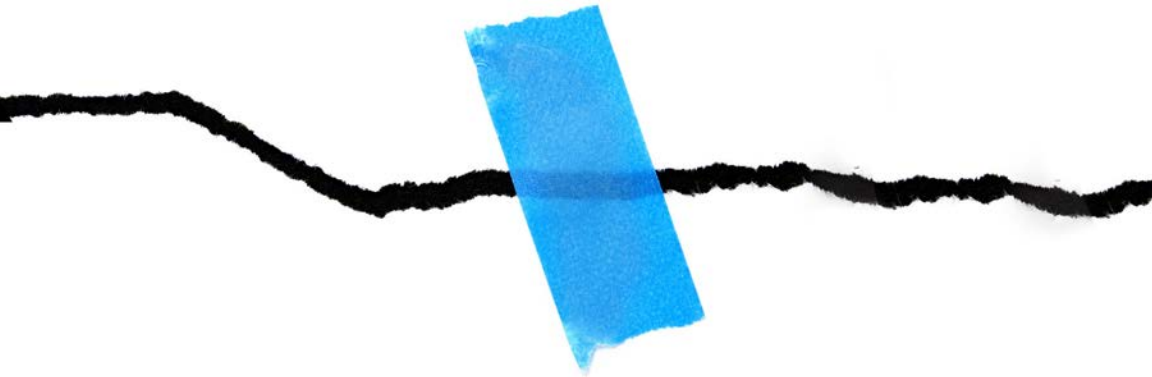
The Ruse of Repair



US NEOLIBERAL EMPIRE

AND THE TURN FROM CRITIQUE

Patricia Stuelke

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Acknowledgments

This book began a long time ago in the messy overlap between two communal scenes of political disappointment and frustration: my grad school reading of what has now solidified as the field of postcritique, and my experiences participating in anti-imperialist solidarity movement organizing. I attended a lot of meetings in which we had endless discussions about tactics: What are the impact of boycotts? Is popular education the proper endpoint of solidarity work? And I listened in on many side conversations, during which the measure of solidarity often seemed to be how much one had personally suffered at the hands of nosy, belligerent soldiers or cops. I learned a lot in those meetings, and especially from the conversations I had afterward with my most trusted comrade in reading and organizing, during which she reminded me, at least once, that my feelings didn't really matter all that much to the movement's work of liberation. More than anything, this book is a product of that insight, as eventually all the focus on managing one's feelings and on manifesting the affective state of being "in solidarity" began to seem to us in some way connected to the academic arguments that encouraged a return to the body, affect, and the text as the proper scope of criticism and politics. This project became a means of formulating a historical relation between those two scenes. The US Left has changed a lot since those days, growing more militant in the realm of both critique and action. The kids are all right, in other words, and not really in immediate need of the history this book offers. But the lure of repair and remediation remains, and so I offer up what I've learned in case it might still be of use.

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In Chilean artist Alfredo's Jaar's 1984 installation *We Are All Created Equal*, the diapered but otherwise naked white baby and self-important text of a *Fortune* magazine advertisement preside above a *Newsweek* photograph of faceless gun-wielding Contra soldiers striding through Central America. Next to this framed and matted pairing, an enlarged black-and-white print of the Contra soldiers photograph accompanies a spare reproduction of the ad's headline: "We're all created equal. After that, baby, you're on your own" (figures I.1–I.3). The juxtaposition of the headless soldiers and the smirking white baby evinces the forms of brutal violence that installed neoliberal racial capitalism in the final decades of the twentieth century, illustrating how US neoliberal empire, under the sign of white babies' fleshy innocence, crushed state socialist projects while co-opting hemispheric social movements' visions of equality into structures of social and economic privatization.[1] "If you want to make it," *Fortune* insists, "you're going to have to make it on your own. Your own drive, your own guts, your own ambition. Yes, ambition. You don't have to hide it anymore." Jaar's piece exposes how this mythic promise of capitalist success is a lie: nobody makes it on their own. The "movers and shakers" of US finance capital who "make it—and keep it" are enabled not by their own sovereign power, but rather by systemized, faceless imperialist violence.

In the same year Jaar fashioned *We Are All Created Equal*, African American artist Clarissa Sligh made a Central America solidarity movement film documenting the creation of La Verdadera Avenida de las Americas (The True Avenue of the Americas) along West Broadway in New York City.[2] On a cold January day, along the edges of the sidewalk where the street met the sky, a group of artists-turned-solidary activists hung signs featuring Latin American and Caribbean revolutionary leaders like Maurice Bishop and Lolita Lebron, as

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FIGURES 1.1–1.3. Alfredo Jaar, *We Are All Created Equal* (1984). © Alfredo Jaar. Courtesy Galerie Lelong & Co., New York, and the artist.

well as faces of ordinary people from across the hemisphere. In front of these fluttering banners, these artist activists made speeches and performed street theater, acting out the dystopian present of state-sanctioned genocidal death squads patrolling Central America in the name of anticommunism. The film records one of these performances: while one activist spoke to the press and milling passersby, others costumed as soldiers ran into the crowd, mock-jabbing fake guns into people's stomachs, arresting them, and staging a coup for a mock dictator who took to the stage cracking jokes. Such actions constituted their attempt to offer, in the words of the event flier, "a living manifestation of solidarity with the heroic struggles of the people of El Salvador, Guatemala and other Latin American lands" and to "remind passersby that" in Central America "people are fighting and dying for the right to live, to work, to make art, and to stroll down their own streets in their own towns on a Saturday afternoon."[3]

Sligh's film might be said to encapsulate what Eve Sedgwick has called the "difficult nexus" where activism and theory meet, the site of both convergence and flux between the affective and analytic modes of paranoid critique and reparative engagement.[4] The camera's patient documentation of the activists' art exhibits and theater captures their creative commitment to the work of exposure and political education, their faith that dramatizing the violence of Central American and especially US state power could mobilize audiences to challenge them. US intervention is possible, according to the event flier, "up to the point that US public opinion will permit."[5] But the artists' testimonies in the film also reveal the practices of pleasure and personal satisfaction that infuse the movement. "I learned a lot," one participant says, providing the conversational voiceover that accompanies shots of building the protest, the camera tracking the patient labor of staking wooden poles and stringing up signs between

them. "I think that night when we spent all of us working together preparing and sewing the edges and putting in the grommets was absolutely thrilling," says another. "That was to me in a sense more exciting than actually putting it up in the freezing cold." "I really enjoyed it," another echoed, "the energy we got from it. I think that was great."

Anyone who has participated in solidarity movement protest will recognize these sentiments: activists' expressions of their personal growth through solidarity work; their satisfaction at the intellectual and affective renewal that this work has brought to their own lives; the joy in the process of making something together, even something as quotidian as anchoring grommets; the feeling of accomplishment at a collective practice that feels like a transferable skill, something you can bring with you, in those activists' words, "to the next thing."[6] But they might also recognize the distance between the "emotional habitus" of this scene of solidarity and the incisive attention of Jaar's juxtaposition in *We Are All Created Equal*.[7] Jaar's piece lays bare the hemispheric state violence necessary to produce even the daily detritus of capitalism in the United States, like a glossy print ad slogan celebrating the willing sacrifice of equality and community in favor of craven ambition, reparatively produced as a natural corporeal drive of which no one should be ashamed. In Sligh's film, such scenes of state and capitalist violence recede amid the celebration of activists' "thrilling" sense of connection, as they find the work of preparing for the protest "more exciting" than the protest itself. "Excitement" and ineffable "energy"—feeling good—become the measure of their collective solidarity action, and the generation of those feelings becomes the true subject of Sligh's solidarity process film, and thus the legacy it leaves behind.[8]

This book reads such frictions within late twentieth-century solidarity movement culture in the Americas as evidence of the tactical negotiations between critique and compensatory connection carried out in activist, scholarly, and state circles in the years of US neoliberal empire's ascendance. By examining how such aesthetic and interpretive contestations eventually manifested mistaken equations of reparative feeling with collective liberation, *The Ruse of Repair* offers both a history and a critique of the US academy's celebrated flight from critique to repair, glossed loosely here as the "reparative turn."[9] It is the contention of this book that this shift—this glide that so often is articulated as a relief from the exhaustion of struggling against structural violence that never seems to abate or recede—has an intertwined activist and political-economic history. Premised on the notion that imperialist war and racial capitalist violence, and the scenes of activism and creative political art and world-making that challenge them, inform our academic and everyday habits of mind more

than we generally acknowledge, *The Ruse of Repair* examines representations of late twentieth-century US neoliberal empire, along with the activist, university, and state scenes that generated them, in order to chart a genealogy of how a large swath of the US academy and beyond has arrived at the valorization of repair. This is a story of how neoliberal racial capitalism in the years of its ascent was tied to an emerging activist, scholarly, and state reparative imaginary at the sites of US empire's extension.

The Prison of Critique

When Eve Sedgwick first formulated her call to revalue repair in the mid-1990s, she did so out of a sense that critique had become a useless and outmoded tool to deal with state violence. Feeling uneasy that queer theory and criticism still seemed structured by the critical "paranoid" mood of the AIDS crisis, even after the arrival of antiretroviral drugs had diminished the disease's annihilating power, Sedgwick argued that the time for the "paranoid project of exposure" of post-1960s "New Historicist, deconstructive, feminist, queer, and psychoanalytic criticism" was over.[10] The "hermeneutics of suspicion" that practiced the "unveiling of practices that had been hidden or naturalized"—Jaar's piece above might be said to practice this mode of analysis in a visual key—were ill-equipped to analyze "violence that was *from the beginning* exemplary and spectacular"; such analytical tools had been much more suited to a time when violence was "deprecated and hence hidden in the first place."[11] "Why bother exposing the ruses of power in a country where, at any given moment, 40 percent of young black men are enmeshed in the penal system?" she asked.[12] Because such state violence was "pointedly addressed, meant to serve as a public warning or terror to members of a particular community"—Sedgwick offers "torture and disappearances in Argentina" as another example—it did not require the "demystification" of critique so much as "efforts to *displace* and *redirect* (as well as simply expand) its aperture of visibility."[13]

For Sedgwick, paranoid critique was not only passé, but mean and condescending too, in its willingness to dismiss pleasure, beauty, and the comfort of "amelioration." Critique performed such dismissals, she claimed, out of the mistaken idea "that the one thing lacking for global revolution . . . is people's having the painful effects of their oppression, poverty, or deludedness sufficiently exacerbated to make the pain conscious (as if it otherwise wouldn't have been) and intolerable (as if intolerable situations were famous for generating excellent solutions)."[14] Here Sedgwick's wry explication of critique's arrogance is linked again to her sense of its boring futility in the face of state and capitalist violence's

spectacularity: critique finds what it expects to find, and even when it does, it cannot count on anyone transforming the world in response. In light of such disappointment, she asks, "what makes pleasure and amelioration so mere?"[15]

Given what she saw as the all-too-evident violence of a racist carceral US state and of US-backed dictatorships in Latin America, Sedgwick concluded that the academy and the world needed a more capacious language for reparative modes of reading, interpretation, and living. "Reparative," a term Sedgwick adopts from psychoanalyst Melanie Klein, references "motives" and "critical practices" that prize what leftist criticism dismisses as "merely aesthetic" or "merely reformist."[16] Reparative criticism is concerned with how people find "comfort," "nourishment," and tools for survival in the texts of capitalism and empire, or as Sedgwick puts it, with "the many ways selves and communities succeed in extracting sustenance from the objects of a culture—even of a culture whose avowed desire has often been not to sustain them."[17] In Sedgwick's taxonomy, reparation and reparative reading, as Heather Love has glossed them, are "on the side of multiplicity, surprise, rich divergence, consolation, creativity, and love," and thus are "better at the level of ethics and affect" as well as "at the level of epistemology and knowledge."[18]

