At one point, Haraway discusses the relationship dog owners have with other dog owners who stand around at the dog park talking about their lives with dogs, engaged in an "ordinary, daily becoming-with that does not seem very oedipal to me."<sup>15</sup> We can take Haraway's statements as suggesting that not all dog owners have oedipal relationships with their animals. In the *L'Abécédaire* interview with Claire Parnet, Deleuze is asked about the kinds of relationship that people ought to have with animals. He responds that "generally people who like animals don't have a human relationship with animals, they have an animal

14. Haraway, *When Species Meet* (above, n. 1), pp. 225 and 67.

15. *Ibid.* p. 314, n. 38.

relationship with the animal, and that's quite beautiful."<sup>16</sup> On this point they agree as well.

To be sure, there are differences between them, but the similarities continually present themselves. Rosi Braidotti, who Haraway considers her "guide" to reading Deleuze and Guattari, is quite clear about the similarities between the two projects and has explained in several different venues that she finds a deep "alliance between companion species and the philosophy of multiple becoming that lies at the heart" of her Deleuzian project.<sup>17</sup> This essay proceeds to connect companion species to Deleuze and Guattari through affect, but animal studies can benefit by engaging Deleuze and Guattari on any number of registers, including the political, the social, the linguistic, the artistic, and so on. Contrary to what Haraway states, Deleuze and Guattari are not the enemies of companion species or of animal studies. To dismiss them as such is to miss significant opportunities for discovering new avenues for non-anthropocentric thinking.

### Desire and the Socius

Deleuze and Guattari's attacks against the family extend beyond the critique of psychoanalysis and into the larger critique of capitalism. This more politically and psychoanalytically oriented discussion has the advantage of emphasizing their larger sustained project, of which their critique against the family is but a part. Deleuze and Guattari want to change the way we think about desire, and this discussion helps to explain and provide a larger context for why Deleuze and Guattari appear hostile to pets and their owners.

"Desire" can be a problematic term because it does not refer to the typical usage associated with want. Desire does not mean I want a new job, a cuter boyfriend, or better pay. Desire has more to do with drive (*trieb*) in the Freudian sense than with want.<sup>18</sup> This statement

16. Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, interview, *From A to Z*, directed by Pierre-André Boutang, translated by Charles Stivale (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2012), DVD; also in Derek Ryan, "'The Reality of Becoming': Deleuze, Woolf and the Territory of Cows," *Deleuze Studies* 7:4 (2013): 539. For Ryan, these statements serve as a "direct response to Haraway."

17. "Haraway shares with Deleuze," she writes, "two key features: serious neo-foundational materialism on the one hand and a rigorous theory of relationality on the other." Rosi Braidotti, "Posthuman, All Too Human" (above, n. 11), p. 200.

18. The standard translations of Freud by James Strachey typically rendered the German *trieb* as "instinct" rather than "drive." As instinct refers to an organism's unlearned response to a stimulus, this usage is well understood to be a primary flaw in the Strachey translations.

helps to make the concept more accessible, as “drive” suggests a separation of desire from the subject’s will and increases the autonomy and agency of desire, regardless of its attachment to any object or event. With the move toward drive, no longer are we talking about “my desire,” or “the animal’s desire” but desire as a pre-organic force that inhabits organisms. The way desire is defined and understood matters, particularly because Deleuze and Guattari’s concern with political repression unfolds from that definition. There are two essential components: multiplicity and production.

### *Desire Is Multiple*

In *Daybreak*, Nietzsche posits a thought experiment: suppose we walk through the market one day and notice someone laughing at us as we walk by. How we react will be determined by which “drive” is dominant in us at that particular moment. One person might absorb the encounter “like a drop of rain.” Another will “shake it from him like an insect.” Another will pick a quarrel, another will examine his clothing, another will contemplate the nature of laughter as such, another will smile, etc. In each case, Nietzsche writes, “a drive has gratified itself” by seizing the “event as its prey.” Why this particular drive as opposed to another? “Because, thirsty and hungry, it was lying in wait.”<sup>19</sup> Daniel Smith calls this explanation the seeds of Nietzsche’s “doctrine of perspectivism,” which, contrary to what one might initially expect, has nothing to do with the perspective of an individual person and rests on the notion that it is the drives themselves—and not you or I—that have their own perspectives: “Each of us has multiple perspectives on the world because of the multiplicity of our drives—drives that are often contradictory among themselves.”<sup>20</sup>

