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Pet Names

*A Critical Geography of Non-human Identity
Construction in Auckland City*

Linda Fay Madden

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ABSTRACT

In this research, my observations of non-human mammals in Auckland City demonstrate how space and identity are mutually constructed. I pay particular attention to the ‘namings’ that serve to situate other species into places (both physical and academic). These ‘pet names’ are explored in terms of the creation, re-creation and co-creation of physical and ideological boundaries, boundaries that emerge through human categorisation, animal agency and interspecies encounter.

In Auckland, spaces of human/nonhuman encounter are moderated by narratives and practices that maintain distance between species. ‘Pet-names’ confer identities upon non-human animals relational to the spaces they are deemed to appropriately inhabit. Such boundaries result in the (at least partial) construction of animal identities. Yet animals themselves do not always pay heed to boundaries, and may indeed establish their own as well or instead. As such, individual ‘humanimals’ transgress boundaries to form interspecies bonds and new spaces of kinship. Empirically, this thesis therefore examines Auckland as a multispecies space, with special consideration of the boundaries – and subsequent transgressions – that are constructed between species.

Drawing on Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts of striation and territorialisation(s), I observe spaces of human-nonhuman encounter through four case studies: a) symbolic spaces (urban farms); b) privatised space (Auckland Zoo); c) public space (stray cats); and d) personal space (kinship bonds with canines). Through the medium of these case studies I address not only how these spaces are experienced, but also how we, as social scientists, apply methodological narratives and practices that often contribute to the construction of categorical ‘animals’.

Reflecting on and re-assembling methods to regard animals as co-producers of knowledge is a parallel transgression, this time of academic boundaries. My thesis thus moves from more distanced approaches toward the construction of a hybridised, ‘inter-special’ academic space. I conclude that animal identities and space are relational, and that both are constructed as a result of more-than-human narratives and bodily interactions with places and other creatures. Auckland's spaces are therefore often the result of multi-species interactions, and by positioning animals as ‘co-authors’ in research we are better able to articulate their agency as both space and knowledge producers.

For my dogs, past, present and future.

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THE NOSE: SNIFFING AROUND THE RESEARCH

Permit me this fancy, if you will: Let us imagine you have just arrived in Auckland City, New Zealand for the first time. As you descend, you peer out your small aeroplane window. The farmland that stretches out beneath you surprises you, as the photographs your friends have shown you of the country gave the impression of mountains, forest and white sand beaches. Not cattle and endless paddocks. Still, it reminds you a little of home, and you look forward to seeing some of the city's fauna once you disembark.

After a night in a hotel near the airport, you set forth into the city. First stop – the Auckland Zoo. Here you can be sure to see some of the indigenous animals! You pay the fee and enter. Wandering the grounds, you see animals familiar to you, but it is not until you walk down the hill at the far end of the zoo that you reach the New Zealand area. And it is all aviaries. You watch the brightly coloured birds for a while, but soon you start to feel as if you could be in any zoo from your home country. There are the 'big draw' animals, the information boards, the fences and glass and souvenir shops. You settle into the stiff café seat with your over-priced coffee and croissant, and people-watch instead.

Later that week you are travelling by bus to the picturesque Northern suburbs. You head over the Waitemata harbour, peering down into the sparkling waters below. There's life in here, you think, but the blue is impenetrable, out of your domain.

The bus stops near the northern side of the Harbour Bridge, and as you disembark at the stop you notice a cat asleep on the seat, and a notice above her. 'This is Merli', the sign says. 'She is old and grumpy, and has decided to live in this bus shelter even though she has a home down the road'. Someone clearly cares for Merli, as she has a freshly laundered blanket on the metal seat and a small bowl of biscuits at the foot of the shelter. As the bus rolls away you reach out to pet her, but the sign was right. Merli does not want to be friends. She snarls and raises a paw to swat at you, as if you were a mouse or rat.

That afternoon you are due to present a guest lecture at the University of Auckland. It goes well, and afterwards you are invited to drinks at the Old Government House. Amongst the formal furniture, grandiose paintings and your somewhat stolid colleagues, you spy a lithe grey cat. "That's Governor Grey", your acquaintance tells you "he was a stray that the caretaker took on". Resting your drink on the arm of your leather chair, you wonder how that scrawny stray has transformed into the sleek, healthy lap-cat before you now. Governor Grey presses his body against you and purrs.

Conversation turns to a discussion about your colleague's pets. There are humorous cat stories, someone has a new puppy for their son, and one young man reveals he has eight pet rats. The woman to your right has stayed silent throughout the exchange, and – wondering how to include her - you turn and ask if she has animal companions. She hesitates for a moment, then fishes in her purse for her wallet. Opening the case, she pulls out a photograph. "This was Betty. I had to get her put down last year". The photograph is of a rather non-descript, black cross-breed dog with a grey muzzle and gentle eyes. "I can't get another pet. I just couldn't bear it", she says, and you wonder if she is about to cry. You manage to mutter an uncomfortable "I'm sorry", and reaching back for your drink you pause a moment to tenderly stroke Governor Grey's soft fur.

This thesis is intended as an examination of this hypothetical visitor's tour, through my own experiences of human-animal encounter in Auckland. It is a tour not just of animal spaces, but of the relationship between the construction of non-human identity and place. And like any tour, it has a start and a finish, but leaves space for the unexpected, for moments of lightness and darkness, and for creatures in the shadows to emerge and take form.

Part I

Introduction

1.1 Animal Sit(e)uations

The reference to ‘pet names’ in my title is intended as a playful nod to the way that humans imbue our animal compatriots with identities that reflect our relationships with them. However, namings are a serious business. Indeed, what we call non-human animals¹ is part of politically, spatially and specie-ally situated processes that actively constitute spaces and identities.

In the character of an assemblage approach, I start this animal journey with a meme (see Figure 1) that reflects many aspects of New Zealand’s wider animal landscape; one that touches upon several of the ideologies that surround both the roles and place of non-humans.



Figure 1: ‘Rounding them up’ internet meme, 2018

¹ From here in I will use the word ‘animals’ in place of the more bulky term ‘non-human animals’, while recognising that humans are of course animals in many (if not most) definitions.

As I wrote my thesis, I also worked part time at an International School. In my shared office, someone (no doubt a maths teacher) had posted a copy of the above joke on the wall. I was especially taken by it, not just because it's funny, but because it reveals several things that both reinforce and usurp the traditional human-animal relationship.

First is the cultural value placed on farming. The joke is particularly amusing to New Zealanders (and Australians) who use dogs to herd sheep in remote areas, and is likely to provoke feelings of national identity and pride in the connection between humans, animals and the land. Of course, the humour is centred on the relationship between farmer and dog depicted in the meme. The dog - a border collie - is positioned as a co-worker, as opposed to the sheep, who remain passive. Thus, the joke relies on an assumption that some humans and animals engage in symbiotic relationships that often rely on shared goals and spaces.

Secondly, the meme emphasises the inherent intellect of the border collie. It is unlikely the joke would be as funny if it was a pug, afghan hound or bulldog 'rounding up' the sheep. It therefore draws our attention to the genetic imprint of animals as inherent to their role-playing. This notion is of great importance through all the case studies presented later in the thesis, as animal performances are constructed around expected modes of behaviour and potential spaces of encounter with humans based on their species, whether on farms, in a zoo, a public park or in the home.

However, here the dog is also transgressive. She or he has worked independently of the farmer, deciding that s/he will take agency, and 'round up' the sheep (both mathematically and physically). Yet while this is undeniably a valuable characteristic when the dog is working for the farmer, had this scenario taken place in real life, it would have no doubt annoyed rather than amused the dog's master. Indeed, it may well have signalled the end of any working dog's career, revealing how the roles of animals are subject to fundamental dichotomies that rely on intricate - and often unspoken - modes of encounter. The meme then, is a provocation towards attitudes that surround animal roles, agency, and relationships to humans and to other animals, as well as taking place within a highly idealised New Zealand landscape. It reveals splits between various species-based identities, evident in both present and absent animals, as well as the positionality of humans in relation to beasts.

Of course, these conflicts occur not only in the sheep stations of New Zealand's rural high country, but also within Auckland's urban spaces. Here animal roles are tailored and restricted to fit neatly within concepts of space. For example, the identity of a wild animal becomes that of 'educator' in Auckland Zoo, or a stray cat may be re-homed if (and only if) s/he is proven to fit expectations of domestic animal behaviour. Subsequently, sets of relations are rendered visible and invisible

according to context, often regulated by boundaries surrounding animal use of either public or private space.

Throughout this thesis, both spaces and identities are referred to in terms of what Deleuze and Guattari identify as ‘territories’. This means that both are tackled as parts of unstable assemblages that construct (temporary) functional structures that both bind and transgress. Territories can thus be understood in terms of institutionalised understandings of animal spaces that reflect the ontological division humans have drawn between ‘us’ and ‘other’ species. By categorising non-humans in accordance with the types of places that they should perform within, spaces become striated. For example, sheep do not belong in the same spatial confines as pet dogs, which leads to (and reflects) distinctions between what constitutes rural space versus urban space.

This research addresses namings in a range of milieus, drawing on four empirical case studies. Each case study confronts examples of animal identity (re)production, and I place special emphasis on the process of naming (as territorialisation) and the spaces of encounter. As such, I refer to these meetings as **sit(e)uations**: moments that include not only sites, but also the confluence of bodies and the situational preconceptions held towards one another.

1.2 Animating landscapes

Although cultural landscapes may dominate humanimal encounters, it nevertheless remains that we live in interspecies communities, or what Donna Haraway (1991) terms “naturecultures”. In a variety of contexts, animal geography seeks to bring the “‘hidden masses’ out of the shadows, understanding the city to be habitat and home for them too” (Braun 2005:646-47), allowing us to review the way Auckland exposes itself as an ethical-political space functioning on multiple levels of understanding between species. Therefore, naming can not only be understood as a process of boundary-making, but also as a deterritorialisation, where animal identities bypass and transgress traditional understandings of where they ‘should’ sit. Through these deterritorialisations new interspecies bonds and spaces of kinship are formed.

My intention is to ‘animate’ some of the less-heard stories from across the human animal divide. Due to the nature of this study, I have been drawn towards ideas of performativity (Butler, 1993; Nash, 2000) and non-representational theory (particularly the work by Thrift, 2000; Lorimer, 2005; Anderson & Harrison, 2010) as strategies for analysing Auckland’s animal landscape. As a result, my thesis assumes that the environment is neither passive nor directed by symbolism or codes. Rather, “the on-going creation of effects through encounters” (Thrift & Dewsbury, 2000:415)

within everyday life is taken to fabricate assemblages dominated by unstable sets of social relations. My thesis therefore follows what Vannini (2015) loosely calls a ‘non-representational style’, as he elaborates in the following quote:

By ‘animating’ lifeworlds, non-representational ethnographic styles aim to enliven, render, resonate, rupture, re-imagine, and to generate possibilities for fabulation. If indeed there is a quintessential non-representational style, then it is that of becoming entangled in relations and objects [ethnographically], rather than studying their structures and symbolic meanings, thus animating the potential of these meshworks for our geographical imagination.

- Phillip Vannini (2015:319–320)

As Ley (1979) pointed out, a methodological commitment to material phenomena, explicit reductionism, implicit determinism and analysis which separates fact from value has often resulted in a tendency for human geography to pursue the format of physical science over sociological theory. Questioning methodology, then, is essential for critical geography. For, while animals exist bodily, they are also constructed intellectually and academically. My thesis therefore also unpacks how non-human identities are often the result of the methodologies employed when studying them. I argue that, historically, this has largely served to confine animals within (human) constructed parameters, thus reflecting – and reinforcing – perceptions of non-human creatures as separate from ‘us’. By situating animals aside from humanity, bestial place is justified as lying beyond both physical and ideological boundaries, and as such the *construction* of animals ultimately results in their *constriction*.

For social scientists, it is timely to recognise how the methodologies we use often position non-humans in a way that supports the constriction of both animal place and expression, and what epistemologies can overcome essentialist understandings of non-humans in order to research animals in new and different ways. In my attempt to ‘do’ geography differently, this thesis reflects on and re-assembles methods in order to regard animals as co-producers of knowledge. In a parallel transgression - this time of academic boundaries – my research moves toward a construction of a hybridised, ‘interspecial’ academic space, in which I treat animal identities and space as relational and emergent. Auckland's spaces are therefore often the result of multi-species interactions that include both more-than-human narratives and bodily interactions with places and other creatures. Through my engagement with them, my thesis re-positions animals as ‘co-creators’ of my research, providing an opportunity to better articulate their agency as both space and knowledge producers.

1.3 Research Questions

The construction of both identities and spaces result from boundary maintenance, enforcement and transgression. More often than we realise (or acknowledge), urban spaces are categorised with implicit relation to the animals that have inhabited them² (see Wolch, 2002). Accordingly, non-human identities and relationships with the spaces in which Auckland's animals dwell often correlate with the encounters they have, or bear the potential to have, with humans. This includes representational, bodily and emotional interactions, and the meanings that are subsequently placed on such relational interchanges.

Primary research question

- How is non-human identity construction related to embodied encounters within Auckland's socio-spatial urban landscape?

Secondary research questions

- What types of 'assemblages' (of people, animals, places, objects, symbols and events) constitute these encounters?
- What boundaries (spatial, structural and ontological) exist that inhibit and invalidate encounters?
- What types of transgressions take place that re-shape these boundaries?
- How can trans-species intersubjectivity be effectively (or *affectively*) documented in academic research?

The above questions highlight two interrelated key concepts – **boundaries and transgressions** – which will underpin my investigations and link areas of research. I focus on how **embodied animal-human encounters** in Auckland's urban landscape result in the construction of animal identities. To meet this goal, my field studies examine:

- a) How non-human identities reflect, reinforce and resist boundaries.
- b) How these boundaries can be transgressed, through spaces and identities that unite rather than divide species.

² I will discuss Auckland's broader animal geography in detail in Chapter 3.

As such, I am viewing the spaces of encounter - and the animal and human actors engaging in encounters - through a 'geographical assemblage' perspective. This refers to the assembly and reassembly of socio-material processes, and the continual, heterogeneous interactions between them. Here, agency lies with humans *and* beasts, as well as the objects, representations, spaces and events in which they cross paths. An assemblage approach allows engagement with my animal subjects to pivot around reciprocated interrelationships between parties each imbued with subjectivity and power. This includes situations in which encounters take place, and detailed investigation of the processes in which actors gather and disperse.

However, I have a dual focus of my research. As indicated in my line of questioning, I am also interested in where and how non-human subjectivities fit into cultural geographical³ practice. Using reflexivity throughout the research process to scrutinise my own successes and failures in engaging with animals as research subjects, I actively analyse and critique existing paradigms. I unpack how and why social science methodologies fail to absorb non-human subjects, as well as documenting the positioned and highly situated narratives that inevitably permeated my research. As a result, my thesis simultaneously becomes a critical geography of 'humanimal' engagement as well as a documentation of specific animal geographies.

1.4 Structuring(s)

As an experiment designed to explore the relationship between method, methodology and research subject, I have deliberately structured my thesis to reflect the interactions between these aspects of the research process. It has become a work of quadruplets, birthing four case studies, each comprising (loose) methodological 'sit(e)uations' and narrative approaches. These are intended as non-linear, and can be read in any order – as if your tour around Auckland took you to the different places that captured your interest as you passed by. However, for the sake of simplicity, I offer a conventional overriding structure.

1.4.1 Part I: Introduction

Part I consists of an introduction that outlines my research agenda, explains my thesis structure and provides an overview of my chapters and four case studies. I also use this section to situate my

³ It must be noted that I take issue with the commonly used expression 'human geography', as this situates geography exclusively within a humanist tradition, reinforcing our elite position as cultural agents. I will instead employ the term 'cultural geography', as I hope that geography has indeed been decentred as interest in the 'posthuman' (see Wolfe, 2003; 2010; Lorimer, 2009; Panelli, 2010; Taylor, 2012) increases.

inquiry in the context of contemporary work in animal geography, and to situate myself as researcher: why I wanted to do this research, and how the project moulded itself around my own interspecies experience.

1.4.2 Part II: Methodology (matters)

I also believe that the approaches, philosophical grounding and actual practices of researching that form our methodologies *matter*. Epistemologically, they reflect our values as researchers and influence our experience of researching, and ontologically, methodologies affect how we understand and categorise our subjects. In Part II of my thesis I not only explore matters pertaining to my methodology, but also *why* it matters. My research design and process is described, using a non-linear conceptual plan that fits with the methodological approach(es) I am taking. Although I reserve discussion of the actual methods applied in each case study to their respective subchapters, Part II justifies my choice of ‘assemblage’ and ‘fluid methodologies’ as my central frameworks, and introduces the key terms used through the thesis.

1.4.3 Part III: Literature review

As this thesis treats methodology as of equal importance to the case studies themselves, I have chosen to focus my literature review exclusively on how methodologies in cultural geography reflect and impact on the way that animals are understood and articulated. Framed as *constructions and constrictions*, I use Part III to argue that the construction of non-human species is a result of the methodologies employed when studying them. I maintain that this has largely served to (re)create boundaries distinguishing animals as physically, emotionally and morally distinct from ‘us’. Throughout Part III my subchapters trace the paths taken by geographers when regarding animals, from the Saurian concepts of domesticity and early conservation approaches critiqued in my first subsection. I then move on to theoretical positions that sit ‘on the fence’ – neither confining nor freeing the animals within them. Here I briefly address postmodernism and feminism as structures which provided geographers with new methodologies to explore more-than-human interactions. My final discussion focuses on the methodologies more applicable to this research, including actor-network and non-representational theories as well as performative, hybrid and affectual geographies. I conclude with a discussion of assemblage as a viable approach to my own humanimal research, both in terms of my case studies as intersubjective encounters, and to the production of my academic work. Part III thus provides in-depth description of the methodological frameworks that underpin my work, and builds on the overview and key terms of the previous chapter.

1.4.4 Part IV: Context

As a crucial part of preparation for this animalised journey I have also included a contextual chapter outlining the range of animal spaces in Auckland. Part IV locates my case studies in the broader spatial and social geographic environment of Auckland City. I pay particular attention to the ways that animal life can be encountered, based on processes of territorialisation. This chapter argues that striation between spaces is a fundamental determinant in the way that animals are understood, and that this is based on ontological assumptions surrounding the place of different animal species in Auckland. Part IV therefore discusses the relationship between social constructions of animals and the historical basis for some of the attitudes surrounding human-animal interaction, their subsequent mobilities, and the spatial boundaries that result, as well as providing some situational examples of the terms ‘striation’ and ‘territory’ that are utilised in my subsequent original research.

1.4.5 Part V: Empirical studies

Part V consists of my four case studies. These accounts articulate the experiential geographies of four different animalised spaces:

- a) Symbolic space – Urban farm animals as icons of national identity
- b) Private space – Animals in Auckland Zoo
- c) Public space – Stray cats in public parks
- d) Personal space – Dogs as family members in domestic space

Although I approach each case study through similar sets of research methods, my thesis structure is intended to be a loose progression from a more distanced stance towards a more emotional, affectual understanding of being-with animals.

In my first two case studies I engaged only indirectly with my animal subjects, focusing more on the spaces they inhabit. In these case studies I was primarily an observer. Documenting humans and animals in local urban farms I was very much a ‘visitor’, and at the zoo I was a paying participant, viewing animals showcased for entertainment and educational purposes. In both spaces, structural boundaries granted me only limited access to non-human inhabitants, which I take to reflect the categorisation of such beasts as agricultural production units, spectacles of leisure and entertainment, and tokens of global conservation objectives.

My last two case studies, though, deal with cats and dogs; animals normally considered to be in closer association with humans. Because of this connection, these are species that we often feel strong bonds with and sympathies for. In these two accounts my interaction with my non-human subjects is deeper and highly interactive. The first is conducted through my volunteer work with an organisation that feeds and cares for stray cats, while my final case study is an intimate account of my own relationships with canine family members. Here I clearly had/have deeply enmeshed, emotionally complex relationships with the animals concerned, as we negotiate and renegotiate spaces in ways not dissimilar to those in which human kin respond with and to one another. Table 1 outlines the research sites and subjects, and is designed as a conceptual overview of the central differences between each.

Table 1: Spaces of inquiry within the thesis and associated subject matter

Space	Site	Animals	Topic	Broad focus	Animal Identity
Symbolic	Urban Farms	Farm	Symbolic values of rurality	Domestication	National icon
Private	Auckland Zoo	Zoo animals	Changing roles of zoo animals	Conservation	Ambassador
Public	Parnell Rose Gardens	Stray cats	Conflicting ideas of rights to space	Citizenship	Pet/pest
Personal	The home	'Family' dogs	Human-canine network building	Kinship	Family member

1.4.6 Part VI: Conclusions

Part VI consists of my conclusions. A synthesis of the research as a whole, this section is comprised of a discussion of the connections (and disparities) between my case studies. Structured first around ontologies, my conclusions return to the research questions by identifying emergent themes of *boundaries*, *territories* and *transgressions*. However, my conclusions also consider epistemologies, evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the methods used throughout the research. This section therefore considers the contribution of my empirical evidence, but also reflects on my experience as

researcher as situational to both methods and subjects. I conclude that modes of encounter with animals relate to spaces and identities, both of which are influenced by research practice.

1.5 Situating the Research: Contemporary literature in animal geography

While it would be a falsity to claim that geographers have not considered animals as part of a shared human-environmental landscape, the field of ‘animal geography’ is relatively new. Building on previous work on animal agency which utilised actor-network theory (see Callon, 2005) and nature-culture borders (see Anderson, 1995, Whatmore & Thorne, 2000), animal geography has gained significant momentum since the publication of Wolch and Emel’s seminal book ‘*Animal geographies: Place, politics, and identity in the nature-culture borderlands*’ in 1998. Corresponding work by authors such as Jennifer Wolch, Jody Emel and Chris Philo demonstrated a breadth of analysis beyond human geography and inspired a new body of geographic study, often referred to as ‘more-than-human’ research. This discussion will briefly trace understandings of non-humans in the discipline’s literature from ‘geographies of animals’ towards ‘animal’s geographies’ (Philo & Wilbert, 2000), and outline the space this thesis intends to situate within this body of work.

Typically, early considerations of animals concentrated on Sauerian notions of domestication and agricultural spread (for example, Issac, 1970; Simoons 1974). Later studies in social science explored the social interrelations between humans and animals (Serpell, 1996) and the bonds between us (Kidd & Kidd, 1987), often assessing how these can influence commercial animal keeping (Hemsworth & Barnett, 1987; Hemsworth *et al*, 1993). In New Zealand, rural images of animals still tend to dominate the way that social identity and understandings of the landscape are constructed. However, there is currently no geographic literature that addresses the significance of rural animals as identity ma(r)kers of New Zealand culture, in spite of the enduring popularity of television shows and online videos that represent the rural life. Indeed, Jones argues that the animalness of rurality is far more strongly represented in popular culture (such as television, film and literature) than it has been in academic readings, and that the richness of animality-rurality is better articulated *affectively*, as the direct result of human-animal co-dwelling (Jones, 2013).

While attempts have been made to investigate farmer subjectivities in relation to animal bodies and concepts of ‘good’ agricultural practice within a neoliberalised and industrialised rural climate (Haggerty *et al*, 2009), literature that deals with identity construction fails to incorporate the role of non-humans. Although it should be noted that some authors have also made attempts to analyse agri-food networks in terms of social relations (Jarosz, 2000; Whatmore 2002), the role of animals

as agricultural commodities (producers of meat, dairy products, eggs, skins and so on) remains the overriding locus of non-human study in this field. Accordingly, literature remains embedded within economic geography and foodscapes (see Le Heron *et al*, 2016). My first case study uses urban farms in Auckland as an example of how animal identity is constructed and maintained to support ideas about nationhood, examining the linkages to hegemonic practices of patriotism, production, domestication and the confinement of animals into bounded space(s).

More frequently, animals are researched with regard to where they sit in the ‘natural’ environment, particularly in terms of pest management (see Clayton & Cowan, 2010) or the preservation of indigenous species. Animals are thus typically framed as ‘villain’ or ‘victim’, credited with moral identities that result from the spatial distribution of their species. Often, this type of identity construction extends to non-human roles within (eco)tourism landscapes. Cloke and Perkins (2005) for example, used whale-watching enterprises in New Zealand to explore how non-human agencies (of ‘nature’) affect the performance of place. The authors observed that even when confronted with actual animal bodies, tourists constructed animal behaviour in a representational sense by ascribing the whales with signifying identities such as “tolerant”, “regal”, “reclusive”, and dolphins as “playful”, “acrobatic”, “mischievous”. These observations of tourist-animal encounters led the authors to conclude that we “tend to see animals as we want to see them, rather than respecting their otherness and their difference” (Cloke & Perkins, 2005:907).

Commonly referred to as ‘identity politics’ or ‘geographies of difference’, the connections and interdependencies between sites, beliefs and bodies have been plotted by geographers to explain the way that places and identities are co-constructed. Processes of urbanisation and globalisation, alongside new technologies and modes of media, have long been understood as threatening the stability of social identities (Rutherford, 1990). As Pratt and Hanson (1994) noted, geography is typically read as a medium for fixing identities and hardening boundaries, and as such we accept the role of place in influencing both individual and collective characteristics (whether domestic, civic, national, or global).

However, theorists such as Doreen Massey (1994, 2005) and Tim Cresswell (1992) drew our attention to the open and heterogeneous nature of places. Rather than essentialising place as singular and static, both Massey and Cresswell emphasised its connectivity and emergent properties, thus opening up possibilities for more fluid identities to take form. Research points to the ways in which places are experienced as relational to our understandings of ourselves. This is particularly notable with regard to people who are ‘othered’ through disability (Kitchin, 1998), gender (see Jacobs & Nash, 2003 for a feminist reading, or Berg & Longhurst’s 2003 work on

masculinities), sexuality (Knopp, 2004) or changing landscapes of ethnic diversity (Tilley, 2006). Yet in spite of a significant body of geographic literature examining the relationship between identity and place-making, it is difficult to find examples that stretch beyond the human-animal boundary.

David Harvey (1995) also discussed the ‘politics of difference’ in terms of place: the situatedness and positionality of bodies in locations governed by space-time. While primarily concerned with class, he did address the complications arising from essentialising identities in space as ‘othered’, and advocated a relational approach that accepted identity politics as coterminous with the assembly and disassembly of space, time and bodies. Questioning how transformative processes lead to the isolation of bodies in space (such as incarceration in prisons or subjection to degrading social and economic livelihoods) Harvey asks how this will in turn lead to divergences in the evolutionary processes and subsequent differentiation of bodies.

Such inquiries easily lend themselves to human-animal interstices, particularly considering how readily animal bodies are altered (grooming, shearing, milking, neutering, microchipping, de-beaking, slaughtering, among many other practices). However, literature fails to directly address these issues, nor does it investigate the way that bodily practice echoes (and reproduces) parallel discourses of cleanliness, dirt and sanitation. In this context Harvey’s ‘incarceration’ is revealed as a need to keep animal and human ‘nature’ separate due to fears of disease, attack and madness (Palmer, 2004), and the fear of – to use Deleuze and Guattari’s (1980/87) famous terminology – “becoming-animal”.

My research attends to this incarceration by addressing how the construction of animal identities is intimately related to the spaces they are given licence to occupy. This is most obvious with regard to my second case study, addressing the distinctive (and captive) species-based territories within Auckland Zoo and the tensions surrounding representations of ‘wildness’. However, my field work also investigates how spatial categorisations are themselves the result of such non-human occupation as animals transgress classification and create new identity-spaces. To this end, I follow works within animal studies that credit non-humans with ‘agency’ (see Philo & Wilbert, 2000; Irvine, 2004; Haraway, 2003, 2008; Law & Miele, 2011). In this sense, agency refers to the capacity for decision-making (whether conscious or unconscious), and subsequent enactments in and with the world.

Thus, agency carries potential for resistance, and some scholars support a re-evaluation of animals as a transgressive social group who might “wriggle from the cages, fields, and wildernesses allotted to them by their human neighbours” (Philo, 1995:656). Early studies drew analogies between feral

animals and convicts on the loose (see Ingold, 2002), while Cresswell (1996) described an escaped chimpanzee in London as a transgression of ideas of place. Similarly, Wolch *et al* (1997) investigated the way that cougars in California have been depicted as ‘criminal’ as they are increasingly forced into interaction with suburbia, and Yeo and Neo (2010) examine conflicts between humans and macaque in urban Singapore.

More recently, the *ethics* of interspecies boundaries has been tackled in contemporary geographic literature. Carter and Palmer (2017) question the moral implications of transgression as an anthropocentric conceptualisation. Using the culling of ‘problem’ dingos as an example, the authors recognise that transgression is generally seen as one-way (animals into human territory), and how this framing results in asymmetric power relations that can have dangerous repercussions for non-human animals. Transgression thus requires the identity construction of the animal as ‘undesirable’ in place, as well as agency on the animal’s part to take place in any said undesirable spatial context. This is particularly pertinent to the framing of stray and feral cats that forms the basis of my third case study. Indeed, Van Patter and Hovorka (2018) situate such framings explicitly within dialogues surrounding the purification of public spaces (also see Griffiths *et al*, 2000 and Loyd & Hernandez, 2012, who address public perceptions of domestic versus feral cats in the United Kingdom and United States respectively).

Such ethical landscapes depend on processes of boundary construction and maintenance, and many new geographies of conservation and planning utilise Foucault’s idea of ‘biopower’ as a useful starting point from which to contextualise the politics of non-human subjectivity. As he emphasised in a series of lectures between 2003 and 2007, Foucault articulated biopower as the power over other bodies, often referred to as the power to “make live and let die” (Foucault, 2008:241). However, biopower requires the autonomy of both parties, and led to a surge of interest in interspecies ‘biopolitics’ which relate to the production of new forms of life and ways of living (Lorimer, 2013). Interestingly, biopolitical research generally deals with non-human collectives (as opposed to whole species) located in multispecies spaces. Srinivasan, for example discusses the biopolitics of animal management with regard to dogs (2013) and turtles (2014), and Biermann and Mansfield (2014), Hodgetts (2016), and Hillier (2017) all use the framework to reconceptualise conservation biology, pest management and animal subjectification.

Likewise, biopolitics has enjoyed favour in new ‘rural’ geographies. Following Risan’s (2005) and Holloway’s (2007) work on farming technologies, Lorimer and Driessen (2013; 2016), for example, use biopolitics to discuss the rewilding of Heck cattle, genetic regulation of farm animals and livestock breeding. Yet although relevant to trans-species ethics, I have chosen not to deploy a

Foucauldian framework as (like Philo recognised) attributing agency and intentionality to animals in a manner normally reserved only for humans raises questions as to whether it is appropriate to interpret transgression as occurring in a situation where the parties involved lack any shared systems of political meaning (Philo, 1995:656).

Instead I favour the Deleuzian concepts of territorialisation and deterritorialisation. These concepts better fit with work that deals directly with boundaries, transgressions and ensuing topologies of identity, particularly as my emphasis is on embodied spaces of encounter (of which governance is a part, but not central). Most evident in organisational theory, Deleuzian concepts have been employed to investigate more-than-human entanglements in the urban planning realm (Buser, 2013; Houston *et al*, 2017; Neaf, 2017) and regional development (see Woods, 2015 for an application in a New Zealand rural landscape). Like biopower, territorialisation/deterritorialisation permits researchers to draw connections between colonial animal space as ‘invaded’ and broader ecological concerns (Menozzi, 2013). Thus, Deleuzian conceptualisations of space can also provide freedom for academics to rethink humanism as *the* way forward in what has now been accepted as the ‘Anthropocene’ (Stark, 2017), and allow us to create new territories of/for research.

Of course, territories require boundaries – boundaries which are often fiercely defended. Typically understood in terms of spatial borders (nations, states and sovereigns), boundaries are also ontological, dividing social groups based on culture, practice and species. A Deleuzian framework is more interested in the porous nature of these boundaries, regarding territories as entanglements or constellations rather than striated, homogenised spaces. Although still viewed through a lens of ecological management, recent literature directly addresses the organisation of space and time to territorialise place through boundary creation, and examines non-human ‘disturbance’ as boundaries are breached, resulting in re-territorialisation of space. Sage *et al* (2016), for example, discuss the way that building projects were disturbed due to the presence of frogs, Buller (2014) reconfigures ideas of ‘wildness’ by re-placing non-domestic animals into urban life, and Ojalammii and Blomley (2015) explore the tensions surrounding more-than-human legal boundaries between sheepholders and wolves in Finland. However, such studies are grounded in European or North American contexts of wildlife and space, and no comparable research has yet been conducted in the postcolonial Asia-Pacific region, let alone within the unique geographic boundaries of Aotearoa/New Zealand (see section 4.1 for a more detailed discussion of Auckland’s social and physical landscape).

Clearly, animal identities are constructed subject to territorial sites and processes. Yet these identities more often than not preclude *legitimised* participation in urban life. I therefore centralise

‘citizenship’ as a chief facet of boundary demarcation. Citizenship was of pressing concern in geographical literature throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, especially as a response to an increasingly globalised and mobilised world (see Smith, 1989; Clark, 1994; Painter & Philo, 1995; Purcell, 2003). Physical boundaries, and the control of these borders, are a significant part of processes that configure bodies as citizens. As Lynn Staeheli notes:

These efforts are promoted as ways to protect citizens within a country from ‘illegal’ migrants or from those who would do harm, whether by taking jobs from citizens, by imposing burdens on taxpayers, by challenging social norms, or through physical violence. Yet these border controls are part of a larger dynamic of exclusion and ‘othering’ that is integral to nation states and the ways that citizenship is often imagined and reinforced through discourses of fear.

–Staeheli (2011:2-3)

Once we reframe territories as distinct from nation-states, it is clear that boundaries also serve to support a separation between humans-as-citizens and animals-as-noncitizens. According to Donaldson and Kymlicka (2014) such distinctions are primarily due to an unjustifiably narrow focus on citizenship which is necessarily reliant on *democratic* political participation. However, in spite of not sharing cognitive understandings of political processes, the authors believe that agency and embodied action allow non-humans to constitute political practice(s). In a similar vein, the article entitled ‘*Nonhuman citizens on trial: The ecological politics of a beaver reintroduction*’ by Crowley, Hinchcliffe and McDonald (2017) considers engagement in ecological politics as a potential way in which non-humans might be (re)considered as integral agents involved in planning and conservation processes.

While the authors do not directly dissect the idea of what constitutes a ‘citizen’, this commentary broadens the concept to include both participation in landscapes and shared political situations. In other words, citizenship is reframed as *agency* and the power to claim space. Processes of spatial appropriation are not new, with Clark (1994) proposing an unfolding ‘counter public’ who perform in contested spaces. However, there are few examples of how animal participation in space can challenge the hegemonic ‘larger public’. This challenge can be achieved through embodied

performance as opposed to democratic involvement⁴, and includes animal action autonomous of humans, and hybridised engagements between animals, humans and spaces (see Instone & Sweeney for an account of human-dog public performances in Melbourne). My work takes this view as a starting point, considering animals not as democratic citizens, but as what Hinchcliffe (2015) defines as *agents of change*, whose sheer presence affects political outcomes. The stray cats in my third case study, for example, are considered in terms of their capacity for the co-constitution of sites/situations that do not depend on shared language.

However, this materiality is often expressed not in public, but within the home. For example, Young's (2013) account of he and his wife's rapport with their cat Rocky denies common language as a prerequisite for communication, instead arguing that shared meaning is a valid system of interspecies intersubjectivity. Often transgressing traditional ideas of what constitutes 'family', I explore the concept of kinship as a (sometimes messy) web of social relations, inclusive of - and co-created with - non-human members. As Charles (2014) points out, pet keeping has transformed human-animal relationships, and blurred the lines between what spaces animals traditionally inhabit. The changing societal attitudes towards pets are increasingly addressed through the lens of posthumanist ontologies (see Wolfe, 2003; 2010). Examples include Irvine and Cilia's (2017) research into perceptions of the role of pets in the family, and Heidi Nast's 'critical pet studies' (2006).

Likewise, Rebekah Fox (2006) investigated renegotiations of pet-human relations through daily, interactive lives, and Julie Urbanik (2012) uses pet-keeping as way to re-evaluate animal-human relationships. Although less common, there are specific examples of familial environments that include non-human domesticated species, in particular, Smith's (2002) seminal article about co-living with rabbits, and Power's (2008; 2012) work on dogs as part of multi-species household in Australia. This posthuman approach is of particular importance, as it centers the research focus not just on the animal as the recipient of human emotion, but instead as affectual beings in their own right.

By deconstructing concepts of interspecies language, identity and place, posthumanism thus challenges singular models of the human subject to blur and enliven the boundaries between the human and the nonhuman (Lorimer, 2009). Here, non-human identity as family member overrides

⁴ The "reclaiming" of a dog park from undesirable humans (drug users and prostitutes) recounted by Kymlicka and Donaldson (2011) is one such case of non-human political involvement. Here, dogs (alongside their human companions) took license to freely use the park. The authors argue that the process ultimately validated canines as holding both a right to public space and the agency to determine how space is utilised, pointing out that "humans are essential "enablers" in this story but ... it couldn't have happened without the participation of the dogs. Their physical presence played a key role in the political process, resulting not only in their re-integration into public life and space, but in a more general change to grassroots activism in the process" (Kymlicka & Donaldson, 2011).

that of civic citizen, as it is “usual for domestic groups to include both human and other animals and for affective, inter-species connections to be formed between them” (Charles, 2014:717). Yet the dynamics of human-pet relationship are subject to change. While some species have become increasingly integrated into everyday rituals and homemaking practices⁵ (see Mosteller, 2008 or Power, 2008), they have simultaneously become subject to increased controls over their behaviour and movement, especially with in public space (Fox & Gee, 2017). An important implication is that ‘pet’ species ought to be removed further from their ‘wild’ behaviours, and therefore must perform within limited parameters when outside the home.

Subsequently, new animal identities emerge that are neither ‘animal’ nor ‘human’, but hybridised through involvement in kinship networks. Indeed, use of the term “fur babies” (as a reference to pets) has snowballed, indicating how animal identity can become enmeshed in familial environments that include parental responsibility, but also control, competition and affection (see Tuan, 1984). Animals give new meaning to ideas of family, and processes around pet keeping increasingly use terms of kinship (*fostering* a stray, *adopting* a puppy). Likewise, the dramatic increase in ‘petrepreneurship’ – services and products targeting animals such as doggy daycare, pet salons, luxury boarding facilities and raw food outlets - indicates that animals are now considered legitimate members of spaces of both care and consumption. While ‘petrepreneurship’ is now academically reviewed within business and the hospitality industry (see Dotson *et al* 2010; Taillon *et al* 2015; and most significantly, Mules 2015), this phenomenon is yet to be considered seriously in geographical studies. Such shifts in identity are clearly relational to processes of urbanisation and consumption, as well as ontological shifts that situate non-humans as members of social groups alongside their human companions. My final case study takes up this challenge, focusing on the ways that canine place within the family is co-constitutive with pet dogs’ identities in the social landscape of Auckland.

Thus, the ways that animal identities are understood (and appropriated) constitute both spatial and ontological realities. In turn, this can be interpreted as a much more reciprocal process than simple subjugation (by morphologising and categorising), instead allowing us to visualise place and identity construction as actively encultured by animal materiality. Animals become more than signifiers, more than mediums through which human understanding of place are linked through animal representation and symbology. Rather, space, proximity, performance and practice are dialectical; there is a becoming-animal, rhizomic nature to both place establishment and the construction of what an animal (as individual, as species and as category) ‘is’.

⁵ On the other hand, increased distaste surrounding the keeping of exotic pets (see Slater, 2014) has meant that it is far less acceptable to position some other species within the home, such as lions, monkeys, chimpanzees or bears.

Drawing from posthuman and materialist thought, my research builds on the burgeoning field of animal geographies by contributing more-than-human narratives from New Zealand into a pool of scholarship ill-represented by the Southern Hemisphere as a whole. Presenting a poststructural analysis of the co-creation of animal identities in Auckland, I explicitly examine the relationship between space(s), modes of encounter and the construction of multiple and shifting identities. Attending to four specific ‘entanglements’, I document a range of encounters between animals and humans in Auckland’s urban landscape. My case studies unpack associations between animal species and place types that form within shifting assemblages of animals, people, places, discourse and legislation, and demonstrate how these assemblages result in materialities that reflect memory, identity and feelings of belonging.

1.6 Situating the Researcher

Non-humans are often invisible, omitted from urban geographies as if the only life there is human. Yet as I traversed the city in my daily life – dog-walking, going to work, taking my children to school, getting the groceries – I observed animals in many different capacities going about their business in Auckland’s public space. It was these observations that spawned my case studies, triggered foremost by my own responses to these situations of encounter. I see this research as an opportunity to undertake three tasks: to extend our human perceptions of who has a right to urban spaces; to give Auckland’s animals a voice in geographical literature; and finally to understand how my own personal participation in the project has moulded itself around (and in turn re-moulded) my own interspecies experiences.

As a long-term, strict vegetarian I have always held a deep interest in animal rights, and consider non-human animals as equal to humans in terms of our sentience and capacities for emotional understanding. However I wanted my thesis to be less an exercise in ethics and more an exploration of non-human roles in my home city. Of course, that is not to say that I am not concerned with questions of power, and I accept a starting position that animals are a ‘subaltern’ group; a population outside of the cultural hegemonic structure. In this case, Auckland’s animals are excluded from many aspects of political and social life (yet are accepted into others), and I am interested in how this relates to geographies of space and identity.

I was born in Auckland. The physical landscape is second-nature to me – there are few places left unfamiliar. I was raised on trips to the Auckland Zoo and to the urban farms that form the backbone of my later case study. I went on school trips to animal-themed leisure parks, and produced school assignments that calculated the economic value of animals. Emotionally, I felt profound dismay as a

child at seeing trucks of cattle or chickens on their way to a slaughterhouse, and sorrow for both creature and owner when seeing a crushed cat on the roadside. I never went to horse races, but the annual Easter Show and its incorporation of the history of ‘A&P’ shows⁶ permeated my understanding of animals as part of a rural-urban landscape.

I had pets: my childhood cat Gypsy (who was nothing like her namesake), then the antithetical Bas, a tortoiseshell cat who was repeatedly recalled from the SPCA⁷ compound after making new homes at (to my understanding) random neighbouring abodes. I experienced the thrill of being (finally!) able to walk at night ‘alone’ as a female, chaperoned by Nasir, a flatmate’s massive Rottweiler-German Shepherd cross. Moving back after fifteen years away, I brought my dogs and cat with me, as well as my young human family. I suffered the difficulty of finding accommodation, a reinforcement of anthropocentric understandings (and legislation) that precluded animals from rental properties. I have adopted animals both formally and informally, and lost animals, through old age, illness and through their own sudden disappearances into an urban world they no doubt understood in ways inherently distinct from my human comprehension.

I suffered the death of my first dog, and bore the demise of the second pragmatically. I fought to include my current dog into my home life, and ultimately it is he who shares my bed rather than my dog-intolerant (then) live-in boyfriend. Contrary to my original intentions, only one section of my work is dedicated to my own pets – living and dead – instead moving beyond my personal experiences with/between ‘my’ animals to explore a range of ways animal bodies act alongside human bodies in Auckland’s public and private spaces. Through this process, I also stepped aside of singular understandings of animals as ‘pet’ or ‘companion’ and considered more deeply the variety of animal identities, both those overlaid by humans, and those self-constructed and maintained by beasts themselves.

Over the course of this research I have lost animal friends and made new animal friends. All of these things took place within Auckland-spaces that are striated and coded to include and exclude animals. Even these small moments in my own embodied human-animal history reveal boundaries

⁶ The colloquially known ‘A&P Show’ stands for ‘Agricultural and Pastoral Show’. As a showcase of farming life, the weekend long event is a culturally iconic feature of New Zealand’s rural landscape, and demonstrates the strong historical ties forged between the Royal Agricultural Society and the country’s smaller A&P Associations. Featuring competitions judging the quality of farm animals, as well as farming skills (including the traditional ‘farmers wives’ activities of homecrafts and baking), the show was a cornerstone event of most rural communities. Although no longer a mainstay of Auckland’s festival circuit, the A&P show is still an annual performance in outer-urban suburbs such as Kumeu, Waiuku and Pukekohe.

⁷ I use the acronym SPCA to refer to the *Royal New Zealand Society for the Protection of Animals*. Established in 1872, the SPCA now consists of approximately forty one animal shelters around the country as a unified national entity. The organisation follows the tenets of the British Royal SPCA, concentrating on the prevention of animal cruelty and promotion and provision of animal welfare services.

and transgressions: those special moments of freedom (for Bas, who explored new places, or for me out walking with Nasir), or moments of despair, where the human-animal divide remained uncrossable. Boundaries and transgressions are at the same time ontological and material, as our idea of animal-placements mean that non-human bodies are continually fixed in space. Yet borders are not just definitive, but are also unfixed, mutable and sometimes even obsolete. And as this research demonstrates, it is through rethinking what it is to ‘be animal’ and ‘be-with-animal’ that embodied transgressions become visible.

1.7 Why Auckland?

Quite simply, I selected Auckland because it is where I live (see Heidi Nast’s notion that we are ‘always everywhere in the field’, 1994). As a solo parent of three young children, travel to a glamorous location was both beyond my means and grossly impractical. So, while I may have pined to study street dogs in India or to research cat cafes in Tokyo, my life is actually quite ordinary. Furthermore, my city is ordinary. And it is this very ‘ordinaryness’ that is of value. I study not an exoticised view of animals, nor examples of extremist behaviour between humans and animals. Instead, I focus on encounters *ordinarily* experienced in my cityscape.

Yet to be ordinary does not mean that a place is not unique. Indeed, Auckland lends itself well to animal studies due to the following factors:

1. Its physical geography. Auckland’s vast area means that it encompasses a wide range of topographical features and land uses. This diversity extends to animal life, and provides ample scope for a range of case studies. Furthermore, New Zealand’s position far from the rest of the world has meant that New Zealanders have few opportunities to engage with ‘wild’ animals, rather experiencing most non-companion animals via controlled environments such as farms and zoos. Farming has had particular influence over regional areas, and still proves a strong identity marker even among Aucklanders, reflecting the geographic legacy of New Zealand as an offshore farm for the United Kingdom. Zoos too, perform functions of international relations, and practices of ‘gift-giving’ animals or obtaining them for public display are one way in which the country builds and preserves bonds with countries afar.
2. Its human geography. New Zealand’s history of human inhabitation only spans approximately one thousand years, meaning that Auckland has a relatively recent history of humanimal encounter. Māori had limited animal interactions beyond

fish and bird life until the advent of Western colonialism less than three hundred years ago. This recent history allows one to draw connections between human and animal colonisation by situating humanimal relations within a postcolonial history. Other notable features of Auckland's human geography include an especially high pet keeping ratio⁸, and a particular set of politics surrounding animals' right to place in the city (where animals are largely excluded from public transport, restaurants, pubs or entertainment venues) that reflects 'modern' understandings of animal human interactions. Finally, Auckland is experiencing significant urban growth, and is the primary gateway city into New Zealand. As such it has the country's greatest diversity among its human residents, and is undergoing systemic and legislative changes to accommodate demographic and cultural shifts.

3. Current debate around conservation and animal rights is a hot topic. There is considerable media attention surrounding the tensions between pet and 'protected' species, and legislation to control cats in order to preserve indigenous species is proposed. Furthermore, like much of the Western world, there is evidence of an upsurge of support for vegetarianism and veganism, and increasing emphasis on food production (including organic farming and small markets selling vegetable and animal products). These trends have sprouted lifestyle fairs, magazines and websites that make explicit or tacit reference to animal life (and death). Interest in international animal cruelty debates (such as the Chinese dog eating festival) is considerable, and debate surrounding the ethics of trading 'wild' animals is also topical, particularly with regard to the acquisition of new elephants at the Auckland Zoo.
4. Auckland's human-animal stories and history are not yet represented in contemporary geographic literature. I therefore feel it is timely to situate Auckland – ordinary as it is - as a space where attitudes to animals are flexing and adapting, resulting in shifting identities of animals beyond simply food production.

⁸ According to 2016 statistics, 64% of New Zealand households contain at least one companion animal, second only to the marginally higher ratio of the United States of 65% (New Zealand Companion Animal Council Inc., 2016).

1.8 Boundaries - Limiting the research

Somewhat ironically, I have had to construct a series of arbitrary boundaries for the sake of this project. First, I drew a spatial boundary. Since the 2010 amalgamation of four city councils into a ‘Supercity’, Auckland as a jurisdictional entity has become too diverse in terms of land-uses to be useful for the purposes of my research. Therefore I focus on the area that was previously ‘Auckland City’, with emphasis on suburbs within my broader neighbourhood. Case studies are thus drawn from suburbs reasonably close to the city centre, including Parnell, One Tree Hill, Western Springs, Mangere, and my own suburb of Mount Albert.

Secondly, I draw a species boundary, and deal exclusively with mammalian life for my case studies. Again, I am aware of the irony of drawing such an indiscriminate line, done for practical purposes to keep the project within manageable limits and to ensure continuity within my research. While birds, insects, fish and reptiles all play parts in Auckland’s animal landscape, my choice of mammals reflects the focus on encounter. This is for two reasons. First, mammals usually instigate the strongest feelings of affinity between humans and animals, and second, all these species were originally introduced *by* humans to the New Zealand environment. I also recognise, however, that this choice likely reflects my own bias towards mammals as more ‘relatable’ animals, and that this impacts on my own ability to create meaningful encounters with different species.

Furthermore, as a third fundamental boundary of the research, I chose to exclusively consider *land* mammals. Examples of boundary transgression by animals into Auckland’s urban space are often from the sea, particularly given the length of coastline that surrounds the city. Seals are a particularly salient example, with many news reports documenting the arrival of seals and sea lions in unusual places, and the efforts to relocate them back into what is regarded as a more suitable space (the ocean). It would certainly be valuable to look at these examples, and I see this as an understudied area that needs further work.

Finally, I draw attention to my specific choices of case studies. I recognise that these are in no way exhaustive, and that the roles of each animal are not limited to the scope of the discussion that frames each case study. I acknowledge that my choices were based not on quantification, but on my own personal interests – interests that of course will be different from person to person. I have therefore created boundaries around what/where/when/how I studied my subjects that reflect my world view, the location of my home and neighbourhood, my socioeconomic status, life stage and my own cultural predispositions.

Part II

Methodology

CHAPTER 2 | METHODOLOGY (MATTERS)

2.1 Making methodologies that matter

Methodologies can be informed choices, taken for granted, or just used uncritically without any alternatives. Alternatively, methodologies can be situational, complex structures or constellations that are in flux.

- Mirka Koro-Ljungberg (2016:79)

To investigate the relationship between the construction of animal identity and the construction of animals' space, my methods relied on both practice and discourse. I needed to find ways to research relationships that were messy and emotional, and that were expressed through interrelating bodies, emotions and spaces. To achieve this mix, I found it necessary to work from a methodology that is not constricted by boundaries. Remaining 'fluid' has meant that rather than constructing a pre-determined toolkit, I shifted my methods (and responses to them) in relation to the experiential encounters that opened up through the course of my fieldwork. These shifts were documented alongside my data, and were subject to continued reflection as I analysed my findings and drew my conclusions.

Largely this was done by collecting data through the lens of my encounters with other animal bodies. Records of my (inter)actions therefore depended on the reasons for the encounter (planned or unplanned), whether the encounter was with a human or non-human, where the encounter took place, and my mood at the time. These situational recordings allowed me to cull data that was unlikely to be of real consequence, for example, when I was too rushed, sick or the weather was too bad to engage meaningfully with either site or animal subjects. Since few of these aspects remained static, I allowed my methods to shift freely in reply to each encounter. Methods were thus responsive *to* the research, rather than responsible for the outcomes, allowing me to collect data that was unexpected and emergent.

Philo (1995) noted there are both *animal spaces* (as documented by humans) and *bestly places* (as revealed by individual animals). My research has been designed to tackle both of these positions using a series of four case studies. My decision that this would be the most effective approach was based on a range of reasons. First, case studies provide scope for deep engagement with both subjects and spaces over an extended period of time. This strategy also granted me the capacity to focus on spaces rather than species, meaning that the research both avoided essentialising animals

within species-based narratives, but also helped me to emphasise the geographical concepts and lines of questioning, as well as staying true to a disciplinary tradition of field work. Secondly, employing case studies ensured that I was able to articulate my *own* participation with the space/subjects. As a result, my methods remained in line with wider methodologies of performativity and embodied research. Finally, the use of case studies provided space for the ‘unexpected’ to emerge, rather than predetermining my research before I began.

My attempt to expose both ‘animal spaces’ and ‘beastly places’ is therefore underpinned by my choice of methodology and emergent key concepts, and revealed through the structure of my thesis. To begin this journey, this chapter outlines the key concepts that underlie the thesis, in terms of how this fits with a ‘fluid’ methodological approach. I then describe how my data was collected and analysed, focusing on how this results in an assemblage (in the sense the term is used by Deleuze & Guattari, 1987 and DeLanda, 2006) of experiences and findings. I also take time to outline the primary conceptual sets throughout my thesis, framing these as ‘lines’. Last, I address the design and process of my project, with special attention paid to the project as emergent and unfolding.

2.2 Fluid Methodologies

Davies & Dwyer (2007) suggested that as cultural geographers we must look beyond singular methods of investigation, and revise our understanding of what social science research achieves as a way of framing (and influencing) the world. A need arises to be creative with techniques that allow the researcher to engage at a bodily level with animal subjects, rather than restricting ourselves to one-dimensional analyses of non-human environments that fail to relate with the fundamental materiality of animals.

I employ what Koro-Ljungberg calls a ‘fluid’ methodological approach. Following Annemarie Mol’s (2002) ‘ontologies of practice’, fluid methodologies eschew linear research design and allow the researcher to “map overlapping research events and interactive spaces” (Koro-Ljungberg 2016:84). Making connections with philosophical touchstones, ontological explorations and innovative methodological practice are valued over regimented research agendas, and more easily adapt to experiential research and projects that rely on interaction with non-human subjectivities and phenomena.

