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### Slave Hounds and Abolition in the Americas

Tyler D. Parry

*University of Nevada, Las Vegas*

Charlton W. Yingling

*University of Louisville*, [charlton.yingling@louisville.edu](mailto:charlton.yingling@louisville.edu)

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#### Original Publication Information

Parry, Tyler D. and Charlton W. Yingling. "Slave Hounds and Abolition in the Americas." 2020 *Past & Present* 246: 69-108.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/pastj/gtz020>

#### ThinkIR Citation

Parry, Tyler D. and Yingling, Charlton W., "Slave Hounds and Abolition in the Americas" (2020). *Faculty Scholarship*. 441.

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# SLAVE HOUNDS AND ABOLITION IN THE AMERICAS\*

## I

### INTRODUCTION

In 1824 an anonymous Scotsman travelled through Jamaica to survey the island's sugar plantations and social conditions. Notably, his journal describes an encounter with a formidable dog and its astonishing interaction with the enslaved. The traveller's host, a Mr McJames, made 'him a present of a fine bloodhound' descended from a breed used for 'hunting Maroons' during Jamaica's Second Maroon War almost three decades earlier.<sup>1</sup> The maroons had surrendered to the British partly out of terror of these dogs, a Cuban breed that officials were promoting for use in Jamaica on account of their effectiveness in quelling black resistance.<sup>2</sup> Unfamiliar with the breed, the traveller observed its 'astounding . . . aversion . . . to the slaves'. For instance, when a young slave entered his room to wake him early one morning, the animal viciously charged the boy. The Scotsman judged that, without his intervention, the

\* We should like to thank Matt D. Childs and the Atlantic History Reading Group at the University of South Carolina for critiquing early stages of this article; Karl Appuhn, Joyce Chaplin, Deirdre Cooper Owens, Alec Dun and Dan Rood for commenting on conference papers; and our colleagues Erica Ball, Chris Ehrick and Tracy K'Meyer for sharing advice. Earlier versions of this project benefited from feedback at meetings of the American Society for Environmental History, King's College London Animal History Group, the Washington Early American Seminar Series, the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic, the Forum on European Expansion and Global Interaction, the Omohundro Institute and the Society of Early Americanists. We also received generous funding from the Huntington Library, the American Historical Association, the Conference on Latin American History, the University of South Carolina, California State University, Fullerton, Harvard University, the University of Louisville and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

<sup>1</sup> 'Journal of a Visit to Jamaica, [1823–1834]', 24 Feb. 1824: National Library of Scotland, Special Collections, MS 17956.

<sup>2</sup> Alexander Lindsay, sixth earl of Balcarres, lieutenant-governor of Jamaica, to Henry Dundas, secretary of state for war, 29 Dec. 1795: The National Archives, London (hereafter TNA), WO 1/92, fos. 239–45.

hound 'would positively have torn him to pieces'. Returning later to his room, he found an intruder, a large black man 'with a drawn cutlass in his hand', pinned into a corner by the dog, which was biting deeply into his leg. The man escaped, but the Scotsman followed the trail of blood into a 'thick jungle in the centre of the forest'. Presuming the man to be a maroon with 'no good intention', the traveller appreciated the dog's tenacious enforcement of racial boundaries and its seemingly 'natural' inclination to attack black bodies.<sup>3</sup>

A thousand miles away from Jamaica, but only fifteen years after the Scotsman's observations, canine violence continued to bolster the profits of planters, this time for the American South's burgeoning cotton production. In 1839 Theodore Weld, a pioneer of abolitionism in the United States, published a letter from a clergyman recording the near deaths of two runaways outside Natchez, Mississippi, whose 'most agonizing cries' were mingled with the 'barking of several dogs', signalling their failed escape attempt. Ironically, abolitionists utilized the very evidence that acquitted dogs among the plantocracy. Weld lambasted the slaveholders for making use of dog attacks that resembled those infamously pioneered by Spanish conquerors three centuries earlier, which helped to decimate indigenous populations in the Caribbean and facilitated African bondage.<sup>4</sup> For moralizing rhetorical effect, he and many abolitionists linked the plantocracy's expansion of canine coercion to precedents from the notorious Black Legend of the Spanish conquests. They saw themselves as adjudicators in this hemispheric morass, exposing how slave hounds had constructed white power.

The lash and shackles remain the major symbols of physical degradation fixed in historical memory on slavery.<sup>5</sup> Yet, as recounted by witnesses, including slaves themselves, the dog was perhaps a more effective tool for managing labour or even inflicting horrific pain or death on those who defied their masters' commands. Central to this Atlantic tragedy were black victims

<sup>3</sup> 'Journal of a Visit to Jamaica', 24 Feb. 1824.

<sup>4</sup> *American Slavery As It Is: Testimony of a Thousand Witnesses*, ed. Theodore Weld (New York, 1839), 107–9, 8.

<sup>5</sup> David Lambert, *White Creole Culture, Politics and Identity during the Age of Abolition* (Cambridge, 2005), 61–3; Darla Jean Thompson, 'Circuits of Containment: Iron Collars, Incarceration and the Infrastructure of Slavery' (Cornell University Ph.D. thesis, 2014).

who insisted upon their own humanity by innovatively resisting canine attacks that animalized them as prey. Attack dogs thus formed a touchstone for black cultures. Despite learning from mostly local experiences with slave hounds, black resisters widely exhibited uncanny similarities in evading the dogs by using scents to misdirect them, wading in water, hiding from them and, as a last resort, fighting them. The hounds pursued them, extending white power into mountains, swamps and forests with their acute extra-human abilities to scent, hear, outrun, signal, attack, and sometimes execute, black bodies. The ingenuity and perseverance of slaves in fleeing dogs to terrain beyond the plantocracy's domain later enlivened the abolitionist cause by manifesting the peculiar depravity of slavery.<sup>6</sup>

Socially conditioned, culturally weighted interspecies violence permeated the management of slave societies in the Americas.<sup>7</sup> Slaveholders, slaves and abolitionists all conferred meaning upon, and inferred meaning from, pursuit and punishment by dogs. This pattern formed three mutually defined, entangled cultural circuits. The plantocracy wielded the 'natural' antipathy of dogs towards blacks for their own power and prestige, slaves learned how best to survive, and abolitionists described this barbaric contest in emotive appeals for emancipation. As many observers noted, domesticated attack dogs not only hunted those who defied the profitable Caribbean sugar regimes and North America's later Cotton Kingdom, they dominated black space as terrifying enforcers of labour exploitation.<sup>8</sup> Dogs enforced plantation regimens through quotidian intimidation and closed off fugitive landscapes with acute adaptability to the varied Caribbean and North American

<sup>6</sup> Stephanie M. H. Camp, *Closer to Freedom: Enslaved Women and Everyday Resistance in the Plantation South* (Chapel Hill, 2004), 41, 61–6; Robert Tindol, 'The Best Friend of the Murderers: Guard Dogs and the Nazi Holocaust', in Ryan Hediger (ed.), *Animals and War: Studies of Europe and North America* (Leiden, 2012), 115.

<sup>7</sup> Luiz Carlos Soares, *O 'povo de cam' na capital do Brasil: a escravidão urbana no Rio de Janeiro do século XIX* (Rio de Janeiro, 2007), 235–7. For concision, this article does not develop similar but distinct processes among dogs and slaves in Brazil, though our larger project does.

<sup>8</sup> Jerome S. Handler, 'Escaping Slavery in a Caribbean Plantation Society: Marronage in Barbados, 1650s–1830s', *New West Indian Guide*, lxxi (1997), 219 n. 55; William Luis, *Literary Bondage: Slavery in Cuban Narrative* (Austin, 1990).

terrains of sugar, cotton, coffee or tobacco plantations that they patrolled.

Dogs embodied a crude form of 'biopower' for slave societies across the Americas.<sup>9</sup> They optimized the extraction of labour from black bodies by using threats that encouraged compliance, and coercion that enforced biological controls.<sup>10</sup> Dogs secured both the foundations of capitalism, and the white bodies that might enjoy it. The *canis familiaris*, willingly or not, was an interspecies shaper of racial hierarchy and slavery. Slave dogs subdued human property, enforced legal categories of subjugation, and built efficient economic regimes.<sup>11</sup> The common refrain among slaves of being treated 'worse than a dog' was no hyperbole, as many blacks were made subservient by a 'lesser' species that was well maintained by the white power it fortified.<sup>12</sup> Training dogs to attack only blacks instantiated racism, as planters interpreted this as confirmation that even dogs 'knew' the supposed immutable inferiority of blackness.<sup>13</sup>

As a form of biopower in the slave societies of the Americas, hounds used violence to 'naturalize' blackness and whiteness for the sake of the planters' profits, defined an existential struggle for black humanity, and proved the evils of slavery for abolitionists. This melding crucible has yet to be analysed across the rise and fall of slavery in the Americas. It suggests that, among burgeoning

<sup>9</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, trans. Robert Hurley, 3 vols. (New York, 1990), i, 139–44.

<sup>10</sup> Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977–1978*, ed. Michel Senellart, trans. Graham Burchell (Basingstoke, 2007), ch. 1; Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975–1976*, ed. Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana, trans. David Macey (New York, 2003), ch. 11; Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977*, ed. and trans. Colin Gordon (New York, 1980); Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose, 'Biopower Today', in Vernon W. Cisney and Nicolae Morar (eds.), *Biopower: Foucault and Beyond* (Chicago, 2016), 309–11.

<sup>11</sup> Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market* (Cambridge, Mass., 1999); Stephanie E. Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora* (Cambridge, Mass., 2007); Edward E. Baptist, *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism* (New York, 2014).

<sup>12</sup> Benjamin Drew, *A North-Side View of Slavery. The Refugee: or, The Narratives of Fugitive Slaves in Canada. Related by Themselves, with an Account of the History and Condition of the Colored Population of Upper Canada* (Boston, 1856), 198–201.

<sup>13</sup> G. L. Reisback, *Instructions for Training Young Bloodhounds to Trail*, pamphlet (n.d.). Some theorized that human racial identities conditioned dogs to prefer certain fur colours: see Sarah Cheang, 'Women, Pets, and Imperialism: The British Pekingese Dog and Nostalgia for Old China', *Journal of British Studies*, xlv, 2 (Apr. 2006), 363.

transnational and comparative studies on ethnicities, labour, commodities and social life, histories of slavery could gain from increased attention to interspecies interactions. By examining how the use of dogs proliferated in Atlantic slave societies, spurred transatlantic abolitionist campaigns, and forced enslaved people to use their environments creatively to resist their bondage, this article demonstrates that dogs were major mediators of slavery, race and abolition for over three centuries in the Caribbean and North America.

Current scholarship on this canine violence separately surveys Jamaican maroons, Haitian revolutionaries and Black Seminoles in Florida, but remains disconnected from the regionally entangled, systemic prevalence of racialized hunting of humans with hounds.<sup>14</sup> However, a few scholars have recently taken a new look at twentieth-century civil rights struggles within the context of the nineteenth-century use of slave dogs.<sup>15</sup> Founded upon a wider empirical engagement, this article builds upon these leads to reveal greater geographic dispersion, a longer chronology, consistencies of use, abolitionist angst and more perspectives from black experience. Sara Johnson's innovative article on revolutionary Caribbean dog deployments as 'torture' links them to earlier Spanish attacks on indigenous Americans by interweaving disparate printed sources.<sup>16</sup> In the historiography of the American South, 'negro dogs' appear fleetingly, but without analysis of either the professionalization of American slave hunting or their broader Atlantic legacy.<sup>17</sup> This article

<sup>14</sup> James W. Covington, 'Cuban Bloodhounds and the Seminoles', *Florida Historical Quarterly*, xxxiii (Oct. 1954); John Campbell, 'The Seminoles, the "Bloodhound War", and Abolitionism, 1796–1865', *Journal of Southern History*, xxxiii (May 2006); Mildred M. Chang, 'The Jamaican Accompong Maroons: Continuities and Transformations' (State University of New York at Albany Ph.D. thesis, 2007), 65–79; Miles Ogborn, 'A War of Words: Speech, Script and Print in the Maroon War of 1795–1796', *Journal of Historical Geography*, xxxvii (2011); Matt D. Childs, *The 1812 Aponte Rebellion in Cuba and the Struggle against Atlantic Slavery* (Chapel Hill, 2006), 42.

<sup>15</sup> Bénédicte Boisseron, 'Afro-Dog', *Transition*, cxviii (2015); Larry H. Spruill, 'Slave Patrols, "Packs of Negro Dogs" and Policing Black Communities', *Phylon*, liii (Summer 2016); Tyler Wall, "'For the Very Existence of Civilization": The Police Dog and Racial Terror', *American Quarterly*, lxxviii, 4 (2016).