Drives are in continual competition with one another to be the strongest drive within the organism at any one given time. But while a multiplicity of drives continually inhabit and impress themselves against an organism (and even an organ), each singular drive itself is associated with another multiplicity—a secondary panoply of sensations, affects, emotions, memories, aspirations. “My inclination to go to the tavern,” Smith writes, “includes not only the minute perception of the effect of the alcohol, or the taste and temperature

19. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Daybreak: Thoughts on the Prejudices of Morality*, ed. Maudemarie Clark, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 119; Daniel W. Smith, “Deleuze and the Question of Desire: Toward an Immanent Theory of Ethics,” *Parrhesia* 2 (2007): 70.

20. Smith, “Deleuze and the Question of Desire” (above, n. 19), p. 70.

of the drink, but also the clinking of glasses in the bar, the smoke in the air, the conversation with friends, the temporary lifting of one's solitude, and so on."<sup>21</sup> Any inclination is formed with an entire ensemble of associated perceptions and affects. Like cables made up of bundles of strands, multiple drives act upon our bodies and each drive itself is multiple. We are pulled simultaneously in many directions, by many different lines, and each line or direction has an associated multitude with it that spreads by association and contagion.

### *Desire Is Productive*

If organisms are inhabited by such a vast multiplicity, then any one particular drive that is the most intense at a particular moment plays a significant role in *producing* material, psychological, and social realities. Such is the basic and essential foundation for Deleuze and Guattari's political philosophy, leading to their *Anti-Oedipus* slogan, "There is desire and the socius and nothing else." Deleuze and Guattari attribute to Freud's theory of drives the distinction of having been his "great discovery." But once desire was assigned "universal predetermined objects and aims: sex with the mother and identification with the father," desire's productive function would be lost. Desire would continue to produce, but now desire would become attached to objects: desire *for*, rather than desire *as*. Not only did this new definition establish the "universality" of the Oedipus complex, it would also define popular notions of the unconscious. Rather than a desire that flowed freely from a pre-individual register, desire became an effect of human subjectivity: instead of autonomous desire, subjective want.

It would not take much for this organization of power to extend outward toward theories of social repression. In *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud would argue that the law is the check by which civilization is able to function productively through a repression of Oedipal desire, at the expense of universal guilt and neurosis. The father demands repression, and this universalizing paternal authority extends outward through the master, the schoolteacher, and the boss to an all-encompassing social authority. And here we open to Deleuze and Guattari's larger political project, in which they undertake to historicize and thereby to relativize this notion that instincts (i.e., desire) must be repressed. In *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari conduct a genealogical investigation into unconscious desire as it appears under three different historical social assemblages. By showing how the unconscious is organized during different historical epochs,

21. Ibid. p. 72.

they seek to expose the way in which desire has been pathologically assembled by capitalism. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, becoming animal will become a transformative force against capitalism's pathology, allowing us access to those currents of desire that lie in wait, grumbling and growling as they pace deliberately back and forth and side to side through this world, our collective zoo.<sup>22</sup>

The first two parts of their genealogy concentrate on how desire is organized by tribal and despotic societies. In both of these cases, desire is organized for the sake of a social collective (tribal) or hierarchy (despotic), but they share the common thread that desire and power are structured according to community organization. Deleuze and Guattari do not shy away from the cruelty of these societies; they are obviously cruel. Under capitalism, however, cruelty and people are unhinged from the codes of the tribe or the transcendent figure of the despot and attached to the flows of capital. Rather than moving through ritual or law, desire moves with capital through debt and interest, from industrial capital to finance capital, from banks that create debt and markets that create wealth through the near-fabrication of money. Capital is limited only by regulations that are continually being subordinated in order to increase the speed and sophistication by which it can circulate. God and the Earth are privatized, turned into the effects of neoliberal policies. Desire circulates with capital across the social body, obeying the flows of markets and exchange. It is this pathological delirium of capital that Deleuze and Guattari want to expose:

Everything is rational in capitalism, except capital or capitalism itself. The stock market is certainly rational; one can understand it, study it, the capitalists know how to use it, and yet it is completely delirious, it's mad. It is in this sense that we say: the rational is always the rationality of the irrational. . . . So what is rational in a society? It is—the interests being defined in the framework of this society—the way people pursue those interests, their realization. But down below, there are desires, investment of desire that cannot be confused with the investment of interest, and on which interests depend in their determination and distribution: an enormous flux, all kinds of libidinal-unconscious flows that make up the delirium of this society. . . . The true history is the history of desire. A capitalist, or today's technocrat, does not desire in the same way a slave merchant or official of the ancient Chinese empire would."<sup>23</sup>

