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Labors of Likeness: Photography and Labor in Marx's *Capital*

> [T]he purpose of the paper I am about to read . . . is to induce you to do in photography something similar to that which the old Greek did in painting . . . to take the best and most beautiful parts you can obtain . . . and join them into one perfect whole.
>
> —Henry Peach Robinson, "On Printing Photographs from Several Negatives"

THIS ESSAY PROVIDES a new technological and discursive context for Karl Marx's theory of the laboring body and reproduction, and in doing so, seeks to change the way we read Marx's relationship to visuality, photographic reproduction, and mechanical realism. In the most general sense, critics have distanced Marx and Marxist theory from the camera—variously defined as a product of (and having produced) a form of naïve realism and empiricism, bourgeois ideology, or faith in the machine rather than the human.[1] Marx's famous description of ideology as offering a picture of social relations "upside-down as in a *camera obscura*" serves as a common and useful starting point for such an argument.[2] Exploring Marx's own use of visual tropes, Ann Cvetkovich in particular argues that Marx's aim is to critique both empiricism and idealism—"to redefine the nature of 'vision' in order to challenge the idea that capitalism can be understood simply by looking in the right place."[3] From this point of view, photography, with its claims to "empirical" and "objective" representation would only embody what Marx seems to reject. As Siegfried Kracauer put it in 1927, "[I]t would be well worth the effort to expose the close ties between the prevailing social order and artistic photography . . . [Photography] is a secretion of the capitalist mode of production."[4]

To intervene in this conversation, in which Marx seems to both correct the way we see the world under capitalism and critique the reliance on vision itself,

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this essay offers a simple but important proposition; namely, that Marx's critique of commodity production and bourgeois ways of seeing is actually aligned with, rather than in opposition to, the discourse of photography—a seemingly "empirical" and technological vision. Responding to the new medium, both consumers and producers used tropes of alienation, anonymity, fragmentation, and abstraction to describe the effect of being captured by the photographic lens.[5] In this way, we can read photography not merely as a "secretion" or product of capitalist practices, but rather as a *medium* for analyzing such practices. And as I will show, Marx's reading of the laboring body is not a repudiation of mechanical reproduction or "empirical" vision, but rather an engagement with a wider nineteenth-century conversation about the impact of visual technology on the body and identity.[6] Moreover, reading Marx through such an engagement with the discourse of photography complicates how we read the conceptual and economic climate in which Marx wrote his critique, as well as how we read that critique itself. That is, if Marxist discourse is anticipated by the language of photography itself, how does this change how we read Marx?

In order to begin to answer this question, my focus will be fairly narrow—resting on two specific and interrelated tropes that we find both in photographic discourse and in Marxist analysis. The first of these is bodily fragmentation and reassembly. As Marx puts it, the generic "expenditure of human brains, muscles, nerves, [and] hands" shapes the "body of the commodity": "all these *membra disjecta* come together for the first time in the hand that binds them into one mechanical whole."[7] Marx describes the process of production as a form of artistic bodybuilding—one that mechanically "takes" pieces of bodies and puts them together. Given the mechanical or technological character of both taking and "binding" these bodies, Marx's description recalls the art of photography more so than other visual mediums. In fact, in the 1850s and '60s "art photographers" such as Oscar Gustav Rejlander and Henry Peach Robinson were creating photographic images by combining figures from different images and even suturing single bodies from multiple models (see figures 1–3). As Robinson argues: "It is sometimes necessary to print a single figure from two negatives: Ophelia is an example of this kind. The head was taken from one model, and the figure from another."[8] In such cases, the photographic body and its private identity were torn apart: made abstract, anonymous, exchangeable, and endlessly divisible. Using the technology of "realism," these photographers produced new and fictional bodies that existed only in a photographic space. In other words, the technology of realism *produced* what appears to be its opposite: the nonexistent, the fictional, and the abstract.

While these photographers were attempting to mimic the aesthetic standards of painting, they were also responding to a generalized sense that ordinary photographs were not "realistic," failing to capture individuality or identity. As Robinson asserts: "I maintain that I can get nearer to the truth . . . with several

Fig. 1. Henry Peach Robinson, "Studies for *Bringing Home the May*" (1862). By courtesy of the National Media Museum / Science and Society Picture Library.

negatives than with one."[9] In other words, Rejlander and Robinson blur the boundary between realism and fiction not only by using photography to represent scenes and encounters that never occurred, but going further, they argue that such photographic fictions are both *more* realistic and more *photographic*. As Rejlander puts it, "I never see a photograph containing many persons in which they do not all look like a series of distinct figures, that won't mass together, and this effect appears to me to be unavoidable . . . In photographing groups I should prefer to produce the figures singly, or by twos or threes, and combine them in printing afterwards, which can be done satisfactorily . . . without any violation of pictorial truth."[10] For Rejlander, by failing to achieve "pictorial truth," the photograph failed to capture truth itself. This perceived need to make the photograph "realistic" through a form of photographic fiction stemmed from a widespread conviction that the photograph could not represent individuality, particularity, and even the temporal moment—what Roland Barthes calls the "that-has-been-there" of the photograph.[11]

Yet, what is important to understand is that art critics and other writers were already representing ordinary photographs as internally fragmented and the photographic body as infinitely divisible. One writer in 1855 describes a run-of-the-mill family photograph in the following terms: "the figure as wooden as a figure

Fig. 2. Oscar Gustav Rejlander, "Study for *The Two Ways of Life*." By courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

head, the limbs *perfect dissected members,* that might be dead bones in Ezekiel coming oddly together."[12] For John Leighton, such fragmentation defines the photograph as such. As he writes in 1853, "[M]any photographic pictures may be cut up into several pieces, all beautiful, but no particle can be removed from a work of art without detriment, since it possesses unity."[13] Even without using photographic technology to move and remove subjects, for many Victorian writers the photographic body was always already "cut up" because it lacked any organic "unity." Thus, photography provided a way of visualizing some of the same issues Marx will take up—namely, the relationship between laborer and product, part and whole.

The second trope I focus on here is that of "abstraction." To be clear, throughout this essay I use the words "abstract," "homogeneous," and "anonymous" interchangeably, and I do so with Marx's description of labor power as "human labour in the abstract" (*Capital* 166) specifically in mind. In my reading, Marx's "abstract" body is infinitely divisible and reproducible, always faceless and necessarily interchangeable—both with other forms of value and with other bodies. And it is through these characteristics that I link Marx's image of the laboring body to the

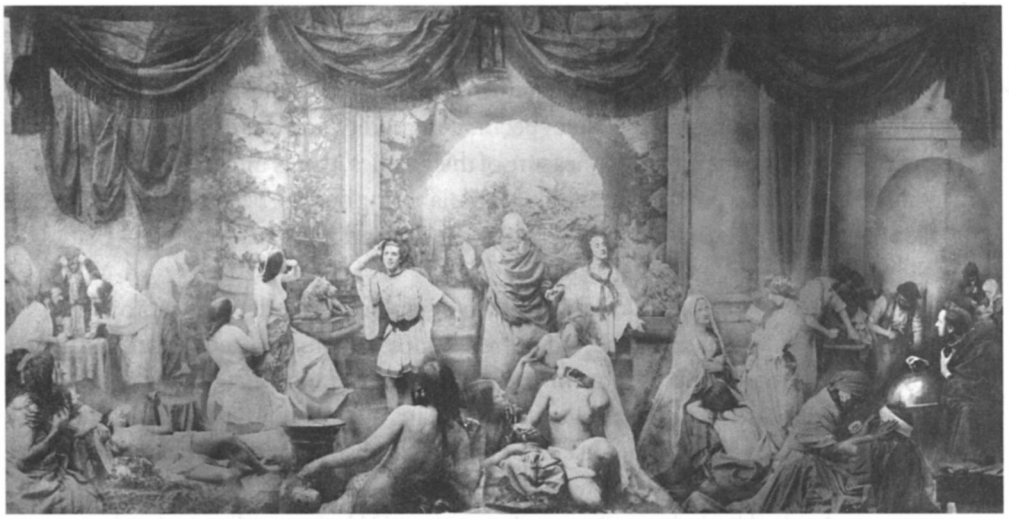

Fig. 3. Oscar Gustav Rejlander, *The Two Ways of Life* (1857). By courtesy of the Science Museum / Science and Society Picture Library.

body that emerges in nineteenth-century photographic practice and photographic discourse. In the accounts of many photographers of all levels (even street photographers), critics, and consumers, rather than recording identity, photography erases it. Stories on photography in nineteenth-century journals often offer cases of mistaken identity and even posit a market for images of anonymous and interchangeable people—a market where photographic "likeness" is irrelevant.