Distinct from mixed methods and open to the possibilities that arise through the process of research, I found this methodological approach consistent with the ‘immanent philosophy’ that underpins a Deleuzian approach. Here, concepts, theories and the reproduction of knowledge are not passive

vessels awaiting depositions of data. Rather, data, practice and the production of my thesis have all been active and interactive agents. The subject matter has thus been fluid too, folding into the research in an on-going process of becoming-thesis.

A difficulty with such a methodology has - unsurprisingly - been ensuring cohesion between case studies and their findings. To help, I use the idea of emergent 'lines' to articulate immanent thematics. I borrow this framework from anthropologist Tim Ingold, whose work has been influential in many ways over the course of this project. Specifically, I draw on Ingold's work on lines (2008; 2016), where form is not always straight, but tangled. Lines curve, break, reform, and multiply. Lines can be entangled, and where they knot, they (may) create spaces. This line of thought builds from his theory of *entanglements*, which neatly encapsulates animals and humans within a single framework, reinterpreting cultural structures as encounters given form and meaning through interpersonal dialogue (Ingold, 2000). Drawing on von Uexküll's (1957) concept of *umwelt*, Ingold argued that animals are constructive both materially and semiotically, building worlds rich in animal webs of significance and representation. Therefore, my lines are not only 'threads' but also tracks and traces of animals past and present.

I frame these knots as **assemblages**, where research methods entangle with the performative negotiations of humanimal spaces. By documenting inter/trans-species intercessions with place through the lens of the encounters that take place in my chosen sites, both representational and bodily *processes* are investigated (Woodward *et al*, 2009) emphasising practice and affect over sign and meaning (Whatmore, 2006). In this model the process of investigation is not regarded as separate to the processes investigated, and aligns with work on assemblages (see Anderson & McFarlane, 2011; Dewsbury, 2011; Robbins & Marks, 2010), and autoethnographic research (see Davies & Ellis, 2008; Mitra, 2010). Therefore, inclusiveness of myself as researcher within the realm of performance, and the reflexivity this implies, is included in my research design. As such, I too encounter and transgress boundaries: as academic researcher, as critical geographer, pet 'owner', stray cat-feeder, zoo-goer and as lover of (and with) animals.

Pivoting around humanimal relations, I construct my thesis itself as an assemblage, a collage of human-animal stories in Auckland. The stories stem from my own experience of animalspace as well as stories of individual animals' passage(s) through space, or their roles within spaces of encounter with humans. I examine how these embodied experiences relate to narratives *about* animals that are constructed by others - whether media personalities, policy makers or theoreticians - resulting in a set of methods that hinge around the analysis of a range of data sources, including

my own multimedia notes from my field research and collected articles from the media, historical documents and legislation.

2.2.1 Benefits of an assemblage approach

The benefits of an assemblage approach are varied, but fundamentally enable the researcher to function in a fluid and somewhat spontaneous manner. Researchers can utilise multiple methods that adapt in response to shifting assemblages, rather than forcing us to mold research experiences to fit pre-existing methods and methodologies. Likewise, the research itself can articulate a wide range of responses to both the processes and actors that form encounters; whether legislation, bodies, feelings, politics, or places. In other words, an assemblage approach accepts all inputs and outputs as equally constitutive, including the researcher themselves. As such, assemblages readily take into account non-human actants and pay attention to what/how/why ‘agency’ is enacted, an attribute of vital importance when the research focus is on human-animal encounter.

Rather than simply aiming to clarify or reduce uncertainty surrounding geographic questions, assemblage approaches permit researchers to review how social science research frames and influences the world. As a result, inclusiveness of the researcher within the realm of performance is necessary - as is the reflexivity this implies - alongside categorisation and hard conclusion. I follow what Lorimer (2010) describes as “learning by witnessing” to observe and record animal-human performances. More recently, the practice of ‘engaged witnessing’ has reframed this as researching *with* non-humans to “understand how human and non-human bodies and research practices are relationally co-fabricated and brought into being together” (Bell, Instone & Mee, 2017:137)

I am interested in reviewing whether such deep engagement with the research process reinforces Wall’s (2006:155) claim that “rich meaning, culturally relevant personal experience, and an intense motivation to know are what typify and strengthen autoethnography”, as compared to other less personal (though more empirical) qualitative methods. Subsequently I intend my own analysis of these methodologies to contribute to theoretical debate surrounding intersubjective research in general.

2.3 Moving in and around methods

It is a peculiar fact that a discipline which, in part, defines itself as the study of Society environment relations has conspicuously failed to engage with questions of the political status of the non-human.

- Noel Castree (2003:207)

Research methods lack mechanisms to involve non-human subjects, particularly as qualitative methodologies typically rely on interviewing and discourse analysis, both of which become difficult to apply when lacking any shared language. Observation is also commonly employed, and is more easily applied to non-human subjects. However it often renders animals passive within the research, and tends to privilege particular sensory understandings (such as visual) over the ways that animals themselves might interact with the landscape, each other or the researcher. This has meant that research has both epistemologically and ontologically situated animals as inert features within landscapes, and as ‘subjects’ that reflect human do-ings *to* our environment.

Yet as the above quote indicates, geographers have long been advocating for new ways to research non-humans. As a result there have been attempts to construct alternative methodologies when interacting with more-than-human subjectivities. Examples include works by Hinchliffe *et al* (2005), Hitchings and Jones (2004), Lorimer (2010), Pitt (2015), Dowling *et al*, (2017), and particularly Hodgetts & Lorimer (2015) who specifically address methodologies for “**Animals’ Geographies**” (my emphasis). It is vital that we continue to build on these approaches, as any methodology that accepts expressions beyond language requires research methods that diverge from convention. Spoken language is not essential to articulate either physical or emotional states, and as McCormack (2003) recognised in his study of dance movement therapy, *asking* people how they feel is not necessarily the best method to inform about body practices. This is a crucial point when approaching animal geographies, and social scientists have found that alternative methodologies have initiated new engagements with non-human subjectivities.

2.3.1 Emergent Methods

My animal moments are understood as shifting configurations of actants in the world, each becoming something for and in that moment. These moments are made possible by meetings, both planned and random. I refer to these meetings as ‘encounters’: as bodily interchanges between human and animal organisms that take place in space and time. Following this, I view these *sites* of

encounter as sit(e)uations, to reflect the knotted situated-ness of space, time and bodies. In keeping with a fluid methodology, my choices of methods were allowed to form through my engagements with sites and species (as opposed to forcing sit(e)uations to fit established sets of research practices). I found that sites, modes of encounter and applicable methods all were due to - and created - degrees of distance between myself-as-researcher and animals. In particular, my animal participants are variously considered in the research as subjects (as in the first two case studies), and as increasingly involved research accomplices (through the second pair of studies).

My methods, then, needed to remain malleable, to adapt and flex alongside (and within) sometimes unexpected humanimal states. With such diverse requirements, I therefore needed to construct lines of continuity that link (and differentiate) field sites and encounters within them. Inherent in my research design is a progression of methodological *tactics*⁹, designed to reflect my level of engagement with each field site and case-study focus.

As a result, rather than here providing an overview of literature (or practice) surrounding the above methods, I reserve discussion of their application to within the individual case studies themselves. Rather, I contextualise my methods in the following chart by drawing attention to the relationship between methods and the key ‘lines’ that emerged. Methods then, relate to measurements of distance between researcher and subjects, and can emerge naturally through the course of the research.

Table 2: Method and position of researcher for thesis case studies

Subject	Method(s)	Distance between myself and ‘subjects’
Farms	Historical analysis	Very distanced
	Reading the landscape	Present, but distant
Zoo	Observation	Distanced but increasingly involved
	Performative engagement	
Cats	Discourse analysis	Involved
	Participant observation	
Dogs	Autoethnography	Highly involved
	Affectual reflection	

⁹ As Michel de Certeau maintained in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1998), a distinction can be drawn between strategies as formal, linear processes of production, and tactics as informal, creative and enacted as modes of resistance.

2.3.2 Selecting specie-cific case studies

My initial interest in my field sites emerged from current events, stories from colleagues and friends and personal experiences. My requirements were simply that each site must enable encounters between humans and animals, and must be located within Auckland City. Unsurprisingly, my initial list of potential sites was unrealistically long, and over the course of my early research activity, I limited these to four spaces that each reflected different narratives, spatial constructions and animal identities.

However, rather than selecting sites or species as the foci of case studies, I choose to concentrate on the *modes* of encounter within each. In other words, my field sites articulate different ways in which I-as-researcher interacted with space. Therefore, my engagement with urban farms was through an analysis of the landscape itself, of which animals were necessarily a part. My mode of encounter was filtered through symbolic understandings of animal place, and human-animal contact was rare, or very carefully moderated by gatekeepers/boundaries. When visiting the zoo, I was engaged with a privatised space (for although Auckland Zoo is publically owned and funded, the process of paid entry into a clearly defined space situates the experience of visiting the zoo within a privatised space of consumption). My encounters with animals at this site were moderated by systems of payment and privilege. Here, encounter is addressed through the lens of ‘staged authenticity’ where I viewed animals as if on a safari.

In contrast, my participant observation at the stray-cat colony meant that encounters in this case study took place in public. Here, both the cats and I had equal (but different) claims to space, closing the gap in power relations that permeated my relationship with animals in the previous sites. Finally, my mode of encounter in the fourth study took place at home, within personal, or domestic, spaces. This is not to say that I literally recorded only data within the home, but rather that narratives of canine kinship centre on home-based modes of encounter.

Once again, it is important to point out that these distinctions are not categorical, and transgressions frequently occur that push these boundaries out at both individual and collective levels. To balance this, each chapter deals not only with boundaries, but also with transgressions, demonstrating how encounters fail to remain either static or confinable.

2.3.3 Getting data [But what is data?]

Data itself is not distinct from the processes of obtaining it – it exists only through how we define and treat it. Data, then, reveals not only the methods we employ to collect it, but also represents

what we value, and what we discard. Nevertheless, any rigorous academic exercise requires an explanation of what the data is, and how it came into being. In the case of this thesis, data has been collected both materially (through encounters with humans and nonhumans) and representationally (through media articles, historical documents, legislation, and signifiers within/upon landscapes). As my case studies move from distant to close, data also moves from more representational to more material.

Methods include the *collection* and *translation* of data. While these often occur simultaneously (and sometimes spontaneously), for the sake of simplicity I have broken down each aspect into basic lists of methods applied within my research.

2.3.4 Collecting and recording data

Data was accumulated through recording moments of encounter in field sites, and from other encounters in my everyday life that related to my case studies. These generally took shape as vignettes, recorded in a reflective journal (using both handwritten and digital form). The journal documented my interactions with people and animals in an anecdotal manner, including my responses to sit(e)uations that I encountered both physically and representationally.

Part of doing emergent research is considering that what the data might ‘want’ may require more formal interviews. To allow for this possibility, I applied for consent from the University of Auckland Human Ethics Committee to conduct interviews with agents from within each of my field studies; staff at Auckland Zoo, members of the SPCA, ‘feeders’ at the Rose Garden cat colony, and volunteers involved with canine rescue groups. However, ultimately these interviews were less useful than the experiential data that I accumulated through my own involvement with the sites, people and animals at each location. As a result, while most participants were aware of my project¹⁰, my data is largely filtered through my own lens of understanding. As such, it remains ‘informal’, manifesting as anecdotes jotted on my notebook after the event. Subsequently, data reflects my own experience and understanding of interchanges, rather than documenting a preconceived set of questions and answers.

As well as observational narratives, my data includes the collection of photographs, video material, brochures, and newspaper cuttings. These were collected over the full research period, and catalogued according to site and/or species. Themes were identified, and key resources were then employed as analytical texts once my spatial assemblages were determined. Other documents such

¹⁰ Data has been omitted from this research if it was deemed to impact on the political position of participants within organisations, and names have been changed to protect the identities of informants.

as sketches, maps, notes to self, emails, computer screen images, art pieces, and government documentation were analysed in response to case studies as they emerged.

Particular sources of data include:

- Anecdotes
- Conversation
- Diaries, notes and journals
- Interviews with representatives of specific organisations
- Media articles
- Memories
- Observations
- Photographs and videos

To greater or lesser degrees, the above data sources were employed in every case study, although the relative proportions of each was ultimately dependent on the methods I applied in each case study to translate meaning onto my notes.

2.3.5 Translating meaning

My assemblage of vignettes was influenced by wider research methods that determined both how I interacted with the site (whether as an active participant or as a passive visitor), and how I interpreted what I saw and experienced there. Translated through wider methodological techniques, data morphed from its raw form and was given meaning.

Broader methods include:

- Content analysis (of my own notes)
- Discourse analysis (of media articles)
- Observation
- Participant observation/Active research
- Personal reflection
- Reading the landscape

Again, each of my case studies incorporated many of the above methods (see table 2 for the dominant two strategies of each), becoming *assemblages* of research. Also apparent on the table is how each method set positioned me-as-researcher as differently distanced from my subject(s). I therefore became aware throughout my research of the symbiotic relationship between data-method-researcher, a relationship that will be dissected in my thesis conclusions.

2.3.6 Analysis: Not getting lost in translation

It is all very well to collect data, but it is what we do with it that brings it to life. While there are several ways material is analysed, within cultural geography research design typically includes coding. Indeed, under each of the methods listed above, there is usually the expectation that the researcher then codes the accumulated data through counting, sorting, cataloguing and categorising. Typically, this results in thematic sets, which are then re-presented to the reader as evidence or analysis. However, following Koro-Ljungberg's (2016) proposal, I decided to instead address: "What does the data want?". In other words, I rejected my observations and experiences as 'data' to be manipulated into a preconceived set of findings. Instead, I wanted to personalise rather than de-personalise it. To again use Koro-Ljungberg's terminology, I wanted to enter a "dialogue with the data" (Koro-Ljungberg, 2016:54-55), to see how it created me, the researcher, as much as how I created it.

However, working without coding is unfamiliar territory for the geographer. Employing the concept of lines, I decided to apply an interpretative phenomenological analysis to my data. My analyses – of content, discourse, landscape and experience – were constructed first as *descriptions* of individual, personal perceptions of animal-human encounters. This process links to symbolic interactionism (see Blumer, 1986), whereby meaning is attributed to events and encounters through the process of experiential actions.

I then simultaneously dismembered and developed my narratives, assessing what aspects of each were the most revealing, meaningful - the most filling - and which were simply engorged or distended. I materialised primary concepts as schematics (see figure 2), that articulated core concepts evident in the data. Finally, lines emerged that both guided the course of my research and provided analytical frameworks around which I could assemble my findings. This process itself fits neatly with assemblage theory, as my project *became* as a result of interactions with other sets of assemblages I encountered throughout my research.

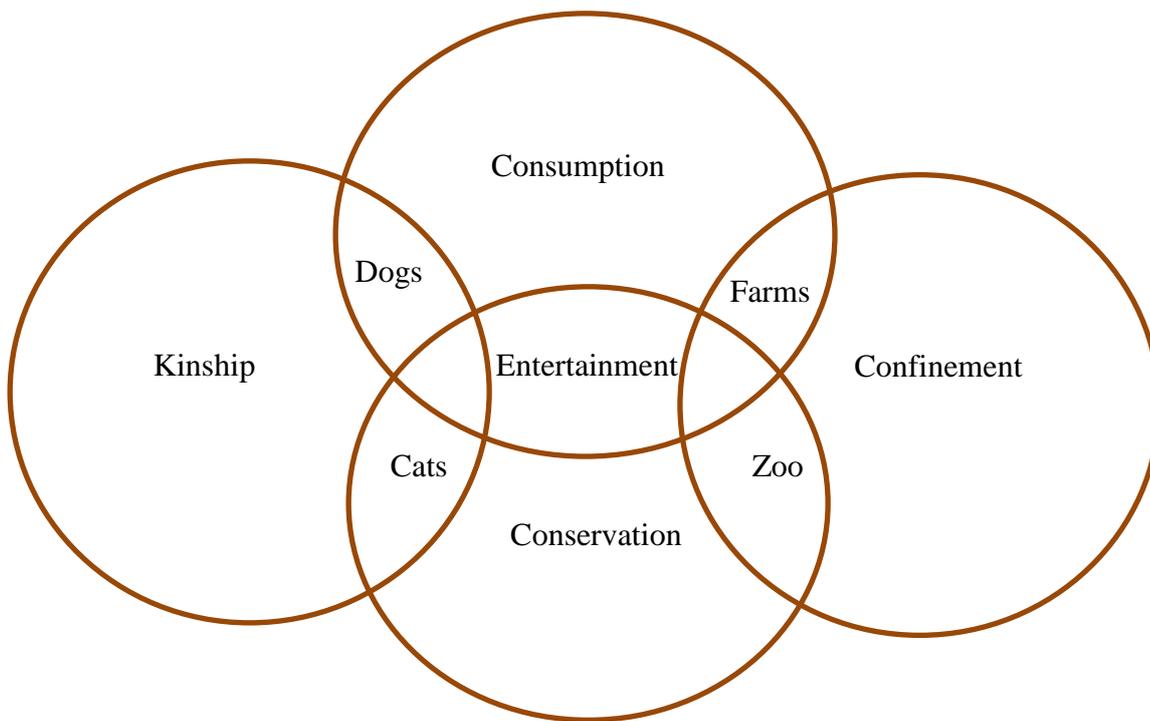


Figure 2: Schematic of emergent themes within the research

2.4 Key concepts: Lines

While able to be read as stand-alone sit(e)uations, my case studies are intended to both relate to and build on one another. So, linking my case studies are a series of central themes. Throughout my thesis I will speak of **encounters**, and of **boundaries** and **transgression**, outlining what they mean to me in my interactions with the array of different animals I spent both short and prolonged time with over the course of my research. I also make reference to a number of other key concepts, all of which warrant further explanation before embarking on our animalised tour of Auckland. These are outlined alphabetically, although it is important to note that each ‘line’ is not a singular concept, but a hybrid (or rhizome) that comes into being through the other lines it knots around. Lines then, cross boundaries too, wriggling around data, furtive and stealthy, or charging into academic vocabulary with passion and gusto.

2.4.1 Agency

I use the term agency to refer to the capacity for (intra- and inter-)actions of both living and non-living subjects. The collision of agents at a sit(e)uation therefore manifests as world-changing and place-making moments, and my research specifically explores how these moments result in/from the construction of animal identities.

However, questions of which things and processes have the power to act often reflect assumptions of an animal-human divide. For example, animals are generally considered incapable of political decision-making and action. Therefore when considering agency, it is important to consider who holds power in assemblages, and how this power is flexible and shifting. Agency, then, exists not in a single form, but rather as a continuum of capacities for action. Likewise, agency need not be conflated with sentience, and can be held by artefacts, documents, spaces, legislation, cultural understandings and so forth, and is inherently associated with both the personal and social power to influence the world.

Lines of literature:

Pile (1993)

Whatmore (2002)

Aitken & Valentine (2014)

Kitchin & Tate (2013)

2.4.2 Boundaries and transgressions

Territories require boundaries and borders, which can be maintained or transgressed by individuals or collectives. Therefore, concepts of boundaries and transgressions both relate to the capacity (agency) of an actant to be *mobile between territories*. Boundaries can be either/both physical or ontological, and restrict mobility.

- A boundary can be physical or ontological
- A boundary restricts mobility
- Boundaries define and restrict encounters
- Boundaries define and stabilise a territory

As such, **boundaries** define encounters, often restricting the range, mode or viability of how/when/where they occur. In this manner, boundaries stabilise territories, defining identities and spaces.

Castree (2013) suggests that whilst these borders may most obviously be defined by national governments, the concept extends to ‘conceptual cuts’ that separate what is ‘inside’ from what is ‘outside’. To use a topical example, boundaries can cause an encounter to become a homogenised experience. In Auckland, this could include a sit(e)uation such as your hypothetical zoo visit, where the animals remain separate from your touch. A trip to an off-leash dog area, or a picnic in an urban farm are subject to similar distinctions, where boundaries are physical (such as fences, walls, waterways) or semiotic (such as signage). In these cases, territories are defined and stabilised. However, boundaries are not just the cages of a zoo or fences bordering a property. I also refer to boundaries as the ontological categorisation of species. Again, animals are usually seen as ‘inside’ a species, and this determines which special boundaries they are seen as being appropriately located within.

Boundaries, then, are best seen as dividing lines, yet they are always subject to pressures that can cause them to flex, reform or break down entirely. Just as no territory exists without de-territorialisation, no boundary exists without **transgression**. Transgression of borders can be considered as both an active form of resistance and as an unintended outcome of boundary crossing. Thus, the idea of transgression becomes significant within human-animal studies. Here, boundaries are constructed by one party whilst the other remains only partially cognisant, or even fully unaware, of their existence. As Creswell states:

Resistance seems to imply intention—purposeful action directed against some disliked entity with the intention of changing it or [of] lessening its effects. ... Transgression, in distinction to resistance, does not ... rest on the intentions of actors but on the results—on the 'being noticed' of a particular action. ... Transgression is judged by those who react to it, while resistance rests on the intentions of the actor(s).

- Creswell (1993:53-54)

Even on your Zoo outing, the odours of the animals and the sounds they make would have wafted beyond the fences and borders. Indeed, my zoo chapter will outline several incidents of animal-agency where physical boundaries have been transgressed by the inmates. Moreover, you yourself could have transgressed; if you had perhaps mounted the fence and slipped into a den. Thus, transgression can be inadvertent or determined by agency.

Lines of literature:

Castree (2013)

Ingold (2008)

Cresswell (2014)

2.4.3 Encounter

Encounters refer to any meeting between actants. Like agency, this includes not only sentient beings, but also structures, spaces, legislation, literature, media and concepts. Through this research I have highlighted examples of human-animal encounter, with relation to processes of identity construction. As such, although my focus is often on meetings between bodies, some of my animal encounters are enabled/disabled through a wider range of functionalities and forces. The research therefore broadens the concept of encounter to include these less-tangible energies to articulate ‘enlivened’ (Tolia-Kelly, 2010) assemblages of people, places, movements and understandings. Furthermore, encounters are moderated by spaces, and the potential for mobility between spaces: who, what, when and how individuals can mobilise themselves. Of course, mobility is often controlled, dependent on which species one belongs to. While most countries have a population of ‘wild’ indigenous animals who have historically been in contact with humans, *deliberate* human-animal encounters have been the *only* reason land mammals (with the exception of bats) populated this country¹¹. As such, I believe encounter proves an excellent framework for addressing my research questions, as it neatly encapsulates both the conceptual framework of my thesis and the pragmatic nature of human-animal associations in the field sites studied.

Lines of literature:

Laurier & Philo (2006)

Valentine (2013)

¹¹ Whether through human choice (as food source, labour force, sport or reminder of homeland) or animal choice (such as stowing away on waka or ships).

2.4.4 Performance

Due to the mobile nature of encounters, I consider them best viewed as **performances**. Most importantly, a performative approach allows scholars to identify and analyse transgressions (not just establishments) of boundaries. By recognising that animal actants are powerful, active, politicised agents that participate in performances both spontaneous and staged, it allows academic recognition of how animals contribute to trajectories of events. Furthermore, this type of approach acknowledges the position of the researcher in such ‘animal moments’ (see Freeman *et al*, 2011), and allows us to engage with the interactive, reflexive process of research. As a result, we see a greater emphasis on personal geographies. As we articulate geographies that are emotional, affective and individualised, academic boundaries are transgressed too.

Lines of literature:

Butler (1998)

Thrift (2004)

Barad (2004)

2.4.5 Striation

Striation is discussed in *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980/1987) in terms of the aesthetics of art and music, and is utilised to argue that the striation of space-time initiated the ethics of labour and surplus inherent in capitalism. However, I use it here in a third sense: to define spatial understandings. Striated spaces consist of closed systems that operate hierarchally. They are socially and physically segmented into homogenised units, as opposed to ‘smooth’ spaces where functions and relationships are forged through rhizomic webs (using Deleuzioguattarian terminology) or ‘entanglements’ (see Ingold, 2008, 2010). Deleuze and Guattari (1987) associate striated space with the State, as it “bounds, structures, frames and locates action; and practices of discipline, regulation, subjection take place inside these spaces” (Osborne and Rose, 2004: 218).

Lines of literature:

Deleuze & Guattari (1987)

DeLanda (2006)

Ingold (2008; 2010)

2.4.6 Territories [territorialisation/deterritorialisation/reterritorialisation]

National boundaries and sovereign states are no longer considered the conceptualisations of territories within geographic thought (see Agnew, 1994). In addition to understanding territories as defensible areas, this research follows Elizabeth Grosz (2008) and J.D Dewsbury's (2011) lead in regarding territories as fixing and un-fixing identities. I am using the term here in the Deleuzian sense in which territories are part of shifting assemblages. In this context, territories require limits and boundaries that set them apart from other territories (although overlaps are possible, and often occur). In this sense territories are said to produce identities: each different territory marks a particular identity-set, labelling and defining those who act within it. However, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) expand the concept to apply to both spaces and non-humans, such as a city or a tree, meaning that the concept can be applied in studies that focus on animal actants.

It is also important to understand that in a Deleuzioguattarian context, the self, and the identity of the self, is not referring to a singular body, but to collaborations brought together in assemblages. As Colebrook (2000) notes, at its most basic level, territorialisation can be understood as the synthesis of bodily connections¹². Territories are thus composed through a process of self-making, that Deleuze and Guattari call territorialisation. These consist of habits and actions that form territories which are understood subjectively through signs and symbols. Finally, territories can be destabilised through de-territorialisations, or re-formed through re-territorialisations, revealing shifting assemblages of humans, non-humans, technologies, places, objects, symbols and events that result in an untidy, entangled constellation of lives.

¹² In Deleuzioguattarian terms, this synthesis (or series of syntheses) are social and political as well as spatial, forming what is known as social 'machines'.

Lines of literature:

Deleuze & Guattari (1987)

Grosz (2008).

Dewsbury (2011)

2.5 Research design (and the actual process)

This final section outlines two alternative readings of my research design. The first conforms to *expectations* surrounding thesis-making, and fits parameters established within what Deleuze and Guattari conceptualise as the apparatus of the State. In this model, stages of research are presented sequentially, each numbered in consecutive order. Likewise, research activities are stratified, as if each part of the process occurred independently of the others. However, the research process was *not* linear, and nor were research events isolated or autonomous. Instead, research *moments* were continually infiltrated by experiences, emotions and responses to and with animals. To continue with Deleuzioguattarian terminology, the research becomes a machinic assemblage, without clear start and finish points between tasks. I have therefore re-mapped my process (see figure 8) to represent it as an entanglement, a knotted assemblage of influences, actions, responses and goals that acted in a state of flux.

2.5.1 Obsolescent designs?

Though this first representation of my research design articulates 'what happened', it presents the process in a somewhat artificial and linear manner. This model assumes that I 'stuck to the plan', and limits spaces for emergent research paths. While it is true that my research did follow the trajectory below, it fails to credit other factors (such as my research participants, concepts or literature) with agency within the project.

Table 3: Linear plan of my research design and process**Research design and process:**

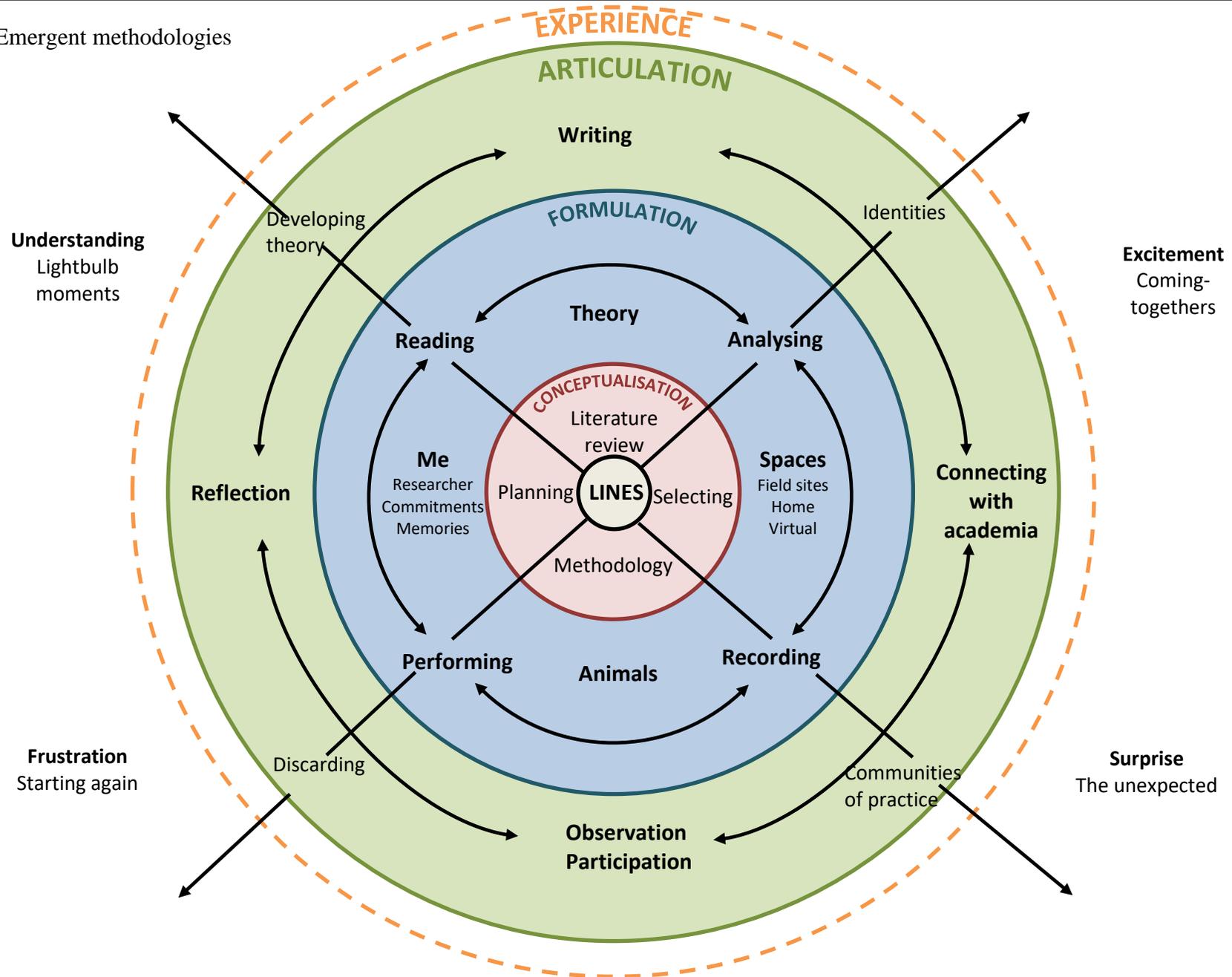
1. *Pre-selection of field sites for observation for cases studies (2012)*
2. *Approached relevant parties and gained approval from the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee (UAHPEC) to participate within volunteer organisations (2013)*
3. *Data was collected over a two year long period (2013-2015)*
4. *Case-studies were finalised. In some cases, new sub-chapters emerged as the result of observational themes (2016)*
5. *Supporting interviews were held with relevant parties. These were based on gaps or areas of particular interest that had emerged from my observations (2016)*
6. *Data was evaluated (2016-2018)*
7. *Theory developed/re-developed and related back to existing theory (2017-2018)*
8. *Case studies re-presented as narratives with supporting visual images (2018)*
9. *Reflection on methodologies and theory, my intersubjective role in research process, and a return to my research questions (2018)*

2.5.2 Emergent designs

The nature of unfolding, emergent research is difficult to present in linear form. I therefore chose to re-present my design in a manner that more accurately reflects *process* as part of *design*. This required a re-mapping that was responsive to both emergent lines and my experience as researcher. Following Annemarie Mol's (2003) ontology of practice, and other alternative work on mapping (see Kitchin & Dodge, 2007; Perkins, 2009; Dodge, Kitchin & Perkins, 2011), I present a sit(e)uationist map that reveals the intrinsic multiplicity inherent in thesis design. Here, the design process is *deviant* (as opposed to undeviating), drawing attention to connections between variable research-spaces. The connecting arrows point to the most significant connections between agents, events and outputs, while the coloured lines represent spaces of overlap or contact zones (to use Haraway's terminology). Loosely constructed around research stages - conceptualisation, formulation and articulation - my map communicates the fluidity between stage-boundaries through the use of lines and colour coding.

Unlike the former model, emergent research design does not (have to) centre around the researcher. In this alternative schematic, the research revolves around my key lines, positioning myself as a contributor alongside other agents (theory, animal bodies and spaces). Likewise, I include my own experience as part of becoming-thesis, with the outermost ring representing the final thesis. Indeed, my diagram is better imagined as mobile, the concentric rings pivoting around the central point. In this three dimensional model, the rings would be able to be rotated between the four segments that traverse them, re-creating new relationships between spaces, animals, myself and the research.

Figure 3: Emergent methodologies



Part III

Literature Review

3.1 Constructing constrictions?

The agony of the rat or the slaughter of a calf remains present in thought not through pity but as the zone of exchange between man and animal in which something of one passes into the other

- Deleuze and Guattari (1994:109)

Historically, cultural geography has typically situated humans as the *only* cultural agents, granting us the exclusive ability to develop technologies and change the environment. Recognition of animals is restricted to their position within a superorganic system (Duncan, 1980) rather than in terms of their capacity of creative agency. Subsequently, non-humans are seen to function in the world through a series of mechanical or unconscious responses. Likewise, when animals are involved in landscape changes, it is generally regarded as coming from larger scale shifts in ‘nature’ rather than as the result of individual animal action. Ultimately, this perspective stems from an enduring belief in man¹³ as the apex in evolutionary scale; whether as caretaker or dominator of ‘nature’. Our big brains and opposable thumbs are evidently more evolved than a magnificent sense of smell, multiple compartments in one’s stomach, the ability to see in the dark or employing one’s hump to save water. In turn, methodologies in geography still largely place animals within academic investigations of ‘nature’, and human analyses become ‘cultural’ studies.

Blame for this is conventionally traced back to Descartes, who remains notorious for both his conviction in a binary between humanity (as those who have souls) and non-humans (who don’t), and his belief that animals are incapable of sentience. According to Cartesian philosophy animals are reduced to *automata*, by which their behaviour is mechanical instinct, devoid of reason:

I know that animals do many things better than we do, but this does not surprise me. It can even be used to prove they act naturally and mechanically, like a clock which tells the time better than our judgement does.

(Descartes, letter to the Marquess of Newcastle, 1646)

¹³ I use the term “man” deliberately here. First, it conveys the way that groups such as women, children, people of colour and those who identify as queer (among others) are treated similarly methodologically (with the positioning of the white, male scientist at the apex of society, objectively studying ‘others’).

Such a claim clearly enables methodologies that treat animals as expendable objects of study (famously, Descartes was a vivisectionist). Most significantly, it reflects the elevated value of reason and a belief that lack of shared language amounts to incapacity to experience emotional or physical sensation. Descartes makes this clear in *Discourse on method and meditations on first philosophy* (first published 1637), where he claims a fundamental difference between “men and brutes” by which even the most “depraved and stupid” humans can: “arrange different words together, forming of them a statement by which they make known their thoughts, while, on the other hand, there is no other animal, however perfect and fortunately circumstanced it may be, which can do the same” (Descartes, 1985 [1637]).

To Descartes this proves that animal expression originates from a “corporeal and mechanical principle”, with the result that “men can make various automata which move without thought”. In this narrative, nature can also “produce its own automata, much more splendid than artificial ones”. These natural automata include beasts (Descartes, 1646), a view that permits us the *use* of animals, granting us the subsequent right to manipulate animal bodies. We spay, neuter, microchip, register, sell and kill, then use Cartesian logic to, in turn, push such utilitarian purposes out of sight, behind the metaphorical curtain¹⁴.

Constrictive constructions can thus be viewed as both conceptual and ethical. More explicitly, the ideological situation of animals as less-than-human is used to justify their place in society and space. Scholars have increasingly made reference to how this manifests in networks (see Whatmore & Thorne, 1998; 2000; Jarosz, 2000), cultural form (see Berman, 1994; Baker, 2001; Marvin, 2001; or Kalof & Montgomery, 2011 for a range of approaches) and everyday life (see Haraway, 2003; Power, 2008; Smith, 2003; Fox, 2006). However, few authors have attempted to critically review how social science research has itself perpetuated such ideas by largely conforming to paradigms that elevate humans above non-humans on a hierarchal scale based primarily on our interpretations of biological evolution.

Perhaps, as academics, we remain subject to what Laland & Hoppitt (2003) refer to as a ‘brainist bias’; a bias resulting from the value we afford reason and language, and our lack of capacity to share this linguistic reliance with non-humans. However, I suspect there is more to this predisposition and the subsequent reluctance to treat animals as active subjects. A position is revealed that is in itself reflective of deep-seated ideas about who and what is worth studying, a lack

¹⁴ While Cartesian duality has left an enduring legacy, it has certainly not enjoyed unanimous philosophical acceptance. Almost two centuries ago Bentham, for example, posited that “*The question is not, Can they reason? nor, Can they talk? but, Can they suffer?*” (Bentham, 1823), suggesting that his interest in social reform extended to non-human life. Likewise, Bentham’s stance draws our attention to politics surrounding animal bodies that are acceptable only given that animals cannot verbalize discontent, nor mobilize themselves in protest.

of imagination regarding the validity of research methods, a preference for empirical research, and a general belief in a nature-culture divide. Accordingly, we - the encultured - study facets of 'nature' objectively, as unnamed and somewhat passive processes as opposed to being subjective agents who influence our shared landscape.

Geography has always straddled the divide between the natural sciences (where animals are accepted to sit), and the 'humanities', by addressing the relationship between the places and spaces we occupy and how these shape and reflect social relations. Understandings of animals in physical geography are largely situated within the harder sciences of zoology and biology (which focus on the physiological characteristics, dispersive and evolutionary processes and systemic classification of animals). Cultural geography has adopted an array of additional methodologies from other disciplines in the arts and social sciences¹⁵, as well as being informed by political, ecological and environmental concerns. For this reason, I will include ecological perspectives in my analyses of cultural geographic methodologies, as concepts of conservation are inextricably linked with social understandings and values placed on the 'natural' world in which we participate. However, it remains that the binary nature of physical and human geography has resulted in different paradigmatic views of animals, and a general discomfit or indecision about where and how they are studied geographically.

Here, I use cultural geography as the framework to confront these issues by outlining the ways that the discipline has interpreted and reinvented sentient non-human subjects and subjectivities. First, I address how academic treatments of animals has traditionally resulted in their construction as passive and invisible; as objects, not as active agents. I will argue that such construction is essentially *constriction*, with animals becoming bound within meta-concepts and discourses that fail to recognise their place-making abilities and subjective autonomy. Yet while confined intellectually, animals frequently surpass the constructive frameworks in which they are placed by virtue of bodily existence, performance and expression. The second part of this discussion will turn towards such 'transgressive' research methodologies, in which animals are situated as legitimate participants in place-making processes and landscapes.

¹⁵ The theories of sociologists such as Pierre Bourdieu, Michel Foucault and Jean Baudrillard have been of particular influence, especially concerning the politics and structure of social space.

3.2 Inside the Fence: Confinement in methodology

Social geography is generally accepted as emerging from the early-twentieth-century theories of Carl Sauer's 'Berkeley School'. It is here then, that we should turn to understand the ways that animals have been conscripted into the discipline. As Philo (1995) recognised, Sauerian approaches present animals as essential to geographic narratives. Such interests are neatly reflected in the Berkeley School's resolute interest in domestication, which is of course, an important facet of interspecies social relations. As domestication is a process demanding the sharing of space, studies on the subject therefore necessitate some degree of relativist theory, as people are inevitably put into same contextual environment as animals (and vice versa). Yet, by situating domestication within a linear trajectory of evolution, it becomes a process articulated as vital to the advancement of *human* civilisation. Although Sauer (1965) rejected ideas of particular races as higher or lower than others, his theories of domestication maintain distinctions between 'tame' and 'wild' and the 'civilised' and 'uncivilised' relations that humans have with the respective categories. Resultantly, domestication becomes "not only a mark of culture (conceived as a civilising attribute), it was also the practice through which culture had arisen" (Anderson, 1998:122) as the position of humans is established as relative to the 'place' of animals. Animals, then, make us who we are - we need animals to be human!

3.2.1 Geographies of Domestication

It is crucial to recognise that such discourses surrounding domestication are entwined with uneven power relationships and control. Gautier (1990, translated from the original French in Gentry *et al*, 2004:645) describes domestication as a "microevolutionary process and a *form of cultural control* over animals, implying that these creatures are *forced* to live and multiply in captivity; as a result they acquire domestic traits" (my italics). This passage clearly identifies humans as 'masters' of animal identity and behaviour, placing humanity in the God-like position of manipulating species development in both a social and biological sense. Less emotively, perhaps, consider this definition of the main characteristics of a domestic animal, which reflect common assumptions surrounding the capacities of animals situated inside the human realm:

(1) its breeding is under human control; (2) it provides a product or service useful to humans; (3) it is tame; (4) it has been selected away from the wild type.

- Gentry, Clutton-Brock, & Groves (2004:645)

Here, we again see the construction of a different type of animal from the ‘wild’ beast; one whose exclusive purpose is to serve humans. Clutton-Brock (1992) also makes mention of Ingold’s (1980) observation that animals require ownership to be considered domesticated, yet this highly political perspective remains unexamined in geographic literature. Therefore, while acknowledging the existence of non-humans in cultural patterns, these early theories fail to engage with non-human agency, concentrating on the ways that ‘man’ impacts on the physical environment. Since beasts remain unmentioned as forces of landscape change, we can assume they are regarded as incapable of cultural development¹⁶, and are consequently part of a natural environment modifiable only by humanity. Different cultural or technological stages were thus theorised as linear progressions of cultural advancement – in this respect echoing the very essence of environmental determinism that cultural geography was critiquing. Hunter-gatherer societies, for example, were conventionally considered lower in a culturally evolutionary hierarchy¹⁷, and non-humans are outside of it altogether. Rather, animals fulfill a purpose for human cultural agents: as wild food, as totems, as domesticated controlled nature¹⁸.

Likewise, animals become tools by which a human can progress up the cultural ladder. As control over nature increases, social stature and cultural positions adjust relative to other groups. The wealthier a set of humans, the more highly domesticated are the beasts that surround them. For example, a farmer with a large herd of sheep, cattle or camels compares favourably against the semi-wild chickens, goats or pigs associated with a less well-to-do family. By extension, prosperity is related to ownership of ‘nature’, although it ought to be noted that there is often less engagement with it, as the less-wealthy are employed to perform menial, dirty or otherwise undesirable tasks.

Not only can animals present opportunities to ‘climb the ladder’ within individual (or multigenerational) human lifetimes, but their roles, identities and uses also manifest as a way in which we can track the development of civilisation. Both metaphorically and materially, increased domestication, bodily modification and capitalisation of animal bodies have come to represent levels of man’s mastery over – and separation from – animal worlds. Hans Carol painted us such a picture in 1964, presenting a linear path of human development. Beginning from our initial adaptation of the environment and culminating with our control of it through “automation”, this is a theme customary within many geographic narratives and is one that has been mirrored in school

¹⁶ In this, animals are treated as more closely affiliated with technology than with the flesh and blood bodies of their mammalian cousin, humans. Again, we see an example of Cartesian *automata* surfacing, in spite of centuries of human-animal interaction since (and before) the dissemination of the said ideas.

¹⁷ As Anderson (2003) says: these “pernicious hierarchies ... continue to assign premodern people and livelihoods to an anterior developmental space”.

¹⁸ Importantly, in Saurian terms, such space is culturally constructed rather than co-created, and this view of ‘cultural’ as opposed to organic evolution ultimately sidelines the politics of animal body alteration (Anderson 1997:121) intrinsic in domestication.

curriculums over the years. Crucially, Carol effectively denies any agency that is not human. Yet as the cultural future climaxes into a vision of automated society, animals are not fully omitted from the picture. Proposing that unprofitable ranches might well be converted into huge new nature conservation areas (populated by scientifically managed wild game), Carol's future-animals serve new purposes applicable to the new, advanced stage of humanity, as "[in] this event, pleasure hunting by nature-addicted [humans] could develop as the principle usage" (Carol, 1964:5).

There is a truth here amongst the somewhat fanciful 1960s imaginings of the future. Animals have indeed become leisure commodities situated in (and against) an individualised post-Fordist world (see Wilson, 2001; Saarinen, 2004), their individual identities subsumed within larger representations of the natural world. More important though, are the manifold discourses of confinement evident within Carol's dialogue. The "scientific management" of animal spaces speaks of the demarcation of animal space by humans, in which beasts are *materially* placed in delineated (bounded) areas by humans, for humans. "Pleasure hunting" (again taking place within physically defined boundaries) indicates an *ethical* boundary whereby killing becomes morally acceptable when outside of one's own species, even when demarcated by otherness of religion or ideology. Thirdly, the reference to a "nature addicted" (and presumably bourgeois) humanity also places animals within the *ideological* boundary of 'nature'. They are depleted not just of personal characteristics but also of species characteristics, becoming part of a concept that includes widely disparate components – indeed, anything that is not human or human created¹⁹.

3.2.2 Conservation discourse

Material, ethical and ideological boundaries are most evident in the central tropes that continue to maintain currency within geographic research. Most significant are those which commonly locate animals as/in nature. A distinction between the controlled nature of the domesticated beast is thus contrasted with unpredictable (but 'pure') wildness. While this is common in film, literature and visual art, academia is not exempt from exalting 'wild' beasts as totems of the 'Power of Nature', while simultaneously emphasising their passivity within the same landscapes as objects of sport or spectacle. Such a landscape is often subject to ideology that "transforms habitat into a moral landscape" (Proctor, 1998:193). At best, wild animals are painted as victims, a schema also evident in much conservation discourse dealing with species extinction (see Johnson, 1998; Lynn, 1998;

¹⁹ This is a problem, perhaps, that humans face when we consider animals. When confronted with that which we have not made, we are forced to either accept or deny alternative agencies and reproductive forces. Maybe, the arguments surrounding the cloning of animals centralise around the position of a cloned beast as neither nature nor culture, yet at the same time our consequent elevated (human) control over the animal situation may serve to minimize some of our ultimate discomfit about where animals stand, and our guilt about using them for human means should we be able to re-consider them as man-made, synthetic objects.

Bulbeck, 2012). In such scenarios, animals and human are pitted against one another in contested nature-spaces. Academic (dis)engagement with the wild does much to situate it as a place for beasts, not humans, lest we debase it, or lose our humanity through our engagement with it.

As a result, conservation and environmental geographies generally favour research methodologies that quantify animals; counting, measuring and classifying them²⁰ based on relationships between species and spaces. Contemporary environmental geography has thus mirrored zoographic treatments of non-humans, focusing on the spread of animal life over time and space. For example, animal geographies have certainly been used as a way of proving scientific theory (such as continental drift), as biogeographic methodologies traced land formation based on ancient animal species distribution. Of course, in this case the animal life itself is irrelevant. How the animal lives as a being-in-time is reduced to a framework that measures the feeding or breeding statistics of species, or broader evolutionary patterns. Animals are instruments of scientific exploration, in the same way that they are laboratory test subjects, rather than emotive creatures with personal agency.

By default, under these paradigms animals are stripped of agency and are instead understood only in terms of meta-processes. This is enacted in literature by placing (ideas of) animals in landscapes that can be managed by experts. Here, beasts are treated impersonally, divorced from romanticised characteristics of nobility, regality or power. Academic discourse thus reflects environmental management practices that employ a range of techniques that quantify, manage and fix nature in space – including Geographic Information Systems (GIS), electronic tagging, poison, genetic databases, biosecurity controls to keep out pests, and so on. Such ecologically-informed apparatus define non-human objects in the world, rendering them knowable in a given context. Ordering tendencies ‘from above’ tend to territorialise space (DeLanda, 2006), to impose order on to a messy, mobile array of non-humans, portraying nature (and indigenous cosmologies) as the unruly, irrational other to the contemporary nation-state. It therefore becomes apparent that conservation techniques are, like methodologies, constitutive of the objects they exist to save.

While some literature addresses why “animal (and plant) species designated *wild* are placed categorically outside the ambit of ‘human society’, confined to inhabiting the margins and interstices of the social world” (Whatmore & Thorne, 1998:435), few authors offer analytical discourse surrounding the way that the significance, and subsequent protection of, the wilderness is subject to complex value judgments surrounding the value of one species over another. As categorisation essentialises species as either indigenous or exotic (Ginn, 2008), individual animal’s

²⁰ This census type activity is paralleled among human populations, especially in response to problems or dangers such as epidemics of disease or political threats.

rights to place are ultimately subsumed into wider environmental discourses reflecting metanarratives (such as the ecosystem).

3.2.3 Political Ecology

More recently, the emergence of political ecology in the 1980s further extended investigation into the dialectical relations of nature and culture. Here, the essence of nature-society connectivity is disputed, as “post-structural social theory and nonequilibrium ecology have initiated a re-examination of the way we conceive of nature-society interactions” (Neumann, 2009:228). By making serious attempts to conflate social and biophysical scientific theory²¹, political ecology challenged taken-for-granted assumptions by geographers as well as environmental managers. In doing so, nature-society relations were often reframed as historical processes with strong links to capitalist development (Neumann, 2009) and, as such, are of relevance to geographers interested in the politicisation of the spatial and temporal sites in which humans and animals collide.

It was through political ecology, then, that the door was metaphorically opened for animals to pass into the sphere of academic study as agents of social and environmental change. By recognising the unclear distinction of culture and nature, the approach incorporates the post-structural tenet that all species have interconnected roles with none superior to the other, as well as recognising the way that discursive practice can (re)create spatially situated power relations. However, the most common portrayal of non-human life is, like other ‘confining’ methodologies, presented in terms of wildlife management. As Hobson points out, political ecologists often use animal case studies within conservation discourse. However, this work often results in locating them “as static components of a thoroughly human sociality” (Hobson, 2007:250).

Focusing largely on environmental issues in the ‘developing’ world, political ecologists tend to deny animal agency, instead lumping groups together to position them as part of a political-economic process. For instance, in accounts of beef ranching in the Amazonian rainforest (see Durham, 1995; Edelman, 1995; Hoelle, 2011), cattle are themselves implicated as anti-conservation forces. Bovine identities are not just de-personalised - the cattle themselves are presented as merely

²¹ Drawing on interdisciplinary methodologies, political ecology is based around a key concept of ‘non-equilibrium’. This means that ecological systems are considered contingent, consisting of unique individuals that are subject to chance, rather than as homogenous units (Watts, 2015). The relationship between non-human and human animals, then, is assessed through a range of multi-scalar lenses, including political economics, ethnographies, and biology.

de-individualized cogs in the machine²² - but their presence is also pitted 'against' wildlife, thus making a tacit moral judgment about the standing of one animal against another.

A second example is evident in the following quote discussing crop raiding by "wild animals such as elephants, buffalo, primates and a host of smaller species" (Adams & Hutton, 2007:156). Here, even the species of animal is irrelevant: they are simply 'wild', positioned against agriculture. In spite of adhering to the postmodern idea that nature is socially and discursively constructed, it appears that political ecology falls back on essentialising non-human animals as part of nature. Secondly, such a perspective tends to perpetuate ideas that certain environmental problems are situated in the global south, and that the non-human actors here either belong (as in indigenous species) or do not belong (as in the cattle ranches) in these contexts. 'Wildlife', thus become the contemporary counterparts of the noble savage: glorified, as long as remaining in their indigenous environment²³.

3.2.4 Nature-culture boundaries

The overriding boundary then, on which all others pivot, can be distinguished as that between culture and nature. The idea of culture and/or nature as a construct is one that has surfaced in many guises in geographical literature (see Proctor, 1998; Castree & Braun, 1998; 2001; Demeritt, 2002), yet still the discipline seems more ready to accept research that places animal experience firmly on the side of nature than to challenge preconceptions about what distinguishes 'us' from 'them'. With faith in the superiority of the sacred cows of language and reason (and the co-constitutive relationship between these two domains) dominating perceptions of what comprises higher or lower lifeforms, a belief emerges that understanding of nonhumans is so incomplete that intersubjective research is invalid.

Accordingly, there is always a problematic nature to documenting animal subjectivities. With neither evidence of shared cultural understandings nor a universal language in which to express these, we find ourselves entangled in a Wittgensteinian philosophical bind. In his somewhat enigmatic proposition: "If a lion could talk, we could not understand him", Wittgenstein (1958) neatly infers that muteness becomes problematic not for the lion, but for us humans who cannot

²² A stance political ecologists and development theorists would almost certainly try to avoid doing to their human subjects.

²³ Furthermore, the idea is reinforced that animal life should be governed by regulation, and that conservation problems (such as discourses surrounding animal disease) can and should be controlled according to Western ideas.

sever our concept of knowledge from that of language²⁴. As noted, there has been a tendency for social scientists to “bear inherited analytic dispositions” (Inglis & Bone, 2006:272) that bracket phenomena as either ‘natural’ or ‘cultural’. Although there may be surprisingly little literature explicitly critiquing this (implicit) divide outside of the relatively new fields of posthumanism and ‘animal geography’, with the rise of postmodernism these lines have become more blurred and less categorical.

3.3 On the fence?

Certainly, since the 1980s, Human Geography relied less on the study of artifacts as representations of culture, moving instead towards increasingly diverse ideas of dwelling, belief systems, art forms, interactions and mundane happenings. This ‘cultural turn’ was distinguished by a new focus on the importance of understanding language, meaning, representation, identity, and difference (see Barnett, 1998; Valentine, 2001), and adhered to qualitative methodologies such as discourse analysis, reading the landscape and participant observation (see Burton, 2003; Blunt, 2005). However, although (presumably) unintentional, the prescription of cultural activity to humans remained the dominant paradigm. By emphasising ‘culture’, non-human life faded from the postmodern geographic gaze, as textual analysis sidelined ways of knowing-the-world as experienced in ways beyond language.