Sedgwick's doubts about the utility of the paranoid mode during an era when US state violence was exercised "on the surface," and Love's sense that the reparative "no doubt" constitutes something "better," spread over the course of the next few decades. In her address to the American Studies Association in 2003, as she considered the second Bush administration's horrific acts of occupation, invasion, and torture that accompanied the "shock and awe" campaigns of the early years of the global war on terror, Amy Kaplan expressed similar concerns about her own critical investments in uncovering the violence of US empire:

> Along with other scholars, I have argued that the denial and disavowal of empire has long served as the ideological cornerstone of U.S. imperialism and a key component of American exceptionalism. So I feel blindsided when I find champions of empire making a similar argument for different political ends. . . . This uncanny mirroring makes me wonder about the limits of my own approach, which we might call a method of exposure, one that reveals the repressed violence embedded in cultural productions or that recovers stories of violent oppression absent from prior master historical narratives. At this political moment, in an administration committed to secrecy and deception, lies and acts of violence appear hidden on the surface, and the unpacking of a complex ideological construct often seems irrelevant.[19]

Kaplan's sense of the irrelevance of paranoid critique in an era when the "lies and acts of violence" of the imperialist carceral US state appear "hidden on the surface" echoes Sedgwick's critique of exposure as a method. They resonate, too, with humanities scholars' justifications for the mushrooming array of alternate approaches to reading and analyzing cultural texts developed in subsequent years. These methods tend to reject "strong theory" and contextualization, advocating instead for the "surface," the "descriptive," the "affective," and the "reparative." Mark Seltzer has called this "the incrementalist turn": a turn to a "political minimalism" that generates "minority reports" "with respect to affect, minor feelings; with respect to political forms, little resistances, infantile subjects, minute therapeutic adjustments."[20] Like Sedgwick and Kaplan, proponents of these methods are suspicious of suspicious modes of reading. They propose instead, as Rita Felski does, that critics "forge a language of attachment" so as to treat texts "not as objects to be investigated but as coactors that make things happen."[21] Drawing on Bruno Latour's actor network theory, Felski argues that this approach will allow readers to attend to what a text "makes possible in the viewer or reader—what kind of emotions it elicits, what perceptual changes it triggers, what affective bonds it calls into being."[22] As is the case for Sedgwick and Kaplan, ideology critique in these accounts often appears as unnecessary in the face of spectacular US state violence. In their call for "surface reading," for instance, Stephen Best and Sharon Marcus similarly look to develop a kind of fellowship with their objects of study, motivated by a concern that interpretive practices invested in "demystification" are "superfluous in an era when images of torture at Abu Ghraib and elsewhere were immediately circulated on the internet"; "the real-time coverage of Hurricane Katrina," they suggest further, "showed in ways that required little explication the state's abandonment of its African American citizens."[23]

This turn toward the reparative as a response to state violence has also reverberated outside the academy. As Dierdra Reber has described—citing Zapatista Subcomandante Galeano (formerly Marcos)'s advocacy for people "to opine, and *to feel*, and to dissent"—feeling often functions in the present not only as "a vehicle for knowledge," but as "the motor driving activist intervention."[24] Graffiti around the world shouts "the new global currency is love," while allies carry "Love Water Not Oil" signs in solidarity with indigenous peoples fighting the construction of oil pipelines. The Zapatistas describe themselves as "experts (or professionals) in hope," while other Latin American artists and creative collectives, in solidarity with indigenous activists, emphasize *micropolitica*, a practice that, as Suely Rolnik writes, "can incite in the people that are affected by it in its reception: it does not have to do with the consciousness of domination

and exploitation (its extensive face, representative, macropolitical), but rather the experience of this state of things in the very body."[25] Solidarity tourism, from Palestine to Ferguson, Missouri, stimulates and manages affect, as tours are designed to provoke either identificatory or disidentificatory feelings in activist-tourists that they then struggle to mobilize; as such, solidarity activism can sometimes seem less about dismantling empire and more about the affective renewal of relatively privileged subjects.[26]

Given the violence of the recent past and present—the omnipresence of the forever war and the policing of national borders, the ongoing ravages of settler colonialism, antiblack state-sanctioned and capitalist violence in the continuing aftermaths of slavery, ever-increasing debt and economic precarity, and the catastrophic reprisals of a dying planet—it is understandable that scholars and activists are celebrating or mining as models for their own practice those strategies people use to cope within the systems that oppress them. Yet there are myriad difficulties with the presumptions about state violence that underlie the embrace of reparative methods, modes, and moods. Such appeals to treat state and capitalist violence as obvious and evident—to "[let] ghosts be ghosts, rather than [say] what they are ghosts of," as Best and Marcus write[27]—tend to overestimate the legibility of state and capitalist violence, as well as the extent to which understandings of that violence are known and shared. We have only to think of Nicole Fleetwood's analysis of the regime of "carceral visuality"—a regime that renders the incarcerated "invisible" even as the state and popular culture circulate a "set of rehearsed images" through which the prison becomes legible and naturalized as necessary—to understand the oddity of Sedgwick's suggestion that the racist violence of mass incarceration renders paranoid critique irrelevant.[28] And we have only to ask, as Crystal Bartolovich does with regard to Marcus and Best's claim for the obviousness of antiblack racist violence on the Gulf Coast, "Were individual white viewers of newscasts in Ohio able spontaneously to 'map' themselves socially in relation to the flood and parse the causes of state 'abandonment' of fellow citizens or their own implication in it?"[29] In other words, as Caroline Lesjak has noted, "spectacular forms of domination too require interpretation."[30]

Even if there is a widespread shared understanding of some forms of state violence, such appeals to its transparency also tend to obscure the labor of those activists, scholars, writers, and artists who worked hard to make and circulate that knowledge, as well as the degree to which the discourse of transparency effaces the methods of exposure central to their work. While Sedgwick understands that "paranoid exigencies" of activism and research "are often necessary for nonparanoid knowing and utterance," this understanding often

seems to move out of focus in a postcritical field that continually reiterates the assumption that the mechanisms of state, imperialist, and racial capitalist violence are already known and understood.[31] Assertions of the manifest comprehensibility of state violence also efface how discourses of transparency themselves work to enforce ongoing forms of state violence and racial capitalist dispossession. For example, media coverage of the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina "transparently," to borrow Lisa Marie Cacho's characterization, represented black people as criminals, refugees, and "looters" and, in so doing, "eras[ed] the state's neglect." "Acts of transparent recognition," Cacho reminds, "are integral to the processes that criminalize people of color in the first place."[32] Critics' certainty about the legibility of structural violence, in other words, obscures the workings of ongoing structures of racial capitalism and settler colonialism in the present, as well as political and activist praxis against them, while allowing those processes to shape uncritically academics' own inevitably interpretive practices.

This book, however, brackets the problem of the perceived intelligibility of contemporary racial capitalist and imperialist violence—as well as the implications for methodologies that take for granted this transparency—in favor of a genealogical question: How has anti-imperialism become associated with feeling-as-practice and the rejection of historicism and ideology critique? How might we historicize the rise of reparative approaches, and in particular the idea that reparative modes constitute the ethical response to US neoliberal empire and racial capitalism? In the academy, reparative and postcritical readings often seem to arrive as relief and reprieve—from the AIDS crisis, from George W. Bush's disastrous wars, and especially from racial and imperialist violence that no longer needs exposure—curiously immune to other ideological and material forces, a response to and respite from history but never its product.[33] *The Ruse of Repair* presses on these senses of relief and reprieve. It argues that the embrace of reparative modes as a critical and even ethical response to US imperial formations—the casting of such formations as legible and evident, and the corresponding turn to feeling and care as ends in themselves and limit points of possible action—has a history, one that is inextricable from the cultural and social forms of US imperialism and anti-imperialism in the late twentieth century and the concomitant rise of neoliberal racial capitalism.

The genealogy of the rise of the reparative that this book constructs shares much with longer genealogies of affect and the reparative's relation to global capitalism and colonialism. It unfolds in sympathy with Reber's tracing of the origins of neoliberalism's affective episteme—its "casting of knowledge, self, and world in the language of emotion and feeling"—back to the formation of

free market capitalism in the revolutionary periods of the United States and Latin America, after which it remained an emergent structure of feeling until neoliberalism was secured as the dominant organizing principle of the world economy.[34] *The Ruse of Repair*, however, offers a shorter genealogy of the spread of the reparative, focusing on the late 1970s and 1980s, the years in which US administrative and bureaucratic violence, counterinsurgency, and military intervention facilitated neoliberalism's ascent. Like Reber, it understands the affective and the reparative as emergent structures in this period, but rather than mapping a clean break between empire and capital, between "imperialist reason" and neoliberal affect, of the sort Reber proposes, this book tarries in the entangled relations between late twentieth-century US empire and emerging structures of neoliberal racial capitalism, both of which functioned through aggressive and ambivalent registers of absolution, repair, reconciliation, and remediation.[35] The purpose here is to limn the messy yet mutually reinforcing relations between US imperialist and neoliberal racial capitalist reparative visions: to see, for instance, how US empire's revival came to be framed as an ameliorative possibility for people in the United States made subject to and by a service economy, even as the United States and global governance organizations imposed very same racialized economic structures on Central America and the Caribbean, framing them as a means to repair the violence of US imperial invasion and counterinsurgency.[36]

With this focus, *The Ruse of Repair* also unfolds in conversation with David Eng's reading of Melanie Klein's theory of reparation as the psychic inheritance of European colonialism, and with Audra Simpson's searing explications of how discourses of repair and reconciliation have in the long and short durée constituted the "gestural architecture[s] of settler states."[37] Eng teaches us to read Kleinian reparation as a disavowal of "responsibility in a history of colonial war and violence that preserves and extends life to some while simultaneously withholding it from others";[38] it enacts "a closed circuit of injury and repair," one that equates "justice" with the "liberal redistribution of love and life," rather than with the return of stolen land, compensation for stolen labor, or the abolition of racist settler colonial capitalist institutions.[39] Reparation is thus, in Eng's reading, the psychic scaffolding for what Simpson shows are imperial settler states' efforts to hold legal proceedings and construct policies that in effect secure "settler absolution" for irremediable violence.[40] Such official exercises in absolution, they show, police and maintain the racialized boundaries of the human that secure the dominance of white settler subjects over economic resources and life itself, while allowing those settler subjects to feel not so bad about it.

Following Eng and Simpson, this book understands political (as well as interpretive and aesthetic) investments in repair and reconciliation as deeply implicated in colonial, settler colonial, and imperialist histories. However, rather than consider truth commissions, compensatory legislation, or policies of formal reparation for state, colonial, and racial violence, this book's interest is in the kinds of affective and relational structures that underlie and sometimes script such forms of official redress. Moving among different scales from social movement and other forms of collective infrastructure to aesthetic production to lived experience to academic institution, it pursues the reparative practices, relationalities, and modes of interpretation developed not only by agents of the violent US state and the diversifying corporate university, but also by anti-imperialist and solidarity activists, writers, and photographers.[41] It does so in order to remain attuned to the intertwined discourses of freedom and feeling that linked US imperialism and activist opposition to it during the period of neoliberalism's consolidation. Liberal empire has always, Mimi Nguyen argues, offered the "precious poisonous gift of freedom."[42] In the wake of postwar anticolonial movements, US neoliberal empire found pernicious ways to contract, corral, and infect what liberation movements labored to build, but movement opposition to US invasion and counterinsurgency in the name of hemispheric affiliation and solidarity also charted routes for constituting new racial capitalist social and aesthetic forms and relations.