For example, in an article from *Household Words*, "A Counterfeit Presentment" (1858), a literary celebrity is desperate to avoid having his photograph taken and circulated, because he fears no photograph could give a "correct idea of the original." A photographer finally compels him to allow the photo by bullying him with the logic of supply and demand. Apparently, in the logic of the market, he is eminently replaceable: "[Y]ou are aware . . . that, when a demand reaches a certain height it must be supplied . . . [K]nowing your objection to sit for a photograph, I have been compelled to look amongst my stock for something like you.'"[14] Hardly a "likeness," the photograph offers "the lineaments of a church warden mixed with those of the professional burglar, but whether the church warden turned burglar or the burglar turned church warden, it was impossible to determine" (72). While (judging from this specimen) the author's fear that a photograph could never represent him accurately is well founded, his insistence on photographic realism misunderstands the function of a photographic economy in which likeness is beside the point.

And this photographic anonymity is not represented as the exception to the rule but, at times, as a rule necessary to the functioning of the photographic economy. For Marx, too, abstraction and anonymity are the foundation of economic

exchange: "[I]t is not money that renders the commodities commensurable. Quite the contrary. Because all commodities, as values, are objectified human labor, and therefore in themselves commensurable, then, values can be communally measured in one and the same specific commodity, and this commodity can be converted into the common measure of their values, that is into money" (*Capital* 188). In other words, it is the ability of the laboring body to become the equivalent of all other bodies—that is, its homogeneity and interchangeability—that allows for monetary exchange itself.

In focusing on the link between photographic and industrial reproduction—both of which are expected to reproduce in standardized, exact, and "objective" forms—what is most important to understand is that *what* is reproduced in both cases is not individuality/specificity, but rather abstract value. The worker reproduces not "him/herself," but rather an abstract and interchangeable quantity of labor power. For many Victorian writers, the photograph reproduces not an individual body, but rather an abstract one.[15] Understanding technological reproduction in these terms also helps bring together the two tropes I have just discussed: bodily fragmentation and abstraction. At first these may seem to be opposing terms. Yet the laborer cuts himself into pieces ("human brains, muscles, nerves, [and] hands"), not as identifiable parts, but as both abstract values and *reproducible* values. More important, it is the abstraction of the body in the first place that renders its parts divisible and interchangeable.

Certainly Marx's sensational narrative painstakingly recounts capitalism's violent and extravagant extractions. In Marx's theory of exploitation, labor itself takes the form of a bodily expenditure, which must be returned: "The production of labour-power consists in his reproduction of himself or his maintenance. For his maintenance he requires a certain quantity of the means of subsistence . . . [I]n the course of this activity, i.e. labour, a definite quantity of human muscle, nerve, brain, etc. is expended, and these things have to be replaced. Since more is expended, more must be received" (*Capital* 275). Scholars such as Elaine Scarry have memorably linked the failures of this biological economy both to physical pain and disruptions of "human consciousness" in general.[16] However, Marx admits that this strict economy of bodily exchange is a theoretical fiction. It turns out that workers are often paid late or not at all. Ultimately, Marx's laborer can reproduce his or her bodily value without receiving a return on his or her corporeal expenditure. Even when unpaid, the laborer can always "resume the exchange anew."[17] In other words, the laborer in Marx's theory seems to have a body that exists and works outside of the contingencies of the human and the biological.

Along the same lines, essays on nineteenth-century photography often read like a gothic novel or horror film, with limbs extracted and heads cut off. As Ronald Thomas notes, tropes of photographic "execution" imply that "the photograph not only silences its subjects but takes their lives as well."[18] Yet, like Marx's laborer, the photographic subject survives, despite the homicidal tenden-

cies of mechanical reproduction. As photographers, critics, and consumers argue, what makes a photographic body *photographic* is that it is already both divided and interchangeable—both abstract (not really you) and reproducible (its parts can be moved and removed without injury). In other words, it survives because it embodies not an individual body but a reproduced and reproducible one. As I will go on to show, it is the language of photography—the photographic imaginary—that offers the closest analogue to Marx's indestructible laborer, both in the nineteenth century and now. Moreover, in pointing out such links, my purpose is not merely to suggest that photography "illustrates" Marx's theory. Not only did the conversation around photography constitute a theory of the body, exchange, and reproduction in its own right, but Marx's theory of the laboring body can be read in terms of photographic reproducibility.[19] This essay, then, offers not to limit or narrow the purview of Marx's diagnosis of capitalism, but rather to open a different conversation about the discursive, technological, and visual context of *Capital*.

"No Exchange without Likeness"

For Marx, commodity production depends both on the division of the laborer's body and on a kind of artful bodybuilding that I have argued resembles the kinds of photographic montage produced in the mid-nineteenth century. As Marx writes, commodities are "merely a number of parts fitted together" (*Capital* 474). The work of commodity fetishism is, to a large extent, the work of composing bodies and body parts into the seductive and smooth contours of attractive merchandise—the work of making a commodity body capable of casting "wooing glances" at consumers (204). The "body of the commodity" is a composition of two apparently heterogeneous groups of objects—natural materials and laboring bodies: "The physical bodies of commodities are combinations of two elements, the material provided by nature, and labour" (133). Marx defines this labor as an objectified form of the laborer's body, but in the form of severed body parts: a "productive expenditure of human brains, muscles, nerves, [and] hands" (134). While the performance of labor seems to divide the body of the worker into disposable parts, the division of labor performs a primary dismemberment in preparation for this "productive expenditure" of body parts:

> [The division of labor] converts the worker into a crippled monstrosity by furthering his particular skill as in a forcing-house, through the suppression of a whole world of productive drives and inclinations . . . Not only is the specialized work distributed among the different individuals, but the individual himself is divided up, and transformed into the automatic motor of a detail operation . . . [It] is developed in manufacture, which mutilates the worker, turning him into a fragment of himself. (481–82)

The division of labor makes men into "monsters" in order to collect them and their embodied labor more efficiently. It at once "cripples" a body by transforming a whole body into a single part and multiplies the uses of an individual body by dividing it up into parts, each of which can be used for specialization. While the division of labor seems to mimic the operations of synecdoche, in which a whole body is reduced to a single and representative part (the worker as a "hand," for example), Marx stresses how the division of labor makes it impossible for a body so divided to be represented at all. Parts can only refer to parts, because "the individual himself is divided up." That is, the productive divisions of manufacture seem to make the referential divisions of synecdoche impossible.

