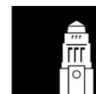

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Chapter 10

Posthuman Care and Posthumous Life in *Marjorie Prime*

Amelia DeFalco

In this essay, I explore the idea and practice of posthuman care as it can and, perhaps most importantly, might operate in more than human worlds. The *might* of my formulation is crucial to my method. As a cultural critic I look to fictional speculations, which provide the kind of context and specificity crucial for theorizing an affirmative, equitable, intersectional feminist ethics and politics of care, a methodology I outline further below. I use "posthuman care" as a shorthand for relational models that account for the more than human forces that facilitate being and life, including, but not limited to human life. I take "posthuman" from posthumanist theory, which affirms the human animal as one animal among many, as a complex biopolitical technocultural assemblage inextricably embedded in a dense network of intersecting structures and systems.

At the heart of my enquiry is the assertion that human animals, like all living beings, are fundamentally relational. This assertion is based on the work of feminist posthumanist philosophers and cultural critics like Donna Haraway, Karen Barad, and Maria Puig de la Bellacasa, which stresses the vulnerability, contingency and entanglement of living beings. My arguments build on the premise that relating precedes being; in other words, there are no pre-existing beings that proceed to engage in relations; existence itself is generated by relations. As ethics of care philosophers have argued since the 1970s, this pivotal insight—that human animals are profoundly and fundamentally relational—is anathema to Western neoliberal politics of autonomy and independence. As a result, neoliberal socio-political structures interpret visibly vulnerable, dependent bodies—including disabled, older and frail bodies—as problematic because of their inadequate independence.[1] Though relations produce agency and a sense of self, neoliberal discourse enacts a sleight of hand that reverses this causality, imagining that an original,

autonomous "I" picks and chooses how to relate to the world. A posthuman care perspective, on the other hand, insists that relating is always already in operation; who and what we relate to (not to mention how and why) are therefore crucial philosophical questions.

Human interdependence asserts itself in times of pronounced vulnerability—that is, vulnerability accentuated by aging, illness and impairment, not to mention the vulnerabilities created by structural inequalities: the all-too-frequently-mortal vulnerabilities engendered by race, gender, class, and sexuality in patriarchal, heteronormative, white supremacist societies. In such times of pronounced vulnerability the integrity of care is obvious. And yet, the fundamental necessity and ubiquity of care is often disguised or minimized by the white, able-bodied, male, heteronormative privilege that insulates certain human populations from risk and exposes others. This exposure often takes the form of what Rob Nixon calls "slow violence," that is, forms of violence that obscure culpability and exploit vulnerability at such a sedate pace that the violence is very difficult to discern. As Nixon explains, it is "a violence that occurs gradually and out of sight, a violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space, an attritional violence that is typically not viewed as violence at all" (2). Posthuman care pays attention to quiet, slow, hidden and unacknowledged entangled vulnerabilities. Posthuman care includes the banal, everyday, slow interactions, affects and labour that support, sustain, and repair more than human worlds.[2]

But much like slow violence, slow, everyday, posthuman care can be difficult to identify and communicate via conventional narrative. It is often too banal, too boring, too sedate to hold an audience's interest. Instead, it is the care necessitated by crisis and disaster, by dramatic spectacles of intense dependency that tends to draw attention and commentary. For example, old age, a time of life commonly and problematically associated with illness and crisis, often functions as a period of hyper-visible vulnerability that brings the physical and affective labour of life-sustaining care to the fore. This has led to frequent neoliberal hand wringing over projected (elder)care deficits and stigmatizing hyperbolic metaphors like the "silver tsunami" of an aging demography that exploit and reassert the prioritization of

independent individuals legitimized by their capitalist productivity. For successful neoliberal subjects, vulnerability and dependence remain anomalous, projected onto stigmatized, so-called problem bodies: bodies visibly marked by disability, illness, and/or age. A popular potential solution is care technologies including social or assistive robots designed for older and impaired users. Such technologies are produced within and for capitalist systems seeking to diminish the economic burden of unproductive bodies on the productive individuals who must support them. Viewed from this perspective, the development of care robots and other assistive technologies manifests a neoliberal offloading of caring responsibility, yet another way that already stigmatized bodies are treated as undeserving of good or *real* care, that is, human care.