3.3.1 Postmodernism

In most cases the postmodern animal remains the *subject* of discussion rather than a fully-fledged creative agent. Nevertheless such approaches narrow the divide by directly addressing beasts within cultural studies. Here, we begin to see animals studied in terms of their representation in art, literature and film. Woodward (2003) for example, examines animals in South African fiction, particularly in a post-colonial context. By focusing on indigenous knowledges-of/relationships-with animals, she articulates how this challenges Western hegemonies that situate humans as dominant and beasts as subordinate. Woodward goes on to relate this to the way that postcolonial systems have resulted in poverty for many South African people, concluding that the portrayal of

²⁴ This position is elaborated on in Vicki Hearne’s reading in which she dissects Wittgenstein’s statement, applying it to her own research on the famous language experiments conducted with Washoe the chimpanzee. Here, she evaluates the “condition of language” as compatible with Washoe’s wildness and dangerous-ness, negating that ‘civilisation’ is a concept necessarily tied to language at all. Since Washoe remained dangerous in spite of her grasp of language, Hearne concludes that “I may then be thrown into confusion ... and may want to deny Washoe’s personhood and her language rather than acknowledge the limits of language – which can look like a terrifying procedure” (Hearne, 2007:39)

interspecies relationships is essentially the result of political and economic environments²⁵. In a different manner, Creed (2007) analyses ‘screen animals’ as a subversion of the taboos that divide humans and animals, as hybrid beings commonly depicted in well-known cultural forms. This can take the form of literal hybrids (werewolves, mermaids, the Fly, or Beauty’s Beast, for example), or as animals awarded human characteristics (including the capacity for rational thought) such as Bambi, the Lion King, King Kong, Babe, or even the malevolent shark in the movie *Jaws*. Creed argues that this is a manifestation of a Deleuzian ‘becoming’, in the sense that the melding of animal-human that is depicted on screen is what Deleuze refers to as the ‘body without organs’, capable of surpassing conventional modes of habituated behavior. Accordingly, by violating taboos, film allows us to disinvest animals of their status as other. The representation of onscreen animals instead creates “a different order of the animal, one whose agency (desires, dreams) challenges the bases on which the differences between human and animal have historically and philosophically been founded” (Creed, 2007:61).

However, these screen animals are, by necessity of their mythical status, also *automaton*, constructed from increasingly technical on-screen trickery. In this way the mythic animal becomes more of a reality than the embodied animal. By restricting understanding to the figurative and represented animal, we are guilty of academic totemism, of undermining the reality of animals populating-the-world. Cultural studies rarely demonstrate engagement with the animal-actor, outside of ethical considerations; instead, we gain insight into what the *symbolic* meaning of the animal, ultimately retaining a humanist central core.

One central characteristic of postmodernism is the focus on the everyday: for example, May’s seminal article on appropriation of ‘exotic’ food in London (1996), Thrift’s work on bodily performance (1997) or Laurier’s investigations into commonplace happenings in spaces such as cafes (2008) and motorways (2004). Although anthropocentric accounts, all explore the mundane as geographically relevant, emphasising how our routines do indeed shape spaces and places. Following the lead of these (and other) key works, an increasing body of academic literature has emerged which focuses on the politics of the domestic (see Anderson, 2005; Blunt, 2005; Longhurst *et al*, 2009). As a result, the home has emerged as a platform on which animals may be seen as *legitimately* situated. The implication here is significant, as the home represents a quite different

²⁵ In another cultural context Sabloff (2001) explores the cultural meaning of animals in the city using examples of civic art in Toronto. The artistic portrayal of animals has also been studied in such diverse contexts as how it can be used to highlight animal rights issues (Watt, 2009), as a representation of history (Baker, 2001), and as an interrogation of the meaning and reason behind anthropomorphic practice as applied to animals both real (Carmack, 1997) and imagined (see Ghedini & Bergamaso’s 2010 study of robotic animals, or Bliss, 2012; Wells 2008 for work addressing cartoon/animated animals).

academic context to the rural/wild spheres in which they have generally been placed prior; instead, animals now are accepted as co-habiting human spaces.

3.3.2 Feminist Theory

Spaces of the home, however, remain subject to asymmetric power relations, largely remaining as feminised realms in which women, children and domestic animals are *expected* to sit. In what has perhaps been the most famous feminist critique of the implicit correlations drawn between women and animals, Carol Adams' (2006) dissection of "the sexual politics of meat" uses historical discourse analysis to argue that meat-eating relates directly to male privilege. Here, the bodily practice of slaughtering and eating a dead animal is presented as a manifestation of power over women, non-whites and non-human animals alike; meat is a symbol of patriarchy, while vegetable foods represent passive, female, nature. By pinpointing the oppression of feminised subjects, and by opening up new spaces for research that had previously ignored (particularly domestic spaces of the home, homework and family) I believe feminist theory has unquestionably played an important part, contributing to alternative academic treatments of non-humans, and in many ways providing the theoretical backbone for contemporary human-animal studies.

On the other hand, a problematic element of feminist and postmodern theory is that by speaking of women, animals and nature in the same breath, their similarity is implicitly reaffirmed. First, this reflects assumptions that the everyday is in fact a discrete space in which the home and caring practices are primary matters (Brown & Staeheli, 2003). By setting women/children/animals here as a single unit, ideas are reflected about both who constitutes and who inhabit these 'everyday' spaces. Frustratingly, by studying our placement-in and experience-of domestic space, women become situated (t)here, as if this is where we belong. The point of (our) existence - as point in time, point in space and point of meaning - is defined academically; we are bounded again, caged in ideology. Thus, postmodernism can be seen to perpetuate geographic traditions that fetishise the domestic rather than constituting an alternative methodological perspective. Likewise, the conflation of women with nature (and by extension, animals) has not yet been effectively debunked. Once again, by contextualising these groups together academically (for example, as victims of exploitation or patriarchal violence), there is less room for exploring the individual narratives surrounding either social group. In other words, we need to be cautious of re-inscribing an age-old image of woman as somehow more animal or 'closer to nature' and therefore less human.

This also draws attention to the way that marginalised researchers are themselves more likely to engage with marginal subjects. Wilkie (2013) considers human-animal studies (HAS) in terms of

‘dirty’ scholarship, akin to vocations such as nursing, slaughtering livestock, or prison work - which are likewise tackled by women or ethnic minorities more often than people of privilege. Dirty work involves contact with ‘polluting’ substances; participating in unpleasant tasks, or involvement with disvalued beings (Sanders, 2010:105). In this context, HAS is “academically precarious because it is impure social science scholarship. The impure is that which violates the categories and classifications of a given cultural system. Through amorphousness or ambiguity it brings together things that the cultural system wishes to separate” (Wilkie, 2013:4).

A hierarchy thus emerges in methodologies that address non-humans. Natural science is situated at one end, positioning positivist values as of utmost authority. (Sub)sequential levels of qualitative research are presented as increasingly impure, with academic convention retaining interpretations of ‘good’ or ‘bad’ research based on where methods sit on this continuum. Methodologically, the more subjective the research and the higher the level of personal engagement (or even worse, emotional investment!), the dirtier it becomes. Wilkie equates some methods, such as ethnographic fieldwork and highly qualitative analyses based on small groups, with dirty scholarship, though she omits to mention personal reflection as a tool - which would most likely be considered filthier still. Typically, social science research that senses gender, race, the body and sexuality is quite far down the hierarchy, highlighting Western, masculine academic privilege. Handling such topics - particularly touching the bestial - therefore infringes on academic taboos, and risks tainting scholarship and spoiling scholarly identities.

3.3.3 Crossing boundaries

Nevertheless, poststructural reinterpretation of the concept of ‘language’ to ‘communication’ has done much to reposition the animal across the nature-culture divide. Non-linguistic communication and the power to *respond* (Derrida 2002, Haraway, 2003, 2007) invite a beyond-representational academic understanding of human-animal relationships, a position succinctly articulated in Lyotard’s decidedly anti-anthropocentric reconceptualisation of language in *The Differend*:

French Aie, Italian Eh, American Whoops are phrases. A wink, a shrugging of the shoulder, a taping [sic] of the foot, a fleeting blush, or an attack of tachycardia can be phrases. – And the wagging of a dog’s tail, the perked ears of a cat?

- Lyotard (1988:70)

By expanding the breadth of study to include methodologies that support animal participation in social environments, postmodern and poststructural accounts directly address the connections that particular social groups have with animals. As a result, they allow us to piece together an (albeit incomplete) geography of shared space. Yet often it seems that the discipline struggles to fit this into practice. Indeed, Latham (2003) and Simpson (2011) note that more effort surrounding geographies of practice focuses on theoretical development than on how this licenses and necessitates new methodological horizons (Lorimer 2010).

3.4 Over the fence

As Sarah Whatmore (2006) recognised, a “*return*” (italics original) towards the physical has melded the materialism of Sauerian cultural geography with the ‘new’ cultural geographer’s breadth of cultural definition. Subsequently, both representational and bodily processes are investigated (Woodward *et al.*, 2009), privileging practice and affect over sign and meaning (Whatmore & Lea, 2006). In this model, the investigative process is not regarded as separate to the practices investigated, and aligns with work on assemblages. In this final section I consider how these ‘newer’ cultural geographical understandings have resulted in the recognition of trans-species intersubjectivity, particularly in terms of the influence of actor-network theory (ANT) and non-representational theory (NRT) as well as the methodologies inherent in performative, hybrid and other affectual geographies. I will conclude with an overview of assemblage geographies as a methodology for directly engaging with encounters between humans and non-humans that takes into account the complex, fluid and unstable relationships between place, space, objects, life forms, technologies, infrastructure and bureaucracy.

3.4.1 Actor-Network Theory

Stemming from the ideas of Bruno Latour (1993, 1999), Michel Callon (1986) and John Law (1999), the ontologically relational basis of ANT contends that places, agents, actors, networks and processes are continually ‘in-the-making’ (Latour, 1999). Initially conceptualised as a sociology of science and technology (Latour 1999), ANT has long extended into a social theory that encompasses more-than-human agents as firmly embedded within processes and networks. Both Callon’s (1986) seminal study on scallops, and Risan’s (2005) account of dairy cows, for example, credit their mollusc/bovine subjects as active participants who can refigure and negotiate networks and territories (Whatmore & Thorne, 1998). ANT, then, espouses a methodology that situates

animals as belonging in our analytic lens because of their capacity to inject intent and reflexiveness (whether consciously or otherwise) into networks (Breslau, 2000; Cerulo, 2009).

Subsequently, research in the field is open to engagement with animals, although a common critique of ANT is that a reduction of agents (including objects) to networks fetishises ‘flows’ (Jóhannesson, 2009), as well as denying the dynamic affect of power and capital on and within such networks. Nevertheless, ANT approaches successfully challenge paradigms that esteem human intellect above animal skill. In the central tenet that ‘every actor is a network’, spaces are multiplicitous and topological, and actors themselves are the interstices of relations. As such, the idea that language is the primary way of understanding the world is transgressed. Rather, transformative processes and practices are heterogeneous, unpredictable and ever-changing connections taking precedence. ANT therefore links disparate forces without falsely unifying them, as we can see in Lulka’s (2006) post-structural analysis of bison diffusion in the US. By practicing an ANT approach, the divergent interests of both humans and bison are addressed, alongside (and in the context of) an aggregate of spatial and political networks such as the commercial meat industry, environmental discourse, agricultural product markets, indigenous interests and wildlife organisations. Lulka avoids a political economy approach, applying ANT to describe non-linear patterns distinct from simply the steady progression of development. Rather, mechanisms are identified in the geography of bison which include their metabolism, processing, marketing, handling (or not handling) and distribution. Thus, spatial practices are clearly linked to politics that determine the economic value of both animals and land (Lulka, 2006).

3.4.2 Performativity

Critical theory and post-structural feminism have both been credited with revolutionising methodological approaches towards animal-human relations, particularly, insurrection in terms of de-identifying animal selves from categorical associations by reassessing collective understandings. Described as focusing on “physical optics, to questions of diffraction rather than reflection” (Barad, 2003:803), performativity prioritises material do-ing over representation. Discursive practices then, are understood in terms of bodily action, or what Barad calls “agential realism”. Subsequently, performativity has proved a popular methodology to tackle the tricky and often messy world of human-animal relations (see Birke *et al*, 2004; Taylor & Signal, 2011). More specifically, Braidotti advocates the “de-oedipalizing” of humanimal relations as a “form of estrangement that entails a radical repositioning by the subject” (Braidotti, 2009:526). Like ANT, such a manoeuvre reappraises dualistic interpretations of the body such as blackness, whiteness, maleness, femininity

or rationality and animality. In contrast to postmodernism (where the body is interpreted more as representation than reality), performativity addresses physicality while rejecting essentialism.

Most famously, Judith Butler (1988) located the body as central in performances, while arguing that it is the result of discursive and pre-discursive constructs. Thus, there is an ‘outside’ to the body²⁶. However, Butler’s position remains problematic in that it then draws a distinction, or separated-ness between the body and the world in which the body moves. Indeed, it is hard to read self/world as anything but opposing internal and external forces, which seems to support a view of oppressed bodies (whether female, animal or so forth) as lacking real agency. Similarly, Butler’s ideas are critiqued on the grounds that the rejection of essentialism has gone too far, and that by denying physical (or biological) characteristics, bodily relations are subsequently reduced to concept. While maintaining popularity among feminist and queer theorists in particular, the resolute emphasis on the social construction of the body has meant that this notion of performativity is rarely applied in spheres that do not deal so intimately with identity politics.

An alternative reading of performance, however, can be seen in the philosophy of feminist philosophers Elizabeth Grosz (1994), Moira Gatens (1996) and Genevieve Lloyd (2002). Grosz’s idea of a body, for example, focuses not just on limits, but rather on capacity to mobilise bodily becomings, representational or otherwise. This enables us to question Butler’s radical separation of ground or origin, which defines the body *only* as oppositional to its signification (Colebrook, 2000). By drawing on Deleuzian-Spinozist ontologies, and re-interpreting the body as a becoming, such a perspective could easily be applied to animal bodies, situating animals in modes of their own practice, encounters with others and self-representations. As Grosz points out, these practices create meaning, indicating that is a not simply a symbolic system but “an immanent power of active nature” (Grosz, 1994:148). Seen this way, performative methodologies are of great value to social scientists, allowing us to re-view animal actings by accrediting the non-human actant not just with important roles (and allowing us to omit human actors if necessary) but also by analyzing the socio-political-environmental stage as part of the performance, including the role of onlookers.

3.4.3 Hybridity

Materialist geographies are also apparent in Sarah Whatmore’s seminal ‘hybrid geographies’. Here, Whatmore returns to the ethical and social relations of the “most mundane of worldly transactions, eating” (Whatmore, 2002:162), analysing the hybrid nature of Mad Cow disease that manifests

²⁶ And indeed this is what Butler demands of Foucault in her critique of his interpretation of power: that power and control require an outside as a force of discursive exclusion (like Lacan), rather than in Foucault’s interpretation as immanent and multiplicitous.

through the corporeal practice of eating flesh. Whatmore's example touches on the technological hybridity of industrial farming (including the cannibalistic aspect of the cows having been fed supplements derived from protein sources that included bovine carcasses) and the hybridity of manmade pathogens²⁷. However, hybridity refers not just to material bodies, structures and performances, but also indicates a transgression of boundaries between both states and beings. In other words, hybrid states (or sit(e)uations, to use my terminology) are fundamental ways that links are created between human and non-human lifeworlds. Consequently hybridity has been set forth as a suitable ontological position for studying non-humans since, like performativity, it centralises embodied practice as the methodological foundation of study.

Lulka (2009), on the other hand, cautions against thinking of hybrid spaces as necessarily being those composed exclusively of human-animal encounters, warning that "almost universally ... in geographic writings, the nonhuman animal only becomes hybrid through its relation with society/humanity" (Lulka, 2009:384). He goes on to question whether there are ways for animals to be hybrid without the involvement of humans or society more generally, concluding that if not, then geographers are "simply disavowing the multiplicity of agencies that ANT has thrust before us" (Lulka, 2009:384). Lulka's point, I believe, is that 'hybridity' often infers that nonhumans only become *valid* through encounters with other human participants. By disputing this, Lulka opens the door for hybridity to occur as the result of *any* interaction, and I am inclined to agree. Looking at animal geographies as assemblages then, is to see them as consisting of hybrids (and hybrid-hybrids) that result from legislation, genetic dispositions, or academic treatment that are performing in hybrid spaces.

Sometimes, connections are through frameworks of politics and power. Specifically, Agamben's philosophy of machines addresses the way that the nature-culture divide is a necessary part of human identity. Considering how biological difference is unclear and arbitrary, and language is historically constructed, Agamben²⁸ argues that the identifying characteristics of humanness are the result of an 'anthropological machine' (Agamben, 2004). This machine serves to produce states of inclusion and exclusion, which in turn each re-create one another. Subsequently, groups are not created by virtue of shared characteristics, but rather by who or what they deem *different*. Of

²⁷ Furthermore, the topic necessarily calls into question the *relational ethics* (Whatmore's term) of eating meat and how the rendering visible of the secret worlds of slaughterhouses that resulted from the scare supports what Whatmore calls a "passionate mode of enquiry", which hybridises researcher and subject, human and animal.

²⁸ I am referring here to Agamben's later writings. Pre-1990, he followed a similar anthropocentric metaphysics to Levinas or Heidegger whereby humans are the sole agents of politics and philosophy. However, through the formulation of the idea of "bare life" with regard to sovereignty and the State, Agamben was evidently forced to reconsider the question of the animal.

course, power lies with the group of excluders (humans), who can then in turn determine the way in which the excluded group (animals) is presented. This is apparent when academic writing objectifies animals, especially through espousing methodologies that constitute the machine. Agamben's own commitment to a philosophy of animals can therefore be viewed as a transgression of the rules of the machine which continue to bind academic institutions worldwide.

Like Agamben, Donna Haraway also plays with the metaphor of the machine, employing the "cyborg" as a figure that (re)presents the blurring of human, animal and technology. In *A Cyborg Manifesto* (1991) she draws attention to the social construction of science and technology, and the often unacknowledged embodiment of non-human technologies and scientific methodologies. Though largely a semiotic exercise, Haraway's cyborgs prove helpful for re-viewing (and dismantling) the nature-culture divide, as well as drawing attention to what she calls "technobiopolitics" whereby identity is partial, contradictory and linked to multiple non-human kinships²⁹ (Haraway, 1991). In addition to her consideration of bodily amalgamations, Haraway pursued the idea of hybrid states/spaces which she identifies as "naturecultures" (2008), or later, as "contact zones" (2010). These are spaces of entanglement, in which binaries are destroyed and new, enmeshed relationships can be forged between society and the environment. Furthermore, such a vantage point allows us to see that knowledge and observation (and by extension, academic research) is fleshy, located, and partial. As Neumann (2009) expressed, academic recognition of these qualities allows science to better understand the limits of knowledge claims. Like its subjects, research into animal geography is embodied and incomplete, and it pays to reflect on the way this too resides on the edge of cultural studies, much as animals sit on the edge of culture.

3.4.4 Non-Representational Theory

Another methodology that goes-beyond language has developed alongside contemporary geographical study, evident in the increasing application of non-representational theory (NRT). Stemming primarily from continental philosophy, NRT reflects disillusionment with social constructivism and the paradigm's reliance on symbology and significance. Proving to be a very useful theoretical starting-point from which to formulate non-human methodologies, NRT addresses life as interrelated bodily practices that precede cognition. Most notably, the multiplicitous nature of relations are emphasised, expanding the phenomenological precedent set by Heidegger, Wittgenstein and Merleau-Ponty: that the world-we-live-in and the-world-as-lived-in are one and

²⁹ While Haraway looks in particular towards animals and machines, presumably plants, objects or even processes could comprise an identity assemblage under such a model.

the same. Within geography, the ontology of NRT is steered most directly through the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari. Here we see an emphasis on transformative, multi-corporeal states and social fabrics, articulated in terms of ‘affects’ (see Anderson & Harrison, 2006; Lorimer, 2008; and Pile, 2010).

NRT assumes neither a passive environment nor a landscape directed by symbolism or codes. Rather, “the on-going creation of effects through encounters” (Thrift & Dewsbury, 2000:415) within everyday life both fabricates and destabilises the world in which we live. Such interrelationships reveal animals not as symbols, but as living flesh who engage in bodily contact(s) through everyday encounters. Early provocateurs included Nash (2000), Castree and MacMillan (2004), Lorimer (2005) and Thrift (2008), all who sought to overcome dualisms between interior/exterior, mind/body, and theory/practice. Such a materialist approach in geographic literature is useful, as creatures (and objects) not conventionally credited with meaning-giving are granted saliency. However, fixation on simply the ‘non-representational’ is not unproblematic, given that: a) the process of articulation demands representation(ings) of a being, object or event, and b) we attach meaning to everything we encounter, whether it is material or a symbol or image of a reality. A danger then, is interpreting NRT as adhering *only* to material actions, and disregarding the discursive practices that give rise to them. As a result, the term more-than-representational is often preferred in current scholarship (see Lorimer, 2005; Jones, 2008 for formative use of this terminology, and Lorimer *et al*, 2017; Holloway *et al*, 2018 or Waterton, 2018 for recent work that apply it in contemporary practice).

3.4.5 Assemblage Theory

The final point of this discussion focuses on assemblage as the most viable approach to apply to my thesis. A relatively recent approach, and one that has gained significant velocity, assemblage geography draws from work by Manuel DeLanda, who is in turn strongly influenced by Deleuze and Guattari. Taking Deleuze’s claim that “relations are external to their terms” (DeLanda, 2006:41) as a central principle (also see DeLanda, 2010), assemblage theory applies Deleuze’s fundamental rejection of stability, boundedness and dualism. For Deleuze, an assemblage is co-constituted with its space.

Spaces where actions occur can be ‘striated’. Striation speaks to homogenised, sedentary orders that are structurally disciplined, and contain closed systems that operate segmentally (both socially and physically). The particular placings of animals according to their ‘use’ is an example of this in action (livestock on farms, pets in the home, wildlife in the forest and so on). Deleuze and Guattari,

on the other hand, reconceptualise space as ‘nomadic’. This term has been further elaborated by Rosi Bradotti (1994; 2006), who explains nomadism as a “process ontology that privileges change and motion over stability” (2013:344). In contrast to striated spaces, nomadic performances constitute undisciplined shifting, turbulent spaces in which interrelations occur as affects rather than as manifestations of encoded order.

Resurging interest in the bonds between philosophy and geography³⁰, have further extended understandings of such ‘rhizomic’ connections as linking humans and non-humans within single biopolitical spheres. As such, the organic and inorganic intersect, connect, reassemble and co-define space and place, as affect is transmitted (and redistributed) between bodies and things that are not exclusively human. By actively seeking to break down accepted dualities between human and non-human, contemporary philosophy has embraced the idea of ‘becoming animal’ in which an ontology (Buchanan, 2008) emerges that encompasses human, animal and inorganic life. To Deleuze and Guattari, becoming-animal involves the creation of contact zones in which the clear boundaries between human and nonhuman bodies give way to what Haraway (following Merleau-Ponty) calls “heterogeneous infoldings of the flesh” (Haraway, 2008, in van den Hengel, 2012:51). Thus, Deleuze and Guattari effectively invert creative evolutionary process into a ‘biophilosophy’ (or “involution”) that privileges internal expression over external molar organisation:

You do not become a barking molecular dog, but by barking, if it is done with enough feeling, with enough necessity and composition, you emit a molecular dog. Man does not become wolf, or vampire, as if he changed molar species; the vampire and werewolf are becomings of man, in other words, proximities between molecules in composition, relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness between emitted particles.

-Deleuze & Guattari (1987:275)

Essentially, this allows the academic to incorporate a wide diversity of actors who contribute in different ways, to different degrees, in different spatial and temporal and scalar contexts, to create events that are in turn subject to the actors engaging in it. Assemblage theory is thus philosophically apart from other methodologies that assume research subjects are the construction of their cultural environment. While in many ways an assemblage might closely resemble the networks of ANT, a

³⁰ Most notable is the increasingly widespread incorporation of continental philosophy such as that propounded by Spinoza and Deleuze & Guattari, or the deconstructionist thought of Foucault and Derrida.

critical difference is evident in the way that unpredictability and instability are treated. Rather than assuming that actors consist of fundamental characteristics, Deleuzian assemblage theory instead views the self as composed of the assemblages in which it participates. Subsequently identities are not set or bounded and may manifest as different according to the varying assemblages we participate in at any given time. Furthermore, we are part of many various assemblages simultaneously, and are therefore differently composed people/animals/objects depending on how we interrelate with others in each assemblage. It is therefore possible to visualise assemblages as machines that function in, around and next to micro and macro constellations of events, actors and discourses.

3.5 Conclusions: Moving forward into assemblage(s)

Assemblage thus offers a way to consider more-than-human geographies without binding animal participants into essentialised and categorical behaviours. While studying sheep, for example, as part of a ‘rural’ geography, animal bodies become subject to prescribed behaviours and placings that define them: they are immutable. Yet when re-viewed as part of assemblages that transcend the rural or the urban, the sheep *becomes*. Ovine identity is licensed to shift depending on encounters, even if the sheep physically remains in the same location. For instance, an individual ewe does not remain the same in all sit(e)uations: other sheep may be introduced to or leave the paddock, different mammals, insects and birds may pass through, or the weather might change. In each circumstance, she responds through behaviours that are unlikely to have been recorded had an academic study been made on her whole flock, or on wider processes such as transportation, shearing or drenching. In this way, our academic treatment of animals often defines them by categorising expected behaviors. In a Deleuzian context this can be understood as ‘coding’, whereby meanings and values derived from discourse are applied to practices and bodies. These are maintained by the State (Deleuze, 2004): institutions such as religions, corporations, governments, and of course, academic systems and conventions.

Yet academic transgressions of tradition can upset these boundaries and allow us to re-view non-humans as embodied agents. Methodologies, then, are *becomings* too. By understanding interspecies academic works as part of assemblages, they become ‘living’ documents that shape even wider assemblages, including not only the academic community but also our animal subjects. Work is *immanent*, consisting of a series of emergent productions that create the world. Assemblage geography recognises these co-created environments as being and creating assemblages of humans,

non-humans, technologies, places, objects, symbols and events that results in an untidy, entangled, enmeshed gathering of lives, thus becoming a transgression, a crossing over or a going-beyond.

It remains that as geographers, we find it difficult to translate our theoretical understandings into academic practice. On the one hand, the influence of post-structuralism has resulted in a critical realism that “starts from the premise that the world exists independently of our knowledge of it and that its very independence means that human knowledge is not reality, but a representation of it” (Somerville, 2012). However, the existential struggle of translating inhuman knowledges into ordered human understandings has resulted in a rather confused reconceptualisation of animal geographies within human theories of culture and evolution. As a result, with the exception of some of the more recent re-material geographies, animals have largely remained subsumed in larger discourses surrounding nature, domestication and species conservation. This is despite their inherent capacity to interact with us and one another, to produce and reproduce space, and to perform materially and emotionally in lives that, although often invisible and unrecognisable to us, run parallel to ours in co-created urban landscapes.

In addressing how academia has constricted animals through construction, this chapter has critically assessed the way that geography has itself contributed to the positioning of animal against human through methodological treatment of the non-human subjectivity. However, all is not lost: a new ethics of intersubjective research is becoming more and more central to geographic understandings of space, place and intra-urban environmental studies. The transgression of boundaries that occurs on a daily basis in the mundane everyday urban worlds of both humans and animals is also taking (its) place in the academic world of both field research and theoretical study. Thereby, I situate this analysis in my broader study of Auckland City’s animal geographies, examining the way that social and emotional engagement often transgresses these boundaries, and why the crossing of animal-human boundaries is rarely acknowledged academically. Here, changes in approach now support different views, in method and methodology. This can manifest in our geographical outputs in the way in which we approach animals as agents, as subjects, as friends, as co-creators of space, as co-operators of systems and collaborators in our academic research projects.

Part IV

Context

GOVERNANCE, MOBILITY AND THE CLASSIFICATION OF AUCKLAND'S NON-HUMAN MAMMALS

4.1 Preamble

Aotearoa/New Zealand's geographic isolation has resulted in unique patterns of non-human animal settlement. Surrounded by both the Pacific Ocean and the Tasman Sea, the landmass remains bound in a watery embrace, impermeable to all non-winged mammals. As a result, pre-human Aotearoa was, with the exception of two species of bat, devoid of land mammals. Subsequent settlement by animals has therefore been the direct result of linked mobilities between humans and non-humans. Interspecies encounters have thus been fundamentally entwined with processes of colonisation and development of a 'new' land. This has meant that the classification and governance of non-human life has emerged within sets of embodied assemblages, producing both physical and ontological territories of non-human life.

Auckland is the main commercial and cultural centre of New Zealand. Situated on a narrow isthmus in the northern region of the North Island, the city straddles both the eastern and western coastlines. Twin harbours established the strategic importance of pre-European Auckland as a centre for transportation and trade, and its later development as a port city has meant that the city and surrounds has acted as a hub for many animals moving in and out of the country. Geographic location therefore ensured that the mobilities of non-human mammals has depended entirely on (hu)manmade transportation technologies. Thus, the forebears of the animals that form the backbone of this thesis *had* to initially have come here by sea or air: on boats or on planes.

Originally called Tāmaki Makaurau, the area was first settled Māori in approximately 1350. Translated as 'Tāmaki of a thousand lovers' (or 'favourites'), the name referred to the desirability of the location, particularly the accessible harbours and rich volcanic soils, both of which provided abundant food supplies to early inhabitants. Due to the isolation of New Zealand, Tāmaki Makaurau's animals consisted exclusively of aquatic life, insects, reptiles and birds. Notably, the absence of predatory mammals enabled over thirty species of unique flightless birds to evolve in New Zealand³¹, many of whom would have lived in the Auckland region. The incapacity of these species to escape introduced predators has caused innumerable problems in terms of wildlife management, as exotic species have devastated populations of indigenous birds and lizards.

³¹ Of which, now only sixteen species remain.

Upon the arrival of Māori, pre-human animals in Auckland were fundamentally considered resources, and Māori folklore largely centres around mythological animals (such as the water dwelling *taniwha* or bird-like *nuku-mai-tore*) rather than accounts of ‘real’ interactions between humans and fauna. Yet as early as the tenth century AD, Māori settlers transported the first non-winged mammals to Aotearoa. Although dependent on pigs and chickens in their Pacific homelands, only kurī (dogs) and kiore (small rats) were mobilised in these early territorialisations³², primarily as food and skin sources. While these animals may not have been significant in Māori narratives of place, they would nevertheless have been crucial factors in early animal-human assemblages.

Later, European explorers and settlers shipped animals from their homelands, again those deemed important for commercial and emotional reasons. On Captain James Cook’s second voyage in 1773, he brought pigs with him, which he presented to the Ngati Porou *iwi* (tribe) on the East Coast of New Zealand. By the turn of the century Māori were reportedly trading in introduced agricultural resources, establishing pigs and sheep as some of the earliest non-human actors in early Auckland’s animal landscape. European rats and mice would have mobilised themselves as stowaways on early whaling and sealer ships, and later on settler steamers. In 1814 the missionary Samuel Marsden established the presence of horses and cattle, clear examples of animals destined for utilitarian purposes, especially farm work and transportation for humans. Other creatures were introduced (some without success) for sport (hare, deer, moose and wallaby), sentiment (mainly bird species) or biological control (hedgehogs, stoats, and weasels). The mobilisation of these species reflected the colonial belief that New Zealand’s native flora and fauna must eventually be replaced by European species. Indeed, a vigorous policy of acclimatisation continued from the 1840s until World War II, peaking in 1860-70 alongside the first wave of settler migration from Great Britain (see table 4).

These initial animal movements were intimately related to farming, to colonising, and to the rapidly spreading *human* geographies of a new nation-state. Of course, not all animals remained confined to the spaces in which they had been placed, and escapees rapidly established themselves as ‘feral’ inhabitants of New Zealand’s wild spaces. Examples of these early transgressors of boundaries include goats, pigs, deer, tahr, chamois, wallaby and horses; all of whom later presented the New Zealand government with problems surrounding their management within national parks and

³² Both species have since died out through interbreeding with later European introduced species. As noted by Te Heu Heu Tukino (leader of the Ngati Tuwharetoa *iwi*) circa 1859: “As clover killed the fern, and European dog the Māori dog; . . . so our people will gradually be supplemented by the pākehā.”(quoted by Wedde 2007:279).

reserves. In total, fifty three species of exotic mammals were introduced by European settlers, with thirty one of these classed as currently living in a ‘free state’ (Wodzicki, 1984).

Table 4: Time frames of introduced species to New Zealand Aotearoa

(Source: Adapted from Wodzicki, 1984)

	Period of Time						
	Pre-European	1773-1840	1841-1860	1861-1880	1881-1900	After 1900	Unknown
Freshwater fish				22	8	11	
Amphibia				3	1		
Reptiles				3	1		
Birds		2	3	9	14	7	9
Mammals	2	11	2	22	8	8	

Chiefly regarded as useful to humans, animals and their spaces have been re-ordered through processes that correspond to how human inhabitants have viewed and used Auckland’s physical landscape. As a result, spatial categorisations define what types of beasts are *supposed* to reside within particular locations. In Auckland City, it is possible to trace connections between animal movement(s) and the establishment of territories in terms of both colonising processes and modern land uses.

4.1.1 Early Auckland

Fiercely contested among iwi, inter-tribal warfare meant that the area was largely depopulated by the time of European settlement in 1840. After a brief stint as capital city, Auckland established itself as a primary port and as a commercial and industrial hub, initially servicing a wide rural territory. As a British colony, this rurality focused on first clearing the land of indigenous forest (utilising timber for the masts and spars of boats and the building materials for houses, as well as harvesting gum for export back to England) and then on the establishment of farms whose primary purpose was to provide animal goods for England. Thus, the social construct of New Zealand as a territory of England – combined with its physical territoriality as a South Pacific Island nation – influenced the types of animals that were both introduced and displaced as part of the colonisation process.

Until the 1950s, much of what was considered ‘inner city’ land was still actively farmed, mainly for cattle and sheep³³. With the steady advance of suburbia and the associated population growth, farming in Auckland was gradually displaced to make way for residential areas. Rather than blurring the lines between urban and rural boundaries, Auckland’s animal spaces have become increasingly striated into distinct territories that can loosely be classed as residential (the place of pet animals such as cats, dogs, rabbits and guinea pigs), rural areas (cattle, sheep, goats, pigs and alpacas), wild spaces (containing native species), and industrial/commercial land, which although supposedly devoid of mammalian life, is the home for many of the stray (or ‘homeless’) pet animals who elude ownership status.

4.1.2 Contemporary Auckland

Since the amalgamation of four independent councils in 2010, metropolitan Auckland encompasses a massive 5,600 km square land area (see Figure 4). Geographically diverse, the region encompasses a wide range of animal inhabited zones. We have regional parks (both bush and farmland), agricultural and horticultural areas, as well as extensive (and expanding) housing, commercial and industrial areas.

Accordingly, animals participate in daily life through equally diverse spaces such as households, zoos, parks, racetracks, airports, retirement villages, processing plants, and research institutions, to name just a few. Non-human participants have therefore been classified according to which of these spaces they inhabit, resulting in emergent identities as animals become stock, companions, consumables, entertainers, endangered species and so forth.

³³ Indeed, even when I moved to my current house in 2009 (and only 15km from the city centre), cattle grazed in a small farmlet one block along the road. Now this space is a new residential subdivision, but it is still possible to spy pockets of rural land, such as the grazing cattle viewed from the hypothetical aeroplane descent in my introduction.



Figure 4: Map of the wider Auckland area

Likewise, definitions of urban functional zones rely on assumptions about where animals should and should not be located. Indeed, the number and distribution of animal species in a given area can serve as a defining characteristic of spatial categorisation. For example, the *presence* of particular species may warrant an area being classified as a protected wetland, such as the indigenous bird life in *Tahuna Torea* coastal reserve in Eastern Auckland (see Figure 5)³⁴. Alternatively, the *absence* of species may constitute the management of a space (such as fencing stock out of the reach of predators, or maintaining pest free ‘islands’ of native forest).



Figure 5: Map showing potential roosting areas on Tahuna Torea (Shaun Lee, 2014)

³⁴ This reserve was deliberately established as a recreational wetland in the South-East of Auckland. However, while well equipped for human visitors, domestic animals are banned in order to protect indigenous bird life.

Clearly related to social control and the discipline of space, such mappings are integral in most conservation discourse, revealing how animals are entwined within ideas of nature, then classed and restricted accordingly.

The remainder of this chapter provides the broader context for the case studies that follow, elaborating on the interplay between processes of territorialisation and boundary making in Auckland's animal space. I focus on the classification and governance of animals in Auckland, considering how this has impacted on the roles of animals and their relationship to space.

4.2 Territories

We have long applied the concept of territories to articulate the animal 'kingdom'. Indeed, animal taxonomies reflect human concepts of territories. Divided into 'kingdoms', 'domains' and 'phyla', our basic conceptualisation of animal categorisation mirrors feudal and tribal boundary-making processes. In other words, we transpose human concepts of spatial relations upon animal use of space, often with an assumption that animal interactions conform to a hierarchal power structure with dominant individuals, groups or species monopolising resources and managing negotiations with others within geographic confines.

Territories are therefore understood as being organised by patterns of interactions between actors. Determined through conquest and claims to space, the physicality of territories is established through assemblages that result from embodied encounters between multiple actants and fluxing power relations. Territories can therefore result from behavioural practices, whether human or more-than-human. For example, in the 'Encyclopaedia of Ethology' (1992), Immelmann defines territories in terms of animal behaviour, stating that:

Most commonly a territory is an area of more or less fixed boundaries from which the individual or individuals in possession exclude all rival conspecifics, or at least attempt to do so, by means of territorial advertisement (vocalizations, chemical signals), threat, and, if necessary, territorial fighting.

-Immelmann (1977:310)

A territory then, is the product of ever-changing collages of shifting assemblages. Of course, these animal territories are often pasted over with conflicting human territories, and boundary lines may not be recognised, acknowledged or accepted by other members of assemblages.

At the most basic level, Auckland's territories can be structured in terms of property boundaries within which animals can be kept (by people) or excluded. A farmer on the outskirts of the city, for example, is legally allowed to shoot their neighbour's pet dog should s/he infringe on their sheep paddock, in order to protect the flock from attack. In this case, the dog transgresses property boundaries and, in doing so, forfeits his/her protection as 'owned' by the neighbour. Here, both sheep and dog are classified as *property*, and contained within *properties*, and these territories are governed by physical and/or legal boundaries.

Stabilised through assemblages that include practices and processes (such as property surveying, legal titles and ownership rights), these spatial territories seem summative in nature. Yet territories also have a strong relationship with identity, or as Deleuze (2004) claims: "territory is the domain of the having". In other words, a sheep becomes a sheep not because of his or her genetic legacy, but because of the territory s/he is bound within. 'Sheep' is commodity, wool-maker, meat or cute lamb, depending on the spaces and practices surrounding her. Likewise, 'dog' may become pet or threat due to which territory he participates in at a given time. Deleuze and Guattari argue this 'territorialisation' is a process of (temporary) self-making, with boundaries constructed through signs, habits and actions.

Territories, then, consist of elements grouped by similar qualities, which are distinguished from other territories because of contrasting qualities. As such, identities are created by what they are not. Functioning in a manner similar to Manuel DeLanda's (2006) relations of exteriority, identities emerge as a function of dealings with other entities, spaces and practices. Furthermore, these relations have their own ontological integrity (Price-Robertson & Duff, 2016), requiring encounters both within and beyond sets of bounded territories.

[A] biological species is an individual entity, as unique and singular as the organisms that compose it, but larger in spatio-temporal scale ... individual organisms are component parts of a larger individual whole, not the particular members of a general category or natural kind.

- DeLanda (2006:27)

A clear relationship thus emerges between material bodies, identities, modes of human-animal encounter and governance of space. Using the above framework, territories are more than spaces: they are systems of orientation. I therefore use the term to refer both to the identities of species (the

classification of animals) and the spaces of their performance, and consider ‘territorialisation’ to be the process through which they are secured in place through *governance*³⁵.

4.2.1 Territorialisation and classification in Auckland

As already mentioned, we classify animals based on the types of space they inhabit, and concurrently, spaces are categorised by the species of animals residing within them. We can therefore see that naming is a fundamental part of the process of territorialisation, by grouping, classing, structuring, and managing species and individuals.

Names create territories. Most significant are sets of tropes that run through the case studies which follow: the territories of the ‘rural’, ‘wild’, ‘urban’ and ‘domestic’, which situate animals politically, and in relation/ships to/with humans. Both spatial and ontological, these territories are based on *distance* between humans and animals, as animal identities and practices are gauged by how, when and why we encounter them.

Clearly, the greatest perceived distance between human and animal lies with the wild beast, those that are ostensibly ‘unmanaged’ (and unmanageable) by humans. While it is dangerous to conflate the terms ‘wild’ and ‘nature’, they do indeed perform as a duet. Creatures conceptualised as populating the ‘wilderness’ are inferred to lead ‘natural’ lives. This speaks of an epistemological distinction between the man-made (the synthetic, urbanised, civilised world of humanity) and the ‘natural’ world (considered variously as more base, or more authentic). A territory-of-nature, then, is often subject to ideology that “transforms habitat into a moral landscape” (Proctor, 1998:193). Moreover, animals who live in the ‘wild’ are understood as wholly outside the gambit of human interactions (Anderson, 1998), and great effort is often invested to recreate or protect segregated spaces for these animal performances to take place.

While encounters with the wild *can* take place in human environments (such as the thrill of seeing lions up close in a zoo or circus), they are deemed most *appropriate* when they are enacted in what is constructed as a ‘natural’ environment. Here, animals are endowed with sets of qualities that territorialise. Framings centre around those who resist domestication. The ‘noble’ lion, for example, becomes the ‘king of the jungle’, and with this status he is enmeshed in territories of either preservation (of the wild lands that sustain him), or alternatively, where he is hunted as a trophy that can be tamed through enslavement or death. Feared and revered, the animal-in-nature is

³⁵ I use the word governance here to mean the processes surrounding the establishment and enforcement of legislation.

categorically wild only in contrast to the animal-as-tamed, and only when s/he is situated within the wild itself (or a replication of the wild, such as a zoo or nature park).

Tensions arise when animals *deteritorialise* space by venturing outside this construction. For example, Yeo and Neo (2010) address conflicts between urban and wilderness borderlands, reflected in ambiguous views towards monkeys who invade Singapore's urban space. Although recognised as ecologically and culturally important, the monkeys were also identified as aggressive, thieving and disease ridden. In other examples, wild animals were understood as more direct threats to human life, livelihood or livestock. For example, Miquelle *et al* (2005) describe conflicts between villagers and tigers in East Russia, while Hill (2018) analyses negative opinions towards African elephants due to crop-raiding. Likewise, Mishra's (2016) account of snow leopard predation in the pastoral Himalayas and DeCesare *et al's* (2018) study of wolf management in North America both highlight conflicts that situate 'domesticated' animals as food, and 'wild' animals as threat.

In Auckland however, such framings of the wild beast are not applicable. Here 'wildness' takes on a different mask. Given that Auckland's indigenous species are almost exclusively reptiles or birds, there is no roar of the beast to be heard. Rather, Auckland's 'wilderness' is a quieter, passive 'nature', a place for (human) urban dwellers to visit for recreation or meditation. In contrast, non-human mammals who venture into Auckland's land-based wild spaces have become framed as out-of-place³⁶. As categorisation essentialises species as *either* indigenous or exotic (Ginn, 2008), the rights of individual animals to place are ultimately subsumed into wider environmental discourses reflecting metanarratives (such as the ecosystem). Subsequently, 'wild' animals take on a binary presence; they become either that which needs protecting, or that which is an ecological threat.

Species that elude control are subsequently (re)categorised as 'pests'. These include those beasts brought by colonists either inadvertently (rats, mice) or deliberately (rabbits, hedgehogs, possums). Often these have long history as commodity, such as possums who were released from between 1853 and the 1940s for their pelts (Potts, 2009). However, since the 1960s heightened interest in New Zealand's 'natural' ecology has seen a re-evaluation (or de-valuation) of possums into menace. In a comparative study between New Zealand and Australia, Milton (2016) establishes that attitudes towards possums are governed by the extent to which they are perceived as in place (the Australian

³⁶ It is worth noting that *human mammalian* occupation of 'wildland' is largely accepted in New Zealand, in contrast to restrictions on non-human mammals. Indeed, historically there is very strong public feeling that humans should be entitled to access *all* public land for recreational purposes. Currently, access to such 'wildernesses' is conditional, with humans stripped of most of the trappings of modernity (such as vehicles), and without non-human accompaniment. Domestic animals are banned from most parts of National Parks - including almost all camping domains - only permitted with a license to hunt other non-human intruders such as pigs, deer or goats.

bush) or out of place (New Zealand bush). However Milton notes that like many of our favourite companion animals, possums have a high ‘cuteness’ factor, something that New Zealand conservationists have had to actively counteract to ensure possums are demonised in New Zealand’s nature-culture landscape.

There are active pest control programmes in both of Auckland’s main ranges (Waitakere to the west and Hunua to the south), as well as in many coastal and suburban parks. Domestic animals such as cats and dogs are discouraged or banned in these parks, whilst management plans target possums, stoats, rats, ferrets and feral cats, as well as goats (Hunua) and pigs (Waitakere). These programmes are under the administration of the Auckland City Council (ACC), although other organisations such as The Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of New Zealand Inc.³⁷ also advocate trapping and poisoning such species, even within private properties. Boundaries, then, can girdle large or small spaces, serving to both confine species within them and exclude them from trespassing. In both cases, the construction of a wild-territory requires the immobilisation of non-human animals in order to create a very human conceptualisation of what such a space should look like.

However, identity classification is not bound exclusively to the species one is born into. Dogs, while banned in Auckland’s regional parks *unmonitored*, are allowed provided they are leashed. Having relinquished agency, the dog is now property, carried with a human like a backpack or picnic basket. Dogs are also an excellent example of a stretching of territorialisations, as the most common ‘working’ animals in Auckland’s urban zone, although it must be noted that these animals are unpaid employees³⁸. Dogs perform duties for the police, customs, guiding those with hearing and visual impairments, working on farms and assisting with search and rescue operations. As a result, they are granted access where pet dogs are not. The sight or hearing dog is allowed in movie theatres, public transport, eating establishments or a university lecture theatre: all places where dogs are usually banned in Auckland’s milieu. Identities therefore swing upon classification, and spatial rights shift accordingly. In many cases, the ‘value’ of the dog is altered, enabling him/her to access banned spaces due to his or her contribution to human good. Territorialisation of Auckland’s public spaces therefore limits encounters with animal agents, while the exemption of certain animals from the rules reinforces ontological boundaries.

Of course, animals can have multiple identities depending on what assemblages they participate in. For example, an animal with a primary identity as ‘companion’ or ‘stock’ can be re-situated as

³⁷ Most commonly referred to as simply ‘Forest and Bird’.

³⁸ There are animals that have paid work as models and actors, although obviously it is their human owners who manage their accounts. Again, money earned and hours worked by an animal are regarded in the same way as renting out any other object.

entertainer. As well as animals with visible presences in the Auckland Zoo, beasts participate in assemblages such as advertising events (it is not unusual to release sheep in Auckland streets or sports fields to promote events or advertise products). The Agricultural and Pastoral Show remains a fixture in New Zealand, where animals compete for ‘best of species’ awards. Within central Auckland this event has been integrated into the annual Easter Show, but regular competitions are held across the city for a range of species, including dogs, cats, rabbits, chickens and horses. Travelling farms for birthday parties and school fetes feature petting zoos and pony rides, and pet stores themselves remain a popular destination for families with young children as a leisure activity to ‘window shop’ animals. In these spaces, animals are deterritorialised, becoming entertainers through their participation in transient events while returning to their original identities afterwards.

On the other hand, animal athletes are usually subject to stricter boundaries than their companion animal counterparts, even if they share a species boundary. For example, racing greyhounds are kept in near total confinement outside of racing events, largely immobilised outside of their set purpose. Animal athletes are thus generally classified exclusively into a single category, and although some are re-homed on retirement or injury, the majority are euthanised when they are unable to perform. However, there is growing indictment of racing industries as exploitative, and rehoming animal athletes (including ex-racehorses) is becoming more prevalent in Auckland’s animal landscape. ‘Pet naming’ therefore comprises spaces, actions, and relationships, with a wide ranging set of outcomes for Auckland’s animal inhabitants. As such, territories are established that include (but are not restricted to) species boundaries, and are managed through wider sets of governance practices.

4.2.2 Territorialisation and Governance

Composed and disseminated in a written (and to a lesser degree, spoken) language, governance of Auckland’s animal spaces rests in the hands of human citizens. We construct regulations that exclude non-humans from some spaces and contexts, whilst encouraging their participation in others. For example, we support engagement with animals in the Auckland Zoo as objects of entertainment, while it would be deemed dangerous or unsanitary to have an otter or orang-utan running ‘wild’ in the suburbs. As such, territorialising processes are regulated through practices of governance, resulting in striated spaces based on classifications of the animals that reside within them.

Typical of global legislation, New Zealand laws are directed entirely towards humans *or* non-humans. For example, even within the necessarily hybridised zoo environment, regulations are

different for the animal tenants and human workers in a manner that parallels the physical divide of cages, fences or other barricades (Braverman 2011b). In spite of maintaining that animals are denied freedoms enjoyed by humans in a democratic landscape, literature surrounding animals and place-making (including much of the classic work on animal geographies cited throughout this thesis) largely ignores the legal side of governance. Most specifically, this right relates to the regulatory constriction of animal mobility: animals are confined spatially to reinforce their ontological position, while their ontological position in turn serves to reinforce spatial environments. As Braverman notes, governance *depends* on classification, the taxonomy of animals and definition of spaces. In this manner, legislation is an attempt to order, to stratify spaces into finite layers or groupings³⁹.

In Auckland, bylaws govern animals, and their management, by determining numbers of certain species allowed to be ‘kept’ per urban property (particularly dogs, poultry, goats and pigs), how they are to be confined (fences, kennels, coops and other structures), and minimum health requirements (water, food, shelter and so forth). Specific locations non-humans are allowed to move within are also defined in bylaws. For instance, off-leash dogs are restricted to particular public parks and urban farm animals are limited to circumscribed spaces. On the other hand, native beasts (such as skinks, bats or birds) are not to be removed from the council-managed reserves in which they may be found. Regulation therefore determines animal place and provides structures in which humans must order (and control) our own behaviour to ensure these spatial arrangements are maintained. As a result, the scope of spaces and manners of encounter that are possible between human and animal are restricted and constrained in Auckland’s urban environment. Most municipal regulations are for the purpose of protecting human Aucklanders from the threat of disease, distress or annoyance caused by animals. This is usually considered as any activity that causes a “nuisance”, and is clarified as follows:

- a) *where any accumulation or deposit is in such a state or is so situated as to be offensive or likely to be injurious to health;*
- b) *where any premises, including any accumulation or deposit thereon, are in such a state as to harbour or to be likely to harbour rats or other vermin;*
- c) *where any premises are so situated, or are in such a state, as to be offensive or likely to be injurious to health;*

³⁹ Yet, ironically, it is trying to order that which is by its own definition ‘nature’, and nature - again by definition - is that which is essentially unable to be ordered!

- d) *where any buildings or premises used for the keeping of animals are so constructed, situated, used, or kept, or are in such a condition, as to be offensive or likely to be injurious to health;*
- e) *where any animal, or any carcass or part of a carcass, is so kept or allowed to remain as to be offensive or likely to be injurious to health;*
- f) *where any noise or vibration occurs in or is emitted from any building, premises, or land (from an animal) to a degree that is likely to be injurious to health;*
- g) *where there exists on any land or premises any condition giving rise or capable of giving rise to the breeding of flies or mosquitoes or suitable for the breeding of other insects, or of mites or ticks, which are capable of causing or transmitting disease.*

-ACC Animal Management Plan (2015:4)

Council guidelines are therefore in place to protect people *from* animals. Animal well-being, on the other hand is deferred to national administration. The implication is that Auckland's animals - although sentient and deserving of basic rights - are not urban citizens. Their right is not to the city, and aside from references to 'conservation' are absent from planning documents such as the Auckland Unitary Plan (2012). Instead, Auckland's fauna are protected under the umbrella of the Animal Welfare Act 1999. The Act serves as an overriding code that governs ethical considerations of zoos, circuses, farms, competition animals (race horses, greyhounds etcetera), laboratory animals and wild animals as well as those beasts in the urban domestic environment. As such, a single piece of legislation deals with such far-reaching concerns as animal transportation, trapping, research environments and veterinary obligations as well as attending to issues of basic physical and behavioural welfare. Otherwise, a National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee informs welfare decision-making and policy, the Biosecurity Act (1993) deals with international animal movement, while wildlife is granted additional protection programmes co-ordinated by the Department of Conservation.

Regardless of over-riding governance at national level, Auckland's internal animal management legislation is divided categorically. While dogs are subject to a specific set of bylaws, all other animals are covered under the more general Animal Management Plan, which places the onus on owners to ensure that an animal does not "cause a nuisance to any other person", or cause "a risk to public health and safety" (ACC Animal Management Plan, 2015:5). The Plan also sets guidelines

with regard to what species can be kept. For example, within urban areas, the keeping of livestock⁴⁰ is forbidden, aligning the presence of species with map-able, quantitative understandings of functional zones under the Unitary Plan. However, smaller numbers of chickens and quail are allowed without a license (a maximum of six) within urban areas, as are bees. There are currently no restrictions around cat (or other small pet) ownership either in terms of numbers allowed within properties or the range animals are permitted to move unregulated. However, there is significant debate surrounding future regulation of cat-bodies through mandatory microchipping and de-sexing procedures with the specific intent of restricting the movement of un-owned felines. Indeed, cats have recently been included in Proposed Regional Pest Management Plan (2018), suggesting a realignment of both the framing of ‘cat’ and the territories they are welcome to participate within.