22. A mention of Edward Albee's 1958 play *The Zoo Story* seems appropriate here.

23. In Félix Guattari, *Chaosophy: Texts and Interviews 1972–1977*, ed. Sylvère Lotringer, trans. David Sweet, Jarred Becker, and Taylor Adkins (New York: Semiotext(e), 2009), p. 36.

Different historical social assemblages organize desire differently. Underneath one's rational interests lies the unconscious of the social assemblage, a social madness under an apparently rational order. Daniel Smith explains that under this arrangement, we appear to pursue our own rational interests, but that is because our irrational drives have been arranged in a particular way that makes those interests appear rational. "In the end, the answer is simple: it is because your desire—that is, your drives and affects—are not your own, so to speak. They are, if I can put it this way, part of the capitalist infrastructure; they are not simply your own mental or psychic reality."<sup>24</sup> As anyone knows, nothing is easier than opening the Groupon app on your iPhone while standing in line at Starbucks.

From this perspective, the attack against oedipalization is an attack against the popularized understanding of the repression of desire. Rather than desire arranged historically by different social assemblages, the psychoanalytical response sees desire as something requiring repression. Desire is defined by lack and attaches itself to specific objects in order to be satisfied. But desire is instrumental for Deleuze and Guattari because they locate within it the possibility for political, social, and economic transformation. Oedipus is the mother and father of all repression, but it is not the result of psychoanalytical work. Oedipalization is an effect of the organization of desire under capitalism. All the psychic terms associated with Oedipus—synthesis, oedipalization, triangulation, castration—refer to the coding of unconscious desire. As Deleuze and Guattari write, these forces "are a bit more powerful, a bit more subterranean" than what is found at the level of the family.<sup>25</sup> The socius channels desire according to repetitive modes, drives that inhabit you, that feel quite like your own, but that don't belong to you. Just as desire is attached to technologies, oedipalization is another particular arrangement of desire that is produced by capital. It is for this reason that Haraway states that it is difficult to resist slipping into the role of treating pets as family members. Yet here we must pause and prepare to shift gears: desire in the animal is not subjected to capitalism as it is in the human. Untapped energies run through the animal in ways revolutionary to capitalism, to humans, to thinking, and to political action. Becoming animal means finding a micropolitics of desire so the conditions for transforming capital become possible.

24. Smith, "Deleuze and the Question of Desire" (above, n. 19), p. 74.

25. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), p. 118.

## The World Is an Egg

“In truth, there are only inhumanities, humans are made exclusively of inhumanities, but very different ones, very different natures and speeds.”

—Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari<sup>26</sup>

Haraway introduces her discussion of contact zones by acquainting her readers with the two-foot-long yellow areas found on the ends of teeter-totters in dog agility courses. Dogs are required to come to fast halts in these zones and wait for the handler’s command before continuing. Haraway explains that if the handler and the dog have not established successful communication, these areas can be “instruments of death.” It was in “that paint strip,” she writes, where she and her dog learned the most about “power, knowledge, and the meaningful material details of entanglements.”<sup>27</sup> As introduced by Mary Louise Pratt in 1991, a contact zone foregrounds the “interactive, improvisational dimensions of colonial encounters” that emphasize how subjects are constituted through their relations to each other. Haraway’s encounters with her dog fit this definition well, although she does not hesitate to add some more definitions: Contact zones include numerous different actors, groups, border zones, states, subjects, and systems that come into contact with other relationally constituted subjects, species, animals, plants, organizations, industries, and cultures. To be sure, Haraway acknowledges different configurations of species at work in any number of different environments. Similar to Deleuze and Guattari’s notion of the multiple, of note is Haraway’s commitment to organisms and technologies as always already being compound, comprising composite other organisms and technologies. Identities are always made up of compounds of “conjoined forces.”<sup>28</sup>

Haraway goes on to describe one particularly salient contact zone that resonates well in Deleuze and Guattari’s context. Drawing from her early career work at Yale in the 1960s and ’70s, Haraway opens the discussion of embryonic morphology, explaining that she studied “morphogenetic interactions” in which “cells and tissues of a developing embryo reciprocally shape each other through cascades

26. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p. 190.