I'm sympathetic with this critique of care robots and other technologies designed to solve the Global North's so-called care deficit. Nonetheless, I believe such critiques can unhelpfully replicate the hierarchical, atomizing, anthropocentric epistemologies that produce vulnerability as anomalous and detrimental in the first place. I argue that a posthuman care framework can help us re-evaluate human exceptionalism, offering a model of care that addresses the ubiquity and integrity of vulnerability, interdependence, and relationality across more than human worlds and lifespans. As feminist science and technology studies scholar Maria Puig de la Bellacasa reminds her readers, "interdependency is not a contract, nor a moral ideal—it is a *condition*. Care is therefore concomitant to the continuation of life for many living beings in more than human entanglements—not forced upon them by a world order, and not necessarily a rewarding obligation" (70). Care, in other words, is not an afterthought, not an inconvenient chore or sacred task necessitated by illness, impairment and old age; quite the contrary, care is the *condition* that facilitates and produces life. Nonetheless, concepts such as relational ontology and posthuman care can be difficult to apprehend through everyday interactions and experiences. How can one recognize, engage and enact a posthuman ethic of care? What might a society that acknowledges and values embodied, enmeshed vulnerability look like?

This is where imaginative texts can help. Speculative film, television and literature can imagine alternative ways of being and relating in their narrative specificity, their dramatization of situated relations, and contextualized more than human dynamics that envision the problems and possibilities of posthuman care. This is not to say that posthuman care is a future phenomenon; it is always already happening to, with, and around us, most often in quiet, unremarkable ways that are easy to overlook. In their depiction of exaggerated posthuman affinities, such as caring relations between humans and artificial beings, fictional texts can serve as catalysts for the theorization of care in its more than human complexities. My approach is predicated on the notion that literary and visual representations are not only aesthetic gestures and models of ideas, but imaginative interpretive discourses in dialogue with the complex political and philosophical debates in contemporary culture and critical theory. In what follows, I explore the 2017 film *Marjorie Prime* (based on the 2015 play by Jordan Harrison), which imagines the ethics and politics of AI care in later life. The film offers insights into the ways that manufactured caregivers might erode or entrench anthropocentric, neoliberal approaches to care that disavow and ghettoize vulnerability and treat care as a temporary action precipitated by aging and frailty, as opposed to a ubiquitous state of responsive engagement that produces and sustains life. Further, the film provides opportunities to query the very definitions and parameters of the category "life," illuminating the degree to which inhuman, more than human, and even posthumous life—that is, "life" beyond or after organic, earthly life, which troubles the distinctions between alive and not—is enmeshed, interdependent, and ethically significant.[3]

My analysis of the film in this essay is premised on the notion that representation provides the context and particularity necessary for interrogating the ethical potential of nonhuman care without recourse to the abstractions and generalizations common to ethical philosophy. This emphasis on particular scenarios accords with ethics of care philosophy, which stresses the role of context and specificity in moral reasoning. My approach continues and develops my previous work on representation and care,[4] which demonstrates why fiction—broadly conceived—has much to contribute to the ethics of care. Fictional

representations of human/nonhuman (particularly robot) care can provide detailed, multi-perspectival views of posthuman care, both as it does and might exist in a range of temporalities and environments. Concomitantly, such fictions often draw audiences' attention to the limitations, biases, even risks of humanist ethical models that cannot easily accommodate human/nonhuman intimacies.

Before turning to the film, I want to offer a brief overview of what feminist scholars talk about when we talk about care. Anyone who has survived to adulthood is familiar with experiences of care;[5] as vulnerable, embodied beings, human survival and flourishing depend on it. In its broadest sense, care is attunement, responsiveness and responsibility; it is action, behaviour, motivation and practice: care feels and care does. Since the 1980s, stemming from the pivotal work of Carol Gilligan, Nel Noddings, Sara Ruddick, Joan Tronto, Eva Kittay and others, care has become an important concept for feminist philosophers seeking an alternative to traditional moral philosophy's emphasis on autonomy and individualism. For philosophers frustrated by androcentric and universalizing ethical philosophy, "ethics of care" or "care ethics" has many advantages. Most notably, a care perspective privileges specificity, context and emotion, and highlights vulnerability and interdependence as inevitabilities, rather than anomalies. For example, in their collection *The Subject of Care*, Eva Kittay and Ellen Feder insist that vulnerability and the dependency that results "must function in our very conception of ourselves as subjects and moral agents" (3). This quotation reveals the central concerns of ethics of care; as much as it is a philosophy intent on addressing the needs of others, those "others" are most often familiar. Throughout ethics of care theory, one finds the assumption that care arises in interactions between humans, most often familiar humans, particularly friends and family members, and a reliance on universalizing humanist assumptions signalled by the frequent use of the first-person plural.[6]

