DISAFFECTED / XINE YAO

THE CULTURAL POLITICS
OF UNFEELING IN
NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICA

DISAFFECTED

BUY

PERVERSE MODERNITIES A SERIES EDITED BY JACK HALBERSTAM AND LISA LOWE

DISAFFECTED

XINE YAO

THE CULTURAL POLITICS OF UNFEELING IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICA

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On April 10, 2020, during the first COVID-19 lockdown, Lucia shared on Instagram the third in her ink painting series "About Touch and Intimacy during the Pandemic." In the caption, she remarked, "Not sure how to resolve the piece yet, so I'm stepping away from it, turning it around, seeing

what works so far." A continent and an ocean away, I was mesmerized by her creative rendition of the paradoxes of intimacy and distance that spoke to my work as I struggled to finish it. Thank you, friend, for generously sharing your gorgeous artwork with me. To me, this collaboration of sorts captures something of the queer of color ethos, femme survival, and Black-Asian counterintimacies that informs the feeling otherwises of *Disaffected*.

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INTRODUCTION /

Disaffected from the Culture of Sentiment

affectability: The condition of being subjected to both natural (in the scientific and lay sense) conditions and to others' power
affectable "I": The scientific construction of non-European minds
—Denise Ferreira da Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race*

By disaffection, I emphasize not only emotional distance, alienation, antipathy, and isolation but also to center this word's other connotation of disloyalty to regimes of power.—Martin F. Manalansan IV, "Servicing the World: Flexible Filipinos and the Unsecured Life"

I thus am able to conceive of the opacity of the other for me, without reproach for my opacity to him. To feel in solidarity with him or to build with him or to like what he does, it is not necessary for me to grasp him.—Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*

WHITE FEELINGS, white tears, white fragility, white women's tears, white men's tears: these phrases circulate within popular antiracist social justice discourse galvanized by the Black Lives Matter movement. These phrases articulate frustration with the ongoing manifestations of what scholars have

variously called the "unfinished business of sentimentality," the legacies of the "intimacies of four continents," and "the biopolitics of feeling."[1] They name the weaponization of white feelings in everyday life.[2] Behind these uses is the implicit statement: we know—indeed, have always known—that white feelings produce and maintain structures of domination.[3] To depend upon white feelings as the catalyst for social change reinscribes the world that enables their power. No more business with white sentimentality. Withhold from those colonial intimacies. Refuse to feel according to the hierarchies of the biopolitics of feeling. Be disaffected.

There is ambivalence. There is discontent. Perhaps one of the more radical manifestations of this critical dissatisfaction can be seen in a 2017 polemic by the writer and popular social media critic Robert Jones Jr., known as Son of Baldwin, who writes from a Black queer perspective. The essay "I Don't Give a Fuck about Justine Damond" responds to the killing of an unarmed white American woman by a Black police officer by breaking down the dynamics of racialized sympathy and emotional labor tied to legacies of Black enslavement:

> Most white people rely on this idea that black people, in situations where white people are in pain, are only ever to be soothing and understanding; only ever to be Mammy or Uncle Remus; only ever to extend condolences; only ever to embody loyalty; only ever to offer the empathy and sympathy that most white people purposely and haughtily deny when the situation is reversed—almost as if most white people still see us as their property.
>
> When the situation is reversed, when we require empathy and sympathy, then suddenly we're all of the opposite things that these once-needy white people previously said we were. When the shoe is on the other foot, then they assess us as immoral, violent, criminal, subhuman, unworthy.[4]

Black and Indigenous women who are victims of police brutality, as Son of Baldwin points out, do not receive the same sympathy. So, writing several years after the emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement, he chooses to be unsympathetic about the death of Justine Damond despite the anger he knows his stance will provoke. "My disinterest is white people's fault," he declares.[5] In a follow-up post, he asserts that he is unmoved by the backlash he has received from enraged white readers withdrawing their allyship to those he calls the "black/brown domestics," insisting on the importance of white feelings.[6] "Sentimentality, the ostentatious parading of excessive and spurious emotion," accused James Baldwin in his indictment of Harriet Beecher Stowe's paradigmatic protest novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), "is the mark of dishonesty,

the inability to feel; the wet eyes of the sentimentalist betray his aversion to experience, his fear of life, his arid heart; and it is always, therefore, the signal of secret and violent inhumanity, the mask of cruelty."[7] Referring to his "heart already full to capacity for all the dead black people killed by police," Son of Baldwin develops the antisocial affective implications of his namesake's critique. "I'm very much onto something with black apathy as radical opposition to their toxic ecology. And I believe it may be a key to liberation," he concludes.[8] The violence of white tears described by James Baldwin becomes projected onto those who refuse to be moved by them and are condemned as the ones unable to feel, with arid hearts, secret and violent inhumanity. Nonetheless, Son of Baldwin rejects that unspoken social contract of sympathy—for these unfeeling vilifications are already built into the structures of the United States predicated upon Black enslavement and Indigenous dispossession.[9]

Disaffected looks to American literature of the long nineteenth century to rethink the ongoing racial and sexual politics of unfeeling not as oppression from above but as a tactic from below. This book deliberately reads against the grain of the culture of sentiment to refuse the usual move of arguing for the humanity of minoritized subjects by enlisting literature to affirm that they feel too. *Disaffected* asks what we can apprehend if we stay with the negativity of unfeeling and suspend its rehabilitation. Through this provocation, I seek to excavate unfeeling occluded by the stifling imperatives of the political stakes of sympathy. In her preface to *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861), Harriet Jacobs signals her ambivalence about the political necessity of writing about herself as a formerly enslaved Black woman who is keenly aware of the stakes of her reworking of the genre of the slave narrative and the conventions of sentimentalism: "I have not written my experiences in order to attract attention to myself; on the contrary, it would have been more pleasant to me to have been silent about my own history. Neither do I care to excite sympathy for my own sufferings. But I do earnestly desire to arouse the women of the North to a realizing sense of the condition of two millions of women at the South, still in bondage, suffering what I suffered, and most of them far worse."[10]

Jacobs alludes to the compromises behind the cultural equation between true feeling and right action exemplified by *Uncle Tom's Cabin* that continues to overdetermine the politics of recognition underlying cultural fantasies of justice and social change. "There is one thing that every individual can do,—they can see to it that *they feel right*. An atmosphere of sympathetic influence encircles every human being; and the man or woman who *feels* strongly, healthily and justly, on the great interests of humanity, is a constant benefactor to the human race," concludes Stowe.[11] Her call to humanity for the corrective

of universal sympathy collapses naturalized, individual affective capacities with impersonal, collective affective intensities. Jacobs was spurred to publish her own abolitionist narrative after the humiliation of reaching out to Stowe with her life's story and requesting the opportunity for her daughter to travel with the famous writer to England—only to have Stowe reject the possibility of writerly collaboration; turn down her daughter; and instead express her intention to appropriate Jacobs's experiences as material for her new book, *The Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1853).[12]

Obscured in Stowe's injunction to "feel right" is the structural positioning of those privileged to be hailed as "every individual," "every human being," or "man or woman" with the authority to translate that sympathetic identification into action for "the human race." For them to be unsympathetic is a choice: their moral failure is an aberration that does not compromise their presumed status as subjects. This schema conceals the grounds for the politics that determine the recognition of the subjugated, a disciplinary apparatus that governs the terms of sociality: one must be recognized *as* sympathetic to be deserving of sympathy from those with the agency to sympathize. Thus, the marginalized do not have the luxury of being unsympathetic without forfeiting the provisional acceptance of their capacity for affective expressions and, therefore, the conditional acceptance of their humanity.

Disaffection / Reframing Recursive Debates about Sympathy and Sentimentalism

The philosophers Sylvia Wynter and Denise Ferreira da Silva have argued that the category of "Man," referring to bourgeois Western whiteness, overrepresents itself as universal humanity structured upon the suppression of racialized modalities of the human as mere derivations.[13] If we follow lines of inquiry opened up for us by their insights, what operations will we find concealed and enabled by the construct of universal feeling as a symptom and signifier of that coloniality? Affectability, according to da Silva in her study of Enlightenment universality transmuted into the biopolitical apparatuses of global modernity, is "the condition of being subjected to both natural (in the scientific and lay sense) conditions and to other's power."[14] Affectability defines raciality: the "transparent I" has the agency to know and affect, while the "affectable I" is the susceptible, the "scientific construction of non-European minds." In this way da Silva recalls for us Baruch Spinoza's foundational proposition about the nature of the emotions in relation to the world. Spinoza states, "By emotion I understand the modifications

of the body by which the power of the acting of the body itself is increased, diminished, helped, or hindered, together with the ideas of these modifications."[15] Although not written with affect studies in mind, da Silva's definition of affectability, as Tyrone Palmer observes, points to "the inextricability of 'affect' from power."[16] *Disaffection, then, threatens a break from affectability*.