27. Haraway, *When Species Meet* (above, n. 1), p. 216.

28. *Ibid.*, pp. 216–219.

of chemical-tactile communications.”<sup>29</sup> After briefing her readers on the development of embryology over the previous twenty years, Haraway writes in her most Deleuzoguattarian vein: “The point is that contact zones are where the action is, and current interactions change interactions to follow. Probabilities alter; topologies morph; development is canalized by the fruits of reciprocal inductions.” In the next sentence, she introduces the word “subject.” “Contact zones change the subject—all the subjects—in surprising ways.”<sup>30</sup> Haraway often uses the language of the subject unapologetically throughout her work, usually in reference to typologically distinct organisms but also when discussing organs, cells, or critters. More than in the other examples, however, Haraway’s description of embryology is a passageway to Deleuze and Guattari.<sup>31</sup>

The embryo figures prominently for Deleuze and Guattari. Early in his career, Deleuze discovers the slogan, “The world is an egg.” Showing a Nietzschean flair, he explains the process of embryonic individuation:

Embryology shows that the division of an egg into parts is secondary in relation to more significant morphogenetic movements: the augmentation of free surfaces, stretching of cellular layers, invagination by folding, regional displacement of groups. A whole kinematics of the egg appears, which implies a dynamic. Moreover, this dynamic expresses something ideal. Transport is Dionysian, divine and delirious, before it is local transfer. Types of egg are therefore distinguished by the orientations, the axes of development, the differential speeds and rhythms which are the primary factors in the actualisation of a structure.<sup>32</sup>

Rather than drawing attention to the parts of the egg, Deleuze focuses on the kinematics that give rise to foldings, divisions, and the differentiation of cells, tissues, and layers. Before the embryo can have its qualities and parts, it is a “larval subject.” The embryo is

29. *Ibid.*, p. 219.

30. *Ibid.*

31. Haraway writes that “probabilities alter” and there we can clearly identify, in Deleuze and Guattari’s terminology, a “zone of indiscernibility.” She writes that “topologies morph” and because they morph in relation to neighboring cells, there is “a zone of proximity.” She writes that “development is canalized by the fruits of reciprocal inductions” and there we have what Deleuze and Guattari call “intensity.”

32. Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 214. The statement that “The entire world is an egg” appears on p. 216.

the “patient” of the “spatio-temporal dynamisms” at work upon it.<sup>33</sup> Individuation begins with spatio-temporal movement and then, in some kind of divine, delirious, and Dionysian way, there is the actualization of the larval subject.

Notice that these morphogenetic movements are not extinguished with the creation of the body or organism. The intensive processes that set morphogenesis to work continue after the actualization of the body and the organism. The kinematics that brought the egg into creation continue through the organism and beyond it into other organisms. Each body is super-charged with intensity running across it. Each body is Electro. Haraway offers a number of other examples of intensive processes at microscopic, macroscopic, and social scales that fit easily into Deleuze and Guattari’s ontology of movement. As John Protevi explains, if “the entire world is an egg” then every individuation is ‘embryonic,’” and by the time of the writing of *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari explicitly thematize that the syntheses [processes of individuation] are fully material of nature in geological as well as biological, social, and psychological registers.<sup>34</sup>

Continuing with the biological register, allow me to throw these points into sharper relief by drawing upon two examples of horses from animal cognition and horse training. The first comes from studies in epistemic feedback involving the case of “Clever Hans.”<sup>35</sup> The story of Clever Hans may first appear to be a becoming-human of a horse, but there is more at stake. The story begins in 1904 when a group of thirteen experts in different professions assembled in Berlin to determine the mathematical “genius” of this particular horse. Hans seemed able to solve complex mathematical equations in multiplication, division, and the calculation of square roots. In fact, Hans’s gifts were beyond remarkable. All a questioner needed to do

33. Ibid. “Before the embryo as general support of qualities and parts there is the embryo as individual and patient subject of spatio-temporal dynamisms, the larval subject” (p. 215).

34. John Protevi, *Life, War, Earth: Deleuze and the Sciences* (University of Minnesota Press, 2013). Kindle Loc: 3125–3131.