But as fragments of individual laboring bodies are passed "from hand to hand" (*Capital* 455) in the process of production, they become inseparable and indistinguishable from the parts of the commodity being assembled: "[A]ll these *membra disjecta* come together for the first time in the hand that binds them into one mechanical whole" (462).[20] Blurring the distinction between embodied commodities and commodified bodies—between components that look like body parts and body parts that look like components—Marx figures production as a form of artistic and mechanical labor, an artful composition of the "*membra disjecta*" of labor. Turning imperfect monsters into perfect products becomes the aesthetic labor of commodity fetishism.[21]

For Marx, however, what makes this entire process possible is a form of abstraction—a preparatory labor that transforms literal and "concrete" bodies and different acts of labor to a quantifiable and "homogeneous" labor power: "Equality in the full sense between different kinds of labour can be arrived at only if we abstract from their real inequality, if we reduce them to the characteristic they have in common, that of being the expenditure of human labour-power, of human labour in the abstract" (*Capital* 166). Marx reads this production of an abstract resemblance among laboring bodies as an economic and even mechanical production of "likeness." Quoting Aristotle, Marx writes: "'[T]here can be no exchange without likeness [*Gleichheit*].'"[22] But while Aristotle insisted that it is "impossible . . . that such unlike things can be commensurable, i.e. qualitatively equal" (151), Marx argues that it is the abstraction of human labor that makes this economy of "likeness" possible: "What is the homogeneous element, i.e. the common substance, which the house represents from the point of view of the bed, in the value expression for the bed? Such a thing, in truth, cannot exist, says Aristotle. But why not? Towards the bed, the house represents something equal . . . what is really equal, both in the bed and the house . . . is—human labor" (151).

In order to become a "body of value [*Wertkörper*]," an exchangeable body, an economic body that matters, the commodity must be composed of bodies that don't matter. It must embody and express a measure of value that takes the form of "a congealed quantity of undifferentiated human labour" (*Capital* 155). Moreover, it is the ability of the laboring body to become the equivalent of all other

bodies that allows for monetary exchange—the creation of a "universal equivalent" in the form of money. As Marx writes, and as I quoted earlier, "[I]t is not money that renders the commodities commensurable. Quite the contrary. Because all commodities, as values, are objectified human labor, and therefore in themselves commensurable, then, values can be communally measured in one and the same specific commodity, and this commodity can be converted into the common measure of their values, that is into money" (188). The "likeness" of "undifferentiated," abstract laboring bodies makes possible the unlikely exchange of different commodities.[23]

Marx's analysis of the relationship between exchange and "likeness" implicitly invokes questions of *visual* sameness and difference, and hence participates in a wider cultural conversation about new forms of visual representation and "likeness," such as photography. Labor itself seems to act as a mechanical practice, a technology (*technê*) for taking "likenesses." If making every-body the same seems hardly "photographic," this same rhetoric of "likeness" as sameness, as the effacement of difference, was associated with photography throughout the nineteenth century. Moreover, in Marx's analysis labor is at once visible and invisible, literal and metaphorical:[24] "[C]oncrete labour becomes the form of manifestation of its opposite, abstract human labour" (*Capital* 150). Marx's theory of commodity production seems to render the opposition between the tangible and the abstract impossible. To put it another way, labor produces the paradox of a *visible abstraction.*[25] That is, commodity exchange not only makes all laboring bodies look the same, but also produces a "likeness" between abstraction and materiality. And if, as Marx insists, the practice of labor is what makes all other equivalences function, one can reformulate Aristotle's phrase: there can be no exchange without a technology of likeness.

Rendering bodies and body parts abstract and interchangeable, the production of commodities capitalizes on a technology of likeness and composition. Production reduces difference to the illegibility of sameness, in order to reproduce difference in full-bodied products. Difference returns with a difference in bodies repackaged as "new and improved." Earlier in Marx's discussion, commodity production appeared to demand at least a double composition: the composition of fragments from different laboring bodies, and the combination of these body parts with natural raw materials. However, as we have seen, abstraction both reduces laboring bodies to "homogeneous human labor" (*Capital* 202) and transforms them into an abstract raw material. Moreover, while Cvetkovich criticizes Marx for a "gender-blindness" in representing "a labor force that is for the most part either ungendered or implicitly male" while not representing women at all, it is precisely the work of capitalism's habitual abstractions to efface such bodily inscriptions of gender and identity.[26] Marx and Engels's *Communist Manifesto* invokes the sensational spectacle of an emasculating industrial labor—"the labor of men superseded by that of women"[27]—but it immediately diffuses this threatening displacement

with the more disturbing diffusion of gender itself: "Differences of age and sex have no longer any distinctive social validity for the working class. All are instruments of labor" (88).[28] Abstracted by capitalism into an "incoherent mass" of labor (89), working-class bodies can only be marked as "socially valid" by being rendered *unremarkable*. In other words, rather than doing violence to gendered bodies, capitalism does violence to gender and particularity itself.[29]

Yet, even as a mass of abstract raw material, the individual worker never has enough physical capital to create a finished product. Literally parceled out in advance into the small change of an abstract corporeal expenditure—a "productive expenditure of human brains, muscles, nerves, [and] hands" (*Capital* 134)—this grotesquely divisible body of the laborer never seems to add up to a whole body and only prepares "the raw material for another worker or group of workers. The result of labour of the one is the starting point for the labour of the other" (464). The laborer's body can be used and reused, combined and recombined to create more commodity-bodies. As Marx writes later, the "particular worker . . . is merely a limb of th[e] aggregate worker," the totality of "socially combined" labor power (1040). The divided "partial operation" (457) of the individual laborer not only renders his or her body only partially operative, but also transforms the parts of his or her body into an entirely disposable raw material; a "finished" product can always become the raw material for another product: "Although itself already a product, this raw material may have to go through a whole series of different processes, and in each of these it serves as raw material, changing its shape constantly, until it is precipitated from the last process of the series in finished form, either as means of subsistence or as instrument of labour" (289). Providing only non-vital members for the commodity body, the entire laborer's body is composed of an excremental substance, as recyclable as the "dust heaps" of Victorian England. The lifelong labor of the worker, then, consists of a continual passage from "dust to dust."

Caught in an invisible temporal position between process and product, part and whole, the laboring body seldom sees the light of history. Even the laborer's home falls into both a historical shadow and a literal obscurity. While, as Marx argues, the worker is "not at home" when he is forced to work in the factory,[30] he is not at home when at home, either: "The cellar dwelling of the poor man is a hostile dwelling . . . a dwelling which he cannot regard as his own home . . . but where instead he finds himself in *someone else's* house."[31] Offering no domestic "sweetness and light," this uncanny home provides only a continuation of the day's dark labor: "Man returns to a cave dwelling . . . A dwelling in the light . . . ceases to exist for the worker" ("Meaning" 148). Working and living, eating and sleeping in a dark room, labor is safely closeted in history's darkroom. But labor disappears from history not once, but twice. In a second form and different connotation of abstraction, consumers can only buy and sell commodities as wholes if they forget that they are composed from fragments of labor. They can only re-member the patchwork commodity by forgetting its composition from so many pieces of

men. Already reducing its bodies to the invisible statistics and abstract figures of a simple mathematical problem, exchange demands that consumers "forg[et] in the nick of time" (*Manifesto* 111) in order to prevent even abstract laboring bodies from becoming visible.[32] As Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer write in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, "all reification is a forgetting."[33] Producing an economic narrative that depends on amnesia, labor's abstract and reusable body forms the invisible condition, the negative image of bourgeois history.