In Stowe's *Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the supplementary text documenting the "truth" of her novel's depiction of slavery in response to the outcry from proslavery apologists, she divulges the racialized hierarchy of the transparent and the affectable that produces the universal. The "Anglo-Saxon race," asserts the white abolitionist, is "cool, logical, and practical," with an obligation to sympathize given its "dominant position in the earth."[17] In contrast, she places "the negro race" under the umbrella of "Oriental nations" to articulate "a peculiarity which goes far to show how very different they are from the white race": "They are possessed of a nervous organization peculiarly susceptible and impressible. Their sensations and impressions are very vivid, and their fancy and imagination lively. In this respect the race has an Oriental character and betrays its tropical origin. Like the Hebrews of old and the Oriental nations of the present, they give vent to their emotions with the utmost vivacity of expression, and their whole bodily system sympathizes with movements of their minds."[18]

Here we can observe how da Silva's affectability maps onto what Mel Chen terms the animacy hierarchy, which encompasses the spectrum of the human and nonhuman, the organic and the inorganic, the living and the nonliving.[19] According to Stowe's enduring sentimental model of justice, racialized peoples are legible only through their affectability. Emotional expression is presumed to be the signifier of affective human interiority, what Rei Terada calls the "expressive hypothesis."[20] If they do not accept this condition of affectable vulnerability, they fail to demonstrate their emotions as evidence of their subjectivity and, therefore, status as human subjects. The coloniality of this bind means that this process is always precariously iterative, contingent upon recognition by those already overrepresented as the universal human. Sympathy is "one of the fundamental ethical questions/problems/crises for the West," Saidiya Hartman observes in conversation with Frank B. Wilderson III, "It's as though in order to come to any recognition of common humanity, the other must be assimilated, meaning in this case, utterly displaced and effaced."[21]

I ask, then, how does unfeeling operate as the constitutive outside to that totalizing system, and what challenge can disaffection pose? In this regard, I take unfeeling not simply as negative feelings or the absence of feelings, but as that which cannot be recognized as feeling—the negation of feeling

itself. By foregrounding the heuristic of unfeeling as disaffection in its affective, causal, and political meanings, this book makes key interventions in our understanding of affect and politics in American literature and culture, a paradigm that has disproportionately affected the world. First, I reconsider unfeeling as an index of the underacknowledged spectrum of dissonance and dissent that critiques the demands of sympathetic recognition shaped by sentimentalism, questioning the liberal project of inclusion. Second, I explore unfeeling, in both the responsive and demonstrative senses, as a quotidian tactic of survival and a counterintuitive, and sometimes counteractive, mode of care. Finally, I propose that these antisocial affects are vilified as unfeeling because they have insurgent potential that may not be legible or instrumentalized toward resistance. If we follow Raymond Williams's definition of structures of feeling as the affective workings of ideology in lived experience, we may consider disaffection to be the unfeeling rupture that enables new structures of feeling to arise.[22] In other words, the reading of unfeeling as oppositional negation functions as a defensive denial of the quickening, flourishing, and renewal of alternative forms of sociality made possible by feeling otherwise.

In this book I trace a representative array of queer, racialized, and gendered modes of disaffected unfeeling that emerges within dominating structures of feeling from a range of precarious positions within the axes of oppression that constitute the biopolitical hierarchy. These groupings—unsympathetic Blackness, queer frigidity, Black objective passionlessness, and Oriental inscrutability—are not meant to be taxonomic or exclusionary, but to articulate a few key coded categories in the cultural imagination deployed to flatten out and invalidate individual and collective subtleties.[23] These nascent, fleeting, and sometimes failed modes of affective disobedience capture transgressive desires, ambivalences about relationality, and complicated investments that cannot be readily redeemed into the trajectory of liberal politics—and may even be damaging and countereffective.

In this contrarian manner, I read Herman Melville's *Benito Cereno* (1855), Martin R. Delany's *Blake; or the Huts of America* (1861), Elizabeth Stuart Phelps's *Doctor Zay* (1882), Frances Ellen Watkins Harper's *Iola Leroy* (1892), and *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* (1912) by Sui Sin Far (the pen name of Edith Maude Eaton). These narratives published after Stowe's novel engage the major sociopolitical issues of their day in ways that question the coercive relationship between Stowe's paradigmatic model of right feeling and political progress. I discuss these literary works in the explicit and implicit contexts of the struggles toward fantasies of justice linked to the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850; the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution on Black citizen-

ship and Black men's suffrage, respectively; Black and white women's rights activism toward suffrage that would be addressed by the Nineteenth Amendment; and the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.[24] I explain how these texts register ambivalence toward the very demand for sympathetic recognition—which, as Glen Coulthard (Yellowknives Dene) argues in his indictment of the processes of reconciliation for Indigenous peoples in Canada, is colonial and coercive.[25] These writers strategically employ the conventions of sentimentalism but then portray disaffected characters whose obdurate composure and divisive actions defy the expectations of right feeling that structure the politics of recognition. Rather than simply refuting negative portrayals of unfeeling contoured by racial and sexual politics, they reappropriate this apparent emotional lack as the affective symptom of dissatisfaction in ways mindful of the uneven political stakes and punishments risked by different subjects. I show how literature disrupts reading practices that crave affective access, legibility, and affectability. I thus bring into relief the complex and dynamic ways that minoritized subjects shaped the cultural, political, and even professional discursive arenas where these struggles took place, including the developing field of gynecology and the conflict between monogenesis and polygenesis theories of human development in race science.

I am not so much interested in fine-tuning the distinctions between agentic volition and instinctual physiology that attend the generally held taxonomization of the strata of affect, feeling, and emotional expression—ordered along the polarization of the axes of interiority to externalization and unconscious to conscious—as I am in stressing the flexible operations of how these differentiations naturalize scales of the human, nonhuman, living, and nonliving that Chen groups under the rubric of the animacy hierarchy.[26] Of greater concern to me are the operations of unfeeling as a form of antisocial discontent about, if not outright defiance of, the compulsory norms for expressing feeling along with susceptibility to the feelings of others. Unfeeling can signal skepticism and reluctance to signify the appropriate expressions of affect that are socially legible as human, which can rise to the refusal to care and sympathize as part of the expected cues of deference that maintain and structure biopolitical hierarchies of oppression. Lauren Berlant points out that withholding can operate as a sign of civility for the privileged and is "often deemed good manners in the servant class," and for those so-called "problem populations," such disaffection signals the threat of the ungovernable.[27] The popular understanding of emotional labor, a term originally coined by the sociologist Arlie Hochschild, is a useful way to address the uneven expectations about who does this labor and for whom according to the overlapping but irreducible processes of

racialization, class differentiation, and their modulations of sexual difference that persist despite the promise of socioeconomic mobility.[28] In this light, the literary works I discuss explore pathologized models of affective disobedience and agency that defy and rework scientific and legal discourses naturalized by the culture of sentiment. Through tactical shifts in mood, voice, and perspective, they offer glimpses into how accusations of unfeeling mask the transgressive validity, lived necessity, and emerging possibilities of antisocial affects and gestures that may be counterproductive to the conventional demands of advocacy. These writings demonstrate the inextricable relationship between the everyday and formal, institutional scales of the politics of sympathetic recognition that make up the governmentality of sentimentalism.

I linger with unfeeling, rather than dismissing or exonerating it. By focusing on unfeeling as disruptive negation, I aim to introduce a way of reframing the perennial Americanist fixation with oscillating between the structural complicity of sentimentalism or the feminist recuperation of its political and cultural work that goes back to Ann Douglas's and Jane Tompkins's generative disagreements about *Uncle Tom's Cabin* decades ago.[29] Sentimentalism remains an enduring—though often disavowed—rhetoric, genre, cultural mode, set of material relations, ideology, and episteme. Our understanding of sentimentalism has expanded to take seriously its essential part in the coercive American national project of citizenship and belonging, as shown through the work of Berlant and Pier Gabrielle Foreman.[30] It plays this part as an ethically fraught political tool for abolitionist and feminist agendas.[31] It is gendered not only as feminine and domestic, but also as important to the redefinition of consolidated masculinity in the private and public spheres.[32] In addition, its materiality informs embodiment and even the development of consumer materialism.[33] And most importantly, its constitutive racialized and colonial violences are complex.[34] It infiltrates even institutional bastions considered the obverse of sentimental: Kyla Schuller insightfully draws attention to its operation as a technology of scientific biopower, which she calls the biopolitics of feeling.[35] But if, as Shirley Samuels writes, sentiment is at the heart of nineteenth-century American culture, what does it mean to withdraw from that totalizing embrace, to be heartless?[36] Given that Schuller claims the biopolitical hierarchies of feeling are based upon the impressibility of bodies and minds, what if the failure of intractability were understood as, well, being unimpressed? Unfeeling dissents from the biopolitics of feeling, hinting at other ways of organizing life that might be suppressed, overlooked, adjacent, incipient, insurgent, resurgent, or still to be imagined. Bearing these questions in mind as I join conversations that rethink prevalent models of action

and feeling, I analyze these literary works written in the wake of Stowe's influence for the ambivalences, refusals, and failures of true feeling that frustrate the conditions underlying the politics of recognition.[37]

"Tender violence," as Laura Wexler calls it, undergirds American imperialism and its assimilationist, settler colonial enterprise wielded against Black people, Indigenous peoples, and immigrant populations.[38] Sentimentalism is part of the logic of the transnational intimacies of empire that, as Lisa Lowe notes, draw together Black enslavement, Indigenous dispossession, and Asian indentured servitude across seemingly disparate geographies as the material conditions for the usual affective, personal senses of intimacies that produce the Western liberal subject.[39] My daunting task, then, is to approach literature designated as American without reifying the United States or taking the nation as a limit. Instead, I hope to use American literature as a way to address the continued production and exportation of a sentimental nationalism and its imperialist corollary exemplified by the likes of Herman Melville's good-hearted American captain who intervenes on behalf of enslavers in the Southern hemisphere, but simultaneously disputed or redefined by disaffected dissenters as imagined by Martin Delany, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, and Sui Sin Far.