35. Those unfamiliar with the case of Clever Hans should read Despret’s essay as well as the account put forward by Oskar Pfungst; see Oskar Pfungst, *Clever Hans (The Horse of Mr. Von Osten)*, trans. Carl L. Rahn (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965); and Vinciane Despret, “The Body We Care For: Figures of Anthro-zoo-genesis,” in “Bodies on Trial,” ed. M. Akrich and M. Berg, special issue, *Body & Society* 10:2–3 (2004): 111–134. Haraway states that she takes her understanding of becoming-with from Despret. Despret’s account has strong affinities with the becoming of Deleuze and Guattari.

to evoke a response from Hans was to think of the question. Apparently, Hans could also read minds!

Oskar Pfunst, the expert enrolled to solve the mystery, was stumped. Through weeks of trial and error, Pfunst eventually moved the questioners from the horse's line of sight and performed the experiments again. This time, Hans did not answer. Pfunst returned the men to their positions near the horse and had them repeat the questions; Hans returned to guessing the answers correctly. Pfunst continued the experiments, now paying scrupulous, fastidious attention to the bodies of the men. With painstaking specificity, Pfunst was able to deduce that slight, almost imperceptible body movements were accompanying their questions. All of the questioners had taken great care not to offer any hints and were all unaware that their bodies were communicating. "Their bodies," Vinciane Despret explains, "were talking and moving against their will, outside the frame of their consciousness."<sup>36</sup>

But Hans also revealed something else the questioners did not understand about themselves—not only were they influencing him by communicating, he was teaching them how to communicate. Pfunst had asked the questioners to think of the number zero. When they did, he detected a small gesture, a "slight ellipse" of the head. When they concentrated on the thought of zero in the presence of the horse, however, this gesture became a shaking of the head. Strangely, this shaking of the head was the same movement that the horse would use when giving the answer of zero. Despret asks an interesting question: "How could it happen that humans replace their own spontaneous movement with that of the horse, unless we assume that Hans taught them the gestures he needed?"<sup>37</sup> It was not merely that the questioners did not know they were giving the horse the correct answers, but also that the horse was teaching them *how* to give those answers, all outside of their conscious awareness. Hans was establishing a means for nonverbal communication, a *field of affects* for the way in which he communicated. They were not aware that they were participating in this field. Hans had an increased capacity to be affected but he also had an increased capacity to affect others around him. Pfunst was enthralled; he realized that Hans stood to become the key to unlocking myriad secrets involving the unconscious links between affect, bodies, intention, thoughts, and muscles.

Hans's ability to read clues has had an impact on observer-expec-

36. Despret, "Body We Care For" (above, n. 35), p. 113.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 116.

tancy studies, phenomenology, human-animal communication, and more. Similar research into horse-human communication has challenged the privileged status of verbal communication and suggests that “humans and horses co-create a language system by way of the body to facilitate the creation of shared meaning.”<sup>38</sup> For instance, untrained riders are often inept at reading the bodily cues given to them by the horse, so that if one of them gets kicked, he often do not see it coming. As one horsemanship instructor put it, when “you don’t read their body, that’s when people say, ‘my horse kicked me and I had no idea it was coming.’ He’s been telling you probably for weeks before he kicks that something’s coming. And some people are just unaware because of lack of time and being with the horse.”<sup>39</sup> Expertly trained riders, alternatively, often experience the intelligence that *is in the body* of the horse. As one interviewee put it, “if humans have smarter brains, then horses have smarter bodies.”<sup>40</sup> Commanding horses only requires minimal signals for experienced riders because gestural language is incorporated into a much large affective field, what Paul Patton describes as a “somatic framework of interspecies communication.”<sup>41</sup> This larger sensory field includes “pressure, body contact, attitude, and, of course, eye contact.” At more advanced levels, Vicki Hearne has suggested that the relation between horse and rider takes on an imperceptible quality, where no longer does the human control the horse but command “collapses” so that the human-horse experience becomes a “single, supple relation,” what horse trainers often call “becoming one body” with the horse.<sup>42</sup>

Along these lines, consider the famous horse race scene in *Anna Karenina* in which Frou Frou is somehow able to read Wronskij’s thoughts:

At the very moment when Wronskij thought it was time to overtake Machotin, Frou-Frou, divining her master’s thought, increased her pace considerably and without any incitement on his part. She began to come nearer to Gladiator from the near side, which was the most favorable. But Machotin would not

38. Keri Brandt, “A Language of Their Own: An Interactionist Approach to Human-Horse Communication,” *Society and Animals* 12:4 (2004): 299–316.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 310.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 198.