<sup>16</sup> Sara E. Johnson, "'You Should Give Them Blacks to Eat": Waging Inter-American Wars of Torture and Terror', *American Quarterly*, lxi, 1 (2009).

<sup>17</sup> Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom* (Cambridge, Mass., 2013), 234–40; Sylviane A. Diouf, *Slavery's Exiles: The Story of the American Maroons* (New York, 2014), 94–5, 289–303; John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger, *Runaway Slaves: Rebels on the Plantation* (Oxford, 1999), 160–4;

(cont. on p. 74)

evaluates this escalating phenomenon within the formative transnational racial tensions generated by black refugees in Mexico and Canada.<sup>18</sup>

Paralleling this expanding violence, debates over national morality, humanity and dog violence were nearly as old as European colonization in the Americas and preoccupied figures like Bartolomé de las Casas, Voltaire, Henri Christophe, William Wilberforce, Harriet Tubman, Martin Delany and Harriet Beecher Stowe. In all these cases, as throughout the anthropogenic record, non-human animals are ever present, laden with cultural weight, and entangled in the material strata of human society.<sup>19</sup> Albeit sometimes with unintended consequences, non-human animals played crucial roles in colonialism, including slavery.<sup>20</sup> To illustrate more fully the dog's centrality to slavery across the Americas, this article draws upon numerous published and unpublished sources from ex-slaves, abolitionists, colonists, planters, travellers and government officials found in the archives of many countries.

The abuse and misuse of dogs by humankind against humankind is predicated upon thousands of years of intervention with dogs' reproduction, progeny and Pavlovian

(n. 17 cont.)

Mark Derr, *A Dog's History of America: How our Best Friend Explored, Conquered, and Settled a Continent* (New York, 2004), 74, 154–9; Bryan D. Cummins, *Our Debt to the Dog: How the Domestic Dog Helped Shape Human Societies* (Durham, NC, 2013).

<sup>18</sup> Manisha Sinha, *The Slave's Cause: A History of Abolition* (New Haven, 2016), 209–20, 330–5, chs. 12–13.

<sup>19</sup> Margo DeMello, *Animals and Society: An Introduction to Human–Animal Studies* (New York, 2012), ch. 1; Richard Twine, *Animals as Biotechnology: Ethics, Sustainability and Critical Animal Studies* (London, 2010), 83–94; Cary Wolfe, *Before the Law: Humans and Other Animals in a Biopolitical Frame* (Chicago, 2013); Paul Waldau, *Animal Studies: An Introduction* (Oxford, 2013).

<sup>20</sup> Joshua Abram Kercksmar, 'Wolves at Heart: How Dog Evolution Shaped Whites' Perceptions of Indians in North America', *Environmental History*, xxi, 3 (2016); Chris Pearson, 'Dogs, History, and Agency', *History and Theory*, lii, 4 (2013); David Lambert, 'Master–Horse–Slave: Mobility, Race and Power in the British West Indies, c. 1780–1838', *Slavery and Abolition*, xxxvi, 4 (2015); Virginia DeJohn Anderson, *Creatures of Empire: How Domestic Animals Transformed Early America* (Oxford, 2004); Elinor G. K. Melville, *A Plague of Sheep: Environmental Consequences of the Conquest of Mexico* (Cambridge, 1997); Alfred W. Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900–1900*, 2nd edn (New York, 2004); Marcy Norton, 'The Chicken or the Legue: Human–Animal Relationships and the Columbian Exchange', *American Historical Review*, cxx (Feb. 2015).

conditioning.<sup>21</sup> *Canis lupus familiaris* emerged as a subspecies when wolves adapted to scavenging human settlements, and over generations evolved to adopt symbiotic sociability with, rather than instinctive aggressiveness towards, humans.<sup>22</sup> Dogs developed a responsiveness to gestures within their human in-group, and were useful to bark warnings or defend their group against threats.<sup>23</sup> They became companions, sentinels and hunters throughout the ancient world, although war dogs were used particularly in Europe.<sup>24</sup> As chattel slavery expanded in the Americas, slave hunters raised working dogs like the ‘Cuban bloodhound’, later mating it with other breeds to increase the spread of coercive canines to intimidate and attack enslaved people. This was certainly more than simple mass selection, and preceded mid-nineteenth-century bourgeois kennel clubs that bred dogs as status symbols and companions, mirroring ‘scientific’ attempts to classify human races.<sup>25</sup>

Through breeding and training, slave hunters believed that they had conditioned enmity between their dogs and black people, premised upon innate and perceptible racial difference.<sup>26</sup> Racializing the animals’ sensory capabilities, in which they could supposedly smell, hear or see racial difference, resonated with concepts of discernibly scented

<sup>21</sup> Daniel P. Todes, *Pavlov’s Physiology Factory: Experiment, Interpretation, Laboratory Enterprise* (Baltimore, 2002), 230–5.

<sup>22</sup> Aaron Skabelund, ‘Breeding Racism: The Imperial Battlefields of the “German” Shepherd Dog’, *Society and Animals*, xvi (2008); Erica Fudge, ‘How a Man Differs from a Dog’, *History Today*, liii (July 2003).

<sup>23</sup> Brian Hare and Vanessa Woods, *The Genius of Dogs: How Dogs Are Smarter than You Think* (New York, 2013). Humans domesticated dogs perhaps separately in Europe and Asia at least thirteen thousand years ago: Laurent A. F. Frantz et al., ‘Genomic and Archaeological Evidence Suggests a Dual Origin of Domestic Dogs’, *Science*, ccclii, 6290 (June 2016).

<sup>24</sup> John Grier Varner and Jeannette Johnson Varner, *Dogs of the Conquest* (Norman, 1983), p. xiv; John Blair, *The Life and Acts of the Most Famous and Valiant Champion, Sir William Wallace, Knight of Ellerslie, Maintainer of the Liberty of Scotland* (Glasgow, 1713), 24, 91–4; ‘Dogs of War in European Conflict’, *New York Times*, 21 Feb. 1915, S3; E. S. Forster, ‘Dogs in Ancient Warfare’, *Greece and Rome*, x (May 1941).

<sup>25</sup> Andrew S. Curran, *The Anatomy of Blackness: Science and Slavery in an Age of Enlightenment* (Baltimore, 2011), 139–45, 171–8; Greg Bankoff, ‘A Question of Breeding: Zootechny and Colonial Attitudes toward the Tropical Environment in the Late Nineteenth-Century Philippines’, *Journal of Asian Studies*, lx, 2 (2001); Leslie Irvine, *If You Tame Me: Understanding our Connection with Animals* (Philadelphia, 2004), chs. 1–3; Cheang, ‘Women, Pets, and Imperialism’.

<sup>26</sup> Sarah E. McFarland and Ryan Hediger, ‘Approaching the Agency of Other Animals: An Introduction’, in Sarah E. McFarland and Ryan Hediger (eds.), *Animals and Agency: An Interdisciplinary Exploration* (Leiden, 2009).



bodies posited by southern slaveholders, including Thomas Jefferson.<sup>27</sup> Many white southerners considered that ‘blacks smell, sound, look, feel, even taste different’.<sup>28</sup> Essentially, slaveholders believed they could train their hounds’ superior hearing, scenting, peripheral vision and sensitivity to movement to find fugitive slaves by teaching them their own prejudiced ‘senses’ of race. In practice, this detrimental interspecies dynamism relied upon dogs’ responses to commands from white masters or other contextual cues, and the barks of dogs, shouts of masters and cries of victims uniquely haunted those racialized as prey. For the masters, this preserved the racial hierarchy and their masculine mastery of subordinates, just as humans have done by conferring anthropocentric meaning onto, and inferring it from, other animals enmeshed in their own social relations.<sup>29</sup>

This article follows a chronological course that examines how Spanish colonizers of the Americas in the 1500s and later imperial competitors in the Caribbean all adapted dogs to reinforce slavery violently. Beyond coercing efficiency, in the Age of Revolutions the Cuban bloodhound spread across imperial boundaries to protect white power and suppress black ambitions in Haiti and Jamaica. This sparked British anti-slavery debates in Parliament in the late 1790s and hastened Haitian independence from France in 1804. In the early nineteenth century, slave dog violence in the Caribbean spurred planters in the American South to import and breed slave dogs to maximize their own profits. The runaway slaves they pursued towards Canada and Mexico inspired anti-slavery activism in the North (including *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*), deepening the sectional divide before the Civil War ended slavery in North America in the mid 1860s. In

<sup>27</sup> Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 2nd American edn (Philadelphia, 1794), 201. See also Andrew Kettler, *The Smell of Slavery: Olfactory Racism and the Atlantic World* (Cambridge, forthcoming).

<sup>28</sup> Mark M. Smith, *How Race Is Made: Slavery, Segregation, and the Senses* (Chapel Hill, 2008), 4–6.

<sup>29</sup> Alexandra Horowitz, *Being a Dog: Following the Dog into a World of Smell* (New York, 2016), ch. 3; Steven R. Lindsay, *Handbook of Applied Dog Behavior and Training*, 3 vols. (New York, 2013), i; Edmund Russell, *Evolutionary History: Uniting History and Biology to Understand Life on Earth* (New York, 2011), ch. 6 and pp. 71–5; Mark M. Smith, *Listening to Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill, 2001), 76–8, 86, 207; Chris Pearson, ‘Stray Dogs and the Making of Modern Paris’, *Past and Present*, no. 234 (Feb. 2017); Harriet Ritvo, *The Animal Estate: The English and Other Creatures in the Victorian Age* (Cambridge, Mass., 1987), 3–38.

each region and era, inventive black fugitives made use of untamed natural environments impenetrable to human patrols to evade canine biopower cajoled into enforcing white supremacy. The resourceful ways in which slaves eluded their pursuers proved their humanity to observers through emotive and concrete examples, impugned the morality of the perpetrators, and generated abolitionist outrage. The cases that follow show how hounds were central to the rise and fall of slavery in the Americas.

## II

### ORIGINS, PROLIFERATIONS AND RESPONSES

Before the advent of slave societies, dogs were used by the first European colonizers in the Americas to suppress indigenous populations. Alongside the devastation wrought by European diseases and firepower, contemporary sources extensively recount canine violence as brutal examples of the early Spanish conquest. Indigenous societies in the Americas had kept dogs for supernatural and other purposes, but the size and ferocity of the hounds brought by the Iberian invaders were unfamiliar.<sup>30</sup> Spanish landowners often used dogs to execute indigenous labourers simply for disobedience.<sup>31</sup> The priest Bartolomé de las Casas, the 'Protector of the Indians', documented attacks against Taino populations, telling of Spaniards who 'hunted them with their hounds . . . taught to . . . tear apart the Indians like beasts. These dogs shed much human blood'. Many later abolitionists made comparisons with these brutal precedents to criticize canine violence against slaves on these same Caribbean islands.<sup>32</sup>

The widely circulated remonstrations of las Casas improved indigenous treatment and became a primer for advocacy against

<sup>30</sup> Marion Schwartz, *A History of Dogs in the Early Americas* (New Haven, 1997), 25–6, 93–146; Varner and Varner, *Dogs of the Conquest*; Kerckmar, 'Wolves at Heart'.

<sup>31</sup> Médéric-Louis-Elie Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Description topographique et politique de la partie espagnole de l'isle de Saint-Domingue: avec des observations générales sur le climat, la population, les productions, le caractère et les mœurs des habitans de cette colonie, et un tableau raisonné des différentes parties de son administration, accompagnée d'une nouvelle carte de la totalité de l'isle*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1796), i, 304–6; Johnson, 'You Should Give Them Blacks to Eat'.