Affect Studies Has a Race Problem

We can recall that W. E. B. Du Bois begins *The Souls of Black Folk* with the question, "How does it feel to be a problem?"[40] Muñoz views Du Bois's famous question as an "opening," not an "impasse": "Thus feeling like a problem is a mode of minoritarian recognition."[41] In my first chapter I begin my discussion of unfeeling with the example of Herman Melville's fugitive Senegalese Babo, not his white New Yorker Bartleby, to emphasize that affect studies has a race problem. By centering Babo in his Blackness, I question why it has been easier for critics to become attached to white Bartleby's enigmatic inexpression as the universal figure of transgression, his popularity reiterating the inexhaustible extension of sympathy for him by the narrating white lawyer.[42]

Affect's deracinated universality is part of its appeal as a critical turn, surmises Clare Hemmings, making it a productive way out of the impasse of deconstruction and hegemony by attending to embodied experience, aleatory attachments, and the quirky textures of everyday life as potentially transformative. Hemmings traces two major approaches to affect: one that follows Eve Sedgwick, drawing upon the work of the psychologist Silvan Tomkins (wherein the appeal is how the "affective freedom of attachment

becomes a mark of the critic's freedom"), and another that can be traced to Brian Massumi, who draws inspiration from Gilles Deleuze (wherein "the affective's autonomy places it outside the reach of critical interpretation").[43] Affect, Hemmings concludes, is useful, but it is naïve to believe that it is beyond the social realm: critics draw attention to the whiteness of affect studies, indicting the overlap between the inadequate discussions of race and the racial citational politics of its intellectual tradition.[44] Despite Sara Ahmed's oeuvre on how affective economies shape the significations and relations of individual and collective bodies and Sianne Ngai's work on racialized animatedness—and, to some extent, her discussion of irritation—these authors too often remain exceptions regardless of their influence.[45] Work by David Eng and Jasbir Puar has enabled us to better understand how affect operates on geopolitical and transnational scales through diaspora, kinship, debility, and capacity, yet these authors' insights highlight the insidious convenience of the epistemic erasures and colonial portability of more abstracted, universalist frameworks of feeling.[46] In this vein, postcolonial and feminist writers of color like Audre Lorde, Frantz Fanon, Gloria Anzaldúa, Cherríe Moraga, and Claudia Rankine have been ignored as theorists of affect despite the centrality of feeling to their work.[47] Indeed, as Naomi Greyser beautifully illuminates for us, nineteenth-century Indigenous women writers like Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins (Northern Paiute) had to negotiate between settler colonial understandings of sympathy and their distinct tribal languages and traditions to assert the importance of the deep reciprocity of affective geographies as part of their practices of survivance and sovereignty.[48]

On the level of scholarship, then, we must confront the fact that the systemic refusal to take these conceptualizations of feeling as valid mirrors the historical and cultural denials of the feelings of peoples of color and other disaffected and marginalized populations: in this sense, they are subordinated as unfeeling within the academic episteme, too.[49] Demands for change in the academy have been made, and there have been calls for decolonizing or racializing affect studies by recognizing how affect operates for peoples of color and adopting non-Western taxonomies and paradigms of affect.[50] In this regard, my final chapter on Oriental inscrutability takes up the Chinese concept of face to challenge the presumption of universal feeling. Thus, this book deliberately looks to thinkers like the Caribbean philosopher Wynter not to decontextualize them, but for how they provoke us to rethink context and scope, to disturb the streamlined sense of Western intellectual tradition.[51]

Through what I view as an ongoing antisocial turn in affect theory, I suggest that unfeeling constitutes a break from dominant models of feel-

ing. Affect aliens like the feminist killjoy and the angry Black woman, according to Ahmed, disrupt normative conventions of happiness.[52] What, then, are the implications of alienation from affect itself? For critics like Berlant and Wendy Lee, the phenomenon of unfeeling entails both frustration and promise. "By disaffection, I emphasize not only emotional distance, alienation, antipathy, and isolation but also to center this word's other connotation of disloyalty to regimes of power and authority," writes Martin F. Manalansan IV in his discussion of Filipinx domestic workers navigating the global economy.[53] A counterpoint to demands for Third World feelings and labor, this model of disaffection acts as a quotidian performance that enables the execution of labor as well as the potential for activism, with the appearance of being unmoved concealing its potential for the choice to move and be moved in other ways.[54] The matrix of power that overrepresents the universal human through the abjection of those positioned as other is the condition that determines the intelligibility of feelings as signifiers of human interiority, producing the subjection of unfeeling and its exile beyond the horizon of the social.[55] Put another way, marginalized unfeeling is the unrecognized underside of universalized feelings of the dominant.

I use "unfeeling" as a broad term for a range of affective modes, performances, moments, patterns, and practices that fall outside of or are not legible using dominant regimes of expression. The range includes withholding, disregard, growing a thick skin, refusing to care, opacity, numbness, dissociation, inscrutability, frigidity, insensibility, obduracy, flatness, insensitivity, disinterest, coldness, heartlessness, fatigue, desensitization, and emotional unavailability. In short, people who are disaffected break from affectability and present themselves as unaffected. Inexpressive expressions stubbornly contradict the supposed universality of affects' encompassing intensities, tracking the edges of their influences and suggesting a beyond to their limits.

Unfeeling signals a break from the emotional respectability required by the politics of recognition.[56] Although the appearance of lack signifying an absence of interiority is the primary association, unfeeling also stands in for embryonic, fleeting, or inarticulate expressions that are so minor or deliberately diminished that they are unacknowledged.[57] The pejorative connotations of the words and phrases associated with unfeeling attempt to delegitimize how these tactics articulate dissent or—below that coherent threshold of political instrumentalization—index dissatisfaction with and ambivalence (however futile) about existing structures of feeling. I stress that the denigrated figurations of unfeeling cannot be understood without addressing the dimensions of how they are racialized, queered, and gendered

as part of legacies of survival and resistance intertwined with traumatic genealogies of hegemonic oppression. These antisocial affects may be perceived as such only because their insurgent potential offers a way out of dominant ways of being and enabling new structures of feeling to arise.

Theories of queer annihilation and refusal offer a vocabulary for considering transgression as legitimate in itself, regardless of whether or not it appears to be viable or useful.[58] Disaffection has its immediate roots in the meeting between the antisocial turn in queer theory and queer of color critique—a meeting represented by the provocative tensions between Lee Edelman's and José Esteban Muñoz's approaches. The spirit of this book owes much to Edelman's embrace of queer negativity and transgression regardless of instrumentalization alongside Muñoz's gestures toward the ways that queer of color critique in particular can seek generative possibilities beyond the normative through attending to the horizon of queerness as an opening, rather than only a shattering.[59] However, paying attention to these intellectual traditions alone is insufficient for addressing the rhizomatic aspects of how unfeeling works for the disaffected who are positioned throughout the biopolitical hierarchies of differentiation.[60] My approach to the antisociality of unfeeling as epistemological and ontological refutation seeks to honor and bring together conversations about disobedience, negativity, and the limits of the social running through queer theory, Black studies, Indigenous studies, and Asian North American studies to better grapple with the interlocking dimensions of its biopolitical implications.

Provincializing Sympathy / The Coloniality of Universal Feeling

I propose to examine unfeeling through provincializing the concept of sympathy that forms the basis of sentimentalism. The principle of sympathy has been held by Americanist scholars as key to the development of the United States as a nation-state: identification across difference shapes belonging, ideas of citizenship, and the construction of the body politic. Sympathy emerges from the colonial imposition of the Enlightenment episteme, whose universality is a function of the overrepresented status of whiteness and which is both product and producer of the intimate transnational violences of imperialism that made Western modernity possible. According to the paradigmatic definition that opens Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), "by the imagination we place ourselves in his situation, we conceive ourselves enduring all the same torments, we enter as it were into his body, and

become in some measure the same person with him, and thence form some idea of his sensations, and even feel something which, though weaker in degree, is not altogether unlike them."[61] Sympathy enables the recognition of feelings: "Whatever is the passion which arises from any object in the person principally concerned, an analogous emotion springs up, at the thought of his situation, in the breast of every attentive spectator" (10). In this regard, I want to emphasize the foundational nature of sympathy as more than a historical antecedent: sympathy is the fundamental mode of apprehending affects, feelings, and emotions—and deeming them legitimate.

This "fellow-feeling" works both ways in the world: one is pleased to receive sympathy and "hurt by the want of it," and we are also pleased to sympathize and "hurt when we are unable to do so" (15). The person who does not sympathize or accept the sympathy of others recurs throughout Smith's treatise as an object of affront. On the one hand, to not have sympathy for another provokes a breakdown of sociality more profound than differences of opinion: "We become intolerable to one another. I cannot support your company, nor you mine. You are confounded at my violence and passion, and I am enraged at your cold insensibility and want of feeling" (21). On the other hand, when "we cannot enter into his indifference and insensibility," as in the case of people who do not react to insult or injury, such people are seen as "contemptible" and just as bad as their aggressor (35 and 34). The consequence of not sympathizing is to forfeit receiving sympathy. Wendy Lee, in her reading of Bartleby, notes that for Smith, insensibility can rise to "a public offense instead of just a personal insult," escalating "to unite others in their resentment, even and perhaps especially in those who have no apparent stake in the conflict."[62] This specter of the unfeeling subject acts as the antisocial corollary to sympathy as the "fellow-feeling" basis of civilized sociality.

I find it telling that later Smith abandons the guise of universal abstraction to reveal how the schematics of sympathy reproduce the material relations of colonialism. Shifting to the global stage, he divides humanity along the line of sympathy: while the "civilized nations" are said to be "founded upon humanity," the "rude and barbarous nations" are focused on "self-denial."[63] This anthropological differentiation gives context to his earlier discussion of virtuous control versus unfeeling lack: the first is "the very principle upon which that manhood is founded," while the second "deserves no applause" for those "altogether insensible to bodily pain" (152 and 156). Want of feeling is not neutral but linked to depravity, for it is possible to grow "callous by the habits of crimes." According to Smith, "the vilest and most abject of all states" is the "complete insensibility to honour and infamy, to vice and

virtue" (118). The figure of "the savage" is the ultimate figure of unfeeling: he "expects no sympathy from those around him, and disdains, on that account, to expose himself, by allowing the least weakness to escape him" (205). The savage is inexpressive and unreactive, refusing to change "the serenity of his countenance or the composure of his conduct and behaviour." The criminal is racialized, while all the racialized are criminal: the former has the privilege of agentic individuation, and the latter is the indistinguishable stand-in for the entire race.