The 1980s, in particular, was a decade that anticipated Kaplan's description of an American empire run by "secrecy and deception" in which "lies and acts of violence appear hidden on the surface"; as Michael Rogin describes, events like the Iran-Contra scandal and the invasion of Grenada troubled "the distinction between mass spectacle and covert power."[43] Since Rogin made this claim in the early 1990s, American Studies has more or less, to borrow Russ Castronovo's pithy phrasing, "lopped off from consideration" US imperialism in the 1980s, as if it is "too unconnected to the cultural past or the imperial future we now inhabit."[44] But it is precisely this sense of US imperial formations of the 1980s as excluded from consideration by their very covert spectacularity—so resonant with the descriptions of War-on-Terror-era state violence evoked above—that marks their importance to the genealogy of the reparative this book pursues.[45] Late twentieth-century US imperialist violence engendered a sense of what Ann Laura Stoler calls "abrupt rupture"—it's worth remembering that in 1982, a year and some months before the United States invaded Grenada, Fredric Jameson wrote that "the failure of the Vietnam War seems, at least for the moment, to have made the naked exercise of repressive power impossible."[46] But the violence of US invasion and counterinsurgency in this period was also

evidence of what Stoler emphasizes as the "recursive" nature of empire, "the retroactive and refractive pull" of imperialism and resistance past that "presses on the present," marked by "processes of partial reinscriptions, modified displacements, and amplified recuperations."[47] *The Ruse of Repair* traces the rise of the reparative by mapping the contours of these recursions and ruptures: how the spectacular appearance of US empire in the 1980s masked the enduring power of racial capitalism and the settler state; and how the aesthetics and forms of postwar anticolonial materialist liberation movements were partially displaced and partially recuperated by the late twentieth-century neoliberal racial capitalist imperial project.

In its periodization of the reparative turn, this book learns especially from Sedgwick, who roots own her interest in the reparative in the post-1980s gay liberation movement's waning adversarial relationship to the state and the market. For Sedgwick, the paranoid ethos that characterized early queer theory arose in dialogue with 1980s queer activism; "paranoid" evokes the mode of writing and organizing in the 1980s from the terrified position of a defensive crouch, always anticipating the next death, the next blow from the state, amid the "sudden, worse than Euripidean horror" of the AIDS epidemic and the US political establishment's genocidally neglectful response.[48] Her essay "Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading" opens with her invocation of a conversation she had with scholar-activist Cindy Patton, in which Patton asks,

> Even suppose we were sure of every element of a conspiracy: that the lives of Africans and African Americans are worthless in the eyes of the United States; that gay men and drug users are held cheap where they aren't actively hated; that the military deliberately researches ways to kill noncombatants whom it sees as enemies; that people in power look calmly on the likelihood of catastrophic environmental and population changes. Supposing we were ever so sure of all those things—what would we know then that we don't already know?[49]

Patton's question allowed Sedgwick to articulate her discontent with this "paranoid" and "conspiratorial" activist and academic politics of knowledge. It "opened a space for moving," permitting her to explore her restless sense of the limited efficacy and diminishing appeal of projects that practiced the "hermeneutics of suspicion": her sense that confirming what people already know (despite the fact that many people do not already know, or that they know because of the very exposure projects that feel so paranoid) was overvalued as an activist and interpretive practice; that there is no straight line between knowing about injustice and acting to challenge it; that the continued pursuit of

academic critiques of "liberal humanism" and state violence seemed out of step with the context of the Reagan, Bush, and Clinton–era state apparatus.[50] The announcement of drug cocktails that could effectively treat HIV in the mid-1990s, in congruence with her discovery that she was terminally ill with breast cancer, thus became the occasion for Sedgwick to elaborate on the reparative, a hermeneutic she felt was more suited to an era when AIDS had become a "chronic disease," and to the temporal reorientation of her own imaginary that these discoveries partially conditioned.[51] Embracing the reparative meant for Sedgwick, as it has often come to mean for the scholars who write in her wake, ceasing to anticipate trouble to come or hunt for evidence of violence the academy already knows or suspects, and instead finding joy where one can, honoring practices of survival, finding comfort in contact across temporal and other scales of difference, and celebrating reforms as a win. As Tim Dean suggests, reparative reading has become for critics both a "panacea" and a form of "virtue signaling": unlike the tired and ineffectual paranoid, the reparative seems both perpetually avant-garde and eternally ethical in its generous optimism about texts and feelings.[52]

The Central America solidarity art with which this introduction began makes messy the reigning wisdom and story of progress that Sedgwick's taxonomy and "personal political history" has often seemed to endorse: we were all lamentably paranoid then, what a relief and even a triumph to be reparative now; paranoid critique is passé, no longer appropriate to the times we are in, given the temporal scales and visual forms of state violence, given the perilous state of the university.[53] In both Jaar's and Sligh's work, paranoid and reparative interpretive and aesthetic modes emerge as trial maneuvers in the cultural and popular educational front of the fight against the US state and US state-sanctioned violence in Central America. Yet their work also reveals the rising appeal of the recourse to repair: Jaar's art warns of US neoliberal racial capitalism's own reparative recuperative power; Sligh's film celebrates solidarity as a practice of self-care and affective connection that comes to excite and impress activists more than political critique. *The Ruse of Repair* thus repositions Sedgwick's history and the forms of repair it imagines—an account that has exercised so much field-moving power while remaining strangely unhistoricized, in part because relief from the burden of histories that hurt is what the reparative seems to offer—among a broader hemispheric archive of late 1970s and 1980s activism, university discourse, and state violence.[54] It understands Sedgwick's call to turn away from critique toward repair as the naming of a broader sensibility suffusing the world outside as well as inside the academy that had by the mid-1990s been congealing for quite some time, conditioned

by the rise of, and failed struggle against, neoliberal racial capitalist empire in the 1970s and 1980s.

To Sedgwick's account of the reparative as a mode and mood that emerged from her frustration with influential 1980s queer movement and academic strategies that prioritized the "tracing and exposure" of systemic violence, we might add an observation that Felski makes in her book *The Limits of Critique*. Felski, who is otherwise engaged in the project of glossing the history of suspicious reading, offers her own insight into the origins of reparative reading in rhetoric that both echoes Sedgwick's invocation of the prison twenty years prior and suggests how Sedgwick's history might be broadened out beyond the gay liberation movement:

> In short, critique, like the avant-garde, imagines itself as taking a crowbar to the walls of the institution rather than being housed within them, barreling toward the future rather than being tugged back toward the past. What happens once this self-image flickers and fades and euphoria of its iconoclastic ambitions begins to wane? For some scholars, the consequences look impossibly bleak; convinced that the last loophole for action has been closed, the only sound they hear is that of the prison door slamming shut.[55]

Here Felski's metaphorical use of the prison recalls Sedgwick's cutting question: "Why bother exposing the ruses of power in a country where, at any given moment, 40 percent of young black men are enmeshed in the penal system?"—along with Best and Marcus's invocation of Abu Ghraib prison, offering another example of the tendency of reparative reading's advocates to invoke prison as a self-evident location of state violence, so obvious that its very existence contravenes the need for suspicious reading.[56] Such invocations are clearly meant as a rejection of Foucauldian readings that find power and disciplinary forces everywhere, as well as Foucault's concern, shared by prison abolitionist activists and scholars, about the further diffusion of the carceral into everyday life through the vehicle of reform.[57] Such references, as suggested above, ignore the literal opacity of prisons, the fact that the unincarcerated cannot see the exploitation and torture that occurs within; the racist law-and-order rhetoric that continues to accompany prison expansion; and the fact that many, even in communities affected by these disastrous carceral policies, still understand policing and prisons as necessary mechanisms of justice and mitigators of violence.

But prison for Felski is also a metaphor for the academy. This conflation forgets that the institutional destination of 1960s and 1970s movement activists

and of radical critique was often, in fact, the prison rather than the university.[58] Similarly, the implication that such movement actors and scholar-activists were and are naive about the academic institutions they occupy—present in Felski's claim that "critique imagines itself as taking a crowbar to the walls of the institution rather than being housed within them"—underestimates not only the radical potential that activists have imagined for the university, but also their sense of its pragmatic utility to their goals: their ambitions for reshaping violent institutions for humane and liberatory ends; their determination to use the institution to gain control over the production and dissemination of knowledge for the sake of changing the material distribution of wealth and power; their ability to think both, as Casey Shoop writes, "with and against the institution."[59] But Felski's conflation, in and through these distortions, registers a widespread sense of disappointed frustration with the outcomes of social movements' complex negotiations with the institutional power of the university, a frustration she refers to as "malaise," a sense of exhaustion at struggling against the institution, much less the violent structures beyond it, that never seem to change, echoing Sedgwick's own discontentment.[60] For Felski, too, the arrival of the reparative is a relief: such a "downsizing in oppositional thought," she insists, "may turn out to be a liberation."[61]

The work of both Sedgwick and Felski suggests that historicizing the shift toward a valorization of reparative methods—a shift to what has come to be seen, as Reber writes, "a progressive—and progressively radical—epistemological affirmation of affect as a vehicle for knowledge"—requires accounting for the institutionalization of late twentieth-century US domestic and transnational social movements: their move into the academy, their shifting relationship with the state and the university.[62] The history of the US academy and culture's investments in repair is interwoven with two entangled phenomena: first, the reshaping of movements' ideological horizons and modes of interpretation and representation in response to such negotiations with the state, the university, and the culture industry, as they became sites from which activists could operate, rather than what they opposed or that to which they aspired; and second, the massive power of the institutions of the state, the military, and the university to capture and deploy social movement language, literature, and logics in service of exploitation, the upward redistribution of wealth, privatization, and war.

What would it look like, then, to pull at the sites of what Sedgwick calls "interdigitation" in the activist, academic, and creative work of this period, and consider the emerging power and effects of movements' (as well as the state's and the university's) reparative strands? Guided by this question, this

book proposes a movement genealogy of the reparative turn. It takes as its setting the late 1970s and 1980s: the period in which transnational solidarity movements were responding to the Reagan administration's covert and overt interventions throughout Latin America and the Middle East; and the moment when the knowledges produced in those movements, and in the global anticolonial movements of the 1960s and 1970s from which they grew, were being institutionalized, migrating into US universities, the military, and the culture industry. In Latin American and US empire studies, the 1980s are commonly understood as a decade of rehearsal: a decade in which the United States sought, as Greg Grandin describes, "to 'salvage' a foreign policy wrecked in Vietnam" by testing out war and counterinsurgency strategies in Latin America and the Caribbean before enacting them even more extensively in the Middle East in subsequent decades. In this formulation, Latin America appears broadly as a "laboratory" or "workshop" for neoliberal empire.[63] This book's movement genealogy of the reparative learns from but also revises this formulation: rather than framing Latin America as a workshop for perfecting imperial techniques that would be wielded later, it argues that the killing fields, debt mechanisms, and administrative violence of US empire, along with the movements that fought them, were themselves laboratories for the reparative turn. The US feminist sex wars, the black feminist imaginary of the Caribbean, the Central America solidarity movement, university Master of Fine Arts (MFA) programs, and the audiosphere of the US invasion of Panama were arenas of contestation between paranoid and reparative modes of interpretation and performance, but also incubators for the development of reparative frameworks, patterns of interpretation, and structures of feeling. These scenes of US imperialist violence and transnational anti-imperialist struggle were sites where the reparative emerged as a consoling mode for responding to state and racial capitalist violence, for accepting such violence as known or intransigent to the power of critique, enabling the paring back of visions for social transformation. Eventually, the reparative came to eclipse more expansive, historical materialist critical forms and practices while helping to revise US imperialism for the neoliberal future.