"The Body without Fatigue"

> [H]is laboring capacity exists in the same mode as before . . . Capital has consumed it, and because it did not exist as a thing, but as the capacity of a living being, the worker can, owing to the specific nature of his commodity—the specific nature of the life process—resume the exchange anew.
>
> —Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*

Reading Marx's discourse of "likeness" in the way I have done above, there are a number of parallels between Marx's reading of labor and production and photographic discourse and practice.[34] First, both photography and labor operate as technologies for producing "likeness" or abstract sameness. As I have argued, many writers and photographers insisted that rather than recording individuality, photographic "likeness" rendered everyone "like" everyone else. For Marx, the economic system creates a "likeness" between all laboring bodies in order to establish an abstract and objective measure of quantitative value—the category of labor power. Second, production transforms the body of the laborer into an always already divided, partial, and reusable raw material. Never an inviolable organic whole, the divisible body of the laborer can profitably become raw material at a moment's notice. For many writers, what distinguished photography from other arts was precisely its lack of unity, and photographers capitalized on the fragmentation of the photographic subject to move bodies into new scenes and to even create new bodies. Third, just as composition photography produced the perfect artistic body by combining the abstract body parts of anonymous photographic subjects, commodity production depends on and creates an abstract and generic body whose parts can be combined with other bodies. Photographic and economic production seamlessly combines the "*membra disjecta*" of its component parts. Finally, in a broader sense, photography makes visible the way exchange is made possible by the effacement of difference.

More important, however, is how Marx posits the production of labor power in visual terms, as a kind of abstract portraiture that can be reproduced indefinitely—what I will go on to read as a form of "photographic" reproducibility. Able to market his or her body as a form of abstract and renewable potential energy, a

"congealed quantity of undifferentiated human labour" (*Capital* 155), the worker can enter the market as an owner of a "peculiar commodity"—that of objectified "labor-power" (272). But if labor power is a reified form of the laborer's body, how does this body-in-pieces appear on the market, and what relation does it have to the body that performs the work? If laboring bodies are diminished by ill treatment and exploitative practices, does their value or appearance as "labour-power" suffer?

At first labor power seems to represent an accurate composite image of the laborer's complex body and powers. As Marx writes, "we mean by labour-power, or labour-capacity, the aggregate of those mental and physical capabilities existing in the physical form, the living personality, of a human being, capabilities which he sets in motion whenever he produces a use-value of any kind" (*Capital* 270). But despite the possibility of producing "use-value of any kind," the power to labor turns out to be limited to the tautological task of reproducing "labour-power." As Marx tells us, the worker is responsible only for "the reproduction of the value of labour-power" (430). Labor power, then, is the power of self-replication personified. Already an embodiment of the "value of labour-power," already an image both of labor power and of the capacity for reproduction, the worker produces an exact reproduction of himself or herself as an abstract body of value. In the contract between labor and capital, this form of self-portraiture is the only labor that counts.

For Marx, it is this contract that makes possible the entire sphere of production and, more specifically, enables the transformation of money into capital:

> In order that its possessor may sell it as a commodity, he must have it at his disposal, he must be the free proprietor of his own labour-capacity, hence of his own person . . . For this relation to continue, the proprietor of labour-power must always sell it for a limited period only, for if he were to sell it in a lump once and for all, he would be selling himself, converting himself from a free man into a slave, from an owner of a commodity into a commodity. He must constantly treat his labour-power as his own property, his own commodity, and he can do this only by placing it at the disposal of the buyer, i.e. handing it over to the buyer for him to consume, for a definite period of time, temporarily . . . For the transformation of money into capital, therefore, the owner of money must find the free worker available on the commodity-market; and this worker must be free in the double sense that as a free individual, he can dispose of his labour-power as his own commodity, and that, on the other hand, he has no other commodity for sale, i.e. he is rid of them, he is free of all the objects needed for the realization of his labour-power. (*Capital* 270–71)

Selling the capacity to reproduce his or her body as a commodity rather than selling the body itself, the "liberal subject" of this "free" market becomes the owner of a renewable and reproducible quantity of value. Labor power can only become

a commodity to be bought, sold, and reproduced if it is only a *reproduction* in the first place. In order to fully distinguish the laborer from the slave, the worker loans the use of his or her capacity to labor, the capacity for reproduction, for only limited amounts of time. The laborer is only "free" to become a commodity once the reproduction of his or her body becomes both a function of time and an embodiment of time—what Marx calls a quantity of "congealed labour-time" (130). Once his or her free time has a price and a form, he or she can sell both time itself and the representation of time well spent.

But labor power is a function of time in two other ways: the value of labor power is measured by the time taken to produce it, and the exercise of labor power takes place in the future: "The value of labour-power is determined, as in the case of every other commodity, by the labour-time necessary for the production[,]and consequently also the reproduction, of this specific article" (*Capital* 274). The process in which labor power is produced is always "consequently" a process of reproduction, because labor power exists at once in the present and the future. Both a product of time and a representation of time yet to be spent, the temporality of labor power has a split personality. It is simultaneously visible and invisible, a material expenditure embedded in the body—"that very labour-power that exists only in his living body" (271)—and a potential reproduction of that body at a later date. That is, the body of labor power is an "anachronism," a specter that haunts two temporalities at once.[35] The bodily expenditure and reproduction of labor power has not yet taken place, but can only be sold if it has a quantifiable and *visible* form, measured in advance by the time it takes to reproduce that form. Laborers must already appear to be a representation of abstract labor power that can reproduce itself in the future. The capitalist promises to pay for labor power based on how labor's ability to reproduce itself in the future is written on the laborer's body. But unlike a promissory note or credit card, which promises to deliver the value it represents but in a different form, the laborer perfectly embodies the value it will reproduce. Reading this in terms of the discourse of photography I have explored, one could describe this form of proleptic representation of potential labor power as "photographic" both in terms of its perceived objectivity and in terms of its abstract nature. The laborer's body "photographically" represents the body of (abstract) value that will appear again at the end of the laboring process. To put it another way, the laborer appears on the market as a photograph of a photograph that has not yet been taken.

Nevertheless, Marx attempts to securely position the laboring body within a strict economy of bodily exchanges and returns:

> Labour-power exists only as a capacity of the living individual. Its production consequently presupposes his existence. Given the existence of the individual, the production of labour-power consists in his reproduction of himself or his maintenance. For his maintenance he requires a

> certain quantity of the means of subsistence . . . [I]n the course of this activity, i.e. labour, a definite quantity of human muscle, nerve, brain, etc. is expended, and these things have to be replaced. Since more is expended, more must be received. If the owner of labour-power works today, tomorrow he must again be able to repeat the same process in the same conditions as regards to his health and strength. His means of subsistence must therefore be sufficient to maintain him in his normal state as a working individual. (*Capital* 275)

For Marx, the laborer is responsible for two forms of reproduction in order to survive: a production of labor power and the production of a body with the power to labor. The worker must reproduce his or her body as the commodity of labor power in order to earn the means of subsistence and must reproduce his or her body as a worker capable of continuing the process of reproduction:

> The owner of labour-power is mortal. If then his appearance in the market is to be continuous . . . the seller of labour-power must perpetuate himself . . . by procreation. The labour-power withdrawn from the market by wear and tear, and by death, must be continually replaced by, at the very least, an equal amount of fresh labour-power. Hence the sum of means of subsistence necessary for the production of labour-power must include the means necessary for the worker's replacements, i.e. his children, in order that this race of peculiar commodity-owners may perpetuate its presence on the market. (275)

In Marx's lexicon, survival and "subsistence" translates into the survival to reproduce a perfect body of labor power. Whether making commodities or children, the laborer merely embodies the capacity for faithful reproduction.