Unlike the civilized nations, these barbaric peoples of color are prone to "falsehood and dissimulation": "It is observed by all those who have been conversant with savage nations, whether in Asia, Africa, or America, that they are equally impenetrable, and that, when they have a mind to conceal the truth, no examination is capable of drawing it from them" (208). These Asian, Black, and Indigenous peoples deny affectability, caring not whether they are sympathetic to Western scrutiny—and Smith is unsympathetic in turn, unable to recognize these racialized feelings. He complains that "they never express themselves by any outward emotion," conveniently eliding the colonial dynamics of the epistemological imperative (208). Consequently, he views the violent actions of the inexpressive savage as a moral lack, whereas similar deeds by the "civilized" white Westerner are within the bounds of sociality, "convincing the spectator, that they are in the right to be so much moved, and of procuring his sympathy and approbation" (208).[64] Smith is unable to comprehend the possibility of the emotional complexity of peoples of color or the validity of their affective interiority as fully human subjects. For Smith, they are inexpressive and therefore unsympathetic; for Stowe, they are expressive and therefore sympathetic. Rather than a conflict within what da Silva would call affectability, they illustrate its bind. Eighteenth-century Enlightenment racism locked the coloniality of sympathy into national projects and the understanding of the global; the nineteenth-century sentimental project consolidated that formulation of sympathy into the liberal logics of belonging and political action. To acknowledge sympathy only as feeling across difference erases its violent origins in the matrices of domination that produce the system of racial difference. We should instead apprehend the hierarchies built into sympathy, a concept that has been foundational to the geopolitical configurations of modernity—including the construction of the United States.

Sympathy, much like the present workings of affect studies in the academy, has operated as a strategy of engulfment to subordinate non-Western taxonomies and paradigms of affect, emotion, and feeling as mere variations if not to outright invalidate them beyond the threshold of recognition as

feeling. In this sense, sympathy functions as the fundamental condition of affective intelligibility for the spectrum of feelings in all degrees of expressiveness and intensities. To understand the erasures of the unfeeling, we must read the archive in oppositional ways. In Smith, for instance, we can discern the anticolonial disaffection of those "equally impenetrable" peoples of "Asia, Africa, or America" that prefigures twentieth-century articulations of Third World solidarities. Indeed, it is relevant to note that although Charles Darwin's *The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872), which argues for the universality of readable affects across races and species, is considered part of the paradigm shift to emotions as external and physiological, Darwin vents a frustration similar to Smith's. Darwin footnotes the challenge of extracting ethnographic knowledge about emotions from Indians through the network of the British colonial apparatus due to their "habitual concealment of all emotions in the presence of Europeans."[65] I speculate that nonequivalent convergences between these forms of disaffection from colonial intimacies can give rise to what I elsewhere designate "counterintimacies." Counterintimacies produce the conditions for insurgent solidarities, as I explore in chapter 2—which views the Caribbean as a site that brings together those disaffected peoples from Asia, Africa, and the Americas that so frustrate Smith.

Unfeeling as Theory in the Flesh

Taking up the ethical charge to decolonize affect studies, I turn to queer and feminist of color theorists whose underappreciated contributions to the intellectual histories of feeling—lack of recognition erasing their theorizations about the unrepresentable status of unfeeling in the dominant episteme—paradoxically positions them as thinkers who uniquely pay attention to this disaffected sense of unfeeling. Unlike the affront of unfeeling to Smith's "fellow-feeling," in this tradition I suggest that we can track unfeeling as a theory in the flesh, not as opposition to feeling but as its complement in lived experience within the affective hierarchies of biopolitics. In her original preface to *This Bridge Called My Back*, Moraga speaks to the lived experiences of the women of color collected in the volume: "Our strategy is how we cope—how we measure and weigh what is to be said and when, what is to be done and how, and to whom and to whom and to whom, daily deciding/risking who it is we can call an ally, call a friend."[66]

There is a necessary calculus of refusals: the apparent lack or dulling of affect can be a defensive tactic of everyday psychic survival in a world predicated upon racial and sexual violences. "To cope with hurt and control my

fears, I grew a thick skin," states Anzaldúa, and Lorde writes, "In order to withstand the weather, we had to become stone."[67] Their images of thick skin and stone indicate that the callousness of insensitivity may be a development of an affective callus, a protective hardening of the sensitive psyche against the wear and tear of everyday life and the repetitive tasks of racialized and gendered emotional labor. However, uncritical valorization of unfeeling as triumphant resistance ignores its risks. As Anzaldúa acknowledges, the tactic runs the risk of being misread and vilified: "I am not the frozen snow queen but a flesh and blood woman with perhaps too loving a heart, one easily hurt."[68] This antisocial armor can be turned against those it is meant to protect, for Lorde notes that the cultivation of a stony exterior can lead to Black women hurting other Black women: "we bruise ourselves upon the other who is closest."[69] Unfeeling can be a dangerous gambit, but the pathologization of its manifestations obscures how cultivating unresponsiveness and inexpressiveness is an effect of the structural alienations in the culture of sentiment—and symptoms of dissatisfaction.

Making space to reclaim the legitimacy of the feelings of queer women of color requires decentering dominant sympathies to the point of being unfeeling toward them. In her letter to Mary Daly, Lorde makes explicit the uneven emotional labor placed upon women of color and raises the possibility of disengaging: "I had decided never again to speak to white women about racism. I felt it was wasted energy because of destructive guilt and defensiveness, and because whatever I had to say might better be said by white women to one another at far less emotional cost to the speaker."[70] Lorde reserves the right to refuse the demands of emotional labor that would center hurt white feelings to attend to her own emotional well-being. Likewise, Anzaldúa resists the pressures to pay disproportionate attention to the feelings of others: "She has to learn to push their eyes away. She has to still her eyes from looking at their feelings—feelings that can catch her in their gaze, bind her to them."[71] The demand to sympathize can be coercive, making the rejection of identification a political decision that may be the first step toward shifting existing structures of feeling. To choose not to care, not to be moved, pushes against the expectations of affectability.

Nonetheless, these writings by queer women of color testify that these feelings can be recovered even though they had to be suspended for the sake of survival. Rather than absence or negation, unfeeling may enable dormant, incipient, and insurgent affects. Unfeeling used strategically can be put in the service of the eventual flourishing of feeling, as with Anzaldúa's figure of the *india*-Mestiza: "She hid her feelings; she hid her truths; she concealed

her fire; but she kept stoking the inner flame."[72] Their feelings qua feelings do not require expression or recognition for legitimacy, and unfeeling in another sense names the outsiders' frustration with these dissenting modes of emotional life that may seem ineffable to them. For her own creative growth, Anzaldúa works to consciously reshape her structure of feeling, or what she calls her "belief system," through not just affirmation but also destruction: "Those I don't want, I starve; I feed them no words, no images, no feeling."[73] I suspect that there is a congruence, then, between these processes of disaffection and Muñoz's disidentifications: the suspension of relationality allows for creative remakings in the struggle to reach the horizon of queerness, with its potentialities and possibilities. Unfeeling is the detachment from attachments to hegemonic structures of feeling and the potential for striving toward a radical politics of liberation.

Antisocial Affects and the Suppression of Insurgent Sociality in Colonial America

Drawing upon these nuanced theorizations of psychic survival and taking a brief look at foundational scientific and medical American texts, we can begin to discern the suppressed workings of affective complexity among Black and Indigenous peoples demonized as unfeeling. Thomas Jefferson, Stanley Stanhope Smith, and Benjamin Rush take up Adam Smith's concept to articulate the biopolitical frameworks of the new settler colonial nation regulated and naturalized through feeling, suggesting that affective agency may intervene not only on the personal level but also on a biopolitical scale. Across these writings are accounts of the dulled, diminished, and absent affective expression and pain attributed in particular to Black and Indigenous peoples. These attributions appear in inconsistent ways that ultimately serve the settler colonial nation-state by positioning Blackness and Indigeneity as exclusionary and antagonistic. In *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785), the inaugural text of American race science, Thomas Jefferson understood the symbiotic relationship between scientific knowledge and legal authority: his discussion of scientific racial difference is placed in Query XIV, titled "Laws," with the subtitled question "The Administration of Justice and Description of the Laws?"[74] "To our reproach it must be said, that though for a century and a half we have had under our eyes the races of black and of red men, they have never yet been viewed by us as subjects of natural history," observes Jefferson, bringing the brutalities of his American iteration of the Enlightenment episteme to bear upon Black people to justify chattel slavery. He makes

claims about the affective and physical excesses of Black people—"more ardent," "more an eager desire than a tender mixture of sentiment and sensation," "more of sensation than reflection"—reinforcing their racialization as what da Silva terms affectable and Ngai calls animated.[75]

Allegations of unfeeling come out of Jefferson's frustrations with any obstacles to his prerogative to epistemological mastery, blurring the porous distinction between physical and psychological as well as collapsing the difference between exterior expression and affective interiority. During his degrading assessment of Black people's bodies, he judges the richness of their melanin as inferiority because it blocks his expectations of affectability: "that eternal monotony which reigns in the countenances, that immovable veil of black which covers all the emotions of the other race."[76] Is the veil immovable or refusing to be moved? Jefferson accuses Black people of inherent insensibility: "Their griefs are transient. Those numberless afflictions, which render it doubtful whether Heaven has given life to us in mercy or in wrath, are less felt, and sooner forgotten with them" (146). Of course, Jefferson does not acknowledge that he numbers among those afflictions that bring such grief: the enslaved have reason to guard their feelings against enslavers, resisting the emotional dimension of the labors of chattel slavery that would make even their affects fungible. Refusal to recognize the fullness of Black feelings feeds into Jefferson's contempt for Phillis Wheatley's poetry as an expression of those feelings: "The compositions published under her name are below the dignity of criticism" (147). These factors contribute to his conclusions about Black inferiority: frustrated by Black opacity, he infamously cannot decide upon polygenesis or monogenesis as the appropriate scientific rationalization to estrange Black people from the category of the human (150). Jefferson's claims about Black lack of emotional depth are his complaints about the limits to his total domination over Black bodies and psyches. To grow thick skins and become stone like Anzaldúa and Lorde, then, is part of a long tradition of disaffected defiance.