At household level, governance focuses on pet-owner’s responsibilities of care and confinement. Subject to special bylaws, canines and their owners⁴¹ must abide by the regulations laid out in the Dog Management Act (2012). Mainly concerned with outlining spaces that dogs are permitted to go, and under what conditions (for example, leashed) and times of day, the Act explicitly segregates territories into dog-spaces as opposed to spaces of exclusion. The Act also specifies fees payable by owners, at least some of which goes towards the enforcement of these spatial and temporal regulations.

Like other Auckland dog owners, I am obliged to pay my dog King’s annual registration fees of about \$130, and have obtained what is known as a ‘Responsible Dog Owner License’ to get said costs reduced.⁴² Again, territories and classification are ensconced in regulations, as Auckland’s urban dogs pay higher fees than those in rural areas outside the Supercity. Furthermore, the classification of individual dogs as ‘working’ or ‘special category’ (such as public service or disability dogs) permits cheaper registration. In this case territorialising processes reposition the value of the dog to reflect his or her perceived benefit to the wider community. In other words, the urban owner pays a higher fee for the *highly individualised* luxury of having a dog, while the working farm dog contributes to the *good of the nation*, warranting a discount on his or her registration costs.

⁴⁰ The Plan specifies that livestock consist of “cattle, deer, llamas, alpacas, donkeys, mules, horses, sheep, goats, pigs, poultry and any other animal kept in captivity, or farmed, and dependent on humans for their care and sustenance”.

⁴¹ The council is yet to embrace the terminology promoted by the SPCA, and regards owners as anyone over sixteen who either “owns the dog” or who has taken a dog into their “possession whether the dog is at large or in confinement, otherwise than for a period not exceeding 72 hours”.

⁴² When I had two dogs in the past, I also had to apply for a license to house more than a single dog on the property.

Likewise, fees paid for dogs reflect ideas about ‘good’ ownership, with costs dependent on the breeding status of individual canines. In particular, owners are penalised with a higher fee if they do not de-sex their dog/bitch. Given that the dogs themselves have no say in whether or not they desire the procedure, we can safely assume that Auckland’s promotion of neutering/spaying is in order to ensure there is no further explosion of canine numbers so that they do not become problematic for human citizens. Although most New Zealand pet owners continue to buy from breeders (New Zealand Companion Animal Council Inc., 2016), awareness of ‘backyard’ breeding operations (such as puppy mills) are increasingly considered disreputable by the public. Though legal, recent coverage of the cramped and unsanitary conditions in many underground breeding operations has resulted in growing cynicism towards the restriction of animal mobility and freedom for financial gain.

While many rescue organisations promote sterilisation to limit numbers of street dogs who suffer from starvation, illness and injury⁴³, the ACC’s position focuses on owner responsibility. This serves to territorialise Auckland as a Western space, where order equates to limited or restricted animal mobilities. Here it is rare to see animals in the streets without a human guardian, although this would be a relatively recent expectation of Auckland’s street-spaces. Dogs then, have limits around the formation and expression of dog-territories, whether in terms of space or their own bodily materiality. Rather, Auckland is situated as a place where ‘nuisance’ animals are not tolerated, with owners penalised or animals removed from public space, revealing place-based idea(l)s surrounding the territories of beasts and humanity.

‘Good’ ownership, however, also relies on sets of practices designed to protect animal bodies from harm. New Zealanders generally express resistance to the idea of animal enslavement and abhorrence at torture or mistreatment of animal bodies. Yet their naming as animal results in other implications arising from law and governance on animal mobilities (Braverman, 2013). *Some* animal bodies can thus be trafficked, bred and confined for slaughter or experimentation. In New Zealand there has not been a history of experimentation on animals for the development of cosmetics and a law was passed in 2015 making this practice illegal in the future. However, it is estimated that approximately 300,000 animals are bred for/used in research, mostly in universities (MPI Information Paper, 2016). The unlucky creatures are largely rodents, but also sometimes cattle, chickens and sheep⁴⁴.

⁴³ Albeit under the assumption that dogs require human assistance (when in the human realm) to survive.

⁴⁴ Experiments on beagles ceased in 2007 after significant social pressure, indicating that species are granted moral value above others based on human perceptions of their position relative to us.

Such categorical differences between species are entrenched in policy. For instance, in Auckland the home slaughter of household animals is illegal. ACC guidelines state this must be “carried out on a premise licensed under the Meat Act 1964” (ACC bylaw no.3, 2008), suggesting that blurring the lines between stock and pet is discouraged in a regulatory sense. In 2009, there was a well-publicised case where an Auckland man barbecued and ate his pitbull terrier cross. In spite of being acceptable under the Animal Welfare Act, public outcry was considerable and criminalisation of the deed was advocated by many. The spokesperson for the SPCA stated: “Although we appreciate the difference of cultures that exist in a place like New Zealand, the SPCA finds this sort of treatment of any animal to be totally unacceptable” (*New Zealand Herald*, 16/08/2009). While stating “any animal”, it is clear that this response was species-based, as the slaughter and consumption of other (farm) animals is rarely noted in the media (see also Elder, Wolch & Emel, 1998 for a similar account of dog-eating).

Of course there are other territories of illegality; dog fighting rings would be one example, as would the theft of desirable species for sale on the black market. Yet a territorialised and striated Auckland means that we usually encounter animals in ways supported by regulation and enacted via governance, and the vast majority of decision-making (particularly in a regulatory sense) is human-centred. It appears that although Auckland’s animal-identities shift and interspecies relationships have adapted accordingly - such as human-livestock to human-pet - there is little to indicate that the city has become more hybridised at a legislative level. Interplay between humans and non-humans, and often between species of animal, is therefore highly controlled in an attempt to maintain categorical boundaries. However, these small deterritorialisations make differences not just to individual human-animal relations, but also contribute towards broader shifts in where we understand boundaries between human and animal lives to lie.

4.3 De-territorialisation?

Classifications and governance regulate possibilities for interspecies encounters, but at the same time our understandings of space are quietly defined by *animal* use of space; in other words, animals’ material be-ings and do-ings define how we articulate our environment. In a Deleuzioguattarian framework, attention is paid to the processes that un-make and re-make territories (de- and re-territorialisation). Approaching space this way, any functionality of a territory is the *result of* the processes of its formation, rather than the more commonly accepted inverse (Livesey, 2010).

It is therefore possible to conceptualise de-territorialisation as what Deleuze and Guattari describe as a loss of ‘self’, which they label as “schizophrenia”. Deterritorialisation is thus best thought of as the separation of an actant from a given purpose (which is itself only defined in terms of its territory). Deleuze and Guattari use the example of a club as a deterritorialised branch. The territory of the branch is the tree, and the branch performs a set of functions as part of the tree-territory. Yet once removed from the tree - perhaps by wind, or by human interaction – the branch is detached from its territory, liberated to become something else. It is de-territorialised, open to insertion into new territories. When this happens, Deleuze and Guattari regard it as a process of *reterritorialisation*, as ‘branch’ is reassembled to perform a new function as a ‘club’, a tool of warfare or violence.

In short, nothing is constant. Assemblages shift as actants come and go, and each new constitution re-creates the actants themselves. Animal identities thus become destabilised as territories of classification and governance shift through the temporal landscape of the city. For example, the idea of ‘urban sustainability’ has gained traction, challenging the idea that food production ought to remain in the hinterland. Touted as a return to the ‘Good Life’, urban sustainability networks emphasise principles of permaculture and organic production⁴⁵, leading to changing relationships with animals in Auckland. In a shift back towards embodied interspecies relationships, urban chicken keeping has gained particular favour, with the chickens themselves often sourced from battery farms. Domestic territories have become territories of food production, and chicken identities simultaneously shift from production unit to pet.

It is worth mentioning an interesting twist, however, on this little tale. As backyard chicken keeping has gained favour, increasing legislative intervention has become evident. In 2015, restrictions were placed on the number of poultry (up to four) and gender (no roosters, due to the noise of their crowing) allowed on a single property (ACC Animal Management Guidelines, 2018). The implication is therefore that controls are necessary to ensure the urban does not too closely replicate the rural. In this case, reterritorialisation has preserved the status quo, where urban and rural spaces stand as distinct. Nevertheless, household chicken keeping in Auckland is an example of shifting territories, and new animal identities as tropes of urban/rural are destabilised and re-territorialised.

There are countless other examples of boundary transgressions in Auckland, as animals become more-than singular identities. To borrow some examples that link with the following case studies, we can see that Auckland has had its fair share of charismatic animal public figures through history.

⁴⁵ In such systems, food production relies on many more-than-human inputs, for example, chickens for fertiliser and eggs, insects as pest control, or bees for pollination.

The tea-party chimps of the mid 1950s-60s Auckland Zoo were anthropomorphised as ‘more than chimp’, in a (rather unsavoury, by modern standards) becoming-human. Kashin the elephant, who prompted a widespread and public outpouring of grief upon her death in 2009, became more-than-elephant. Or the iconic living features of the landscape such as or the springtime lambs at One Tree Hill which are popular with locals and tourists alike, yet who are still ‘farm’ animals, destined for shearing or slaughter as commercial agricultural commodities. In both these spaces, we see non-humans transcending their ‘animality’ to become valued participants in interspecies encounters. Due to the highly structured environments of the Zoo and the deep-seated associations we have between animals and space, it is difficult for deterritorialisation processes to be truly subversive or revolutionary. However, species that share greater bonds with humans, such as dogs and cats, offer some examples of deterritorialisation that go beyond simply having multiple identities, revealing new understandings of shared interspecies space(s).



Figure 6: Benjamin the cat at Devonport Library

The death of Benjamin, the Devonport Library cat (figure 6), for example, demonstrates not only animal agency, but also the way that space has been reconfigured as a result of animal-human encounter. After rejecting his previous home, Benjamin was resident at the North Shore library for over a decade. The local community embraced Benjamin’s participation in the day-to-day doings of the library, even fitting a cat door for him in a 2015 refurbishment. His memorial service was attended by over two hundred people, and library staff are raising money to erect a bronze statue commemorating his contribution to the space. In this case, ideas of publics as exclusive spaces for humans have been upturned, and Benjamin’s bodily presence has deterritorialised the space. This positionality was duly recognised by Devonport librarian Fiona Startup, who mused that:

Someone said to me, 'it's not us that humanise animals, it's animals that humanise us', and I thought 'yeah, that's what really happens when an animal becomes part of the community of its own volition'.

(Stuff News, April 2017)

Virtual space is also able to be deterritorialised. In a world first, New Zealand dog Reggie actively runs his own social media account. Under the username 'ReggieDoesSnaps', he uses his paw to activate special glasses linked to his Snapchat account (figure 7). The ten second videos Reggie posts are responses to moments of his own choosing, revealing life from his point of view. Now employed by dog training company *Dog Zen*, Reggie produces content for its social media platforms.



Figure 7: Reggie from Dog Zen demonstrates hybridised identities through his SnapChap account. (Dog Zen website, accessed 07/07/2018)

Benjamin and Reggie have superseded their status as pet to become respectively an icon of community and internet superstar. In both cases, the 'self' of each animal has gone beyond categorisation, and aligns with the Deleuzioguattarian concept of active, autonomous separation from an original identity/purpose.

In both cases too, the boundaries of animal-space have been stretched and reassembled through transgression. Striation is breached, resulting in what Deleuze and Guattari call 'smooth spaces', occupied by intensities and events. When striated spaces are broken, animals can become visible in the city in a multitude of different contexts. The seal who ventures out of the harbour and into a shopping district, an infestation of rodents, or the macabre presence of animal bodies as roadkill or taxidermy in a museum; all exist within heterogeneous spaces where boundaries have been unmade and remade. The everyday act of dog walking, 'Doggie Days Out', animal church services, pet

expos, first aid courses for your animals, or the recent addition of ‘cat cafes’ (where people can pay a fee to share embodied space with felines for a limited time) each reflect the enduring desire to seek out (and recreate) possible interspecies encounters (see Sabloff, 2001). Auckland can therefore be seen as constituting an assemblage of varying and often disparate animal-human interstice that are subject to - and sometimes in defiance of - regulation.

Territories, then, are potentially restrictive, creating boundaries that are maintained by limiting mobilities in and out. Movements are controlled by classification and governance, and do not pertain solely to the material movement(s) of animal bodies. Ontological movement(s) are equally subject to processes of territorialisation, as an actant *becomes* what it is due to situatedness within a territory. Hence, animals in Auckland are constructed as threat, as food, as entertainment, or as pet or pest in accordance to the types of assemblages they act in, and the types of territories established around them. Yet simultaneously, transgression occurs: a cat in a library, a dog on Snapchat. There are interventions and encounters, both friendly and hostile, as deterritorialisations occur that decentre claims to space. In Auckland City, these processes rely on links between the classification of animals, the governance of space, and the possibility for both physical and ideological mobility.

Part V

Empirical Studies

CHAPTER 5 | MA(R)KERS OF PLACE

ANIMAL LIVES (AND DEATHS) IN AUCKLAND'S URBAN FARM

What is a farm but a mute gospel?

- Ralph Waldo Emerson (1836)

5.1 Preamble: Sit(e)uating ruralities

Given the national significance of agriculture, it is vital to consider the role of rural(ised) animals in assemblages of humanimal encounter; for while farms are tangible spaces, encounters with farm animals are embedded in symbolic understandings of various non-human identities.

Farm-spaces are necessarily shared by both humans and animals, and are closely associated with the materiality of the land on which these actants perform. It follows that urban farm animals go beyond the country-city divide - they are *geographically* situated within urban space, yet *symbolically* fixed in rural place. To further complicate things, these placements are not necessarily permanent. Certainly, animals may be transported outside urban boundaries, or remade within them, and I argue that their identity can potentially shift as meanings are (re)interpreted through a range of encounters with humans (or non-humans). For example, animal identity may swing from that of an 'educator' in a petting zoo to a threat to human safety, from a symbol of a bucolic idyll to a public nuisance, or from a prize-winning entry in an agricultural competition to a commodity such as fleece, milk, a pair of leather boots or tray of meat in the supermarket.

In spite of being privy to a great diversity of land-uses, animals continue to play significant roles as both *makers* and *markers* of place within Auckland. Stemming from New Zealand's colonial history, these identities have been re-presented in terms of national pride and a connection to the past. Most significantly, Auckland's urban ruralities function as spaces that situate animals as national icons and as educational tools, both of which evoke nostalgic interpretations of what it is to be animal. These understandings are conveyed to locals and international visitors through experiential encounters that take place within Auckland's urban farms. Subsequently, encounters are generally one-sided, reflecting both the role of animals within a highly industrialised meat industry, and the paradoxical image of pleasant, peaceful rural countrysides. These tensions result in assemblages that include real animal bodies and fluid social relations, yet often involve the denial of individual animal's agency.

Additionally, urban farms are a way that we can explore historical shifts from a rural nation to an increasingly metropolitan one. Like most of the world, Auckland has experienced increased urbanisation, with peripheral land transitioning from farming to urban land uses. New Zealand's strong identification with rurality has both changed and been retained in the face of city living. In particular, animal spaces have adapted alongside wider social paradigms, such as conservation, animal rights or sustainable living. Accordingly, the modes, types and opportunities for encounters have reformed, as evident from the news media cited later in this chapter.

Employing Deleuzioguattarian concepts of territorialisation and striation, this chapter re-imagines 'rural' and 'urban' territories, as well as assessing non-human contributions to the conceptualisation of each zone. I refer to 'urban farms' as enclosed spaces within Auckland's primary urban areas (not those on the perimeter), using the following sit(e)uated case studies to focus on the nexus between the material, embodied actions of living animals and the construction of their identities as part of territorialising processes. In my first field site, a recreational urban farm park called Cornwall Park, identities are structured around symbolism linking farm animals to national pride and geographic imaginaries of what it is to 'be' a New Zealander. The second field site translates these understandings into educational experiences for children, taking place in Ambury Park, a working urban farm. Finally, I consider how Auckland's farm animal bodies take place even after death, as products and commodities destined for human consumption.

5.2 Changing spaces, shifting identities

Over the course of my research, I was struck by several minor articles appearing in local news media, each indicative of how land use boundaries depend on and recreate animal identities. The first, published on an online news site (*Stuff News*: 10/08/2014) documented the shooting of two shih-tzus at a lifestyle block on the outskirts of Auckland. The dogs were allegedly worrying sheep on a neighbouring property, where the ewes were lambing. The article communicated concerns surrounding the movement of urban dwellers to lifestyle blocks, doing so expressly in terms of animal interactions. In this case, established farmers placed the onus on pet owners, with the implication that these new rural-urbanites are inept and irresponsible animal managers. As a result, the identities of the dogs versus that of the stock resulted in the construction of spatial distinctions: that of a 'proper' farm that exists in contrast to a new urban-rurality that is seen to be diluting the integrity of rural Auckland.

Focusing on the changing ways that non-humans are integrated into Auckland's social landscape, the article unintentionally highlights the materiality of animal place in terms of territory and

boundary-making. While livestock are historically the face of Auckland's non-human population, a concurrent industry is fast expanding that situates animals as pets and/or family members, with the associated emotional connections this implies. New sets of social relations between people and animals thus emerge in rural spaces which often conflict with traditional notions of animal place. Encounters and transgressions, then, not only occur between property boundaries but also across animal roles. Unlike the sheepdogs in my introductory meme, the shih-tzus were considered the 'wrong' type of dog to occupy farm-spaces that included stock. Rather, they should be kept exclusively as pets: an identity reinforced in the report's description of them as "small, fluffy" dogs.

I ground this chapter on this tension, and here draw upon a second article. Featured in a community newspaper (*Central Leader*, 15/08/2014), the report focuses on a popular central suburban farm, Cornwall Park. The article documents a case of rustling, with six ewes and a ram stolen over a four month period, and the later discovery of a pregnant ewe caught in a leg-hold trap (figure 8).



Figure 8: Ewe trapped in leg-hold trap in Cornwall Park (*Central Leader*, 15/08/2014).

On one level, the article draws attention to the way that rustling (and by association, farming) is seemingly incongruous with urban life. This dichotomy is highlighted in the title of the piece itself: "Rustling goes urban". Implying that practices 'belong' in places, the headline implies rustling is at odds with the urban environment. Given that thievery and crime are accepted elements of the city, the difficulty contextualising rustling within a non-rural landscape is not due to the practice itself (nor the motivation behind it), but due to the perceived inconsistency with stock-keeping within the city. Urban farms are thus framed as unusual territories, and the stock within them are re-conceptualised as property that is worth money. In this way beasts are territorialised as 'real' farm animals rather than props in a park or petting zoo. However, the rustling incident also indicates that – as with the shih-tzus – a transgression has taken place. This time though, the transgressive action was by a human within an animal sector, revealing how urban farms are interchangeably framed as animal spaces or human spaces depending on context.

Both media pieces describe (ultimately fatal) encounters and transgressions that can be addressed in terms of territory. As evident in the articles, territories can be structured in terms of property boundaries: whether private property in a lifestyle block, or sheep-bodies as properties that can be stolen. Yet territories also rely on the construction and maintenance of identities. Farm animal identities are primarily understood in terms of institutionalised understandings of the spaces they inhabit; spaces which represent the ontological divide humans see as separating us from other animals. These representations further govern animal performance within them: we accept, for example, that sheep belong in city parks as long as they are under the control of human management. Furthermore, non-humans themselves are categorised in accordance with the types of spaces that they should perform within. The sheep on the lifestyle block do not belong in the same spatial confines as pet dogs⁴⁶, for instance.

These territories change over time, and the identities of animals within (or without) them are amorphous and flexible, created and recreated in relation to farm-spaces. In particular, Auckland's urban farm animals occupy spaces within New Zealand's colonial history. They are thus understood simultaneously as commodities within an international capitalist system, and as ciphers that connect us with a rural idyll of the past. Farm animals therefore assume important and enduring identities as symbols of nationhood that contribute to wider understandings of what it is to be a 'New Zealander'⁴⁷.

Nevertheless, demographic shifts have resulted in changing city-country tropes. Auckland's hinterland is no longer unanimously distinguished from urban life, and expanding city boundaries are resulting in tensions between old and new animal spaces. Increased interest in sustainability has meant that there is increasing demand for locally produced foods, and smaller scale, more diverse farming operations. This interest in sustainability is combined with growing cynicism surrounding farming practices in terms of both their environmental impact and standards of animal welfare. As a result, there is heightened interest in household production of dairy and poultry products, and a move to a 'lifestyle' block is the dream of many city dwellers.

Moreover, increasing numbers of immigrants settling in Auckland have meant that associations between rurality and the country's colonial past are no longer shared by the population as a whole. Opportunities to experience 'rural' life within the city are increasingly offered as an important educational experience. Auckland's urban farms therefore function as complex and often

⁴⁶ It must be noted that territories are not necessarily just human constructions – we also see evidence of non-human territories, which manipulate, reject, and transcend constructs as well as conforming to them. However, as it is through encounter that interspecies interaction takes place, this discussion is limited to that framework.

⁴⁷ Or, the more commonly employed colloquial term 'Kiwi'.

contradictory assemblages, both spatially and temporally. They are at once urban and rural, public and private, natural and cultural, animal and human, new and old. Indeed, urban farms seem the perfect way to explore animal spaces without becoming caught within an ontological binary that situates space as simply ‘country’ or ‘city’.

5.3 Milking knowledge: Researching farmscapes

Historically, the place of animals has been reinforced through geographic literature. Animals tended to be studied behaviourally and physiologically, a part of ‘scientific’ research within a discipline firmly entrenched in concepts of objectivity⁴⁸. Biogeographic analyses generally focus on the distribution of taxa, established on what Charles Darwin and Alfred Wallace recognised as ‘provinciality’. Consequently, *barriers* between species have typically underscored animal-oriented research. Provinciality also impregnates social concepts, segregating cultural studies into place-based categories. As, for example, processes of urbanisation came under closer geographic scrutiny through the 1960s and 1970s, disciplinary distinctions were increasingly drawn between rural and urban sub-fields.

Problematically, the associated categorisation of rural/urban itself essentialises each as a finite zone (or province), with farm animals generally studied exclusively under the auspices of rural geography. In these narratives, research methods rarely include consideration of animal lives within agricultural landscapes, rather favouring the term “livestock” to describe the non-human actants with farming systems (see Pownall, 1953; Curry, 1963; Kirby, 1975; Moran & Nason, 1981; or Le Heron, 1989 for a range of examples situated in Aotearoa New Zealand). Early accounts tended to omit animals from rural landscapes, instead focusing on the management of topographical features, soils and drainage (Yarwood & Evans 2000).

On the other hand, rural animals were increasingly incorporated into the exotic landscapes of developing countries, particularly in terms of the relationship between agricultural ‘problems’ and underdevelopment. Animals were often perceived as antithetical to technology, (see Bradshaw, 1990; Sachs 2001), their presence a representation of what is lacking (finance and technology) or ‘backward’ values that restrict the socioeconomic growth of developing nations. The spatial distribution of animals was thus assessed as an economic indicator of a region (see Miller, 1976), again reinforcing animal identity as a commodity rather than having active agency. Indeed, even

⁴⁸ For example, while biological metaphors impregnated geographical discussions of social relations by the 1940s, both the French and Chicago schools clearly situated animals as independent from the urban, cultural and social world of humanistic geography.

after the ‘cultural turn’ of the 1970s and 1980s, “[f]arming centred engagements with notions of culture have been relatively limited compared with those concerned with the non-agricultural aspects of rural space” (Morris & Evans, 2004). In spite of wider disciplinary shifts towards the openness of cultural spheres, and away from rigidly positivist epistemologies, rural geography has been slow to embrace new sets of analytical tools. Rather, animals have been mapped as part of networks, calculated as economic units, or charted as indicators of human patterns of migration, domestication and development. While addressing animals as part of global networks *does* present opportunities to coalesce regional spaces and broader processes, the categorical nature of such methodologies equates the human researcher with knowledge itself, while those researched become demarcated, separated and exoticised.

Much literature on ruralities has therefore relegated the status of animals to that of artefacts, and farm-animal identities are reduced to that of property and product. Framed particularly in terms of ‘domesticated’ beasts, identities are territorialised as subject to human dominance and with the purpose of serving human needs. Literature does little to address how such understandings affect both the way that we view domesticated animals, or how animals themselves have culturally adapted *themselves* in accord with shifting ontological boundaries. The perspective of individual animals is given even less consideration. Rather, academic interest is usually restricted to the consideration of collectives, such as species, schools, packs or herds. Ultimately this discredits the way that non-humans experience personal intercultural encounters, and as Bear (2011) argues, researchers should pay greater attention to the lived experience of individual animals.

An alternative reading of Auckland’s animal spaces, then, requires research methods that articulate the nuances of interspecies relations and the evolution of particular animal identities. Exercising the concept of ‘sit(e)uations’, this chapter translates the landscapes of Auckland’s urban farms into spaces of human-animal encounter. Building from the foundations laid by Cosgrove and Jackson (1988), I treat the landscape as both a manifestation of historical interrelationships between people, animals and land, as well as an active force that has everyday meaning for both the people and animals inhabiting it. In this context the landscape is an organisational force that normalises modes of encounter between species (see Schein, 2010), holding power through the establishment and maintenance of boundaries (Mitchell & Mitchell, 2002).

Auckland’s urban farm landscapes thus function as assemblages incorporating not only physical bodies and material features, but also materialise the “values, ideas, aspirations, fears, and convictions, [working] to reproduce these as truth simply by being” (Duncan & Duncan, 2009). These spaces can be analysed by reading them as texts, a method that gained traction within

geography throughout the 1980s. Building on the thinking of Roland Barthes (particularly his 1957 publication, *Mythologies*), cultural geographers were quick to experiment with ‘reading’ the landscape as a way of widening the scope of their textual analyses. Undoubtedly most influential were the works of James and Nancy Duncan (1988), Denis Cosgrove (1989) and Derek Gregory (1994) who firmly consolidated the approach as both robust and meaningful. Other significant contributions include those from Duncan (2005), Barnes and Duncan (2013) and Mitchell (2008), all who extended analyses to understand landscapes as forming and reforming through interaction with other meta-processes that include discourse and metaphor.

Reading the landscape has been subject to a number of criticisms. Most salient among them is the criticism that the method is visually centred, relying too strongly on the researchers ‘gaze’ on the environment. It is argued that this imbues the researcher with too much power (see Nash, 1996; Wylie, 2006; Rose 2008), de-centring other actants that shape moments of encounter. This imbalance is likely to result in “disarticulated bodies of history” (Haraway, 2013) as the landscape is reduced to a passive object of investigation. For example, rural studies generally refer to space in terms of the animals contained within them, such as ‘dairy’, ‘beef’ or ‘sheep’ farms, or the vegetation required to sustain animal populations (for example, ‘pasture’ or ‘grazing’). These states themselves comprise a territorialisation of practice in academic treatment of animals.

Nevertheless, although most definitions of landscape pivot around human agency, culture and vision, efforts have been made to radically de-centre the human perspective, (see Ingold, 2008; Wolf, 2010; Braidotti, 2012). Notably, Tim Ingold collapses the division between the seeing and the seen, claiming to reject the “division between inner and outer worlds - respectively of mind and matter, meaning and substance - upon which such distinction rests” (Ingold, 2000:191). In this narrative, Ingold reconsiders the landscape as beyond human imaginings of order, situating it instead as an inherently creative force. Likewise, Don Mitchell (2003) argues that any given landscape is actively made. Asserting that it is less our ‘unwitting autobiography’ (Lewis, 1979), and more a physical intervention into the world, Mitchell imbues landscapes with innovative and constructive power.

Adopting this principle, many landscape geographers have more recently revitalised themselves as ‘City as Text’ (CAT) practitioners. Hostetter (2016) identifies the fundamental considerations for contemporary CAT practitioners. First is that the researcher recognises the importance of history, both physically and ideologically. This inheritance manifests in the structures and systems that sidle into assemblages. Scenes reveal and hide the past, and Mitchell notes that it is often the “erasure of history” that can matter the most. Secondly, CAT requires recognition of spaces as standing not in

isolation from one another, but as mobile and fluid assemblages with physical and ideological interconnections. For example, the constant transferal of animals, people, products, services, ideas, and beastly materialities serve to meld rural and urban zones. Mobilities of feed, seed, sewerage, blood, bone, flesh, semen and breath render the constitution of ‘rurality’ into a less certain, more abstract set of energies (see Cloke *et al*, 1994; Woods, 2010). Likewise cultural and legal connections such as shared legislation and codes of ethics surrounding animal keeping have meant that Auckland’s urban farms become part of assemblages that sit within both rural and urban landscapes simultaneously.

Finally, it is helpful to ‘visualise’ landscapes in terms of the Deleuzian machine. In Deleuzioguattarian terms, the machine indicates connections between organisms and, more explicitly, is a system of interruptions to flows. In this scenario, landscapes function as creative forces that incorporate inputs and outputs. Component parts of city farms, for example, include fences, sheds, feed and water troughs that are designed for ‘animal’ use, as well as benches, roads, garbage cans, washing facilities and landscaping that serve ‘human’ purposes. These elements work together to achieve social, economic, aesthetic, ideological and emotional purposes. As a result, assemblages are created that variously include and exclude particular animals, people or functions (such as rustling, shepherding or milking). It was into two of such milieu that I inserted myself, carrying with me not just my notebooks and pens, but values that I had collected over my lifetime, reflecting my own position as an urban, vegetarian, non-farming New Zealander.

5.3.1 Doing an embodied reading

Landscapes fold and unfold through our interactions with them. Post-structural understandings of text (as unstable and interrelated) mean that reading the landscape becomes more than a simple assessment of location. According to Duncan and Duncan (1988), a text “encourages the reader to carve it up, to rework it, to produce it”. Since there is no clear distinction between the signified and signifier, readings can extend beyond spaces to include discourses, fictional texts, interview material and responses from the author. The semiotic position of animals reinforces particular understandings of place, and we encounter farm animals as part of sit(e)uations: aspects of landscapes that include past, present and future interpretations of what constitutes ‘farms’.

I therefore read the landscape of Auckland’s urban ruralities through a dissection of both portrayals of farm-space in local media and my own embodied encounters with farm animals. However, non-human place-making is not always passive. Employing performance as my primary framework for an embodied reading, I investigate the role animals play within a rapidly urbanised landscape. These fleshy performances – framed as ‘situated encounters’ – shape both the way that animals and

humans see one another, and (re)create the very spaces in which we (as both beasts and humans) interact, influencing the way we perceive the purpose and constitution of city farms.

Initially, I collected newspaper stories and online reviews of parks around Auckland that referenced farm animals. I then identified three key lines that form the backbone of this chapter, based on the primary identities of animals in these narratives: tokens of national pride, educational tools, and commercial products. Finally, I narrowed my search down to two primary field sites that embodied these themes. I collected data through photographs, audio clips and notes that recorded moments of overheard conversation and my direct engagements with other park visitors, activities, staff and animals.

Research examples come from my engagement with/in two urban farm parks within my own local area:

- Cornwall Park: An iconic park where grazing sheep are a popular and well-promoted feature.
- Ambury Farm Park: A working farm that is open to the public and often frequented by school/preschool groups.

While many of my visits were solo, I also visited the farm parks with my family, friends and dog. Conducted over a period of time between February 2014 and October 2015, visits took place at a range of different times, days of the week and seasons, in order to experience a range of sit(e)uations. Unsurprisingly, spring proved the most active time for observing human-animal encounters, due to the presence of the baby animals at both locations – a feature of the parks that is heavily promoted as a weekend activity for Aucklanders. Additionally, I volunteered on several school and pre-school trips as a parent helper. This included two trips with children aged between two and four years, as part of local Playcentre outings, held in March 2014, and again in August 2015. A further two trips were taken alongside Year 4 and 5 primary school children, in September 2014 and 2015 (both of which my son participated in).

My field-based evidence is drawn from embodied and emplaced experiences ranging from quiet contemplation to raucous visits alongside groups of children. These experiences elicited a range of tactile and emotional responses: touch, smell and even taste supplemented the sights and sounds of urban farms. As such, memories, stories, the embodied experiences of others beyond me-as-researcher, all contributed towards the creation of an embodied reading. In other words, not only do we shape the landscape, but the landscape becomes us.

5.4 Auckland's urban farms: Then and now

Since European colonisation, agriculture has been integral to New Zealand's pecuniary and cultural identity. Unlike most nations, New Zealand's economy has depended on products grown on pasture rather than crops, particularly meat, wool and dairy products (see figure 9). As such, animals have shaped the nation through a shared colonial and postcolonial history of inter-relationships. The Auckland region typified this shared history.

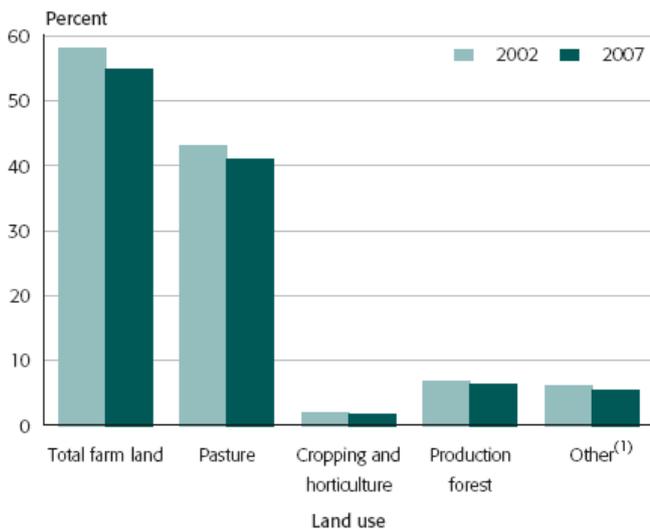


Figure 9: Proportion of pastoral land relative to farm land-uses in New Zealand 2002, 2007 (Statistics New Zealand, accessed 10/5/18).

Although most European settlers located themselves in Auckland to take advantage of the timber/kauri gum industry, it was not long before farming took over the area, both for subsistence and commercial purposes. Once deforested and with the timber industry in inevitable decline, pastoral land dominated the landscape. Many early immigrants were farm labourers from rural England attracted to New Zealand's relative freedom from landlords. Most originated from Oxfordshire, Lincolnshire and Kent, many of whom had been displaced due to technological developments in their home territories (Hawke, 1985). New Zealand's agricultural network was consciously designed to empower an English Empire. Auckland served as an outpost fed by an Arcadian hinterland, in which animals imported from England (and exported back as meat and wool) served as critical markers of the relationship between colony and homeland, as well as having practical purposes as consumable items and economic assets.

Visions of New Zealand (and by extension Auckland) were consequently part of a wider social manifesto of a new society. In this scenario, the English pre-industrial model of provincial towns surrounded by agricultural districts was transposed onto Auckland's colonial landscape (Brand,

2017). Significantly, wider discourses of the city serve to territorialise space as much as those that describe rural surroundings. Often framed in literature as unglued, doomed spaces (see Thrift, 2005), cities are represented as ‘the urban jungle’ - cesspits of misanthropy that awakened the darker side of human ‘nature’. On the other hand, rural ideals evoke visions of peaceful, pure living, where people are connected to the land. In many ways the colonisation of New Zealand became a material manifestation of such tropes, with the new territory framed as a utopia (see Bowring, 2015; Brand, 2017). In this case, territorialisation was more than the claiming of land for an offshore power, and morally transformed New Zealand from wilderness to a tamed territory filled with the animals of the Motherland, particularly sheep, cattle, goats, pigs and deer.

This meant not only that animals had to be imported *from* the homeland in order to replicate these rural ideals, but also that the ensuing animal products needed to meet England’s commercial demands. Trade centred on sheep (wool and meat) and cattle (mainly dairy products), and while the face of New Zealand farming was the high country sheep stations of the South Island, Auckland’s wetter and warmer climate was always better suited to the dairy industry. Therefore although the advent of refrigerated shipping (in 1882) further boosted export meat sales, North Island industry remained focused on the domestic market. In recent years, cattle have displaced sheep in the majority of the country’s farms (see figure 10), excluding only the steep high country of the South Island. The sheep that we see predominantly displayed on the slopes of Auckland’s *maunga*, are symbols, then, of imagined farms rather than the successors of any local industry.

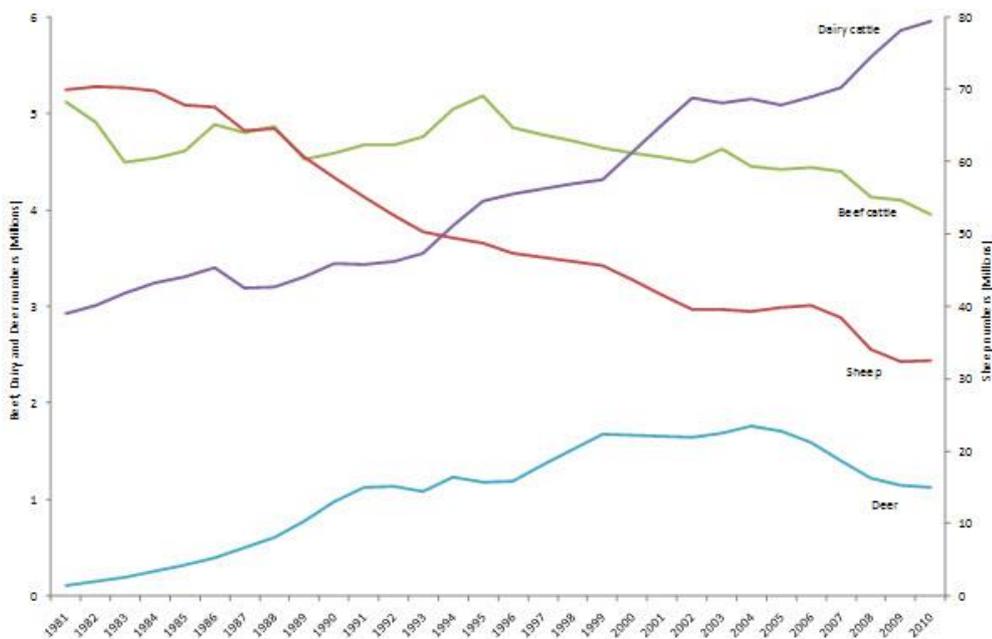


Figure 10: Changes in proportional numbers of livestock species 1981-2010 (New Zealand Ministry for the Environment, 2011).

Farming continued to dominate both the economic and physical landscape of the country until the 1970s. At this point, globalisation and deregulation resulted in decreasing returns for farmers, and although a range of government subsidies were granted until the mid-1980s (Le Heron & Pawson, 1996), many farmers made the decision to sell off land for burgeoning horticultural industries or housing subdivisions, or to otherwise “re-imagine” farming landscapes (Le Heron & Roche, 1999).

Auckland has since transitioned from agriculturally based outpost to major metropolitan centre (see Hamer, 1995 for a more detailed outline of New Zealand’s urban expansion). However, such developments have been relatively recent, as the city’s commercial hub advanced only in the mid-19th century. At this point inner city urbanisation was swift and intensive, yet family farms remained the primary way that many families supported themselves in all but the most central suburbs. Lifestyles thus included direct interaction with animals, notably house cows, sheep, chickens and sometimes goats and pigs. Quotes from the time demonstrate high levels of engagement with animals. In this account, provided by the Mount Albert Historical Society, a local resident (and also my great-uncle) recalls his childhood in terms of farm life:

Some of my earliest memories are of the farm at Mt Albert. I can remember the cows being milked by hand in the cowshed and then the milk being put through the hand separator. There were always cats and kittens waiting for a dish of milk still warm from cow and we children often squirted some straight into our mouths as well - no worries in those days about the dangers of unpasteurised milk.

- Jack Pickens, 1919-1977 (quoted in The Mount Albert Historical Society newsletter, July 2006)

The passage reveals multifaceted modes of human animal encounter. While cow-identity is that of milk-producer, the experience of milking is framed in terms of a multispecies encounter; a shared experience that included not only the cow and her milkers, but also children and other pets. The emphasis is on the tactile, embodied encounter, and the author’s reminiscences are warm and earthy. Referencing sensations and body parts, the milking of the cows “by hand” implies not only an old fashioned technique (where the cow fulfilled the dairy needs of a family rather than as part of a commercial operation), but also the connection between beings. The “still warm” milk itself is framed in connection with the cow and in terms of senses; a far cry from the industrialised processes we now associate with dairy farming.

Nowadays, there are few private farms within Auckland’s central urban area. Instead, most are governed by the Auckland City Council (ACC) and have some element of public access. These

encompass a range of farm-spaces, including an organic ‘community’ farm in the inner city suburb of Herne Bay, grazing on Auckland’s volcanic cones, and semi-working farm parks such as those discussed later in this chapter. Other farms require membership and/or payment to enter. These cover council land leased to privately run pony clubs, a high school farmlet, and recreational ‘petting zoos’. Fully private farmland is largely restricted to the outskirts of Auckland, which is zoned ‘rural’ under the Auckland Unitary Plan. While outside the scope of this study, these larger, private farms are worthy of mention as a) rural-urban spaces that inner city residents frequent recreationally; and b) as desirable property for urban residents looking for a ‘better lifestyle’. In both these circumstances, rural Auckland maintains the same imagined qualities associated with farming – such as ‘genuine’, ‘at one with the natural world’ and ‘old fashioned values’ - that we will see represented by inner city farms.

5.5 Boundaries, identities and space

Animal territories in Auckland are comprised of wider processes that structure animal behaviour and place. Most significantly, animal identities relate to processes of domestication. Farm-animals’ identities are thus related to their capacity to successfully accomplish tasks *for* their owner: whether to produce milk, guard the house, lay eggs, or simply to look attractive. In these cases, animal identities are bound within concepts of ownership, becoming ‘properties’ that are socially defined as *resources* (Russell, 2002). Furthermore, to ensure that these tasks are performed for a single ‘owner’ (or unit of owners, such as a family, tribe or village) the freedom and mobility of domesticated animals is necessarily restricted. Primarily dictated by structural boundaries, both artefacts and people (‘farmers’) determine where animals can move and who/what they have contact with⁴⁹.

Farmland is territorially defined through physical structures such as fences, coops, sheds and barns as well as in accordance with legal boundaries of ownership. However, urban land is zoned in accordance with its intended or perceived use(s). In Auckland, five specific rural landuse zones are listed within the Auckland Unitary Plan (2012): Rural – Rural Production Zone; Rural – Mixed Rural Zone; Rural – Rural Coastal Zone; Rural – Rural Conservation Zone; and Rural – Countryside Living Zone.

⁴⁹ Animal movement is not just restricted through physical barriers, but also through practices and processes that are internalised within animal bodies. Most notably, genetic mobility is curtailed via selective breeding. Integral to processes of domestication, genetic interventions are the primary way that animals are *classified* (as domestic versus wild). Genetic research thus reinforces the idea that humans are ‘in control’ of animal genes, a power structure rarely disputed within either farming or geographic discourses.

Classification of space underlies most geographic discussion of landscapes, and inherently implies boundaries. As Trudeau notes, land-use zoning ordinances are “normative prescriptions about how land in a particular segment of space may be used, who should be present, and how it should appear” (Trudeau, 2006:434). In the case of what constitutes a farm, not only do sites require certain sets of animals to be present or excluded, but they also create spatial categories of both acceptable behaviours and visual aesthetics. Zoning therefore regulates spaces in a striated manner, enforcing homogeneous social relations and limiting connections between/among assemblages. In a wider sense, land may be zoned rural by councils and urban planners, such as under Auckland’s Unitary Plan. In Auckland rurally zoned land sits on the perimeter of the city, encompassing large tracts of the Supercity to the north, south and east.

However, individual small farms such as Cornwall Park have contrasting boundaries. Sitting within areas zoned ‘residential’, these urban farms rest among suburban housing, meaning that material boundaries such as fences, hedges and roads, rather than legislation, differentiate them from their suburban neighbours. This in itself makes them remarkable spaces, as for the sake of safety, management and economic purposes, animal mobility must be curtailed. Walls, fencing, gates and cattle stops are evident in the following photographs, presumably to ensure that livestock do not wander into the surrounding built environment, as well as to define boundaries to human visitors (figures 11 and 12). Likewise, physical boundaries establish firm social understanding about who owns farm-animals, ensuring that stock are not treated as public property or subject to forced removals (as in the rustling incident).



Figure 11: Fence at Cornwall Park. Fencelines function as boundary-makers between spaces of transportation and cattle paddocks. A sidewalk encourages pedestrians to remain in-between these animal and human spaces.



Figure 12: Cattlestop at Cornwall Park gate. This construction is designed to prevent stock from escaping where fencelines are interrupted by roads.

Landscapes can thus visually communicate inclusion and exclusion through both the symbolism and practice of the built environment. According to Trudeau (2006), they are constructed, at least in part, through a territorialised ‘politics of belonging’. Spatial boundaries normalise sets of practices that establish a polity of ‘farming’, and correspond to historically constructed geographic imaginaries. The result is an embedded idea that to be a New Zealander, you must participate in rural life, even if inauthentic or contrived. Auckland’s city farms serve as spaces where these interactions can occur, requiring animal bodies to fulfil sets of expectations about what it is to be ‘Kiwi’⁵⁰.

To elaborate further, in a piece entitled *Growing up as a Kiwi - our changing childhoods*, a young journalist, Verity Johnson, draws attention to changing demographics of Auckland youth. Identifying as one of many international citizens unable - and often unwilling - to have experienced farm life, the author reveals that “there are a growing bunch of young people, like me, who don't have [a rural background]. I've never touched an animal that wasn't a pet (although I held a parrot at the zoo once). I've never been to a farm” (New Zealand Herald, 26/06/2014). Johnson argued that the elevated significance of rural experience is invalid in an age of a highly mobile and cosmopolitan human population, and bemoans the expectation that she should have to embrace (or

⁵⁰ See Bell (1996), Berg & Kearns (1996) and King (1988) for some ground-breaking discussions of identity-making in New Zealand, or Liepins, R. (2000), Little (2002) and Little & Leyshon (2003) for material more specific to ruralised identities. However, it must be noted that while this literature draws connections between people, place and identity, the influence of non-human animals is not referred to as being of any significance.

even pretend to desire) rurality.

Backlash to the column was swift and brutal. The ensuing online commentary highlighted the strength of feeling surrounding how immigrants ‘should’ be willing to engage in farm experiences. A typical reply was as follows:

So Verity you have been here more than 6 years, have never been on a farm or touched an animal that is not a pet....what have you been doing all this time?? Isn't it about time you experienced what NZ life is REALLY about? You presumably moved here for a better life so you need to start adopting our culture and ways and not force those of yours onto us Kiwis.

(Anonymous online comment in reply to Johnson's editorial, 28/6/2014)

The respondent clearly draws a connection between place and identity that explicitly relies on an embodied connection (of lack thereof) with animals. A distinction is thus drawn between pets and farm animals that implies that the moral status of the latter is of greater significance than the former. Not only is the respondent situating animals within certain identity structures, he or she infers that New Zealand life is inherently associated with farming, and that the young people Johnson is referring to are outside of a mainstream culture which necessarily includes direct, embodied rural experience. In this discourse, a “better life” would be one that embodies the *real* New Zealand the respondent speaks of, indicating both that cities are bad, and that rurality is a prerequisite for an improved lifestyle.

This narrative is echoed in the article about the rustling at Cornwall Park, with a statement released by the Federated Farmers rural security spokesperson stating that rustling was “a daily reality for many on-farm but rams home to those in Auckland the magnitude of what our guys have to deal with.” Here, not only is the spokesperson reinforcing a binary between city and rural residents (“*our* guys”), but also indicates that farm life is somehow more ‘real’. Others commenting on Johnson’s article reflected similar beliefs. Johnson’s other activities are belittled and portrayed as less worthwhile than those of true ‘Kiwis’ who *do* touch animals that are not merely pets. Likewise, nostalgic interpretations of the Kiwi way of life are framed to revolve around animal interactions (riding a horse, having a pet lamb and so on), and many comments made repeated reference to a “better time”⁵¹, idealised as safe, community-minded and free from the pressures of everyday modern life.

⁵¹ Ironically, this “better” time was often idealised as one free of international capitalism, a position hardly justifiable given the reality of farming practice as the primary commercial industry in New Zealand.

Furthermore, several respondents offer Johnson the opportunity to come to their farms. An innate link is thus established between New Zealand culture and farming, reflected in the words “our culture and ways”. Immigrants are subsequently targeted as requiring opportunities to engage with national culture through participation in farm life, which is reduced to its most basic form of interaction with farm animals. This idyll is replicated in Auckland’s urban farms, which are offered to urban citizens as an ‘experience’⁵² (sometimes commercially). However, this is no more a ‘real’ rurality than an animal in a zoo is a ‘real’ wildlife experience. Using case studies of two particular urban farm spaces, the following section unpacks some of the ways such social manifestos manifest through experiential encounters.

5.6 Animalised Identities

5.6.1 Symbols of National Pride

Cornwall Park is a large public reserve on a dominant volcanic cone, known as ‘One Tree Hill’ or ‘Maungakiekie’. Located in an upmarket and well-established Auckland suburb within reasonable distance from the city centre, the park comprises a large recreational area. As well as extensive paddocks, it includes an observatory and children’s playground, as well as picturesque avenues, specimen trees and gardens. It is of great historical and cultural significance to both Māori and Europeans (see Kearns & Collins, 2000) for a detailed analysis of the iconography surrounding Maungakiekie), and the iconic *maunga* (mountain) and the obelisk that dominates Auckland’s skyline is featured in much of the city’s promotional material (figure 13).



Figure 13: Promotional material featuring Maungakiekie, or One Tree Hill. Farmland is clearly evident on the slopes at the foreground.

⁵² Experience implies sensory knowledge of a subject or environment, or bodily engagement with(in) it.

Prior to European settlement, Maori cultivated the area, growing kumara, yams, gourds and taro. In 1844 the mountain passed into European ownership and was subsequently bought by Sir Logan Campbell who gifted it to the city in 1901. Continually farmed since then, later land use has been by lease, and as revenue increased the space was increasingly opened up to the public. By 1959 the Cornwall Park Trust Board took over administration of the park, employing a succession of staff to take care of the livestock, with full public access. Cornwall Park and the adjoining One Tree Hill reserve now consist of 81 hectares of grazing land belonging to the Cornwall Park Trust Board, with a further 44 hectares leased from the Auckland City Council (Cornwall Park 2017 ‘Fact Sheet’). Altogether, the park is home to around 700 sheep and 120 cattle, with hundreds of thousands of visitors annually.

Yet in spite of containing a reasonable number of animals, the park is not a fully working farm. Rather, it consists of pasture on which several different breeds are grazed. The animals are moved off-site for slaughter, milking or shearing, meaning that farm infrastructure is minimal, consisting only of holding pens, basic utility sheds and access roads (see figure 14). However, the presence of spring lambs is an iconic feature of Auckland’s urban landscape, and a trip to view them has been an annual ritual for many families which has endured over generations. Cornwall Park thus functions in an urban assemblage that incorporates recreational, historical and practical aspects.



Figure 14: Utility area at Cornwall Park. One of the few significant structures in the park, a wool/shearing shed and utility bay.

The 2017 information booklet emphasises the unique status of Cornwall Park as an urban farm, stating that it is “unusual in being located in the middle of a busy urban area”. This distinction brands the park as a prized tourist destination: “Because of its central location, its rural environment is accessible to thousands of visitors each year”. This wording reveals assumptions that urban and

rural spaces are distinct, the former *central* and the latter *external*. The booklet goes on to qualify that grazing animals were always envisaged as “being part of the landscape plan for the park.” Animal identity is therefore explicitly designed to be part of a landscape that recreates New Zealand’s past and current farming identity. The following comments were made to me in conversation with park-goers, each testifying to the feeling of country-in-the-city.

It’s amazing to be in the middle of the city and feel like you are on a farm in the country.”

(Jennifer, Auckland resident, October 2015)

You are so lucky to have a bit of farm-life right here in the city. We have parks at home, but not with the animals in like this.

(Beth, tourist from Thailand, March 2015)

Both comments not only express the notion (and experience) of a farm in the city in positive terms, but reflect inherent distinctions between what we expect spaces to *be* like. Although Cornwall Park clearly lacks many necessary features of a ‘real’ farm, the juxtaposition of the farm-scape in contrast to the surrounding ‘city’ (that which is-not-farm) ensures it *becomes* a farm. The second comment also attributes animals as part of this becoming. After explaining to me that she and her husband were on holiday from Thailand, Beth conveyed her understandings of rurality as apart from the city. In this narrative, her experience of Thai city parks was extensive, yet the association of them as distinct from New Zealand parks was based on the presence of animals.

In this manner, Beth is exactly the type of tourist that Cornwall Park is designed to impress. Indeed, recent developments have seen one hectare set aside to be converted into a farm centre. Supported by the Auckland Tourist Events and Economic Development (ATEED) division of the Auckland City Council, the development is set to be built on the site of a decommissioned water reservoir, demolished in June 2017. Aimed as a tourism enterprise for both international and local people who might not otherwise have the opportunity to get out into the countryside, park director Michael Ayrton explains that here, visitors will be able to “engage with the day-to-day farming operations we carry out, like sheep shearing” (quoted in *Central Leader*, May 19th 2017). The value of having a rural experience is thus presented as a fundamental engagement with New Zealand culture, with the operations of the park dutifully replicating sets of activities (such as milking or shearing) that visitors expect humans and animals to participate in together.

Visitors often referred to the park as feeling “like” a farm, disclosing subconscious understandings of ‘real’ farms as taking place in the country. Thus, the idea that Cornwall Park is not a ‘real’ farm is crucial, revealing the incomplete nature of the space as farm-territory. It seems that Cornwall Park is therefore understood as a replication of a farm in which animals take on identities as tokens or symbols of a life that takes place elsewhere in either space or time. Indeed, several visitors drew explicit connections between the past and the present, especially in relation to notions of a bygone era of farming.

*I walk or cycle here at least weekly, and reckon it’s the best place for a picnic. It’s just a lovely green space. The livestock – cows, sheep, roosters – are all so peaceful. Such a contrast to the way we’re all rushing around **these days**.*

(Joe, Auckland resident, October 2015)

*It’s a lovely park. I took Mum out every year to see the lambs. She said it **reminded** her of the farm she was brought up on.*

(Lois, Auckland resident, September 2014)

The reminders mentioned in Lois’s comment are of both a time (the past) and place (rural New Zealand), and most likely embodied memories of formative or emotional significance to her mother. Clearly, a conception of a rural idyll is alive and well even within urban narratives, with the animals themselves ‘making’ place through their materiality. However, they also function as semiotic reminders of a more peaceful, simple world that these narratives often contrast with the hustle and bustle of the city. Cornwall Park, then, is *cultivated* as a farm, reflecting ‘real’ farm experiences for neither humans nor animals.