In other words, care ethics is often preoccupied with human selves, with "our" human dependencies and interconnections.[7] As much as it is a philosophy intent on addressing the needs of others, those "others" are most often familiar others: they are human like "ourselves." I do not want to suggest that these foci

and pronouns are misplaced—the shared vulnerability of the human animal is a central tenet of care, one that marks care's provocative challenge to moralities built on autonomy. Nonetheless, in its focus on the human, care scholarship has often neglected the rich posthuman potential of care as a concept capacious and flexible enough to accommodate the incredible range of human/nonhuman interdependencies and ontologies. Posthumanism addresses this neglect in its attention to more than human relational ontologies. In its attention to materiality, vulnerability, and the myriad entanglements of interdependent being, ethics of care and posthumanism have the potential to operate as companion philosophies committed to overturning neoliberal humanist fantasies of atomistic existence.

Marjorie Prime

Marjorie Prime explores the degree to which synthetic beings might be similarly entangled. The film concerns Marjorie, an affluent, 86-year-old white woman with dementia, and her simulated caregiver, a "prime" named Walter. Primes are holographic AI companions modelled after real people, in this case, Marjorie's late husband.[8] The film depicts Marjorie's relationship with Walter Prime and its effects on her loved ones, particularly her daughter, Tess, who bristles at her mother's emotional attachment to an entity she dismisses as a "computer program." Tess's husband John is more accommodating; he argues that Marjorie's comfort and wellbeing is paramount, regardless of its source. As Tess explains, her misgivings about the prime don't stem from guilt or fear that Tess is being duped—Marjorie is well aware that Walter Prime is a digital replica of her husband (a kinder, more sensitive replica, according to John). Instead, Tess is irked that Marjorie appears to prefer the digital simulacrum to her flesh and blood daughter. Throughout the film, Tess expresses her frustration at her inability to comfort her mother the way others do, most notably, the film's artificial and racialized others: in addition to Walter Prime, Marjorie has a paid Latina caregiver, Julie (played by Stephanie Andujar), who provides Marjorie with small pleasures like illicit cigarettes. After Marjorie dies, Julie wordlessly departs Marjorie's seaside home just as Tess and John are joined by a new prime, this one based on Marjorie. Marjorie Prime is meant to ease Tess's grief, but Tess is inconsolable and commits suicide only to be holographically re-

animated like her parents before her. The film's final scene depicts the three primes, Walter, Marjorie and Tess, conversing in the family home with no flesh and blood humans in sight.

In many ways, *Marjorie Prime* unsettles conventional distinctions between life and death in its depiction of a posthumous digital life that is often indistinguishable from the organic existence it imitates. Its representation of synthetic beings as responsive agents delivering care challenges biocentric definitions of life and the sanctity of the human.[9] However, this apparent challenge to human exceptionalism emerges from a representationalist model that preserves humanist hierarchical distinctions between mind and body, talk and tactility, art and the everyday, even as it undermines those between the real and the simulated, alive and not.[10] The film treats art as a magical distillation of the ordinary world it represents, banishing everyday materiality, the banal *stuff* of life to the margins, to wild and unknown literal and metaphorical outside spaces. Within quiet, affluent interior spaces, characters talk, remember and listen, but never touch. Even as the film's subject matter challenges the human exceptionalism of care, its vision of posthuman care remains a dyadic, hermetic relation between human(oid)s who remain separate from the chaotic mesh of inhuman/more than human worlds. In multiple scenes, the agency of the nonhuman asserts itself as violent storms and driving rain, which, at least momentarily, force human characters to reckon with their own embodiment via its assault. The film depicts care as cognitive labour, as the dutiful maintenance of key memories, a task undertaken by nonhuman, immaterial primes. In the meantime, the material agencies and embodied affects of more than human worlds hover at the edges of the film's action; as characters converse about the nature of memory and identity, torrential rains beat against the house and the sea crashes onto the shore. As a result, the film's central images of aging, illness, and care as eerily disembodied are in tension with wild, threatening inhuman agents that hover at the periphery. The human and digital characters take little notice of the more than human dramas, the violent bodies and dynamic agencies that seethe just beyond walls and windows. Indeed, the vibrantly tumultuous more than human world outside exists in stark contrast to the almost eerie calm of the human beings on screen who

grapple with the extremes of embodied difficulty—illness, disease, mortality, grief, depression—with subdued, almost disembodied dialogue.