Stanley Stanhope Smith's rebuttal to Jefferson argues for monogenesis but further transmutes universal sympathy into the field of scientific knowledge, developing racial differentiation as racialized affects. *An Essay on the Causes of the Variety of Complexion and Figure in the Human Species* (1787) argues that humanity is "united together by a common system of feelings and ideas," but the titular "varieties" reflect hierarchies of the human—demonstrated in part through physiognomy as the "index of our feelings," with the face as physical evidence of affective, moral, and cognitive faculties.[77] Inexpression becomes an embodied signifier of the uncivilized: "In proportion to their

improvement in the arts, and to the progress of science among them there is a characteristic and common *expression*, which results from the similarity of the operations of the mind, and of the subjects about which these operations are employed. But savages in every region are usually distinguished by a countenance so dull and stupid, when not excited into ferocity by hostile and revengeful passions, as to induce many writers to regard them as an inferior grade in the descent from the human to the brute creation."[78] There are echoes of Adam Smith's observations about the withholding of unsympathetic peoples of color around the world, with Stanley Stanhope Smith affirming the hierarchy of humanity through science.

While Jefferson focuses on the abject state of Black people, he briefly valorizes the "Indians," who have "their reason and sentiment strong," in comparison.[79] In deliberate contrast, Stanley Stanhope Smith dedicates his text to the inferiority of Indigenous peoples and critiques Jefferson's assertions about Black people, defending Wheatley and ascribing "the apparent dullness of the negro principally to the wretched state of his existence," under the conditions first of Africa and then of chattel slavery.[80] This disagreement between Jefferson and Smith perversely puts Blackness and Indigeneity in competition for the constitutive singular nadir of human ontology, reifying their comparative racial positions as antagonistic when enslavement and settler colonialism are intertwined as the multiple, nonequivalent conditions of possibility for the United States. Throughout his treatise Smith speaks of the "American savage" as "vacant and unexpressive—the whole composition of his countenance, is fixed and stupid, with little variety of movement in the features" (192). Smith continually reaffirms his contempt for Indigenous peoples: "Destitute of that variety of ideas and emotions which give variety to the human countenance, the same vacancy of aspect is spread over all; the same set and composition, nearly is given to the features" (230–31). These "savages of America" are beyond the bounds of sympathy: they "know nothing of the finer feelings of the heart, and that soft interchange of affections which give [*sic*] birth to the sentiments of compassion and sympathy" (402–3). These "aboriginal tribes of North-America" are known for their "uncommon power of supporting pain" (411). In this inversion of Jefferson's treatment of Black versus Indigenous peoples, Smith does not recognize the nuances of Indigenous affective survivance in the face of settler colonial's genocidal violence, what Dian Million (Tanana Athabascan) might later have considered to be connected to Indigenous feminist "felt theory," which she expresses as Native women's "sixth sense about the moral affective heart of capitalism and colonialism."[81] Indigenous kinships and cosmologies are incomprehensible to Smith's colonizing gaze.

Another link in this intellectual history of articulating racial difference through feeling and unfeeling can be found in Benjamin Rush's notorious medical treatise on Black people and leprosy (1799), which opens by positioning itself as an explicit contribution to the discourse created by Smith's essay, taking whiteness as the standard measure of humanity and feeling. Leprosy, according to Rush, causes all the physical signifiers of Blackness; therefore, Blackness itself is a disease that can be cured. "The leprosy induces a morbid insensibility in the nerves," states Rush in his litany of evidence for this hypothesis. "This insensibility belongs in a peculiar manner to the negroes."[82] Black unfeeling becomes a literal symptom of pathologization, read as a physical property of the diseased body. Rush quotes a medical study by Benjamin Moseley, who claims that Black people "are void of sensibility to a surprising degree," citing his surgeries upon Black bodies compared to white patients as his major proof (quoted on 297). (Moseley's claims continue to influence the unequal treatment of Black people in the medical profession today.) Black people are characterized as having "morbid insensibility," "indifference," and "apathy" (297). Here we may recall Son of Baldwin's "black apathy" as a tactic to explain the consternation presented by that racialized unfeeling. To "cure" Blackness would enfold Black people back into the category of the universal human, Rush argues, and his Christian-inflected monogenesis subsumes racial particularities into whiteness originated by Adam and Eve as that "one pair, easy, and universal" under the coercive auspices of "universal benevolence" (297). Even though Rush attempts to discredit the institution of slavery, the reliance upon this framework of universalist humanity and sympathy reinscribes the same structural violences that slavery does. Across these key early American texts we can read how unfeeling registers epistemic failures of recognition that signal the stubborn trace of dissent, the abjection of the resilient practices of quotidian survival that gesture to the subversive politics of minoritarian ways of being and knowing.

Unfeeling as Interlocking Traditions of Minoritarian Critique

The novels and short stories I analyze in this book respond in complex ways to how modernizing American scientific and legal structures regulate, produce, and naturalize feeling. Each chapter responds to the influences of Adam Smith and Harriet Beecher Stowe on prevailing cultural norms in the American culture of sentiment by focusing on texts that allow us to track a spectrum of queer, racialized, and gendered genealogies of unfeeling in relation to the historical context of these scientific and legal discourses. To trace the

interrelated differentiations that constitute the global biopolitical apparatus of feeling through the lens of the American context as a point of entry, I follow unsympathetic Blackness, queer female frigidity, Black objective passionlessness, and Oriental inscrutability as illustrative, but hardly exhaustive, modes of unfeeling that are attributed to different populations and that flatten out the textures within these categories of difference or otherwise elide the changing negotiations between a subject and the collective. Through reading literature, I seek to recover the nuances and ambivalences that emerge from the contours of a range of situated lived experiences that are collapsed into denigrating tropes that discipline representation and behavior and thereby foreclose social and political possibilities. The writers of the works I discuss use the space of fiction to question the politics of sympathetic identification in the cultural imagination informed by sentimentalism.

There are two organizing logics to this book's trajectory: one historicist and the other comparative. First, I track how writers respond to the sentimentalist paradigm in relation to major developments in science and law as modernizing disciplines from the mid-nineteenth century after the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* through the turn to the twentieth century. Beginning with a consideration of Melville's and Delany's engagement with race science and the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850; moving to Phelps's and Watkins Harper's responses to sexology, gynecology, and the entrance of women into medicine in relation to constitutional amendments expanding and delimiting citizenship depending on race and gender; and ending with Far's considerations of anthropology and the enduring effects of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, I articulate the ways in which American novels reflect on sympathy and action in the public and private spheres. This arc through the antebellum and postbellum periods and the turn of the century allows us to follow how the sentimental politics of recognition both transforms and endures in the cultural imagination. Second, this book shows its debts to Ahmed and Ngai not only in its intellectual influences but also in its organizational strategy: each chapter is structured upon attention to a different mode of unfeeling. For each mode, I examine how writers imagined affective agency in relation to the shifting contours of interlocking axes of oppression by paying attention to the distinct but interrelated embodied situatedness of Black, Indigenous, white, and Asian characters. Dedication to taking apart the liberal political project and the discourse of humanism in their systemic entanglements demands interdisciplinary considerations of the forms of insurgent critique arising from the different fields of critical race and ethnic studies inflected by feminist and queer theories. In this regard, I follow

the methodologies of scholars like Jodi Byrd (Chickasaw), Lisa Lowe, and others in defying the false divisions between archives and fields of study.[83] The divisions of these chapters attempt to be less identarian—not so much invested in stable categories of race and gender as if they were parallel—than an approach for sketching out the hierarchical, comparatively constituted articulations of biopolitical racial difference that produce the spectrum of normative and deviant gender and sexuality.