Crucially, the fabrication of Cornwall Park manifests not as a typical local rural setting, but is a geographic imagining of English countryside. The park landscape and presence of the lambs themselves endorse an image of Acadia that is very much unlike a high country sheep station. Stone walls may be hewn from local volcanic rock, but their structure and design replicates the landscapes of Auckland’s forefathers⁵³. Trees tower along avenues and provide shade in paddocks, but they are the grand oaks, birches and plane trees characteristic of English scenery, rather than native flora (see Anderson & Gale, 1992; Abbott & Ruru, 2010). One Tree Hill’s particular iconography has been described as a conscious imitation of the English countryside, maintaining allusions to

⁵³ As earlier, I use the masculine term deliberately here, to draw attention to the connection between colonisation and animal husbandry – itself a term that firmly locates the animal as the female, passive and dominated form requiring her ‘husband’ to provide for her needs, while she reproduces.

ruralised England in order to recreate settler's feelings of 'home' (Kearns & Collins, 2000). In this way, the physical landscape bridges both park and farm identities, the presence of the animals themselves being the overriding feature that territorialises space as more than simply another city park.

Maintenance of the park is therefore of great importance, impacting both human and animal experience. Animal spaces (paddocks) sit side by side with manicured gardens, specimen trees, children's play equipment and a significant observation platform. In keeping with its identity as 'rural', it is important that the park is kept tidy; the illusion would not be retained if urban waste was to trespass. Not only is the park free of litter, but stone walls are devoid of mildew, wooden fences are well maintained, water troughs are hygienic, grass is green and even; there are no crumbling ruins or decaying structures. Furthermore, the animals themselves are all plump and healthy, their wool clean and hides shiny. The farm/park thus showcases a perfect environment, free of dirt, mess, animal disease, or the decay of economic downturns. Space here is purified; an agricultural theme park where participants can have some thrills without getting their hands too dirty!

Cornwall Park thus stands as a manifestation of man's⁵⁴ mastery over wild nature and as testament to order, its manicured lawns a homage to generations of hardworking farmers. Cleanliness is necessary to keep it a "haven" where park-goers can feel outside of the urban. Although tongue in cheek, the following comment mentions the possible role of the animals in the upkeep, revealing the role of animal bodies:

The park is always so well kept ... I wonder how much the sheep and cows do to help out? [laughs]. Anyway, it's a real haven in such a busy city like Auckland, I try and come here as often as I can to recharge the batteries!

(Karen, Auckland resident, February 2014)

Of course, many visitors take pleasure in direct engagements with the animals. In these cases, spatial boundaries facilitate humanimal encounters, largely by ensuring that animals are not able to escape. Sit(e)uations are thus established that mark clear relationships between site and encounter, as visitors recognise the freedom of park-goers in terms of their intrusion into animal space, yet fail to articulate the relative captivity of the sheep that made human experiences possible.

⁵⁴ As in footnote 51.

Paradise in the city ... better than a zoo, as you can be free to walk around in the fields with the animals. No-one stops you.

(Peter, tourist from China, March 2015)

While humans are permitted access to all areas of the park (including paddocks), fences deny animal movement (see figure 15). Behaviour is thus guided by spatial boundaries – a sheep becomes sheep not only because of her genetic legacy, but also through her being-doing. For example, the confinement of a ewe or lamb encourages particular sets of doings, such as butting, grazing, suckling or bleating. These behaviours are then fed back to human (or other animals) understandings of what ‘sheep’ are like. In other words, an actant *becomes* what it is due to situatedness within a territory; the assemblage constitutes that which is within it.



Figure 15: Stile at Cornwall Park. Structures such as stiles ensure that boundaries are permeable to humans, yet rigid for stock. This stone-hewn wall divides the sheep paddock from the road, yet walkers, joggers and family groups frequently traverse it, creating makeshift paths through animal-space.

In many cases, visitors seemed to understand animal presence as simply part of the landscape, exactly in the manner that the information booklet cited earlier stated as the intention of the park. For example, the following quote conflates animals with both the natural world (“greenery”) and emotional states (“peace and quiet”). In other words, visitors experience a sit(e)uation that relies on what Holloway (2001) referred to as “animal ambience”.

We got told about it [Cornwall Park] by a friend, and made a point of visiting. It’s great to see the lambs and the other animals here, and the greenery and the peace and quiet.

(Tobias and Jonas, tourists from Germany, visiting October 2014)

Also of interest in this passage is the distinction of the lambs from “the other animals”. First, it speaks to the inherent romanticism surrounding sheep farming in New Zealand discourse⁵⁵. However, visits to the lambs also embody a ritualistic experience. Not only do the lambs provide ambience, but their natural naivety and curiosity make them perfect candidates for connection-making between species. Value is therefore evidently placed on being *recognised* by animals, as opposed to the distant viewing of cattle or skittish sheep. A ‘becoming’ is possible through embodied connection, either through sharing a space (as in figure 16), or touch (figure 17). Sounds and smells further enhance moments of being-with farm animals, and it is through the engagement of these senses that the experience becomes meaningful.



Figure 16: Shared space at Cornwall Park. Shared human-animal spaces not only provide opportunities to be ‘on a farm’, but to experience the embodied everyday-ness of bovine life. This includes smells, sounds and exposure to the elements, all of which allow visitors to share a moment of being-sheep.

Addressing urban farms through a Deleuzian framework, attention is paid to the formative processes that make and unmake territories (de- and re-territorialisation). In this sense, Cornwall Park does not become a farm because it is segregated by fences from genteel villas and Californian

⁵⁵ A feature distinctly lacking from dairy farming, which is largely considered a more modern industry, reliant on technologies.

bungalows, but because of the wider assemblage within which it performs: its histories, the embodied experiences that take place within it and the discourses and ideologies that surround it. Rather, a view of New Zealand as a safe, honest, hardworking farming nation is supported through the replication of a rural ideal within an urban setting, as if wandering through a pastoral hologram.



Figure 17: Touching spring lambs at Cornwall Park. Greater connections are made through the shared experience of touch. In spite of the fence dividing my son and the lamb, each demonstrates a shared curiosity about one another.

5.6.2 Educational tools

Given that encounter with animals is ritualised as part of be-ing a New Zealander, engagement with farm animals is widely considered a quintessential element of the Kiwi childhood. Farm animals therefore function as important identity builders, and - as Johnson's editorial proved - failure to participate in the ritual is to become the subject of derision: territorialised as foreign, city slicker, or in the case of Auckland City, a 'Jafa'⁵⁶. Urban farms are therefore constructed for those unfortunate locals who miss out on archetypal 'Kiwi' life. Within these assemblages animals therefore assume identities as educational tools, and interacting with them is considered vital formative development for city dwelling children.

Subsequently, the provision of 'real' farming experiences for children is embedded in early childhood and primary school curriculums. Generally this takes the form of a trip to Ambury Park Farm, a working farm in the southerly suburb of Mangere. The space itself is wedged between the shores of the Manukau Harbour and the Mangere volcanic cone, lending it well to a further range of

⁵⁶ An acronym for 'Just Another Fucking Aucklander', 'Jafa' is pejorative slang directed at Auckland city residents. Based on a set of perceived characteristics, the term reflects prejudice against the city, as Jafas are framed primarily in terms of contrasting cultural values that are understood to be in opposition to those shared by rural New Zealand.

recreational opportunities such as cycling, bird watching and historical and geological walks. In this case, the entire 124 hectares is farmed, and lacks the more park-like features that characterise Cornwall Park. Likewise, Ambury is home to a much wider range of animals, including goats, pigs, rabbits, horses, chickens, turkeys and peacocks as well as the ubiquitous sheep and cattle.



Figure 18: Entranceway to Ambury Park. Both modern elements (signposting) and allusions to the past (the stone walls) are evident, hybridising the park as both historical and contemporary.

Yet like Cornwall Park, vestiges of colonial past are evident in the dry stone walls that segregate the estate from the surrounding suburban housing (figure 18). Dating from the mid-1800s, the land was originally converted to a dairy farm that serviced the local area until 1965. This history is evident not only in the remnants of old farm infrastructure, including wells and a windmill, but also in its name, taken from the original Ambury Milk Company. Since the disestablishment of the original farm, the land was acquired by the Auckland Regional Council and the land was rezoned as a Regional Park. Now, the farm is open to the public (with free entry), making it a popular destination for school groups as well as families, and it hosts annual ‘Farm Days’ as an extension of its wider programme.

The main feature of the farm is the Education Centre, promoted as connecting more than 7500 children with New Zealand’s farming heritage each year (Ambury Farm website, accessed 07/06/2017). The emphasis on education reinforces both a particular dogma - that New Zealand is built on a particular set of values that include farming - and that these values should continue to be instilled in modern children. The centre itself consists of a series of barn style structures, including a milking shed and classroom/exhibit space (see figures 19 and 20). Staff are employed as ‘farmers’, although it is unclear whether their background lies within conventional farming, education, or both.



Figure 19: Structures at Ambury Farm Park evoke iconic ‘farmyard’ imagery.



Figure 20: School children get greeted by staff at Ambury Farm Park.

On school visits, our groups' first encounter with the ‘farmers’ takes place at the gate and primary entry point to the farm. Here, our guide for the day delivers a health and safety talk, as well as a brief outline of what/where animals are situated on the grounds. A distinct emphasis is placed on hygiene, and the children are firmly warned about the likelihood of disease after handling animals and touching the places which farm-animals inhabit. Not only does the talk carry the implication that animals carry disease, but also provokes participation in a ‘leaving ritual’ from the farm space.

Here, children must engage in a ritualised performance before returning to the more sterile urban zones, queuing at outdoor sinks equipped with detergents and hand sanitisers.

While on site, children engage in a series of activities. First, school groups are herded into a structure where the very design recreates several different symbolic spaces. The barn-like building is clearly constructed to evoke the experience of being-on-farm, yet the inside is revealed as a reproduction of the classroom spaces the children are accustomed to from school. Children are seated on mats and presented with familiar educational props – a whiteboard, art materials and sets of laminated resources that relate to farm life. In this way the urban farm environment establishes a connection between the exotic and the day-to-day, while at the same time reinforcing the idea that there is important learning to be had that cannot be experienced in school-space.

The activities themselves are keenly designed to glorify farming. First, children match sets of scenarios and construct a stylised time line of daily farm activities. Emphasis is placed on traditional notions of what it means to be a farmer through descriptions such as “hard working” people “who get up before sunrise”. Activities thus effectively reflect sets of ethics that children *should* absorb, and that teachers/parents *ought to* instil in order that a younger generation become fully operational New Zealand citizens in the style of their forebears.

The value of farming is not restricted to the moral sphere, but is also framed in terms of economics. Next, children are introduced to simple economic processes such as inputs and outputs. In this section of the workshop, children establish connections between farming and nation-building, with farmers positioned as the economic backbone of the country. Activities draw attention to the relationship between climate, resources, and the associated flora that are necessary for the survival and growth of animals. As such, the balance between stock and feed is a crucial learning point for the young students, a connection that reduces animal life to simply part of functional systems that treat them as end product. Economic repercussions of government decision-making are also referred to, particularly in terms of diminished subsidies that have “made life hard” for contemporary farmers. Children are therefore primed to feel pride towards (and sympathy for) their rural compatriots.

Yet at no point are animals themselves credited with contributing to New Zealand’s pecuniary status, in spite of being the currency through which farming business is conducted. Rather, beasts are dissolved into farming discourse – there is neither mention of them in this section of the day. This marks a stark contrast with the beliefs expressed in Johnson’s column, where readers clearly indicated that material interaction between species is a necessary component of being Kiwi.

Of course, at Ambury the workshop serves as a preamble to the real business at hand – the opportunity to experience rural life – and the time has come to engage in interactions with an array of animals. Some are encountered within their confines, such as the chickens, and sheep and pigs. In these cases, gates were carefully opened and shut, boundaries clearly established and maintained in order to striate and dedicate smaller sections of farm-space into species based enclosures. Some demonstrate agency, like the young goat that followed us around, butting her head against human bodies as they giggled and chased her along the wide pathways around the edges of paddocks.

However, some special animals are paraded forth with the direct purpose of providing a learning experience. For example, after the classroom based events the children are reassembled at the milking shed. Now (finally!) the milking cow is shuttled in. She is introduced by name (Rosie), then led on stage, up to an elevated platform that the children reach by climbing a short set of steps (see figure 21). Her standing is thus elevated, both literally, as an actor on stage, and as a token of the content presented in the earlier exercises. Children form an orderly queue, climbing the steps behind the cow, passing by her body and culminating in the performance of patting her head. Some children are reluctant, some tearful and clearly afraid. Staff look scornfully at those who don't participate, and parents and educators push reticent participants to make the desired hand-to-head contact that proves them to be the 'proper' Kiwis referred to in Verity Johnson's column. There is a sense of shame among parents whose children have failed the test (are they still good New Zealanders?), as tearful youngsters are led to the back of the group to watch the rest of the show from afar.



Figure 21: Rosie the cow 'on stage' during a school visit to Ambury Farm Park.

Other kids love it, touching, talking, and making eye contact with Rosie. She is patient and remains calm through what is clearly part of her daily performance. Yet as evident in Figure 22, Rosie is secured in her position with a sturdy chain, ensuring she cannot leave the platform until the performance of milking is complete. It is therefore necessary to restrain Rosie physically in order to retain her identity as domestic provider (of both milk and education). In this way she is coded and situated in striated space(s), her identity homogenised and merged with that of all other milking cows. In parallel with the elephants in zoos of old, the chains deliberately preclude what Deleuze and Guattari call a “line of flight”, or possibilities of other types of relations that resist codes and powers (Deleuze, 1988:103). Agency is therefore recognised and thwarted simultaneously. As Holloway (2007) acknowledged in his seminal account of robotic milking systems, farm systems rely on human jurisdiction; “if a cow chooses not to be milked in the proper way (i.e. the cow behaves ‘badly’) she is then forced to conform to the procedure regardless” (Holloway, 2007:1051). Farm assemblages can thus be understood as containing various tools of both spatial and technological domination, which are re-presented to children on a somewhat diluted scale at Ambury Park.



Figure 22: School children get herded past Rosie during a milking demonstration.

Most significant, perhaps, is the process of milking. Rosie's cow-body is tethered to a machine, suckled by the milking apparatus. Her identity is further made passive, she is *subjected* to procedures. Once milk is removed from her body, Rosie's chains and machinery are unclipped and she is led away. Again, the focus returns to hygiene, and the processes of milk treatment are outlined before the children move to another room to turn the cream into butter. This transformation of produce further removes Rosie from the final product, reinforced by the activity taking place in another location, free of any bovine presence. Furthermore, the butter-making is merely symbolic, Rosie's milk having been replaced with a product bought from a supermarket, already pasteurised and ready for consumption. In this way, the final product that the children sample has no real connection to Rosie herself, yet the experience has been constructed in a way that presents her as a token of milk-making. Rosie is thus established as part of a farm assemblage-system that enables practices to objectify her as part of a territory of production, enmeshing her within relations of domestication and production.

Rosie's identity is thus one of animal-object rather than animal-subject, constructed as of use to humans. This notion is encompassed in the answer to a particularly confrontational inquiry from one of the children. During the question and answer time after the milking, a small hand pops up: "What happens if she doesn't make any more milk?". There's a pause, but the facilitator takes a leap: welcome to *real* farming, boys and girls. "This is an actual farm, and in farms the animals need to be able to pay their way. So if a cow [the facilitator pauses, considering her words carefully] doesn't make enough milk, we call a truck and take it to the butcher". Questions of morality are avoided, as the onus is on Rosie's capacity for milk-making – if *she* fails to produce milk, her fate is her fault. Power is clearly within the hands of those with the capacity to call the truck. Similarly, she ceases to become 'Rosie' within narratives of slaughter, and is referred to as any errant cow, an 'it' rather than a 'she'. At this point, the connection between students and animal is broken, and bovine identity is shifted from educational prop to product.

5.6.3 Production and animal death

It is impossible to read Auckland's animal landscape without acknowledging bestial presence as consumable items. Rendered static, animal bodies must go through a process of slaughter, processing and packaging as part of their transformation into products on our supermarket shelves. Actual killing is not conducted on farms, but in abattoirs situated in the industrial areas of Ōtāhuhu and Penrose. While it is common to associate animal killing with the outskirts of cities (see Vialles,

1994; Philo, 1998), both these suburbs are relatively central, sited along major transportation lines through the south-eastern suburbs.

The meat industry was still a prevalent part of the urban landscape until the 1980s. As such, animals were a big part of Auckland's visual and olfactory landscape. Hamlin's Hill, for example, was a holding pen for cattle at the Southdown Freezing works in Ōtāhuhu, and I can still remember as a child smelling the abattoir on a still winter's morning. Meat and dairy produce were processed in Auckland factories at Penrose and Ōtāhuhu (most notably at the Auckland Municipal Abattoir and freezing works) and then exported from the nearby port. At the same time, jobs and low living costs attracted a burgeoning labour force that enabled manufacturing to expand (see Ackroyd & Crowdy, 1990; Lee, 2008; and Hamilton & McCabe, 2016). Furthermore, Nibert (2017) identifies unequal social relations, particularly due to the largely unskilled labour required at slaughterhouses. In a perverse manner, animal lives thus contributed significantly to the changing dynamics of Auckland's demographic makeup, influencing human mobilities and social contexts.

Rural animals are thus conceptualised as capital. McMullen (2015) argues that the essential elements of modern capitalism (profit maximisation, competition, and specialisation) are at the centre of the systemic abuse of farm animals. Accordingly, the need to maximise profits invariably results in animal lives characterised by suffering and (institutionalised) violence (Cudworth, 2015). As part of this process animal bodies are depersonalised as they set foot within compounds designed for animal death. This is at least partially reinforced through increasingly mechanised killing-processes: workers are likely to be working machinery more often than slaughtering animals with their hands. While the idea of nationhood as dependent on rurality has endured in myth, it is less evident in reality.

Modernist food technologies place emphasis on cleanliness, hygiene and separation of animal death from what is served on the plate. Animal bodies are repackaged to return to the city in another form – free of skins, bones, guts, microbes, life. Ironically, animal lives become more palatable when dissected and wrapped on a polystyrene tray, than when living and breathing, shitting and smelling. Further processing of bestial bodies reinforces this separation from living creature to 'meat', ensuring that the butchery products we encounter on our supermarket visits do not bear witness to the lambs or cattle identities encountered in Cornwall Park or Ambury Farm. As Nibert (2017) notes, this can be seen as a "meat-becoming process" that functions on an ontological level, with animal identities maintained even beyond death, living on in supermarket aisles, as pet food, in recipe books and on television cooking shows.

Nevertheless, within rural narratives, interspecies relations can be messy and complex. Stock can take on contradictory identities, at once beloved companions and bodies that produce milk, wool or are eaten for a meal (Anderson, 1998). As Humphrey (1995) noted, we can hold multiple, even contradictory, attitudes to the very same animal. This is illustrated in Berger's (1980) influential, although somewhat idealised, work addressing human-animal relationships, where he noted that:

A peasant becomes fond of his pig and is glad to salt away its pork. What is significant, and is so difficult for the urban stranger to understand, is that the two statements in that sentence are connected by an and and not by a but.

- Berger (2009:5)

Animals, then, are tied within 'lines' of discourse, symbolism, power and practice (Holloway, 2001). It is through these rhizomic networks that farm animal identities are created, particularly through physical encounters between human and animal bodies. We can therefore draw on Cresswell's (1999) reference to embodiment as a process, whereby the individual body is "connected to larger networks of meaning at a variety of scales" (Cresswell, 1999:76). To apply a Deleuzian perspective, this understanding of embodiment functions as an unfixed state, situated through the constant production and reproduction of animal identities and the spaces they inhabit.

Often, a result is framing animals as objects (as in the slaughterhouses), or as tokens of the success of individuals to 'master' the land'⁵⁷. However, an alternative way of understanding assemblages of animal death is through the concept of 'necropolitics'. A phrase credited to Achille Mbembe (2006; 2008), necropolitics relates the control of mortality to sovereign power. Although most often applied to instances of violence, trauma and death towards human victims, necropolitics can also be seen as a territorialising tool that condones (or normalises) meat-making and, by extension, meat-eating. As the ultimate commercialisation of the body, the embodied act of eating flesh is intimately associated with farming and farming practices. Indeed, the husbandry and consumption of animals is situated so closely within narratives of nation-building that vegetarianism in New Zealand is sometimes viewed as unpatriotic (Potts & White, 2008)⁵⁸.

In narratives of meat and meat-eating, the material experience for the animal should not be overlooked. Discomfort, fear, pain, death are all part of our animal histories, alongside the effort to

⁵⁷ Indeed, according to farming discourse - including that delivered to the children at Ambury Park - failure to 'produce' animal commodities amounts to social and psychological failure (Weaver & Munro, 2009).

⁵⁸ Although it is significant to note that this view is more prevalent outside of Auckland.

alleviate or hide this from the public domain⁵⁹. This results in a juxtaposition of sites - industrial in contrast to natural –with abattoirs and crematoriums hidden away in spaces that do not infringe on our sensitivities. We are encouraged to remember *live* animal bodies, not to witness their dismemberment. Visitor experiences therefore flesh out certain identities of animals, carving off others to be experienced only when encountering them in supermarkets or butcher shops.

To ensure this distinction remains intact, there is a separation between these processes that manifests spatially. Actual killing takes place at neither the site of production nor site of consumption, but rather in hidden, in-between spaces that visitors never see (Vialles, 1994, Philo & MacLachlan, 2018). For example, ‘Auckland Meat Processors’ plant is tucked into an industrial area of South Auckland. The space is clearly bounded by security apparatus to ensure that only certain human and animal bodies pass in and out the compound (see figure 23). Farming practice, then, does not replicate the idyll we see in Cornwall Park. The romantic vision of gambolling lambs (as symbols of new life) is a denial of the reality of animal death. Disassociation is therefore necessary between production and consumption and between (un)ethical practices and visible animal bodies.



Figure 23: Auckland Meat Processors, a meat works in South Auckland.

The dairy industry has been subject to heavy critique within current discourses, both in terms of environmental management and animal welfare (see Weary & von Keyserlingk, 2017, or Ventura *et al*, 2013 for New Zealand examples). Dissatisfaction with broad scale production has subsequently led to alternative understandings of ruralities. Interest in alternative food networks, for example, indicates a shift back towards embodied interspecies relationships. The most accessible example of urban animal-keeping generally appears as the presence of chickens on household properties. In many ways, chicken keeping demonstrates a mingling of rural-urban at an individualised and

⁵⁹ The New Zealand dairy industry has been subject to some heavy critique in recent years, both in terms of environmental management and animal welfare (see Weary & Keyserlingk, 2017, or Ventura *et al*, 2013).

personal level (for both human and birds)⁶⁰. However, some larger properties reclaim (peri)urban space through sets of ruralised relationships with stock. Usually characterised as small farmlets, these spaces have low numbers of animals compared to commercial farms, and generally involve both a wider range of species and an increased level of involvement with individual animals. For example, the animals are normally named, and may fit in to a wide range of activities including riding, wool and dairy production, landscape maintenance, competitive showing, breeding and companionship. Additionally, these new territories necessitate new sets of humanimal relationships that do not always fit within traditional concepts of rurality.

To return to the example of the shih-tzus who ventured onto their neighbour's property, we can see that territories affirm certain animals as legitimately in place within rural-urban landscapes while others are not. Shih-tzu identities are therefore situated in contrast to that of both working dogs and other traditional farm animals that 'belong' on the land, and who are properly controlled by knowledgeable and responsible farmers. Instead, the shih-tzus become identified as luxury items that any wealthy urbanite might have for amusement. In the role of signifier, animal bodies can thus be viewed as an extension of lifestyle. In this case, animal identities represent associations between farming and work (working dogs), while urban life is equated with leisure (pet/toy dogs). Of course, this view is not necessarily shared by the lifestyle-blockers, revealing a tension between what may have been regarded as a clear distinction between rural and urban and the types of encounters that occur as a result of these unstable animal identities.

In this case, justification for the death of the dogs was framed as retribution for acts of violence (or potential violence). However, farm animal violence *towards* humans is not unknown. A significant incident occurred in 2018, when an unnamed cow attacked a woman within an Auckland public park. The attack occurred in a shared species urban farm-space called Totara Park, where walking tracks crossed through grazing paddocks. In this case, a female jogger entered a paddock where there was a group of cows and calves. The errant cow presumably acted to protect her eight month old calf, knocking the jogger to the ground and causing substantial injuries to a second park-goer who had leapt to assist. Her actions encouraged the rest of the herd to respond, with the injured man stating that they "started clawing the ground and snorting at me like I was a matador." (*New Zealand Herald*, 6/08/2018). Media were quick to sensationalise the incident, with one article describing the incident as a "herd of possessed cows who attacked and injured a man ripping hunks of flesh from his body" (*New Zealand Herald*, 6/08/2018). Thus, as implied in the language,

⁶⁰ Although interestingly this is currently under legislative debate as restrictions are being placed on home chicken keepers regarding numbers (up to four) and gender (no roosters) allowed on a single property (ACC Animal Management Guidelines, 2017). This in itself discloses an unwillingness to conflate rural and urban activities, proving that legislation is utilised as a tool to enforce striation.

while the initial boundary crossing was physical, the cow herself transgressed her presumed identity as a placid and domesticated beast.

In this instance, the woman was obviously (although perhaps unknowingly) transgressing a boundary into cow-space, yet as a result both the cow and her calf were sent to slaughter to ensure no such attacks occurred again. Readers largely opposed the resultant death-sentence, revealing that populist understandings of animal behaviour mirrored those that people have towards other humans. Comments reflected beliefs that the cow was acting from maternal instincts akin to those that human parents would display, blaming the jogger for transgressing into cow-space. It was also interesting to note that upon a subsequent visit back to Cornwall Park, electric fencing had been installed around the perimeters of all paddocks housing cattle. Clearly the cow attack had resulted in the establishment of new, material boundaries in order to prevent future incidents that stemmed from confusion around what was appropriate animal or human space.

5.7 Rounding up: Conclusions

Using farm animals as what Deleuze and Guattari would call “content”, this chapter approached animal bodies in terms of their *enunciation* or *expression*. Most notably, animals embody practices that directly contribute towards the creation of historically situated national identities. Auckland’s farms function as important identity markers, and relate closely to New Zealand’s colonial character as an offshore farm servicing Great Britain. Now, this history is reconnected with through education, with animals re-presented as ‘educators’ who provide modern children, immigrants and overseas tourists with a way to experience a (fabricated) ‘true’ New Zealand.

Animals are therefore revealed as fundamental place-makers. For example, without animal inhabitants, the spaces described earlier would be considered *parks* rather than farms. Furthermore, the placement of animals striates space. The presence of ‘working’ animals such as Rosie establish Ambury Park as farm-space, striated and distinct from a recreational reserve or suburban surrounds. On the other hand, the shih-tzus cited at the start of this chapter would not have readily been accepted as ‘working’ dogs (as opposed to their identity as ‘lap’ dogs), nor could the sheep on the adjacent farm or the trapped ewe in Cornwall Park easily transcend singular characterisations as ‘sheep’. These identity structures serve to maintain rural tropes, and rely on embodied performances by both animals and humans.

At the same time, urban farms de-territorialise space, embodying both rural and urban features that dilute traditional rural-urban divides. Given the messiness and complexities of actors and actions

that cross place, the construction of 'rural' as opposed to 'urban' is a binary that can easily be disputed. The process of movement can therefore be seen as a line of flight, as a transformative moment, a bridge between assemblages. As Brian Massumi points out in his introduction to his translation of Deleuze and Guattari's '*A Thousand Plateaus*'; "*Fuite* [flight] covers not only the act of fleeing or eluding but also flowing, leaking, and disappearing into the distance" (Massumi, in Deleuze & Guattari, 1987:xvi)

Rather, a blurred space emerges. Contrary to popular views, the placement of animals in space does not constitute a rural idyll, nor does it preclude space being seen as 'urban'. It must therefore be remembered that in spite of physical boundaries that striate space, lines of flight always permit change, movement, and new expressions of animal identity. The sheep rustling at Cornwall Park, for example, de-territorialised, as the park temporarily became a 'real' farm where this kind of event can occur. Of course, this simultaneously *territorialises* genuine farms by defining them through what they are not: city farms, parks, or other 'fake' farms. Likewise, animal attacks (both on and by beasts), are ways in which unpredictable assemblages can destabilise order.

Characterised by flows of people, animals, goods, and services, urban farms also represent memories, emotions and potential futures between spaces. The way these farms are experienced, and the types of interspecies encounters Aucklanders have within them contain the potential to shift animal-human identities, yet ultimately fail to provide chances for meaningful engagement, for transformation, or for transgression.

CHAPTER 6 | PERFORMING ENCOUNTERS (AND ENCOUNTERING PERFORMANCE) AT AUCKLAND ZOO

6.1 Preamble: Sit(e)uating Zoo performances

Encounters between humans and animals have always been fundamental to zoo environments. Here, in Auckland Zoo, the construction (and sometimes transgression) of boundaries that govern such encounters is integral to the formation of animal identities. In particular, framings of animal spaces as ‘wild’ and ‘natural’ facilitate different sets of human-animal performances, and the animals within these space become entertainers, educators and ambassadors according to spatial and temporal boundary-constructions.

Playing on - and with - Dean MacCannell’s (1973) seminal interpretation of staging, I examine human-animal encounters in terms of zoo ‘performances’ as experienced by both human visitors and non-human inhabitants. Animal actors thus perform within broader assemblages of stage(d) spaces. Using the analogy of a show throughout, I reflect on how my ‘Zoo Experiences’ revealed relationships between animal ‘actors’ and my own role as ‘audience’. These encounters are mediated by discourses, environmental materialities (such as fences, cages and pens), social and capital exchanges, human and non-human agency, and moments of unpredictability.

Utilising a performative methodology informed by Judith Butler, Karan Barad and Elizabeth Grosz, I situate myself within narratives of place and agency. I draw too from the Deleuzioguttarian concept of territorialisation(s) to examine how the animals in Auckland Zoo assume multiplicitous and changeable roles. These roles include broader identities as ‘educators’ and ‘ambassadors’, but I also pay particular attention to three common stage archetypes – the ‘hero’, the ‘innocent’ and the ‘jester’ – to reframe the way that zoo animals perform within staged structures. Finally, by tending to examples of animal transgressions to zoo order, I highlight how future boundaries can be enacted in response to transgressions, creating a temporally fluid and unstable zoo landscape.

6.2 The zoo-stage

Over the course of the last century, Auckland Zoo has undergone multiple transformations, increasingly (re)framing its animal inhabitants as ‘educators’ rather than as ‘entertainers’. Rejecting a view of animals as performers designed to sate human appetites for the exotic, emphasis is instead placed on conservation awareness (see Kearns *et al*, 2016). Auckland Zoo therefore grounds the way we experience its non-human inhabitants in terms of making visible the plight of particular

species of animals, as well as crediting individual zoo creatures as possessing decision-making powers and ethical rights. In many ways the result of this ideological shift has been increased segregation between animals and humans, as a ‘hands-off’ philosophy has replaced an anthropomorphised ‘circus-like’ experience for zoo visitors.

As a result, new sets of animal identities have been forged, as animals are re-cast as ambassadors for their species within highly fabricated replications of their wild homelands. Physical boundaries therefore serve not only to confine zoo animals, but also ensure that they are not compromised by ‘unnatural’ exploitation. Territorialising processes, then, moderate human-animal encounters in many ways. For example, visitors are rarely allowed direct interaction with animals, and performances are structured towards the separation of stage/actor - audience/spectator. Moreover, the zoo philosophically situates animals as requiring meaningful engagement with ‘natural’ activities. Audiences are thus fed animalised performances on stage sets that signify places outside the zoo – South East Asian rainforests, African savannah, Australian outback, or New Zealand native bush - constructed of props designed to replicate wild behaviours.

The concept of sets and props can easily be related back to what Dean MacCannell (1973) famously referred to as the ‘front stage’ (also see Goffman, 1949). Conventionally understood in literature as the meeting place between hosts and guests, this is necessarily a contrived space where performances are carefully measured and often sanitised. As such, the front stage is generally considered as an ‘inauthentic’ space, or a facsimile of real-life designed to satisfy the tourist gaze. Nevertheless, as MacCannell pointed out, tourists have always desired a deeper, more authentic experience. To this end, Auckland Zoo provides ‘Behind the Scenes Experiences’ through which participants can experience ‘back stage’ areas of animal enclosures, and/or participate in ‘enrichment’ activities involving direct encounters with animal bodies. Of course, as MacCannell theorised, these ‘back stage’ experiences are no more authentic than passive viewing of animals within their enclosures, but can instead be understood as an extension of the Zoo-show, territorialising spaces and animal identities to fit contemporary zoo ideologies.

Engagements with animals themselves are therefore subject to highly moderated processes. Subsequently, the zoo lends itself better to a study of *space* rather than an analysis of human-animal interaction. Animal identities are thus fluid, shaped by (re)presentations of zoo-spaces as (re)constructions of nature and spaces of interactive learning, facilitated by front/back stage visitor experiences.

6.3 Experiencing the zoo/research

Employing a Deleuzioguattarian understanding of territories/identities, this section delves into Auckland Zoo's bestial spaces and rummages through ritualised performances of human-animal encounter. In addition to general excursions around the zoo grounds, visitors like myself are therefore able to "encounter" (as the Auckland Zoo website itself states) many species via question-and-answer sessions from zookeepers. These are conducted at preordained times of day; for example, I joined groups to cluster at the cheetah enclosure at 2pm on a Wednesday, listened to the keepers introduce the new otter pups on a Monday at 11am, and gathered around the central rotunda to see the elephant walked around noon on a Friday.

Despite increasingly hands-off policies and practices, Auckland Zoo must also respond to visitor demand for intimate interspecies moments of encounter. 'Behind the Scenes Experiences' have been developed, which are intended to educate the public about particular animals' 'natural' behaviours. Conducted in small groups and held (usually) within animal enclosures, these guided tours are relatively expensive, and last approximately one to two hours. Advertised online and throughout the zoo grounds (see figure 24), the 'Experiences' offer participants a way to associate more intimately with nominated creatures. Crucially, animals are selected by the zoo (rather than chosen by customers), and are again mediated by booking systems, with set dates and times often months from the registration date, and by financial transactions. Human-animal encounters are therefore placed within temporal boundaries (a one hour long encounter at 2pm, for example), as well as being conducted within defined and bounded space.



Figure 24: Advertising for Auckland Zoo 'experiences' is displayed within the zoo grounds.

The remainder of this chapter reflects on my experiences in a range of these encounters, and a series of weekly observational visits throughout the 18 month long research period. I unpack my own experience of entering zoo-territories that are usually kept visitor-free to maintain beastly ‘purity’, and how such territories are (re)created through conservation-based placings of animals. My methods were based on observations of both human and animal behaviours, conversations with other participants (both guests and zoo staff), and analysis of zoo spaces themselves, particularly in terms of signage and the location and setup of animal enclosures. These observations are integrated with a range of narratives presented by the zoo (through their website, publicity posters, advertising and promotional pamphlets) and my subsequent reflection on my own data as part of a zoo-becoming.

Primarily observational, my research has been experiential, recorded as notes and photographs as I participated in a range of activities within the zoo grounds. During this time I interacted with zoo staff, watched presentations and attended special zoo events. I fed red pandas, spider monkeys and lemurs, petted a rhino and threw apples into the mouth of a hippopotamus. I sat patiently at the otter enclosure in the sun and in the rain, waiting while otters do things private and otter-y. I walked the grounds alongside a cheetah, tied a goatskin around a metal chain for lions to battle over and distributed blankets soaked in tiger urine for other beasts to smell. To my amusement, I witnessed parents become irate as their children took more interest in a nondescript fencepost or drinking fountain than the animals’ - time and money invested into life-experience literally going down the drain. I watched while zoo staff tried vainly to evict chickens from the zoo and return them back to the adjacent lakeside park. Over this year and a half I spoke to volunteers, tour guides, administrative staff and zoo keepers about my project and theirs, and observed members of the public (national and international tourists, local Aucklanders, friends and members of my family) respond in differing yet surprisingly similar ways to the experience of being-at-the-zoo.

6.4 Setting the Scene: Zoo history

The first animals imported into New Zealand for public display were exotic curiosities such as parrots, emu, bears, monkeys and lions (Wood, 1992). Arriving over the mid-nineteenth century, these beasts were destined for animal collections displayed in the grand public domains of the country’s three major cities: Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland. Auckland opened New Zealand’s second official public zoological park⁶¹ in 1922, with most animals purchased from the

⁶¹ The first was in Wellington in 1906.

privately managed ‘Royal Oak Zoological Gardens’ which had shut down earlier that year⁶². Unsurprisingly, New Zealand’s early zoos followed a Victorian English model in both design and ideology. Here, zoos were part of scientific agendas; living museums, designed for public entertainment and education encouraging the study of natural history. This emphasis on scientific research differentiated modern zoological parks from menageries designed solely for the pleasure of wealthy private citizens, and Auckland Zoo has historically espoused an ideology encouraging public interaction with non-human ‘wildlife’ as part of its municipal plan. Accordingly, the Auckland City Council (ACC) took initial stewardship of the zoo, and continues to support it today with funding and promotion.

The location of the new Auckland Zoo was on ACC owned land adjacent to a large lakeside park bearing the name of the suburb it defined: ‘Western Springs’. At the time of the zoo’s development, the lake had ceased its original use as the budding city’s municipal water supply, and the area had fallen into disrepair. The derelict state of the area was not helped by the immediate proximity to a municipal landfill on the mangrove swamp north of the zoo site, which remained open until the land was reclaimed in the 1950s and 1960s⁶³. At the time, the land was proving impossible for the council to divest, due to its inability to be developed for housing. However, in spite of geographical challenges, the site was deemed suitable for developing the zoo owing to the relatively flat contour and easy connectivity via existing tram routes⁶⁴.

Zoos have long been considered vital components of urban life, and the council of the time doubtlessly understood that exhibiting nature marked Auckland as a civilised city of modernity. As Braverman (2011) notes, introducing animals into the metropolis meant their subsequent conversion into spectacle came to represent the “ultimate triumph of modern humans over nature, of city over country, of reason over nature’s apparent wildness and chaos” (Braverman, 2011:814; also see Anderson, 1995). From its naissance in a rapidly industrialising city, Auckland Zoo functioned as a material and representational oasis of nature in the urban jungle, with animals the most direct link

⁶² This early menagerie was managed by businessman J.J. Boyd in the south-eastern suburb of Onehunga, and is a fascinating story in itself (see Wood, 1992).

⁶³ Redeveloped by the Auckland City Council, this space has been repurposed into playing fields, school grounds and a large recreational reserve now dedicated as a dog-walking park and bird life reserve.

⁶⁴ It is worth noting that the spatial geography of the zoo situates it within certain socio-economic boundaries too, on the edge of society in many ways. Although the zoo did much to encourage beautification projects in the area, the site was essentially a low-lying, swampy, foggy dip at the bottom of a low ridge; a place prone to flooding and rat infestation, a place deemed inhospitable for humans. Surrounding housing was always low-income. Many of the original small workers cottages still sit on the rise overlooking the zoo grounds, and housing on lower ground is dominated by 1920-1950s state housing and council blocks designed to cater for the city’s low income (and often Polynesian) citizens. The people who traditionally surrounded the zoo, then, were those who were inherently in less of a position to complain, and could be seen to reflect a prevailing opinion that the poor (and people of colour) were closer to animals (see Shiva & Mies, 1993) The zoo then, was from the start housed in a place fit only for animals, reflecting an inherent ontological boundary between what is required for humans and that required for other species.

between the wild, exotic beyond and the more mundane, urban here-and-now. Then, as now, these urges were fuelled by nostalgia for lost nature(s). However, experiencing nature at this time was primarily to service the leisure needs of urban citizens, and as such the Auckland Zoo's animal inhabitants were often publicised as sources of entertainment and expected to perform accordingly.

The most memorable example of animal performance is undoubtedly the (in)famous 'chimpanzee tea-parties' that ran between 1956 and 1963. In spite of their relatively short life span, the tea-parties are remembered with fondness and nostalgia (see figure 25), and remain a common reference in documentations of New Zealand's zoo history. However the story is now qualified by the negative outcomes experienced by the four chimps (who were brought to New Zealand expressly for such performances). This included diabetes and asthma resulting from their inappropriate diet (Wood, 1992). Even worse, lifelong inability to socialise required the foursome to be housed separately from other chimpanzees until their deaths. In a press release detailing the death of one of the original tea-party chimps, the Auckland Zoo Life Sciences Manager, Maria Finnigan (who worked with the chimpanzees through the 1980s) stated that:

In the 1950s chimpanzees were raised by humans and tea parties were the norm in a number of zoos. The consequences of this decision were chimpanzees that were unable to live in normal social groupings. We know that chimpanzees are social and live in multiple family communities, hence our long planned for decision to move our group of six younger chimpanzees to Hamilton Zoo's expansive purpose-built facility. It's a move that also enables us to concentrate on just one great ape species, the endangered orangutan.

- Maria Finnigan (interview with the *New Zealand Herald*, 4/11/2004)

The above quote reveals a view that to see animals explicitly as entertainers is inappropriate at best⁶⁵, as well as drawing attention to the increasing precedence of preserving endangered species. Thus, the chimpanzee foursome were part of territories that revolved around interspecies engagements designed for human gratification rather than animal wellbeing.

⁶⁵ It must be noted that some zoo curators of the past agreed with this stance. The tea-party chimps were only purchased after the retirement of curator Col. Sawyer in 1949, who had resisted pressure from the Council to introduce animal entertainments, claiming in a 1948 memo that this was "deplorable", and that "lions and tigers trained with the whip, performing elephants and dancing bears, are offenses under the sun, together with all such appeals to the Simian in human nature" (quoted in Wood, 1992:66). Nevertheless, Sawyer's successor Robert Roach shared no such opinion. Eagerly obtaining the chimpanzees suggested by the Council, Roach also instigated the sale of postcards, established train rides, rallied for other animal rides (such as llamas and camels), and introduced the sale of food to the public for feeding animals (Wood, 1992).



Figure 25: The ‘Tea Party Chimps’ perform for crowds at Auckland Zoo, circa 1960s (*New Zealand Geographic*, Issue 096, March-April 2009)

As is evident, the illusion of ‘wild animals in nature’ was therefore established not by the surroundings, but by the bodily presence of animals themselves. Stark concrete cages dominated the zoo landscape through these early years, and the high rate of animal deaths (and low rate of breeding) was testament to such ‘unnatural’ conditions. However, from the 1970s on, Auckland Zoo began moving towards modifying the zoo environment to embody values of conservation and animal welfare. Shifting to a ‘cageless’ zoo resulted in the deconstruction of borders, replaced by moats and shared animal spaces designed to facilitate ‘natural behaviour’ through the provision of features such as grassed mounds, dust baths and climbing equipment. In the 1990s this culminated in the development of a ‘Pridelands’ African zone and a monkey ‘Rainforest’, both of which refigured traditional enclosures as multispecies territories, themed around animal habitats⁶⁶. These developments enabled spectators to imagine the objects of their gaze as in the ‘wild’, and a different set of expectations subsequently emerged about interspecies relationships, particularly in terms of conservation and animal welfare.

Conservation values also are built into the ways animals are presented: information boards, demonstrations from keepers, promotional events such as ‘safari nights’, leaflets and merchandise all emphasise vulnerable and endangered species. Indeed, over the years the zoo has actively “disposed of species that were for a number of reasons unsuitable” to provide more space for “more

⁶⁶ A third area, ‘South East Asia’ is under construction in 2018, that will house Sumatran tigers, otters, orangutans, siamang gibbons, tomistoma (crocodiles), and a range of other reptiles and fish from the South East Asian region.

appropriate species” (Wood, 1992:157)⁶⁷. From a more cynical perspective it could also be claimed that the education agenda is accentuated as a means of justifying the presence of captive animals. Zoo reputations are often established by pitting the civilisation of the modern western world against the primitive zoos of the past. One guide informed me that I would have been “disgusted and walked out” of early renditions of Auckland Zoo, and that “we would never consider running a zoo like that anymore”.

Contemporary zoo-territory then, is built on (re)understandings of the past, as material and ideological spaces are remade within its walls to fit with socio-cultural perceptions of animal rights. Likewise, as a modern, Western construction, Auckland Zoo also situates itself in contrast to portrayals of zoo-spaces of the developing world, where conservation of species is not expected to be valued, and animals are likely regarded as subjects of exploitation. My guides all took pains to point out that Auckland Zoo was indeed superior to what they considered “bad zoos”, with one staff member even going so far to say that she believed the word zoo should be changed to ‘reserve’ to ensure that the valuable (and primary) message conveyed to the public was that of the zoo’s conservation ethos.

6.5 The Zoo-stage: Boundaries

Auckland Zoo remains on this original site, nestled against Western Springs Park and the large Museum of Transport and Technology (MOTAT) complex, and near a major motorway interchange (see figure 26). Tellingly, the few houses that border the zoo are buffered by a steep and heavily vegetated public mountain-biking track. It would still be regarded as unusual to have a zoo in the midst of a suburban housing enclave, and (in comparison to pets) the species of animals housed in the zoo are those viewed as incompatible with human housing. As such, the zoo, for all its order and structure, remains a simulation and symbol of the wild. Boundaries are constructed to prevent this wildness seeping into the suburbs, and to maintain the façade within its walls by eliminating the mundane everydayness of the surroundings.

⁶⁷ Furthermore, conservation practice is embedded in on-site breeding programmes, and a ‘New Zealand Centre for Conservation Medicine’ which was established on the zoo grounds in 2006. As well as tending to zoo inhabitants health care requirements, the facility serves to extend the zoo territory beyond its physically bounded core. This occurs in several ways, the first as a quarantine facility for imported animals destined for other parts of the country. Secondly, the facility assesses disease risk for native species (birds and reptiles) that are released back into the wild. Thirdly, the Centre conducts studies specific to zoonosis, bridging a research gap between species.

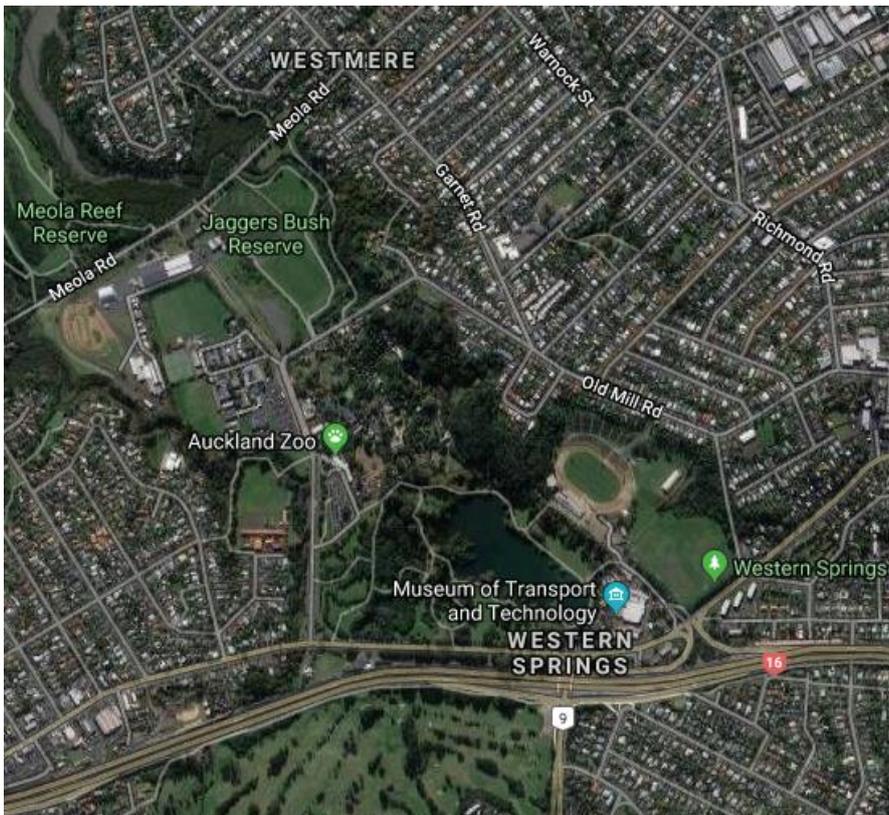


Figure 26: Aerial map showing the position of Auckland Zoo relative to other recreational sites, residential housing and infrastructure.

When we approach the zoo, we cannot simply enter. The space is physically walled, a combination of materials that reflect the zoo's past. On the north, the old stone wall remains, and the long disused original gates stand proud on the rise (figure 27), but are now reinforced with barbed wire fencing. To the south, the modern face of the zoo greets us from a substantial carpark with an open entrance (figure 28). Instead of passing through a ticket booth immediately, we enter a liminal space, where we are neither inside nor outside the zoo. We stand in an open atrium, a meeting space from which we can set foot into the animal domain, or leave and return back into the world of gas stations and motorways on the other side of the carpark. This is also a commercial space, where we can consolidate our visit with souvenir photographs and merchandise, buy food and drink, and of course purchase our ticket that grants us access to the animal-world beyond. Therefore, while the zoo-border is permeable, passage depends on a process of initiation through sealed and surveilled portals.



Figure 27: The original zoo gates, now crumbling and unused.



Figure 28: The current entrance to Auckland Zoo, which opens to an atrium that serves as a retail space.

Boundaries are edges: they are manifestations and representations of a desire to create spaces, definition, clarity, realness. It is these walls and the ritual of entering them that creates the zoo-space, as space becomes defined relative to what it is not. Once inside, we encounter a series of smaller bounded spaces that contain groups of animals. Again, the physicality of these boundaries - fences, pits, netting, gates, walls of glass or cement – create these animal spaces: they make spaces *real*. The otter pit or tiger enclosure, for example, do not become such until they are bounded. To be

otter- or tiger-space, there is a requirement that other areas do *not* contain otters or tigers. Striated spaces are thus formed as animal spaces that are arranged into homogenised units.

Zoo-spaces can therefore be understood as territories of practice, or interactional processes that “result from encounters and from the affects developed during those encounters” (Brighenti, 2010:57). In such a model, individual animal enclosures are territories constituted by the items/people that pass through them. Animal identities are subsequently linked to territories containing only single species, or themed spaces where animals are grouped according to environmental classifications (such as the savannah of ‘Pridelands’). Zoo-territories, then, depend on the exclusion of out-of-place components. Like Agamben’s (2004) mechanism of the “anthropological machine”, enclosures work to catalyse, stabilise and segregate animal spaces.

Furthermore, narratives that entwine animals with conservation ethics ensure that zoo-dwellers become representative of ‘nature’. Although critiques of the realist-Cartesian environmental paradigm often note that throughout Western thought and practice, nature is reified as a pristine domain, separate from the contaminating influence of humanity (Lestel *et al*, 2014), the zoo’s own ‘nature’ necessitates a high level of human-animal encounter. The emergent materiality of the zoo therefore reflects the increased importance placed on environmental conservation and species preservation, articulating spaces beyond the zoo-boundaries through both representation of, and physical experience with, animals within it. As animal performance is governed by space, the experience of ‘going-to-the-zoo’ is moderated by boundaries that establish animal identities as relational to us as human. The stage is set: as we become audience, animals become actors.

6.6 The Show: Going-to the zoo

When we ‘go to the zoo’, we take part in a performance enacted within the opening hours of 9am to 5pm. At the most basic level, we are subject to temporal boundaries with the zoo gates open only during these specified daylight hours. The rest of the time, zoo-doings are hidden from us; presumably animals will sleep, eat, exercise, play, take medicine, undergo surgeries, fight, mate, give birth, be euthanised (and participate in innumerable other activities beyond my imagination) in the same zoo-space(s), or within parallel ‘back stage’ enclosures. When the performers’ working day is done these activities take place beyond our prying eyes. However, during these opening hours the curtain is drawn wide, and zoo inmates play a part in a show that features boundaries between them-as-animal and us-as-human. In turn, as the audience, visitors are expected to abide by rules delivered as physical structures. Just as we are expected to remain in our seats through a theatre performance, at the zoo we gaze at cheetahs from behind perspex walls and we peer at otters

over concrete barriers. We look down on tigers in a pit, and up at orang-utans on their hilltop climbing structures. Although breached by both parties at times, these boundaries secure our positions as ‘inside’ or ‘outside’, and serve to maintain distance between species as well as the manner in which we connect/disconnect with one another.

Fundamental to the Zoo ethos is the replication of ‘wild’ animal behaviours. Increasingly achieved through ‘enrichment’ activities, these often take the form of games and challenges designed to replicate ‘wild’ behaviours. The Zoo describes enrichment as “a way of enhancing the environment an animal lives in. It's anything we do here at Auckland Zoo to encourage and stimulate *natural behaviours* in our animals ... Providing enrichment alleviates boredom and gives our animals more *choice* on how they use their environment” (Auckland Zoo website: accessed 03/09/2014, my italics). Although framed in terms of animal welfare, the passage reveals the zoo’s status as active provider, with the animals themselves referred to as passive recipients of enriching activities. The blurb goes on to say that “[a]long with improving animal welfare, it gives our visitors a more enhanced experience at the zoo and a chance to see behaviours they may not have realised an animal could do”. Visitor experience is now overtly mentioned, making transparent the importance of *active* animals being on display. In other words, enrichment ensures that animals perform at certain (pre-advertised) times, in a clear demonstration of MacCannell’s staged authenticity.

Responding to demand for more ‘authentic’ coming-togethers, the zoo allows the public to experience some of these activities through *Behind the Scenes Experiences* which allow participants to construct enrichment environments and undertake basic feeding tasks first-hand. For example, the Red Panda Experience includes attaching food to equipment so that the pandas are forced to ‘hunt’ for it, as well as offering food directly from human to animal bodies (figure 29).