This book's project thus owes much to the work of scholars who have chronicled post-1945 social movements, especially those such as María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo and Jasbir Puar, who have tracked the "discursive collusions" and "complicities" between movement discourses and development ideology (the former) and neoliberal empire (the latter); and those such as Lisa Duggan, Jodi Melamed, Roderick Ferguson, Grace Hong, and Glenn Coulthard, who have tracked the containment and usurpation of mid- to late twentieth-century

movements' epistemological and aesthetic projects by the state, the university, and other institutional structures central to the maintenance of capitalism and empire.[64] Such works often emphasize traditions of what Melamed calls "race radicalisms" or what Anna M. Agathangelou, Dana M. Olwan, Tamara Lea Spira, and Heather M. Turcotte call "feminisms otherwise," balancing their accounts of institutions' incorporation of movement knowledges by emphasizing movement energies that escape the pull of hegemonic incorporation, that gesture to something beyond or outside.[65]

The Ruse of Repair, however, eschews the task of mapping the outside in order to track more closely not only the slow institutional repurposing of anti-imperialist movement ideas for capital and empire, but also the conjunctures, collusions, and complicities between the reparative orientations and practices of transnational solidarity movement cultures and the emerging neoliberal racial capitalist order. This focus is not a paranoid staving off of "the bad surprise"—the bad surprise, clearly, is already here—but rather a deliberate exercise of attention.[66] Tracking the complicities with neoliberal racial capitalism and empire that trouble state and transnational solidarity movements' visions of repair reveals how the turn from critique to the refuge of repair is, as Sedgwick says of the paranoid impulse, "more historically specific than it might seem."[67] The turn to repair is entangled with the very history and practices of neoliberal empire and the settler colonial carceral state that advocates for such methods often imagine the world already understands all too well. Without grappling with such entanglements, the widespread commitment to the reparative—often recognizable by way of its earnest commitment to making room for pleasure and amelioration, in its celebration of survival strategies and coping mechanisms as beautiful seeds of that which might one day, in the future, save the world—can sometimes seem to stave off the difficult work of imagining possible worlds that break definitively with this one; instead, allegiance to the methods people use to survive things as they are becomes a form of solidarity. From this perspective, racial capitalism, settler colonialism, and empire often emerge as structures only in need of repair and remediation, rather than as ever-shifting violent structures whose nuances must be perpetually, collectively apprehended if they are ever to be destroyed.

Conditions of Reparative Possibility

In 1983, the collective Equipo Maíz began a liberation theology–influenced program of popular education in El Salvador. Aligned politically with the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), they worked to inform

communities who weren't directly involved in the armed struggle about the causes of the war.[68] In 1989, the collective published a book called *El Neoliberalismo*, diagnosing the rise of neoliberalism, "the mechanism to create more poor people among the poor."[69] *El Neoliberalismo* deploys cartoons to make accessible the intellectual history and contradictions of neoliberal economic ideas and ideology—it points out, for instance, using the coup in Chile as its example, the irony of neoliberalism needing a repressive state to enforce its policy of eschewing state intervention in the market—as well as tailoring that history to El Salvador, recounting the counterinsurgent force of USAID's financial assistance in the 1980s that drove a wedge between grassroots communities and armed leftist forces.[70] As Laura Briggs describes in her essay "Activisms and Epistemologies," the book "was enormously popular" and "traveled all over Latin America . . . before being translated into Portuguese, Italian, and English, as it moved to Europe; every year between 1992 and 2001, a new and updated version was put out." Briggs directs readers to Equipo Maíz's explanation of neoliberalism, among other examples of Latin American activist-intellectual production, to make the point that an unrecognized "capillary effect of ideas about neoliberalism travel[s] through activist circles from Chiapas to the United States to the halls of academe." The academy's accounts of neoliberalism and anti-neoliberal struggle, she shows, often "overlook the blood shed and the difficult political-intellectual work of Zapatismo and other Latin American political movements."[71]

This oversight has come to shape much of Americanist and North American scholarship's relationship to neoliberalism, which has become of late tendentious at best. The term "neoliberalism" has drawn criticism from Marxist literary scholars, among others, for functioning as a poor stand-in for capitalism, one that invites only reformist solutions or nostalgia for a racist and warmongering liberal welfare state; others argue that "neoliberalism" has become a word so capacious that it has lost any critical purchase.[72] The North American academy lately seems preoccupied with the worry that the term obfuscates too much or that it serves as a convenient cudgel for silencing critics, worries that sometimes seem to outstrip concern about the ravages of neoliberalism itself.[73] These critiques neglect the history that Equipo Maíz's work indexes: that "neoliberalism" is a term with a specific historical purchase; that Latin American social movements used "neoliberalism" in the 1980s and 1990s to describe the particular set of cultural and economic logics that were being imposed on their nations and communities; and that the term has had broad power and utility in those movements' projects of popular education, providing communities in Latin America and elsewhere with a name to describe and eventually

challenge these structural conditions. This book employs "neoliberalism" as an analytical and periodizing term precisely because of this history. It is structured by the insight that was central to Jaar's appropriation art and Equipo Maíz's activist epistemologies: that neoliberalism, despite its reliance on fictions of state nonintervention and equal opportunity for all, is an iteration of racial capitalism forged in the crucible of US empire.[74] This effort to bring together what Matthew Frye Jacobsen has called the "two distinct interpretive paths" of American Studies scholarship on US empire—"the frankly imperialist history of militarism" and "the overlapping history of geo-economics, aggregations of capital, and the power structures of global finance in the age of the corporation, particularly this latest, neoliberal chapter"[75]—emphasizes neoliberalism's constitution through the United States' military invasions and counterinsurgency campaigns in Central America and the Caribbean, though it ties these processes to the legacies of the Vietnam War and US intervention in the Middle East as well.[76]

"Neoliberalism" has often been used to refer to the theory and practice of free market economics, the bid to, per David Harvey, "bring all human action into the domain of the market."[77] The word "free" in the evocation of "free market" in such conversations is somewhat misleading, however. As Quinn Slobodian and others have pointed out, neoliberal economists' plan was never so much to free markets from the management of the state so much as to stave off their fears of socialism and decolonization, and to put states' violent power to work serving and protecting free market liberalization above all else.[78] While the economic ideas underlying neoliberalism can be traced back to the acts of enclosure and to those thinkers who gathered at the Mont Pèlerin Resort in 1947, this book periodizes neoliberalism as beginning with the implementation of those ideas in the Americas in the 1970s.[79] It follows Aníbal Quijano in seeing neoliberalism as a continued exercise of what he calls the "coloniality of power" in the Americas; it also follows scholars such as Melamed, Hong, and Ferguson in understanding neoliberalism as marking a new stage in the long arc of racial capitalism.[80] Cedric Robinson deploys "racial capitalism" to describe how the "racial order" of European feudalism "permeate[d] the social structures emergent from capitalism," such that capitalist violence unfolded, and continues to unfold, through historically contingent fabrications of racial difference and value; or, as Melamed explains, "Racism enshrines the inequalities that capitalism requires."[81]

The neoliberal phase of racial capitalism began in the 1970s, when the US government, US and global financial elites, and global governance organizations compelled Global South nations to implement free market practices—tax cuts, deregulation, the privatization of state services, the defunding of

social programs, the removal of trade barriers—in order to reorganize a global capitalist system facing two threats: what Harvey names a "serious crisis of capital accumulation" that signaled the death-spiral of the liberal developmentalist Bretton Woods order; and, as Duggan explains, pressure from global social movements to redistribute wealth and power downward.[82] Economists, global governance organizations, CIA-installed dictators, and global elites conspired to test out neoliberal policies in the Americas beginning in the 1970s, famously implementing economic "shock therapy" in Chile after Augusto Pinochet's CIA-backed coup, touting black progress while withdrawing basic public services in the Bronx, and using the weight of debt to pressure Jamaica into enduring the pain of structural adjustment.[83] Neoliberalism spread unevenly if relentlessly across the globe in the decades that followed, as what Harvey refers to as "accumulation by dispossession"—spurred by processes such as war and counterinsurgency, financialization, privatization, and the manufacture of debt—enabled a massive transfer of wealth to global elites, which effectively created, as Equipo Maíz described, "more poor people among the poor."[84]

What made this program of free market capitalism a new racial capitalist and colonial episteme was precisely the violent capture and diversion of postwar left social movements' language and analyses—what Duggan names their shared "overlapping, interrelated (if conflicted) *cultures of downward redistribution*"—into the biopolitical and ideological projects that facilitated ever-increasing inequality and dispossession.[85] This process, as scholars such as Naomi Klein, Wendy Brown, Spira, and others have argued, was a matter of reorganizing economies, subjectivities, and communities alike through the violence of shock, torture, incarceration, and austerity.[86] If US imperialist violence in Central and Latin America in the 1980s was, as Briggs argues, "above all about the imposition of neoliberalism," this violence operated throughout Latin America, Central America, and the Caribbean, as Grandin has suggested, in order to disrupt what he characterizes broadly as the Latin American left's "harmonization of self and society, of individuality and solidarity": "Terror violently and traumatically cut the relationship between individualism and solidarity, leaving the individual to a market now called democracy. That becomes the experiential predicate for neoliberalism."[87] With reference to the United States, Hong has described this violent process of severing movement solidarities in order to instantiate neoliberal individualism as one of "reterritorialization," harnessed to an epistemology of "affirmation" and "disavowal." The state, the university, global governance organizations, and corporations, she explains, learned to encourage and sustain "aspects of movements that . . . replicated . . . normative investments in political modernity" and thus

rendered "certain minoritized subjects and populations . . . as protectable life," particularly through an "invitation into respectability." Simultaneously, these institutions actively disavowed how neoliberal racial capitalism "exacerbated the production of premature death" for minoritized subjects who fell outside those bounds, claiming instead that "racial and gendered violences are things of the past."[88]