If laborers can only mechanically reproduce the value their bodies represent, reproduce, and receive each day, efforts to exploit labor by paying less for labor time appear to violate the contract between labor and capital as well as economic common sense: "This result, however, could be attained only by pushing the wage of the worker down below the value of his labour-power. With the 4s. 6d. which he produces in 9 hours, he commands one tenth less of the means of subsistence than before, and consequently the reproduction of his labour-power can take place only in a stunted form" (*Capital* 431). The failure to accurately compensate the expenditure of laboring bodies only results in the production of "stunted" laborers who produce "stunted" labor power—the production of monsters who reproduce themselves as monstrous products. Marx insists that labor power cannot be thought outside of a laboring body and the means of subsistence necessary to that body's survival: "Their value is expressed in its value" (277).[36] Even the mechanism of exploitation seems to be rooted in a strict bodily economy:

> Let us examine the matter more closely. The value of a day's labour-power amounts to 3 shillings, because on our assumption half a day's labour is objectified in that quantity of labour-power, i.e. because the means of subsistence required every day for the production of labour-power cost half a day's labour . . . The fact that half a day's labour is necessary to keep the worker alive during 24 hours does not in any way prevent him from working a whole day. Therefore, the value of labour-power, and the value which that labour-power valorizes in the labour-process, are two entirely different magnitudes; and this difference was what the capitalist had in mind when he was purchasing the labour-power . . . What was really decisive for him [the capitalist] was the specific use-value which this commodity possesses of being a source not only of value, but of more value than it has itself. This is the specific service the capitalist expects from labour-power, and in this transaction he acts in accordance with the eternal laws of commodity-exchange. In fact, the seller of labour-power, like the seller of any other commodity, realizes its exchange-value, and alienates its use-value. He cannot take the one without giving the other . . . The owner of the money has paid the value of a day's labour-power; he therefore has the use of it for a day, a day's labour belongs to him. On the one hand the daily sustenance of labour-power costs only half a day's labour, while on the other hand the very same labour-power can remain effective, can work, during a whole day, and consequently the value which its use during one day creates is double what the capitalist pays for that use; this circumstance is a piece of good luck for the buyer, but by no means an injustice towards the seller. (301)

Rather than attempting to evade the laws of "equal" commodity exchange or the "natural" law of the laborer's bodily needs, the capitalist extracts more value merely by operating within his rights. The value of the laborer's time still equals the value of the means of subsistence, but the laborer reproduces that value in half the time allotted for the working day. Having reproduced his or her body by reproducing the value of labor power, the worker receives only as much as it requires for that body to reappear in the same form the next day. Expenditure after this point, apparently, requires no return. Marx will go on to explain at length how the manipulation of time, both through an extension of the workday and through greater productivity, serves to produce even greater surplus value.[37] For the purpose of our discussion, however, all I want to point out is that, for Marx, surplus value can be produced while still respecting a strict biological economy in which (ironically) there can be no excess or debt.[38]

But as Marx admits, this closed economy turns out to be only a useful theoretical fiction: "The labour-power is sold, although it is paid for only at a later period. It will therefore be useful, if we want to conceive the relation in its pure

form, to presuppose for the moment that the possessor of labour-power, on the occasion of each sale, immediately receives the price stipulated in the contract" (*Capital* 279). In the sale and purchase of labor power, credit is the rule rather than the exception, because there is always a period of time between the performance of labor and its payment. There is never an exchange involving labor that does not institute some form of credit and debt. Earlier in our discussion, the capitalist had appeared to extend credit to the worker by paying for a reproduction of labor power that would take place in the future: "[T]his new value only replaces the money advanced by the capitalist in purchasing labour-power, and spent by the worker on means of subsistence . . . [T]he new value of three shillings appears merely as a reproduction" (316).

But the worker only appears to be in a form of debt to the capitalist. His or her "reproduction" of labor power only appears to be a replacement for and repayment of money already received. As Friedrich Engels tells us later in a footnote, "in reality it is the worker who does the 'advancing' to the capitalist, not the capitalist to the worker" (*Capital* 325). In buying the worker's "labour-time," the capitalist literally buys the time in which to pay the worker back for his or her valuable time. Rather than the immediate transaction imagined by Marx in order to simplify his discussion of labor power, the exchange of this "peculiar commodity" of labor power and labor time is peculiarly untimely. It produces a suspended exchange more like the obligatory reciprocity of gifts outlined in Marcel Mauss's *The Gift*. As Jacques Derrida interprets Mauss, in the gift economy, what the gift gives and demands is a certain time in which to return it: "The gift is not a gift, the gift only gives to the extent that it *gives time*. The only difference between a gift and every other operation of pure and simple exchange is that the gift gives time."[39] Giving time by selling time, the traffic in labor power operates according to the temporal logic and temporal currency of credit. The capitalist's promise to pay for labor power gives the laborer the "gift" of time in which to perform his or her "labour-time." Yet after this labor is performed, the capitalist has received two gifts in one: the laborer's "gift" of "labour-time" and the "gift" of the time in which to return it.

Insisting that laborers living from hand to mouth cannot live on time and promises alone, Marx warns that laborers are in danger of being paid only by rumor—by *word of mouth*:[40]

> In every country where the capitalist mode of production prevails, it is the custom not to pay for labour-power until it has been exercised for the period fixed by the contract, for example, at the end of the week. In all cases, therefore, the worker advances the use-value of his labour-power to the capitalist. He lets the buyer consume it before he receives payment of the price. Everywhere the worker allows credit to the capitalist. That this credit is no mere fiction is shown not only by the occasional loss of the wages the worker has already advanced, when a

> capitalist goes bankrupt, but also by a series of more long-lasting consequences. (*Capital* 278)

Despite the well-established and routine nature of suspended exchanges between labor and capital, Marx argues that the worker's "gift" of time puts the laborer's body at risk by giving too promiscuously—by giving without the assurance of an immediate or even future return on his or her bodily investment. Moreover, one of the "long-lasting consequences" of this credit economy is that it produces an inescapable and self-perpetuating cycle of credit. Without money, workers are often dependent on the capitalist for necessary goods, which are sold to them on credit.[41] Yet even the overpriced means of subsistence available to the worker are inferior. "[O]bliged to buy on credit," workers are "tied to the shop which gives [them] credit" (279) and are not free to shop around for better quality products: "Englishmen . . . knew well enough that man . . . is destined to eat his bread in the sweat of his brow, but they did not know that he had to eat daily in his bread a certain quantity of human perspiration mixed with the discharge of abscesses, cobwebs, dead cockroaches and putrid German yeast, not to mention alum, sand and other agreeable mineral ingredients" (359).[42] Unfortunately, not living on bread alone, laborers must find a way to reproduce an increasingly deficient body as a full body of labor power while receiving an insufficient replacement for the body they have now promised to reproduce a second time: first, when they sold their labor power on credit to the capitalist, and second, when they bought the insubstantial means of subsistence on credit. Caught in a cycle of insufficient and diminishing returns, it seems that the worker can never have enough bodily wealth to cover his or her growing expenses.

