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Title: Non-human animals as property: what this means when companion animals are stolen

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Abstract: In much of the Western world, non-human animals are legally classified as property. This has far-reaching consequences for the lives of non-human animals who are entangled in human-centred societies and criminal justice systems. One area where the property status of non-human animals has received little attention is the implications for both non-humans and humans, when non-human animals are stolen. Under UK law, for example, stolen pets are regarded as personal property, with sentences available under the *Theft Act 1968* dependent on the monetary value of the stolen 'item', rather than their cultural and emotional significance or individual welfare and wellbeing. In recent years, these tensions have been challenged by Pet Theft Reform campaigners, leading the UK government to add a new 'pet abduction' offence to the proposed *Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill*.

Lying at the intersection of animal geography and criminology, this paper takes a multidisciplinary perspective to explore the various inequalities associated with sentient beings (dogs) as property. With focus on developments around crime beyond the 'sublime' (dog theft) in England and Wales, we show how theoretical understandings of multi-species networks can be harnessed in political and public contexts to influence policy change and crime prevention. By challenging nature-culture and subject-object boundaries, we also speculate how changes to legislation would further recognition of our multi-species societies.