In Latin America and the Caribbean, such modes of affirmation and disavowal have been particularly visible in the neoliberal settler state's adoption of multiculturalism alongside its economic reforms. As Charles Hale describes, the eventual enshrinement of neoliberalism after the coup in Chile; the suppression of leftist revolution in Grenada, Nicaragua, and El Salvador; the indiscriminate murder of indigenous people in Guatemala, to name just a few examples, saw neoliberal settler states offer indigenous communities in particular "a carefully designed packet of cultural rights guaranteed not to threaten the fundamental tenets of the capitalist economy" that offered legal and cultural affirmation of some indigenous movement demands while simultaneously stymieing more radical claims for land and wealth redistribution.[89] Disavowed, meanwhile, was the "persisting racial hierarchy that discourses of cultural equality ignore and are not meant to change."[90] In the United States, this negation of the vital urgency of anticolonial historical materialist movement critique amid continued structural violence coupled with the endorsement of "normative investments" and "respectability" found earlier articulation, notably in Daniel Patrick Moynihan's 1970 memo to President Nixon calling for the state to practice "benign neglect." "Benign neglect" was a policy Moynihan described as "paying close attention to [black] progress" while "seeking to avoid situations in which extremists . . . are given opportunities for martyrdom, heroics, histrionics or whatever. Greater attention to Indians, Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans would be useful. A tendency to ignore provocations from groups such as the Black Panthers might also be useful."[91] This memo makes visible how racial and gendered logics are built into what would become the aspirational horizon of the good neoliberal subject, a form of subjectivity Foucault called *Homo economicus*, or "an entrepreneur of himself."[92] "*Homo economicus*" describes a subject who internalizes the self-regimenting imperatives of a privatized economy—those tenets Duggan has identified as the meshing of "privatization" and "personal responsibility"—and take as obligatory the task of optimizing oneself for capitalist success, such that the only imaginable solution to structural inequality becomes one's own forced choices, one's unfree adoption of free market logics.[93] As Moynihan's call to attend to "Indians, Mexican Americans, and Puerto Ricans" over black people, especially black radical

activists, makes clear, the rise of the ideal of *Homo economicus* inscribed what Cacho names the "differential devaluation of racialized groups," so that "the most vulnerable populations" were "recruited to participate in their own and others' devaluation."[94]

In the United States, the elevation of this logic—that the only way to achieve success was to leave one's community or movement behind and instead cultivate what Ronald Reagan called an "entrepreneurial spirit"—occurred alongside a related "downsizing," to use Lauren Berlant's term, of community and collective public life, as "nostalgic images of a normal familial America," came to delineate "the utopian context for citizen aspiration."[95] The transition to neoliberalism thus entailed not only the aggressively promoted ideal of a personally responsible individual, but the renovation of the nuclear family, that unit that was perceived to be threatened by US failures in the Vietnam War, feminist and gay liberation critiques of the family, and broader calls by activists to expand the welfare state or effect a more radical downward redistribution of wealth.[96] Neoliberal economists and the often neoconservative state actors who implemented their vision, as Melinda Cooper has argued, sought "to reestablish the private family as the primary source of economic security and the comprehensive alternative to the welfare state."[97] Given this objective, the renovated family form was open to partial reinvention or at least a certain amount of elasticity: domesticity could precariously include all kinds of subjects as long as they preserved the family's privatizing depoliticizing function of serving as the mechanism of wealth accumulation and distribution.[98] This vision for the family within the United States was also centrally dependent on the brutal enforcement of neoliberal economic politics elsewhere in the hemisphere and beyond. As Briggs has shown, the violence of the wars for neoliberal empire and the dispossession caused by structural adjustment programs sent women from the Caribbean and Latin America to labor in, and thus shore up the durability of, the purportedly privately sufficient American family, while also precipitating the so-called rescue through adoption of imperiled Central American babies that served as proof of America's post–civil rights antiracism.[99]

Returning to the years in which the neoliberal racial capitalist order took shape in the United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean, *The Ruse of Repair* focuses on how the containment and redirection of radical movement analyses and energies were effected through the force of reparation, through the visions of repair animated by movement activists and by the US state and university. The first half of the book explores the reparative practices, visions, and aesthetics generated within feminist and solidarity movement cultures around specific scenes in US imperialist history that facilitated neoliberal

economic transformations. Chapter 1 outlines the transnational reparative sexual solidarity politics of sex-radical feminism, which emerged in Kate Millett's witnessing of the 1979 Iranian Revolution and then traveled back to the United States to shape the sex-radical camp of the sex wars; chapter 2 outlines a US black feminist reparative imaginary that emerged during the death of the Grenada Revolution, first by internal coup, then by the US invasion; and chapter 3 describes the 1980s Central America solidarity movement's struggle over whether paranoid or reparative orientations to the violence of US counterinsurgency in El Salvador and Guatemala could best enable solidarity with Central Americans subject to state and imperialist violence. Though their reparative hermeneutics, their specific designs for drawing into relation conditions of structural violence across borders and time, varied, as did their designations of the sites worthy of their reparative efforts and attention, each of these scenes, movement actors, and cultural workers practiced the "love" Sedgwick associates with Kleinian reparation.[100] Invested in visions of repair that might heal the violence wrought by the present and past of racism and imperialism, they attempted to reassemble the pieces of a world riven by US empire's voracious reach into something not quite like what came before, something that might offer "nourishment and comfort" in the face of the turbulent present.[101]

Yet whether this repair work was directed at the perceived unfun "killjoy" politics of the Iranian Revolution and antipornography feminism, or lost matrilineal black kinship bonds severed by slavery and empire, or genocide-abetting US intervention in Central America, feminist and solidarity movement visions of remediation for structures that hurt became entangled with, and were often a site of the articulation of, those emerging logics of privatization, communal downsizing, and the selective incorporation of racial difference and indigeneity that characterized the solidifying neoliberal regime.[102] Often organized around the practice of the "care of self" coupled with investments in hemispheric or transnational affiliation across difference, the exercise of the reparative as a means of challenging US imperialism past and present by activists and artists often in effect (though not always by intention) cleaved anti-imperialist orientations from anticapitalist commitments, such that challenging empire became a route to constituting and celebrating racial capitalist forms and intimacies.[103] This was true in part because the US state was itself selling free trade liberalization and austerity through reparative gestures of its own, often similarly organized around appeals to shared histories of violence premised on acknowledging colonial pasts (if not their ongoing presents) and fantasies of loving "closeness" with the citizens of Central America and the Caribbean, whom it planned to coerce or violently subdue into neocolonial economic arrangements. Both the

US imperialist settler state and solidarity movements generated fantasies of identification with subjects of US imperialist violence in Central America and the Middle East that were organized around resonant notions of repair.

The confluences of these US state and anti-imperialist visions of repair become clear when understood as part of the longer history of Kleinian reparation. Klein's theorization of the reparative was shaped, as both Eng and Carolyn Laubender explain, first in the debates over whether Germany should have to pay reparations after its World War I defeat, and then in the World War II era of genocide and global war.[104] "We might describe Klein's theory of reparation," Eng writes, "as an attempt to provide a new language for love and repair in order to rescue a besieged liberal human subject in the midst of utter destruction."[105] In her investigation of some of the case studies in which Klein was working out her ideas of reparation, Laubender shows how these Kleinian logics of love, of trying "to do good to their objects . . . [to] want to heal, repair, help, or cure them" that critics have come to celebrate through Sedgwick's uptake of Klein's theory, were thoroughly enmeshed in this broader cultural struggle over what might constitute justice, amends, and repair in a time of colonial violence, genocidal fascism, and war.[106] Laubender describes, for instance, how Klein measures the improvement of her child patient "Richard" by "his ability to sympathize with, to identify with, his 'destroyed enemy,'" which meant, in the context of the end of World War II, "his ability to see himself in [the] fascist, anti-Semitic empire" of the Nazis. In Laubender's account, this example emphasizes how, for Klein, the power of the reparative lay in a child's ability to "exculpate its own guilt by adjudicating injury and repair": reparation names a "process" in which the "child constructs the object's injury according to its own expectations and desires, its own ability to position itself as the agent of repair," and in so doing, cures itself, such that it can "expiate its own guilt and reinvest the world of object relations."[107] Eng elaborates on how this arbitration of injury and repair is structured by what he names the "colonial object relations" that lie at the heart of the "consolidation of a European liberal human subject."[108] The reparative amounts, then, to a "psychic process" by which some objects are imagined as "worthy of repair" and others are not, a deliberation that makes the continual inscription of the racial logics of the colonial (and settler colonial) world order, and the designation of who counts as human or not, the purview of the loving creative "properly bounded" liberal subject.[109] In Klein's case studies of "true reparation," Laubender indicates, the healing creativity of such subjects is deemed to manifest through a number of telling scenes: through a colonizer's fantasy of the "repopulation" of territory with colonizers after the elimination of indigenous peoples; through a scene

of a white woman celebrated for painting a naked black woman, appropriating her image, as Laubender writes, "to slake [the white woman's] emotional needs under the auspices of care."[110]

Eng's and Laubender's work thus reveals the reparative as a mode that links insufficient state visions for the resolution of unresolvable violences past—visions that so often accompany new exercises and extensions of racial capitalist power—with the fraught identificatory impulses that underlie solidarity projects.[111] During the transition to neoliberalism, both the US imperialist settler state and US feminist and anti-imperialist solidarity movements shared the "political and psychic unconscious of colonial object relations" that Eng diagnoses as constitutive of the reparative, participating in the recycled and ongoing practice of drawing lines around which objects are constituted as "good and worthy of reparations but psychically constituted as human," lines informed by the racial capitalist and colonial past and present.[112] For feminist and solidarity writers and activists, their invention of reparative visions of solidarity directed at repairing the violence of US empire often further resembled the therapeutic journey of Klein's patients, who similarly, as Laubender describes, "construct[ed] the object's injury according to [their] own expectations and desires, [their] own ability to position [themselves] as the agent[s] of repair," a process that offered "the feeling of ethical action."[113] Such reparative visions and the feelings that justify them, the first half of this book suggests, became conduits through which neoliberal racial capitalist forms of desire, debt, and recognition began to take shape.

Because the reparative in all its layers—psychic process, social form, interpretive hermeneutic—is relentlessly invested in identification with a damaged object, activists and cultural workers' reparative investments often emerge in these chapters as the aftermath and reprise of the sentimental, or what Berlant has named its "unfinished business."[114] Berlant cautions that, for Sedgwick, reparative reading was never meant to be a sentimental exercise, as Sedgwick viewed sentimentality "as tending toward foreclosure and homogenized attunement"; this is why proponents of reparative reading tend to emphasize that Sedgwick's vision of reparation is not the same as an indiscriminate restoration of the past or an uncritical relation to violent histories.[115] For Berlant, sentimentality seems central to the work of building solidarity and politics in general, even if she remains one of our most eloquent explicators of the betrayals of sentimentality's promise of affective connection across difference: its failure to be revolutionary and the violence of its "humanizing gestures," given that in the realm of sentimentality, "the ethical imperative toward social transformation is replaced by a passive and vaguely civic-minded ideal of compassion," and

"the political as a place of acts oriented toward publicness becomes replaced by a world of private thoughts, leanings, and gestures."[116] Sentimentality is the mode of identifying across difference with another's pain, the mode of crying while reading a book or watching a movie that imaginatively transports one into the experience of the suffering other, the gesture of imagining that "feeling with" and "feeling right" constitutes a form of political action even if it goes no further than a change of heart; what it produces, then, is not unlike that "feeling of ethical action" (that is not necessarily ethical at all) that Laubender identifies as central to the reparative mode.[117]