<sup>32</sup> Bartolomé de las Casas, *Brevissima relación de la destruyción de las Indias* (Seville, 1552), 7, among many references; *American Slavery As It Is*, ed. Weld, 8.

the brutal use of dogs. They also became a measuring stick against which European violence and nationalist moralizing could be ascertained, and made attack dogs widely recognized at the dawn of Atlantic slavery. The decline of indigenous populations from disease and massacre had opened up vast swaths of fertile land, and when enslaved Africans were forced to toil in the young Caribbean colonies in their place as *las Casas* had once recommended, slaveholders followed the precedent of the early conquest in turning dogs against the new African labourers. By the early sixteenth century, Spanish officials in Santo Domingo were licensing packs of dogs to comb the forests for indigenous fugitives, a practice that expanded when Africans became the majority of runaways. Dogs in Panama, for instance, tracked, attacked, captured and publicly executed maroons.<sup>33</sup>

Although reports of canine violence were used to reinforce the anti-Spanish Black Legend among competing empires, in ensuing centuries these rivals quickly suspended moral judgement to deploy dogs to secure their own slave regimes. As soon as runaway slaves started to use their natural surroundings to outsmart the plantocracy, seemingly all European colonial societies turned to the dog's superb tracking capabilities to control black bodies. For example, early English colonists in Barbados used dogs to subdue black resistance. In the 1650s runaways throughout the island frequently raided plantations at night and retreated to caves large enough for '500 men' where 'runaway negroes' would 'shelter themselves . . . for a long time'. One observer noted, 'There is nothing in [Barbados] so useful as . . . Liam Hounds, to find out these Thieves'. The term 'liam' likely came from the French *limier*, meaning 'bloodhound'. These dogs, famed in England for their exceptional tracking skills, were traditionally 'used in those days for finding . . . deer'. In 1659 English planters in Jamaica 'procured some blood-hounds, and hunted these blacks like wild-beasts', including 'hunting of negroes' who had first arrived with the Spanish colonization. In 1718 a Quaker in Barbados witnessed canine violence when a large mastiff devoured a black man. Having seen the dog shredding the man's arms, and his 'face and bowels', he wrote:

<sup>33</sup> Lawrence A. Clayton, *Bartolomé de las Casas: A Biography* (New York, 2012), 135–40; Carlos Esteban Deive, *La esclavitud del negro en Santo Domingo, 1492–1844*, 2 vols. (Santo Domingo, 1980), ii, 480–4; Leslie B. Rout Jr, *The African Experience in Spanish America, 1502 to the Present Day* (Cambridge, 1976), 103.

'the very thoughts of . . . penning it . . . chills my blood . . . [and] it obliges me to lay down my pen'. Dogs also tracked runaways in Brazil and Dutch Suriname.<sup>34</sup>

By the mid eighteenth century, French planters in Martinique were also relying upon dogs to hunt fugitive slaves. One runaway who knew he could not outrun the pursuing hounds elected to dive into a river. Submerged, he thus obscured his scent, and he hid his face with a large palm frond under which he could breathe.<sup>35</sup> In French Saint-Domingue dogs were used against the maroon Macandal, legendary for his alleged poisoning of French planters. He was caught but soon escaped; however, tracking dogs facilitated his recapture, and he was burned alive in 1758. In contrast, in 1777 a military expedition against maroons from Saint-Domingue used hounds in densely forested mountains that troops had failed to penetrate. Yet, as the dogs barked, the maroons escaped. These maroons had cleverly deployed their own dogs to patrol the perimeter of their settlement, a subversion of sensory superiority that alerted them to impending attacks and allowed them to flee.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>34</sup> María DeGuzmán, *Spain's Long Shadow: The Black Legend, Off-Whiteness, and Anglo-American Empire* (Minneapolis, 2005); Richard Ligon, *A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbadoes: Illustrated with a Map of the Island, as also the Principal Trees and Plants There, Set Forth in their Due Proportions and Shapes, Drawn Out by their Several and Respective Scales. Together with the Ingenio that Makes the Sugar, with the Plots of the Several Houses, Rooms, and Other Places, that Are Used in the Whole Process of Sugar-Making*, 2nd edn (London, 1673), 98; George Turberville, *The Noble Arte of Venerie or Hunting: Wherein Is Handled and Set Out the Vertues, Nature, and Properties of Fifteene Sundrie Chaces Together, with the Order and Maner How to Hunt and Kill Euery One of Them* (London, 1575); Walter W. Skeat, *Notes on English Etymology* (Oxford, 1901), 164; D. H. Madden, *The Diary of Master William Silence: A Study of Shakespeare and of Elizabethan Sport* (London, 1907), 20; Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica: or, General Survey of the Antient and Modern State of the Island. With Reflections on its Situation, Settlements, Inhabitants, Climate, Products, Commerce, Laws, and Government*, 3 vols. (London, 1774), i, 279; 'A Quaker Account of Barbados in 1718', ed. Henry J. Cadbury, *Journal of the Barbados and Museum and Historical Society*, x (1943), 123; Kátia M. de Queirós Mattoso, *Ser escravo no Brasil, séculos XVI-XIX*, trans. Sonia Furhmann (São Paulo, 1982), 162; Richard Price, *Alabi's World* (Baltimore, 1990), 24.

<sup>35</sup> Jean-Baptiste Thibault de Chanvalon, *Voyage à la Martinique: contenant diverses observations sur la physique, l'histoire naturelle, l'agriculture, les mœurs et les usages de cette isle, faites en 1751 et dans les années suivantes* (Paris, 1763), 63.

<sup>36</sup> M. L.-E. Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Description topographique, physique, civile, politique et historique de la partie française de l'isle Saint-Domingue: avec des observations générales sur sa population, sur le caractère et les mœurs de ses divers habitants, sur son climat, sa culture, ses productions, son administration, &c. &c. Accompagnées des détails le plus propres à fair connaître l'état de cette colonie à l'époque du 18 Octobre 1789*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1797-8), i, 651-3; ii, 498-502.

The practice of breeding dogs for hunting human beings proliferated as canines followed white colonizers throughout the circum-Caribbean. Though proven British breeds circulated, such as ‘handsome’ and ‘fine’ brindle and black terriers shipped from Bristol to planters in Jamaica,<sup>37</sup> colonists began to use different breeds with a view to improving their suitability to track and attack in heat and humidity, an idea related to racial thinking that questioned Europeans’ physiological fitness for tropical weather. For example, William Codrington, seeking to develop the island of Barbuda for sugar production, tried to cross the greyhound and the bulldog, hoping to produce a specimen that took the speed and strength from the respective breeds.<sup>38</sup> Even Voltaire, the legendary French Enlightenment intellectual, rebroadcast to an ever wider European audience that such legacies of brutality were a Spanish iniquity.<sup>39</sup> Such distant origin stories sometimes dissociated blame for ongoing canine violence from its contemporary perpetrators.

Aside from the British and French use of canine violence, vivid accounts of the Spanish conquest remained the exemplar of cruelty that shaped the intertwined growth in celebrity and criticism of attack hounds.<sup>40</sup> English-language readerships continued to consume anti-Spanish, anti-dog tropes. In 1763 a widely circulated British history of Catholic intolerance contended that by dint of their canine atrocities the Spanish had ‘divest[ed] themselves of humanity’. Likewise, a major historical compendium published in 1795 heralded las Casas’s cautionary tales about barbarous Spanish dogs and posited the need for Anglocentric Protestant redemption across the Americas.<sup>41</sup> Ironically, this imperative did not prevent the

<sup>37</sup> Lowbridge Bright to David Duncomb, Bristol, 19 Sept. 1788: University of Melbourne Archives, Bright Family Papers, 80/75, box 18, bundle 6, folder 1.

<sup>38</sup> Codrington to L. Redhead[?], 29 Apr. 1762: Duke University, Rubenstein Special Collections Library, Sir William Codrington letterbook, 1762–8.

<sup>39</sup> Voltaire, *The General History and State of Europe: From the Time of Charlemain to Charles V. With a Preliminary View of the Oriental Empires*, 5 vols. (London, 1754–7), ii, 184, 201.

<sup>40</sup> Lori Boornazian Diel, ‘Manuscrito del aperreamiento (Manuscript of the Dogging): A “Dogging” and its Implications for Early Colonial Cholula’, *Ethnohistory*, lviii, 4 (Nov. 2011); las Casas, *Brevissima relación de la destrucción de las Indias*.

<sup>41</sup> John Lockman, *A History of the Cruel Sufferings of the Protestants, and Others, by Popish Persecutions, in Various Countries: Together with a View of the Reformations from the*

(cont. on p. 81)

expansion of attack dogs in British or, later, US domains. It did, however, serve to widen the social divide between pro-slavery and anti-slavery groups into the nineteenth century, particularly when abolitionists vociferously protested against the use of dogs as an ethical quagmire that debased their nations.

Although slave hounds existed throughout the Caribbean, it was common knowledge that Cuba bred and trained the best attack dogs, and when insurrections began to challenge plantocratic interests across the Americas, two rival empires, Britain and France, begged Spain to sell these notorious Cuban bloodhounds to suppress black ambitions and protect shared white power. It was not until canine violence became widely publicized in the 1790s and early 1800s that defiant black confrontations with hounds sparked broader humanitarian outcries heralding abolitionism. Slave dogs soon became symbols of exploitative racial hierarchies that were crushing demands for human rights, signature struggles of a revolutionary era.

### III

#### AGE OF ATTACK, AGE OF OUTCRY

In the Age of Revolutions a new canine breed gained widespread popularity in suppressing black populations across the Caribbean and eventually North America. Slave hounds were usually descended from more typical mastiffs or bloodhounds, animals renowned for strength and scenting respectively. Spanish and Cuban slave hunters not only bred the Cuban bloodhound, but were midwives to an era of international anti-black co-ordination as the breed's reputation spread rapidly among enslavers during the seven decades between the beginning of the Haitian Revolution in 1791 and the conclusion of the American Civil

(n. 41 cont.)

*Church of Rome. Interspersed with the Barbarities of the Inquisition, by Question and Answer: Faithfully Compiled from a Great Number of Authors in Different Languages . . . Writ Principally for Schools, and Being Intended as a Preservative from Popery and Arbitrary Power, May Be of Use in All Protestant Families* (London, 1763), 315–19; William Guthrie, *A New System of Modern Geography: or, A Geographical, Historical, and Commercial Grammar, and Present State of the Several Kingdoms of the World* (Philadelphia, 1795), 209.

War in 1865. In this period, however, deployment of these dogs in Jamaica and Haiti invigorated new emancipatory movements.

Observers agreed that the Cuban bloodhound was physically imposing, variously describing it as ‘equal to the mastiff in bulk . . . the bull-dog in courage . . . the blood-hound in scent, and . . . the grey-hound in agility’.<sup>42</sup> The exact date at which contemporaries understood it as a distinct breed is debatable, though many contemporaries clearly regarded it as such. In 1803 Robert Dallas stated:

The animal is the size of a very large hound, with ears erect, which are usually cropped at the points; the nose more pointed, but widening very much towards the after-part of the jaw. His coat, or skin, is much harder than that of most dogs, and so must be the whole structure of the body, as the severe beatings he undergoes in training would kill any other species of dog.

Dallas further complimented the strength, height, beauty and agility of the breed. Despite the legends of Spanish cruelty, British officials bought Cuban bloodhounds when unrest erupted in Jamaica in 1795 after learning that Spanish officials in Cuba had recently sent dogs to hunt runaways and the indigenous Miskitos in Central America. Advocates crassly rationalized their opportunism by drawing moral equivalences with cavalry, watchdogs and war elephants (see Plate).<sup>43</sup>

In early 1795 in Jamaica the roughly six hundred legally free Trelawny maroons had launched a revolt after prolonged provocation from whites.<sup>44</sup> The island’s governor, Balcarres, later wrote that ‘Soon after the maroon rebellion broke out’ he had sent representatives ‘to Cuba in order to procure a number of large dogs of the bloodhound breed which are used to hunt down runaway negroes’; he described them as ‘very large with a greyhound head, but a mastiff body’.<sup>45</sup> Panicked British officials, whose forces were already engaged in the Haitian

<sup>42</sup> *The Proceedings of the Governor and Assembly of Jamaica: In Regard to the Maroon Negroes* (London, 1796), p. lxxviii.

<sup>43</sup> Robert Charles Dallas, *The History of the Maroons from their Origin to the Establishment of their Chief Tribe at Sierra Leone: Including the Expedition to Cuba, for the Purpose of Procuring Spanish Chasseurs, and the State of the Island of Jamaica for the Last Ten Years, with a Succinct History of the Island Previous to that Period*, 2 vols. (London, 1803), ii, 4–18, 58–9; *Proceedings of the Governor and Assembly of Jamaica*, pp. xlvi–lxxxii.

<sup>44</sup> Kathleen Wilson, ‘The Performance of Freedom: Maroons and the Colonial Order in Eighteenth-Century Jamaica and the Atlantic Sound’, *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., lxvi, 1 (2009).

<sup>45</sup> Balcarres to Dundas, 29 Dec. 1795.



Cuban bloodhounds sent to Jamaica. From Robert Charles Dallas, *The History of the Maroons from their Origin to the Establishment of their Chief Tribe at Sierra Leone*, 2 vols. (London, 1803), ii, p. vi.