But if Marx's concern that the laborer loses in this waiting game of credit is "no mere fiction," the strict bodily economy that he insists must be maintained is both a theoretical fiction and an impractical fantasy.[43] It becomes obvious that in order to participate in the economy of labor power, in order to become a laborer in the first place, the worker must be able to repeatedly reproduce his or her body without directly receiving a replacement for the expenditure of bodily material. Able to reproduce himself or herself as a full body of labor power without being paid with "corporeal coin" (*Critique* 121), the body of labor must be able to dispense a bodily value it never possesses. Both paying and being paid on credit, the daily task of the worker is to create something from nothing.[44] Despite Marx's insistence that the value of labor power is unaccountable outside of a specific laboring body, its health and its necessities, the worker survives and reproduces labor power each day even at wages below the means of subsistence—even in an apparent condition of impossibility for the performance of labor. Rather than having to be "withdrawn from the market by wear and tear" like metallic currency (*Capital* 275), or producing products in a "crippled state" of value (277), labor power continues to reproduce itself as a well-rounded, full, and healthy body even if the body producing that value is

worn. As Derrida puts it in *Specters of Marx,* "wear no longer counts . . . one no longer counts in that way" (77). While, as Marx and Engels argue, these worn and shrunken workers "must sell themselves piecemeal" (*Manifesto* 87), they are magically never out of body parts. Ironically, the very process that systematically places laborers in a dangerous liaison with crippling conditions transforms the laborer into what Slavoj Žižek refers to (in another context) as a "sublime" and indestructible body—a body "exempted from the vital cycle."[45]

Conclusion

Reading Marx alongside the discourse of nineteenth-century photography demonstrates that Marx's theory of the fragmented and abstract laboring body—a body of value rendered "like" all other bodies—was part of a larger cultural conversation about technology and the body, "likeness" and individuality, identity and exchange. This conversation was not only carried out by philosophers and theorists but also by a wide variety of people and in a variety of formats—from the street to the studio. Along the same lines, it also becomes clear that photography is not *simply* a "secretion," symptom, or even agent of capitalist practices. Instead, those in the business of photographic production (many of those who wrote on photography were photographers themselves) were responsible for theorizing how visual technology produced forms of alienation and abstraction. In this context, while Marx uses the tropes of this conversation for a far-reaching and consciously radical critique, his reading of the body in the age of mechanical reproduction is not *in itself* radical.

At the same time, Marx's theory of a laboring body that seemingly exists beyond the contingencies and limits of the biological is best understood in the context of photographic discourse and technology. This body seems out of place in Scarry's, Cvetkovich's, and even Marx's own narrative of physical pain and economic exploitation. Yet the laborer's status as a laborer in the first place is based on what I have argued is a form of photographic reproducibility in three ways. First, Marx conceives of labor power as at once a form of "objective" visual reproduction, produced in advance of the laboring process (as a form of advertising) and at the end (as an abstract body of value). In other words, labor can only be sold in the first place as a reproduction and as an embodiment of reproducibility. Second, both the laborer's body and the reproduction of that body have value only if the reproduction is an abstract "likeness"—a "homogeneous" or "congealed" set of exchangeable values. In this sense, "objectivity" (in terms of quantification) and abstraction are aligned. Finally, Marx makes clear that the laborer's reproduction of himself or herself as "labor power" is not impaired by the deterioration of the laborer's "real" body. In terms of commodity production, he or she exists as both a virtual and a reproducible body. That is, Marx posits an impossible or "sublime" body as the *foundation* of the economic system he analyzes.

By reading *Capital* in the context of photography, we can see that Marx does not simply critique bourgeois, objective, or "empirical" forms of vision. Instead, his critique of commodity production is surprisingly aligned with a medium that many view as the embodiment of bourgeois vision and empiricism. Yet in the nineteenth century, photography and its "objectivity" were already being theorized in terms that both anticipate and help to explain Marx. In both photography and *Capital,* "objectivity" is already associated with what appears to be its opposite—effacement of individuality and abstraction. Moreover, Marx's seemingly invincible laborer most closely resembles the infinitely reproducible photographic "subject." One can read the laborer's ability to reproduce himself or herself indefinitely and without return as a photographic talent—a *negative* capability. In order to sell his or her labor, the laborer has to visually represent the image of labor power he or she would produce. And in order to participate in the economy, in order to reproduce labor power, the worker must be capable of an infinite and abstract self-reproduction. Like the photographic negative, the laborer must be able to produce an infinite number of self-portraits in perfect condition, despite the increasingly imperfect condition of the "original" laboring body. To put it another way, unsightly laboring bodies reproduce a body of value that always remains productively photogenic. In this sense (to borrow a phrase from Stanley Cavell), "what photography calls thinking" is essential for fully understanding Marx's own "thinking" in *Capital.*[46]

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Notes

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1. Arguing for a Marxist skepticism of photographic representation and production, other critics such as Allan Sekula, Jennifer Green-Lewis, and Miles Orville have linked photographic reproducibility and commodity production in terms of their shared regularity and perfection of reproduction and replication. From Victorian critics and admirers to contemporary theorists following Walter Benjamin, the camera has been compared to the industrial machine. Allan Sekula notes that nineteenth-century photographic studios were often referred to as "daguerreotype 'factories'" that set up "an assembly-line style division of labor." "Photography between Labor and Capital," *Mining Photographs and Other Pictures, 1948–1968: A Selection from the Negative Archives of Shedden Studio, Glace Bay, Cape Breton,* ed. Benjamin H. D. Buchloh and Robert Wilkie (Halifax, Nova Scotia: Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1983), 222. Jennifer Green-Lewis offers a good survey of Victorian

figurations of the photographer as an "operator" of a machine. As she argues, the analogy to the factory was at once used to celebrate and legitimate the photographic image as "objective" and to denigrate the photographer as a mere laborer, an "operator" of a machine: "Critics of photography's claim to higher status relentlessly employed metaphors of machinery and assembly-line work." Jennifer Green-Lewis, *Framing the Victorians: Photography and the Culture of Realism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 41. Miles Orville argues for a shift in the way the camera was viewed from the nineteenth to the twentieth century. While the nineteenth century saw the camera as "an unwieldy machine," the twentieth century exalted the authenticity of an irredeemably mechanical reproduction. Miles Orville, *The Real Thing: Imitation and Authenticity in American Culture, 1880–1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 198. Paul Virilio updates the analogy to the factory and follows this metaphor to World War I, in which the pictorialist photographer Edward Steichen organized the production of aerial photographs: "Steichen was to organize an aerial intelligence image production 'like a factory,' thanks to the division of labor (the Ford car assembly lines were already in operation in 1914!)." Paul Virilio, *The Vision Machine,* trans. Julie Rose (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 48.

2. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology,* ed. C. J. Arthur (New York: International Publishers, 1996), 47. As W. J. T. Mitchell argues, Marx "would have seen the camera obscura and the invention of photography with a jaundiced eye, as another false bourgeois 'revolution.'" W. J. T. Mitchell, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 171–72. Mitchell's reading of this metaphor is one of the most sophisticated and extended versions of this approach to Marx's relationship to photography. See also Sarah Kofman's *Camera Obscura: Of Ideology,* trans. Will Straw (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999), which uses the quote from Marx as the basis for an entire book exploring Marx's, Nietzsche's, and Freud's use of the metaphor of the camera obscura.
3. Ann Cvetkovich, *Mixed Feelings: Feminism, Mass Culture, and Victorian Sensationalism* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992), 176; hereafter cited in the text. See also Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994). Raymond Williams offers a good account of the debate over the metaphor of "reflection" in Marxist thinking in his *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977).
4. Siegfried Kracauer, *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays,* trans. Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 53, 61. Although Kracauer seems to have in mind the impressionist style of photographic pictorialism rather than the art-photography of Henry Peach Robinson and Oscar Gustav Rejlander, I would like to accept Kracauer's open invitation to explore the ideologically productive entanglement of capitalism and photography. See also Gisèle Freund, *Photography and Society* (Boston: D. R. Godine, 1980): "[Photography] is the perfect means of expression for a goal-oriented, mechanized, and bureaucratic society founded on the belief that each person has his own place in a standardized hierarchy of professions" (4).
5. For a more extensive account of nineteenth-century responses to photography in terms of alienation and abstraction, see Daniel A. Novak, *Realism, Photography, and Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

6. Certainly, many writers also recorded a faith in the objectivity and indexical nature of the new medium. As scholars such as Nancy Armstrong, Jennifer-Green Lewis, and Helen Groth have most recently made clear, a certain Victorian faith in the photographic image is registered in multiple contexts, from a concern with social control to a hankering for nostalgia. Nancy Armstrong, *Fiction in the Age of Photography: The Legacy of British Realism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999); Jennifer Green-Lewis, *Framing the Victorians;* Helen Groth, *Victorian Photography and Literary Nostalgia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). Moreover, it is precisely because of its *presumed* "indexical" status of photography that photographic manipulation mattered so much to producers and consumers. In other words, photography had such a strong impact on ideas of identity and the body *because of,* and not despite, a sense of the revolutionary nature of photographic representation—both its mechanical origin and reproducibility.

