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Canine Citizenship and the Intimate Public Sphere

by Lisa Uddin

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To be a good dog citizen, Beans should behave the way you like your friends' dogs to behave when you visit them. Naturally, you don't like a dog who barks, snaps, or bites; who destroys property; who jumps up on people or furniture. So naturally you won't want Beans to have such bad habits. Correcting these faults is the first step in teaching Beans decent dog behavior.

By this time, Beans will know his name. He will understand what "No" means, and the difference between "Good dog" and "Bad dog." He will probably be housebroken. So you have already made a very good start with the ABC's of good citizenship.

Jane Sherman, *The Real Book about Dogs*, 1951.

Something strange has happened to citizenship.

Lauren Berlant, *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City*, 1997.

This essay is a speculative inquiry into the possibilities and problems of canine citizenship. Informed by a cross section of contemporary images of and relations to dogs in the United States, it asks to what extent, and to what effect, man's best friend has become invested with a particular set of meanings about public participation. These are meanings worth exploring, I think, for three reasons. First, animals have a long history of symbolizing fantasies and anxieties about human life; we sometimes call this anthropomorphism. As a kind of surrogate human being, the American dog can help make the terms of being human, and more specifically the terms of being a citizen, more visible. Mine is a strategy of displacement that considers what these dogs reveal about the character of public life and its participants, or lack thereof. What can these dogs tell us about citizenship as a set of actions or inactions, as a definition of personhood, as a way of moving through and imagining the nation?

Second, the current meanings of citizenship that are made visible through dogs are traceable not only to human actors, but also to animal actors. We do well to recognize, as other animal watchers have, that animals have a way of shaping the meanings assigned to them. Recent work in Cultural Geography, for example, has demonstrated that animals are not blank canvasses onto which human communities paint their various pictures. As Chris Philo and Chris Wilbert argue: "it is also vital to give credence to the practices that are folded into the making of representations, and – at the core of the matter – to ask how animals themselves may figure in these practices."¹ This is to say that whatever notions of citizenship dogs may reveal are partly due to dogs themselves. As "embodied 'meaty' beings," these animals (mis)behave in ways that sometimes defy human expectations, altering the canvasses accordingly.² If we can accept this provocative claim, then the potential meanings of canine citizenship become all the more significant; they become co-productions. Links, however, between animal agency and political agency are complicated and by no means continuous. As we shall see, the active presence of embodied meaty beings does not necessarily entail a more equitable or substantive politics.

Third, these co-productions bear a striking resemblance to a citizenship described in Laurent Berlant's discussion of the intimate public sphere. I want to consider these dogs as a possible extension of Berlant's critique that American citizenship has become privatized, sentimentalized, infantilized, and victimized; that:

the most hopeful national pictures of 'life' circulating in the public sphere are not of adults in everyday life, in public, or in politics, but rather of the most vulnerable, minor or virtual citizens – fetuses, children, real and imaginary immigrants – persons that, paradoxically,

cannot yet act as citizens.³

The emergence of the canine citizen is potentially part of this phenomenon, but how so, and with what consequences to the practices and principles of national membership?

Consider the following image as one of these “hopeful national pictures of life” of which Berlant speaks [Fig. 1]. Appearing in *Dog News*, an online digest of American dogs, the photograph is a typical submission to the post 9/11 catalogues of patriotic snapshots. A rescue worker and his dog rest near ground zero in New York City. A large flag is taped to the glass window behind them. We can begin to think about how the dog’s citizenship status is constructed through a touching appeal to life, an appeal to *signs of life* amidst national death. And yet, these signs display a curious way of life that finds both man and dog fast asleep. National life, it appears, does not require being awake. It asks only for bodies with a pulse.

A Multispecies Public Sphere?