Figure 29: Offering Red Pandas food at Auckland Zoo.

‘Experiences’ are usually conducted within animal enclosures, and the small groups of participants therefore partake in literal boundary-crossings that are not part of the regular Zoo visits. Entrance into animal territory then, is a vital component of a more privileged ‘experiencing’ of the zoo, and links to processes and practices of territorialisation in both an ethological and philosophical sense. *Behind-the-Scenes Experiences* offer a way that the zoo visitor can overcome material boundaries, and by so doing we enter a highly ritualised performance.

In this case, participants are inside the enclosure itself, having stepped past the normal boundaries that segregate humans from animals. After being thoroughly briefed on protocol, and having donned the lesser boundary of latex gloves, I was granted an intimacy of encounter beyond that of mere spectator. I must remain still, hand outstretched for Red Pandas to initiate approach. My patience was rewarded, and food I offered is accepted, both from my hand and from the more ‘natural’ display where pear halves have been attached to a piece of wood and suspended from overhanging branches within the enclosure (figure 30).



Figure 30: Setting up an ‘enrichment’ activity for Red Pandas at Auckland Zoo.

Yet in other *Experiences* more defined barriers remain between animal bodies and mine. Taking place in a ‘back stage’ zone, the hippos remain in secure pens; my companions and I throw bright red apples and orange carrots into their gaping mouths from behind a line demarcating what the zoo keepers call the “safe zone” (figure 31). We are safe from them, of course, but they too are

presented as safe from us – in 1937 ‘Chaka’ the hippo died in agony after swallowing a tennis ball thrown into his enclosure⁶⁸.



Figure 31: Throwing fruit to a hippopotamus at Auckland Zoo

The performance of food-throwing and catching creates a territory of interaction, but ‘becoming-animal’ is simultaneously restricted through territorialising processes of human-animal distinction. The safe zone, the bars of the cage, the mediation of keepers who pass us a single carrot or apple at a time and instruct us when we may take a turn to cast our vegetable matter forth – these things all serve to re-territorialise zoo-space and experience back into segregated zones that are either animal or human. Likewise, on my *African Experience*, a barrier of posts protects me from the rhino’s horn. Although I am allowed to reach through and touch his flank, I do not necessarily feel a more intimate connection with the animal in spite of the sensory contact. Rather, I am more aware of the barrier itself than what stands beyond it.

Critically, *Zoo Experiences* are mediated by zoo expertise with embedded conservation messages that play into the ‘enunciation’ of the zoo-as-territory. Most obviously, educational messages delivered by knowledgeable experts (supported by information boards outside exhibits) place animals within ecological contexts. At times these presentations border on evangelical, with guides and keepers repeating the severity of, say, deforestation in Sumatra whilst emphasising the financial assistance that listeners could offer the “21st Century Tiger” fund. Likewise, when I pay for my *Experience*, the exchange of capital for a special orange lanyard is constructed as helping

⁶⁸ More recently, in 2014 a hippo in Frankfurt Zoo died of the same fate, a year after being voted ‘favourite animal in the zoo’. In this case, a special animal crime squad was dispatched to try and find the culprit.

endangered species. From the outset, my encounters with individual animals are (re)framed as an act of charity towards a whole species, rather than thrill-seeking on my part or a commercial enterprise on behalf of the zoo. Thus, in the zoo-assemblage conservation becomes part of a ritual that involves technology, capital and the transferral of knowledge, all of which ensure that the participant enjoys privilege above and beyond a regular visitation.

Armed with my orange lanyard, I meet with my guide; I am temporarily backstage, on the inside, animal side of the zoo. Yet permission to access animals is measured not only by lanyards, but also via a coloured coded system of zoo uniforms through which lanyard-bearers must liaise. In this case, shirt colour demarcates the level of animal interaction a staff member is privy to. At one end of the spectrum are the red-clad zoo volunteers. Volunteers situate themselves at exhibits to answer questions and point out interesting animal behaviours (in contrast, administrative staff wear black; they are invisible, shadows, their managerial processes disassociated from the animal world). Volunteers are approachable, they are like us; indeed, we could even *be* them should we complete a training programme and commit to a year of weekends onsite. Zoo guides and information personnel wear teal blue attire (a progressively more ‘natural’ colour). Blue-shirted staff are our gateway to animal experiences. We make our bookings through blue-shirts, they operate the EFTPOS machines and hand out the paperwork. Not only guides, these personnel also document our experience, taking photographs that we then receive on DVDs at the end of the session⁶⁹.

However, in terms of animal interaction they are accountable to the *keepers*, as coloured shirts become both maps and layers of infiltration into animal world. Zookeepers are an acceptable presence within animal enclosures, the only human be-ing or do-ing that is not interpreted as detracting from the ‘naturalness’ of the display. Accordingly, zookeepers wear khaki safari outfits, signifiers of knowledge of and intimacy with the animal world. Symbolic in the past of hunting and a Hemingway-esque masculinised dominance over nature, the safari suit has now has been re-appropriated to conform to the message of conservation that we now associate with the zoo. Wearing khaki implies camouflage, becoming part of the natural world. Keepers are thus the mouthpiece of zoo animals, and rather than performing mundane tasks in the enclosures (these are usually reserved for afterhours/backstage, when/where they do not detract from the illusion), zookeepers are made visible performing educational talks that feature the animals themselves.

Territories enunciate practices of bodily encounters between humans and animals, and it is khaki-wearers who we accept as qualified to make informed decisions about where the boundaries of

⁶⁹ Participants are required to surrender bags upon entry to the tour, ensuring that documentation of backstage areas is regulated by zoo authorities.

these territories lie. In the lion enclosure I am instructed to remain behind a line painted across the floor of the stark concrete den (figure 32). Here I stay, safe from fearsome claws and formidable jaws while keepers administer medicine to an elderly lioness. Keepers are also responsible to ensure that doors are secure between areas so that we can set foot in the outdoor enclosure to assemble activities for feline enrichment (figure 33). Once locks are in place, latches clicked and heavy barred doors drawn, I am invited forward. And not without trepidation: the closeness of the lion bodies has indeed affected me – I am nervous, vesting my trust in keepers to have counted each and every lion within their secure confines. Over the border I go, clutching a bunch of branches from the otter den and an old blanket pungent with tiger urine. Lion bodies are (thankfully) securely absent, and it is now the audience who are captive in a role reversal that puts the keeper, guide and myself on display in the enclosure. A territory-in-the-making, we perform our enrichment set-up while a second keeper tells the audience the lion's history in the zoo and the types of activities they would engage in had they remained wild.



Figure 32: Briefing by zoo-keepers before entering the lion enclosure. This took place in a 'backstage area', closed to general access.



Figure 33: Setting up 'enrichment' activities for the lions in the outdoor enclosure. Here, I was temporarily on display, visible to zoo visitors through the barriers of the space.

To approach zoo-territories in a Deleuzian manner, it is useful to outline the zoo as a tetravalent assemblage consisting of two axes (see Dewsbury, 2011). The first axis is between a ‘machinic’ assemblage of desire and a collective assemblage of enunciation (Deleuze and Guattari 1987:81). The former term refers to a collection of qualities, things and relations; the latter to a collection of languages, words and meanings. With regard to the Auckland Zoo, axes consists of bodies (animal and human), infrastructure, food, enrichment activities, cages, and their enunciation as signs and symbols: of wildness, conservation, education or the unspoken rules we abide by that keeps us safe from zoo animals or them from us.

The second axis involves a distinction between (re)territorialising and deterritorialising movements as heterogeneous parts come together and come apart. This axis emphasises stability/instability, and is always subject to the unpredictable and individual desires and actions of humans and animals. Assemblages always ‘claim’ a territory as heterogeneous parts are gathered together and hold together, and are constantly opening up to new lines of flight, new becomings. In this way, *Behind the Scenes* moments thus simultaneously grant us access into (spatial) animal territory, and at the same time are territory-makings (territorialisations) where animals are re/presented through active education. My excursion into the lion’s lair is thus a process that reinforces lion identities through myths and narratives that focus on places (Brighenti, 2010), as animals perform roles that affirm themselves as both parts of the zoo-show and as active, unpredictable agents.

6.7 The actors

At Auckland Zoo, animals are classified not only by their scientific Latin name, but also through information about their characteristics. Information boards thus identify the otters as playful, the lions as fierce, the wallabies quick and apes smart. Again, these are territorialising processes that define not only the type of space we expect an animal to be in, but also how we might expect to encounter them.

In addition, information boards emphasise animals’ homelands. Animals are thus spatially defined as members of a species (such as an *African* lion, *Indian* elephant, or *Australian* wallaby). Hence, animals have identities as belonging to certain foreign spaces, as out-of-place in New Zealand. Belonging in dual spaces, animals therefore represent their species as tokens of far off wild spaces as well as bodily existing as individuals we form connections with on the zoo-stage. The cheetahs, for example, are not just brothers ‘Osiris’ and ‘Anubis’ any more, but rather are representatives of wild cheetahs in South Africa. Osiris and Anubis thus become symbols of a conflict far away, their presence in the zoo contextualised as ‘tokens’ of cheetah. The lesson we learn about ‘their’ struggle

for survival in the African savannah is therefore endowed with greater meaning than had a keeper simply addressed us with a stuffed toy as a prop.

The birth-lands of animal bodies become not just exotic lands abroad (as was common in zoos of the past), but also places generally presented as depleted of resources and victims of human greed. This justifies the animal's presence in the zoo, where it is *necessary* to have individuals confined as representations of species in peril, and often as breeding stock. In this way the animal's role as entertainer is understated and their educational value is accentuated. Nevertheless, as Essen and Moss (2013) point out, "we must guard against the assumption that 'education' and 'entertainment' are separate, dichotomous entities", and 'Behind the Scenes Experiences' reveal how Auckland Zoo has tried to balance visitor desires (for fun animal encounters) and conservation of endangered beasts.

Moreover, the role of entertainer is too broad, too all-encompassing to fit the wide range of animals in Auckland Zoo. As in a conventional drama, animal identities are overlaid by archetypes invoked through imagery, dialogue and spaces of encounter. Here I focus on three of these - the Jester, the Innocents and the Hero - to unpack just some of the complex and multifaceted identity constructions within zoo-space.

6.7.1 The Jester

The archetype of the jester is designed to entertain, to teach us how to take pleasure and joy in life, and to turn interactions into *fun*. While the 'big draw' animals may be cast as nobility, the identity of jester falls upon creatures more mundane: the otters. Identities are thus constructed through humanimal interaction, and the style of exhibit is designed to facilitate some 'comic relief' within the zoo-show.

There are thirteen otter species worldwide, the smallest of which is the Asian small-clawed otter *Aonyx cinerea*, who are inhabitants at Auckland Zoo. Highly interactive, Auckland's otters have an extraordinary level of engagement with zoo visitors. Otters are regarded as intelligent and playful creatures, especially as they participate in many activities seemingly for their enjoyment, such as making waterslides or manipulating objects. This, combined with desirable 'pet-like' physical features, makes them highly appealing to many humans⁷⁰. They are very verbal, emitting high pitched squeaks that humans often imitate. Engagement is facilitated through narratives and through spaces that enable mutual embodied performances.

⁷⁰ Although this is likely to be culturally dependent. Otters also resemble rats and rodents, and it is likely that there are cultural associations made. Indeed, I observed several people who reacted at odds with the prevailing "ooh cute" response, who went "eew", in an expression of disgust.

At Auckland Zoo, the otters are separated into two enclosures, each in independent locations within the zoo. The first houses a family of four, containing two parents and two young. A signboard introduces the otters: Jeta, Juno and pups from two litters. This is accompanied by a small conservation display and additional signboards highlighting the otters' status as ecologically vulnerable, as well as information about species, country of origin and characteristics that they are associated with (they are sociable, love to play and wrestle, and that they are easy to train/quick to learn).

Near to the zoo entrance, this lodge sports a modern, glass fenced enclosure, ensuring the observer a variety of vantage points. The first is along the standard glass frontage, while the second is a raised glass-sided platform (figure 34), providing a level of spectatorial domination (Willis, 1999) unattainable from outside a traditional cage. As the otters can be viewed from multiple angles (from above, alongside and into the back and side of the space), the enclosure controls levels of intimacy between observer and observed (Braverman, 2011). Thirdly, a roofed structure with a full glassed wall allows a view into the deepest point of the small water body within the compound (figure 35). This quirky feature is designed so that spectators have a view of the otters swimming and playing in/under the water, although in my visits it was very rare to see them here (particularly as some of the time the water was drained to protect the newborn pups from drowning). Adapted from the aquarium, the glass frontage enables spectators to literally experience animals 'face-to-face' (Braverman, 2011). Nevertheless, physical boundaries firmly demarcate animal and human worlds, and visitors are allowed little audience participation.



Figure 34: View of raised platform and wall that offer various vantage points into an otter enclosure.



Figure 35: Enclosure design includes underwater viewing in order to see otters swimming.

Berger (1980) questions whether these encounters are examples of animal interaction, noting that “nowhere in a zoo can a stranger encounter the look of an animal. At most, the animal’s gaze flickers and passes on ... They have been immunised to encounter” (Berger, 1980:26). In other words, such settings objectify animals as recipients of a tourist gaze, and while they may perform for us, we are not included in the show, segregated by physical boundaries that restrict us to a passive audience.

In contrast, the second exhibit contains two young, male brother otters. Housed in an ex-bearpit, visitors look down over a low concrete wall. They can sit on it and reach over to take photographs, but the otters themselves are out of reach, about two meters below the lip of the wall (see figure 36). Of the two areas, this space permits a significantly higher level of interaction between actors and audience. The brothers regularly approach the concrete surround, making eye-contact and vocal engagement which provoke considerable audience response. Here, humans perform too, often imitating animal sounds or actions in an attempt to gain their attention. Notably, there is a high level of interest in the way that the animals perform everyday tasks (especially eating), which serves to confirm a relationship between ‘us’ and ‘them. Most commonly, the audience affirms this bond by

reinterpreting the ‘wild’ otters into a familiar framework. Frequent comments include how “friendly”, “cute” and pet-like the otters’ are, with many visitors expressing their desire to “have one” as they would a kitten or puppy at a pet store.



Figure 36: Children climbing on the wall of the second otter enclosure.

In a related story, an otter named Jin gained widespread notoriety in 2006 as she scaled the walls of her enclosure and made a bid for freedom into the sea via Auckland’s adjoining creeks and waterways⁷¹. The escape elicited mixed responses from Aucklanders. Public reaction typically fell within two dominant tropes. The first was characterised by comments such as “poor wee thing, really should be back in the zoo” (online comments to *New Zealand Herald*, 16/06/2014), whereby the idea of the zoo was maintained as a safe and appropriate environment for otters whilst being in the (urban) wild was fraught with danger. However, a strong online presence evident through forums and comments on media sites of the time also articulated a “Go little otter!” attitude. Speculation abounded as to why Jin may have wanted to leave the zoo and both television and newspaper media emphasised her ability to escape physical barriers as something of a heroic feat: “Jin has now spent two weeks on the run after managing to dig through two walls and scaling a six foot barrier around her enclosure” (*New Zealand Herald*, 21/06/2006). The eventual realisation that she had swum to an island 20km away and eluded recapture for 26 days consolidated her ‘hero’

⁷¹ Whether Jin herself perceived this the same way, we will never know.

status, as evidence that an animal could outrun and outsmart human captors was romanticised and celebrated.

However, as I observed in the zoo itself, forum-based discussion indicated that otters were generally regarded as cute, harmless, and “cat-like”, which implies that we view them as potentially domestic. Certainly, many comments about Jin indicated that she was welcome to seek refuge in commenters homes, as well as a desire for her to become the reader’s pet. It is telling that other animal escapes have not necessarily been interpreted in such ways. For example, the (2004) escape of Burma the elephant from Auckland Zoo was responded to immediately and seriously by the public, the zoo and the New Zealand police force. Indeed, Burma’s escape attempt points even more markedly towards an agential act of resistance. Before opening hours, Burma dropped a log on an electric boundary fence in her enclosure, rendering it inactive. She then climbed a moat and walked the perimeter of the zoo’s external fence line before finding a suitable section of fence to crash through into the adjoining public park, before being recaptured almost half an hour later.

In comparison, otter identities fit the role of jester not only as providers of fun, but also as tricksters who can disobey normal conventions or rules, but in ways that are understood as playful and harmless. Jin was famed for using her wits to overcome authority, a characteristic admired by the nation. Likewise, the otters embody qualities of mischief and charisma, and are therefore crafted identities and settings that showcase (and mold) our sets of expectations about how we interact with them in Auckland Zoo.

6.7.2 The Innocents

As Auckland Zoo’s ideology has transitioned from one of domination to that of conservation, a second implication of superiority has gained traction. In this scenario, animals are portrayed as victims of human greed and subsequent denigration of the natural world. The Zoo (and visitors by default) thus becomes hero, vested with the power to *save* animals. Braverman (2011) points out the contradictory position humans are presented as holding within the zoo’s visual and experiential landscape as “on the one hand, humans are frequently referred to as the cause of animal extinction and for habitat destruction at large, at the same time, humans are also presented as having the power to make a difference”. Again, the zoo-territory renders animals passive, incapable of survival in a world changed by human interventions, where zoo animals “stand in for wild animals in a call for the help of humans” (Braverman, 2011:823).

A second archetype thus emerges as sets of animals are imbued with child-like identities. These are the ‘Innocents’: creatures that need to be protected, but that can also teach us empathy and connect

us with what is seen as pure, virtuous nature. Most notably, species such as the red pandas, spider monkeys and lemurs fulfil this educational role, especially through the way that they are presented as accessible to visitors. In this scenario, young people are particularly encouraged to embrace the role of saviour, and the animals targeted to assist them are generally those that are both safe to interact with and have high levels of engagement and ‘cuteness factor’.

More than 60,000 of the over 700,000 annual visitors to Auckland Zoo are school children, reflecting the interest in the zoo not just as a ‘fun’ activity for school groups, but as an important educational tool. The zoo has a dedicated education centre, with programmes catering for school and pre-school groups. These have a range of session outlines with learning outcomes that focus on fields such as ‘The role of the modern zoo’, ‘Endangered animals and human impacts’, ‘Mammals as consumers’ and ‘Asking the big questions: Zoo philosophy’. Animals are positioned as educators in this teaching space, and the zoo itself becomes an active territory of knowledge production and transfer. Learning experiences are embodied and sensory, and rely on animals enacting sets of behaviours that reveal qualities or values associated with their species.

These experiences - seeing, observing, smelling, hearing and sometimes touching - fuel our sense of wonder and appreciation for the amazing creatures that we share this planet with. We believe that this connection helps to inspire people to play a part in caring for wildlife and wild places.

(Auckland Zoo website, March 2017)

Again, emphasis is on the preservation of wild/natural traits, characteristics and behaviours. There is a rationale across the zoo that domestication is never in the best interest of the zoo’s animals, to the extent that it is rarely mentioned that many animals (such as the cheetahs Osiris and Anubis) are indeed hand-reared. Rather, we are given to believe that beasts ‘deserve’ to retain wildness. Why this is so, however, was never made clear to me in zoo visits, but simply accepted as a given.

Interactions with the Innocents are explicitly framed in terms of their need for protection from exploitation and the need to retain the purity of their character. In the case of the spider monkeys, interspecies danger was presented less as a risk of domestication, presumably because small monkeys are perceived as less wild than big cats due to their physiology and non-threatening nature. Instead the risk of zoonosis was emphasised, and considerable effort went into explaining to visitors the risk of cross infecting the monkeys with human disease.



Figure 37: Preparing food for the spider monkeys at Auckland Zoo.



Figure 38: ‘Backstage’ area adjoining the spider monkey enclosure.

As part of the backstage agenda, I was privy to the ritual of food preparation. Held in spaces overtly human in design (figure 37), a variety of food such as banana, papaya and apple were cleaned and sliced, then carried through a maze of backstage pens where the monkeys could retire between performances (figure 38). Cutting their banana, I was required to don gloves as a barrier between my flesh and food intended for monkey bodies. Like with the lemurs and red pandas, we are instructed not to initiate contact with non-humans. Remaining passive, our bodies could be explored by probing monkey fingers, or nibbled by red panda muzzles as they search for raisins from outstretched palms (figure 39). But the gloves ensured my sweat and their saliva never mingled; we never matched skin to fur, and as such the nature of our relationship is denied ‘animality’ and rendered pure, sanitary and controlled.



Figure 39: Feeding Spider Monkeys inside the enclosure.

Like my Lion Experience, feeding the spider monkeys and lemurs involved entering the front stage position so that feeding could be performed in front of an audience. Serving to reinforce the animal-actors status as safe, innocent and playful, these ritualised acts consolidate animal identities through embodied encounters. For a moment, I become an actor in the show too, as I play my part in the zoo performance (figure 40). As my live body enters the spider monkey enclosure, it is explained that we are “part of the enrichment programme for spider monkeys”. Our guide tells us that the monkeys are very intelligent, and that the new experience of visitors was an important part of their enrichment. In this case, we were philosophically positioned as saviours, protecting our more vulnerable animal cousins from the evils of a world they cannot understand.



Figure 40: Looking out from the Spider Monkey enclosure towards the ‘audience’.

Yet for all the structure of a *Behind the Scenes Experience*, territories are still subject to moments of unpredictability. Before entering the enclosure, we were briefed to remove all loose items from our pockets and warned that the experience was likely to be short-lived, as when food treats (raisins and nuts) run out, the monkeys quickly begin their exploration of our human bodies. Despite every effort, monkey agency is ever possible, and in my visit I indeed neglected to get a set of keys out from my deepest pocket, only to feel tiny simian fingers fumbling against the metal. At this point we were instructed to leave the enclosure immediately as the monkeys were likely to become aggressive as their curiosity waned. The monkeys, then - in spite of their innocence - were reterritorialised as 'wild', as separate from humans. Human-animal interaction was curbed to ensure that monkey behaviour did not include 'taming', and that curious fingers did not admit a piece of my human life into the simian realm.

6.7.3 The Hero

In literature, the Hero is not only a warrior fighting for good, but also a saviour. In this performance, the part is played by recent addition to the zoo, Anjalee the elephant. Historically, elephants have been some of New Zealand's few examples of non-human public figures. For example, it has been elephants who are most often referred to by name rather than by species (such as 'the tiger', 'the lion'), or as part of collectives ('the seals', 'the flamingos', 'the otters').

We have had Jamuna, from the 'golden age' of elephant rides and chimpanzee tea parties that my mother and grandmother remember nostalgically. And there was poor Rajah, who was euthanised aged only nineteen due to his 'rogue behaviour'⁷². In contrast, there was a monumental outpouring of grief when forty-year-old Kashin died in 2009. Eulogies appeared in newspapers and on television, and there was a free day at the zoo when grief stricken members of the public could pay their respects to her. Almost 20,000 people attended the public memorial, testament to the association of elephant as valued public figure, and the relationships developed through animal-human encounters at the zoo.

After Kashin's death, focus shifted to the subsequent concern for the newly lone elephant, Burma, with media predicting her certain death should a replacement companion not be found. Enter Anjalee, a nine-year-old 'orphan' elephant from Pinnewala Elephant refuge in Sri Lanka. Locating

⁷² Written out of zoo histories, Rajah's legacy as public figure is that of the somewhat macabre taxidermy elephant who has stood, stuffed and still, as gatekeeper to the Auckland War Memorial Museum for as long as I can remember. Considering that the average age of an elephant is up to sixty years old, Rajah was exceptionally youthful at the time he was shot. His bad behaviour included general demonstrations of ill temper, particularly spitting at visitors, although this was likely due to trauma as a consequence of having been handed a lighted cigarette in his trunk (Gill, 2002). Interestingly, Jamuna committed the greater crime of killing one of her keepers, yet remained loved. It seems that the unfortunate Rajah suffered his untimely demise as a result of his status as bull elephant, unpredictable in musth.

this companion took longer than anticipated, with two potential candidates falling through before Anjalee emerged as suitable saviour. Keeper Andrew Coers was quoted at the time as saying: “If we’d known Burma was going to be alone for 5 ½ years, we’d have sent her to Australia and I’d have been more than comfortable with that, elephants need to be with elephants” (*Canvas Magazine*, 22/08/ 2015).

However, what is a zoo without an elephant? Expectations surrounding what ‘makes’ a zoo have meant that it is a matter of civic pride to have elephantine displays. In this quote from the NZ Herald in 2011, the former chair of the Zoo Board, Graeme Mulholland, associates elephants in zoos with being cosmopolitan, civilised and modern - in contrast to Dunedin, which, elephantless, proved a veritable backwater for pachyderm enthusiast Mulholland:

I was born in Dunedin, with both sets of grandparents in Auckland, and the only thing I ever wanted to do in Auckland was see the elephants in the zoo. It was absolutely essential. And my South Island grandchildren feel the same way.

(Graeme Mulholland, quoted in New Zealand Herald, 28/05/2011)

A gift from the Sri Lankan government, Anjalee’s identity is further consolidated by her very name: Anjalee means ‘gracious gift’ in her home language. As gift, Anjalee has the role of supporting international bonds between countries. As saviour, she is companion to Burma, a strategy for ensuring the financial survival of the zoo as corporate entity, and an important item of trade.

A second characteristic of the Hero is that of making a journey, the passing of boundaries through which hardships are overcome and transformations are made. In Anjalee’s case, this journey was not only difficult, but also relatively expensive, with the Auckland council loaning the zoo \$3.2 million to transport and quarantine two new elephants (although the other elephant is yet to be confirmed). Rather than directly arriving at the Zoo, she flew via freighter to Auckland from Sri Lanka, only to be immediately re-loaded onto a defence force C130 Hercules bound for her quarantine in Niue. Anjalee was now less ‘trade item’ or ‘cargo’, and more escorted nobility. After her ninety days there were complete, Anjalee tramped back onto the Hercules, finally alighting in Auckland, where she was craned into the zoo. Documented through the Auckland Zoo documentary series, chronicles of her journey feature no departures, just arrivals. What Anjalee leaves behind is clearly of far less importance than where and what she becomes.

While the \$3.2 million cost of Anjalee’s journey must be paid back to the council, the associated financial analysis predicted that the zoo would recoup this cost and generate \$900,000 in profit over

the next five years, based on a projected ten percent increase in visitor numbers, sale of merchandise and possible increases in entrance fees. A considerable investment, Anjalee has thus been territorialised as a token: both badge of esteem and *vital* component of a Zoo. She is revenue-maker and has capital value for the zoo, and as such Anjalee's selfhood is directed towards her capacity as a 'cog' in the zoo machine – an elephant able to be showcased, and who also takes on meaning to visitors as more-than-self, as an embodiment of *all* elephants.

I use the term machine here deliberately, as metaphor, but also as theoretical tool. In Deleuzian terms, the machine indicates connections between organisms and more explicitly, a system of interruptions to flows. Bodies are miniature machines that plug into larger machines within assemblages. Moreover, Anjalee embodies multiple identities simultaneously, as she physically and symbolically 'plugs in' to the zoo machine, the media-machine, machines of ecological awareness and conservation discourse, as well as individual pluggings-in with members of the public, staff, volunteers and other non-human animals in the various places she has inhabited.

Once at the Zoo, emphasis shifted to the meeting of elephant bodies, where she and Burma made connections and started their relationship. At this point, the zoo-narrative sidelines Anjalee, and speaks of Burma's reaction to her: initially suspicious (she ignored her), then within days, receptive, then friendly. Keepers now tell me that they are settling into an aunty-niece dynamic, with Burma assuming the matriarchal role they had anticipated when getting a young female elephant companion for her. Now, Anjalee herself embodies a space of encounter for Aucklanders. There were celebrations upon her arrival, including a photo exhibition showcasing elephants past – firmly embedding Anjalee into zoo genealogy.



Figure 41: Question and answer session with Anjalee. This is held in the zoo grounds outside of the elephant enclosure, in an example of a temporary disestablishment of boundaries. Nevertheless, Anjalee is closely managed by a team of keepers, at least one of who is a specialist elephant-keeper.

And like the other elephants, Anjalee has her identity as an entertainer, who will be led around for elephant walks and question and answer sessions (see figure 41). Her history and (projected) personality now becomes an important commodity, a crucial string in the zoos bow.

Anjalee has played different roles and assumed different identities depending on the spatial relations she has engaged in. Through her placement in space and time, she becomes both local and global; a local public figure in Auckland, and simultaneously an ambassador for Asian elephants afar. Anjalee then, is conduit for understanding the wider world, finally taking her place in a line of zoo elephants that are teachers, entertainers and public figures. In other words, Anjalee is multiple elephants simultaneously. She is orphan, gift, a member of endangered species and the result of human animal conflict. She is at once commodity, item of trade, and individual with her own thoughts, feelings, opinions and motivations. She is a body that eats food, lives in shelters and goes on aeroplanes, a heroic figure transformed through connections-to and disconnections-from other beings, places and processes.

6.8 Throwing away the script: Transgressions

It is essential to recognise that no boundaries exist without transgressive moments: axes of de-territorialisation must exist. Transgressions can be physical forces, things, movements or acts. They can be animal and/or human, they can be sensory, or they can be emotional, where new bonds are forged through interspecies encounter. In the highly structured zoo-space, there is less room for ideological shifts, as animals are essentialised into discrete species-based categories. Likewise, there are few examples where humans or animals have breached barricades to invade one another's fortifications. When this has occurred, it is more typically humans who transgress, destabilising animal territories through their uninvited presence.

At Auckland Zoo, the most serious of these occurred in the mid-1980s, when there were two attacks after humans gained unauthorised entry to big cat enclosures. In February 1984 Paul Ross was mauled by a jaguar, suffering lacerations to his upper body, and the following year John Kevin Early was attacked in the lion den, resulting in a leg amputation. Such transgressions are generally referred to in zoo-histories in the context of drug use and mental illness (see Wood, 1992), implying that overstepping the animal-human boundary is also transgressing the bounds of the normal human psyche.

Of course, not all incidents result in injury, but rather small re-territorialisations of zoo spaces through upgrades and modifications of boundaries. For example, over the course of my research

period an incident was recorded (Environmental Protection Authority records, 2016) in which a member of the public climbed a barrier garden and was found by staff in a chimpanzee enclosure. Likewise, a thirteen year old girl and her dog were discovered in the Kid Zone area of the zoo outside operating hours, having scaled a wrought iron barrier fence. In this case, the barrier was reinforced with small gauge mesh, preventing future unsolicited human-animal (and animal-animal, in the case of the dog) encounters.

However, transgressions need not always be understood as breaches of rules, but also as goings-over, or goings-beyond. 'Goings' are more often physical in nature, and link to the geographical idea of mobility. Often performed by animals themselves, these are usually examples of agency beyond the expectations of their part in the zoo-show. Such movements can be conceptualised as 'lines of flight' (Massumi, in Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), as transformative moments or bridges between assemblages. Lines of flight also provide a framework for potential ontological spaces of escape and autonomy. Discourses of escapee animals fit here: tales of non-human agency, urban animals as wayfarers, as itinerants, and as creative forces. Often, physical features of the landscape provide the impetus (or prospect) for flight due to their relationship between external and interior spaces.

Most notable is the creek that passes through the zoo grounds. Flowing from the adjacent park into residential space beyond the zoo, the creek is a literally a fluid space, a seepage from outside to inside and back out again. As well as being Jin's passage to the ocean, the creek has also been seen by other animals as an opportunity to extend territories. For example, in 1976 a young hippo called Faith took advantage of the flooded waterway to float out of her enclosure and swim upstream to Western Springs where she spent one and a half hours before returning of her own will. (Wood, 1992). On the other hand, transgressions also permeate *into* the zoo grounds through the creek. Through the 1970s industrial stormwater resulted in the build-up of mountains of foam from detergents. Occasionally reaching four meters high, this impacted greatly on the hippopotamus enclosure, and exacerbated the daily problem of dyes, household waste, industrial rubbish and massed weeds. This threat to animal wellbeing resulted in the decision to redesign the waterway, ultimately bringing about the end of one of the zoo's most natural exhibits (Wood, 1992). The creek is thus a performative space that facilitates transgressive moments both into and out of zoo boundaries.

Zoo transgressions do not always rely on material features of the landscape. For example, scent - of animals, food, and waste - permeates zoo boundaries both into and out of the park. Likewise, aural goings-over ensure that the presence of animals is evident from some distance. Most notable are the

roars of lions, but also the trumpeting and baying of other beasts mean that zoo-space is not entirely confined within fences and walls. Of course, sound coming in to the zoo has caused problems. While traffic and even the adjacent speedway have not been recorded as causing distress or trauma to animals, giraffe Lo Cecil died after being frightened by fireworks in 1981.

More recently, virtual goings-beyond of information occurs, as technology enables flows of information out of (and into) the zoo. An Auckland Zoo television series, website, and blog all serve to transport virtual animal bodies into the public domain. While their representation is again that of ambassadors, concerns can be raised surrounding the lack of input and permission from animal actors. There has, for example, been increased interest in analysing the complex ways in which animals are represented in wildlife documentaries (see Beinart, 2001). This reveals much about human attitudes towards 'nature', and calls into question ethical debates surrounding the unspoken power imbalance between non-human subjects and human film-makers, with questions raised about the privacy of animals and the potentially exploitative nature of filming them in what is essentially their own dwelling place (Mills, 2010). Likewise, the use of animal footage could potentially be less a tool for promoting awareness of animal agency in the zoo, and more an advertorial strategy that transgresses moral boundaries as well as the zoo spaces the animals inhabit.

Other transgressors more actively go-beyond boundaries to enter the zoo. Rats, mice and other rodents have always been attracted to the abundant food available in enclosures. As early as 1947 rodents vied with animals on display to become popular attractions in themselves: "to the delight of small children, and not a few adults, they perform amazing acts of daring in the lion pits, whisk food from under bears' noses and threaten to steal the show on more than one cage" (*The Herald*, November 1947). In this case, spontaneous performances threatened to usurp the contrived staging of 'legitimate' exhibits. Nowadays, such urban transgressors are equally unwelcome, detracting from the illusion of zoo-space as 'natural' and wild.

Transgressions also happen within the zoo's walls, as animals go beyond their designated spaces. In February 2013 an orang-utan dislodged a metal plate in an enclosure and was able to reach his fingers through to the public viewing area. More seriously, flooding in 2014 caused the moat level to rise and the zoo was forced to turn off the lower electric fence around the cheetah enclosure. A cheetah cub subsequently swam across the moat, climbed a post and entered the public area. After ten minutes the cub was returned to the enclosure. Also in May, a juvenile capuchin monkey squeezed between the roof mesh and wall of his or her enclosure and sat on the enclosure roof. Although coaxed back in by zoo staff, the zoo reported that due "remedial action was taken to ensure this didn't happen again" (Environmental Protection Authority records, 2016). It is therefore

apparent that boundaries are often the result of transgressions, as re-territorialisation processes that re-stabilise territories after breaches. Gaps are filled and spaces are resealed in attempts to deny further movements, and the status quo is maintained.

Obviously, the more dangerous the animal, the tighter the security surrounding them. In these cases, most escapes occur when keepers enter or exit cages. For example, in May 2013 a keeper forgot to secure a tiger into the holding pen while servicing the enclosure. Later that day the keeper returned to prepare the area for a public talk, and the “large tiger ran up and playfully swatted the keeper on the leg” (Environmental Protection Authority records, 2016). These moments of transgression are important formative processes too in animal identity construction, as exposure to damage *by* animals (especially within their enclosures) highlights how animals themselves are transformed from one thing to another depending on how we situate them.

For instance, due to his caged status, the lion who mauled Earlly was supposed to be spectacle, not predator. Yet identities are multiplicitous, and fluctuate depending on where animals are situated. An elephant may be an educator or a friendly face of the zoo, but this can rapidly become threat when settings and controls are changed, minimised or absent. Even *within* the zoo, Burma wandering without her entourage of keepers would certainly instigate an immediate lock down of the zoo environment. The assemblage(s) through which Burma moves depend not only on her physical being, but on the perceptions of others as to where she fits, on fluid notions of elephanthood that move constantly.

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari maintain that territories are not spatially static, but are instead assemblages composed of nomadic bodies and rhizomic interactions between events, actors, histories and structures. In spite of physical boundaries, Auckland Zoo's animal-territories are not fixed but constantly re/formed through both animal agency and human understandings of animal place. Territories are not just the spaces animal occupy, they are the processes that have resulted in their construction and the way they are experienced by those who move through them. For example, as I have participated in *Zoo Experiences*, my presence has temporarily, slightly altered animal territories (had my keys remained in the monkey den, perhaps this transformation may have resulted in a more permanent change!). Identities then, result from boundaries and transgressions within performances that territorialise, de-territorialise and re-territorialise animals to fit human understandings of animal place.

6.9 Dénouement: Conclusions

Since the development of more naturalistic enclosures from the mid-1970s on, animal territories have increasingly become replications of ‘wild’ environments, and our temporary insertion into them transforms them into spaces of active learning. Zoo animals are thus enunciated as living teachers, ambassadors for their species and places afar. We enter something constructed as ‘their’ space (though executed entirely by humans), but we are forbidden to make physical contact with non-human creatures – we are not to pet or stroke the fur of the red panda who nuzzles our hand for apple slices, nor shake a tiny paw offered to us by a friendly spider monkey. Animals’ ambassadorial roles, then, are more akin to those of esteemed leaders or saints than lowly teachers; they possess noble qualities demeaned through proximity with humanity.

The transition from the historical caged display of animals to modern simulations of ‘real’ habitats reveals how the presentation of animal bodies mirrors political and moral landscapes. As Bishop notes in her study of the Taronga Zoo in Australia, the animal is no longer the caged object of the passive tourist gaze but instead “invites a certain kind of experience, a ‘being there’, a participation or re-enactment of journeys into the jungle” (Bishop, 2004:114). Likewise, Anjalee was, for example, procured on the grounds that the general public is largely unable to travel to exotic locations to experience wild animals. To quote Mulholland again: "Documentaries and the National Geographic are great, but there is nothing like the smell, the feel of being near an elephant." (Graeme Mulholland, quoted in *New Zealand Herald*, 28/05/2011)

While this feeling of ‘being there’ is not promoted by the Auckland Zoo as servicing the leisure requirements of customers, research suggests that “zoo educational experiences, particularly informal ones, may actually do little more than provide a socially acceptable veneer to the entertainment on offer” (Carr & Cohen, 2011). Although interactions are both bodily and emotional, moments of animalised be-ing/do-ing fulfil a range of complex, diverse and very human desires, performed within a highly constructed and commodified landscape. Animal’s own symbolic territory-makings (scenting with urine, scraping marks onto trees with claws, making specific sounds or calls) are likely to be retarded, as are their individual experiences of inter-animal experiences. The territorialisation of species into defined zones thus speaks of hierarchies of power and domination of humans over non-humans, regardless of the rationale behind confinement.

The zoo then, emerges as a complex site that embodies conflicting understandings of how humans and non-humans should co-exist. On the one hand animals' ambassadorial role is one of high engagement with human ‘learners’. These zoo inhabitants are inserted into a regime of education where they become visible by necessity, as representatives of their species and the physical habitat

determined by their genetic records. The zoo animal is itself liminal, situated somewhere in between the domestic, the wild and the artificial (Braverman, 2011, 2012; also see Mullan & Marvin 1987, 1999). Rather, they perform as body doubles for 'real' animals, speaking to us of the plight of their overseas cousins, brothers and sisters.

Animal identities have therefore changed over time as part of unstable and flexible territorialising processes. We still glorify the animal as a symbol of a lost nature, but rather than being presented as a reformist space of good moral and physical health, nature is now seen as an entity denied to us through human greed. The lion, tiger or cheetah retains the characteristics of the beast, and instil feelings of awe, fear and admiration when we visit their enclosures. As zoo visitors we are still vested with the power over animals, but now we see it as a power to save: instead of being hunters or curiosity-collectors, we are now saviours and gene-collectors. Working with the machinistic and pragmatic bodily engagements between zoo inhabitants and visitors, it becomes evident that juxtaposed objectives manifest in the zoo through a structured system of knowledge transfer.

In terms of Deleuzian territorialisation processes, these objectives are governed by keepers not just of animal bodies but of knowledge. Consequently, our material experiences of encounter are shaped as much by our own expectations and discourses surrounding the place of animals as by the creatures within the zoo's walls, and reveal heterogeneous and ever-changing constellations of actors both human and not. While conceptualisations of conservation overlay understandings of Auckland Zoo as a space of entertainment, it remains that animals are constrained by ideologies that situate them as distinct from human. In turn, these are perpetuated by socio-scientific paradigms that treat animals as subjects to be experienced 'by' humans rather than as agents who can make a difference in the world.

As Elizabeth Grosz (2008) notes, the way actants are framed fashions territories from chaos. Auckland Zoo is therefore more than just a collection of animals that we see within a static spatial environment. Rather, it is an assemblage of historical processes, events, spatial placement and temporal changes of Auckland city and of associated social attitudes. Through a ritual of passage dependent on a commodified and capitalist routine, connections are drawn to places local and far-flung that relies on the exotic while simultaneously downplaying exoticism. Zoo-shows, then, depend on staged encounters that give the public the chance to encounter animals at a range of different levels. In the zoo, outsiders become insiders who remain outsiders, participants in a space that maintains a disconnect from the urban world. Yet zoo-territories rely on animal actors to perform as entertainers, educators and ambassadors, both reflecting boundary-constructions and redefining humanimal spaces.

THE FRAMING OF FERAL, STRAY AND COMPANION CATS IN AUCKLAND CITY

He is the Cat that walks by himself, and all places are alike to him

- Rudyard Kipling, 1907

7.1 Preamble: Sit(e)uating strays

Felis catus is the most popular pet animal in New Zealand, with an estimated thirty nine percent of Auckland households containing at least one cat. This statistic implies that Aucklanders regard felines as appropriate companion animals which are accepted as having a legitimate place within our domestic environments. Yet at the same time, according to The National Cat Management Strategy Group (2016), approximately 200,000 stray cats also inhabit New Zealand's urban spaces. Dwelling in public reserves, carparking buildings, industrial parks and under buildings at schools, businesses and private homes, these cats lead lives unclaimed by humans, existences on the boundaries of spaces usually considered 'public'.

In these cases, non-human rights to place are complicated and messy, often dependent on fluid understandings of who (and what behaviour) is 'in' or 'out' of place. This chapter attends to contested feline spaces as part of assemblages influenced by human and non-human actors. Through such a framework, the identities of feral, stray and pet cats are unpacked as intimately linked to ideas about where animals belong - and don't belong - whether part of 'nature', urban space or the home. At the same time, this analysis grants Auckland's cats the capacity for transgression and/or transcendence of such boundaries through their interaction with people, non-humans and material spaces.

The first section of this chapter outlines how ideas of appropriate feline use of public spaces is framed in terms of an often idealised 'wild', and pitted against the moral value of other - usually indigenous - species. Drawing from recent discursive media performances, I explore how advocacy for a cat free country is based on constructing 'pest' identities for cats, primarily framing them as threats to native New Zealand bird life. Language and classification of non-humans is used in this case to establish a binary that segregates cats from native birds by situating the former in the home and the latter in the 'wild'. In other words, what we *call* cats has implications for feline performativity and use of public space.

In the second section, I attend more closely to the marginalisation of ‘homeless’ animals. This ethnographic research cites some of the interactions I have undertaken over 18 months of volunteer work as a community cat carer at a colony in central Auckland, as well as additional examples of individual stray cats observed around Auckland city. Using the Deleuzian idea of territorialisation as my primary theoretical framework, I address how the production of such contested spaces relates to ‘cat-calling’ and manifests through control over material animal bodies.

7.2 Why cats?

I focus on cats for three reasons. First, cats have a long association with humans as one side of the ‘pet’⁷³ relationship. Pets are generally considered as animals that are kept within a household and which are not bred for food (or other consumable) purposes (Howell, 2017). James Serpell (1989) recognised the confusion surrounding such blanket explanations, given that pets can be understood both in terms of the embodied animal him/herself, and in terms of their symbolic value (such as objects of prestige, adornment or as toys/playthings). Rather, he differentiates between cat-objects, and cat-subjects who are “quasi-persons”, likely to participate alongside other human and non-human animals in everyday household life. It is the latter conceptualisation that I apply throughout the following discussions, as it is this understanding of ‘pets’ that is commonly referenced in narratives around cats, both from rescue organisations and in ‘pest free’ discourses.

Furthermore, pets are invariably given proper names, indicating that pet identities are individualistic, and that the animals are expected to express emotions and performances that differentiate them from other members of their species. Recognition of this individuality is interpreted in diverse ways by humans, depending on their agenda or general feeling towards cats. Thus, the idea of keeping feline pets can be variously accommodated, supported or viewed as problematic.

Due to our association of them as domestically placed, the transgressive facet of cats’ use of public space is particularly pronounced. Humans respond accordingly, with a sense of discomfit, or even pity, towards stray cats. This response reflects wider tropes that situate felines as belonging in the home, not in the streets. Duly, considerable effort and resources are invested into ensuring that vagrant cats are rehomed if possible, and are kept fed and comfortable if not. We do not, for example, see such an attitude towards rats or stoats, neither of which⁷⁴ have any embedded

⁷³ The concept of pet is fraught with multiple meanings, and will be further dissected in my final case study in terms of multispecies kinship.

⁷⁴ I am aware that it is problematic drawing a grouping of *all* rats, stoats or cats, as each is individual and capable of forming a meaningful relationship with another member either of their own or any other species.

relationship with human companions.

Secondly, in spite of their ‘pet’ status, cats remain largely unregulated compared to New Zealand’s second most popular pet, dogs. While our canine companions are subject to registration, microchipping, muzzling and a number of other bylaws that regulate their mobility and behaviour in public, there are few requirements cat-owners are expected to conform to in order to be ‘responsible’ pet owners. Indeed, responsibilities centre around de-sexing cats in order to control population numbers, while discussion around whether or not cats should be restricted within private residences is a relatively new conversation. This indicates that cats are deemed more free than dogs, and that in spite of having equal rights to participate in home spaces, their right to the ‘street’ is more often claimed and less often questioned.

Finally, we hold a somewhat ambiguous view towards cat personalities, which easily lends them to scholarly discussion around fluid identities and acts of both individual and collective place-taking. While as pets they are perceived as cute, child-like and dependent, cats retain a conflicting reputation as aloof, independent and solitary. In this way, cat collectives (such as stray or feral colonies) challenge our view of felines as lonesome creatures who do *not* travel in packs. Cat colonies can thus be seen as considerably more threatening than individual cats in public space, as non-human collective decision-making is more of a threat to order than individual transgressions of public space. Subsequently, a cat community is more likely to be ‘cleaned up’ or managed in order to control non-human use of space, while individual stray cats are both more easily tolerated and more likely to be absorbed into prior understandings of how a space ought to be used.

7.3 Stalking my prey: Research methods

While still ethnographic in flavour, my methods in this chapter differ from those applied in my previous case studies. Most significant is my involvement with an organised cat feeding network, known as ‘The Rose Garden Cats’. I therefore consider my research as based around a participant observation model, integrated with detailed analysis of broader understandings of feline place in New Zealand. Although my research is not restricted only to fieldwork at that site, my analysis of surrounding discourse was provoked by the group’s strong response to what they saw as anti-cat sentiment in the media. As such, I have focused my case examples largely from observational data collected through embodied encounters with the collective group of Rose Garden cats (and volunteers), supported by examples of several individual ‘stray’ cats around the Auckland area.

It is worth noting that participant observation can be problematic in the field of human-animal research. As non-human actors are incapable of linguistic communication to affirm their points of view or motivations, they are rarely credited as having legitimate input into the research process. Nevertheless, the method is excellent for contextualising the conflicting attitudes that surround a range of animal places. For example, Arluke and Sanders (1996) ethnographic research in animal shelters explores the moral ambiguity apparent in veterinary practices that simultaneously care for and kill unwanted animals. Although not often applied to voluntary work feeding stray animals, participant observation has proved effective at articulating both the transgressive performances of stray/feral cats (Van Patter & Horvita, 2018) and representations of conflicting understandings of cat place (Griffith *et al*, 2000).

While at best an incomplete articulation of feline points of view, the combination of subjective participant knowledge and more ‘objective’ note-taking of phenomena lends itself well to re-placing non-humans into landscapes. I have therefore utilised a range of methods typical of participatory observation, including informal interviews, direct observation, participation in the life of the group, collective discussions, analyses of documents produced within the group, self-analysis of my involvement and an overall assessment of my data obtained from activities undertaken as part of my experience of cat-feeding.

7.3.1 Doing the research

My involvement with the Rose Garden Cats began in 2014, and I spent a total of three years as a ‘cat feeder’ at the colony. Feeders have regular (at least weekly) slots where we provide food and water, as well as trapping cats for any necessary veterinary attention, including spaying/neutering. This time frame was well beyond my anticipated one-and-a-half year research period, as ultimately I found it hard to extricate myself from the organisation after my research was complete. A sense of commitment and duty meant that I continued feeding long after my official research period, but the data cited in this chapter is exclusively from the 2014-2015 period.

I actively invited the group to participate in my project, informing them of my research intentions from the outset. They proved highly enthusiastic, often expressing interest in how it could assist their own agenda. As a result I published some of my observations (such as photographs of cats, or data on the numbers of cats observed), and was sometimes requested to write responses to other media articles (generally against those that took an anti-cat stance) on the group’s Facebook page. While confidentiality agreements with other organisations, such as the SPCA, sometimes precluded releasing some of my data publicly, I drafted several short discussion pieces for the group.

Additionally, I shared conference papers that cited my participant observation within the group with members prior to presentation/publication. This ensured a degree of ‘member checking’ to determine I had accurately portrayed the group’s motivations and political alliances, such as with(in) broader animal rescue organisations. In return, the group shared news articles with me, and encouraged me to articulate the ideological conflicts emerging from these. Often, this took the form of impassioned speeches about the resistance they met from other parties, always framed in terms of the group’s concerns for feline wellbeing.

However, I do not consider the feeding network to be the only participants in the research. In spite of our lack of shared language, I grant the cats agency as actively shaping both the structure and findings of my research. At each session I noted what cats I saw, their general condition, and where I saw them. Generally, there was little or no physical contact between myself and the cats, with interaction restricted to looking, smelling and hearing one another’s presence. I took care to allow the cats determination over their own levels of interaction, as well as where and when encounters took place. This has meant that although filtered through my own lens of understanding, cats were granted autonomy over their involvement in the project as they were able to actively shape events, encounters and spaces.

My overall methodology required that I understood the spatial domain where feline-human interactions took place as an assemblage that included multiple other actors (both sentient and non-sentient as well as structural and procedural). To achieve this, I noted wider environmental factors that may have influenced the way in which cat identities were expressed in research locations. This included the time of day, weather conditions, and any special events or anomalies that occurred at the time of interactions. For example, at one point the cat colony had suffered considerable damage from a scrub fire, at other times there was vandalised equipment, or groups of people using the space for specialised activities, such as film shooting, wedding photography or simply public drinking.

Over this same period, several prominent figures in the New Zealand media landscape had voiced what the feeders saw as anti-cat sentiment. My particular network felt that this directly threatened individual cats, and that they were in need of increased security and support to ensure that they were not removed from the colony and euthanised due to their stray status. The feeders’ perspectives were closely aligned with that of the SPCA, who had in turn become the target of much mockery and disdain by the conservation campaigners. I have drawn not from only my field research and communication with the Rose Garden Cat group, but also from interviews with the SPCA and analysis of the media narratives around the *Cats To Go* campaign (which are largely web based). As

a result, certain ‘lines’ have emerged as inherent to the framing of cats. Revolving around understandings of public/private boundaries, vulnerabilities, concepts of ownership and the associated body modification of animals, these lines function within territorialising processes that determine where cats can/cannot legitimately take place.

7.4 Cat Publics and Cat Privates: Spaces and body modification

*His bagpipe shriek at
sluggish dawn dragged me out in
pyjamas to comb the bush
(he being under the vet
for septic bites): the old fool*

*stood, body hard as a board,
heart thudding, hair on end, at
the house corner, terrible,
yelling at something. They said,
‘Get him doctored.’ I think not.*

- James K Baxter, ‘Tomcat’, 1969

The fundamental question of ‘what makes a public?’ underlies any discussion of the use of public space. The public arena is generally understood as both physically and socially constructed, produced through a range of social encounters constituted by an open-ended stream of actors. Urban public spaces, then, are both material and symbolic “points of assembly where strangers mingle” (Sharon, 1995:45), created through a combination of capital investment and cultural meaning. Nevertheless, the implied democracy of such constructions is sometimes critiqued (see Mitchell, 1995 or Bondi, 2016), as oversimplifying the nuances of publics by failing to take into account the wider assemblages that contribute to their creation, maintenance and accessibility.

Iveson (1998; 2011) distinguishes between two different understandings of urban public space. The first is what he refers to as “topographical” spaces. This denotes urban sites that are accessible by members of the public, where interaction and address can occur. Such sites generally have determined boundaries, are easily distinguished from private space and are able to be mapped. This type of public readily comprises the parks where many of Auckland’s stray cat population congregate, including the Parnell Rose Gardens. However, Iveson also refers to “procedural”

publics, which are not necessarily physical. Rather, these ‘stretch out’ our perception of the public to take into account a range of spatial practices, and direct attention to the role of media and communication in creating praxes (Iveson, 1998). Examples can include the role of newspaper and other print media alongside television, radio, social media and web-based forums such as blogs and webpages.

With regard to this research, both of these publics act and react in nexus. While we may visualise a public reserve as the stage for a cat colony, it is through such procedural publics that ideas form about where is ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ for feline performances to take place. As a result different privileges emerge in relation to urban space, including the lack of the right to legal protection in public. In *The Right to the City*, Don Mitchell (2003) links public space to social exclusion, social rights and social justice. Using the examples of migrant workers and the homeless, Mitchell explains how some actors are marginalised through the differential construction of ‘otherness’ from ‘legitimate’ users of public spaces.