At one point, torrential rain drives Tess and John to take shelter in an affluent beach club where Marjorie and Walter were members. Attempting to recall their last time at the club, Tess and John end up discussing the workings of memory, and Tess instructs John on its operation: "Memory," she tells her husband, "is not like a well you dip into. . . . When you remember something you remember the memory. You remember the last time you remembered it, not the source. It's never getting fresher or clearer. So it's always getting fuzzier like a photocopy of a photocopy. . . . Even a very strong memory can be unreliable because it's always in the process of dissolving." This palimpsestic model of memory is key to the film's exploration of posthuman life, aging and care; the film is preoccupied with re-presentation as replacement, depicting primes as remembrances that replace the humans they represent. But what Tess and John's discussion of memory effaces and the primes fail to address is the *materiality* of the memorializing process Tess describes, the fact that (human animal) remembering is an embodied process that involves particular neuroanatomical mechanisms. Tess and John's conversation treats memory as an abstract, figurative process. In its provocative challenge to the irreducible singularity of the individual via the layering of replacements, substitutions, and metonymic significations, the film offers a view of life as perpetually unfinished since layering and substitutions continue throughout old age and after death. This radical vision of "life" after life is tempered by the depiction of being, both pre- and posthumous, as curiously disembodied, as holographic, thereby overlooking the material complexity of posthuman care. In effect, the film trims the messiness of life and care to suit its linear narrative of replacement, pushing to the periphery the chaotic entanglement of more than human being.

For example, one of the first stories Walter Prime tells Marjorie about their shared past concerns the family dog, Toni. As Walter explains, Toni was a beloved black poodle that Marjorie and Walter adopted before they had children. After their daughter Tess was born and Toni died, they acquired another dog, a

second black poodle they name Toni 2. As Walter says, “The longer they had her the less it mattered which Toni it was that ran along the beach. . . . The more time that passed, the more she became the same dog in their memories.” As the film progresses we learn that there has been an additional substitution: Toni 2 (already a stand in for Toni) is a stand in for Damian, Marjorie and Walter’s son whose suicide has made his name unspeakable. Instead of discussing Damian, they discuss Toni, his beloved pet, the only companion he treated as kin. For Marjorie and Walter, Toni’s death bears traces of Damian’s since Damian killed Toni before he killed himself. Consequently, Toni is a multiple signifier bearing traces of Toni, Toni 2, and Damian, entangled affective bonds that the name “Toni” at once obscures and signifies. Much like the primes, “Toni”—the memory, the name, the animal—signifies a complex web of relations both past and present that the linearity of the Toni/Toni 2 narrative appears to tidy and restrain. As the film continues, the substitutions and replications accumulate, making lives function much like the model of memory Tess described; just as one memory effectively reproduces and replaces its precursor, making every recollection in fact a memory of a memory, characters and creatures reproduce and replace another: Toni is Toni 2 is Damian; Walter, Marjorie and Tess become primes.

There may be a melancholic tinge to this metonymic process, but it’s not treated as tragic. It blurs alive/dead, present/absent, remembered/forgotten binaries in its imagining of a posthumous life that is neither/nor, both/and: present and absent, alive and dead. In *Marjorie Prime*, the accuracy of memory—that is, the correlation between recollections and historical events—is not particularly important, or even quantifiable. What matters is that memories and stories are told and re-told, witnessed, alive, vital. However, in its emphatic attention to memory as signification, materiality remains largely ignored; indeed, there are multiple mentions of Marjorie’s tendency to forget to eat; like many other embodied pleasures, necessities, and affects, eating is rendered peripheral and inconsequential. Indeed, what surprised me most about the film wasn’t its depiction of digital reproductions of dead people employed to comfort older, ill and/or impaired humans, or that these primes so easily overtook the space inhabited by their human originals, rendering human and digital life nearly indistinguishable. What surprised me was

that not one of the humans who encounter the posthumous presence of a loved one reaches out to touch the prime. There are no attempted embraces, no efforts at contact. Throughout *Marjorie Prime*, care is portrayed as a cognitive task achieved through recollection and conversation. Though the film offers a convincing portrait of (digital) life after life that challenges binaries of being that distinguish between biological life and digital reproduction, in so doing it ignores tactility and embodiment. Bodies, human or otherwise appear almost incidental throughout the film's depiction of aging, dementia, and care. By ignoring embodiment, the film simplifies and streamlines care, treating it as a series of cognitive tasks untethered from the messiness of materiality.