To understand how contemporary American dogs figure into an intimate public sphere, we can begin by working through these animals’ relation to the bourgeois public sphere that Jürgen Habermas discusses as an historically specific formation. Born in the eighteenth-century, this sphere developed with the rise of commercial capitalism and the circulation of printed information, and was fundamentally a response to aristocratic power organized by middle-class men. By replacing a power located in lordly entitlements with a power located in private property and educated, rational-critical debate, these men fashioned a new sense of publicness that successfully undermined the ruling class’ version of public authority. Crucially, this new sense of publicness and political subjectivity constructed a parallel sense of privateness and how to “be” in domestic settings. Habermas describes the concurrent formation of “the intimate sphere of the conjugal family” alongside the public sphere of civic-minded persons.⁴ If reason and impersonality were the requisite modes of being in the public sphere, emotion and “humanity-generating closeness” were their counterparts in the private sphere.⁵ Part of the value of publicness was this separation from private life, generating new social rights and responsibilities (for some) and the ontological foundations of a healthy democracy, a sense of being a citizen.

The production of canine citizens may, among other things, demonstrate the limits of the Habermasian public sphere by emphasizing how its participants, or those who struggle to participate, inevitably fail to meet its demands. Dogs here become both metaphors and actual cases of “subjects” who, for whatever reason, cannot satisfy the membership profile of an ideal public agent: rational, informed, situated

in a fixed non-domestic setting, and so forth. The scenarios are productively absurd. How does a canine citizen assert his political will? How does he vote? What is his position on health care reform? What kind of property does he own? In this way, perhaps the notion of a canine citizen has something to add to Nancy Fraser's work of identifying gaps between the Enlightenment public sphere that Habermas holds dear and actually existing democracies today. According to Fraser, these living democracies have a functional relation to publicness that is more complex than the model of a bourgeois public sphere, evidenced partly by the fact that political participation à la the bourgeois public sphere has proven more possible for some than for others.⁶ Additionally, dogs and their shortcomings may contribute in some way to Michael Warner's reconsiderations of what is public. For Warner, publicness is less a discrete, pre-figured, predominantly cognitive space than a multiplicity of circulating discourses under constant production and contestation.⁷ Publicness of this sort is both a cognitive and embodied space shaped by mental *and physical* activity: reading, writing, dancing, screwing, walking . . . fetching? Both Fraser and Warner's conceptualization of publicness lead us in rather optimistic directions with canine citizenship. Their insights open the door for an ongoing disruption of bourgeois public sphere thinking and practice that is specifically readable through the lives of American dogs.

Without shutting that door entirely, I would like turn to Berlant's assessment of publicness, in order to locate canine citizens in a space that, though less positive, is no less significant to a critique of contemporary public culture: the space of the intimate public sphere. Berlant describes this sphere as the dominant national theatre of a late twentieth-century United States. The intimate public sphere is preoccupied with the spectacles and experiences of private life. Private modes of being that may once have been compliments to being public have become its substitutes. To be private is to be public, making the work of actual politics invisible and suspect. She writes:

In the patriotically-permeated pseudopublic sphere of the present tense, national politics does not involve starting with a view of the nation as a space of struggle violently separated by racial, sexual and economic inequalities [. . .] Instead, the dominant idea marketed by patriotic traditionalists is of a core nation whose survival depends on personal acts and identities performed in the intimate domains of the quotidian.⁸

Still more problematic about this form of politics is its inability to recognize, let alone sanction, the divergent ways in which people are intimate with each other. Emerging during the rise of "the Reganite right," but thriving well after, the intimate public sphere is one dominated by the concerns of "pornography, abortion, sexuality, and reproduction; marriage, personal morality, and family values."⁹

Accordingly, meanings of nationhood and being American have been harnessed to traditional ideals of home, family, and community. This is where I want to situate canine citizens; that is, in a public sphere that has morphed into a particularly conservative private sphere. It is this sphere which has granted dogs equal membership in the national family, membership to the nation as a normative family: one man, one woman, two kids and a dog.