   Nevertheless, as critics such as Jennifer Tucker have argued, the "objective" status of the photograph was a result of a long and complex process of debate and negotiation. And photographic objectivity is also only one part of a complex photographic culture. Jennifer Tucker, *Nature Exposed: Photography as Eyewitness in Victorian Science* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 2005). As Lindsay Smith argues: "[O]nly particular versions of Victorian photography can, and have ever, been able to offer such forms of normative realism." Lindsay Smith, *The Politics of Focus: Women, Children, and Nineteenth-Century Photography* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), 11.
7. Karl Marx, *Capital,* vol. 1, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin, 1990), 462; hereafter cited in the text.
8. Henry Peach Robinson, "On Printing Photographic Pictures from Several Negatives," *British Journal of Photography* 7, no. 115 (April 2, 1860): 94.
9. Henry Peach Robinson, "Composition NOT Patchwork," *British Journal of Photography* 7, no. 121 (July 2, 1860): 190.
10. Oscar Gustav Rejlander, "What Photography Can Do in Art," in *The Yearbook of Photography and Photographic News Almanac,* ed. G. Wharton Simpson (London: Office of Photographic News, 1867), 50. Elsewhere, Rejlander claims that composition photography will make photographic bodies "more perfect." "An Apology for Art Photography," *British Journal of Photography* 10, no. 184, 77. For a different reading, see Jennifer Green-Lewis on the resistance to photographic manipulation, on the grounds that "pictorial photography was inartistic because of its poorly defined relationship to the truth" (55).
11. Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography,* trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981), 76. I use Barthes's much quoted line from *Camera Lucida* here as a shorthand for a certain kind of photographic reading inspired by Barthes's text. I do not, however, claim to (or have the space to) offer a full reading of the complexities of Barthes's theory of the photograph. For more on Barthes's theory, see Jay Prosser, *Light in the Dark Room: Photography and Loss* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005).
12. J. T. Foard, "The Connection of Art with Photography," *Liverpool and Manchester Photographic Journal* 2, no. 2 (1855), 17.
13. John Leighton, "On Photography as a Means or an End," *Journal of the Photographic Society of London* (June 21, 1853), 74.

14. John Hollingshead, "A Counterfeit Presentment," *Household Words* 18, no. 432 (July 3, 1858): 72.
15. See Allan Sekula's "The Body and the Archive," *October,* no. 39 (Winter 1986): 3–64, for a reading of the interplay between specificity and abstraction in the photograph.
16. Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 256. See also Ann Cvetkovich's *Mixed Feelings* on the "visible" aspect of the laborer's pain (167).
17. Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy* (rough draft), trans. Martin Nicolaus (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin Books, 1973), 323.
18. Ronald Thomas, "Making Darkness Visible: Capturing the Criminal and Observing the Law in Victorian Photography and Detective Fiction," in *Victorian Literature and the Victorian Visual Imagination,* ed. Carol T. Christ and John O. Jordan (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 145.
19. While I read *Capital* in the context of Victorian photographic discourse, and while I draw connections between Marx's theorization of labor and photographic practice, it is important to make clear that in this essay I am not drawing causal links between actual photographs or photographers and Marx's analysis. I use the term "photography" as a shorthand for the tropes that I discussed above—tropes of fragmentation and abstraction, anonymity and exchange. Along these same lines, I do not analyze Marx's use of photography as metaphor (as in the line about ideology and the "camera obscura") or references to photography in *Capital.* Such references, in fact, are quite rare. While my focus is not on Marx's encounter with or interest in specific photographs, Marx certainly would have been surrounded by photographic images and studios as he moved about London. At the height of its popularity, three hundred to four hundred million cartes-de-visite (card photographs) a year were sold in England, and London had 284 portrait studios in 1866. Helmut Gernsheim and Alison Gernsheim, *The History of Photography from the Camera Obscura to the Beginning of the Modern Era* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1969), 293–303. Nevertheless, I do not claim that the commodity form and photography are linked *historically* for Marx. Clearly, Marx's own history posits the rise of the commodity form long before the invention of photography.
20. The only times Marx uses this phrase (or versions of it) in *Capital* are to describe the division of labor: "The production of 'wearing apparel' is carried on partly in manufacturing workshops within which there is merely a reproduction of the division of labour whose *membra disjecta* were already to hand" (1:600; see also 462). The phrase "membra disjecta" is adapted from Horace's Satire 4 and has come into common usage as "disjecta membra" (Horace, *Satires, Epistles, Ars Poetica,* trans. H. R. Fairclough [Cambridge: Harvard University Press/Loeb Classical Library, 1934], ll.62; 53). Horace's use of the image of the dismembered poet, however, is slightly different and more complicated. Disqualifying himself as a poet, Horace distinguishes the compositional integrity of a line from Ennius (imitated by Virgil) and a line of his own: "Take from the verses which I am writing now, or which Lucilius wrote in former days, their regular beat and rhythm—change the order of the words, transposing the first and last—and it would not be like breaking up: 'When foul Discourd's din / War's posts and gates of bronze had broken in,' where, even when he is dismembered, you would

find the limbs of the poet." Horace uses the image of scattered limbs, then, to describe a quote and a body that cannot be scattered or mutilated beyond recognition. Horace links his own work to a kind of literary body whose parts can be rearranged precisely because they are untraceable. Adding even more complexity to this figure, the quote Horace uses from Ennius to mark a clear boundary between an inviolable poetic syntax and a more malleable grammar of prose is ironically about a breakdown of boundaries, a reorganization of materials: "foul Discourd" breaks the properly ordered forms of "War's posts and gates of bronze." Paradoxically, in this passage war serves as the model of order and form, violated and dismembered by "discourd."

21. Marx more explicitly links corporeal, economic, and literary composition when he uses the full phrase from Horace with its literary connotation ("*disjecta membra poetae*" [the scattered members of the poet]) to describe the division of labor. See Jacques Derrida's reading of Marx's quotations from Shakespeare in terms of cutting bodies and texts. Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 42.
22. Marx, *Capital,* 151. While the Penguin edition translates this as "equality," I use Tom Keenan's translation of *Gleichheit* as "likeness."
23. As Tom Keenan points out, "What 'allows' exchange to happen is neither the labors nor the uses nor the things themselves but their abstracts, abstractions . . . Being alike is being abstract . . . Relation is abstraction, and the 'expression' or equation of one unit in the other, accomplished in the event of abstraction, is unavoidably a matter of signification or figuration." Thomas W. Keenan, "The Point Is to (Ex)change It: Reading *Capital* Rhetorically," in Emily Apter and William Pietz, ed., *Fetishism as Cultural Discourse* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 175. Keenan argues that the preparatory labor of abstraction "seems to happen *in* the exchange itself" (169).
24. Compare Ann Cvetkovich's reading of the commodity's "double status as material object and sign, simultaneously concrete and abstract" (*Mixed Feelings* 192).
25. For a different reading, see Tom Keenan, who argues that this likeness is not visible but only present "*as a figure,* as something that can be looked at only on paper" ("Point Is," 177). "Commodity exchange is not something visible, not sensory, not something to see or feel . . . So when two things, such as value, 'look alike,' the emphasis falls on the like rather than the look" (174).
26. Cvetkovich, *Mixed Feelings,* 166, 199.
27. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (New York: Penguin, 1967), 88; hereafter cited in text.
28. "Here we are no longer concerned with the quality, the character and the content of the labour, but merely with its quantity. And this simply requires to be calculated" (*Capital* 296). See also *The German Ideology*: "[B]ig industry created a class . . . with which nationality is already dead" (78).
29. For a different reading of "likeness" and labor, see Mark Seltzer's reading of "statistical persons" in *Bodies and Machines* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 106. It is important to note, however, that Marx and Engels already had theorized the "average individuals" of capitalism in *The German Ideology,* when they discussed the status of the individual in a communal relationship based on class: "It follows from all we have been saying up till now that the communal relationship into which the individuals of a class