41. Paul Patton, “Language, Power, and the Training of Horses,” in *Zoontologies: The Question of the Animal*, by Cary Wolfe (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), p. 86.

42. *Ibid.*, quote on p. 89.

give up. Wronskij was just considering that he might get past by making the larger circuit on the off-side, when Frou-Frou already changed direction and began to pass Gladiator on that side.<sup>43</sup>

Ethologists call this phenomenon “isopraxism.” One cannot even say that the human-horse assemblage is one in which the horse plays the role of the body and the rider the role of the head. The horse, rather, anticipates and surpasses the thought of the rider. In an essay that Haraway tells us was foundational for her thinking, Vinciane Despret explains isopraxism:

Unintentional movements of the rider occur, as Tolstoy suggested, when the rider thinks about the movements the horse should perform. The horse feels them and, simultaneously, reproduces them. A careful analysis of these unintentional movements made by the human body has shown that these movements, in fact, are exactly the same as the ones the horse performs. The human’s right hand imitates (and anticipates) what the horse’s right front leg will do, the bottom of the back of the rider makes a jerk which is exactly the movement the horse will do to begin to canter, and so on.<sup>44</sup>

The thought has not yet quite occurred but it is still communicated unintentionally to the horse, so that the rider is mildly surprised by the horse’s response. Before appearing to the mind, the intensity of movement flows without conscious instruction to the rider’s appendage and into a movement that corresponds to that intensity. The intensity moves beyond the body and into the body of the horse—a human arm–horse leg machine—where the charge passes through to the horse body as it becomes intense and the horse automatically, autonomically passes the competition on the other side. The rider’s body responds and these molecular dances continue. We should pay attention to the fact that subjective consciousness only occurs retroactively, however. As Brian Massumi and others have shown, the brain lags 0.5 seconds behind the nervous system. Controlled experiments have shown that when it comes to making decisions, the mind does not initiate decisions but responds to “autonomic, bodily reactions” that occur in the nervous system “but outside consciousness.”<sup>45</sup> The brain makes a decision 0.5 seconds *after* the body has already decided. If horses have smarter bodies than humans, then all these affects occur through bodies without assistance from the brain.

43. Despret, “The Body We Care For” (above, n. 35), pp. 114–115.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 115.

45. Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), p. 29.

As in Haraway's two-foot yellow paint strip that she shared with her dog, we most certainly could call this phenomenon a contact zone. But I want to know what happens if this horse-human relation is looked at through the same processes consistent with what happens with the individuation of the embryo. In the more well-known volumes on capitalism and schizophrenia, the egg is associated with the body-without-organs. There is a moment early in *Anti-Oedipus* where Deleuze and Guattari discuss the difficulty associated with the organization of the human body, where they state that the human suffers from being organized this way, in not being organized differently, or in not having an organization at all.<sup>46</sup> Why does the human suffer from its organization?

It is highly likely that Deleuze and Guattari are drawing from Gilbert Simondon here. As stated earlier, the embryo is the exemplar of the processes of intensity, or what Simondon calls pre-individuation. For Simondon the spatio-temporal dynamism charging individuation results in an emergent force to which the actualization of the body or organism is a "response." Deleuze writes that Simondon has shown that "individuation presupposes a prior metastable state" or "at least two orders" of "heterogeneous reality."<sup>47</sup> What does Deleuze mean by these two different orders? He means that there is a tension between the forces of intensity taking place at the scale of pre-individuation and the emergence of the individual itself. On the one hand, the processes of intensity; on the other, the engendered individual body. The reason why we "suffer" is that the two scales are heterogeneous. The order of actuality is brought about as a response to ontogenetic forces that are of a different order altogether. Deleuze and Guattari explain the operation quite clearly in *Anti-Oedipus*:

The body without organs is an egg: it is crisscrossed with axes and thresholds, with latitudes and longitudes and geodesic lines, traversed by gradients marking the transitions and the becomings, the destinations of the subject developing along these particular vectors. Nothing here is representative; rather, it is all life and lived experience: the actual, lived emotion of having breasts does

46. Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* (above, n. 25), p. 8. Readers may recall from *A Thousand Plateaus* the image of the cosmic egg from the Dogon mythology, complete with the distribution of intensities running across the surface of the egg. According to the ancient myth, seven vibrations criss-crossed the egg in spiraling zig-zag lines, morphing its shape into a helix before it birthed the world. See Marcel Griaule and Germaine Dieterlen, "The Dogon," in *African Worlds: Studies in the Cosmological Ideas and Social Values of African Peoples*, by Daryll Forde (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), pp. 84-85.

47. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* (above, n. 32), p. 246.

not resemble breasts, it does not represent them, any more than a predestined zone in the egg resembles the organ that it is going to be stimulated to produce within itself.<sup>48</sup>

We can note an essential incommensurability between the two orders. The emergence of the subject, organism, or body is itself of a different order from that of the “vectors and lines” which gave rise to it. But these vectors and lines are in no way extinguished once the molar form comes to fruition. They continue to subsist within the individual being itself. While on one level intensive forces of pre-individuation pose a particular force to which the body is a response, as we saw in Nietzsche and the case of the drives earlier, these forces are not quieted. In Simondon’s terms, the organism is thus in a state of *metastability*, saturated with pre-individual intensity. Material, real, and consistent with the processes that take place on all registers, from the geological, biological, social, and psychological, these intensive forces give rise to multitudinous becomings.

It is possible to move from the pre-individual, to the intra-individual, to the *transindividual*. The metastability of the so-called Simondon “individual” is what Anne Sauvanargues calls a “trans-generic concept,” and opens, because the living being is always in transport, toward “an ethics of differentiation.”<sup>49</sup> The possibility of a transindividual or collective ethics of becoming is an ontological consequence of an oversaturation of intensities that exceeds the substantial body. Intensities crisscross the body as they had also done with the egg. These affects are the “residue of unspent or unactualized forces from the pre-individual.”<sup>50</sup> Pre-individual intensities saturate the body, but as that which gives rise to the body, they are not bound by it. They pass through, as affects, as “lines of musicality,” as becomings-animal, becomings-intense, becomings-imperceptible into further processes of differentiation and assemblage making.

To borrow Haraway’s term, the affects “canalize” through the body, often bypassing consciousness, or if they appear to consciousness, it is usually after the fact of their occurrence in the autonomic

48. If there is any question, these “lines and vectors” are pre-individual processes of intensity; see Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* (above, n. 25), p. 19.

49. Anne Sauvanargues, “Crystals and Membranes: Individuation and Temporality,” trans. Jon Roffe, in *Gilbert Simondon: Being and Technology*, ed. Arne De Boever, Alex Murray, Jon Roffe, and Ashley Woodward (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), p. 58.

50. Elizabeth Grosz, “Identity and Individuation: Some Feminist Reflections,” in De Boever, Murray, Roffe, and Woodward, *Gilbert Simondon* (above, n. 49), p. 50.

nervous system. They are, Deleuze states, “purely transitive.” They are experienced in two states, as both intensity and extensity.<sup>51</sup> When Deleuze and Guattari speak about affects and becomings animal, it should be clear why they do not differentiate between the inside and an outside of a body. A contact zone becomes a “zone of indiscernibility,” as intensities are not defined by organisms or species. On a line of flight, it becomes impossible to distinguish between them.

Organisms and species, dogs and horses, cats and cows—or humans and iPhones, for that matter—come into contact continuously, but what makes the difference is not the relation between one being and another, but the affects that are generated across and through them, the capacity of their intensities to affect and to be affected. Not one body to the next, but the affects and the degrees by which an affect increases the power of one’s body to affect and be affected. “Affect is part of their dynamic interactional ontology,” explains Protevi, “so that defining bodies in terms of affects or power to act and to undergo is different from reading them in terms of properties of the substantive bodies by which they are arranged in species and genera.”<sup>52</sup> As Haraway continually reminds us, organisms are already assemblages of multiple bodies, and following movement requires following virtual processes—haecceities—pure relations of movement and rest between molecules, the speeds and slownesses that give rise to the capacity to affect and be affected.<sup>53</sup> Affects and becomings that cross bodies follow “an intensive geography” and a cartography of lines that Deleuze and Guattari define by longitude and latitude<sup>54</sup>:

A body is not defined by the form that determines it nor as a determinate substance or subject nor by the organs it possesses or the functions it fulfills. On the plane of consistency, a body is defined only by a longitude and a latitude: in other words the sum total of the material elements belonging to it under given relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness (longitude); the sum total of the intensive affects it is capable of at a given power or degree of potential (latitude). Nothing but affects and local movements, differential speeds.<sup>55</sup>

51. Gilles Deleuze, quoted in John Protevi, *Life, War, Earth* (above, n. 34), Kindle Loc 1259–1260.

52. Protevi, *Life, War, Earth* (above, n. 34), Kindle Loc 1272–1273.

53. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* (above, n. 26), p. 261.