In a similar manner, fears of disease, dirt and moral decay have resulted in an alignment between animal use of space and that of othered humans, in particular the homeless population of Auckland’s city parks. This fear of danger stems from the inherent openness of public places as locations where we can encounter strangers. In contrast to the private zoo-space - where fences, gates, locks and barriers form an assemblage of closed space - Parnell Rose Gardens lacks systems to restrict access by any species mobile enough to enter and exit. As such, the safety of users becomes a dominant concern. Carmona (2010) frames such apprehensions in terms of public space as a ‘global commodity’, with surveillance and sanitisation deemed necessary to ensure that users do not encounter other actants that might threaten their safety or offend their senses. The upshot is, however, that consequent management can undermine the public dimensions of spaces, as strangers (or ‘others’) are removed by employing semiotic codes that support use of space only by those who share homogeneous identities (Madanipour, 2015).

In the case of the Rose Garden cats, processes of sanitisation and segregation play a fundamental part in the construction of animal space in the park, and are intimately related to their identity as ‘stray’ or ‘pest’. Animals have few rights of their own to participate in public space in New Zealand, with legal access largely linked to their status as *either* indigenous *or* exotic/introduced species. Furthermore, even within the broad category of introduced species, distinctions are fabricated between animals who perform independently of humans (often considered ‘pests’) and those who engage in public space *with* humans in accordance with regulations related to ownership.

In other words, some animals are granted (restricted) access to publics, provided appropriate human companions accompany them.

A parallel can thus be established with what is understood in Deleuzioguattarian thought as a manifestation of the 'State'. Described in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987) as a “phenomena of centering, unification, totaliation, integration, hierarchization and finalization”, the State is not a fixed body, but rather a set of institutional processes designed to order and manage space through fixing representations and territories (see Agamben, 2015). Using the term “overcoding”, Deleuze and Guattari articulate such processes as occurring through the symbiosis of the environment and what they might call language-machines: news media, advertising, children’s stories and so forth, all of which go towards fixing representations of cat-as-stray or cat-as-pet.

A set of meanings is thus imposed over assemblages of animals, spaces, and processes that dictate the way social relations are conducted. Under this order, a cat is coded as either owned or stray based on the (singular) space-time they occupy, and his/her status in relation to humans. In other words, cat bodies require *privatisation* in order to be granted rights, whether as mundane as the right to public space, or in more extreme cases, the right to life. A substitution of individual agency for status as human property is therefore required in order for cat identities to be legitimised. This generally necessitates their removal from public space, but other strategies are also employed in order to re-territorialise cats as ‘part-of’ rather than ‘other’ to human performances.

Bodily restriction/modification is an essential part of the encoding process. De-sexing, for example, legitimises the feline body by curbing reproduction, and microchips legitimise body-identities through ownership. Spaying and neutering are colloquially referred to as ‘fixing’ with the dual implications of repairing/improving something, as well as fixing the body as static, unable to produce and reproduce itself.

In New Zealand, the process of trap-neuter-return (TNR) is an excellent example of the relationship between feline geographies and bodies. Internationally regarded as a gold standard of cat management, TNR consists of the humane trapping, sterilisation and medical treatment of stray cats. An ear is often clipped to mark the cat as ‘fixed’, at which point the cat is then returned to the space where he or she was found.

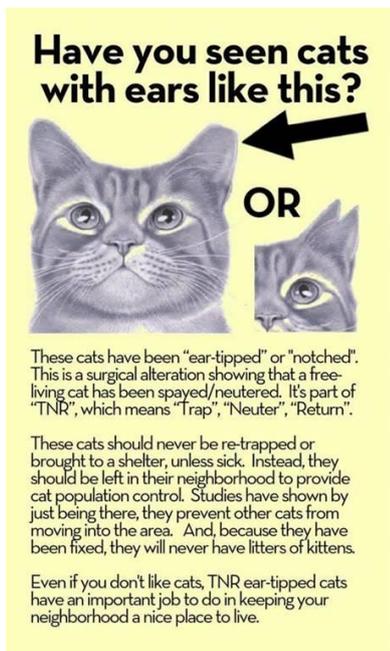


Figure 42: Poster demonstrating ear-clipping in stray cats.

The broad objectives of TNR correlate with the vision of a ‘trans-species urban theory’ touted by seminal animal geographers (see Wolch, 1998;2002 and Philo, 1998). While grassroots TNR advocates do not frame the practice in the language of critical theory, their embodied actions seek to reframe interactions between cats and people in a way that unapologetically defends the interests of felines and their right to space (Thompson, 2012). By calling extermination-based management strategies into question, the process of return back into spaces determined *by* stray cats enables them to participate in everyday life beyond capture, captivity and/or rehoming process through organisations such as the SPCA. Nevertheless, it should be noted that it is contingent on significant body modification of the cats, and that regardless of lifestyle benefits to them, the process of TNR is implemented without feline consent.

A second problem lies with legislation, which creates vulnerability for volunteers and organisations. The Animal Welfare Act (1999) states that it is illegal that the “owner, or person in charge of, an animal, without reasonable excuse, deserts the animal in circumstances in which no provision is made to meet its physical, health, and behavioural needs”. While in some cases the process of ‘return’ does allow for the provision of cats’ needs, volunteers at less-managed colonies are aware that they can potentially be liable for animal abandonment charges as a result of TNR. This concern again highlights the way that cat lives (and deaths) are contingent on their relationships with humans, and the unquestioned role of humans as responsible for keeping animals within private spaces.

7.5 Cat-egorisation

Cats have had a turbulent history of coexistence with humans, having been variously feared, adored, revered and persecuted throughout the ages. Biologically, they are considered only semi-domesticated, as many cat populations function as ‘wildcats’, without humans controlling their breeding patterns or their food supply. In spite of anywhere between 8,000 - 12,000 years of domestication, cats retain close genetic and behavioural links with their wild ancestors, such as acute sensory adaptations allowing them to effectively locate potential prey before being discovered (Montague *et al*, 2014). Given that there are few clear morphological or behavioural distinctions between domestic and wild felines (aside of docility and pigmentation of fur), it is theorised that domestic cats do not express essential physical differences from their wilder cousins, and that the process of domestication has not resulted in significant adaptations to cat genomes over either time or space (Montague *et al*, 2014). Rather, cats are categorised as either ‘domestic’, ‘stray’ or ‘feral’, classes that relate to the space a cat inhabits in terms of his or her proximity to humans, rather than the physiology of cat bodies themselves.

In New Zealand, formalised definitions of each class are provided by the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC). Unlike domestic cats, the feral cat is demarcated as having “none of its needs provided by humans”, who “generally do not live around centres of human habitation” (NAWAC; 2007). Regardless of genetic equivalency, under New Zealand legislation feral cats are treated as if biologically distinct from cats that associate with humans. Managed by the Department Conservation (DoC), it is therefore legal to target feral cats as a pest species – in other words, they can be lethally trapped, shot or poisoned on both public and private property. This stance is not necessarily universally supported, with one interviewee drawing a clear connection to the way that naming territorialises groups as worthless or disposable: “I personally think that defining feral cats as pests ... is like saying refugees are not real people and we don't need to worry what happens to them!” (Lesley, May 2015).

Stray cats, however, have a different set of legal rights, and - like their ‘companion’ cousins - are protected under the New Zealand Animal Welfare Act (1999) against wilful mistreatment. Often fed by volunteers or welfare groups, stray cats differ from ‘companion’ or ‘pet’ cats only in that they are un-owned. Living either as solitary individuals or clustered in colonies, stray cats have been variously called ‘free roaming’, ‘un-owned’, ‘semi-owned’ and sometimes ‘wild’, usually depending on the space they occupy, level of interaction with humans, or international context. Understood as having associations with humans, stray cats can encompass felines born in the wild, abandoned, escaped or those who are semi-owned – having some or all of their needs met by

humans, but without a claim of ownership over them. Without a designated person in ‘charge’ of them, their legal right to minimum care remains a grey area under the Companion Cat Code of Welfare (2007). Certainly, when interviewed for my research, SPCA Executive Director Bob Kerridge took pains to point out that public opinion often conflates cat-classifications. His concern was that if stray cats are inaccurately labelled as ‘feral’, then cats from domestic environments (and urban strays with some level of interaction with humans) will be left open to significant vulnerabilities.



Figure 43: Continuum of cat-categorisation in New Zealand.

Feline identities are therefore reliant on both the levels of interspecies relations and the spaces that cats themselves possess. Furthermore, categories are fluid, and an individual cat may transition from stray to pet or vice versa with relative ease. However, the so called ‘war against cats’ relies on the construction of static boundaries that fix cats categorically and spatially. This is especially evident through the highly controversial *Cats To Go* campaign. Led by entrepreneur Gareth Morgan, it paints cats as “natural born killers” and overtly pits them against native wildlife, which he clearly endows with greater moral and environmental value. Predictably, the campaign invoked the wrath of many cat-lovers and animal welfare groups, who perceived it as conflicting with feline welfare and rights (particularly for strays). The campaign was seen as setting individual pet ownership as oppositional to broader national objectives of environmental conservation, objectives

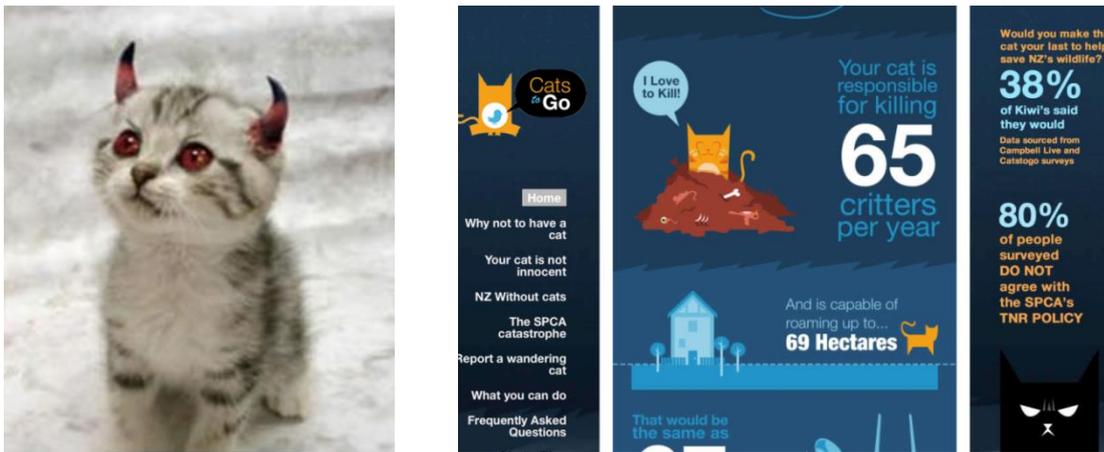
that cat-owners did not necessarily see as mutually exclusive. However, it also revealed boundary-constructions distinguishing between subgroups of the same species.

Using Morgan's campaign as a springboard, this case study explores how the interplay between representation and practise depends on such classifications. What we *call* cats relates explicitly to place, and also demonstrates an interspecies politics whereby boundaries are created and maintained through anthropocentric power structures.

7.5.1 Naming (and shaming) cats through the *Cats To Go* campaign

Gareth Morgan is an economist, businessman, philanthropist, and self-proclaimed conservationist. His 'Morgan Foundation' finances and supports a range of environmental, social development and policy initiatives and Morgan's high profile as a public figure has no doubt ensured the success of many of his causes. In 2013, the Foundation commenced a crusade expressly aimed at reducing the impact of cats on wildlife (particularly birds). In spite of losing some momentum, the campaign is still active and continues to utilise biodiversity rhetoric to frame cats as problematic features of both urban and 'wild' landscapes. Initially focusing on Morgan's hometown Wellington, his *Cats To Go* crusade encourages cat-owners to adopt a number of directives designed to control feline numbers and behaviour. These include keeping cats indoors at night and festooning them with belled collars that warn birds of their approach. Additionally, residents are discouraged from replacing their pets after the death of their current moggies.

However, in spite of these seemingly reasonable and moderate objectives, Morgan's campaign was designed to be deliberately inflammatory, employing highly emotive text and images to convey his point (see figures 44a and 44b). For example, visitors to the *Cats To Go* webpage were greeted with a photograph of a kitten, doctored to represent a demon with red eyes and horns (although this image has since been removed from the site). Supplementary text (which remains as of 2017) situates domestic cats as "serial killers" and "murderers of wildlife". "Your cat is not innocent" Morgan states, going on to bombard viewers with statistics blaming cats for the extinction of bird species across the country. As a result, the campaign gained high levels of media attention, with heated debate taking place in online forums as well as newspaper correspondence and talkback radio.



Figures 44a and 44b: Images from the Cats To Go website (2016)

Morgan’s narrative thus situated wildlife as oppositional to the goals of the SPCA and other cat-rescue/support/feeding groups. Discrediting these groups as foolish, mad, and potentially dangerous, cat-human interactions were portrayed as inherently negative. The value of wildlife in terms of interspecies interaction is less clear. Reliant on a nature-culture binary, the ‘wild’ is typically understood as distinct from humans. Many animal geographers have elaborated on how this has resulted in a delineation of space that shapes animal human relationships within it (see Emel & Wolch, 1998; Whatmore, 2002; Johnston, 2008). Often framed as a utopian space, the wild serves primarily recreational and scenic purposes for humans, into which indigenous animal life plays a part.

It is therefore evident that animal activities have therefore been disciplined to fit within landscapes that encapsulate the wild as pure, clean, healthy, pristine and free. Yet paradoxically it is within these wild spaces that animals can be most restricted in movement. Framed as ‘for their own protection’, conservation practice often demands the forced movements of species to island sanctuaries, captive breeding programs, wildlife refuges and the like, as well as spatially controlling, trapping and eradicating predators. Discourses such as Morgan’s are often enacted through the management of experts to keep out pests. For example, New Zealand’s Department of Conservation’s ‘mainland islands’ are reserves protected by tailor-made combinations of fencing, traps, poison and other pest control measures which require specialised and complex local ecological knowledge (Meurk & Swaffield, 2000).

These ecologically-informed, panoptical apparatus define non-humans as “objects in the world, classifying and tidying them to render them knowable in a given context” (Ginn, 2008:339). Ordering tendencies from ‘above’ tend to territorialise space (DeLanda 1997), imposing order onto a messy, mobile array of non-humans. Animals are essentialised by lumping together individuals as

‘species’, and establishing boundaries that separate ‘good’ species from ‘bad’⁷⁵. As spaces become categorised, the bodily movement of animals between zones becomes imbued with moral value. Since the urban imagination regards city landscapes as incompatible with ideas of natural wilderness, the complexity and heterogeneity of urban non-human life has traditionally been denied. Under such a regime, clear distinctions between cats-as-pests and birds-as-valuable render co-species space invalid, unsound, and ultimately impossible. Furthermore, binary concepts such as native/exotic nature “do enormous violence to some creatures but allow others to flourish” Ginn (2008:349). Cats can be understood as passive victims of such violence not just through the threat of extermination - as under schemes such as Morgan’s - but also through forced identities constructed by language explicitly designed to highlight their out-of-placeness in the urban wild.

Morgan followed up his initial campaign with regular cat related posts on his *Gareth’s World* blog. Here, he drew primarily on video footage documenting the nocturnal activities of Auckland’s and Wellington’s urban feline population, where he concluded that cats are a threat not only in the ‘wild’ bush environment, but are also uninvited “trespassers” and “invaders” of private domestic gardens. Clearly reflecting a belief in privatised domestic spaces, Morgan’s language plays on fears of home intrusion, encouraging us to further segregate and secure our homes from interlopers, whether human or not.

7.5.2 A cats place is in the home

Finally, Morgan’s YouTube channel hosts a Whiteboard Friday series. Consisting of short clips, it is here that the Cats To Go agenda shifts more explicitly to the management of stray cats as pest species. Stating that “every cat should be an owned cat”, trapping and humane euthanasia was now proposed as the only operative management strategy for cats that are unable to be claimed by owners or rehomed into (ideally indoor) domestic environments. Here, Morgan advocates for mandatory microchipping of all owned cats, and the establishment of curfews after which roaming cats would be caught and the owners identified/notified. Where the responsibility lies to manage this is less clear (as is the question of who will patrol the streets after dusk for roaming cats), although Morgan clearly believes that the SPCA ought to be accountable, and much of his campaign targets the organisation as to blame for stray cat numbers.

Concern was swift among animal welfare organisations (dismissed by Morgan as “crazy cat ladies”) that – as occurs with humans - the homeless cat population is liable to become subject to systemic

⁷⁵ This is not always explicitly the case. Indeed, the Department of Conservation takes care to point out that “introduced biodiversity is neither all “good” nor all “bad”; threats or benefits of individual species most often depend on the situation in which they arise” (Department of Conservation, 2000).

vulnerability under such a scheme. For without a microchip indicating ownership, to be ‘humanely euthanised’ is a likely result of feline public place-taking in *Gareth’s World*. As such, feline geographies come dramatically to the fore. Morgan’s campaign hinges around boundaries, both spatial and ideological. Cats, he believes, ought to be stringently placed; restricted to the confines of their owners private property. In a direct relationship with this space, they ought also to have one single identity – that of companion animal, or ‘pet’. According to Morgan, cats who venture outside of this space/class become, and he uses the words interchangeably, ‘stray’ or ‘feral’.

The process of ‘release’ versus that of ‘return’ is a material example of recognition of cats’ rights to space, and is vehemently contested by Morgan (as well as by other wildlife conservationists, particularly in North America). Arguing against TNR, Morgan’s campaign deliberately manipulates public understanding, claiming that the SPCA “*releases* feral cats into the wild” (my italics) rather than *returning* them to the managed colonies supported by the SPCA. Again the significance of place in feline narratives is salient, for without recourse to language, our feline subjects are like nomads who “have no history; they only have a geography” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987:393). Under TNR, cats can only be returned to where they were found at that moment in time, while other feline histories lie hidden, invisible.

Rather than TNR, Morgan advocates restricting feline movement through physical boundaries: the walls, gates, doors and fences of our properties. Stripped of movement, cats are relegated entirely to within the domestic, with the associated dependence on and control by humans. Cats who fall outside the boundaries are positioned as enemies of (virtuous) native wildlife, with Morgan purporting that cats are “the only true sadists of the animal world”. By associating stray/feral cats with deviancy, he appeals New Zealanders to divorce from their emotional attachments with pets to instead see cats as “serial killers” who “murder” for fun.

This perspective mirrors the dominant wider biodiversity discourse of New Zealand as a ‘clean’, ‘green’, ‘pristine’ country, where moral values of purity are overlaid on the landscape. Indeed, in one of the few local studies on the ramifications of feline classification, Farlane *et al* (2011) conclude that the “conservation imperative outweighs welfare concerns for cat owners” and that as a result “feral cats are possibly considered discrete from companion and stray cats”. This stance is reflected in another of Morgan’s provocative statements, where he declares “we ought to stop pussyfooting around and fry the ferals” (*Cats To Go* website, 2016), indicating that inhumane methods of control are acceptable (and even encouraged) to manage the feral population (see figure 45).



Figure 45: Hunting feral cats in New Zealand. (Coastal Pest Control website, June 2018)

Understandings of the moral place of introduced species are increasingly presented as opposed to what is ‘naturally’ here. Accordingly, Morgan imbues wildlife with inherent rights (to space and to life) by virtue of their status as native species. In a clear example of overcoding, Morgan contrasts his demonisation of cats with positive adjectives for morally virtuous bird species: for example, he refers to “cheeky kaka, beautiful kokako and curious weka”. Additionally, Farnworth *et al* (2011) note considerable buy-in to conservation rhetoric across New Zealand, with TNR strategies of population control not particularly favoured for stray cats in spite of being held as the gold standard by animal welfare organisations internationally. The authors suggest that conservation imperatives are so emphasised in New Zealand’s media culture that individual animal’s welfare concerns are often outweighed by broader environmental concerns. They also indicate that this has resulted in feral cats being considered discrete from stray or companion cats, to the point that feral cat welfare is considered negligible.

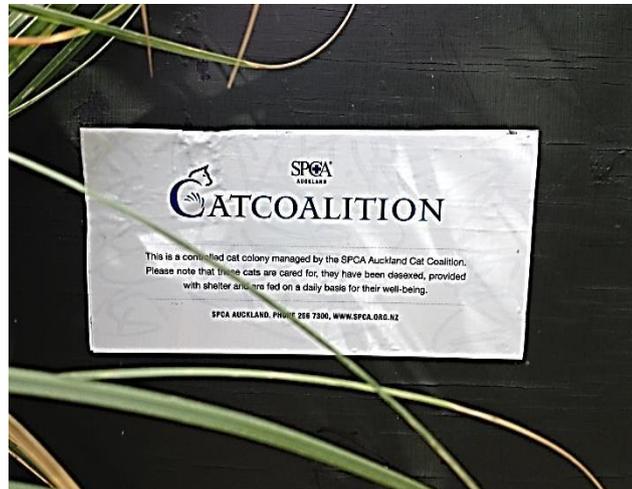
Nevertheless, as mentioned earlier in my thesis, there have been recent moves to frame strays more positively by replacing their identity with ‘community cats’ (NZ Companion Animal Council Inc., 2016). Broader in scope, this implies co-existence and encourages human citizens to accept strays as part of a multi-species community. Throughout the following section I pad alongside my feline informants to stalk feline agency more directly, examining the ways in which non-humans make decisions to occupy public spaces. In particular, I track the politics surrounding stray cat’s claims to space, hunting down encounters in spaces across Auckland where cats transcend identities as simply stray or pet.

7.6 Rose Garden Cats: The co-species construction of a stray cat colony

Considered one of Auckland's premier parks, Dove Myer Robinson Park is approximately one kilometre from the central business district of Auckland City. Created in 1913, the park consists of a range of different spaces, including a popular city and port lookout, open grounds with specimen trees, rose and memorial gardens, a sweeping bay and adjacent saltwater baths. The reserve is more commonly referred to by locals as the 'Parnell Rose Gardens', or 'Judges Bay', and is busy throughout the year with swimmers, walkers and tourists. The cat colony is centred in the rose gardens end of the park, with feeders and supporters identifying the group as the 'Rose Garden Cats'.

Like the park, the colony itself is also well established and highly managed. Existing for over forty years, the cats are cared for by a group of dedicated volunteers who feed them daily. Supplemented by more transitory feeders like myself, the system revolves around a longstanding core group, some of whom have been involved since the early 1980s. Feeders are predominantly female, although several husbands have contributed towards built features of the environment and provide emotional and financial support to the group. Ages vary, although the core group are predominantly in their retirement years. Most are from a relatively high socioeconomic group, although that is more likely to be due to the location of the colony rather than their participation necessitating a higher level of wealth.

The group identifies as "feeders" rather than an animal rescue organisation. Nevertheless, cats are routinely trapped and have health needs attended to (including de-sexing), activities that are performed with the endorsement of the SPCA. The cats are sometimes retained by members of the group for rehoming, and some cats are re-placed into another private sanctuary managed by a group member. This affiliation (and that with an umbrella group 'CatCoalition', who support feeders Auckland-wide), is noted on a sign at the entrance to the feeding area, thus ensuring that the public are aware of the purpose of the space (figures 46a and 46b).



Figures 46a and 46b: Entrance to the feeding area of the cat colony at the Parnell Rose Gardens.

The feeding space is located next to a popular look out area, with two stations on either side of a public carpark. Food is stored immediately adjacent to the parking area, in a space hidden behind foliage and fenced with natural materials. Effectively camouflaged, this zone also contains a set of cat-friendly resting spots, and is unlikely to be investigated by anyone coming to simply look over the harbour. My slot is on Saturday afternoons, just before dusk. Rain or shine, I assemble my supplies, then trudge across the carpark to a second station across the park. Claspings stacks of small tins of food I struggled with buckets to mix the food on site and litres upon litres of water to refill bowls. Often this process garnered curious looks from other people, some of whom would approach me to ask questions about my activities or the cats in general.

Unlike my interactions with animals at the zoo, here I have concerns about hygiene and the spread of disease. When I fed the cats, I readily donned latex gloves before rinsing dirty bowls and discarding uneaten food.

The space has not been sanitised prior to my arrival, and evidence of cat lives abound. It is a sensory overload: bowls are filthy, covered in mud, old cat food, and sometimes faeces. Sometimes a cat will have been sick in one of the hutches, and I need to rinse it down with water from my bottles and a hard plastic brush.

(Journal, October 2014)

At first I encouraged my children to come, but any romanticised ideas of cat petting were immediately replaced by disgust at the stench and conditions, and I often found myself on my own. Cat-feeding stinks, and is not a task for those faint of heart or sensitive of stomach!

In contrast to the ordered and well maintained bulk of the reserve, the land on which the cats reside is marginal space. On the very edge of the park, the colony centres around a steep, scrubby bank that drops down to the railway lines below. The area I was charged with is steep and slippery – the older cat feeders favour the flatter, primary feeding spot where food is stored. I would like to think this is because I am younger and more agile, but most likely the older feeders have simply served their time, moving on to the greener pastures of the lower feeding area. However, this opinion is not necessarily shared by the cats, as this precarious place is likely considered a more desirable, safer, more ‘wild’ location to take sustenance and shelter. The site’s geography poses problems for feeders, often allowing cats to easily evade capture. For example, one feeder told me her frustration at failing to capture an ill kitten:

I have just come back from feeding in the lower area and two very small tabby kittens were just down the bank in front of the concrete slab. They sort of started up the slope towards me and there was no mother in sight, but then they popped off down the bank. One has a sore eye. Probably they won't appear again till they are bigger, but they really looked as if I could have grabbed them if it hadn't been a perpendicular slope.

(Jan, feeder 2014)

The location of the colony within the park therefore conforms with Morgan’s narrative that places stray cats in ‘wild’ spaces, leaving the cats open to the vulnerabilities outlined earlier in this chapter. Yet paradoxically, the nature of the space ensures the cats are left alone, as the space is rendered unusable for human purposes.

Not merely an ideological distinction, a physical boundary demarcates cat-space from the rest of the park. This takes the form of a fence, erected between the park’s entrance pathway and the bank (figure 47). The adjacent bark garden essentially serves as a giant kitty litter box, keeping the cats from defecating in the more manicured part of the gardens. The space has been ordered with animals on one side of the fence, humans on the other. This is presumably with the intention of creating a more sanitary environment, although there are still complaints about smell in summer months. The fence territorialises space, ordering cat-space as both part of and distinct from the rest of the park. This order and division from human-space prevents the cats from being culled or

removed, therefore contributing towards the safety of the cats as much as being for the convenience of human park-goers.



Figure 47: Boundary fence between feline and human spaces along the periphery of the Parnell Rose Gardens

Furthermore, this order and sanitisation awards strays a legitimacy that the human homeless in the same park are not granted, as revealed through the following online quote:

I haven't actually seen the gardens here, I solely (sic) visit to feed the colony of homeless cats. The one time I walked up the steps from the carpark, there were three homeless men asleep (or passed out) on the park benches. Very intimidating, and not great for tourists.

(Yelp online review, 30/5/2014)

Here the anonymous author unintentionally draws a sharp distinction between the safe, managed “homeless” cat population, and the dangerous, disorderly “homeless” human population. While an *unmanaged* group of cats might be understood as a disturbance, the managed and ordered environment at the Rose Gardens is instead seen as an attraction. In contrast, the group of (albeit sleeping) homeless men represents a destabilisation of what this visitor believed she should experience the park as. Likewise, the entrenchment of cat identities as cute and harmless, while seemingly at odds with Morgan’s campaign, confirms feline identities as pet-like and advances the agenda of removing cats from public spaces and replacing them within the private. The use of the word “homeless” implies that the reviewer believes the cats should have homes *with people*, yet

many of the cats are likely to understand the bank as ‘home’, thus deterritorialising space from wild to home through acts of non-human agency.

Territorialisation of space therefore is an important process that results in the formation of moral landscapes. Addressing the interrelationships between landscapes and moral values and judgements (see Setten 2004; Matless, 2016), moral landscapes emerge as boundaries that are “naturalized in, and through, landscapes, in the interplay of their material and representational forms and related significations” (Setten & Brown, 2009:191). The Rose Gardens can therefore be seen to reflect wider understandings of the role of city parks. Although wild spaces are generally constituted as distinct from the opposing forces of urban, civilised or ‘cultured’ spaces of the city, inner city parks serve a purpose of recreating these for recreational and moral purposes. While constructed as places for reflection and connection with nature, city parks concurrently exalt values of order, civilisation and mastery over nature. Consequently, parks such as the Rose Gardens are designed to exclude disorderly, animalistic and uncivilised behaviour.

Sanitation of space is therefore required to remake the Rose Gardens as simultaneously ‘natural’ and ‘cultural’. Like the staged authenticity in the zoo, “things must become purged, purified and ordered, but this time to expel nature and the natural, for example, through sanitisation, decontamination and the removal of waste” (Brown, 2012:5). Assemblages of material boundaries (such as the fence and bark garden), and processes of cleansing (for example the removal of old food and faeces by feeders) re-territorialise the Rose Gardens into an at least acceptable location for stray cats. Although still liminal, order is created, and space is striated so that animals are recognised as actors in the park, and are free to perform some limited catty performances alongside humans.

Legitimation is obtained not only through the re-territorialisation of space and subsequent neutralisation of stray cat behaviour by containing it within a peripheral zone. Even more powerful is the deliberate replication of a domestic environment. This is achieved through the construction of a series of huts and hutches for the cats to feed, sleep and socialise in (figure 48). Made of plywood, each contains blankets, food and water. Literal manifestations of ‘home’, the huts are powerful place-making tools.



Figure 48: Cat ‘houses’ in the Parnell Rose Gardens.

Through their bodily engagement with the houses, cats become more-than-stray. No longer “homeless”, and unlike the sleeping men, they are given a territory through the creation of a cat-village, with the associated implications of permanence and community. While the cats have agency, their management by the feeders grants them a legitimacy that comes from having human authority over them. Thus, while the presence of stray cats might have initially de-territorialised the park by using it in a way that it wasn’t intended, the creation of the cat village both de/re-territorialises cat identities simultaneously, as it becomes less clear whether they are stray, or are active non-human claimants of park-space.

Secondly, sanitisation of cat-space is achieved through the movement of cat bodies. This is enacted in several ways, and relates to the age, breeding status and health of individual cats. While the priority is to capture breeding animals under the auspices of TNR, kittens are regarded as especially important to catch, primarily because they are the easiest to transform into pets. Considerable effort goes into removing kittens from the park while they are still at an age to easily (re)socialise into domestic environments. Generally this is regarded as about six to ten weeks, giving feeders limited time to remove kittens before they are wilded to the point of no return. A process of ‘unwilding’ therefore requires trapping, desexing, vaccination, microchipping and fostering of kittens before they are deemed ‘re-homable’. Some feeders take kittens home themselves, framing the process as akin to educating them (see figure 49), usually detaining the kittens into an intensive programme of domestication before advertising them for adoption via other adoption networks.

We have three very cute little kittens going through the training programme at my house (lots of time being wasted playing with them). They are coming on well but are a few weeks from graduation”.

(Karen, feeder 2014)

Often feeders shared progress and photographs of the kittens in their homes, and successful mobilisation of kitten bodies out of the park was universally celebrated by the group. Catching kittens is a long and tedious process, requiring more patience than skill. I was invited to help on several occasions, often because the more experienced volunteers were uncomfortable sitting alone in the dark in the park.



Figure 49: Kitten in a volunteer’s home, undergoing the process of ‘training’ to be a house cat. (Photograph supplied by Rose Garden Cats, 2016).

I go one evening in early spring, the air is still cold, and darkness falls early. We have all seen kittens around, old enough to feed on their own, but young enough that there is still a window for domestication. Although a feeder (Julie) has been here several times over the last week, she still hasn’t seen the kittens feed, but is certain that that after nightfall they will emerge from the scrubby slope towards the lower feeding station. Julie speculates that the kittens have been born at the Gardens, further down the bank, and are now ready to venture up to the bowls of food. She worries about the mother’s welfare, but more important to her is that she is clearly not desexed, and that there will be future kittens. The traps consist of triggered cages, with tantalising food inside – pieces of chicken and salmon, not the usual cheap tins of food donated from supermarkets and commercial pet food companies. The adult cats are wary, giving the cages a wide berth and heading for the familiar food bowls on top of the houses and inside crates.

But Julie is hopeful that the kittens will take the bait. We wait. After about an hour, we hear a rustling, but it is difficult to see and we are reluctant to shine torches. The rustling continues, and we peer through the bushes, creeping closer to the traps. It's a kitten! We watch as her tiny tongue slurps at the food, hind legs rigid and ready to run. The kitten is very cautious, her body stretched so that she isn't fully in the cage. We take a chance and pull the cord, but the door is too slow to come down and she bolts back down to the dark slope. This time we have been thwarted, yet Julie will return tomorrow, hopeful that the kitten's naivety and hunger will drive her back for a second attempt.

In spite of genuine concern for the best interest of the Rose Garden Cats, kitten catching can induce moral dilemmas and feelings of guilt for feeders:

I have one more tiny to catch from the litter I have been after. Got two tiny blacks and am trying to get their black and white sibling. Last night I set up my trap on top of the main feeding hut baited with tuna and put a few pieces in the open feeding box. ... I noticed a black adult eating on top. I crept in to see and it was mother and the little baby! I don't know how she got him up there but she's certainly awake to my tricks. She saw me catch the other two and is hanging on to the last one! I feel guilty stealing her children?

(Jan, feeder December, 2013)

This passage demonstrates not only Jan's conflicting emotions about what is 'good' for the cats, but also credits the cats with feline intelligence and savvy. Nevertheless, the idea that cats are better placed in the home pervades motivations of feeders as much as it does Morgan's diatribe. Kitten catching, then, reflects beliefs that cats are safer in the home, and that movement is duly justified in spite of resistance from the cats themselves. As a result, kittens sit in fluid states, assemblages where they are both pet and stray, until they become of age, and identities become more fixed.

It is therefore possible for cats, whatever their age, to demonstrate a combination of both pet and stray identity through their chosen interactions with human feeders. As an example, a cat appeared that I hadn't seen before, who was less cautious than many of the more established members of the colony. Suspecting he could have been recently dumped, we hoped to catch him to see if he was able to be identified as a 'pet'. A mass of ginger and white fur, the cat stayed behind the hut, watching with suspicion. Yet his eyes were less wild and more curious than most of the other strays. Loudly demanding food, his persistent meows were clearly directed at me. Gloves on, I filled the bowls, and he quickly came down to the closest rooftop station. I stood still while the cat ate his fill,

making what I hoped were encouraging noises. Immediate needs sated, he came out and approached me, and I scratched his head. But the weather was not on our side, for as we cautiously felt out one another's presence, the heavens opened, drenching us both. Turning tail, the ginger cat rushed back down the bank and under the cover of the brush.

After telling the group of this interaction, the wider rescue community was consulted to determine if the cat fitted any profiles of lost or missing pets. After calling other organisations, a member of our group got the news that he was “an escaped foster child, hankering for life on the streets obviously. He must have thought he had struck gold when he came upon our big bowls of food when he had been living off scraps for about a month” (Claire, feeder, June 2014). In this case, the cat – who we nicknamed Ginger - made a choice to make a home at the colony, both a demonstration of agency, and the de-territorialisation of the traditional pet role of a cat. Of course, his friendly nature and trust of humans made Ginger a perfect candidate for re-territorialisation back into the home, in this case, a return to his foster environment.

However, it is not only kittens that are mobilised. The elderly and infirm are also targeted by the feeders. Local socialite Anne Batley-Burton has had a long involvement (and high profile) with the Rose Garden Cats. Her estate in Kumeu, on the outskirts of Auckland, houses many of the cats extricated from the Rose Gardens. Named ‘Goose Creek’, Batley-Burton has christened the refuge as a “Pussy Palace for Pensioners”, describing it as an “extensive indoor/outdoor safe sanctuary for older or disadvantaged un-homeable rescue cats where they can live out their lives in safety and comfort”. Goose Creek is purposely crafted to accommodate large numbers of cats, although they are segregated by temperament into a series of ‘rooms’ (see figures 50a and 50b). The complex is comprised of large cages, and few of the cats have a free run of the property. Subsequently, Batley-Burton ‘plays the game’, ensuring that she minimises her risk of attack from parties concerned about the impact of the cats on the wider environment.



Figures 50a and 50b: Exterior and interior of Anne Batley-Burton's Pussy Palace.

Yet unlike the kittens, the removal of cats to Goose Creek is not unanimously supported by feeders. One feeder with 35 years of experience in the colony lamented the fact that:

The cats are not friendly anymore here. I used to come and there would be twenty or thirty cats all smooching around when I brought the food. Now, the friendlier cats all live up at Goose Creek. The ones who stay here are the ones that can't be caught, they don't come near [feeders]"

(Pam, feeder, May 2014).

It is therefore evident that the cats that remain here are those who have eluded capture. Inherently further from humans, they are wilded through both their behaviour in the Rose Gardens, and ontological position relative to feeders. To return to the Deleuzian concept of the State, this feline resistance to capture and human connection is enacted through what Deleuze and Guattari conceptualise as “war machines”. While the State is a coded plane that creates boundaries through binary structures, war machines function as sheer nomadic movement. In this manner, the non-striated and uncoded (Deleuze, 1987:141) performance of escaped cats creates spaces absent of both essentialising forces and central authority. Of course, the resultant arrangements that emerge (such as between cats, feeders and the structures of the Rose Gardens) are not always assemblages that the feeders themselves prefer.

The generation of intrapersonal relationships is therefore an important payoff to feeders. This stance is reflected in the following quote from a feeder in reference to diminishing numbers of ‘friendly’ cats: that the “happy, friendly group who used to greet us when we went to feed had all dispersed by the time you started volunteering” (Mel, 2013). The ‘free’ nature of the cats was applauded, but the moments of interaction during feeding time were considered more rewarding than the suspicion and elusive encounters that I experienced. As Jan (2013) commented: “They came, they *greeted*, they ate and they went!”. Rather than a simple example of conflicting internal politics between group members, this reveals the desire for friendship building, between cats and feeders, relationships that can be understood through Donna Haraway’s (2008) notion of ‘politeness’ towards other species. Haraway’s theory is based on acknowledging respect and responsibility between species, while recognising on-going asymmetrical relationships of life/death and nurturing/slaughter. Exploring the idea of touch and historical presence, Haraway identifies processes such as ‘friendship building’: which in the case of the relationship between cats and feeders in the Parnell Rose Gardens, generates “cosmopolitical proposals” granting cats the possibility for escape.

This is evident not only through performative bodily encounters such as petting, but also in that cats are presented as distinct (and individual) beings who have the capacity to be influenced by friendly gestures. For example, the following post was shared by a feeder with regard to a “big, beautiful British Blue” who unexpectedly appeared at one of the stations: “Will people talk to him and stroke him? And if no one responds to the found notices we will hope to *befriend* him and *persuade* him to come to vet to be scanned” (Claire, 2014, my emphasis). The quote indicates that although feeders are aware that some actions (such as TNR) are inevitably conducted without consent, it is preferable to generate cooperative relationships that allow individual cats the opportunity to reciprocate with sociable communication. Feeders intuitively reacted respectfully to feline cues, with one feeder responding that “he was keen to get at the food and wasn't afraid, but didn't let me stroke him. However I had a talk to him so hopefully he knows we are his friends!” (Anne, 2014).

Interspecies politeness results in the emergence of new cat identities through their encounters with feeders. This often takes the form of individual namings. In contrast with Morgan’s narrative, the Rose Garden cats are imbued with unique identities, often based on characteristics they display. Names, then, are manifestations *and* recognitions of agency. Furthermore, the Rose Garden cats do not lose these identities after death; after cremation, the ashes of each are kept by Batley-Burton in small boxes, memorialised with a small plaque and photograph (see figure 51).



Figure 51: Memorial boxes containing the ashes of ‘stray’ cats (Photograph supplied by Anne Batley-Burton, 2018).

Naming is also an important process for legitimising the lives of cats. As cats are captured and returned under TNR, they are routinely microchipped and recorded on a pet register.

Last Sunday we caught and desexed one of the two big (really big) tomcats that have been coming to feed at the top. Any suggestions for a name for him? He was actually quite a placid guy in the cage, no hissing growling etc. he now has an ear tip and a microchip and has had a flea and worm treatment. He just needs a name for his registration!

(Jan, August 2014)

Considerable effort is therefore required by feeders to ensure cats conform to State apparatus, as stray cat bodies are transformed to replicate those of pets in order to ensure their security in the 'wild'.

7.7 Addressing cats: Ownership

While territorialising processes such as naming and microchipping grant cats some validation and protection, it remains that animals still need to be *addressed*. In this context, an 'address' refers not only to the need for recognition, but also the requirement of a concrete address that cats can claim space over. This form of address is inherently related to ownership, as in spite of strong interpersonal bonds with people, cats are ontologically positioned as our possessions. Firmly embedding animals in networks of capital accumulation and consumption, ownership reflects an assumption that a pet is an animal held or purchased as a form of property (Hunter & Brisbin, 2016). Lacking their own property rights (Bradshaw, 2018), it is the politics of ownership that awards cats the right to take place.

In the remainder of this section, I briefly examine the relationship between ownership, agency and space through three short examples of 'stray' cats in the wider Auckland area. First is Brian, who has lived for the past five or six years ensconced in the bowels of one of the historic merchant buildings in Auckland's university precinct. The building now houses the English language school, but more significantly, borders Albert Park, a well-used and highly maintained inner city park. Frequented by students, workers, families and tourists, and used less legitimately, for illicit drug deals, late night drinking sessions, sexual trysts and sleeping rough, Albert Park is similar in many ways to the Rose Gardens.

However, Brian is not part of a colony; indeed, he is nobody's cat but his own. According to staff at the language school, he may have initially been fed by gardeners in the park, but his past is hazy, at best. Even now, it is unclear who supplies him, although he has food and water bowls, a bed and access to under the building at his disposal (see figure 52). Again, the positioning of personal items

establishes a place for Brian, his presence confirmed by items that are uniquely his. Unlike many of the Rose Garden cats, Brian has actively forged relationships with humans. Usually these are international students attending the school, who regularly spend time sitting with Brian, petting him and talking with him. In this case, interspecies encounter provides moments of reciprocal pleasure, with several students telling me how they missed having pets. It is fair to say that Brian serves an important role alleviating loneliness and providing a sense of connection and quiet reflection for the students.



Figure 52: Brian’s bed and water bowl on the back steps of the Language School, University of Auckland.



Figure 53: Brian, on the staff photograph board in the Language School.

Brian's status as a valued member of the community is confirmed through other articulations of place. He is, for example, featured on the staff board of the language school, demonstrating the close embodied and emotional links they have with him (figure 53). Like the other users of the space, Brian has made his own decision to participate in the assemblage that makes up the language school and Albert Park, revealing himself as an active and creative agent who contributes to place-making. Yet at the same time, it is the symbols of ownership – his bowls or photograph – that 'address' him. Rather than exerting the covert residency of a stray, Brian is embedded in a singular location and endorsed by humans, and there is a close enough replication of 'ownership' to secure his lifestyle choice.

In a second example of feline agency, I introduce Merli, a cat who has wilfully taken up residence in a bus stop in the Auckland suburb of Northcote. Like Brian, Merli has an array of personal possessions that support her bodily presence at the bus shelter (figure 54). A popular fixture of the environment, bus drivers and members of the public frequently stop to interact with her, with varying degrees of reciprocation. She demonstrates agency, but what distinguishes her from Brian is that she is *not* a stray. Helpfully for us, Merli's situation is outlined on a piece of paper taped to the shelter wall (figure 55), explaining that in her old age she has chosen to live here, in spite of having a conventional home down the road. Framed from Merli's perspective, the notice clearly explains her presence as a force of active agency on her part, having "now *decided* to leave my permanent home and take up residence in this bus shelter".



Figure 54: Merli at home in the bus stop.



Figure 55: Notice attached to the bus stop.

Although Merli has made a conscious decision to claim public space, it is the outlining of her situation by her (human) family that effectively gives her license to take place, ensuring she is not relocated to a refuge. Because she has access to a private address, Merli is granted a type of citizenship that enables her to make decisions about how she wants to engage with public space. Like Brian or the Rose Garden kittens, Merli embodies both pet and stray identities, although in this case, Merli is given *public* rights because she can claim *private* space.

Finally, I introduce a third example of fluid feline identity. Governor Grey is a stray Burmese cat that arrived battered and bruised on the Auckland University grounds in 2013. Now a resident of the grand Old Government House building, he is a popular and charismatic fixture of the university landscape. Found by the buildings caretaker, initial attempts were made to identify his owners:

[A]fter I found him sleeping under my car for three nights I realised he wasn't going to go away, so I took him to a vet on the Strand. They couldn't find a micro-chip on him. So I advertised him in the lost and found pets section of Trade Me and we put notices up around the University.

(University Alumni newsletter, 04/08/2014)

With no response, Governor Grey stayed at Old Government House, and was (re)named after the most famous occupant of the viceregal residence. His naming is therefore a playful act that builds connections between the university and his physical features (his grey fur), implying that it is possible for non-humans to interweave their histories within the existing traditions of esteemed former Governors who had used the space to entertain guests at the House. Lounging in the sun or curled up on cushy armchairs, Governor Grey holds court to a myriad of academics and guests, many of whom go out of their way to encounter him. More-than-stray, his feline presence is considered as enabling community building, and customers regularly articulate his importance within the University of Auckland's wider assemblage.

Moreover, Governor Grey has become a public figure in his own right, accumulating a horde of fans and even his own Facebook page. Having transitioned from stray to legitimate participant in a multi-species space he, like Brian, effectively de-territorialises the University of Auckland landscape. And again like Brian, rather than complying with strict boundaries of ownership, it is his relationship with an *address* that grants him legitimacy. Thus, Governor Grey, Brian and Merli all embody the SPCA's chosen vocabulary of "community cats" to reclassify strays within dynamic, interspecies assemblages.

In all three cases, it is evident that cats can - and do - display agency through the choices they make about how, when and where they engage in public. Likewise, our three feline protagonists all contribute to the changing spatial relations of the urban environment. Nevertheless, it remains that the formulation of positive feline identities relies on active encounters with humans, in ways that we perceive as behaviourally and spatially appropriate. As such, validation of Governor Grey, Brian or Merli is likely reliant on the construction of their identities akin to 'pets'. Again, identities rely on territorialising processes of exclusion and inclusion. Recreating DeLanda's (2006) states of interiority, the identity of cats is determined through their relations with people and places: there can only be 'stray' cats because of the existence of 'pet' cats (and vice versa). 'Community cats' thus exist only due to contrasting understandings of what constitutes 'stray' behaviour, and are often framed, as Morgan does, as pests that need to be managed.

7.8 Thinking about pussy: Conclusions

Representation and practice dance with one another, each leading the other in turn: representation leads to practice, and practices require particular representations to get buy-in from an often sceptical public. As we have seen throughout this chapter, feline place outside the home is a highly contentious, unstable assemblage that includes media performances, public spaces and human

interactions, and relies on the construction of striated identities that relate to spaces as urban, wild and domestic.

When concluding that “in New Zealand the place of cats is not in the wild, it is in the home”, Morgan (*Cats to Go* website, 2016) directly referenced dualisms that pit domestic versus wild, pest versus pet, predator versus prey, owned versus stray (and so on), with associated spaces that exclude or include species accordingly. A reflection of broader conservation discourses, his argument revealed how both individual animals and whole species are categorised morally as well as biologically. Executed through loaded language, his narrative framed cats as pests, turning natural spaces into war-zones as they invade and attack native wildlife. In this story, ‘pests’ are established as enemies to (natural) order, *things* that need to be controlled by humans. Subsequently, particular attention was paid to confining cats within spatial boundaries, demarcated into territories that include not only space(s) but the embodied practice of being-cat.

The roaming cats that have formed the backbone of this paper defy such confinement. Instead they are wayfarers: they are itinerant, transient, nomadic. Of course, the nomad (cat) is presented by the State as being dangerous, and control is presented as necessary to protect others (birds) from them. Yet an alternative reading recognises feline agency and multiplicity. Becoming “nomad” in a Deleuzian sense licenses a different principle of movement and becoming, one in which felines can plug into multiple assemblages. Here, cats engage in fluid transitions between places and relations with people. Brian’s relationship with the international students, Governor Grey’s celebrity status, or Merli’s rejection of ownership all resist categorisation as singularly stray or companion, instead becoming-‘nomad’.

Likewise, when we reconceptualise space as “nomadic”, the urban world becomes an undisciplined, shifting, turbulent space. The management of cat colonies rejects State apparatus, and functions at a wholly grassroots level. The construction of huts and movement of cat bodies both ‘de-’ and ‘re-’ territorialises the Rose Gardens. On one hand such processes reinforce the idea that cats belong in private spaces, yet on the other, it is the cats *themselves* that have forced the privatisation of their space in the park, generating a material landscape far and beyond the original purposes of the Rose Gardens. Likewise, non-human decision-making is validated at a personal and embodied level, through encounters with feeders and public, resulting in a fluid non-striated set of feline identities.

Feline identities as feral, stray or companion consequently govern their rights to space, yet cats sometimes refuse to fit neatly into such a typology. Identities can occasionally be transcended, either through human intervention (such as rehoming a stray kitten or abandoned cat), or by feline agency. Nevertheless, categorisation has biological, social and moral implications. As sets of

practices and social relations are established and legally formalised around namings, life or death repercussions ensue for many individual animals. For while cats themselves may seem unaffected by the words that spring from fingertips on keyboards or drip from our tongues, feline corporeality and experience relates directly to how we speak of them, and has serious implications for their individual welfare and rights. In other words, cat-calling does matter, as lines around public/private boundaries, vulnerabilities, concepts of ownership and the associated body modification of animals function within territorialising processes that determine where cats can/cannot legitimately take place

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CHAPTER 8 | MAKING ‘FUR-BABIES’

INTER-SPECIES KINSHIP BETWEEN CANINES AND HUMANS

*"The Dogs of Auckland", who were there first walking
along with their company,
seemed specific to given streets, led the way,
accustomed.*

*Nothing to do with sheep or herding,
no presence other than one uncannily human,
a scale kept the city particular and usefully in
proportion.*

-Robert Creeley: 'The Dogs of Auckland', 1996

8.1 Preamble: Sit(e)uating kinship

At the start of this project I imagined something quite different to what you now find in front of you. In 2012 I had two dogs, and I envisioned documenting our paths, mapping our encounters, becoming co-creators of a new animal cartography of space in Auckland. Yet fate intervened. Just as my doctoral application was approved I suffered the sudden and traumatising death of my beloved black Huntaway cross, Prana. This was followed by the swift onset of old age of her son, Sunday Boy.

Sunday became increasingly weak and prone to sudden seizures, probably due to a brain tumour. He was frequently confused, needy, and prone to falls, often resulting in his inability to negotiate simple obstacles and undignified headlong slides down even short sets of steps. Clearly no longer my partner in the wider world, I watched (and lived) as his (our) personal geography shrunk due to his dementia. Disabled, Sunday's long walks to new and interesting spaces were reduced to near complete confinement inside my house. The end came in December 2014, and his mobility came to a halt with a headstone planted in my parent's garden. Bereft and dogless, I started fantasising about my next canine companion. Then I got King.

King has been life-changing for me, as I am certain I have also been for him. Born completely deaf, he had an unsettled early life. Although never overtly mistreated, by the point he entered my life at

the age of eighteen months, King had been spent most of his life either confined within the pound or in a quick succession of foster homes, with stays ranging from between one and six weeks long. Although I was familiar with the emotional bonds between dogs and human from my relationships with Prana and Sunday Boy, it was with King that I began to question wider processes surrounding the introduction and integration of animal companions into the home, and to experiment more explicitly with beyond-language communications through the relationship between myself and a highly intelligent deaf dog.

In this, my final empirical chapter, I deal explicitly with domestic environments and interspecies relationships between humans and our companion animals. The boundaries I address in this section are tighter *personal* boundaries which relate to the distinctions and affiliations we make that allow us to accept our dogs as members of our families.

My focus is on how dogs fit into family structures and complementary ideas surrounding responsibility, home-making and kinship through interspecies hybridity. First I examine hybridity through an example of how humans and dogs 'make' material and emotional transgressions by blurring the lines between species. Often, this blurring is situated through networks of consumption that include 'petrepreneurial' services such as dog grooming, doggy day care, and specialised gourmet or health products marketed for canines. Such pet-services target the 'humanised' animal, s/he who performs within hybridised humanimal families. I therefore unpack ideas surrounding dogs as part of the family, especially in terms of their position as 'fur-babies'.

Second, I draw from my own experiences with-dog and within wider networks of care. This includes dogs as kin, particularly in terms of agencies that 'rehome' dogs through the somewhat anthropomorphised processes of fostering and adoption. As in the case of the stray cats in my previous chapter, these processes both territorialise and de-territorialise. Here I regard kinship as a *deteritorialisation* of species boundaries, while acknowledging that this is bounded by notions of pet keeping that situate dogs as domestic and subscribe to territorialising practices of taming.

Finally, I end with the inevitable: animal death. This ending is framed in terms of 'The Gap', a term I have encountered throughout many encounters with dog-people in parks, in my workplace and over neighbourhood fences. The Dog Gap is what occurs after the death of a canine companion, although as I have experienced, it is often situated within wider contexts of illness and aging *with* pets. Accordingly, I record sit(e)uations of encounter that take place in the material world within affectual geographies of love, aging and grief, and how we carry these geographies with us.

8.2 Animal becomings: Interspecies research methods

All knowledge, the totality of all questions and answers, is contained in the dog.

- Franz Kafka, Investigations of the Dog (1931).

Webs of animal meaning are not scientifically quantifiable. As noted earlier in this thesis, humanimal studies are situated as 'dirty work', as the grubbiness of care and messiness of emotions are deemed academically unsanitary. Most significantly, sets of taboos emerge through daily conversation with other dog-owners that are rarely researched in terms of inter-species relationships: love, sex and death. Although we can form relationships with animals, what *motivates* non-human behaviour is but speculative. Academically, to muse too deeply on animal rationalities could risk accusations of anthropomorphism, and in many fields would likely discredit research entirely⁷⁶. Fortunately, cultural geography is well positioned to take interspecies research seriously, particularly through articulations of encounter, networks and boundary construction.