These first three chapters of this book sometimes identify more historical and genealogical lines of connection between sentimentality and reparativity, particularly in the case of the Central America solidarity movement, where activists positioned themselves explicitly as following in the footsteps of white sentimental antislavery abolitionists. But mostly they track moments in the history of solidarity when activists' reparative projects and gestures shared sentimentality's constricted horizon of social and political transformation: its emphasis on private feeling, its power and privilege to define how and when the suffering objects of solidarity constitute recognizable humans, its commitment to what Berlant calls "bargaining with what there is."[118] Activists' and cultural workers' reparative projects and modes emerged from that recognizable place that Sedgwick identifies as the Kleinian "depressive position," which she describes as "an anxiety-mitigating achievement," one "that comes to encompass, for example, both the preconditions of severe depression and also quite a varied range of resources for surviving, repairing, and moving beyond that depression."[119] In the context of Sedgwick's political world and the larger movement and scholarly scenes with which it intersects, the "depressive position" offers a way of conceptualizing a particular mood of political fatigue, often laced with guilt, an individual but also communal frustration with the ongoing task of critiquing structural violence that doesn't seem to change that seeds the reparative turn. From spaces of both emergency and exhaustion, motivated by a desire to be absolved or obtain relief, activists and cultural workers turned to dreams of compassionate connection and the reparative reconstitution of intimacy, family, and community across borders and racial and class divides.[120] These early chapters try to be attuned to what is troublesome about such reparative gestures, modes of interpretation, and aesthetic forms: their inadvertent fidelity to recycled racial capitalist or colonial forms and practices; how the care relations they inscribe anticipate forms of inequality and dispossession that have come to be associated with the neoliberal period—the emotional and reproductive labor Global South residents perform for Global North tourists;

capitalist and state projects of multicultural inclusion that sacrifice indigenous sovereignty—even as these forms of intimacy and connection come to substitute for, or be imagined as the happy achievement of, broader structural change. But these chapters also attend to how these reparative visions and hermeneutics gained currency as the social movements with which they were associated became institutionalized, and social movement infrastructures—what Berlant calls "those patterns, habits, norms, and scenes of assemblage and use" that characterize the life of a social movement—hardened into institutional wisdom and practice.[121]

While the first half of the book traces how a feminist and solidarity reparative imaginary was tied to the emergence of neoliberal racial capitalism, the final two chapters shift focus, taking up how the US university and military proffered reparative fantasies of US empire that could mediate neoliberal racial capitalism's onset for readers and listeners. Chapter 4 considers the figure of the Vietnam War veteran as he appears in post–Vietnam War MFA program fiction. It tracks how the reparative reading and rendering of the veteran figure by MFA program teachers, writers, and readers unmoored him from serving as a lever of antiwar critique and installed him instead as a figure who could represent congealing neoliberal diversity politics and soothe the temporal volatility of working-class life in neoliberal capitalism. Chapter 5 reads the playlist of pop/rock love-gone-wrong songs, requested by US soldiers in Panama and US listeners at home, that scored the aftermath of the 1989 US invasion of Panama; this medley proffered free market economics as a post-breakup makeover and settler colonial frontier revival fantasies as the answer to white masculine anxieties about the post–civil rights era. While temporally these chapters to some degree bookend the time period covered in this book, given that the loss of the Vietnam War and the shadow of the Vietnam veteran figure had hung over the nation since the early seventies and the United States invaded Panama at the end of the 1980s, what holds these chapters together is their interest in the work of genre.

"Genre" here is meant loosely both in the traditional sense of texts grouped together by their shared though malleable aesthetic conventions, and also in the more innovative senses Jeremy Rosen and Berlant describe. Rosen writes of genre as "'the meeting place where form, history, and material and institutional relations converge" in order to "fulfill social tasks" and meet "social needs"; Berlant elaborates on how genres offer "an affective expectation of the experience of watching something unfold."[122] Though the criticism leveled at historicist and, per Sedgwick, "paranoid" criticism is often that scholars impose stable always-already-known historical contextual frameworks onto pli-

ant misunderstood texts, these chapters attempt to understand the decades of neoliberal racial capitalism's emergence as a period when the conventions for describing the present were in flux, when people across the Americas were in need of (or imagined to be in need of) what Berlant calls a "genre of explanation" for the emerging regime of service work, deindustrialization, economic precarity, and structural adjustment.[123] For subjects in South and Central America and the Caribbean, the genres of war, invasion, and even neoliberalism were readily available as names for the violence to which they were subjected and against which they struggled, as protests against austerity broke out across the region over the course of the 1980s. For US subjects, on the other hand, there was potentially, as Grandin suggests, "a punishing kind of dissonance" in the experience of neoliberal empire's "revival of the myth of rugged individualism and frontier limitlessness at a moment when deindustrialization was making daily life precarious for an increasing number of people."[124] These chapters attempt to read various forms—the MFA-program veteran and the fiction filtered through his perspective, the love-gone-wrong pop song (often a power ballad), the military invasion playlist—as genres that the university and the state generated to offer explanations for the present that could make bearable this sense of dissonance and disorientation, explanations that could pacify readers and listeners while shoring up the relationship between the post–Vietnam War revivification of US military intervention and neoliberal racial capitalism's economic logics. As the lonely asynchrony of the Vietnam War veteran everyman came to register the hurry-up-and-wait temporality of service work and the "rut" of the deindustrial present rather than the destructive power of imperialist war, imperialist "war time" became refigured as an alluring communal oasis for US subjects. After bombs rained down on Panama City, the love-gone-wrong and socially conscious rock songs of the United States Southern Command's postinvasion siege playlist reflected the US state's attempts to coerce Panamanians into collectively imagining the coming transition to an austerity and free trade regime as a post-breakup makeover and an exercise in triumphant self-investment and resilience.

These chapters thus function as specific case studies of the broad processes of the depoliticization of movement knowledges that other scholars have described as characteristic of neoliberal racial capitalism's encroachment.[125] They trace the transmogrification of the antiwar figures of the Vietnam War veteran and the antiwar protest song into tools for casting neoliberal empire as a structure that could make pleasurable or at least familiar the difficult experience of precarious life lived under conditions of deindustrialization and austerity. In this sense, these chapters imagine the university and the state—or more precisely,

MFA programs and the US soldiers repurposing antiwar songs for the siege in Panama—as reparative readers, recuperating objects perceived as damaged by leftist downwardly redistributive and anti-imperialist politics. In the case of the Vietnam veteran, the antiwar story is unliterary and formulaic, in need of complexifying revision; in the case of the antiwar song, music born from rage at US imperialist aggression finds a new life as the soundtrack for the renovation of Panama and the US government's (and the troops') recovery from Manuel Noriega's betrayal. But these chapters also read the reparative genre work here—the university's literary soldier as the site of reparative possibility and the neoliberal imperial settler state's soldier on the ground as the generator of reparative aural fantasy—as laying the groundwork for projects of state multiculturalisms throughout the Americas, as well as for the white supremacist backlash against even such impoverished forms of settler colonial capitalist recognition and incorporation.

This book's history and critique of the reparative should not be taken as an argument against material reparations, though it does draw insight from accounts of the historical inadequacy of reparations to achieve justice, equality, or the transformation of the structures of settler colonial capitalism, in part because reparations truck with the fantasy that amends can make the violence of the past disappear.[126] My sense, however, is that the current life of reparative reading in the academy, and the popularity of reparative modes more broadly beyond it, is less invested in a fantasy of a post-oppression present than it is concerned with the problem of how to live and survive in a world that remains terrible even after one has learned to critique it from whatever positions of power or disenfranchisement one occupies, even after one has gained the knowledge and skill to name the thing that is wrong, and then learned that that capacity hasn't done as much to change the world as one might have hoped it would. This is the dead end against which the turn to the repair feels good, feels like relief, freedom, and creative possibility. More could be said about the assumptions that such a turn toward repair and away from critique sometimes involves: for instance, the idea that anyone's exhaustion at explaining the injustice they already know should be taken as a sign that everybody already knows it; or the idea that the best way to save the cratering university is to invest in a fantasy of an apolitical aesthetic education that can at best teach a morally relativistic appreciation of beauty. But my object in offering an activist genealogy of the reparative at the site of neoliberal racial capitalism and empire is mostly to remain clear-eyed about how reparation, including reparative reading, has historically been implicated in short-circuiting rather than successfully realizing attempts to break with the world as it is in order to create equality.

It is to suggest that this history ought to have some bearing on our reflexive assessments of what is ethical, not to mention what is radical, in our present. As Black Lives Matter activists and allies march in the streets all across the United States and beyond as part of a movement toward the abolition of police, prisons, and a culture that naturalizes such state-sanctioned violence as justice, while liberals and centrists characterize their demands for even the defunding of these hypermilitarized police forces as extreme and polarizing, we should not imagine that it is condescending or contemptuous or superfluous to call out the "merely reformist" as mere, as less than what is needed, as a ruse of repair.[127]

This book is also not making the nihilistic claim that, in the face of the continued myriad emergencies produced by the United States' violent exercise of police and military power at home and abroad in service of racial capitalism, doing nothing is better than doing something, or that solidarity—in all or any of its forms—is impossible or useless. But it is committed to remembering that the feel-good fix that the reparative offers hasn't yet freed, and in fact cannot free, everyone from state and racial capitalist violence, even though sometimes, to some activists, to some readers, to some scholars, the opposite feels true.[128] This book thus offers the stories that follow with the hope that readers will interrogate that feeling.

Notes

INTRODUCTION

1 For neoliberalism's advance under the sign of the white baby and child, see Edelman, *No Future*; Berlant, *Queen of America*.

2 Clarissa Sligh, dir., *La Verdadera Avenida de las Americas* (1984), Clarissa Sligh Papers, box 13, folder 1, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Duke University, Durham, NC. The event that Sligh filmed was the first in a series of solidarity actions by artists, writers, curators, musicians, actors, and filmmakers—including poetry readings, art exhibitions, guerilla theater, and street demonstrations—that took place in the first six months of 1984 organized by Artists Call Against Intervention in Central America. As co-founder (with Salvadoran filmmaker and poet Daniel Flores y Ascencio and artist Doug Ashford) Lucy Lippard writes, Artists Call was "a national and then an international campaign that activated a network of artists who organized events in twenty-eight cities in the U.S. and Canada" in hopes of "affect[ing] public opinion" and stopping US covert wars in Central America ("Susan Meiselas," 211–212). For more on Artists Call, see Duganne, "In Defense"; Lippard, "Artists Call"; Ashford, "Aesthetic Insurgency"; and the January 1984 issue of *Art & Artists*, "Special Supplement" (ed. Foundation for the Community of Artists and the Poet and Writers Committee of Artists Call).

3 "La Verdadera Avenida de Las Americas," flier, Clarissa Sligh Papers, box 13, folder 1, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Duke University, Durham, NC.

4 Sedgwick, "Melanie Klein," 637.

5 "La Verdadera Avenida de Las Americas."

6 Sligh, *La Verdadera Avenida de Las Americas*.

7 I borrow "emotional habitus" here from Deborah B. Gould's deployment of it in relation to the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP); see Gould, *Moving Politics*.

8 On the process film as a genre, see Skvirsky, *Process Genre Cinema*.

9 In sketching this as a "flight," I reference here Sedgwick's own term for her political and personal journey in her essay "Melanie Klein," which she describes as a "flight from that dangerous-feeling, activist proximity of paranoid/schizoid energies—a flight into depression, occasionally, but on a more reliable basis and more productively and pleasurably, a flight from depression into pedagogy" (640).

10 Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 125. Hereafter this book refers to the version of Sedgwick's essay "Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading" published as chapter 4 in *Touching Feeling*. For earlier versions of this chapter, see Sedgwick, "Introduction"; Sedgwick, "Paranoid Reading." For one analysis of the publication history and analysis of the reverberating effects of Sedgwick's essay, see Wiegman, "Times We're In." Sedgwick introduces the connection between access to new drug regimens to treat AIDS and her turn toward the reparative in "Melanie Klein," 639.

11 Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 139–140.

12 Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 140.

13 Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 140.

14 Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 144.

15 Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 144.

16 Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 144.

17 Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 128, 150–151.