54. Protevi, *Life, War, Earth* (above, n. 34), Kindle Loc 720.

55. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* (above, n. 26), p. 190.

From the perspective of Deleuze and Guattari's ontology, we are in error when we think primarily in terms of substances and their properties. A thing is of a different order from the forces that gave rise to it. To mistake a thing for these movements and speeds would be a way of making sense of the world through misrepresentation, rather than in understanding the conditions of possibility for the genesis of the real. Desire, intensity, affect, *produce*. Intensities create the world, whether it is an object in the form of an egg, a new dwarf planet in the Kuiper Belt, an exploitive economic system, or a work of art that seeks to multiply intensities by acting directly on a nervous system. Constantine Boundas reminds us that "Deleuze's ontology of becoming denounces the error we commit when we think exclusively in terms of things and their qualities, because by privileging extension and extended magnitudes we bypass the intensive genesis of the extended (transcendental illusion)."<sup>56</sup> Thinking in terms of speeds and movement and of preindividuation and transindividuating processes gives us the chance of inventing-with the intensities that produce so many realities. It is for this reason that becoming animal does not begin and end with humans and animals. Since molecular revolutions create symphonies, oceans, and strawberries, they can recreate them. Companies such as Monsanto, DuPont, or Dow may not read anything except the stock market, but they learn about desire through capital and exchange. They inject their seeds and eggs with flows genetically modified to strengthen the market, revolutionizing agriculture to the benefit of no body and no thing. But desire's power is in its radical democracy, running through all things and species. Capital does not own it but organizes it better than anyone.

Allow me to conclude by briefly addressing one central complaint against Deleuze and Guattari, a criticism or comment that appears in writers both sympathetic and antagonistic to Deleuze and Guattari's project of becoming animal. For her part, Haraway is very straightforward concerning the point that she is interested in dogs—not the idea of the dog, but actual, living and breathing animals with paws, fur, and fangs. The criticism, mentioned in passing at the beginning of the essay, is that Deleuze and Guattari are not interested in actual animals but see them as what Beaulieu calls "conceptual" operators, that they are not interested in animals as animals but as figures that allow them to think through ideas. Again, forms of this mantra appear in various places. Lori Brown writes that Deleuze and Guattari

56. Constantine Boundas, "Intensity," in *The Deleuze Dictionary*, ed. Adrian Parr (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), p. 131.

fail to “address institutions that have a negative impact on other animals,” and Steve Baker writes that animals “seem to operate more as a device of writing . . . than as living beings whose conditions of life were of direct concern to the writers.”<sup>57</sup> Derek Ryan responds by saying that the “conceptual framework” of becoming animal that Deleuze and Guattari offer is, at the least, “useful for thinking about human interactions with animals on ontological as well as ethical grounds.”<sup>58</sup>

Given all of what has been said above concerning the importance of pre-individual and intensive processes, I find this position that Deleuze and Guattari are not interested in actual animals curious, as it seems that the comparison neglects an important ontological discussion, an example of “falling out of step” between “two heterogeneous realities,” to borrow Simondon’s and Deleuze’s terms. The arguments presented above certainly suggest that it would be disingenuous for Deleuze and Guattari to prioritize *actual* animals when the concept of *actuality* does not adequately attend to the virtual dimensions across human, animal, vegetal, geological, social, and political bodies. The same complaint could just as easily be lodged against Deleuze and Guattari’s position concerning humans. Humans are composed only of very different *inhumanities*, *inhumanities* of different natures and speeds. These natures and speeds may give rise to us, may in fact bring us into being, but they are not *of us*. Sustaining an orientation to them does not mean that future possibilities within the dynamics of social transformation cannot be developed. To the contrary, power can be reorganized, but only on the condition that such decisive struggles allow themselves to be radically conditioned by the molecular revolutions passing through them.

57. Lori Brown and Steve Baker, quoted in Ryan, “Deleuze, Woolf and the Territory of Cows” (above, n. 16), p. 238.

58. *Ibid.*