As mentioned, the film traces the gradual replacement of organic humans with digital simulations. But not all human characters are replaced. The film's women of colour, including the paid caregiver Julie and, later, Tess and John's adopted granddaughter, who is Asian-American, are not replaced. Instead, they simply appear and disappear, hovering, like the more than human vibrancies of violent weather, around the margins of the film's action. As a result, the film reproduces racialized humanist categories that undermine its posthuman potential. Despite its often compelling depiction of posthuman care, the film remains tethered to racialized anthropocentric hierarchies that interpret the category human as white, cognitive, and intellectual as set against non-white, embodied, less-than-human others. In this way, the film illustrates Alexander Weheliye's insistence that "there exists no portion of the modern human," and, in this case, the posthuman, "that is not subject to racialization, which determines the hierarchical ordering of the Homo sapiens species into humans, not-quite-humans, and nonhumans" (8). *Marjorie Prime* imagines a future characterized by posthuman care and posthumous life *for some.* In mounting a challenge to exceptionalist definitions of the human, life, and care, it nonetheless maintains their racialization: authority, humanity, and life remain aligned with white bodies, *even when those bodies are virtual.*

One of the film's strengths is its refusal to treat aging, dementia, and mortality as tragedy. I welcome the novelty of its representation of an old woman with dementia as neither zombie nor witch, its avoidance of Gothic tropes and imagery, the sensitivity of Lois Smith's performance, the affecting shots of her wordless being apart from human company, including her sensual engagement with more-than-human worlds when she briefly emerges from the built environment of her modernist carport into a space of sun and birdsong, cigarette in hand.[11] However, the film's dependence on mind/body distinctions, its erasure of the complex materiality of thinking, feeling, and remembering, combined with its re-inscription of the racial hierarchical distinctions that form the foundation of liberal humanist definitions of the human demonstrate the ease with which exclusionary frameworks might be imported into posthuman scenarios.[12]

The film's depiction of posthuman care and posthumous life, which invites viewers to regard representations and reproductions as agents of care and concern, is a useful reminder of the need for a posthuman theory of care alert to the *ethics and politics of* more than human relations. The film challenges viewers to move beyond humanist distinctions between valuable humans and disposable facsimiles, and to re-evaluate the distinctions between real and artificial life *even as it re-inscribes those humanist boundaries,* depicting and reinforcing boundaries between white and racialized bodies, the human and the natural, the body and the mind. In other words, *Marjorie Prime* offers a portrait of posthuman care in which digital simulacra challenge the limitations of human exceptionalism while at the same time maintaining the inequities of humanist care. This is, science and technology scholars argue, a likely scenario.[13].The film is a reminder that posthuman care is not necessarily good or bad care, that acknowledging and enabling posthuman entanglement in and of itself is not enough. As Eva Giraud insists, one must ask, "what comes after entanglement?" Posthuman care is not an anodyne to humanist care models; it can maintain humanist blindspots and inequities even as it appears to illuminate and challenge them.

Marjorie Prime offers exciting, conflicting, and often conflicted scenarios of future care that can help us

imagine posthuman forms and modes of aging, relating and being, and, perhaps most importantly, alert us to the ethical consequences of such scenarios. As ethics of care theorists have long insisted, there can be no one size fits all theory of ethical care. Care is situational; it is context and site specific; its ethicality and success depend on the particularities of the agents involved. Speculative fictions and posthumanism remind us that agents of care need not be human or animal, but regardless of the agents involved, care remains demanding and complex, requiring vigilance and reflexivity. Posthuman care is what Puig de la Bellacasa terms "a 'generic' doing of ontological significance" (3), one that is "unthinkable as something abstracted from its situatedness" (6). Speculative narrative provides the means for theorizing generic posthuman care via situated being and doing. *Marjorie Prime* suggests that imagining posthuman care is concomitant with a critical re-imagining of life and aging, a reimagining that moves beyond anthropocentric humanist definitions to register the relational significance of not only posthuman, but posthumous life. By reading such scenarios carefully and critically we can begin to glimpse the possibilities for more than human bonds as well as the imaginative and theoretical work that remains to be done.