At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that many imaginings of the canine citizen do traffic in a political subjectivity typical of the “original” bourgeois public sphere. The vocabulary of animal rights activism, for example, seeks to inscribe a bourgeois public personhood onto bodies imagined as the most severely disenfranchised. Here, I am referring to the battle cry voiced by PETA and other animal advocates that “animals are people too.” Such a claim denounces the property status of nonhumans and figures them as rights-worthy beings, full of agency and interests (if we would only listen). A still image taken from a video documenting life in a puppy mill is one expression of this Enlightenment humanist sensibility [Fig. 2]. Similar to other animal rights exposés, this image links the conditions of these dogs with the dehumanizing conditions experienced by industrial laborers. Confined to one spot, the female dog has the specific task of birthing and nursing the animal-commodities, as if she were just another mechanism in the (re)production assembly line. The assumption is that there is a humanity to speak of here prior to its theft; a logic that appeals to essentialist understandings about what and who is truly human – animals, so it seems. But images of animal injustice do not reveal something human about animal life. Rather, they are in the habit of paradoxically constructing the very humanity they suggest is being stripped away. Signified through the dismal lighting, the dirty cage, the hunched over body of the nursing dog, the nondescript blobs that are her offspring, a visible lack of humanity invites its very production, encouraging viewers to project their own human(e) being onto these pathetic others. The tactic here, it would seem, is to visualize this dog’s humanity in order to secure its right to live without pain.

One not-so-subtle effect of these tactics is to position animals in the company of other marginalized communities that have sought legitimacy and social change in and through the bourgeois public sphere: workers, women, queers, racial and ethnic minorities, the disabled. Animals become yet another “interest group” to incorporate into the democratic fold. The difference, of course, is that animals do not have the capacity to politically represent themselves as the human disenfranchised more often do.¹⁰ Their advocates function as ventriloquists, speaking on behalf of those who cannot, but cultivating the illusion of an autonomous political subjectivity in the process. So, while canine citizenship potentially offers an intervention into an Enlightenment-style public sphere, pointing out its limitations and/or obsolescence, we can also see how in cases of animal

advocacy it may end up endorsing that sphere's value in contemporary culture, drawing on it for political inclusion and liberation. Moreover, the notion of canine citizens, as PETA would have it, reproduces a slippery slope of otherness that starts with white, straight, middle-class men and ends with animals. Examples of the slope are slippery indeed [\[Fig. 3\]](#). Typical of PETA's representational strategy, one poster makes a space for an elephant in the bourgeois public sphere by associating it with those slightly higher up on the slope; namely, (African-American?) slaves.

Keeping the slope in mind, my analysis of canine citizenship opts for criticism over celebration. I am not interested in valorizing the emergence of citizen dogs as an example the inclusionary or transformative potential of Western democracy, as if we are witnessing the formation of a positive multispecies public sphere,¹¹ quite the opposite. The figure of the canine citizen, as I hope to show, offers us an illustration of the *failures* of democratic participation today. It presents us with a farcical rendition of being political, which values innocence, safety, and a neutered form of intimacy. Even a dog can do it.

Innocent Persons

Parallel to recent constructions of a canine public personhood is a personhood that Berlant locates in the sentimental heart of the intimate public sphere, the American fetus. Fetal personhood is the late twentieth-century work of various juridical, medical, popular, and especially pro-life discourses, which have collectively ascribed a national voice onto another voiceless body. Berlant explains:

The strategy of nondiegetic voicing has two goals (1) to establish the autonomy of the fetal individual; and, paradoxically, (2) to show that the fetus is a contingent being, dependent on the capacity of Americans to hear *as citizens* its cries *as a citizen* for dignity of the body, its complaints at national injustice.¹²

Composed in and around the autonomous-yet-vulnerable fetal person is a patriotic feeling – a sense of national duty – that this person needs to be protected, precisely because it has a voice, the voice of America's future. Canine citizens can be conceptualized in similar terms. Like the urge to protect the fetus, I am struck by the urge to protect dogs; how that urge plays into the security obsessions circling all family members in an intimate public sphere; how it cultivates an innocence in dogs comparable to the cultivated innocence of unborn human life; and how it mobilizes human beings to act like concerned citizens towards nonhuman beings. Additionally, I am interested in the possibility that protecting these innocents amounts to an investment in a national future on par with being pro-life; only here,

that future resides in a vaguely eco-spiritual ethic of being kind to “all creatures great and small”.[13](#)