entered . . . was always a community to which these individuals belonged only as average individuals . . . not as individuals but as members of a class" (85). For Marx and Engels, labor and individuality are mutually exclusive categories, because labor becomes an abstracted and "accidental" condition of life imposed on classed bodies: "the proletarians, if they are to assert themselves as individuals, will have to abolish the very condition of their existence . . . namely labour" (85). The only individuals who can possibly labor are impossible oxymorons—"abstract individuals" (92) and "statistical persons." For more on the culture of capitalism and statistics, see Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment,* and Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia.*

30. Karl Marx, "Estranged Labor," *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* ed. Dirk J. Struik, trans. Martin Milligan (New York: International Publishers, 1988), 110.
31. Karl Marx, "The Meaning of Human Requirements," *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts,* 153–54.
32. See Derrida, *Specters of Marx.* Derrida reads history in Marx as a memory afflicted by a necessary and enabling amnesia: "One must forget the specter and the parody, Marx seems to say, so that history can continue. But if one is content to forget it, then the result is bourgeois platitude . . . So one must not forget it, one must remember it but while forgetting it enough in this very memory in order to find again the *spirit* of the revolution without making its *specter* return" (110). Derrida also deploys the concept of "anachrony" to describe the inheritance of the revolution (and of Marx) that inscribes its own forgetting: "once the revolutionary task is accomplished, amnesia necessarily sets in . . . Anachrony practices and promises forgetting. Bourgeois society forgets, in its sober platitude" (111).
33. Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment,* trans. John Cumming (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), 230.
34. I take the title of this section from Anson Rabinbach's essay "The Body without Fatigue: A Nineteenth-Century Utopia," in *Political Symbolism in Modern Europe: Essays in Honor of George L. Mosse,* ed. Seymour Drescher, David Sabean, Allan Sharlin (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1982), 42–62. Tracing the history of a nineteenth-century theory, metaphysics, and economy of "energy," Rabinbach examines the efforts to realize the fantasy of conserving bodily energy and eradicating fatigue.
35. On anachronism and "spectrality," see Derrida, *Specters of Marx,* 111–12.
36. Quoting Jean Charles Léonard Simonde de Sismondi, Marx suggests that attempting to separate labor power and the cost of maintaining laboring bodies only produces ghosts: "To conceive capacity for labour . . . in abstraction from the workers' means of subsistence during the production process is to conceive a phantom" (*German Ideology* 277). As we have seen, however, labor power can only be "conceived" by conceiving ghosts. Production can only begin if it employs ghostly laborers that embody the "phantom-like objectivity" of labor power, and labor power can only become a commodity if it has a spectral presence, haunting both the present and the future.
37. To cite just one example: "[T]he shortening of that part of the working day in which the worker must work for himself and the lengthening, thereby, of the other part of the day, in which he is free to work for nothing for the capitalist" (*Capital* 438).

38. But though the extraction of surplus value appeared to take advantage of the worker while still honoring the contract between labor and capital to return exactly what the laborer expended, the production of labor power allows for a different and more effective mechanism exploitation. Counting on labor's unaccountable ability to reproduce itself without return, the capitalist can suspend payment indefinitely. Surplus value produced through the extension of the workday is an additional exploitative practice, a surplus on a surplus, because the laboring body already produces more value than it has or will receive. If "[t]he machine is a means for producing surplus-value" (*Capital* 492), the worker has internalized a form of mechanical reproduction that enables him or her to produce surplus value without the help of prosthetic mechanisms. Reproducing his or her body indefinitely and without return, the worker is already a kind of photographic machine.
39. Jacques Derrida, *Given Time: 1. Counterfeit Money*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 41; italics in original.
40. See Derrida on the phrase "*on se paie de mots* . . . one gets paid in words" (*Specters* 61) as a form of counterfeit money. See also Marx's *Critique of Political Economy*: the linguistic play that transforms the worker paid with such oral currency from a "believer" [*der Gläubige*] into a "creditor" [*der Gläubiger*] forms another economic joke at the laborer's expense, offering only to do deferral in different voices (140).
41. "As a further nice development from the credit given by the workers to the capitalist, we may refer to the method adopted by many English coal-owners whereby the worker is not paid till the end of the month, and in the meantime receives sums on account from the capitalist, often in goods for which the miner is obliged to pay more than the market price" (*Capital* 279).
42. See also *Capital,* 358–61, and an essay from *Household Words* titled "Death in the Bread-Basket," by W. H. Wills and Charles Strange, in *Household Words* 2, no.40 (December 28, 1850), 323.
43. Elaine Scarry's *The Body in Pain* represents a contemporary attempt to return the laboring body to Marx's imaginary biological economy. Scarry outlines a metaphysical system based on the projection and return of bodily expenditure, abstracting this biological economy into the larger and more general structure and mechanisms of "human consciousness" and "sentience" (256): "[H]uman beings project their bodily powers and frailties into external objects such as telephones, chairs, gods, poems, medicine, institutions, and political forms, and then those objects in turn become the object of perceptions that are taken back into the interior of human consciousness where they now reside as part of the mind or soul" (256). The "*contractual premise*" and promise of a "remaking" through projection is a promise of a metaphysical return on a bodily investment and is internal to the "artifact" itself (258; italics in original). Scarry argues that capitalism intercepts this valuable "reprojection" (259), putting more and more distance between the artifact and its producer at every stage of production. For Scarry, this inhibited reciprocity creates "problems of sentience," while also giving the worker a "heightened embodiedness" that makes him or her vulnerable to physical pain.
44. See Tom Keenan's "The Point Is to (Ex)Change It," in which he discusses exchanging something for nothing without naming it as credit: "Can you *exchange* something for

nothing? That you can get something for nothing should be clear by now, and if it isn't, the privileged example of the fetish ought to make it so" (182).

45. Slavoj Žižek, *Sublime Object of Ideology* (New York: Verso, 1989), 134.
46. Stanley Cavell, "What Photography Calls Thinking," *Raritan* 4, no. 4 (Spring 1985): 1–21. Cavell usefully links photography to philosophy, specifically modern skepticism (in the form of "Heidegger and Wittgenstein" (2). However, as in his earlier work, he "raise[s] the question of the photographic primarily by way of the moving picture, not by way of the still (so it has come to be called) photograph" (4). The rest of the article addresses film and its relationship to a number of issues, including mortality, the relation between "photographic motion and stillness" (8), the "violence of the camera's creation" (11), and the relationship between the camera and "metaphysical restlessness" (19). While Cavell's article certainly offers a valuable reading of these several films, in my view the equation of photography with film fails to do justice to photography in either a historical or theoretical sense. Film and photography offer different histories and theories of production and reception. More to the point, through the nineteenth century photography was never really one medium. The difference between direct positive processes (daguerreotype, tintype), to the negative/positive process alone translates into an ontological gap. Each form or process offers an entirely different process of production and (especially) of consumption.