Revolution raging nearby, begged the Spanish for Cuban dogs to help forestall a similar insurrection in Jamaica. Shortly thereafter, British emissaries arrived in Havana to purchase a hundred of the animals.<sup>46</sup> Although they were warmly received, the Spanish were reluctant to send too many dogs in case of uprisings in Cuba.<sup>47</sup> Inter-imperial co-operation to avert a cascade of black resistance across the Caribbean prevailed, and though the Spanish exacted a high price for their hounds, they also sent skilled dog handlers to maximize their effectiveness.<sup>48</sup>

When the dogs arrived in December that year, their ferocity so impressed Balcarres that he hoped to breed them himself, and even considered sending them to support British forces fighting in Haiti.<sup>49</sup> In a demonstration for British officers, forty unmuzzled dogs advanced on leashes amid gunfire. Undeterred, the dogs furiously attacked the guns themselves, biting chunks out of the wooden stocks. Typically the dogs, all from Bejucal in Cuba, would be chained and muzzled to control their inclination to attack, but when coaxed the consequences could be dire. In pursuit, the Cuban *chasseurs* managed two to three hounds each, which were often preceded by faster scenting dogs to track the target. The hounds would then form a menacing circle round their target, awaiting their handler's command to attack. If not properly trained, most of these dogs could 'kill the object they pursue: they fly at the throat, or other part of a man, and never quit their hold, till they are cut in two'. Apparently only thirty-six of the dogs shipped were actually 'well-trained'.<sup>50</sup>

Some maroons declared that if 'they could kill Buccarah (that is, the whites) then [they] can kill dogs too'.<sup>51</sup> However, rumours

<sup>46</sup> Archivo General de Indias, Seville, Estado, leg. 5B (Oct.–Nov. 1795), nos. 82, 173.

<sup>47</sup> Dallas, *History of the Maroons from their Origin to the Establishment of their Chief Tribe at Sierra Leone*, ii, 20–36; Balcarres to Dundas, 29 Dec. 1795.

<sup>48</sup> Archivo General de Indias, Seville, Estado, leg. 5B (Oct.–Nov. 1795), nos. 82, 173.

<sup>49</sup> Balcarres to Dundas, 29 Dec. 1795.

<sup>50</sup> Dallas, *History of the Maroons from their Origin to the Establishment of their Chief Tribe at Sierra Leone*, ii, 56–7, 63–7, 71, 101–12, 128–9; W. J. Gardner, *A History of Jamaica from its Discovery by Christopher Columbus to the Year 1872: Including an Account of its Trade and Agriculture, Sketches of the Manners, Habits, and Customs of All Classes of its Inhabitants, and a Narrative of the Progress of Religion and Education in the Island* (London, 1873), 231–4.

<sup>51</sup> John Jaques to William Philp Perrin, 5 Jan. 1796: Derbyshire Record Office, D239/M/E/171178.

of the canine terror undoubtedly alarmed maroons and slaves alike. The hounds' 'greatest ferocity' was proved by the unprovoked chance killing of a black woman, their gnawing of a soldier's arm and their evisceration of a random cow. As the maroons developed 'the utmost dread' of the dogs, British officers placed the animals in the vanguard of advancing troops as their 'engine of war'. The dogs would continue to chase any who held out after most of the other maroons had surrendered, and in a last stand, one cornered runaway stabbed the leading dog twice before it overpowered him and chewed him by the nape of the neck until a handler intervened. In this way the British thought to expedite the cessation of hostilities.<sup>52</sup>

Recognizing the potential for metropolitan criticism of these tactics, British officials in Jamaica tried to pre-empt it by professing their restrained use of the dogs in defeating the maroons.<sup>53</sup> Their public defence insisted that dogs primarily intimidated rather than attacked.<sup>54</sup> However, as soon as word of this imperialist improvisation reached London, the king endorsed letters to Jamaica repudiating this use of dogs against people who were technically free British subjects, reminding their representatives in Jamaica that such practices were confined to the Spanish and had been 'reprobated by other civilized Nations'. Political volleys over the alleged 'public odium' caused by the use of dogs ensued.<sup>55</sup> Responding to House of Commons debates on the matter, defenders likened the orderliness of the Cuban dogs to a pack of foxhounds in the British countryside.<sup>56</sup> With their

<sup>52</sup> Balcarres to Dundas, 29 Dec. 1795; Dallas, *History of the Maroons from their Origin to the Establishment of their Chief Tribe at Sierra Leone*, ii, 169; Balcarres to Dundas, 1 Jan. 1796: TNA, WO 1/92, fos. 247–8; 'No. 2', Balcarres to Dundas, Jan. 1796: TNA, WO 1/92, fos. 285–7; Dallas, *History of the Maroons from their Origin to the Establishment of their Chief Tribe at Sierra Leone*, ii, 160–1; 'No. 1', Balcarres to Dundas, 30 Jan. 1796: TNA, WO 1/92, fos. 279–82; Dallas, *History of the Maroons from their Origin to the Establishment of their Chief Tribe at Sierra Leone*, ii, 149–52; George Wilson Bridges, *The Annals of Jamaica*, 2 vols. (1827–8; New York, 1968), ii, 237–8.

<sup>53</sup> 'No. 2', Balcarres to Dundas, Jan. 1796; Bridges, *Annals of Jamaica*, ii, 479–80.

<sup>54</sup> Dallas, *History of the Maroons from their Origin to the Establishment of their Chief Tribe at Sierra Leone*, ii, 164–70; [John Stewart], *An Account of Jamaica, and its Inhabitants: By a Gentleman* (London, 1808), 288–91.

<sup>55</sup> Dundas to Balcarres, 21 Feb. 1796: TNA, WO 1/92, fos. 271–7; Balcarres to Philip Yorke, third earl of Hardwicke, 1796: British Library (hereafter BL), Hardwicke Papers, Add. MS 35916, fos. 202–4.

<sup>56</sup> Thomas Munro, letter, 16 Aug. 1796: BL, Hardwicke Papers, Add. MS 35916, fos. 254–5; Ritvo, *Animal Estate*, ch. 2.

honour at stake through comparisons with Spanish conquerors and public 'animadversion', the officials in Jamaica justified their recent actions by jettisoning the selective group memory and pointing to the successful British use of dogs against maroons in the 1730s and 1760s, which had sustained colonial order.<sup>57</sup>

However, many British military officers were quick to criticize this use of dogs. In early 1796 General MacLeod appealed to William Wilberforce and Parliament that this practice originated with the Spanish and degraded British honour, and that he would 'stick fast [to this concern] as those dogs did to their prey'. He reminded politicians of las Casas's accounts of Spanish massacres against Jamaica's indigenous inhabitants by these same ignominious methods, which prompted the prime minister, William Pitt, to state unequivocally that he had not condoned the use of dogs.<sup>58</sup> A vigorous public debate over whether the dogs were indeed 'revolting to humanity' filled the newspapers.<sup>59</sup> Wilberforce later recounted that his staunch abolitionism was animated by having 'heard the bay of the bloodhound'.<sup>60</sup> Yet the prolific pro-slavery writer Bryan Edwards vigorously argued in favour of canine attacks, and Parliament's pro-slavery lobby mockingly expressed a desire to chase Wilberforce with the hounds.<sup>61</sup> However, a century increasingly marred by new bouts of barking dogs and agonizing cries only multiplied the parallel chorus of anti-slavery critics.<sup>62</sup>

In 1803, during the final independence struggle of the Haitian Revolution, Cuban breeders again sold hundreds of hounds to

<sup>57</sup> Balcarres to Hardwicke, 17 July 1796: BL, Hardwicke Papers, Add. MS 35916, fos. 207–8; *Proceedings of the Governor and Assembly of Jamaica*, pp. xlvi–lxvi.

<sup>58</sup> For the debate on General MacLeod's motion respecting the employment of bloodhounds in the war against the maroons, 21 Mar. 1796, see W. Cobbett, *The Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803*, 36 vols. (London, 1806–20), xxxii, cols. 921–9; 'Parliamentary Intelligence', *Times*, 27 Feb. 1796, 1; *Universal Magazine* (Mar. 1796), 219; *Monthly Mirror* (Apr. 1796), 376.

<sup>59</sup> 'Mr. Pitt', *Times*, 1 Mar. 1796, 3; 'Blood Hounds in Jamaica', *Times*, 22 Mar. 1796, 2; 'The Maroon War', *Times*, 8 July 1796, 3.

<sup>60</sup> John Campbell Colquhoun, *William Wilberforce: His Friends and his Times* (London, 1866), 252.

<sup>61</sup> *English Review*, xxvi (1796), 268–9; *An Impartial Report of the Debates that Occur in the Two Houses of Parliament, in the Course of the Sixth Session of the Seventeenth Parliament of Great Britain, Called to Meet at Westminster, on Thursday the 29th of October, 1795*, iii (London, 1796), 480–9.

<sup>62</sup> T. S. Winn, *Emancipation: or, Practical Advice to British Slave-Holder. With Suggestions for the General Improvement of West India Affairs* (London, 1824), 13–16.

the French to aid their fight against the black revolutionaries. White women colonists reportedly welcomed the disembarking dogs with laughter, flowers and kisses, despite their awareness of the gruesome executions they would soon perpetrate.<sup>63</sup> Canine squads regularly tracked rebels through the forests, and having a black prisoner ‘descended into the arena’ became slang for his having been devoured by dogs.<sup>64</sup> Neighbours complained, not because of the inhumanity, but because the sound of the attacking dogs and the dying prisoners was so loud. French critics correlated such brutalities against black insurgents with Spanish atrocities against the Taino in the same region three hundred years earlier, but the dogs and the French were too few to reverse the tide of independence that had risen from the largest and most successful slave revolt in history.<sup>65</sup>

After declaring independence in 1804, the revolutionary leader Jean-Jacques Dessalines compared Haiti’s struggles to the Spanish conquests of the Taino, saying, ‘for a second time in the history of our unhappy isle, dogs were feeding on its children’.<sup>66</sup> These vicious actions appalled many observers, including the legendary British abolitionist Thomas Clarkson, who averred that the revolutionaries’ violence was morally negligible considering that it was in response to French barbarism.<sup>67</sup> In 1819 Henri Christophe, a later leader of Haiti, told Tsar Alexander that hounds were a hallmark of French cruelty.<sup>68</sup> However, on this occasion black humanity triumphed and recovered ‘Ayiti’, the Taino place name, as the new nation’s

<sup>63</sup> Antoine Métral, *Histoire de l’expédition des Français à Saint-Domingue, sous le consulat de Napoléon Bonaparte* (Paris, 1825), 182–3.

<sup>64</sup> Philippe R. Girard, *The Slaves Who Defeated Napoléon: Toussaint Louverture and the Haitian War of Independence, 1801–1804* (Tuscaloosa, 2011), 235–46; Ada Ferrer, *Freedom’s Mirror: Cuba and Haiti in the Age of Revolution* (New York, 2014), 157–84.

<sup>65</sup> Métral, *Histoire de l’expédition des Français à Saint-Domingue*, 181–4, 197, 213.

<sup>66</sup> Julia Gaffield (ed.), *The Haitian Declaration of Independence: Creation, Context, and Legacy* (Charlottesville, 2016); Girard, *Slaves Who Defeated Napoléon*, 235–46.

<sup>67</sup> Quoted in James McQueen, *The West India Colonies: The Calumnies and Misrepresentations Circulated against Them by the Edinburgh Review, Mr Clarkson, Mr Cropper, &c., Examined and Refuted* (London, 1824), 179–80; Thomas Clarkson, *Thoughts on the Necessity of Improving the Condition of the Slaves in the British Colonies, with a View to their Ultimate Emancipation; and on the Practicability, the Safety, and the Advantages of the Latter Measure*, 4th edn, corrected (London, 1824), 26.

<sup>68</sup> *Henry Christophe and Thomas Clarkson: A Correspondence*, ed. Earl Leslie Griggs and Clifford H. Prater (Berkeley, 1952), 132–4.

name.<sup>69</sup> But, despite its influential testimony to black capability and the depravity of slavery, Haitian independence left a market devoid of sugar and coffee that nineteenth-century Cuba filled by intensifying slave production.<sup>70</sup>

Although slave dogs inflamed emancipatory flashpoints during the Age of Revolutions, travellers to nineteenth-century Cuba noted that they remained a key preserver of racial order on the island.<sup>71</sup> Several Cuban slave-catching dog packs became 'legendary for their ferocity', one overseer near Havana even having his dogs bite slaves' genitals.<sup>72</sup> Visitors to the island surmised that the dogs were conditioned to hold anti-black feeling from puppyhood. One traveller observed that Cuban trainers forced black men to abuse the dogs daily by whipping them while they were chained to the ground and simultaneously inciting the dogs to bite the men in reprisal. When the dogs had acquired 'a perfect hatred of [their] tormentor', the black trainer ran to the woods and dared the dogs to chase him. The observer assumed that significant violence came to a 'human victim', concluding that the canine's social conditioning was a common 'business' among Cubans whose livelihood derived from catching slaves and selling slave hounds.<sup>73</sup> The British consul-general in Havana even noted that every night some slaves were locked in a 'barracoon . . . guarded by dogs and armed men'.<sup>74</sup>

The Cuban ex-slave and abolitionist Juan Francisco Manzano recounted surviving an attack, saying, 'Scarcely had I run a mile . . . when two dogs that were following us, fell upon me; one taking hold of the left side of my face pierced it through, and the other

<sup>69</sup> David Patrick Geggus, *Haitian Revolutionary Studies* (Bloomington, 2002), ch. 13.