18 Love, "Truth and Consequences," 237.

19 Kaplan, "Violent Belongings," 3. While Kaplan's address demonstrates this continuity with Sedgwick's line of argument, the address also heralds another main direction of American Studies research post-9/11: the consideration of how the United States' broad adoption of sexual recognition and multiculturalism in the 2000s helped the nation both efface and maintain domestic homophobia, xenophobia, sexism, and white supremacy while justifying unending war and violent imperial expansion. See, for example, Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*; Rowe, "Reading *Reading Lolita in Tehran*"; Jodi Melamed, *Represent and Destroy*; Agathangelou et al., "Intimate Investments"; Edwards, "Of Cain and Abel"; Edwards, "Sex after the Black Normal"; Cacho, *Social Death*; Hong, *Death beyond Disavowal*.

20 Seltzer, *Official World*, 165–166. The literature of and on the postcritical turn abounds. In addition to works cited throughout this introduction, see Love, "Close but Not Deep"; Anker and Felski, *Critique and Postcritique*; Saint-Amour, "Weak Theory."

21 Felski, *Limits*, 180.

22 Felski, "Context Stinks!," 585.

23 Best and Marcus, "Surface Reading," 2. See also Best and Marcus, "Way We Read Now"; Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia*; Love, "Close but Not Deep."

24 Reber, *Coming to Our Senses*, 9, 20. Reber, who is arguing for an understanding of neoliberalism as "an episteme inherently bounded by affect" (21), offers an even wider list of evidence of the turn toward feeling (16–23). The task of Reber's book is to "theorize [the] genesis" of this shift, a task this book takes up too. However, without disputing Reber's longer genealogy, this book is interested in how we might find some of the roots of the affective turn in the imperialist and movement scenes of the late 1970s and 1980s.

25 Haro, "Affective Politics," 185; Rolnik cited and translated in Gabara, "Gestures," n.p.

26 Jennifer Lynn Kelly, "Asymmetrical Itineraries"; Moten, "New International," 3.

27 Best and Marcus, "Surface Reading," 13.

28 Fleetwood, *Marking Time*, 15.

29 Bartolovich, "Humanities of Scale," 117.

30 Lesjak, "Reading Dialectically," 246. Kucich also makes a version of this point in "Unfinished Historicist Project," 74.

31 Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 129. This is true even in Sedgwick's own formulations, despite her stated understanding of how paranoid knowledge might make reparative practices possible. To the extent that there was widespread awareness of the racist violence of mass incarceration in the mid-1990s, for example, it was due to the ongoing labor of organizers and writers within and outside prisons. Such activism intersected, as Che Gossett has described, with the creatively paranoid 1980s activism and scholarship exposing the terror of the AIDS emergency that Sedgwick's essay most directly references ("We Will Not Rest," 35). See also Cohen, *Boundaries of Blackness*. Similarly, while Sedgwick suggests that disappearances in Argentina are an example of the kind of spectacular violence that doesn't need practices of exposure or denaturalization, this doesn't seem to reflect the experiences of activists on the ground. Jennifer Ponce de León describes how in the aftermath of the dictatorship in Argentina, at stake was still "the very possibility for people to perceive violence, identify its causes and agents," and how activist projects to publicly denounce "unpunished war criminals" were called *escraches*, meaning "to drag into the light" ("How to See Violence," 354, 355).

32 Cacho, *Social Death*, 9.

33 For positionings of the reparative/affective/postcritical turn in this vein, see Cvetkocivh, *Depression*; Anker and Felski, "Introduction." In noticing this self-prescribed immunity in the postcritical field, I agree with Jane Elliott and Gillian Harkins ("Introduction," 10), who respond to Marcus and Best's call to surface reading by asking "how precisely symptomatic or postsymptomatic reading practices should be situated in relation to the temporal and territorial conditions of neoliberalism," and then suggest that it is precisely this question that postcritical methods tend to stymie. Leigh Claire La Berge and Quinn Slobodian ("Reading for Neoliberalism") have argued that questions of how to situate our reading practices in relation to neoliberalism would be best answered by turning to the texts of the neoliberal theorists themselves. For a study that beautifully takes this approach with a focus on social movement containment and fugitivity, see Dillon, *Fugitive Life*. This book eschews this approach, however, because of its interest in how social movement, university, and state cultures were absorbing and producing neoliberal racial capitalist logics as they were mediated through the US 1970s and 1980s projects of empire. (In general, the risk to La Berge and Slobodian's approach is that it may end up eschewing how neoliberal theory in all its varieties was mediated in its implementation through state and imperialist violence.)

34 Reber, "Tale of Two Marats," 190; Reber, *Coming to Our Senses*, xv.

35 Reber, "Tale of Two Marats, 205.

36 In that I'm arguing for the 1980s as another moment when the messy relation between forms of empire and forms of free trade liberalization can spark longing to be an imperial subject, this book learns from Christopher Taylor's *Empire of Neglect*.

37 Eng, "Reparations and the Human"; Eng, "Colonial Object Relations"; Simpson, "Sovereignty," 84.

38 Eng, "Colonial Object Relations," 12.
39 Eng, "Colonial Object Relations," 14.
40 Simpson, "Sovereignty," 85.
41 In this focus, this book means to complement the work that already exists on such formal structures of redress, including truth commissions and compensatory legislation, during what Roy Brooks terms "the age of apology" beginning in the late 1970s. See Brooks, *When Sorry Isn't Enough*; Paik, *Rightlessness*; Yoneyama, *Cold War Ruins*.
42 Nguyen, *Gift of Freedom*, 3.
43 Rogin, "'Make My Day!'" 502.
44 Castronovo, "'On Imperialism," 434.
45 I want to emphasize that this perception of spectacular violence as transparent, lacking any need for interpretation, wasn't shared by Rogin. He emphasizes, on the contrary, the need for interpretation because of the amnesia-inducing effect of such spectacles; see Rogin, "'Make My Day!'"
46 Jameson, *Postmodernism*, 24.
47 Stoler, *Duress*, 35, 27.
48 Sedgwick, "Melanie Klein," 638.
49 Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 123.
50 Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 124, 139–140. In the version of the essay that appears in *Novel Gazing* in 1997, Sedgwick writes of "Reagan-Bush-Clinton America" (18); when the essay reappears in *Touching Feeling*, she amends it to become "Reagan-Bush-Clinton-Bush America" (140).
51 Sedgwick, "Melanie Klein," 639. For an account of the retemporalization of queer life that followed the development of drugs that could treat AIDS, see Race, *Pleasure Consuming Medicine*.
52 Dean, "Genre Blindness," 530–531.
53 Sedgwick, "Melanie Klein," 638.
54 In taking on this project of historicizing the reparative, I agree with David Kurnick, who notes that in the "Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading" essay, Sedgwick treats AIDS as an "example" rather than a "historical condition for the moods of queer criticism"; he argues that the essay chooses "characterology" over history, which "functions . . . to obscure the historical conditions of its articulation" ("Few Lies," 366). (Sedgwick's later essay, "Melanie Klein and the Difference Affect Makes," does move, however, to considering the AIDS crisis more as "historical condition" for her interest in the reparative.) For a different account of the reparative in relation to "histories that hurt," see Berlant, *Cruel Optimism*, chapter 4. The phrase references Frederic Jameson's "history is what hurts" (*Political Unconscious*, 102). For accounts that have begun to historicize Sedgwick's turn to the reparative, see Wiegman, "Times We're In"; Bradway, *Queer Experimental Literature*.
55 Felski, *Limits of Critique*, 125–126.
56 Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 140; Best and Marcus, "Surface Reading," 2.
57 On Foucault's prison activism and influence, see Zurn and Dilts, *Active Intolerance*. On the prison abolitionist critique of reform, see Berger et al., "What Abolitionists Do."
58 Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*; Rodriguez, *Forced Passages*; Parenti, *Lockdown America*; Berger, *Struggle Within*; Camp, *Incarcerating the Crisis*.

59 Shoop, "Angela Davis." On the movement of the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s into the university, see especially Roderick Ferguson, *Reorder of Things*, but also Biondi, *Black Revolution*, and Rojas, *From Black Power to Black Studies*. On accounts of the institutionalization of feminisms, in addition to those cited in chapters 1 and 2, see Agathangelou et al., "Sexual Divestments"; Coogan-Gehr, *Geopolitics of the Cold War*; Wiegman, *Object Lessons*.

60 Felski, *Limits*, 126.

61 Felski, *Limits*, 123.

62 Reber, *Coming to Our Senses*, 9.

63 Grandin, *Empire's Workshop*, 71.

64 See especially Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*; Saldaña-Portillo, *Revolutionary Imagination*; Duggan, *Twilight of Equality*; Jodi Melamed, *Represent and Destroy*; Roderick Ferguson, *Reorder of Things*; Hong, *Ruptures of American Capital*; Hong, *Death beyond Disavowal*; Edwards, "Of Cain and Abel"; Edwards, "Sex after the Black Normal"; Hale, *Más Que un Indio*; Povinelli, *Cunning of Recognition*; Patricia Hill Collins, *Fighting Words*; Spade, *Normal Life*; Agathangelou et al., "Intimate Investments"; Agathangelou et al., "Sexual Divestments"; Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*.

65 Jodi Melamed, *Represent and Destroy*; Agathangelou et al., "Sexual Divestments."

66 Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 130.

67 Sedgwick's claim that paranoid critique is "more historically specific" than it seems refers to her sense that, as Joseph North glosses it, "the breakdown of the Keynesian regimes and the subsequent turn to neoliberalism had ensured that the political claims of the dominant historicist/contextualist paradigm were out of step with historical realities" (*Literary Criticism*, 160). North references here Sedgwick's observation that the state's retreat from providing public services, while at the same time exercising what I've already described as the spectacular forms of violence that seemed to her beyond the need for exposure, makes the project of critiquing the ruses of the liberal state irrelevant (Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 19–20). The genealogy I sketch here disagrees with the trajectory that North, following Sedgwick, describes, in that he imagines the "historical-contextualist paradigm of critique" as born of and incapable in the face of neoliberalism, while the reparative and the "incremental" turns that follow are somehow a response to neoliberalism without being conditioned by it. Rather, I'm persuaded by Sedgwick's own observations that the reparative was lurking in the paranoid queer criticism of the 1980s all along, or, as David Kurnick puts it, correcting Sedgwick's own minimization of the reparative's presence, "nonparanoid ways of knowing had long been internal to that [queer theory] tradition" ("Few Lies," 363). Bradway elaborates on this point in *Queer Experimental Literature*, 55–56. This book focuses on the reparative in the 1980s, and its competing yet allied relation with paranoid critique, in order to trace its historical relation to neoliberal empire.

68 Equipo Maíz, "Quiénes Somos"; Laura Briggs, "Activisms and Epistemologies,"88.

69 Equipo Maíz, *El Neoliberalismo*, translation from Laura Briggs, "Activisms and Epistemologies," 87.

70 Equipo Maíz, *El Neoliberalismo*. For further discussion of this text, see Laura Briggs, "Activisms and Epistemologies."

71 Laura Briggs, "Activisms and Epistemologies," 88.

72 See Broulliette, "Neoliberalism and the Demise of the Literary"; McClanahan, "Serious Crises"; and the oft-cited "Kill This Keyword" panel at the 2014 American Studies Association Annual Meeting. For another discussion of "neoliberalism fatigue," see Elliott and Harkins, "Introduction," 2. (This is not to disagree that the diagnosis of neoliberalism has often come with liberal welfare state nostalgia that occludes the violence of the US postwar developmentalist regime, a nostalgia that is present in both Naomi Klein's *Shock Doctrine* and Wendy Brown's *Undoing the Demos*; however, I'm unconvinced that such nostalgia is inevitably inscribed by using the term "neoliberalism.")