The Humane Society of the United States’ (HSUS) current campaign to extend Neighborhood Watch programs across the species barrier is my point of entry into these questions. Protecting autonomous-yet-vulnerable dogs is the naked rhetoric of this educational program, attempting as it does to translate the crime-reducing successes of the human-only program to creatures equally deserving of neighborly attention. “After all,” reads one pamphlet, “pets and wildlife need care and protection too [. . .]” Following, are specific tips for citizens on how to keep local animals safe from harm, including “Pay Attention to Abuse, Neglect and Abandonment”, “Watch for Pets in Parked Cars” and “Designate a Dog-Friendly Area” where owners and pets can meet “to help foster community”.[14](#) Indicating perhaps the limitations of the “animals are people too” argument, the HSUS justifies this initiative by linking animal abuse to domestic abuse: “By being alert to animal cruelty and reporting it to law enforcement, we not only help protect the animals in our communities – we may also be alerting authorities to other victims in the home.”[15](#) Another justification centers on neighborhood and (human) citizen empowerment; the sense that, like the original Neighborhood Watch program, people looking out for animals will also prevent crime and reclaim their communities.

Benefits aside, watchdogs for dogs seem a thin, victim-based form of community activism. It evokes Berlant’s observation that citizenship has been downsized “to a mode of volunteerism and privacy” organized around permeable domestic spaces and the endangered families that inhabit them.[16](#) How central have these families become in public life that even their pets are understood as agents of change?[17](#) What does it mean that one of the few morally and socially sanctioned venues of political participation, something “we” can all agree on, involves checking up on stray dogs? To what extent does the effort to protect canine persons replace other forms of community intervention? Is this an additive kind of politics or one that excuses us from other kinds, by mobilizing a friendly-but-firm discourse of personal responsibility?

Personal responsibility is the same discourse operating in well-publicized cases of dog attacks. When a dog bites someone, and the news media covers it, we witness the frantic, individuating demand for “responsible pet ownership.”[18](#) This call effectively upstages issues of race and class that are frequently present in these events and that would politicize communities in very different ways.[19](#) Elijah Anderson’s ethnographic treatment of these less visible issues in one Philadelphia neighborhood offers a sketch of what that kind of politics might look like. As one young black man shares:

I tell you, when I see a strange dog, I am very careful. When I see somebody with a mean-looking dog, I get very defensive, and I focus on him. I make sure, when the deal goes down, I'm away from it. I'll do what I have to do. But white people have a whole different attitude. Some of them want to go up and pet the dog. Some of these white people will come to the situation totally different from me.[20](#)

Anderson explains that for young members of the black working and under-class, dogs are a mark of status on the streets, where status by other means is more difficult to accrue. The more menacing the dog is, the more powerful is its master, all the more so if the dog is off its leash.[21](#) In these scenarios, the call to be a responsible pet owner – and further, to protect innocent dogs – force-feeds a vision of community as consensus building, peaceful and respectful of all life. Such a vision becomes surreal and insidious next to the lived experiences of people engaged in open, violent conflicts that are produced by inequalities more taboo than species. Experiences like these, we might say, are where national politics are ideally played out, where democracy's promise of inclusion and liberation is most vigorously tested, and where it ought to succeed. Instead, inclusion and liberation are confined to protective, do-gooder programs like Neighborhood Watch for Animals, which makes persons out of pets and activists out of white, middle-class pet lovers.

Safe Supericons

In response to the patriotic job of protecting unborn national life, Berlant argues that pro-life inflected policies and imagery have inscribed a supericonicity onto the American fetus, securing it against its multiple threats. These threats include the mother's interests, but also anxieties around American identity politics that risk dividing the nation along lines of class, race, sexuality and gender. Depicted as something outside of culture – otherworldly – the supericonic fetus becomes immune to these threats and takes on a life of its very own. Literalizing this transformation was the publication of fetal photographs in *Life* magazine. In 1965, the magazine displayed large, glossy images of a human fetus that was still alive in its mother's womb. Rhetorical emphasis was placed upon the “magical technology” that enabled this unprecedented spectacle. *Life* published the fetus again in 1990, but with a rhetoric that had turned more religious and hyperbolic, including headlines such as “the FIRST DAYS of Creation” and captions that were heavy with “universalizing sacred language about MAN.”[22](#) Both issues, in their historically specific ways, accomplished the visual and conceptual labor of disconnecting the fetal body from the maternal body and catapulting the fetus to mainstream American stardom.[23](#) In this state of grace, the fetus became an exaggerated person with which an entire culture came to identify, an everyman's

hero that “actively” laid claim to the nationalized space of the maternal womb.