<sup>70</sup> *Freedom's Journal*, i, 14 (15 June 1827); ii, 37 (12 Dec. 1828). On the impact of Haitian independence on Cuban sugar and coffee production, see Ferrer, *Freedom's Mirror*, 12–14, 81–3.

<sup>71</sup> Maturin M. Ballou, *Due South: or, Cuba Past and Present* (New York, 1893), 270; 'Slavery in Cuba', *Church Missionary Intelligencer: A Monthly Journal of Missionary Information*, vii (Jan. 1857), 12.

<sup>72</sup> Lorna V. Williams, 'A Cuban Slave Hunter's Journal: Francisco Estevez's "Diario del Rancheador" (1837–1842)', *Afro-Hispanic Review*, x, 3 (Sept. 1991), 62; Manuel Barcia, *Seeds of Insurrection: Domination and Resistance on Western Cuban Plantations, 1808–1848* (Baton Rouge, 2008), 96–101.

<sup>73</sup> 'Notes on Cuba: By a Physician', *Littell's Living Age*, xvi (Jan.–Mar. 1848), 489.

<sup>74</sup> Alexander Graham Dunlop, Esq., 'Examination about Slaves in Cuba', 20 Mar. 1876: National Library of Scotland, Dunlop Papers, MS 9255.

lacerated my left thigh and leg . . . which wounds are open yet'.<sup>75</sup> Nevertheless, like innumerable black victims, he continued to resist. Runaways sometimes succeeded by counter-attacking the dogs themselves; in the 1830s an attack on some Cuban maroons resulted in the complete loss of a dog pack.<sup>76</sup> One strategy among Cuban runaways was to strip off all their clothing when the dogs approached so that they would find only the clothes and be unable to track the naked fugitive.<sup>77</sup> Similar strategies among slaves in the American South resisted dehumanization and proved the humanity of black people to a new generation of North American anti-slavery activists who opposed the cruelties of this widening use of canine biopower, which facilitated the nineteenth-century growth of 'second slavery' cotton production in the South.<sup>78</sup>

#### IV

##### CHASING PROFITS INTO THE AMERICAN SOUTH: SLAVE DOGS AS SECTIONALISM

The most extensively documented deployment of slave hounds, which also provoked the most vitriolic national divisions, occurred in the antebellum American South and built upon Caribbean foundations. As early as 1790, newspapers in the North were protesting the occasional use of slave dogs.<sup>79</sup> However, later spectacular stories circulating from Jamaica and Haiti also prompted curiosity among American slaveholders about this form of white power.<sup>80</sup> By the 1820s slaves and dogs were fighting in the South, for example, when a runaway in Georgia was severely wounded by hounds after killing one of his assailants with a dagger.<sup>81</sup> The bishop of Charleston was accosted by 'dogs that were set to guard against the negroes',

<sup>75</sup> Juan F[rancisco] M[anzano], *Poems by a Slave in the Island of Cuba, Recently Liberated . . . With the History of the Early Life of the Negro Poet, Written by Himself*, trans. R. R. Madden (London, 1840), 69.

<sup>76</sup> Barcia, *Seeds of Insurrection*, 60–8, 96–7.

<sup>77</sup> Miguel Barnet, *Biografía de un Cimarrón* (Havana, 1966), 47, 196–7.

<sup>78</sup> Dale W. Tomich (ed.), *The Politics of the Second Slavery* (Albany, 2016).

<sup>79</sup> *Newport Herald*, 16 Dec. 1790, 1; *New-Jersey Journal*, 9 Feb. 1791, 2.

<sup>80</sup> *Maryland Herald*, 4 May 1803, 3; *Daily Advertiser*, 18 Feb. 1804, 2; *Richmond Enquirer*, 10 Feb. 1831, 3.

<sup>81</sup> *New York Commercial Advertiser*, 8 June 1827.

following a trip to Haiti in the 1830s.<sup>82</sup> The use of dogs increased during that decade, especially with the Second Seminole War in Florida (1835–42).<sup>83</sup> The first recorded sale of Cuban dogs into the United States came with this conflict, when the US military apparently purchased three such dogs for \$151.72 each, though in consequence Northerners lamented that ‘the American flag was disgraced with the importation of blood-hounds’.<sup>84</sup>

Yet, despite a notable reputation for ‘tracking and pursuing negroes’ throughout the Caribbean, these Cuban bloodhounds received mixed reviews on their efficiency in fighting the Seminole nation.<sup>85</sup> Much of the criticism surrounded their inability to track efficiently in the swamp, a difficulty of which many slaves were also aware, and which they exploited to confuse the pursuing hounds.<sup>86</sup> Some observers believed the Seminoles smelled differently from the ‘negroes’, confounding a supposed key feature of the dog’s scenting power.<sup>87</sup> However, none of the reports doubted the dogs’ ferocity. Noticing that the Cuban *chasseurs* fed the animals ‘bloody meat’ to prepare them for military service, some local historians later harboured suspicions that the dogs were actually imported into Florida solely for the purpose of slave hunting, despite their official use for suppression of the Seminole insurrection.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Bishop England to Dr Cullen, 1 Aug. 1834: Philadelphia Archdiocesan Historical Research Center, Transcripts from the Irish College in Rome, MC 53, box 1, folder 2, fo. 157. Our thanks to Julia Gaffield for this source.

<sup>83</sup> ‘The Bloodhounds’, *Portsmouth Journal*, 29 Feb. 1840, 2.

<sup>84</sup> Theophilus F. Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canon with the Second Dragoons (Second United States Cavalry): An Authentic Account of Service in Florida, Mexico, Virginia, and the Indian Country, including the Personal Recollections of Prominent Officers* (New York, 1875), 44; William Goodell, *Slavery and Anti-Slavery: A History of the Great Struggle in Both Hemispheres* (New York, 1852), 270–1.

<sup>85</sup> Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canon with the Second Dragoons*, 44.

<sup>86</sup> *Reminiscences of Levi Coffin, the Reputed President of the Underground Railroad: Being a Brief History of the Labors of a Lifetime in Behalf of the Slave, with the Stories of Numerous Fugitives, Who Gained their Freedom through his Instrumentality, and Many Other Incidents*, 2nd edn (Cincinnati, 1880), 254–5; Anna Dickinson, *A Tour of Reconstruction: Travel Letters of 1875*, ed. Matthew J. Gallman (Lexington, 2011), 111.

<sup>87</sup> Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canon with the Second Dragoons*, 44; Minnie Moore-Willson, *The Seminoles of Florida* (Philadelphia, 1896), 31.

<sup>88</sup> Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canon with the Second Dragoons*, 44; Moore-Willson, *Seminole of Florida*, 10, 30–1; Joshua R. Giddings, *The Exiles of Florida: The Crimes Committed by our Government against the Maroons, Who Fled from South Carolina and Other Slave States, Seeking Protection under Spanish Laws* (Columbus, 1858), 265–73.

Either way, in the American South the Cuban bloodhound became widely popular as a benchmark of quality, as ‘Slavery found a use for these terrible dogs, and the negroes feared them more than the lash or musket’.<sup>89</sup> Along with other entry points on the eastern seaboard, fierce bloodhounds reputed to be from Cuba appeared in the Mississippi valley as early as 1841, perhaps introduced separately from those in Florida.<sup>90</sup> Their notoriety grew with the circulation of mass publications covering topics from *las Casas* to the Jamaican maroons and beyond that depicted attack hounds as antagonists in a hemispheric tragedy.<sup>91</sup> Planters sought reinforcements not only to quell unrest and catch runaways, but to manage slaves’ daily lives. With the Cuban bloodhounds’ supposed natural antipathy towards blacks, and with pack tactics adapted from *chasseurs*, the era of canine biopower had arrived in the American South.

The importation of these dogs changed the business of slave catching in the region, as their deployment and reputation grew rapidly throughout the 1840s and, as in Cuba, specialized dog handlers became professionalized. Newspapers advertised slave hunters who claimed to possess the ‘Finest dogs for catching negroes’ in their areas.<sup>92</sup> Trackers interbred Cuban breeds with suitable local dogs, helping to facilitate slave hunting’s expansion into a profitable venture throughout the South.<sup>93</sup> The ‘pure’ Cuban bloodhound remained the quintessential symbol of quality for black domination in the antebellum era, and ownership of Cuban bloodhound lines guaranteed business.<sup>94</sup> Like their Cuban predecessors, American trainers positioned black fugitives as the ultimate adversary, while, intimately

<sup>89</sup> ‘Bloodhounds’, *Our Boys and Girls*, 12 Mar. 1870, 169–71.

<sup>90</sup> Joseph Hazard to Isaac Hazard, 11 Jan. 1841: Rhode Island Historical Society, Manuscripts Division, Isaac P. Hazard Papers, MS 483 sg 12, ser. 1, box 3, folder 1. Our thanks to Seth Rockman for this source.

<sup>91</sup> *The Penny Cyclopaedia of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge*, 30 vols. (London, 1833–58), v, 7–11.

<sup>92</sup> *Boston Evening Transcript*, 7 Aug. 1862. This selection quotes an advertisement from the *West Tennessee Democrat*, 2 Mar. 1853.

<sup>93</sup> One publication theorized that the ‘negro dogs’ of the American South were a cross between the ‘Spanish bloodhound with the common hounds’: ‘Slave Hunting’, *Times*, 10 Sept. 1857, 5.

<sup>94</sup> A former slave owner claimed that the postbellum hounds were less fierce than the original Cuban dogs, having been crossed with ‘deer hounds’: ‘No Real Bloodhounds: Fierce Manhunters Belong to Past Generation’, *Meriden Morning Record and Republican*, 10 Sept. 1900.



familiar with this threat, slaves kept a record of these dogs in their oral traditions.<sup>95</sup>

As slave hunting intensified, so did perceptions of the peculiar institution's brutality on both sides of the Atlantic.<sup>96</sup> When Charles Dickens erroneously assumed that American slavery was 'more humane' than its Cuban counterpart owing to the former's absence of racialized dog attacks, an ex-slave, William Craft, publicly corrected his error, stating, 'I have frequently seen the bloodhounds on the chase of slaves, and have seen the poor trembling victims . . . limping through the streets'.<sup>97</sup>

Indeed, tactics in the American South closely mirrored those of their Cuban predecessors as local slave catchers became suppliers of biopower indispensable to slavery's profitability.<sup>98</sup> Responding to job demand, many realized that capturing slaves was a potentially lucrative profession. No set price existed for apprehending slaves and it was left largely to the discretion of slave hunters, who, 'Charging by the day and mile . . . were often illiterate, non-slaveholding whites who could earn what was for them a sizeable amount — ten to fifty dollars — for bringing back a runaway'.<sup>99</sup> Fees also varied upon the nature of the pursuit, capture and punishment. With the coming of this era, propertyless, non-slaveholding whites could now bargain over enslaved bodies. Unable to display their wealth or masculinity at the auction blocks, slave catchers could build those privileges elsewhere, along with a sense of inclusion in whiteness and racial superiority.<sup>100</sup>

One ex-slave, William Parker, having dodged bloodhounds during his escape, noted that slave hunters were most

<sup>95</sup> See the slave narrative of James Brown: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Wilson Library, Southern Historical Collection, Ernest Seeman Papers, Collection 4031, ser. 1.2, 1930–75, folder 45; journal of D. J. Barber, 1859–64, 75: Huntington Library, Special Collections, MS HM 68483.

<sup>96</sup> *Sketches of Slave Life: or, Illustrations of the 'Peculiar Institution'*. By Peter Randolph, an Emancipated Slave (Boston, 1855), 39, 47, 65, 80.

<sup>97</sup> Charles Dickens, 'North American Slavery', *Household Words: A Weekly Journal*, cxxx (18 Sept. 1852), 1; 'Hunting Slaves with Bloodhounds', in *Five Hundred Thousand Strokes for Freedom: A Series of Anti-Slavery Tracts, of Which Half a Million Are Now First Issued by the Friends of the Negro* (1853; New York, 1969), no. 59.

<sup>98</sup> Sally E. Hadden, *Slave Patrols: Law and Violence in Virginia and the Carolinas* (Cambridge, Mass., 2001), 10, 80, 117.

<sup>99</sup> Franklin and Schwenger, *Runaway Slaves*, 156.