73 For an important version of this argument, see Ahmed, "Selfcare as Warfare."

74 This insight has long been a structuring one in Latin American and Caribbean Studies, and this book is informed by that field's extensive scholarship on neoliberalism, including (in no particular order) Petras, "Imperialism"; Petras, *Social Movements*; Postero, *Now We Are Citizens*; Carla Freeman, *Entrepreneurial Freedom*; Han, *Life in Debt*; Diana M. Nelson, *Finger in the Wound*; Diana M. Nelson, *Who Counts?*; Hale, *Más Que un Indio*; Gareth Williams, *Other Side*; Gago, *Neoliberalism from Below*; Sanchez-Prado, *Screening Neoliberalism*. Literary scholarship on neoliberalism is vast; for important collections that give a sense of the varied approaches in the field, see Elliott and Harkins, "Genres of Neoliberalism"; Johansen and Karl, *Neoliberalism and the Novel*; Huehls and Greenwald Smith, *Neoliberalism and Contemporary Literary Culture*; Deckard and Shapiro, *World Literature*; Kennedy and Shapiro, *Neoliberalism and Contemporary American Literature*. In general, this book agrees with Shapiro and Deckard (who reference especially the periodization outlined explicitly by Huehls and Greenwald Smith), that in Americanist scholarship on neoliberalism, questions of culture and aesthetics often seem to be discussed in relationship to neoliberalism only after the 1990s, which tends to occlude the culture and aesthetics that emerged from the US imperialist wars fought in the Americas in the 1970s and 1980s precisely over neoliberalism, as well as culture and aesthetics produced under the pressure of US-supported austerity regimes in the hemisphere.

75 Jacobsen, "Where We Stand," 282.

76 In Latin America, and Latin American and Caribbean studies, this insight is nothing new. Rather, as Veronica Gago, one of the founding members of the Argentinian militant research collective Colectivo Situaciones argues, the tension around "neoliberalism" is somewhat different. "Neoliberalism," she writes, "has become a term seeking to remain attached to the past" (*Neoliberalism*, 1). Despite "the breakdown of the political legitimacy of neoliberalism from above" (3) ushered in by the early 2000s Latin American "Pink Tide," she argues that neoliberalism has not disappeared, but rather mutated in response to the struggles against it. Neoliberalism consists now, she explains, "from above, as the renewal of the extractive-dispossessive form in a new moment of financialized sovereignty and, from below, as a rationality that negotiates profits in this context of dispossession" (5). Key to neoliberalism's tenacity in the present for Gago is her sense of how the (always partial) reparative, ameliorative actions of the state in resistant response

to neoliberalism are actually productive of multiplying mushrooming neoliberal subjectivities and logics. This dynamic suggests the continued importance of attending to "neoliberalism" as an explanatory term in the present and past, as well as to how reparative and ameliorative state and activist anti-neoliberal projects have often been entangled with neoliberalism's own reparative ethos.

77 Harvey, *Brief History*, 3.

78 Slobodian, *Globalists*; Peck, *Constructions of Neoliberal Reason*, 51–52.

79 Federici, *Caliban and the Witch*; Mirowski, *Never Let a Serious Crisis Go to Waste*. For work that locates the origins of neoliberal cultural and economic logics earlier in the post—World War II period, see Slobodian, *Globalists*; Peck, *Constructions of Neoliberal Reason*; Tucker-Abramson, *Novel Shocks*; Sanchez-Prado, "Mont Neoliberal Periodization."

80 Quijano, "Coloniality of Power"; see also Jodi Melamed, *Represent and Destroy*; Hong, *Death beyond Disavowal*; Roderick Ferguson and Hong, "Sexual and Racial Contradictions." On longer histories of the coloniality that underlies neoliberalism, see Lowe, *Intimacies of Four Continents*.

81 Robinson, *Black Marxism*, 2; Jodi Melamed, "Racial Capitalism," 77.

82 Harvey, *Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 12; Duggan, *Twilight of Equality*, xvii.

83 Harvey, *New Imperialism*; see also Naomi Klein, *Shock Doctrine*; Meeks, *Critical Interventions*.

84 On "accumulation by dispossession," see Harvey, *Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 159–178. On neoliberalism as a process of the upward redistribution of wealth, see Harvey, *Brief History*, and especially Duggan, *Twilight of Equality*. "More poor people among the poor" is Laura Briggs's translation in "Activisms and Epistemologies," 87.

85 Duggan, *Twilight of Equality*, xvii. For other works that emphasize this aspect of neoliberalism, see Hong, *Death beyond Disavowal*; Jodi Melamed, *Represent and Destroy*; Povinelli, *Economies of Abandonment*; Roderick Ferguson, *Reorder of Things*.

86 Naomi Klein, *Shock Doctrine*; Wendy Brown, *Edgework*, chap. 3; Wendy Brown, *Undoing the Demos*; Spira, "Luz Arce"; Spira, "Neoliberal Transitions"; Spira, "Neoliberal Captivities." For a discussion of the "shock" in aesthetic form in the postwar period, anticipating neoliberal formations, see Tucker-Abramson, *Novel Shocks*.

87 Laura Briggs, "Activisms and Epistemologies," 86; Grandin, "Empire's Amnesia."

88 Hong, *Death beyond Disavowal*, 7.

89 Hale, *Más Que un Indio*, 219–220.

90 Hale, *Más Que un Indio*, 219–220. See also Postero, *Now We Are Citizens*; Speed, *Rights in Rebellion*; Povinelli, *Cunning of Recognition*; Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*.

91 Daniel P. Moynihan to President Nixon, January 16, 1970. Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California. https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/virtuallibrary/documents/jul10/53.pdf. On benign neglect and the onset of neoliberalism, see Chang, *Can't Stop Won't Stop*.

92 Michel Foucault, *Birth of Biopolitics*, 226.

93 Lisa Duggan, *Twilight of Equality*, 12–14. On neoliberal governmentality, see also Wendy Brown, *Edgework*, chap. 3; Wendy Brown, *Undoing the Demos*; Nikolas Rose,

Powers of Freedom; Ong, *Neoliberalism as Exception*; Rofel, *Desiring China*; Robin James, *Resilience and Melancholy*.

94 Cacho, *Social Death*, 18, 27.

95 Berlant, *Queen of America*, 3, 5.

96 Zaretsky, *No Direction Home*; Duggan, *Twilight*.

97 Cooper, *Family Values*, 9, 21, 68.

98 Cooper, *Family Values*, 164–165; Duggan, *Twilight of Equality*; Eng, *Feeling of Kinship*.

99 Laura Briggs, *Somebody's Children*. The recruitment of this migrant labor force, too, as Chandan Reddy explains, was routed through the language of "family reunification" that further shifted the responsibility of communal care from the state onto the private family ("Asian Diasporas," 108–112). The reinscription of the family form as a strategy for upward redistribution of wealth justifying the decimation of the welfare state and uneven enforcement of austerity was thus simultaneously a mode of imperialist neocolonial practice. David Eng indicates how this mode is an updated version of what Amy Kaplan names "manifest domesticity" (*Anarchy of Empire*), functioning similarly in US neoliberal empire; see Eng, *Feeling of Kinship*, 8. On the suturing of neoliberalism to the family, intimacy, and reproductive politics, see also Harkins, *Everybody's Family*; Povinelli, *Empire of Love*; Berlant, *Queen of America*.

100 Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 128.

101 Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 128.

102 On the figure of the "killjoy," see Ahmed, *Promise of Happiness*.

103 With "care of self," I reference Sedgwick's own gloss of Foucault in "Paranoid and Reparative Reading": "what Foucault calls 'care of the self,' the often very fragile concern to provide the self with pleasure and nourishment in an environment that is perceived as not particularly offering them" (*Touching Feeling*, 137).

104 Eng, "Colonial Object Relations," 2–5; Laubender, "Beyond Repair," 60.

105 Eng, "Colonial Object Relations," 5.

106 Laubender, "Beyond Repair," 57.

107 Laubender, "Beyond Repair," 63.

108 Eng, "Colonial Object Relations," 11.

109 Eng, "Colonial Object Relations," 6, 11.

110 Laubender, "Beyond Repair," 65.

111 Laubender, "Beyond Repair," 64.

112 Eng, "Colonial Object Relations," 14.

113 Laubender, "Beyond Repair," 53.

114 Berlant, *Female Complaint*.

115 Berlant, "Affect in the End Times." For a careful working out of how the reparative is not about homogeneous restoration or an uncritical relation to the past, see Shahani, *Queer Retrosexualities*.

116 Berlant, *Female Complaint*, 41.

117 The phrase "feeling right" comes from Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*; Laubender, "Beyond Repair," 53.

118 Berlant, *Female Complaint*, 31.

119 Sedgwick, "Melanie Klein," 636–637.

120 Sedgwick, "Melanie Klein," 629.
121 Berlant, "Commons," 403.
122 Jeremy Rosen, *Minor Characters*, 22; Berlant, *Cruel Optimism*, 6.
123 Berlant, *Cruel Optimism*, 80.
124 Rice, *New Politics of Protest*, 7–10; Grandin, *End of the Myth*, 6.
125 For this body of scholarship, see note 52 above.
126 For such critiques of the implementation of reparations, see note 36 above.
127 Kaba, "Yes."
128 On this point with reference to the debates around the Green New Deal, see Bernes, "Between the Devil and the Green New Deal."

1. FREEDOM TO WANT

1 Nestle, *Restricted Country*, 42.
2 Nestle, *Restricted Country*, 49–50.
3 Nestle, *Restricted Country*, 41–42.
4 Nestle, *Restricted Country*, 51.
5 Nestle, *Restricted Country*, 57.
6 Nestle, *Restricted Country*, xvi.
7 Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 130.
8 Foucault, *History of Sexuality*.
9 Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire*, 174.
10 Rogin, "'Make My Day!,'" 507, 522; Cynthia Weber, *Faking It*, 64.
11 Stoler, *Race and the Education*, 173.
12 By referring to Nestle and her cohort as practicing "sex-radical feminism," I follow Jennifer Nash, who distinguishes among 1980s feminist "sex wars" camps between feminists who believed in pornography's liberating possibilities and opposed its regulation by the state, and "sex radicals," whom she argues "destabilize the tendency to view pornography as exclusively a site of women's subordination or a locus of women's agency" in favor of exploring the complexity of pornographic texts and "how arousal, pleasure, subordination, and dominance are co-constitutive" (*Black Body*, 7).
13 Jessica Joy Cameron similarly argues that "sex-radical feminism tends towards the reparative position," though her reading does not read this structure genealogically in relation to neoliberalism and empire, and is more faithful to Kleinian rubrics of the reparative (differentiating, for instance, between reparation and "manic reparation") than this chapter. See Cameron, *Reconsidering Radical Feminism*, especially 83–102.
14 Berlant, "Commons," 403.
15 Hennessy, *Profit and Pleasure*, 178, 186; Weiss, *Techniques of Pleasure*, 154.
16 Pérez, *Taste for Brown Bodies*, 9.
17 For Fraser's account of the confluences between feminism and neoliberalism, see Fraser, "Feminism, Capitalism and the Cunning of History"; Fraser, *Fortunes of Feminism*, 218; Fraser, "How Feminism Became Capitalism's Handmaiden."