The fetal-friendly discourse of canine citizenship has its personalities too, figures that are resistant to the fractures of actual politics, that can bear the weight of millions of identifications, and that mark national territories. McGruff the Crime Dog is one such figure [Fig. 4]. Trademark and “spokesperson” of the National Crime Prevention Council’s campaign to “Take a Bite Out of Crime”, McGruff has been in the American public eye since 1980, educating citizens about stopping crime through public service announcements, brochures, posters, booklets, videos, and personal (costumed) appearances. In interview commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the character, the advertising executive who created McGruff remembers the need to build a “hero-figure” who could talk about the “little things” people could do by themselves to fight crime. Appropriate to the concerns of an intimate public sphere, the campaign began with the theme of personal security at its core, and developed into child-oriented strategies for keeping communities safe. The chosen hero-figure, as described by McGruff’s creator, combines the “tough guy private detective type” with “the sad face dog that had been through it all and seen it all and has a wisdom that can only come from experience.”²⁴

But how tough is McGruff? While the hound dog does make vague references to a world-weary Humphrey Bogart or Colombo, it is also worth considering how his persona is as naïve as other animal icons in American public service advertising: Smokey the Bear and Elmer the Safety Elephant, for example. These cartoon creatures have the non-threatening appeal that is necessary to hold a child-centered audience in the midst of frightening subject matter (forest fires, car crashes, gun violence, etc.) McGruff’s world-weariness is just enough to be credible for children, but tame enough to win the approval from parents, teachers, and law enforcement workers. By contrast, dogs that are genuinely seasoned in the skills of street-level protection, such as the pit bulls or rottweilers featured in dog-attack news coverage, are understood as having nothing to offer in terms of safety lessons.²⁵ Next to McGruff, these living dogs are too dangerous for an intimate public sphere that seems to privilege wholly representational and highly anthropomorphic animals.

This is not to say that “real” dogs, dogs with animal agency, are always denied supericonicity in an intimate public sphere. The high profile of American presidential pets, for instance, is attributable as much to the animals themselves as their human image-makers. Moreover, these dogs have recently been rendered heroic not only through the technique of visualizing otherwise invisible “persons,” but also through simulating the actual vision of those persons. This is the representational strategy adopted by the Bush administration on the official website of the United States government. Click into the site to find a page offering history and tours of the President’s place of business. There, you are given the

option of the in-person tour, the on-line tour, and “Spotty’s Tour.” Click on the latter, and canine citizenship arrives at its poster children *par excellence*. Aimed at introducing kids to life in the White House, a stately photograph of first lady Laura Bush and her two pet dogs [\[Fig. 5\]](#) sit opposite the following text:

Hello, I'm Spotty, the President's English Springer Spaniel. (I'm the spotted dog in the picture with Laura Bush and my pal, Barney, the Scottish Terrier.)

I love this house and thought you would enjoy a tour...from a dog's point of view. I've heard there are many different names for this house. Some call it the "People's House" while others call it the "White House."

The White House is larger than any dog house I've ever seen, that's for sure. There are six floors, 132 rooms, 35 bathrooms, 147 windows, 412 doors, 12 chimneys, 8 staircases, and 3 elevators. As you can see, it's easy to lose your tennis ball in this place. My favorite room is the chief usher's office. I love to sleep on the floor next to his desk.[26](#)

The virtual tour presents still photographs of various rooms and running commentary from Spotty about their official history, as well as his unofficial adventures in these spaces. Spotty’s Tour is complimented by Spotty’s “Today and Yesterday White House Album,” which shows selected images of civic life that have taken place in the building in the style of family snapshots. Some feature human beings – a little league baseball game, meetings in the oval office – while others feature only presidential pets.