If the enslaved, as Saidiya Hartman declares, is the unthought of being, how can we understand the role of unfeeling?[84] Thanks to the coloniality of sympathy, any expression of Black affect can be considered unfeeling in terms of its validity as feeling qua feeling. To put it another way, Black feelings, like Black lives, don't matter—and to say that all feelings matter, like all lives matter, is no mere distraction. Confronting the structural abjection of Blackness has meant a refusal to compromise with the systems of power and the promise of inclusion into category of the human, as articulated by the intellectual genealogy of Black feminists like Wynter, da Silva, and Hortense Spillers.[85] Understanding the foreclosure of Blackness can be a catalyst for abolition, however, rather than an impasse to liberation.[86] My first two chapters take up the schema of Man, sympathy, and unsympathetic Blackness to interrogate the national and transnational enmeshments of white American sentimentalism, and chapter 4 turns to Black feminism to address the gendered dynamics of Man as inextricable from that hegemony. Chapter 1 argues that Melville's *Benito Cereno* critiques the racial dynamics of sympathy in both Stowe and Adam Smith. The novella ironically frames the naïve Captain Delano as the exemplary white feeling American subject in contrast to Babo, as the treacherous Black unfeeling object. By attending to the construction of Delano's sentimental sense of self through his sympathies for Benito Cereno, triangulated through Babo, I trace how Delano's benevolent racism echoes ongoing scientific and legal discourses: first, the rhetoric of physiognomy, phrenology, and craniology in their promotion of the polygenetic theory of evolution; and second, the judicial decisions of Melville's father-in-law, Chief Justice Lemuel Shaw of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, about fugitives, which expose Northern complicity with the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. *Benito Cereno* demonstrates how scientific racism and unjust laws influence the white racist American mind, cohering through the optics of paternalistic sentimentality. Seen through this frame, Babo illustrates the dangers for the unsympathetic Black subject who demonstrate what Fred Moten calls the evidence "that objects can and do resist" in the history of Blackness: to be unsympathetically unresponsive to the emotional

demands of whiteness means foreclosing recognition as worthy of sympathy.[87] In his rewriting of the historical account of the mutiny, Melville erases Babo's social ties at his execution. The novella resonates with Afropessimism: Melville depicts a world built upon the obliteration of Black feelings that overdetermines the inevitability of Black death, both social and literal.[88]

Although Delany has a structural understanding of anti-Blackness similar to that of Melville, where Melville presents Black negation as the consequence of taking white hegemony as the only world, Delany fights for hope because he believes that there are other possible worlds repressed by white supremacist coloniality. "Black texts and narratives require reading practices that reckon with black life as scientifically creative," writes Katherine McKittrick, a practice inspiring complementary chapters 2 and 4 on Delany and Watkins Harper.[89] As chapter 2 explores, Delany's *Blake, or the Huts of America* (1861) imagines how dissenting unsympathetic Blackness can reclaim science and law as part of an assemblage of counterintimacies that can unite Black and Indigenous subjects in rebellion. The early Black nationalist thinker's only novel demonstrates the necessity of being disaffected from white sympathies as a starting point for new structures of feeling. In an earlier series of pivotal letters arguing with Frederick Douglass about *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Delany turns to fiction to weave a story of white injustice against an Indigenous man, declaring—in a reformulation of Smith's definition of sympathy—"I feel somewhat like that Indian."[90] I track what Britt Rusert has called "fugitive science"—the reclaiming of science for Black emancipation—in the ways that Delany unfolds affective, biological, and political kinships with Indigenous peoples in his novel as well as his political and scientific writings.[91] Unsympathetic to whiteness, the eponymous Blake finds other allies—starting with members of the Choctaw Nation—which culminates in a political discussion of Black-Indigenous entanglements made suggestively physical through his masculinist and homosocial erotics with the younger Choctaw chief. Blake catalyzes an affective network of counterintimacies among peoples of color across the United States, Canada, West Africa, and the Caribbean, thereby redrawing the coloniality of sympathy to unmake the structural conditions of Black enslavement and Indigenous dispossession that produce the modern world. To this end, Blake attacks race science and the Fugitive Slave Act as divisive perversions of an original cosmology. In *Blake*, manipulations of science and law by the dispossessed, as well as the revolt itself, attempt to return these disciplines to the natural order: through a decolonial physics, disaffected Indigenous and other peoples of color are pulled into orbit around a Black revolution that impacts the world even on the scales of the living and

the nonliving environment. The novel's experiments with Black-Indigenous counterintimacies point to key convergences between Black studies' emancipatory aims and Indigenous studies' call for literal, rather than metaphorical, decolonization. Overturning instead of accepting the bounded limits of the world that coloniality produces does not mean destruction but resurgence. Following the thinking of Jodi Byrd, Tiffany King, Justin Leroy, Robin D. G. Kelley, and others across Black and Indigenous studies, my analysis shows Delany's work as an early iteration in a genealogy that works through the difficult inextricability of Black liberation and Indigenous decolonization.[92] Delany responds to racialized affective hierarchies—such as those proposed by Jefferson and Stanley Stanhope Smith—that continue to pit Black and Indigenous histories against one another. Delany's strategic use of unfeeling seeks to find compatibility between Black and Indigenous political projects for their radical possibilities by rejecting the sentimental colonial politics of recognition critiqued by Fanon and Coulthard.[93] Blackness and Indigeneity need not be exclusionary categories, and for Delany, blurring the distinction between them offers the hope of reclaiming African Indigeneity. Nonetheless, Delany's struggle to reconcile the tensions between these two groups' overlapping frameworks underlines how they have been structured as the foundational antagonisms of the United States. Cuba is the novel's site of Black, Indigenous, and Asian anticolonial convergences; indeed, it is worth turning to queer Cuban theorist Muñoz's unfinished work, which imagines the sense of brown and the brown commons: "Brownness is coexistent, affiliates, and intermeshes with blackness, Asianness, indigenousness, and other terms that manifest descriptive force to render the particularities of various modes of striving in the world."[94]

Chapters 3 and 4 turn away from work by and about men to considerations of women's histories of and writings on the sexual and racial politics of unfeeling for white and Black women entering medical science during fights for women's rights. The fear of frigidity, a queer unwomanliness, haunts the women doctors (both historical figures and literary characters) who must negotiate heteronormative affective expectations in their shift from the private to the public sphere while pathologized by gynecology. In chapter 3 I complicate feminist epistemologies of science to reframe this history of white women in medicine by tracking the homology between the invention of anesthesia as a technology of controlled unfeeling and the pathology of queer female frigidity that the sexologist Havelock Ellis diagnosed as "sexual anesthesia."[95] I investigate how white women physicians manipulated the unfeeling professionalism of medicine as a subversive tactic to anesthetize

the coercive affective imperatives of marriage and family. I discuss queer female frigidity through a focus on Elizabeth Stuart Phelps's *Doctor Zay*, along with readings of essays and memoirs by early women doctors like Elizabeth Blackwell and Mary Putnam Jacobi, in context with the coeval publication of other women doctor novels such as William Dean Howells's *Dr. Breen's Practice* (1881), Sarah Orne Jewett's *A Country Doctor* (1884), and Annie Nathan Meyer's *Helen Brent, M.D.* (1892). These novels structure their marriage plots with the woman doctor, who is focused on her career and wary of relationships, being in tension with the male lawyer who woos her and serves as both antagonist and love interest. This clash between institutional authorities that both claim to reflect the natural order reveals the still-extant gender inequality that mirrors the struggles for suffrage leading to the Nineteenth Amendment: although the woman doctor has professional authority, the male lawyer's love represents the affective force of heteronormativity. These novels about white women doctors raise questions about the dangers of desire for inclusion without radical change to structures of power.

The suffrage activist Frances Ellen Watkins Harper indicts the compromises made by white feminist activists in their pursuit of suffrage and the limited vision of political belonging that sacrificed Black women's enfranchisement for the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. In chapter 4, I center Black women, whose occlusions haunt the earlier discussions. Taking Black women seriously as medical practitioners alongside the coeval development of detached scientific objectivity pushes back against the well-documented history of Black women's exploitation by medical science, particularly gynecology. By reading Watkins Harper's novel *Iola Leroy* in conjunction with medical texts by Rebecca Lee Crumpler and Rebecca J. Cole, the first Black women doctors to receive medical degrees in the United States, I revisit Ann duCille's "passionlessness," a tactic developed by Black women to assert their sexual and affective agency, in relation to the supposedly dispassionate objectivity of medical science—that ruse of professional and epistemic authority.[96] These seemingly counterpoised phenomena of unfeeling that develop coevally during this century converge for Black women doctors who crafted an objective passionlessness for the sake of both concealing and tending to their passions. Crumpler's *Book of Medical Discourses* (1883) and Cole's MD thesis "The Eye and Its Appendages" (1867) adapt scientific objectivity to create their own authority to work toward Black emancipatory ends, anticipating the Black feminist health studies of Moya Bailey and Whitney Peoples.[97] In particular, Cole's underread thesis is an exemplar of negotiating the tensions between one's situated standpoint and professional discourse. Decades before Du Bois's double

consciousness as second sight, Cole presented her meditation on the eye or I and embodied sight informed by the nondialectical tensions of objective passionlessness to meet the final requirements of her medical degree. As many Black feminist scholars have argued, *Iola Leroy* is a striking example of how Black women writers played with sentimentalism's conventions about white womanhood and the marriage plot. Mixed-race Black Iola Leroy chooses her Blackness and Black kin, a demonstration of what Foreman describes as the "anti-passing narrative."[98] By foregrounding Black feminist thought, I propose to read *Iola Leroy* as a novel about the suppressed possibility of the Black woman doctor who affirms her Black mother to cure the pathology of the sentimental tragic mulatta trope and chattel slavery's congenital stigma of *partus sequitur ventrum*, in which a child's status as enslaved follows the enslavement of the mother. I consider the eponymous character as a potential doctor herself, whose refusal to love the white Dr. Gresham and her choice of the Black Dr. Latimer demonstrate that strategic unfeeling toward whiteness makes possible the healing work of transformative Black love. Through a tactful calculus of detachments and attachments, *Iola Leroy* engenders other forms of belonging in defiance of the failures of the Fourteenth and Fifteen Amendments in terms of citizenship and suffrage for Black men, as well as the deficiencies of the eventual Nineteenth Amendment for women's suffrage that was in practice limited to white women.