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[1] See, for example, Sally Chivers and Nicole Markotic's *The Problem Body*.

[2] My use of "repair" alludes to Berenice Fisher's and Joan Tronto's oft-cited description of care as "include[ing] everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible" (emphasis in original 40). My perspective develops the posthuman possibilities evident in their remarks while attempting to move beyond the essentialism and exceptionalism that phrases like "*our* world" can imply.

[3] I am inspired by Claire Colebrook and Jami Weinstein's description of "the posthumous" as "a disturbance and a vibration orienting around the chaotic intensities that swirl in the absence of a concept of life as a controllable, containable, namable force attributed to humans" ("Preface: Postscript on the Posthuman," xxiii). While Colebrook and Weinstein seek to identify and remedy the "residual humanism in posthumanism" that inhibits the radical potential of posthuman theory (xviii), my own analysis is less invested in ranking the radical potential of the posthumous in relation to the posthuman. Though in many ways *Marjorie Prime* is an example of what Colebrook and Weinstein describe as "ultrahumanisms" masquerading as posthumanism in its maintenance and amplification of anthropocentric distinctions between so-called legitimate humans and less than or inhuman entities, it also destabilizes humanist paradigms in its refusal to effectively distinguish between humans and their synthetic primes. As Colebrook and Weinstein argue, "the concept of 'life' has been used to humanize, racialize, gender, pathologize, and manage human and nonhuman bodies" ("Introduction" 2). In *Marjorie Prime* "life" is not always up to its disciplining duties.

[4] See, for example, *Imagining Care,* "Toward a Theory of Posthuman Care" and "Beyond Prosthetic Memory."

[5] Care is necessary for an infant's survival, but that care might be measly. As care philosophers concede, care frequently co-exists with negligence and cruelty and survival is not necessarily a marker of good care.

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[6] Despite the anthropocentric aspects of care, there has been some inspiring work that gestures to a non-species-specific vision of care, particularly Carol Adams and Josephine Donovan's collection *The Feminist Care Tradition in Animal Ethics* and Maria Puig de la Bellacasa's inspiring work on care in STS and ecology, *Matters of Care*.

[7] Maria Puig de la Bellacasa's *Matters of Care* (2017) is an insightful exploration of how care circulates in more than human worlds. While her work provides a compelling analysis of posthuman ecologies and proposes an ethos of care in science and technology studies, mine seeks to interrogate as well as employ theories of care. My approach expands Puig de la Bellacasa's attention to care in "more than human worlds" to consider narrative speculations as vital contributions that help envision the cultural, social, and political implications of posthuman care. My emphasis on representation facilitates an attention to specificity, detail and context that tempers the universalizing tendencies of ethics of care and some posthuman theory.

[8] The labelling of AI caregivers as "primes" recalls the notion of memory priming, an effect whereby "exposure to certain stimuli influences the response to subsequently presented stimuli" (Camina & Güell 13). In transforming this verb into a noun, the play and the film emphasize AI caregivers as manifestations of memory.

[9] As philosophers of science explain, "there remains no broadly accepted definition of 'life'" (Cleland & Chyba 388). Attempts at comprehensive definitions, like that offered by biochemist Bruce Weber, (potentially) make room for non-organic entities: "Living entities can be viewed as bounded, informed autocatalytic cycles feeding off matter/energy gradients, exhibiting agency, capable of growth, reproduction, and evolution" (221).

[10] Representationalist approaches assume a clear distinction between the material world and discursive practices, that is, between matter and its representation. Anti-dualist approaches, such as those espoused by Karen Barad, "challeng[e]" such a "belief in the power of words to represent preexisting things" (802), emphasizing instead the mutual becoming of phenomena.

[11] This sensitive portrayal didn't prevent a *Variety* film reviewer from describing Marjorie as "dementia-riddled" (Lodge), a description that speaks to popular expectations around experiences and representations of dementia.

[12] According to Weheliye, "racializing assemblages" are the "sociological processes that discipline humanity into full humans, not-quite-humans and non-humans" (3).

[13] See, for example, Neda Atanasoski and Kalindi Voro's *Surrogate Humanity*, and Lucy Suchman's "Subjects Objects" and *Human-Machine Reconfigurations*.