<sup>100</sup> 'Hunting Slaves with Bloodhounds'; David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (London, 1991), ch. 3.

dangerous when collaborating with government officials. Despite their 'nefarious' reputations, Parker stated that trackers 'consorted with constables, police-officers, aldermen, and even with learned members of the legal profession'. Such co-operation ensured that all parties could 'pocket the reward'.<sup>101</sup> William Craft added that the 'business' of slave catching was 'openly carried on, assisted by advertisements'.<sup>102</sup> As tracking reinforced slavery's social and economic expansion, it became a viable livelihood for many poor white southerners.

Whites who pursued runaways celebrated chases as adventurous escapades. The Louisiana slave owner Bennett Barrow portrayed his own pursuits as if he were hunting wild game, almost equating his experiences of tracking foxes, deer and bobcats with those of tracking enslaved people. An avid hunter, Barrow's pride lay in the litters of puppies he trained for hunting, and in his diary he lauded his 'Fifteen of the best blooded hound pups I ever had or saw' and tracked their health and survival rates in subsequent entries.<sup>103</sup> He rarely wrote of his slaves in such favourable terms. While fox hunting, Barrow noticed a runaway slave and immediately redirected his attention to the new prey by putting 'the hounds after him', revealing how dogs sometimes occupied multiple functions for securing and preserving traditional notions of rural white masculinity.<sup>104</sup> By hunting enslaved men, he fixed their marginal status in the southern hierarchy and stripped them of masculine qualities reserved for white men such as choice and mobility.<sup>105</sup> Such occasions reveal how black bodies were dehumanized through slavery's literal animalization.

The relationship between trackers and slaves became intricately systematized, and abuses by trained dogs began to appear more frequently as a common theme in antebellum print culture. While Barrow used his dogs to hunt both slaves and wildlife, James Williams, a fugitive slave from Alabama,

<sup>101</sup> William Parker, 'The Freedman's Story, Part II', *Atlantic Monthly*, xvii (Mar. 1866), 281.

<sup>102</sup> 'Hunting Slaves with Bloodhounds'.

<sup>103</sup> *Plantation Life in the Florida Parishes of Louisiana, 1836-1846, as Reflected in the Diary of Bennett H. Barrow*, ed. Edwin Adams Davis (New York, 1943), 111.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 165, 179, 224-5.

<sup>105</sup> Nicolas W. Proctor, *Bathed in Blood: Hunting and Mastery in the Old South* (Charlottesville, 2002).

exposed how the owners of other southern bloodhounds specifically conditioned their dogs to target slaves:

The dogs are trained to this service when young. A negro is directed to go into the woods and secure himself upon a tree. When sufficient time has elapsed for doing this, the hound is put upon his track. The blacks are compelled to worry them until they make them their implacable enemies; and it is common to meet with dogs which will take no notice of whites, though entire strangers, but will suffer no blacks beside the house servants to enter the yard.<sup>106</sup>

This training method, similar to Cuban techniques, was intrinsic to anti-black conditioning of dogs, encouraging intimidation and pursuit to curtail slave mobility and projecting a lower value onto slaves than that of the dogs that hunted them.

The violence of capture sometimes proved lethal. Williams reported that he was made to participate in the especially demoralizing activity of following the dogs as they searched for runaways. He noted that one runaway named Little John succumbed to being ‘dreadfully mangled and gashed by the teeth of the dogs’, following which the victim’s own mother concluded that his horrific, dehumanizing death ‘was better for poor John than to live in slavery’.<sup>107</sup>

Daily struggle afflicted those who did not flee the plantations. Slaves testified that the masters’ allocation of scarce resources between canines and chattels represented another form of interspecies conflict. Some slaveholders debased the sustenance of slaves by prioritizing the needs of dogs. One ex-slave, John Andrew Jackson, recalled his experience in South Carolina competing for food against the plantation’s mastiff, Old Rip. His mistress gave slaves only a dry ‘peck of corn and a pint of salt’, expressly stating that she would never ‘give the niggers any meat’. In contrast, Jackson noted that Old Rip was ‘fed with the meat that we would have given anything to possess’. This treatment of the dog symbolized how masters further demoralized enslaved people by weaponizing hunger in favour of their non-human labour. Such a juxtaposition exemplified the fact that slaves were sometimes treated worse than a dog.<sup>108</sup>

<sup>106</sup> *Narrative of James Williams, an American Slave, Who Was for Several Years a Driver on a Cotton Plantation in Alabama* (New York, 1838), p. xv.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>108</sup> John Andrew Jackson, *The Experience of a Slave in South Carolina* (London, 1862), 20.

Slaves who personally witnessed the activities of trackers (both canine and human) lived with memories full of ‘nigger dogs’ and their overwhelming terror. One ex-slave, Bert Luster, explained, ‘Seem like I can hear dem “nigger hounds” barking now. You see whenever a darky would get a permit to go off and wouldn’t come back dey would put de “nigger hounds” on his trail and run dat nigger down’.<sup>109</sup> For some enslaved people, the ownership of bloodhounds determined the difference between a master who was ‘good to dey slaves’ against those who ‘treated dey slaves mighty bad’. Another ex-slave, Sam McAllum, claimed that his owners were comparatively good because they never ‘put nigger dogs’ on them.<sup>110</sup> Although some slaves themselves had companion animals, slaveholding states often criminalized black dog ownership on the grounds that it constituted possession of a weapon.<sup>111</sup>

Postbellum reminiscences from white southerners, on the other hand, were prone to downplay the ferocity of slave catching, claiming that fugitives were only trailed and rarely attacked. Listing breeds that were less daunting sometimes helped to deflect criticism of the practice. After the Cuban bloodhound gained notoriety, white southerners claimed that the ‘ordinary foxhound, with very little training, could be taught to trail negroes’.<sup>112</sup> Although the narratives of former slaves rarely comment on the dogs’ pedigree, however, some sources reveal that southern hounds were uniquely vicious. Solomon Northup, famous for recounting his bondage in *Twelve Years a Slave*, postulated that these canines were a ‘kind of blood-hound, but a far more savage breed than is found in the Northern States’.<sup>113</sup>

Nature, however, provided runaway slaves with a repertoire of defences. Like their Caribbean contemporaries, Africans and

<sup>109</sup> Bert Luster, in *Till Freedom Cried Out: Memories of Texas Slave Life*, ed. T. Lindsay Baker and Julie P. Baker (College Station, 1997), 50.

<sup>110</sup> *The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography*, ed. George P. Rawick, 19 vols. (Westport, Conn., 1972), ix, pt 4, 1354.

<sup>111</sup> Theodore Brantner Wilson, *The Black Codes of the South* (Tuscaloosa, 1965).

<sup>112</sup> Joel Chandler Harris, ‘The Colonel’s “Nigger Dog”’, *Scribner’s Magazine*, xviii (Dec. 1895); Henry Thweatt Owen to Captain J. C. Griffin, 1 Apr. 1887: Library of Virginia, Personal Papers Collection, 28154, Henry Thweatt Owen Papers, 1822–1929, ser. 2, folder 4.

<sup>113</sup> Solomon Northup, *Twelve Years a Slave: Narrative of Solomon Northup, a Citizen of New-York, Kidnapped in Washington City in 1841, and Rescued in 1853* (Auburn, NY, 1853), 136.

African Americans in the South studied concoctions of pungent plants and orally transmitted their knowledge of evasion strategies across generations. Historians have analysed how slaves created innovative herbal medicines throughout the diaspora to combat disease and complement their religious rituals, though few have examined how these were used to confuse the dogs' sense of smell.<sup>114</sup> For example, John Warren, a slave from Tennessee, rubbed red pepper on his heels when dogs pursued. Edward Hicks rubbed onions on his body, and later buried himself in earth to evade the dogs.<sup>115</sup> L. B. Barner, an ex-slave from Texas whose father had been a recidivist runaway, said that dogs would patrol the paths between plantations at night to 'tree' or attack wandering slaves. In response, slaves would rub pepper on their feet, knowing it 'would go up the dogs' nose so that they could not track them'.<sup>116</sup> Others claimed that they could throw them off the scent by sprinkling 'a liddle tuppentine' or a particular kind of mud on their feet.<sup>117</sup> Some slaves pragmatically used the surrounding wildlife to combat their domesticated adversaries. Octave Johnson, who sometimes covered his trail with the scent of rabbits, calculated that alligators in the Louisiana swamps 'preferred dog flesh to personal flesh'. He once led a pursuing pack to waterways deep in the bayou and watched with relief as a group of alligators devoured six dogs.<sup>118</sup> Aside from supplying these reptilian assistants, water was also a useful element for confusing the hounds' sensory powers. Black folk music often celebrated slaves fleeing dogs and wading through waters to avoid detection.<sup>119</sup> Folklorists propose that the famous spiritual 'Wade in the Water'

<sup>114</sup> Sharla M. Fett, *Working Cures: Healing, Health, and Power on Southern Slave Plantations* (Chapel Hill, 2002); Karol K. Weaver, *Medical Revolutionaries: The Enslaved Healers of Eighteenth-Century Saint Domingue* (Urbana, 2006); Judith A. Carney and Richard Nicholas Rosomoff, *In the Shadow of Slavery: Africa's Botanical Legacy in the Atlantic World* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2009).

<sup>115</sup> Drew, *North-Side View of Slavery*, 185–6, 260–6.

<sup>116</sup> L. B. Barner/Lewis Bonner, in *Till Freedom Cried Out*, ed. Baker and Baker, 3–4.

<sup>117</sup> *American Slave*, ed. Rawick, ix, pt 3, 94–5; ii, 262.

<sup>118</sup> James McKaye, *The Mastership and its Fruits: The Emancipated Slave Face to Face with his Old Master. A Supplemental Report to Hon. Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War* (New York, 1864), 6–12.

<sup>119</sup> Langston Hughes and Leadbelly, 'Old Riley', in *The Glory of Negro History*, written and narrated by Langston Hughes (Folkways Records album FC 7752, 1955), pt 1, 'The Struggle', record side 1, track 11; Kevin Dawson, *Undercurrents of Power: Aquatic Culture in the African Diaspora* (Philadelphia, 2018), 20–2, 38.

reminded runaway slaves to utilize streams to eliminate their bodily scent.<sup>120</sup>

Thus, by manipulating natural resources to hide in inhospitable terrains, black fugitives could withhold their own bodies from being used for their masters' gain.<sup>121</sup> Thousands who successfully evaded the dogs followed the paths to freedom, both northwards and southwards, as refugees from a country that codified their bondage with stories that would transfix abolitionist audiences. The southern bloodhound's vicious reputation, founded in part on that of its Cuban ancestors, soon permeated a new narrative on slave hunting: that of abolitionist discourses surrounding the iniquities of antebellum slavery.

## V

### NORTH AMERICAN REFUGEES

As the use of dogs imported from the Caribbean spread across the American South, runaways fled the country, drawing slave hound conflicts across more national borders.<sup>122</sup> Dogs pursued slaves fleeing southwards to Mexico along a freedom path across the expanse of Texas that has often been overshadowed by the northward Underground Railroad.<sup>123</sup> The antebellum United States and Mexico (which had technically abolished slavery in 1829) collided over the expansion of slavery and the use of hounds.<sup>124</sup> Before the Mexican–American War of 1846–8 a prominent Mexican newspaper critiqued the Conspiracy of Texas and warned of the westward march of US slaveholding,

<sup>120</sup> Arthur C. Jones, *Wade in the Water: The Wisdom of the Spirituals*, 3rd edn (Boulder, 2005), 54.

<sup>121</sup> Mart A. Stewart, *What Nature Suffers to Groe: Life, Labor, and Landscape on the Georgia Coast, 1680–1920* (Athens, Ga., 2002), 148–75.

<sup>122</sup> Cheryl Janifer LaRoche, *Free Black Communities and the Underground Railroad: The Geography of Resistance* (Urbana, 2013); Claude H. Nolen, *African American Southerners in Slavery, Civil War, and Reconstruction* (Jefferson, NC, 2001), 52.

<sup>123</sup> Vito Alessio Robles, *Coahuila y Texas, desde la consumación de la independencia hasta el tratado de paz de Guadalupe Hidalgo*, 2nd edn (Mexico City, 1979), 302; Sean Kelley, “‘Mexico in his Head’: Slavery and the Texas–Mexico Border, 1810–1860”, *Journal of Social History*, xxxvii, 3 (Spring 2004); Alice L. Baumgartner, “‘The Line of Positive Safety’: Borders and Boundaries in the Rio Grande Valley, 1848–1880”, *Journal of American History*, ci, 4 (Mar. 2015), 1111 n. 10.