Lest Barney be under-represented on this national stage, the terrier also offers access to the White House. Barney’s tour is more elaborate than Spotty’s and has had further audience reach.[27](#) Originally part of the House’s 2002 Christmas festivities, the tour is an online video that mimics the dog’s visual perspective as he moves through the decorated house. The music is cheerful holiday fare, the shots stay low to the ground, frequently pulling back from the dog’s-eye-view to show Barney at play, mingling with staff and visitors, and looking “pensively” out a window at the Washington monument.

Both Spotty and Barney’s tours are part of a larger construction of excessive personhood for these pets that include biographical information, stories they have purportedly authored, and heart-warming images that capture their American spirits [\[Figs. 6 & 7\]](#). Not surprisingly, there is no mention of either dog being housebroken, which would classify them as trained animals and challenge their individualized personalities. Instead, like McGruff, we see them as spokespeople for the nation, model citizens, and supericons.

The supericonicity produced through Spotty and Barney's tours is particularly powerful in that it allows for an identification that imagines human citizens into a presidential dog's life. Touring the quintessential space of domesticated nationhood through the eyes of its most adorable residents, we become these residents: grounded but privileged, mischievous but loyal, the stuff of American heroism. We stake out our turf, we move where it pleases us, we never leave the homestead. We are citizen dogs, united under one common roof and through both a perceptual and conceptual vision of the intimate public sphere incarnate: a loving, safe, and patriotic White House. Further, adopting Spotty and Barney's view on things turns citizenship into fun for the whole national family, pets included. And while it may be difficult for many Americans to easily identify with other members of the First Family – father George, mother Laura, and twin sisters Jenna and Barbara – making a connection with their fun-loving dogs seems to be less of a stretch. Indeed, the entire culture of pet keeping is one that has historically encouraged such banal forms of cross-species kinship.[28](#)

But what kind of citizen-kin are Spotty and Barney? Despite their geographic proximity to the center of power, they remain marginal actors, engaged in public life as it is played out in the White House, but in ways that are limited by their inability to follow some primary rules of legitimate participation, such as speaking or understanding the issues. In this respect, they remind us that animal agency and political agency are two different things, and that the latter may be harder to come by for a supericon of an intimate public sphere. As Berlant remarks, the supericon of this sphere “is still innocent of knowledge, agency, and accountability and thus has ethical claims of the adult political agents who write laws, make culture, administer resources, control things.”[29](#) Do the supericons of canine citizenship signal a similar exchange of participatory politics for passive ethics? Are Spotty and Barney symbolic of a nascent and extreme civic impotence, a citizenship reduced to playing nicely with others and running around the house?

Good Citizen

If the supericonicity of Spotty and Barney – their playful, carefree mobility – is the sunny side of canine citizenship, clouds form over the American Kennel Club's Canine Good Citizen Program.[30](#) Absent of appeals to agency of any sort, disinterested in the pretenses of personhood, this program suggests some plainly ominous aspects of incorporating dogs into public life, particularly if such incorporations operate via human-animal identifications. Dogs are granted citizenship status from evaluators on the basis of good manners. Training lessons are offered to those in need, which help to prepare for a final test. There, successful candidates are expected to demonstrate total obedience to owner

commands, whereupon they are issued high-quality certificates suitable for framing and home display. A sampling of the requisite skills for a canine good citizen gives some final food for thought: walking on a loose lead, healthy appearance and good grooming, sitting politely for petting, coming when called, sit and down on command, staying in place. That the conditions of human citizenship in the United States could somehow be reflected in these oppressive criteria is a disturbing but useful bit of speculation. It alerts us to the darker logic of a national membership constituted through intimate publics and the erasure of species difference.

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1. Chris Philo and Chris Wilbert, "Animal Spaces, Beastly Places: An Introduction," in *Animal Spaces, Beastly Places: New Geographies of Human-Animal Relations*, Chris Philo and Chris Wilbert, eds. (London: Routledge, 2000) 5. ↑
2. Philo and Wilbert, 18. Philo, Wilbert, and other authors in their volume, mobilize Actor Network Theory (ANT) to further explain the concept of animals as defiant or compliant "agents." Contrary to humanistic definitions of agency, ANT defines agency as an effect of social relations brought about through various configurations of human and nonhuman, organic and inorganic actors in a network, producing "a peculiar agency without intentionality." See Michael Woods, "Fantastic Mr. Fox? Representing Animals in the Hunting Debate," in Philo and Wilbert, 199. ↑
3. Lauren Berlant, *The Queen of America Goes To Washington City: Essays on Sex and Citizenship* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1997) 5. ↑
4. Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Thomas Burger, trans. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991:1962) 28-30. ↑
5. Habermas, 48. ↑
6. Fraser is also interested in a historical revision of the bourgeois public sphere, tracing the ways in which its promise was never fully realized. Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," in *The Phantom Public Sphere*, Bruce Robbins ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993). ↑
7. Michael Warner, "Publics and Counterpublics," in *Publics and*

- Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2002). ↑
8. Berlant, 4. ↑
 9. Berlant, 1-5. ↑
 10. Still, as Fraser's work implies, being human is no guarantee of being able to represent oneself in a bourgeois public sphere. Noting the link between political and cultural representation, Fraser raises the point that a group may have difficulty engaging with the modes of representation required, since "public spheres themselves are not spaces of zero-degree culture, equally hospitable to any possible form of cultural expression [. . . their institutions] can accommodate some expressive modes and not others." Fraser, 16-17. ↑
 11. Not that this argument has not been made, most concretely in the form of legislative change. In 2002, for example, Germany became the first EU country to grant constitutional rights to animals, adding *und die Tiere* ("and the animals") to its Constitution. "Germany grants animals constitutional protection." *The Globe and Mail*, 18 May 2002. ↑
 12. Berlant, 99. ↑
 13. This, for example, was the title of the US government's 2002 holiday website that wished Americans seasons greetings via the Bush family pets. ↑
 14. "Neighborhood Watch for Animals Tip Sheet." <<http://www.hsus.org/ace/18691?pg=2>>. ↑
 15. "HSUS Calls for Expanded Neighborhood Watch Programs" <<http://www.hsus.org/ace/18785?pg=2>>. ↑
 16. Berlant, 5. ↑
 17. This raises the corollary point that recognizing dogs as agents of any sort does not necessarily lead to a transgressive politics. In this case, the dog-as-agent is complicit with the conservatism of an intimate public sphere. ↑
 18. See, for example Alan Hamilton, "Princess's dog 'was only playing' in park attack," *The London Times*, 22 November 2002; "Jury Bites Couple: Conviction Underscores Dog Owner Responsibility," *The Human Society of the United States*, 26 March 2002; Kristian Gravenor, "Bad Doggies," *Montreal Mirror*, 18 April 2002. ↑
 19. Meanwhile, some media outlets have been openly racist and classist in their coverage. See, for example, David Brand, "Time Bombs on Legs: Violence-Prone Owners are Turning Pit Bulls into Killers," *Time*, 27 July 1987. ↑
 20. Elijah Anderson, *Streetwise: Race, Class, and Change in an Urban Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990) 222. ↑

21. Anderson, 227. ↑
22. Berlant, 105-111. ↑
23. It was a stardom, Berlant demonstrates, co-produced with other popular pro-life visions, such as Hollywood's *Look Who's Talking* films and anti-abortion campaigns. ↑
24. "An Interview with Jack Keil" <<http://www.ncpc.org/ncpc/ncpc/?pg=10742-5242-2740-2820-5244>>. ↑
25. What those lessons might be, or how humans might be able to "hear" them, are open questions that invite more theorizing about the place of animal agency in public life. ↑
26. Taken from <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/kids/tour/>>. ↑
27. Although the tour is accessible through the www.whitehousekids.gov site, Barney's tour was also publicized to American adults in mainstream news outlets. See, for example "Tour White House With Presidential Dog," <<http://ia.wnbc.com/holidays/1835631/detail.html>>. ↑
28. See, for example, Eugene Rochberg-Halton, "Life in the Treehouse: Pet Therapy as Family Metaphor and Self-Dialogue,") in *Pets and the Family*, Marvin Sussman, ed. (New York: The Haworth Press, 1985) and Kathleen Kete, *The Beast In The Boudoir: Petkeeping in Nineteenth-Century Paris* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994). ↑
29. Berlant, 6. ↑
30. See <<http://www.akc.org/love/cgc/index.cfm>>. ↑

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