My final chapter turns to the establishment of the apparatuses of modern American immigration that transposed the model of sympathetic identification into governmental and cultural evaluations of literal acceptance and rejection into the nation. The diasporic tensions of Asian American studies (what David Palumbo-Liu has called the dynamic of Asian/America) and Kandice Chuh's assertion that the field is a subjectless discourse illustrate the disciplinary skepticism of national belonging and the naturalized coherence of subjects.[99] The work of Sui Sin Far is perhaps least accurately categorized as American literature solely, since she also lived and worked in England, Canada, and the Caribbean. I reassess the well-worn Yellow Peril stereotype of Oriental inscrutability attributed to the Chinese in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries through Sui Sin Far's journalism and short-story collection *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*. By tracing the genealogy of the Yellow Peril through evolutionary and anthropological race science and the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, I articulate how anti-Chinese anxieties clustered around the inexpressive racialized alien—the twin Oriental specters of the coolie and the sex worker as identified by Nayan Shah—associated with a dangerously different taxonomy of feeling.[100] The Chinese concept

of face functions as both an embodied symbol and a cultural concept that threatens to decenter the universalist assumptions about faces and feeling discussed in my first chapter. I propose a radical reconsideration of Sui Sin Far's work: ambivalent about humanizing the Chinese to a white gaze through sentimentality, Far uses Oriental inscrutability to deny invasive anthropological access into Chinese affective interiority, since the condition of sympathy is intermeshed with the regulatory demands of immigration that insist on transparent, affectable subjects. For Far's characters, detachment and distancing are alienating though they function as coping mechanisms against alienation; their reserved composure reallocates affective reserves. This chapter joins conversations about Asian American antisociality articulated by scholars like Summer Kim Lee and Vivian L. Huang, taking Sui Sin Far as a queer and disabled mixed-race Chinese woman who theorizes a queer feminist disabled Asian diasporic sensibility.[101] Oriental inscrutability names an everyday means of surviving Far's chronic condition of affectability, manifested as painful hypersensitivity. Through her writings, we can track the affirmation of inscrutability as dissatisfaction that rejects the demands of citizenship; the antisocial moments in her oeuvre betray uncertainties about the political instrumentality of disaffected feeling for the Chinese and herself. Oriental inscrutability's legibility as a trope readily identifiable by that phrase allows us to ponder the shifting comparative privilege of diasporic Asianness positioned against Blackness and Indigeneity that enables the relative recognition of Asian affective opacity. This final chapter gestures toward the ongoing integration of the sentimental politics of recognition into the apparatuses of immigration and citizenship. In both this chapter and chapter 4, my method is to approach these works by Black and Asian diasporic writers as early woman-of-color feminist theorizations.

I draw inspiration from disciplinary imperatives across the different fields of critical race and ethnic studies to critique and dismantle frameworks that pose as universal and to dissent from the cooptation of justice. The stigmatization of queerness, Blackness, Indigeneity, and Asianness can inspire disruptive potential for other ways of being that shatter norms rather than acceding to the ceaseless duties of refutation for the sake of inclusion. The organization of these chapters aims to present a framework that is dynamic rather than rigid, and comparative rather than exclusionary, wherein focuses on contextualized threads of unfeeling help provincialize sympathy by splintering its hegemonic universality. These articulations of disaffected insubordination emerge from the specificities of their imbricated fields and reflect the incommensurable textures of lived and historical positionalities. I view

this as a methodological strength: their unruly and difficult convergences resist the homogenizing discourse of universalist feeling, which both differentiates hierarchically and collapses that very difference in ways that overrepresent the white Western subject.

In our historical moment, the concept of sympathy has been updated as empathy in the continued hope for a better politics of feeling bound up with morality and justice.[102] I gesture toward the legacies of these expressive requirements for political recognition in the fantasies of justice in the present-day American culture of sentiment for racialized immigrants performing citizenship and the defiance of movements like Black Lives Matter. Through the strong presentation of a weak theory, I hope to offer a way out of the bind between the poles of critique and defense that have dominated our understanding of sympathy, while also eschewing a primarily descriptive approach of tracing the workings and effects of feeling and unfeeling. Lingering with, rather than debunking, the specter of unfeeling in its function as an antisocial rebuttal to discourses of universal feeling provides greater nuance in our understandings of politics and literature for the marginalized. In contradistinction to the insistence on affect in relation to attachments and porousness, we need to acknowledge the affective importance of detachments and boundaries. What possibilities open up when we explore the implications of Édouard Glissant's "right to opacity" in terms of feeling?[103] Can a calculus of uncaring allow for us to better care for ourselves and others?

The trajectory of this project concludes with Far, situating an Asian diasporic sensibility in relation to the previous chapters' charting of the entanglements of emancipatory, decolonial, feminist struggles routed through the United States as construct. A confession: interwoven with the other structuring logics of *Disaffected*, it is no coincidence that I finish with Far because of our parallels. Through the book's organization I have worked through my own positionality in relation to histories, nations, structures, disciplines, communities, and loved ones—deferred until the end according to the usual scholarly suspension, if not denial, of any affective attachments to our work. In my coda, I write from my own experiences of alienation and solidarity to suggest some ways that unfeeling can be taken up in everyday life, particularly by marginalized scholars struggling to survive in the academy. Through this project I hope to articulate something that, if not useful to others, may resonate with their experiences. Ultimately, this book proposes that feeling otherwise is the precondition for thinking and imagining otherwise. This opening is an invitation to you, too, my reader, to speculate about the possibilities of feeling otherwise.

NOTES

Introduction

1 Berlant, *The Female Complaint*; Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents*; Schuller, *The Biopolitics of Feeling*.

2 Accapadi, "When White Women Cry"; DiAngelo, "White Fragility."

3 In one of many relevant memes, a Black woman delights over her collection of colorful fluid-filled bottles with the caption "Assorted White Tears." This gif, taken from a commercial, refashions Diane Amos aka the Pine-Sol® Lady from the spokeswoman for the cleaning product to a spokeswoman for subversive glee.

4 Son of Baldwin, "I Don't Give a Fuck about Justine Damond."

5 Son of Baldwin, "I Don't Give a Fuck about Justine Damond."

6 Son of Baldwin, "That essay really got a lot of folks way up in the Mount Everest of their feelings."

7 Baldwin, "Everybody's Protest Novel," 496.

8 Son of Baldwin, "That essay."

9 Sometime in the intervening years between the original post and the finalizing of my manuscript, Son of Baldwin deleted these notes. In reproducing his words, I hope I have not disrespected his intentions; the fleeting nature of the posts recalls for me the ephemerality of the queer of color archive that Muñoz expressed so well. Robert Jones Jr. references these posts in "Let It Burn," an essay for the *Paris Review* published June 8, 2020, during the global resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement in response to the killing of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor.

10 Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, 5.

11 Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 385. For a discussion about views on Stowe's novel, see Halpern, "Beyond Contempt."

12 Stowe, *The Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin*. There is a considerable body of scholarship on Jacobs's trenchant critiques and adaptation of sentimentalism, but a good starting point is Jean Fagan Yellin's monumental recovery work that includes the letters in which Jacobs writes of her rage about the exchange with Stowe. See Yellin, "Written by Herself."

13 Wynter, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/ Freedom"; McKittrick, *Sylvia Wynter*; da Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race*.
14 Da Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race*, xv.
15 Spinoza, *Ethics*, 128.
16 Palmer, "'What Feels More than Feeling?,'" 47.
17 Stowe, *The Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 46.
18 Stowe, *The Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 45.
19 M. Chen, *Animacies*.
20 Terada, *Feeling in Theory*, 11.
21 Hartman and Wilderson, "The Position of the Unthought," 189.
22 Even the most minor of divergent feelings has the potential to register disaffection. After all, according to J. L. Austin, right feelings are required for the "smooth or 'happy' functioning of a performative" (*How to Do Things with Words*, 14–15). Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, 128–35.
23 Compare to Fretwell's study during the period on psychophysics, aesthetics, and feeling that is organized by the five major senses (*Sensory Experiments*).
24 The Fourteenth Amendment in particular would become the basis for what George Lipsitz calls a "social warrant" for marginalized groups to procure justice in a society dependent upon their subjugation ("The Culture of War," 83).
25 Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*.
26 M. Chen, *Animacies*. See also, for instance, Brinkema, *The Forms of the Affects*; Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling*; Leys, "The Turn to Affect"; Connolly, "I. The Complexity of Intention."
27 Berlant, "Structures of Unfeeling," 197.
28 Hochschild, *The Managed Heart*.
29 Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture*; Tompkins, *Sensational Designs*. This persistent obsession in Americanist intellectual history speaks to what Sean McCann calls "the desire for literature to be distinctive and uplifting that remains a foundational narrative of our profession" ("Structures of Feeling," 329).
30 Berlant, *Cruel Optimism*, *The Female Complaint*, and *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City*; Foreman, *Activist Sentiments*.
31 Sánchez-Eppler, *Touching Liberty*; Weinstein, *Family, Kinship, and Sympathy in Nineteenth-Century American Literature*.
32 Baym, "Melodramas of Beset Manhood"; Nelson, *National Manhood*; Romero, *Home Fronts*.
33 Merish, *Sentimental Materialism*.
34 For how Black and Indigenous women writers critiqued and adapted sentimentalism, see Foreman, *Activist Sentiments*; Piatote, *Domestic Subjects*; Carby, *Reconstructing Womanhood*.
35 Schuller, *The Biopolitics of Feeling*. See also Riskin, *Science in the Age of Sensibility*.
36 Samuels, "Introduction," 4.
37 I believe that it is worth noting the slippage between the studies of nineteenth-century sentimentalism and affect theory. In 2015, the Society for the Humanities, using the theme of sensation, brought back to Cornell

University graduate alumnae Lauren Berlant, Ann Cvetkovich, and Dana Luciano. During her talk, Berlant jokingly referred to the "Cornell School of Sentimentality," a term that Cvetkovich and Luciano would also use in subsequent events. This quip points to a shared connection: all three critics trained at Cornell (as well as the late Eve Sedgwick) began their research on sentimentality in nineteenth-century American and British literature, examining aspects of politics, citizenship, and culture, but they are now more widely known for their work as critics at the intersection of queer, feminist, and affect theory and as having made contributions not just to the nineteenth-century literary and cultural archive but also to studies of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

38 Wexler, *Tender Violence*.

39 Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents*. See also Stoler, *Haunted by Empire*.

40 Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, 3.