<sup>124</sup> Paul D. Lack, *The Texas Revolutionary Experience: A Political and Social History, 1835–1836* (College Station, 1992), 239.

ultimately asking if Mexicans must soon ‘convert ourselves into mastiffs or dogs of prey to protect a new nation of slave traffickers’.<sup>125</sup> Runaways were arriving in northern Mexico ‘constantly’. Perhaps a dozen a month successfully evaded ‘every nasty form of four-footed . . . devil’. Many fugitive groups thrived and were assimilated in northern Mexico.<sup>126</sup> A few refugees even hailed from South Carolina and Georgia, having fled to temporary liberty among the Seminoles of Florida, survived dog warfare and displacement to present-day Oklahoma, and migrated southwards to better prospects in Mexico.<sup>127</sup>

Since the Mexican government was allowing them to stay, Texan slave catchers threatened to cross the border illegally to enforce American property claims on black bodies. News stories on runaways fleeing for Mexico appeared frequently in Texas newspapers, and local trackers were eager to profit from attacking them.<sup>128</sup> The short-lived republic of Texas (1836–46) even enacted specific compensation and laws for slave trackers, provisions that persisted after annexation by the United States.<sup>129</sup> Slaves’ southward escapes beyond the reach of slave hounds became such a problem that the US minister to Mexico, James Gadsden, a southern planter, unsuccessfully tried to pressure Mexico into introducing a fugitive slave clause into the treaty that ceded a region of present-day southern Arizona and New Mexico to the United States. This westward territorial acquisition, known as the Gadsden Purchase, which seemed a victory for promoters of the expansion of slavery, had the policy fingerprints of the secretary of war, Jefferson Davis, future president of the Confederacy.<sup>130</sup>

<sup>125</sup> ‘Historia de la Conspiración de Tejas’, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 26 July 1845, 2–3. Caribbean slave hounds were well known in Mexico: ‘Esterior’, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 18 Dec. 1850, 1.

<sup>126</sup> Frederick Law Olmsted, *A Journey through Texas: or, A Saddle-Trip on the Southwestern Frontier* (New York, 1857), 324–7.

<sup>127</sup> Giddings, *Exiles of Florida*, 331–8.

<sup>128</sup> Olmsted, *Journey through Texas*, 324–7; Giddings, *Exiles of Florida*, 337.

<sup>129</sup> ‘Supplementary to “An Act Regulating the Sale of Runaway Slaves”’, in *Laws Passed by the Eighth Congress of the Republic of Texas* (Houston, 1844), 38–9; Randolph B. Campbell (ed.), *The Laws of Slavery in Texas: Historical Documents and Essays*, comp. William S. Pugsley and Marilyn P. Duncan (Austin, 2010), 95–104.

<sup>130</sup> Charles Lempriere, *Notes in Mexico, in 1861 and 1862* (London, 1862), 6; Brian Schoen, *The Fragile Fabric of Union: Cotton, Federal Politics, and the Global Origins of the Civil War* (Baltimore, 2009).

However, the flight of fugitive slaves who followed the North Star to Canada represented a greater portion of this transnational drama. Owing in part to abolitionists like Wilberforce and Clarkson, British emancipation, which became effective in 1834, superseded the curtailment of slavery that had begun in present-day Ontario in 1793.<sup>131</sup> Overall, at least forty thousand black refugees arrived in Canada, having evaded the dogs that were literally at their heels. There they wielded their new-found freedoms to publicize the cruelties of slavery and to influence abolitionist sentiment. In this mirror Americans could see festering sectionalist practices in which Northerners increasingly refused to be complicit, particularly after the divisive Fugitive Slave Act of 1850.<sup>132</sup>

One abolitionist who operated in Canada, a former slave, was Henry Bibb from Kentucky.<sup>133</sup> Once safely over the border, he became a community leader and published the first black Canadian newspaper, *Voice of the Fugitive*.<sup>134</sup> Bibb described his numerous encounters with attack dogs:

We heard the yelping of blood hounds, a great way off, but they seemed to come nearer . . . We thought after awhile that they must be on our track; we listened attentively . . . We knew it was no use for us to undertake to escape . . . we heard the voice of a man hissing on the dogs. After awhile we saw the hounds coming in full speed on our track . . . The shrill yelling of the savage blood hounds as they drew nigh made the woods echo . . . The dogs were soon at our heels, and we were compelled to stop, or be torn to pieces by them.

Later, Bibb tried and failed to outrun tracking hounds by stealing his master's mule. He said of slaveholders that 'if heaven was made up of such . . . persons, it could not be filled with love to all mankind'. He finally arrived in 1842, saying, 'I had heard that Canada was a land of liberty, somewhere in the North . . . over

<sup>131</sup> Natasha L. Henry, *Emancipation Day: Celebrating Freedom in Canada* (Toronto, 2010).

<sup>132</sup> Karolyn Smardz Frost, *I've Got a Home in Glory Land: A Lost Tale of the Underground Railroad. The True Story of Two Runaway Slaves Whose Flight to Freedom Changed History* (New York, 2007), 180–1, 280–1.

<sup>133</sup> Afua Ava Pamela Cooper, "Doing Battle in Freedom's Cause": Henry Bibb, Abolitionism, Race Uplift, and Black Manhood, 1842–1854' (University of Toronto Ph.D. thesis, 2000).

<sup>134</sup> *African American Slave Narratives: An Anthology*, ed. Sterling Lecater Bland, 3 vols. (Westport, Conn, 2001), ii, 41–3.



which waved freedom's flag, defended by the British Government'.<sup>135</sup>

Even black folk songs celebrated the promise of Canadian freedom from slave dogs, as Harriet Tubman apparently sang:

Farewell, ole Master, don't think hard of me,  
I'm traveling to Canada, where all de slaves are free.  
De hounds are baying on my track,  
Ole Master comes behind,  
Resolved that he will bring me back  
Before I cross the line . . .<sup>136</sup>

Mary Shadd, the first black female editor in North America, ran the refugee newspaper *Provincial Freeman*.<sup>137</sup> It happily reported in 1855 that their community in Toronto was enjoying significant growth 'directly from the South', the 'fugitive slave bill and bloodhounds . . . notwithstanding'.<sup>138</sup> Furthermore, the newspaper rebuffed possible US territorial acquisitions in Canada, insisting that 'The baying of the bloodhounds shall never echo in our woods . . .'.<sup>139</sup>

Escaping the bloodhound's barking and Canadian safety were unifying commonalities for the growing black population, and scathing reprimands to American readers.<sup>140</sup> The 'liberty-loving and righteous spirit of equality and brotherhood over Canada' contrasted with the 'well fed bloodhounds, and hell-deserving Marshals' of the United States, said the *Provincial Freeman*.<sup>141</sup> Slaves did not need a newspaper to understand this. John Little and his wife fled Tennessee and kept only steps ahead of the dogs throughout their harrowing journey. Finally, in Canada, their exclamations of 'God save the Queen!' emphasized US hypocrisy. Many other fugitives who managed to cross the border broadcast incriminating stories of dogs enforcing daily work in Virginia, chasing runaways across Maryland, and

<sup>135</sup> *Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Henry Bibb, an American Slave* (New York, 1849), 128–30, 121–6, 28, 51.

<sup>136</sup> Sarah Hopkins Bradford, *Harriet, the Moses of her People* (New York, 1886), 48–50.

<sup>137</sup> Jane Rhodes, *Mary Ann Shadd Cary: The Black Press and Protest in the Nineteenth Century* (Bloomington, 1998).

<sup>138</sup> 'Can Fugitive Slaves Take Care of Themselves?', *Provincial Freeman*, 6 May 1854.

<sup>139</sup> 'How the Case Stands', *Provincial Freeman*, 20 May 1854.

<sup>140</sup> Alexander L. Murray, 'The *Provincial Freeman*: A New Source for the History of the Negro in Canada and the United States', *Journal of Negro History*, xlv (Apr. 1959).

<sup>141</sup> 'The Coming Election', *Provincial Freeman*, 22 Dec. 1855.

mauling slaves in Mississippi. Like their Caribbean counterparts, many had used waterway tactics and herbal concoctions to elude their canine pursuers. When foiling a dog's sense of smell failed, though, one runaway survived an attack by beating it with a brick, while another always carried a club.<sup>142</sup> Northern reporters added to the outcries against slave dogs, and celebrations of ex-slaves reaching freedom in Canada percolated into northern culture through the work of Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, Lydia Maria Child, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Lewis Tappan.<sup>143</sup>

Black activists in Canada printed a damning story that highlighted cruel American hypocrisy through the microcosm of Washington DC, a city that was simultaneously home to a burgeoning slave economy and the capital of a democratic republic pretending to lofty constitutional liberties. In 1854 a large bloodhound was seen frantically pulling a slave catcher down Pennsylvania Avenue near the White House. After the dog leapt behind boards in a lumber yard, a witness reportedly heard 'the most hideous and heart-rending screams of a child . . . here, almost under the stars and stripes of a nation's flag, which so boasts of her freedom, was . . . a scene . . . appalling and terrific in the extreme'. The southern slave catcher scolded the fugitive child, saying, 'God damn you, I'll learn you to run away!' With a heart palpitating wildly with indignation, the witness exhorted him to consult 'Mrs. Stowe's world-renowned *Uncle Tom's Cabin*'.<sup>144</sup> Stowe wrote her influential abolitionist novel after reading the transnational trials of runaways like Josiah Henson, who reached Canada in 1830.<sup>145</sup> Meanwhile, the black abolitionist Martin Delany spent two years living in Canada's

<sup>142</sup> Drew, *North-Side View of Slavery*, 198–233, 106–8, 285–90, 164–6; J. Blaine Hudson, *Fugitive Slaves and the Underground Railroad in the Kentucky Borderland* (Jefferson, NC, 2002), 125.

<sup>143</sup> *Burlington Free Press*, 10 Nov. 1843; *Anti-Slavery Bugle*, 30 Aug. 1856; *Indiana American*, 21 Apr. 1854; *New-York Daily Tribune*, 5 Aug. 1844; *Semi-Weekly Standard*, 7 Jan. 1854; *Opelousas Courier*, 17 May 1856; *Nashville Union and American*, 19 July 1860. See also Margaret Washington, *Sojourner Truth's America* (Urbana, 2009), 234; *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* (Hartford, 1881), 106, 133, 168; Lori Kenschaft, *Lydia Maria Child: The Quest for Racial Justice* (Oxford, 2002), 44–5; Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Emerson's Antislavery Writings*, ed. Len Gougeon and Joel Myerson (New Haven, 1995), 10, 37, 60. For Lewis Tappan, see Bryan Prince, *A Shadow on the Household: One Enslaved Family's Incredible Struggle for Freedom* (Toronto, 2009), 177.

<sup>144</sup> 'Bloodhounds at Washington', *Provincial Freeman*, 4 Nov. 1854.

<sup>145</sup> *The Life of Josiah Henson, Formerly a Slave, now an Inhabitant of Canada, as Narrated by Himself* (Boston, 1849); 'Rev. Josiah Henson and the Church', *Voice of the Fugitive*, 23 Sept. 1852.

refugee communities before publishing his novel *Blake*.<sup>146</sup> These prominent abolitionist authors and others used fiction to mould slave hounds into composite characters that essentialized the evils of slavery to an audience of millions and increased sectionalist tensions in the United States.

## VI

### PRINTING AND IMPRINTING ANTI-SLAVERY

Building upon testimonies from refugees in Canada, Harriet Beecher Stowe's published works solidified the connections between slavery and canine violence in American popular culture. Her bestseller *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) galvanized anti-slavery angst, in part by condemning the slaves' common tormenters in the South's rugged terrain. Hoping to build upon that success, in 1856 she released her second novel, *Dred: A Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp*. The book's titular character is a fugitive slave who dwells with other maroons in the Great Dismal Swamp located on the border of south-eastern Virginia and north-eastern North Carolina. Dred is a revolutionary figure who not only has fled slavery, but has actively undermined it by utilizing natural resources from his almost impenetrable swampland fortress, a plot line that recalls maroon tactics used throughout the Americas.

Dred's fiercest enemies are specially trained tracking dogs. As in real life, in the novel slave hunters comprise a skilled 'separate profession' that 'train[s] and keep[s] dogs for the hunting of men, women, and children'.<sup>147</sup> Though dogs were often victorious in tracking their prey, Stowe emphasizes the ability of slaves to resist, using their knowledge of local environmental resources. In *Uncle Tom's Cabin* she had depicted how dogs were trained to hunt fugitive slaves, but not their back stories.<sup>148</sup> The canines of

<sup>146</sup> Tunde Adeleke, *Without Regard to Race: The Other Martin Robison Delany* (Jackson, Miss., 2003), 73–4.

<sup>147</sup> Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Dred: A Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp*, 2 vols. (Boston, 1856), i, 255.

