

**Animals and Capitalism:  
Reading and Reflecting on *Porkopolis***  
Marxist Education Project  
Winter 2022

Convened by Terike Haapoja and Fred Murphy

A discussion and reading group on the central role of nonhuman animals in the capitalist economy, both historically and today. We will explore the potential and limits of Marxist theory for addressing the roles and fates of nonhuman animals, as well as ways to connect anticapitalist struggles to animal liberation and environmental justice. The main reading for this study group will be [Porkopolis: American Animality, Standardized Life, and the Factory Farm](#), by Alex Blanchette. The book is available in paperback and eBook formats from various online outlets. Other readings will be available online or in PDFs in the group's [Dropbox folder](#).

1. **March 2**

Jason Hribal, "Animals are Part of the Working Class"  
18 Theses on Marxism and Animal Liberation  
Laura Schleifer and Daniel Fischer, "Animal Liberation Is Climate Justice"  
*Laura Schleifer and Daniel Fischer will join the discussion*

2. **March 9**

Alex Blanchette, *Porkopolis* – Introduction, pp. 1-30  
*Alex Blanchette will introduce his book and join the discussion*

3. **March 16**

Blanchette, *Porkopolis* – Part I: Boar, pp. 31-70

4. **March 23 – Labor**

Blanchette, *Porkopolis* – Part II: Sow, pp. 71-117  
Brett Mizelle, "Radical Hope: Rethinking Multispecies Work in the Anthropocene"  
Alasdair Cochrane, "Good Work for Animals"  
Jocelyne Porcher and Tiphaine Schmitt, "Dairy Cows: Workers in the Shadows?"

5. **March 30**

Blanchette, *Porkopolis* – Part III: Hog, pp. 119-163  
Gabriel Rosenberg, "How Meat Changed Sex – The Law of Interspecies Intimacy after Industrial Reproduction"  
Carol J. Adams: "Another Cow"  
Astra Taylor and Sunaura Taylor, "Our Animals, Our Selves"

6. **April 6**

Blanchette, *Porkopolis* – Part IV: Carcass, pp. 164-200  
Jocelyn Porcher, "The Relationship Between Workers and Animals in the Pork Industry: A Shared Suffering"

7. **April 13**

Blanchette, *Porkopolis* – Epilogue, pp. 239-245  
Alyssa Battistoni, "Bringing in the Work of Nature: From Natural Capital to Hybrid Labor"  
Alasdair Cochrane, "Labour Rights for Animals"  
Jason Hribal, "Animals are Part of the Working Class Reviewed"

8. **April 20**

David Sztybel, "Marxism and Animal Rights"  
Marco Maurizi, *Beyond Nature: Animal Liberation, Marxism and Critical Theory* – chapter(s) tba

## Supplementary Readings and Materials

### Articles (PDFs in [Dropbox](#)):

Maneesha Dekha, "The Subhuman as a Cultural Agent of Violence"  
Jacques Derrida, "Violence Against Animals"  
Jason Hribal, "Animals, Agency and Class – Writing the History of Animals from Below"  
Leigh Claire La Berge: "Introduction: Cat Out of the Bag," *Marx for Cats: A Radical Bestiary* (forthcoming)  
Jason Moore, "Cheap Food and Bad Climate – From Surplus Value to Negative Value in Capitalist Economy"  
Troy Vettese, "A Marxist Theory of Extinction"  
Kari Weil, "A Report on the Animal Turn"  
Ziporah Weisberg, "Animal Repression – Speciesism as Pathology"  
Sam White, "From Globalized Pig Breeds to Capitalist Pigs: A Study in Animal Cultures and Evolutionary History"

### Books

#### *Animals, capitalism, multispecies biopolitics*

Elan Abrell, *Saving Animals: Multispecies Ecologies of Rescue and Care*  
J.L. Anderson, *Capitalist Pigs: Pigs, Pork, and Power in America*  
Peter Atkins, ed., *Animal Cities: Beastly Urban Histories*  
Charlotte Blattner et al., eds., *Animal Labour: A New Frontier of Interspecies Justice?*  
Alasdair Cochrane, *An Introduction to Animals and Political Theory*  
Sarat Collin, *Animal Resistance in the Global Capitalist Era (The Animal Turn)*  
William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*  
Vinciane Despret, *Do Animals Work? Creating Pragmatic Narratives*  
Ruth Harrison, *Animal Machines. The New Factory Farming Industry* (1964)  
Leigh Claire La Berge, *Marx for Cats* (forthcoming, 2022)  
Jason Moore, *Capitalism in the Web of Life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital*  
David Nibert, *Animal Oppression and Capitalism* (2 volumes)  
Jocelyne Porcher, *The Ethics of Animal Labor - A Collaborative Utopia*  
Jasbir K. Puar and Julie Livingstone, *Interspecies*  
Tiago Saraiva, *Fascist Pigs - Technoscientific Organisms and the History of Fascism*  
Nicole Shukin, *Animal Capital: Rendering Life in Biopolitical Times*  
Andrew A. Robichaud, *Animal City: The Domestication of America*  
James C. Scott, *Against the Grain: A Deep History of the Earliest States*  
Wilson Warren, *Tied to the Great Packing Machine: The Midwest and Meatpacking*

#### *Colonialism and domestication*

Virginia DeJohn Anderson, *Creatures of Empire*  
Abel Alves, *The Animals of Spain: An Introduction to Imperial Perceptions and Human Interaction with Other Animals, 1492-1826*  
Antoinette Burton and Renisa Mawani, eds., *Animalia: An Anti-Imperialist Bestiary for our Times*  
Alfred Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe*  
Alfred Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*  
Juno Salazar Parrenas, *Decolonizing Extinction*

#### *Biopolitics and animalization*

Mel Y. Chen, *Animacies*  
Zakiyyah Iman Jackson, *Becoming Human – Matter and Meaning in an Antiracist World*  
Aph Ko and Syl Ko: *Aphro-Isms: Essays on Pop Culture, Feminism, and Black Veganism from Two Sisters*  
Jasbir K. Puar, *The Right to Maim – Debility, Capacity, Disability*  
Joseph Pugliese, *Biopolitics of the More-Than-Human*

### Online Resources

Leigh Claire La Berge, [Marx for Cats: A Radical Bestiary](#) (Red May 2021) and [Marx for Cats on Vimeo antennae: The Journal of Nature in Visual Culture](#)