41 Muñoz, *The Sense of Brown*, 37.

42 For a few illustrative examples of the perennial fascination with Bartleby as the locus of critique, see Edelman, "Occupy Wall Street"; W. Lee, "The Scandal of Insensibility"; Ngai, *Ugly Feelings*.

43 Hemmings, "Invoking Affect," 562. Apropos of Hemmings's view that the affective turn is the ontological turn, the feminist philosopher Zoe Todd argues that ontology is another name for colonialism ("An Indigenous Feminist's Take on the Ontological Turn").

44 Hemmings's indictment has been followed by analyses like those of Claudia Garcia-Rojas ("(Un)Disciplined Futures") and Tyrone Palmer ("'What Feels More than Feeling?'") from the standpoints of queer feminist of color critique and Black studies, respectively.

45 Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* and *The Promise of Happiness*; Ngai, *Ugly Feelings*. Ahmed's and Ngai's thoughtful reevaluations of the regulatory powers of so-called positive and negative emotions, along with their foregrounding of villainized figures and abject categories of feeling, inspired my project.

46 Eng, *The Feeling of Kinship*; Puar, *The Right to Maim*.

47 Hemmings highlights Fanon and Lorde; Garcia-Rojas discusses Lorde along with Anzaldúa and Moraga for a queer feminist of color tradition, while for Palmer, Rankine's poetry is a site for addressing Black affect and its erasures.

48 As Greyser writes, "Cherokee uwedolisdi/sympathy/ᎤᏪᏙᏁᎵᏍᏗ unfolded across indigenous–settler contact, particularly after white people discovered gold in Cherokee homelands. In the Northern Paiute language Numu or Paviotso, sidaminimakiti/sympathy connoted compassion/pity, a mixed emotion with desirable and presumptuously intimate facets" (*On Sympathetic Grounds*, 17). For more on Indigenous engagements with sympathy and sentimentality, see Carpenter, *Seeing Red*; Piatote, *Domestic Subjects*.

49 "What if one of the reasons there is so little scholarship on affect and racialization," asks Schuller, "is because we have such scanty language to account for the ways violence registers in the body, the ways resilience, hope, and love take material form?" (*The Biopolitics of Feeling*, 212).

50 Gunew, "Subaltern Empathy"; Berg and Ramos-Zayas, "Racializing Affect."

51 Through Wynter scholar Rinaldo Walcott points out that the Caribbean's position in the project of Enlightenment modernity is uniquely situated to "assess and reformulate what might be at stake in the radical incompletion of the project of modernity and what might be necessary to reanimate the promises of modernity in order to differently imagine, and live, the human as an alterable species-subject" ("Genres of Human," 186).

52 Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* and *The Promise of Happiness*.

53 Manalansan, "Servicing the World," 217.

54 Manalansan, "Servicing the World," 217–18.

55 This paradox informs Wendy Lee's figuration of the unfeeling character, exemplified by Bartleby ("The Scandal of Insensibility"). By leading with the colonizing dynamics of race, I seek to contextualize her observations about how the insensible character drives the plot by becoming the target of frustration with his unmoving, antisocial stance. For Berlant, structures of unfeeling are the corollary to Williams's structures of feeling as the blurring between thought and feeling in the lived experience of ideology. I build upon what Berlant variously refers to as "inexpressive style" or "underperformativity" or "flattened affect," which temporarily suspends the social as a refusal of the presumed dynamics of affectability (Berlant, "Structures of Unfeeling," 193).

56 I owe my use of the phrase "politics of recognition" to Glen Coulthard's adaptation (in *Red Skin, White Masks*) of the philosopher Charles Taylor's concept (see C. Taylor et al., *Multiculturalism*) and Frantz Fanon's anticolonial analyses in *The Wretched of the Earth* that lead toward a framework for Indigenous decolonization outside the terms of the settler colonial state. For Taylor, the discourse of recognition functions on two interrelated levels: the intimate and the public sphere. See also Povinelli, *The Cunning of Recognition*.

57 Muñoz, "Ephemera as Evidence."

58 See Lee Edelman's polarizing use of the death drive to defy the sentimental heteronormative sociality signified by the figure of the universal child (*No Future*).

59 Edelman, *No Future*; Muñoz, *Disidentifications*, "Thinking beyond Antirelationality and Antiutopianism in Queer Critique," *Cruising Utopia*, and "Feeling Brown, Feeling Down"; Halberstam, "The Politics of Negativity in Recent Queer Theory."

60 I am influenced in particular by Cathy Cohen's insights into how queerness is more than desire and identification; it is also structural marginalization according to race, class, and ability that produces normative and deviant types of gender and sexuality ("Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens").

61 Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 9. Subsequent repeated references to this source will be given parenthetically in the text after the initial citation.

62 W. Lee, "The Scandal of Insensibility," 1410 and 1411.

63 Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 204–5.

64 A few decades later *The Wealth of Nations* would follow Smith's work on the national and transnational circulations of sympathy and the differentials between the values of racialized affects. Perhaps we can see that the entangled

development of sympathy and economics recalls what Ahmed calls affective economies, the flows between objects and signs that accrue value and shape individual and collective bodies ("Affective Economies").

65 Darwin, *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, 21.

66 Moraga, "La Jornada," xl–xli.

67 Anzaldúa, "La Prieta," 204; Lorde, *Sister Outsider*, 158. As Ahmed observes, "Harshness for Lorde is thus not the elimination of fragility; it is how we live with fragility" (*Living a Feminist Life*, 186).

68 Anzaldúa, "La Prieta," 204.

69 Lorde, *Sister Outsider*, 158.

70 Lorde, *Sister Outsider*, 70–71.

71 Lorde, *Sister Outsider*, 65.

72 Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*, 45.

73 Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*, 92.

74 Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 137.

75 Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 150. See also da Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race*; Ngai, *Ugly Feelings*.

76 Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 145. Subsequent repeated references to this source will be given parenthetically in the text after the initial citation.

77 S. Smith, *An Essay on the Causes of the Variety of Complexion and Figure in the Human Species*, 11 and 157.

78 S. Smith, *An Essay*, 195.

79 Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 147.

80 S. Smith, *An Essay*, 268. Subsequent repeated references to this source will be given parenthetically in the text after the initial citation.

81 Million, "Felt Theory," 54.

82 Rush, "Observations Intended to Favour a Supposition That the Black Color (As It Is Called) of the Negroes Is Derived from Leprosy," 292. Subsequent repeated references to this source will be given parenthetically in the text after the initial citation.

83 Byrd, *The Transit of Empire*; Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents*.

84 Hartman and Wilderson, "The Position of the Unthought," 185.

85 McKittrick, *Sylvia Wynter*; da Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race* and "1 (Life)÷0 (Blackness)=∞–∞ or ∞ / ∞"; Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe."

86 Zakiyyah Jackson highlights the transformative potential of the black mater(nal) (*Becoming Human*), and Calvin Warren demonstrates, through Spillers, the paradox of Black queerness under erasure, undermining (with the goal of destroying) the grammar of anti-Blackness and developing a new semantic field ("Onticide").

87 Moten, *In the Break*, 1.

88 For a preliminary discussion of Afropessimism, see Wilderson, *Red, White and Black*.

89 McKittrick, *Dear Science*, 51.

90 Delany, "Mrs. Stowe's Position," 3.

91 Rusert, *Fugitive Science*.

92 Byrd, "Weather with You"; King, *The Black Shoals*; Leroy, "Black History in Occupied Territory"; R. Kelley, "The Rest of Us."
93 Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*; Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*.
94 Muñoz, *The Sense of Brown*, 138.
95 Ellis, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, 3:203.
96 DuCille, *The Coupling Convention*.
97 Bailey and Peoples, "Toward a Black Feminist Health Science Studies."
98 Foreman, "Who's Your Mama?," 507.
99 Palumbo-Liu, *Asian/American*; Chuh, *Imagine Otherwise*. I am also thinking of the work of Aihwa Ong on flexible citizenship (*Flexible Citizenship*), Tina Chen on double agents or agency (*Double Agency*), and the reconsiderations of the alien construction of Asianness led by Rachel C. Lee (*The Exquisite Corpse of Asian America*) and broadened by Anne Anlin Cheng (*Ornamentalism*).
100 Shah, *Contagious Divides*, 87.
101 S. Lee, "Staying In"; Huang, "Inscrutably, Actually."
102 Bloom, *Against Empathy*; Frazer, *The Enlightenment of Sympathy*.
103 Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 194.

One. The Babo Problem

1 W. Lee, "The Scandal of Insensibility," 1411.
2 Melville, *Billy Budd, Bartleby, and Other Stories*, 17.
3 Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 15.
4 Melville, *Billy Budd, Bartleby, and Other Stories*, 54.
5 Schuller, *The Biopolitics of Feeling*.
6 Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, 3.
7 Melville, *Billy Budd, Bartleby, and Other Stories*, 67.
8 Delano, *Narrative of Voyages and Travels*.
9 Melville, *Billy Budd, Bartleby, and Other Stories*, 55–56.
10 Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 452.
11 Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*.
12 da Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race*.
13 Melville, *Billy Budd, Bartleby, and Other Stories*, 56.
14 See Rei Terada's expressive hypothesis that the expression of emotion creates the illusion (*Feeling in Theory*, 11). See also Martin Manalansan, "Servicing the World," on the disaffection of Filipinx professional caregivers in the global economies of emotion work. More generally, Lauren Berlant writes: "At the same time, biopolitical systems of supremacy often call on the problem populations—such as women, people of color, queers, and youth, but this too will vary—to have emotions for the privileged, to be vulnerable, expressive, and satisfying in the disturbance. If they withhold they are called inscrutable, which is a judgment against a form of composure that on other bodies would be honored as good manners, and is often deemed good manners in the servant class" ("Structures of Unfeeling," 197).