<sup>148</sup> Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin: A Tale of Life among the Lowly* (London, 1853), 67, 82, 255–6, 373, 428. Later plays developed the association of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* with ferocious dogs: see John S. Wise, 'A Virginia Boy Sees a Slave Auction', in *The Plantation South*, ed. Katharine M. Jones (Indianapolis, 1957), 69; John W. Frick, *Uncle Tom's Cabin on the American Stage and Screen* (New York, 2012), 123–6.

*Dred*, however, are far more developed as antagonists, even carrying histories regarding their origins. Stowe, cognizant of the bravery of runaways, depicts *Dred* killing a dog that is busily tearing out another fugitive's throat.<sup>149</sup>

Stowe fictionalizes the real microeconomic contests among slave hunters who compare the pedigree of their hounds against those of their competitors. She portrays their constant concern for the effectiveness of particular breeds through an exchange between a Georgia slave trader and Jim Stokes, a slave hunter engaged in tracking a slave worth 'nine hundred dollars' who has escaped from the trader's coffle into the Dismal Swamp. While bargaining over which pack of dogs to use, Stokes insults another slave hunter who is encroaching on his business, exclaiming:

Ho! What you going to him for? . . . Why, durn ye, his dogs ain't no breed 't all! Mine's the true grit, I can tell you; they's the true Florida blood-hounds! I'se seen one of them ar dogs shake a nigger in his mouth like he'd been a sponge.<sup>150</sup>

The phrase 'Florida blood-hounds' implies esteemed connections to the notorious Cuban bloodhounds. Stowe's antebellum audience was surely familiar with this denotation owing to public hostility to dog attacks against the Seminoles and, later, runaway slaves.

Although *Uncle Tom's Cabin* overshadowed *Dred* in popular culture, it represented Stowe's more accurate portrayal of slavery from a black perspective, an evolution in her stand against slavery. Her greater inclusion of 'true' bloodhounds in *Dred* embodied this shift and intensified societal perception of this issue.<sup>151</sup> Thus, her books exacerbated the growing sectional divide, as the composite characters and cruelties that she described, including slave hounds, increased indignation among a general reading public.<sup>152</sup>

<sup>149</sup> Stowe, *Dred*, i, 293.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, 312.

<sup>151</sup> Robert S. Levine, *Martin Delany, Frederick Douglass, and the Politics of Representative Identity* (Chapel Hill, 1997).

<sup>152</sup> 'The Slavery Question', *National Era*, 29 Sept. 1853; 'Treatment of Slaves', *National Era*, 15 Dec. 1853; 'A Choice Bit for Exeter Hall', *Vanity Fair*, 25 Aug. 1860; James M. Cox, 'Harriet Beecher Stowe: From Sectionalism to Regionalism', *Nineteenth Century Fiction*, xxxviii, 4 (1984); David S. Reynolds, *Mightier than the Sword: Uncle Tom's Cabin and the Battle for America* (New York, 2011); Michael E. Woods, *Emotional and Sectional Conflict in the Antebellum United States* (New York, 2014), chs. 4–5.

Among the increasingly vociferous expressions of North American abolitionism, Martin Delany's novel *Blake* (published as a serial from 1859 to 1862) tackles a similar subject. He spent far more time among ex-slaves than Stowe, though her books were more celebrated. Born free to an enslaved father and free black mother, Delany wrote *Blake* partly as a response to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a work he believed represented enslaved people as too passive under white power. *Blake* takes a transnational approach to black resistance, with the main character, Henry Holland (called Blacus, or Blake), clandestinely organizing slave insurrections throughout the American South and Cuba. Delany paints a gritty picture of how slaves related to canine adversaries, vividly describing a scene in which handlers advertise the ferocity of their hounds at a raffle. Delany presents the assaults of bloodhounds as effective performance. Hoping to impress, the handler lets loose a pack of 'niggadogs' before the awestruck crowd to 'taste the blood of some poor black devil', as slaves are 'fearder of a bloodhound than they is of the devil himself!' A sheriff present at the scene admires this, and that the dogs will yield to the commands of any white person, even strangers.<sup>153</sup> Delany thus portrays the racialization of dogs and their senses.

In one meeting during Blake's ventures throughout the rural South, two slaves named Aunt Rachel and Uncle Jerry educate him on the region's dynamics of social control. They inform Blake that he can evade the patrols by staying off the trails, for 'the woods' represent a zone of greater control for a runaway. Such notions held historical currency among some white southerners, who were 'afraid of runaway negroes' and seldom travelled alone outside the plantation.<sup>154</sup> In *Blake*, white vigilantes fear the runaways who haunt the thickets, and often depend upon watchdogs, which might first reconnoitre an area before slave hunters would enter. In exploring hound-human collaboration, Delany underscores how environmental control was essential to

<sup>153</sup> Martin Robinson Delany, *Blake: or, The Huts of America*, ed. Floyd J. Miller (Boston, 1970), 90–7.

<sup>154</sup> *Recollections of a Southern Daughter: A Memoir by Cornelia Jones Pond of Liberty County*, ed. Lucinda H. MacKethan (Athens, Ga., 1998), 9; Henry Clay Bruce, *The New Man: Twenty-Nine Years a Slave, Twenty-Nine Years a Free Man* (York, Pa., 1895), 32–3.

the expansion of slavery, and demonstrates how slaves challenged the plantocracy's biopower by living on its margins.

*Blake* reveals how slaves passed on specialized knowledge of means to evade dogs in clandestine conversation. When asked if he knows how to 'charm dogs', for instance, Blake responds that he understands 'the mixed bull, but not the full-bred Cuba dog'. This exchange emphasizes the mystique of the Cuban breed as a uniquely daunting specimen. Throughout the novel, Delany clearly explores types of dog, using Blake to illustrate how the enslaved studied their non-human enemies and the best methods to combat them. Eventually, Blake's relatives initiate him into a clandestine circle of knowledge that advises on how to survive the dogs, and in his first engagement with 'the best dogs in the country' he slays 'each ferocious beast as it approach[s] him, leaving them weltering in their own blood instead of feasting on his'.<sup>155</sup> He wins this battle and others, and as a protagonist celebrates the courageous triumphs of other runaways. Yet, for many thousands of real enslaved people who endured canine violence in Atlantic slave societies, the results were more varied.

One abolitionist newspaper lamented that 'the blood-hound, emblem of . . . brutal cupidity, is now a household word of the South' and that it was 'a step backward for a great and powerful nation to descend to such means'.<sup>156</sup> So strong was the association between anti-blackness and hounds that when one white abolitionist was chased away by an irate mob, 'the yells and shouts of the multitude, and the barking of a dog' made him remember the 'escaping slave pursued by bloodhounds'. This small glimpse into the debasement of hunting humans with hounds drove him onward.<sup>157</sup> Meanwhile, anti-slavery novelists amplified slave dogs into national ignominy: their dramatic remonstrances psychologically imprinted the crisis of slavery on American consciousness and deepened the sectional divide. Such convictions animated the abolitionists to give the presidential candidate Abraham Lincoln the nickname 'Slave-Hound of Illinois' for his, at this time, tepid stance on the

<sup>155</sup> Delany, *Blake*, ed. Miller, 90–7.

<sup>156</sup> 'Negro Hunting', *Anti-Slavery Reporter*, 1 Oct. 1855, 224.

<sup>157</sup> 'An Abolitionist in Territorial Wisconsin: The Journal of Reverend Edward Mathews (Part III)', *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, lii, 3 (1969), 250.

future of slavery.<sup>158</sup> Thus, the abolitionists scandalized millions of Northerners out of their complacency, embarrassed the plantocracy, and morally contextualized the Civil War as a referendum on slavery.<sup>159</sup>

## VII

### CONCLUSION

Countering assertions that abolitionists exaggerated cruelties to evoke compassion, the abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison asked rhetorically, ‘Are whips and chains . . . and blood-hounds, unreal abstractions?’<sup>160</sup> For slaves across the Caribbean and North America dog attacks were far too real, and, even after abolition, hounds policed prisoners and, later, civil rights protesters. Beginning with historical memories of the Spanish conquests, three centuries of dismay over hounds accumulated in the moral economy of Atlantic anti-slavery movements. British abolitionists commended the continuation of their earlier anti-slavery rhetoric by a new generation in the antebellum United States, where debates over dogs were simply an end stage of this colonialist story.<sup>161</sup> As slavery persisted into the 1880s in Cuba, even the smaller Spanish abolitionist movement decried dog attacks.<sup>162</sup> Slave hounds represented one of the few transnational rallying points for often schismatic anti-slavery activists in each Atlantic context.<sup>163</sup> Activists around the Atlantic heard barking dogs and agonizing cries, and, influenced by the courage of runaways, their facts and fictions about slave hounds contributed to abolition in the Americas.

<sup>158</sup> Wendell Phillips, ‘Abraham Lincoln the Slave-Hound of Illinois’, *Liberator*, 22 June 1860.

<sup>159</sup> W. Caleb McDaniel, ‘The Bonds and Boundaries of Antislavery’, *Journal of the Civil War Era*, iv (Mar. 2014); James Brewer Stewart, *Abolitionist Politics and the Coming of the Civil War* (Amherst, Mass., 2008).

<sup>160</sup> *Selections from the Writings and Speeches of William Lloyd Garrison* (Boston, 1852), 217.

<sup>161</sup> ‘Blood-Hounds’, *Anti-Slavery Reporter*, 1 May 1846, 76.

<sup>162</sup> Rafael María de Labra, ‘La explotación de los Africanos’, *El Abolicionista*, 20 Feb. 1875, 21.

<sup>163</sup> Richard Huzzey, *Freedom Burning: Anti-Slavery and Empire in Victorian Britain* (Ithaca, NY, 2012), ch. 2; Christer Petley, ‘New Perspectives on Slavery and Emancipation in the British Caribbean’, *Historical Journal*, liv (Sept. 2011); Christopher Leslie Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (Chapel Hill, 2006).

If dogs were integral to slavery, yet remain obscured by anthropocentric frames, how else might scholarship benefit from further analytical attention to the role of other animals in projecting or implementing race and ethnicity?<sup>164</sup> Increased attention to how various animal interactions bolstered deeds and ideas of race and colonialism might reveal more instances of decisive interspecies stratification.<sup>165</sup> Intricate intersections of racism and speciesism offer opportunities to understand better our mammalian past and present.

Hounds were crucial to the expansion of black chattel slavery and the profitability of plantations, and left a lasting impact on both black culture and abolitionism.<sup>166</sup> Slave dogs, beyond their quotidian presence and material ruthlessness, came to symbolize national shame among the nations that condoned their use, an indignity that spanned borders and tied slavery and abolition across countries. As a biopower of bondage these hounds, however coerced they were into complicity, managed labour exploitation under spreading capitalism, verified and actualized white ideas of racial difference, intimidated those who might flee, punished runaways who did, and became widely recognized symbols of slavery's immorality within abolitionist discourse.

Listening to the approach of barking dogs was a tormenting experience for slaves, and was perhaps one of the last sounds they would hear in life.<sup>167</sup> Their perseverance against the hounds, despite the prospect of dying for the offence of asserting their personhood, demanded dignity and aroused sympathies against slavery more than philosophical or legal arguments could do. By violently enforcing slavery's regimes of

<sup>164</sup> Matthew C. Greer, 'Contextualizing Canines, a Dog Burial, and Enslaved Life on a Virginia Plantation', *Journal of African Diaspora Archaeology and Heritage*, v, 3 (2016); John Campbell, '“My Constant Companion”: Slaves and their Dogs in the Antebellum South', in Larry E. Hudson Jr (ed.), *Working toward Freedom: Slave Society and Domestic Economy in the American South* (Rochester, NY, 1994).

<sup>165</sup> Joshua Specht, 'Animal History after its Triumph: Unexpected Animals, Evolutionary Approaches, and the Animal Lens', *History Compass*, xiv, 7 (2016); Luís Cordeiro-Rodrigues and Les Mitchell (eds.), *Animals, Race, and Multiculturalism* (Cham, 2017); Lauren Derby, 'Trujillo, the Goat: Of Beasts, Men, and Politics in the Dominican Republic', in Martha Few and Zeb Tortorici (eds.), *Centering Animals in Latin American History* (Durham, NC, 2013).

<sup>166</sup> Rob Schneider and Matthew Hilton, 'Slavery and Anti-Slavery in the Atlantic World', *Past and Present*, no. 239 (May 2018).

<sup>167</sup> 'Lincoln a Great Name to Former Slaves Here', *Milwaukee Journal*, 12 Feb. 1936.



racism and profit, revealing the depravity of the enslavers and the humanity of the enslaved, and enraging abolitionists internationally, hounds were central to the rise and fall of slavery in the Americas.

*Tyler D. Parry*  
*University of Nevada, Las Vegas*

*Charlton W. Yingling*  
*University of Louisville*