In my personal life, I interpret moments of encounter as having meaning to dogs as well as humans, in the manner articulated in the passage below:

When I see animals doing something, I understand something of their own grasp of the situation, a fragment of their world. Of course, I can be wrong; I can fail to understand what they do, but the same remains true with human beings. I am no doubt better at understanding other human beings than other animals, but the decisive fact is that animals, or at least some animals, are perceived as other ways of being-in-a-world. They do not merely belong to the nature to be explained but belong to the space of understanding.

(Bailey, 2011:49)

Nevertheless, I am reluctant to discuss kinship from a canine perspective, and acknowledge that I have translated meaning onto encounters through my own lens of understanding. This final case study is therefore mapped through my own experiences *with-dog*, evaluating the processes and responses of pet keeping and animal death. As New Zealand author Ian Wedde writes in *Walking the Dog* (2005), inserting animals (back) into narratives places emphasis on sensory 'attentions'

⁷⁶ For usually, within qualitative research, informants must communicate with the researcher through language, something we regard as primarily situated as verbal.

rather than theory and discourse. While Wedde spins his tale around a walk he took with his now deceased dog Vincent, the movement from voyeur to individual encounter is equally applicable within the domestic environment of the home.

I could go back through my description of the walk and put the dogs (and Vincent) in where they're missing. It would be different. Its focal lengths, pace and language would change. Discursive 'topics' would largely disappear; sensory 'attentions' would fill the time and space of the walk. Its incidental, voyeur human society would be replaced by intense, individual encounters.

-Wedde (2005:338)

While centering me as-human and as-researcher, personal narratives provide space to 'put the dogs back in'. Emotional geographies require a shift in how we approach our research subjects: to caress not dissect them. Appropriate methodologies must acknowledge pet owners' intuitive understandings of their dogs. I therefore apply the idea of affect as a means to reposition human-animal sympathies. This application means that there is potential to shift from the power-laden idea that it is 'below us' to identify with animals, and to steer research towards mutual emotional and corporal experiences (see Thrift, 2004). I use Massumi's definition of affect/affection from the *Notes on the Translation* section of *A Thousand Plateaus*, which clarifies affect as denoting not sentiment or personal feeling, but rather as the *ability to affect and be affected*. Affection is an encounter "between the affected body and a second, affecting, body (with body taken in its broadest possible sense to include mental or ideal bodies)" (Massumi, in Deleuze & Guattari, 1987:xvi.).

Within this framework, affect is a tool enabling researchers to register relationships between lived environments and the emotional processes that shape space (Tolia-Kelly, 2006). Encounter is therefore fundamentally configured through processes (Deleuze and Guattari speak of "intensities"), governed by human and animal minds, and the subsequent production of emotions. As Kristensen (2016) notes, the precise affects of relationships depend on ideas, memories and imaginings, and the continual flux between such affections result in *affective* compositions of individuals depending on the nature of relationships.

Furthermore, affectual research is better placed to articulate encounters that lack shared language. Dog walking, for example, has been researched in terms of a material interaction with the landscape that is a "living accomplishment of owner and dog" (Laurier *et al*, 2006:2). To use this interpretation, affectual relationships result in (re)productions of social objects. In Laurier *et al*'s fieldwork, human and canine use of 'dog parks' exists in a space where expression and

communication between parties is mostly non-verbal, and it is fitting that the authors chose not to rely on verbal forms of data collection. This included video footage filmed in the observational manner of wildlife documentaries which record 'natural' everyday activities, rather than overtly auto-ethnographic methods.

Affectual methods also provide opportunities for transgressive research that situates animal participants as knowledge-gatherers *alongside* researchers. This stance is more common in research surrounding companion animals than in works concerned with farm or zoo environments. This is itself a reflection of the compression of a human-animal divide within research spaces. Most notably, affectual geographies appear to comfortably apply autoethnographic methods, including what Ellis (1997) has called 'evocative autoethnography' (also see Ellis & Bochner, 2000). A topical example includes Goode's (2007) analysis of the stick and ball games played with his dog Katie. In this unique study, he pursued an 'ethnomethodological' study detailing lived moments of play with a particular dog at a particular time and place (Goode, 2007). Drawing on ethnographic notes, daily observations, and video recording, Katie's performances grounded the research, and Goode's responses to play are acknowledged as both affect-ive and affect-ion.

Following on from this approach, I treat the collection of material in this chapter as an assemblage that traces the place of dogs as hybrid, kin and family-dog. As such, boundaries are *personally* constructed, between individual humans and dogs. This is opposed to the wider species-based identity constructions evident in earlier chapters, and relate to the spatial positioning of dogs as domestic, or within the 'home'.

8.2.1 Becoming: Experiencing my research

The canine-human relationship is useful as my final case study for three reasons. First, the longstanding and well secured relationship between humans and dogs has established dog identity firmly within domestic environments. Humans and dogs have a shared history of domestication that spans the world. Although this relationship presents itself in a myriad of culturally specific ways, within Western practices of pet-keeping the tradition of the 'family dog' is so established that it largely goes unquestioned. Second, and subsequently, the huge array of commercial enterprises available for pet dogs reflect their position in contemporary Western society. No longer the cur tethered to bark on his chain outdoors, Auckland's urban canines may enjoy beauty treatments, doggy day care, luxury kennels, toys, gourmet food products and so forth. In other words, the sheer

breadth of services and products aimed at pets (and their owners) situates dogs as equal members of the family deserving of the 'best' treatment.

Third, dogs are useful candidates for this case study due to my own bond with them. As my research moves through different sets of humanimal relationships, positioning myself *with* my dogs has meant that I can apply more intimate methods. Undeniably, anecdotal accounts of animal meaning are difficult to treat empirically. Accounting for dog requires alternative narratives, with the capacity to situate emotional responses. Although ethological rather than strictly affectual, Lestel *et al* (2014) propose a subjective model that evaluates the meaning making activities animals employ when constructing their worlds. Incorporating both non-human agency and perception into their readings of encounters, the authors describe the approach as 'bi-constructivist'⁷⁷, as it recognises the active role of non-human subjects in the research-making process.

I therefore consider a narrative approach – sometimes known as storying (see Willis, 2013; Phillips & Tossa, 2017; Pacault & Patchett, 2018) – as most attentive to the processes and contexts of encounter between humans and dogs. Stories include multiplicities of actors and attend to the “phenomenological co-constitution of place, subjectivity and becoming” (Lestel *et al*, 2014). My data therefore includes discrete events, captured in anecdotes from other people I met when out with-dog, and responses to stimuli such as media, storefronts or other visual provocations (such as encountering a dog wearing nail polish, or being carried in a backpack). Other material comes from my involvement with rescue organisations, particularly the SPCA and the Animal Rescue Action Network (ARAN) who were integral to King's rehoming. My involvement with ARAN included fostering, transporting dogs from city to city, performing property checks on potential adoptees, and general support for the network. Some data was gathered from informal interviews with members or associates of these organisations. This material was collected later, over the 2015-2016 period, as my research took a new course after King's adoption into my household (see my conclusions chapter for an analysis of how this process fit with a 'fluid' methodology).

However, the chapter also includes autoethnographies. Recorded in journals and story boards, my initial data chronicled the aging and death of my dogs-of-the-past as well as to the processes of obtaining my current dog, King. These were reviewed and unpacked in the later stage(s) of thesis-writing, and now comprise a 'storying' that sits alongside discursive and representational enunciations of being fur-baby (or the family dog). Given the affectual and material nature of the data and the practice of its collection, throughout this chapter I attempt to theorise less and allow the more extensive narrative passages to 'speak for themselves'.

⁷⁷ Or multi-constructivist, in the case of research that includes groups of animals.

8.3 Mongrel identities: What is dog?

Lucky dog, you dog you, mad dog, barking mad, bitch, cur, mongrel, son-of-a-bitch, tail wagging the dog, young puppy, in the dogbox, a wolf in sheep's clothing, beware of the dog, the Dog Star, doggerel, dogs of the Dow Jones, gone to the dogs, hot dog, sea dog, you're dog tucker, dogged, dog bludger, hair of the dog, dogtown, dog's-cake, go dog on, Mongrel Mob, done like a dog's dinner, a dog's life, dog collar, dog fish, dogger-on, dog-end, dog-leg, dog watch, arse-licker, rabid, imperialist running dog, lap-dog, give a dog a bad name, dog eat dog, every dog has his day, the dog returns to its vomit, lie down with dogs and get up with fleas, let sleeping dogs lie, you can't teach an old dog new tricks, every dog is allowed one bite, the dog that barks does not bite, tutae kurī.

-Ian Wedde, Walking the dog, 2005

While broadly situated as belonging to the genus *canis familiaris*, to *be* dog is not a singular identity. In addition to Wedde's extensive list of associations with dogs, Instone and Sweeney (2014) note that dogs themselves can be variously guard dogs, lap dogs, dangerous dogs, working dogs, pampered pets and so on. Given this wide range of identities, when I consider 'what is dog?', I start with phenomenology.

While phenomenology generally prioritises human experience⁷⁸, the focus on being-in-the-world means this philosophical stance lends itself well to more-than-human research. The best known address to animal life in this field is found through the work of Edmund Husserl (1983). Using a phenomenological framework, the embodiment of being-dog is intersubjective, comprised of animated experiences. Given that these lived dog-bodies intermingle with human-bodies and the surrounding world, they can be understood (or examined) through methods that go-beyond objective, physical studies. Husserl himself advocates methods that acknowledge shared life and subjective perceptions, using the example of a cat to argue how the researcher can 'experience' the perception of the other through encounter:

I see a playing cat and I regard it now as something of nature, just as is done in zoology. I see it as a physical organism but also as a sensing and animated Body, i.e., I see it precisely as a cat. ... the cat is present there in the flesh - specifically, as a

⁷⁸ Martin Heidegger, for example remained wary of granting selfhood to non-humans. To him the dog remains 'self-like' (*selbstheit*), incapable of human self-making qualities such as intentionality and reflection (see Anderson, 2017).

physical thing with sensing surfaces, sense organs, etc. ... Likewise, the Body is also experienced as Body of a soul ... beyond the merely physical qualities it constantly has aesthesiological and psychic ones.

-Husserl (1983:176)

Husserl therefore recognises *a priori* assumptions of animal-ness “as something of nature”, but cautions us against essentialising the cat as a singular entity. Most useful in this passage is the idea that we sense animals through not only their bodies, but also their ‘psychic’ life. In turn, we are then open to affects, as to *become* dog comes not from (being) a dog’s body, but from the intersubjective understandings that humans and dogs share, and from which we regard one another. To move forward into Deleuzioguattarian philosophy, I take these regardings as ‘haecceities’. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, haecceities are described as relations that constitute collective assemblages between relatively unformed elements. According to Deleuze and Guattari this evokes a plane “which knows only longitudes and latitudes, speeds and haecceities, the plane of consistency or composition (as opposed to a plan(e) of organization or development)” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987:226).

To become dog, then, is a change between states that distinguishes the ‘this-ness’ of individual hounds from each other and from other animals. Resulting identities are thus shaped (like those of the animals in my other case studies) through moments and modes of encounter. Entirely relational, encounters with animals are recognised in turn as contributing to human identity. Although this can be negative (in terms of race/gender/sexual stereotyping), it can result in positive self-identification: as a pet-owner, or dog-person.

Most telling, perhaps, is Levinas’ account of an animal encounter in a holocaust prison. After recounting how prisoners were deliberately subjugated and dehumanised through being “stripped of human skin” and “treated like dogs” (Levinas, 1990:152), humanity is ultimately reinstated by an animal encounter:

[A]bout halfway through our long captivity, for a few short weeks, before the sentinels chased him away, a wandering dog entered our lives. One day he came to meet this rabble as we returned under guard from work. He survived in some wild patch in the region of the camp. But we called him Bobby, an exotic name, as one does with a cherished dog. He would appear at morning assembly and was waiting for us as we returned, jumping up and down and barking in delight. For him, there was no doubt that we were men.

-Levinas (1990:153)

In a clear example of naming, Bobby is given an identity as more-than-stray. Most readings interpret this as Levinas domesticating the dog (Hantel, 2013), but Bobby is also ascribed place. He survives in some “wild patch” of the camp, distinct from spaces occupied by prisoners or guards. As a result, Bobby also becomes both vulnerable and cherished, his naming granting him an individualism that the prisoners recognise as fundamental for maintaining sanity and dignity under conditions of depersonalisation.

Furthermore, Bobby is credited with identity giving. His animal behaviour towards humans made him ‘dog’ and prisoners ‘human’, and implies some self-realisation of being-dog. Whether or not this is true is irrelevant: the message I take from Levinas is that the values we attribute to dog-ness are relative to those ascribed to our humanity. Whether for our protection, pleasure, company or status or for our entertainment, dog identities are not bound by wider constructions in the manner the stray cats were in the previous chapter (as simply pet or pest). Rather, dogs are individualised due to their place in the home or other dwelling space, even a prison camp.

Individual identity construction, then, revolves around values that surround each dog itself. Situated within the cultural context of Auckland, these values are by no means universally shared. For example, the border collie that ‘rounded up’ the sheep in my thesis introduction is likely subject to a very different set of expectations. S/he probably sleeps outside the house, kenneled with other working dogs, while a ‘pet’ border collie might share our furniture, even our bed. In this sense I conceptualise dog identities as *mongrelized*: part our guardians yet part our charges, part our equals yet part our submissives, even ‘companion’ dogs take on multiple roles. King guards me, for instance, but he is not a guard dog. He sits on my lap, but is not a lap dog. He runs fast, but is not a racing dog, has herding instincts but is not a farm dog. What defines King is neither his physical characteristics nor his temperament, but more his place - like the majority of Auckland’s canine population - as the ‘family dog’. As such, although I touched on the broader understanding of ‘pets’ in my previous chapter, it is necessary to develop more detailed concepts of pet-keeping in order to establish how we create our fur babies.

8.4 Dog-people: Pet-keeping and canine identity construction

Pet-keeping has histories that are spatially and culturally situated, but here I focus only on practices situated in Auckland City. Generally ascribed as having its origins in bourgeois culture, the Western constitution of pets differentiates from ‘working class’ or ‘Oriental’ pet keeping wherein pet animals provided tangible services to owners, as well as (perhaps contradictorily) living more natural, unstructured lives (see Kete, 1994; Podberscek *et al*, 2005). This distinction developed

throughout the Victorian era, during which a belief in the nurturing qualities of the family and home flourished (Olsen & Hulser, 2003). Dogs thus became integrated within idealised family structures, alongside cats and some less enduring domestic companions such as exotic birds, fish, reptiles and rodents.

As in the United States and Australia, the rise of household pets in Auckland has paralleled the decline of home-based livestock, giving rise to what Olsen and Hulser (2003) call the 'Petropolis'. In their study of pet-keeping in New York, the authors trace the provision of public accommodations for pets throughout the early twentieth century, a material demonstration of the way that dog-people have altered social customs through interspecies relationships. Likewise, the evolution of the 'pampered pooch' meant that lavishing money and affection on dogs was no longer the domain of a Victorian elite, and the authors note that New York was home to an array of "intoxicating frivolities" whereby fashion for dogs opened up new ways in which dog-people could express their passion for their pets (Olsen & Hulser, 2003:142)

However, Auckland is not New York. Here the transition from working dog to indulged family member has been slower. Instead, there has been significant cultural resistance to what are seen as lap-dogs (as referenced in the earlier chapter on farm animals). Rather, farm dogs evoke feelings of national belonging and maintain identities that represent independence and a can-do attitude, values that have been instilled as integral to Kiwi-ness. Working for one's keep then, is a value that has only recently been rejected as a necessary component of the human-dog relationship, and until recently popular breeds of dogs have come from working lines rather than show breeds.

In many ways this tension between the functional and the family dog is unintentionally reflected in literature around pet-keeping, as research surrounding relationships between humans and dogs traditionally focuses on benefits *for* humans (see Lewis *et al*, 2009 for a New Zealand-based assessment of the relationship between pet ownership and quality of life). For example, pet ownership has long been found to foster social interaction. However, this is almost exclusively framed in terms of *human* community building (see McNicholas & Collis, 2000; Wood *et al*, 2005, Wood *et al*, 2007), particularly the way that interaction with animals can facilitate integration into society for the disabled or infirm (see Hart *et al*, 1987; Thorpe *et al*, 2006, or Pattinson, 2017, for a range of different literature). Animals are also credited with initiating positive life changes, such as in Flynn's (2000) study of animals and battered women and Irvine's (2012) enquiry into pets as 'lifesavers' of the homeless. In spite of a visible identity as pets, the dogs in these accounts are underpinned with a secondary identity as working *for* humans, while their position as embodied entities with complex geographic understandings is overlooked.

Nevertheless, modern pet-owners themselves are quick to attribute their companion animals with 'personhood' (Fox, 2006:526). Rather than simply performing utilitarian services, dogs are largely regarded as fellow social beings capable of engaging in meaningful relationships. The dog-human relationship then, involves reconstructing identities of family and friends to encompass two-way emotional responsibilities (also see Howell 2000, 2015 and Sanders 1993, 2003 for historical and contemporary analyses of this respectively). These relationships can take many forms. Blouin, (2013) questions understandings of dogs as "children, companions, or just animals" through drawing a typology of orientations exhibited towards them. According to Blouin, pet owners generally fit one of three profiles: "dominionistic", whereby dogs are largely considered as tools such as for hunting or protection; "humanistic", where dogs are awarded status as family members; or "protectionistic", implying responsibilities of care and recognition of non-human equality.



Figure 56: Statue of Friday, John McKenzie's legendary dog, at Lake Tekapo.

In New Zealand, certain tropes have dominated dog identities that go beyond those identified by Blouin. The first is the masculinised dog's body: the working dogs, the hunting dogs, and the adventurers (adventurous) dogs of New Zealand legend. Invariably, these dogs earn the identity of 'faithful dog'. Through the mid to late 1800s several famous dogs have fitted this profile, straddling the boundary between pet and travel companion. Early explorer and folk hero John Mackenzie's dog Friday is immortalised in statue form at Lake Tekapo in the heart of 'Mackenzie Country' (figure 56). Legends surrounding Mackenzie emphasise his strength and rebellious spirit, and all make reference to Friday as integral to his success as a shepherd, drover and rustler. Thomas Brunner, surveyor and explorer of the remote West Coast of the South Island, gained notoriety for eating his (faithful or not, we will never know) dog Rover, earning him the somewhat dubious honour of *Kai Kurī*, or 'dog eater'. On the other hand, in 1884 it was companion dog Caesar who saved the life of Austrian naturalist Andreas Reischek by bringing the hypothermic explorer food, which presumably they shared (see figure 57). As Wedde (2005:280) points out, Reischek – unlike

Brunner – likely considered Caesar as metonymically human, or at the very least, as part of Reischek's society.



Figure 57: Andreas Reischek and one of his dogs (Alexander Turnbull Library).

Of course, the Dogs of Auckland about whom Creeley waxed lyrical are constituted by different spaces of inhabitation than those of the early explorers. As he says, these dogs have “[n]othing to do with sheep and herding”. They work not for us, but rather, we for them, to provide levels of care akin to that of other family members. They do not walk in the wilds of Fiordland or Mackenzie country, but along “with their company” in spaces we generally consider dog-friendly. These are spaces that in turn require a friendly-dog, with characteristics quite different to the qualities Mackenzie or Reischek may have valued in Friday or Caesar.

Family dogs are therefore most often exposed to (and create) sit(e)uations within the domestic realm. Usually thought of a ‘home’, domestic space is now considered “rich territory indeed for understanding the social and the spatial” (Domosh, 1998:281). Phenomenological investigations have expanded to include more-than-human experiences of dwelling, informed by actor network and non-representational theory. The home has thus emerged as a space of co-habitation (see Blunt, 2005) in which pets are often assumed to play an integral, intimate and often idealised part (see Power, 2012, Cain, 2016; Sussman, 2016).

For example, Braverman (2016) associates pet-keeping with dominant narratives of the ‘American Dream’, in which the perfect suburban family consists of parents, kids and family dog. Although herself cynical of the pet-keeping industry, Braverman’s then seven-year-old daughter was not impervious to insistence that the family is completed by a canine companion. Subsequently: “The

pressure is now fully on for us to “adopt” a dog who would fill our days with laughter and fun. A dog who would make us belong” (Braverman, 2016:51).

These are the ‘family dogs’, situated within the traditionally feminine space of the home. It would have been unthinkable for the explorer’s dogs – male or female - to be desexed. However, the family dog is one that is neutered, a eunuch forever destined to play the child. Therefore, while individual dogs are not necessarily feminised, they are neutralised to take on identities of the fur-baby, or substitute child. Removing canine reproduction from the family picture also further legitimises the process of adoption of which Braverman speaks. As the dog cannot co-create his/her own family, he or she ought to be adopted into another. However, this process does not come without a set of conditions, and dogs are expected to conform to sets of behaviour befitting new identities as family members.

The friendly-dog is therefore one that is socialised, who performs appropriately among both human and canine company. In Auckland’s environment, these values are reinforced through guidelines established on the ACC website:

Socialising your dog will help it mature into a well-adjusted dog. To socialise your dog, you could attend a puppy pre-school. If you have concerns or need more advice, it may be useful to seek professional help.

(ACC website, ‘Caring for your Dog’: accessed 07/04/2018)

The passage emphasises the value of socialisation, yet contextualises it within an institutionalised framework. Schooling your dog (or seeking professional services that can help realign your dog’s behaviour with social norms) parallels socialisation processes in humans, systematically territorialising dogs as beings that should function within the same social parameters as their human families. Likewise, as schools are for children, processes of ‘schooling’ further renders the neutered canine as child-like, affirming his or her position as a dependent who needs guidance and education.

8.5 Fur-babies: Kinship and responsibilities of care

I am I because my little dog knows me.

- Gertrude Stein, 1936

This second wave of pet ownership emerged in post-industrial countries from the 1980s onward (Power, 2012), and directly relates to changing understandings of kin and kinship. Alongside flexible understandings of what comprises family and friendship networks, new boundaries have evolved (Charles & Davies, 2011, also see Hansen, 2013). As a result 'kinship' across the species barrier has become an everyday experience of those humans who share their domestic space with other animals (Charles, 2014). In other words, kinship has transgressed ontological boundaries that distinguished family as species-based units, to embody everyday experiences alongside animals.

More recently, the term "fur-babies" has become prevalent to describe the relationship between people and pets. Although not reserved exclusively for dogs, the high level of care required for canine companions has meant that the dog/child association manifests in a wider range of ways than with other species. Care primarily involves the provision of exercise (manifested in 'walking the dog') and the maintenance of personal hygiene (food, grooming, bathing and so forth). However, increased recognition that dogs suffer loneliness and separation anxiety if owners are absent for prolonged periods of time has resulted in additional modes of canine care. Thus, kinship carries with it expectations of care and commitment that parallel those that adult humans have for their children.

*Owning a dog ... is not like buying any other animal, say a guinea pig or a fish.
Rather, owning a dog is buying a one way-no-return ticket to an all-consuming social life, complete with gadgets, medical bills, licensing responsibilities, and outings with other dog owners; it is about restructuring one's daily (and nightly) routines, rethinking travel plans, recalculating monthly payments and bills.*

Braverman (2016: 53)

Subsequently, dog-identities have become enmeshed in familial environments that include "parental responsibility, control, risk, and competition" (Wall, 2010). Often the materiality of care includes *control* over dogs. Responsibilities as 'owners'⁷⁹ includes the territorialisation of canine behaviour through 'training'. Typically framed as a prerequisite for harmonious dog-human relationships, training is also a process that establishes sets of unequal power relations. This asymmetry is outlined by Tuan (1984) in his seminal work *Dominance and Affection*. Here he drew parallels between the 'training' of plants, pets and groups of humans (women, children, slaves and so on) as a strategy of dominion over nature that imbued pet owners with (at best) a sense of purpose and (at

⁷⁹ It must be noted that 'ownership' is not always an identity shared by all people-with-dogs, as 'fur-babies' or 'family dogs' are not universally considered as property.

worst) supported self-images of power. However, responsibilities also hinge around protection of dogs themselves. For example, while the obligation to leash a dog in public may be situated as insurance against harm to humans, leashing is also emphasised as a strategy to ensure the safety of the dog him/ herself.

Protection therefore relies on surveillance and regulation (Oliver, 2008) which again correlate with understandings of the dog as a family member. As such, spaces outside the home (or other institutional setting such as puppy school) are represented as potentially dangerous for dogs in a manner very similar to that of children⁸⁰. Of course, the construction of fur-babies goes far beyond matters of control or canine management, to include affectual relationships in which 'owners' overlay meaning onto their dogs as a result of their strong maternal or paternal feelings towards them. In a culture in which remaining childless is becoming a more common (and acceptable) choice, fur-babies have transcended the identities of the family dog Braverman referred to, becoming family members *instead* of rather than necessarily *alongside* of human children.

8.5.1 Making fur-babies

Fur-babies are made through materialised patterns of co-existence that include shared spaces and emotional bonds. Susan McHugh (2012) explores hybridised interspecies relationships as intimate sit(e)uations within the home. Focusing on authors Caroline Knapp and Donna Haraway as examples of women who have documented their choice to share their lives with canine bitches rather than bearing their own children, McHugh stretches the concept of caregiving beyond traditional associations with motherhood. For instance, as an example of reconfigured family priorities, she cites Knapp's conscious decision to break up with her long-term boyfriend, as she did not want to bear his children but would rather care for her dog.

Like Knapp, I have also favoured dogs over relationships. While I do have children, my long-term relationships have also suffered because of my commitment to my canine companions. The integration of dogs then, into the family can result in the same tensions as other blended family sit(e)uations. Canine presences can be a source of jealousy, as time and attention is understood as being 'taken' from a partner. In my case, I fought long and hard to keep King: what was a space of emptiness and grief for me after Sunday Boy's death was interpreted as a time of freedom-from-dog by my boyfriend, who insisted that he preferred spending time alone with me, not with dogs (or children for that matter) around. Eventually, a compromise was met. I would foster King until a

⁸⁰See Valentine (1996) or Kearns and Collins (2003) for examples of the construction of children's geographies.

permanent home became available. This arrangement was acceptable to me, as I was sure King could win over any insurgent family members. My gamble paid off and we adopted King some four months later. Yet the wound festered, and resentments within the relationship were directed towards the close associations I had with King and my children.

In the end it was the dog that stayed, not the man. Now, King has become my boyfriend, or maybe my husband; but not my fur-baby. King and I go out together, we have fun. He sleeps on my bed, his head on the pillow next to mine. His white fur covers my clothes, my furniture, my floors, my sheets. When I return from work King greets me, but with dignity, not with the infantilised leaping, prancing and frenzied barking my previous dogs did. Not all human-dog relationships situate canines as children (substitute or otherwise): indeed Haraway takes care to note that she “fear[s] infantilization of the adult canines and misidentification of the important fact that I wanted dogs, not babies” (Haraway, 2003:95–96). My on-going love affair with King, then, embodies alternative kinships that rely less on parent-child responsibilities and more on bonds based on physical connections from sharing spaces - his body against mine in bed or with him at the park - and affectual bonds of mutual protection, trust, and love.

While Knapp shies from imbuing her dog with husband-ness, Haraway is fearless. Her playful account of her relationship with her Australian Sheepdog bitch, Cayenne, muddies distinctions between humans and dogs through language that deliberately infers deviancy and transgression. Refusing to conform to stereotypes of fur-babies (and associated single, middle-aged women), Haraway frames her and Cayenne’s relationship in the language of sexuality: she speaks of their “oral intercourse”, and sharing “irresistible ... darter-tongue kisses” (Haraway, 8:6). In this manner, boundary transgressions are evident through the hybridisation of both dog-human bodies and modes of interspecies relationship: dogs become lovers, friends or fur-babies, going-beyond namings as merely the ‘family’ pet.

8.5.2 Networks of care and consumption

Yet kinship has implications beyond the intimacy of Haraway’s musings. The emergence of fur-babbling has resulted in a vast expansion of services aimed at pets. Stores stock an ever-expanding array of products, from the fundamentals (leashes, collars, balls) to treats, toys, shampoos, and specialised dog clothing, available in a range of sizes and gendered colours (figure 58a). You can buy colouring treatments for fur, and dogs may be groomed in styles influenced by international fashions. Likewise, holiday-themed treats and costumes reflect the siting of fur-babies firmly within

holiday traditions once reserved for human kin. The figure below, for example, advertises stocking-fillers and Christmas crackers for furry canine consumption (figure 58b), and another display at the same store stocked a range of Christmas themed costumes such as reindeer antlers and Santa hats for dogs.



Figures 58a and 58b: Stock available at Animates pet store in central Auckland.

Pets are thus firmly enmeshed in geographies of consumption (see Mansvelt, 2005). In some ways they are territorialised as fur-babies, as embodied changes are enacted upon them in ways beyond their volition (such as putting antlers on them at Christmas). However, it is also possible that dog-owners make consumer decisions in response to dog's individual needs: for example the purchase of a favourite toy, or grooming to ensure comfort in warmer seasons. In such ways canine identities are de-territorialised as human and animal consumer desires reflect a breakdown of boundaries that situated dogs as mere chattels. The incorporation of pet-pamper products therefore articulates dogs as members of families who, like children, have sets of needs that go beyond the basics of care.

Likewise, to alleviate canine loneliness, the modern dog owner can enrol their charges into Doggy Day-cares, Puppy Pre-schools and specialised Pet Hotels⁸¹. Further reinforcing canine placement in the home, such services faithfully replicate (idealised) domestic environments. Presented as a 'home away from home', these sites accent the physical and emotional safety of dogs, presenting

⁸¹ It is worth noting that these services are also designed to reduce the guilt pet-owners feel at leaving their beloved dogs at home all day, another parallel with the responsibilities human parents have for their children.

sit(e)uations which offer social engagement within regulated systems of care. While it is easy to mock such overt anthropomorphism, I view such services with less cynicism. Existing not simply as money-spinners capitalising on overly precious fur-parents, doggy day-care and luxury kennels fill a genuine niche for people who view their dogs as valued family members rather than utilities to be stored while humans go to work or on holiday. As such, they imbue canine companions with agency, capable of complex emotions and social desires. Moreover, the language used to describe such services reframes dogs as equal participants in home networks, as they become guests and valued clients with individualised needs.

Subsequently, the dogs of Auckland can go on holiday to kennels advertised as Rural Retreats, Lodges or Farmstays. K9 Heaven, for, example, emphasises 'fun' for dogs, offering 'pack running' activities in the native forest on the outskirts of Auckland. At K9 Heaven, accommodation is designed to replicate familiar domestic environments, with dogs "treated to sleeping inside our 'dog house' which is fully air-conditioned for their comfort". Advertising elaborates that as most canine companions are "sleep-inside family members, this helps them to settle and provides a more homely experience than outside kennels", assuring dog-owners that their precious pooch will "enjoy their holiday as much as you do!" (*K9 Heaven website*, accessed 11/08/2018).

Also on the edge of suburban Auckland, Bark Avenue promises "five star accommodation" in a "luxury pet hotel". An obvious play on Park Avenue, advertising alludes to wealth, status and indulgence, provided in both day-care services and overnight lodging.

Your doggie will be able to play all day long while you are away! To guard against injury or accidents, we provide specific areas for small, medium and large dogs and have two areas for outside play. Sofas and beds are provided for guests to nap on throughout the day, with our staff supervision at all times.

(Bark Avenue website, accessed 16/09/2018)

This narrative mirrors language surrounding the care of children, emphasised by the use of the diminutive term "doggie". Safety and care are highlighted, with systems in place to separate larger boisterous dogs from smaller breeds in a similar manner that human day cares segregate infants from older pre-schoolers. As with K9 Heaven, identities as fur-babies are reinforced through the provision of human furnishings. At Bark Avenue, this is supported by the accompanying image on their website (see figure 59). Here, a small dog lolls on a sofa, adorned in a crown. His headgear

further hybrids him as more-than-dog: a prince settling for no less than the best that money can buy⁸².



Figure 59: Image advertising Bark Avenue Pet Hotel and Doggy Daycare (Bark Avenue website, accessed 16/09/2018).

However, dogs need not travel to the countryside for their holiday break. Capitalising on geographical imaginaries that situate upmarket city apartments as chic, sophisticated home environments, Pets in the City advertise “luxurious apartments” in a “range of different apartment designs and sizes”. This inner city franchise plays on contemporary trends of stylish apartment living. This boarding and day-care facility goes on to describe their environment in language that echoes real estate advertising:

There is an accommodation style to suit every dog and owner. All our apartments are purpose built and feature tempered glass doors (no bars or grills) to allow your dog to see what’s going on around them, comfy raised beds, and tasteful interior décor for your dogs [sic] utmost care and comfort.

(Pets in the City website, accessed 15/09/2018).

Reframing kennels as apartments without bars and grills first implies comfort for canine guests. However it also speaks to human understandings that kin should not be imprisoned, and that family dogs should move freely within households. Here, “all dogs enjoy their own *stylish apartment* for *privacy, comfort* and that much needed rest and “*me time*” at the end of the day” (*Pets in the City* website, 2018, my emphases). Canine capacities are therefore acknowledged through desires

⁸² This type of overt anthropomorphism is discussed in one of the few pieces of literature directly addressing canine representation in Auckland. Here, the authors dissected the hybridised presentation of dogs/women evident in a ‘De-sex your bitch’ billboard campaign organised by the SPCA, concluding that the conflation of (de-)sexualised dogs and women revealed multi-layered transgressions (Van Stipriaan, & Kearns, 2009).

(privacy and comfort), in addition to basic needs of food and exercise (that go unmentioned). “Me time” further reframes dog in human terms, avoiding philosophical issues surrounding the extent of canine self-awareness.

While owners have always needed to find accommodation for their dogs, a relatively recent trend has been Doggy Day-care and Puppy Pre-school. Now accepted as mainstream practice (at least within middle to upper class society), these services are also offered at Pets in the City. Safety and social interaction are emphasised: “You can have peace of mind that while your dog is at Pets in the City Doggie Day care your dog is not only being cared for and having fun, they’ll also be making new friends and learning new skills” (Pets in the City website, 2018). Pets in the City therefore take care to acknowledge the needs of both dog and owner, deeming that their desires run in parallel.

In a final example, language is far more hybridised, blurring boundaries between humans and canine clients. In addition to the pun in the name, Barkley Manor uses a number of other strategies to sell itself as an academic institution for dogs. Their logo, for example, replicates the style of academic institutions, suggesting the integrity and quality of a reputable education provider. Puppies who attend Puppy Preschool can graduate from Barkley Manor upon the completion of the course. Explicitly referred to in human terms, a graduation ceremony is held where “[e]ach year we take school photo's [sic] of all the kids” (see figure 60). In this manner Barkley Manor hybridises dog identities into that of human youth, while at the same time insinuating that this is the best quality, private education available for puppies to get the best start in life possible. Concepts of education and social status are thus deterritorialised to include more-than-humans.



Figure 60: The logo and graduation photographs on Barkley Manor’s website (2018)

At Barkley Manor, humans are also hybridised through language usually restricted for dogs. Staff members are initially described as a “breed apart”, and from thereon in are referred to as “pack leaders”. Identities are further muddled to reinforce dogs as fur-babies, with owners able to access information on the website through a ‘Parent Login’. Furthermore, the daily schedule resembles that of a human day-care. Upon enrolment, ‘parents’ are offered an overview of activities, segregated

into sections that replicate human systems. Dogs are arranged into 'playgroups'; they can go to 'gym class', have 'nap time' and are expected to exhibit 'good behaviour'.

Barkley Manor Daily Schedule	
7.30-9.30 am	Drop off: Dogs arrive, wait calmly at gates and doors as they are assigned their playgroup for the day.
9.30 -10 am	Settle in: Supervised by pack leaders, dogs are encouraged to play and interact with their pack.
10am-1pm	Playtime - a variety of toys and games for all to enjoy - Ball Mayhem, Squeaky Madness Rope Tug, Pool Games, Gym class Barkley Manners: Pack leaders reinforce basic good behaviour and teach new tricks with some yummy treats.
1.00-2.00pm	Naptime: The lights are dimmed, sleep areas are assigned, each dog is given a cuddle and a health check... some much-needed peace is provided for dogs and pack leaders.
2.00-4.00pm	Playtime: More supervised fun and exercise. Using non-destructible and interactive toys, dogs are encouraged to play, tug, roll, chase and find.
4.00-5.00pm	Settle time: Time to settle down before you arrive, playgroups are mixed if suitable
5.00-6.00pm	Home time: Time to form an orderly queue, put leads on and head home for dinner and some much-needed rest before the next exciting day begins.

Figure 61: Daily schedule at Barkley Manor Doggie Daycare (Barkley Manor website, accessed 19/10/2018).

These geographies of consumption are both affectual and hybridised examples of boundary transgression, reinforcing fluid identities of dogs as more-than-pet.

8.6 Homing (and re-homing): Making dogs kin

As Power (2012) notes, the home is a key space of human–dog relatings, a setting in which powerful geographic imaginings turn dogs into family members. Although the most common way of 'getting a dog' is still through breeders, adopting and fostering dogs is seen as a way in which out-of-place dogs can be inserted into the safety of the home. Indeed, dogs in many rescue shelters risk euthanasia should they not be rehomed within certain limited timeframes. Although 'getting a dog' appears to treat dogs as passive objects that are chosen⁸³, processes of fostering and adoption

⁸³ Power's (2012) study of dogs in Australian homes identified characteristics such as fur type, temperament and size as drivers when selecting a domestic (or 'family') dog.

require active agency on behalf of dogs themselves. This can mean performing in certain ways in order to be selected, such as looking cute, making eye contact or barking. Likewise, the pre-adoption phase of canine rehoming also involves a selection process in which dogs must exhibit sets of characteristics to prove themselves able to fit into home environments.

Reflecting on my own experience of this process, at first it seemed that King was not going to conform to these ideals. This was possibly compounded by his deafness, but was more likely due to his lack of training prior to his surrender to the SPCA at the age of about six months. After I adopted him, one volunteer who was integral to his rehoming shared some of his backstory with me, informing me that over the six months or so that he was in the SPCA:

King wasn't popular with vollies [SPCA volunteers] as he was a loose unit. To try and walk to the paddock for a run was a fight from hell. He'd get so excited he'd spin and scream and drag people to the gate. In the runs he'd jump all over you and push into you always wanting contact.

(Pat, April 2015)

She went on explain that due to his problematic behaviour a colleague told her she “*needed to do something quickly about King as he was worried King would knock a vollie over or something and then they'd have an excuse [to euthanise]*”. As a result, the volunteer took action to re-territorialise King:

*I had to come down hard on King, damn hard, in that environment. Once out of the compound I had a better time with him but he'd have panic attacks when he didn't want to do something, I didn't give in to him, just waited him out and slowly he started to understand what I was showing him. I got a strong sit signal on him where he'd then cock his head (super cute). So whenever I heard an issue with King (lots of barking from him), I'd go out and ask for a sit to settle him. But no one wants the extra work of a deaf dog with no training, he was liked until they found out he was deaf. [Administration] wouldn't allow dogs to be taken off the property so no outside life allowed: not good. So training him out in the **real world** wasn't allowed.*

(Pat, April 2015)

Pat's narrative therefore frames re/territorialisation in terms of training, but situates 'bad' dog behaviour as environmental, drawing a strong distinction between *inside* and *outside* the SPCA compound. This is significant both in her belief that King's behaviour⁸⁴ was related to the spatial confines he was subject to, as well as the territorialised understanding that dogs must be able to perform in certain ways in the outside ("real") world. Volunteers recognise the constructed reality of the SPCA as distinct from a home environment, with Pat indicating that the relative freedom of the home and the possibility of close contact would result in different sets of human-animal relations. However, her response-ability (Brown & Dilley, 2011, who use the term as a characteristic of multispecies practice) was related to King's *potential* for re-homing. In this case, Pat was critical of formalised processes of determining homability, expressing that the territorialised and striated apparatus of checklists and behavioural tests ought to be eschewed in favour of affectual knowledges based on experiencing individual dog-ness.

We'd spent years reading dogs and learning when something had hope and was worth the effort and no check list would do that.

(Pat, February 2016)

In King's case, he was excluded from participating in tests (manifestations of the Deleuzioguattarian State) due to his deafness. Disability then, is highlighted as a space of discrimination that extends to animals, in spite of the fact that King was physically healthy and psychologically sound. At this point, his care was passed to the Animal Rescue Action Network (ARAN), a group who specialise in 'end of the line' dogs, those who have reached the maximum amount of time they are able to be held in pounds or the SPCA before they are euthanised. As such, ARAN hold a higher proportion of dogs less able to fill rehomability expectations, for example older, nervous or disabled dogs. From here, King became entangled within further processes of fostering, passing through five different households over the next six months before finally being adopted into our family.

Adoption and fostering both carry inherent associations with family-making, referencing any kinship(s) not bound by blood. In spite of rescue organisations favouring this terminology, boundaries to family-making are species specific: Aucklanders cannot *legally* adopt (or marry) a dog. While I am unfamiliar with adoption or foster processes for humans, I would expect them to be far more rigorous and elaborate. Nevertheless, not just anyone can foster/adopt a dog, and less

⁸⁴ It is also worth noting that Pat's description of her response to King was overtly sensory. She *heard* "an issue" with King, which he manifested through the only agency he had: excessive barking.

formal arrangements still bind canine fosterers and adopters. These take form as sets of regulations and practices determined by independent rescue organisations, which are in place to ensure dogs are rehomed within appropriate home-spaces. For example, most dog-adoption agencies insist on property checks, interviews and contracts in which potential adoptive families (or individuals) must agree to provide care for new dogs.

King and I went through the processes of both fostering and adoption together. Only two months after Sunday Boy's death, I saw King advertised on an online auction site (see figures 62a and 62b). I was immediately drawn to him. Crucially, his white fur, almost translucent skin and (complete) deafness made him different from my other dogs, and I felt that I would be unlikely to transpose any feelings or expectations I carried from them on to him.



Figures 62a and 62b: Two of King's advertising photographs. The first situates him in the home. He is looking in the mirror, a hybridising activity that frames him as humanised. In the second photograph, King is outdoors. The aesthetics of the photograph evoke associations with nature, nobility and physical prowess, and in many ways replicate advertising for luxury products such as cars, or real estate. King is therefore advertised as taking place simultaneously in nature and at home, with the implication that his new owner could share a range of spaces and identities should s/he adopt him (ARAN, 2014).

ARAN was finding it difficult to rehome King, primarily due to his deafness, but it was also revealed that he had nipped an infant in his current foster home, and the family wanted him relocated immediately. After expressing my interest, I had an approximately one hour long phone interview with a member of ARAN. Centring around the ages of my children, other pets (I had an elderly cat) and my status as a renter, this part of the process evaluated the social makeup of any prospective fosterers' (or adopters') domestic environments. As a follow-up, a different ARAN representative came to perform a property check, assessing the size of my yard and height of my fences. Physical and social boundaries were therefore in place that enabled King to be part of my home.

After passing these tests, I filled in the necessary paperwork to foster King. Fostering is an intermediary stage, where dogs are in homes, but not part of families. This was recognised by King too. Upon his arrival he ran around all corners of our house, sniffing every crevice to familiarise himself with the space itself. I had taken it for granted that he would consider humans as the foundation of 'family'. However, the first time I took him on holiday with us, he repeated the performance of sniffing the house. I realised two things: a) that, following the patterns of his life, King *expected* to be rehomed, and b) that his sense of belonging relied on his connection with spaces as much as with the people surrounding him.

Over the foster period, bonds are retained with rescue organisations which are relinquished only upon adoption. For example, while I fostered King, ARAN covered costs of food and veterinary care. However, my sense of obligation to him grew, so that by the time it was likely for him to be adopted into another family, I felt concerned that I was betraying him by destroying the sense of security he had developed while in our home. Luckily, I was able to adopt him myself, at which time I was presented with a new contract (see appendix I). Again reinforcing adoptive dogs as family members, this stipulated that new 'parents' must provide not only adequate food, water, exercise, shelter, veterinary care, but also "lots of love". Furthermore, I was required to commit that King would live in the house as *part of the family* and would not be tethered outside.

The adoption contract therefore constructs dogs as both physically and emotionally part of the family unit. Indeed, associations with the home are so firmly established that many adopters reject links between their dog's new identity and their prior experience in the pound or SPCA. It is common for adopters to assign dogs a new name, and it is rare for new families to retain links with rescue organisation staff or previous fosterers, even if they had themselves developed strong bonds with the a dog.

[The SPCA] had so many [adopters] that once the dog left the SPCA or rescue, they never wanted to stay in touch or remember their dogs past. I do understand a bit - they wanted the dog to be only theirs, and not think about the past.

(Kerry, June 2016)

In a final observation, with the exception of one male SPCA staff member, the people involved in King's homing were exclusively female. Familial bonds and home spaces are therefore territorialised through wider genderings of human–dog relations (see Fifield and Forsyth, 1999). Women remain positioned as responsible for making-home and for keeping "dogs within the

bounds of the respectable” (Power, 2012:378, my italics). This includes the culturing of fur-babies through affectual modalities of discipline, care and love.

8.7 Dog Gaps: The materiality of canine aging and death

*A comfort in the old dog, like a rug.
Spiders get busy in the sun, knitting a past.*

*We write poems for dead fathers, for all that dies,
for all that dies by our hand.*

-Tom Weston, The Old Dog (2014)

Fur-babies get old, and fur-babies die. To return to Sunday Boy, it is evident that cultures of care also include the decline of canine health and the onset of old age. At twelve years old, Sunday had his first seizure. Although he had some deafness and arthritis, up to that point he had been in good health. However, from then until his euthanasia some nine months later, my kinship responsibilities featured medication, re-routing of routines and increasing risks to his safety. In the lead up to Sunday Boy’s death I made many notes chronicling his descent into dementia.

He had two seizures this weekend. After both he went outside: his recovery routine is to circle and circle until he is steady enough to walk again, then to go and check every room, then the garden. It is as if he needs to re-familiarise himself with the environment, and with us ... He will come and smell us, as if getting someone new. This time he went outside, then when he finally made it back up onto the deck, just stood staring at one window pane at our French doors, even though I was there with the other side held open telling him to come in. The first time he came back he had a slug stuck to his face too – obviously he had gone to his food bowl ... Ridiculous and funny, but also kind of pathetic and sad.

(Journal, August 2014)

My journal recognises the materiality of an aging dog’s-body, but also the affectual nature of his illness: particularly my fears and exasperation with his behaviour. In the following excerpt, I explicitly frame Sunday as like a human, revealing that I associate emotional responses to illness and care responsibilities with human kinship.

He stands now, at the roadside staring at the car door – I can see muscles twitching in his legs, he sways. When he tries to get into the boot he fails. Hits his head on the deck as his legs give out under him and he falls clumsily, twisted back to the ground. How ANNOYING the aging animal body can be. Sunday Boy is like an old person, deaf, senile doddering ... He can't hear me calling his name in the garden or at the park. He gets lost. And there is the constant concern that he will be dead when I get home. All these worries, this fear and this infuriation surely parallels the ways that we respond to aging family members.

(Journal, September 2014)

As a result of his illness it became obvious that Sunday could no longer go on long walks. Our geographies shrunk, and it became usual for us to go in the car to the closest park to the house. It was here that I was first introduced to the idea of a Dog Gap. One afternoon as we walked together, Sunday and I encountered an older woman spraying the weeds. We spoke of Sunday's age, and she responded incredulously: "you haven't got a younger one too?" What she meant was 'who will replace him in when he dies?' so as not to have a Dog-Gap.

A Dog Gap is a space *between* dogs: a space where warm bodies once were, where daily walks were taken, and where secrets were silently absorbed into fur. They are temporal spaces that will be filled by other dog bodies. Transient spaces, Dog Gaps can be short (like mine) or long. My neighbour, for example told me that now, seven years after her dog's death, she was considering getting another puppy, but was worried she might compare it with her beloved Bobby. Her Dog Gap then, was due to fears that she might project the characteristics and associated expectations of Bobby onto the new puppy. Likewise, a colleague recalled her horror when, soon after her bereavement, the suggestion was made that she ought to go out and get another dog. Not only did my colleague find the idea insensitive to her own grief, but specified that the proposition was unsavoury as it was disrespectful of her dog. Typical of many Dog Gaps, both informants expressed fears of betraying the memory of the old dog, in a manner that reproduces human opprobrium directed at humans who re-partner quickly after the death of a spouse. Dog bodies therefore have identities as individuals who are not replaceable.

Most geographies of grief focus on spatial landscapes – markers, memorials, cemeteries, and other spaces of remembrance (see Maddrell, 2016). However, little is written about the *empty* spaces left behind in the home. A Dog Gap is also a space where a dog *was*. This too is a space where warm bodies once were, where daily walks were taken, and where secrets were silently absorbed into fur.

These are material spaces where our dogs once ate food, laid to sleep or sat with us while we did our everyday busy-ness in the home.

I look to his bed when I go to bed, to say (or did I think it?): "goodnight"

(Journal, January 2015)

The following excerpt from my journal was written after euthanising Sunday Boy. I had got him put down while on holiday with my parents, and the following excerpt from my journal was written about two weeks later. My children (Poppy, Calico and Django) and I had returned home, minus dog, but to the material associations with-dog: his chair, water bowl, dog dish.

A week later, we patted his gravestone goodbye and returned home to Auckland. That night I found Django sitting in Sunday's chair, rocking and looking sad. I sat with him and we cried. Poppy came in and was distraught too. He is gone. Later, both Django and Poppy said they talked to him. Poppy said that she liked having him here when she came home and everyone else was out, and that she would sit with him in my room. And that she felt safe with the doors open because he was here, even knowing that he was deaf and now a useless guard dog! On the other hand, Calico said she had been scared being with him when I was out because of the seizures.

(Journal, January 2015)

The gap is therefore a space where there is no guard dog, no confidante. A space where loneliness sits, but also a space free from fear of seizures and commitments of care. My journal records a familial space, and one that I had been unaware of. Looking back at this passage, I realise that I had not understood the different types of kinship bonds forged between my dog and my other family members, his identity mongrelised even after death.

8.7.1 Performances of death and mourning

Near this spot

Are deposited the

Remains of One

Who Possessed Beauty

Without Vanity, Strength without Insolence,

*Courage without Ferocity,
And all the Virtues of Man
Without his Vices.*

-Lord Byron, Epitaph to a Dog (1808)

Animals' geographies rarely touch moments of death. When they do, death is invariably portrayed as ritualistic, or in terms of the animal-to-animal predator-prey relations we see documented in 'wildlife' films, television shows or magazines. Of course, animal death occurs not just in the 'wild', but in the urban environment too. It happens publically, in parks, streets and on the roads⁸⁵. However, it also takes place privately, in the home or veterinarian clinic. The deaths of fur-babies, then, invoke apparatus of healthcare, and often involve being 'put down', or even more euphemistically 'put to sleep', a process (usually) performed by qualified veterinary staff. It is increasingly popular for animals to meet their final demise in the home, positioning the home as a space of care where animals will be more comfortable and less frightened.

The following excerpt describes the lead-up to Sunday's euthanasia. I had watched his seizures getting worse, and was convinced that his erratic and disturbing (disturbed) behaviour was due to an incurable brain tumour. Over the Christmas holiday period 2014, he had a fit in the evening, followed by two more the next day. Unusually, the first of those was on the deck in midday sun, when he was awake (he was previously asleep when seizures occurred), which made me concerned that his health was declining evermore swiftly. Through the next two nights I was kept awake as he tried to get up off the floor by my bed. Unable to lift himself on his back paws, his front paws scabbled to gain purchase on the linoleum, and he had spent the night swivelling around and around in a sitting position. Moreover, he had been barking incessantly. I googled dog dementia: the pieces fitted.

By this time Sunday Boy was trying to eat anything. Fingers, rubbish, his own faeces, and then the penultimate gluttony. On Christmas day he stuffed his head in a container of unused water balloons my niece and nephew had been given as a present, consuming a heap of brightly-coloured rubber tubes. I decided to call the vet in the morning when she re-opened after Christmas.

(Journal, December 2014)

⁸⁵ Most obviously perhaps, is the example of roadkill, a subject that has been addressed in terms of animal geographies (see Bell, 2002; Michael, 2004; Lulka, 2008). The animal carcass on the side of the road becomes a reminder of our complex, messy, and multifarious geographies. Here, the body becomes not just a symbol of humanity's disregard for the environment (a somewhat tired image), but a literal example of corporal collision.

Later, on Boxing Day, Sunday Boy seemed to have made a recovery. There was a bit of barking, but nothing frantic or anxious. I wondered if his behaviour had been the result of the series of seizures and that perhaps he would restore to normality?

During the night he slept. No scrabbling. In the morning we went for a final walk on the beach. He excreted the coloured balloons: it was a fiesta of dog shit and rubber. We laughed about it, a fitting end, we thought. I took photos of him with the kids, while the children drew a big heart in the sand. Django was especially anxious, I think he was worried about the procedure. He wanted to come with me but I was afraid that Sunday might bite and fight and need to be muzzled ... Previously, Sunday had tried to bite the vet during a blood test and always tried to fight needles off, so I was so scared that it would be a dominance thing where we/I had to overpower him, which would then make it feel like I killed him.

(Journal, December 2014)



Figures 63a and 63b: Sunday Boy's Last Walk

Most telling in this passage is my fear that a struggle would be paramount to me “killing him”. As distinct from slaughter or unnecessary euthanasia of unwanted or impounded dogs, ‘putting down’ the family dog requires us to situate death as an act of kindness. In spite of taking place in the vet’s clinic, the performance of Sunday’s euthanasia included elements of home. I brought his bed in, and he was given treats which he ate from my hand. As such, the dispassionate environment of the veterinary clinic was reframed to replicate a space-of-care. In practice, my fears were unfounded, and Sunday died a happy dog.

My Dad and I parked at the vet's and we walked around the block with Sunday on his lead: a final walking-the-dog. No-one else was at the clinic. The assistant weighed him and put an anesthetic gel on his leg then we went into the back room to wait while it took effect. Sunday was fine. He loved going to the vet. He was lucid, relaxed, even sitting down and not pacing.

Then the vet and other assistant came in. We put his bed by him and they gave me dog treats. The assistant kneeled by him to hold him in position and I sat in front of him with the treats in my right hand while the vet was attending to the gelled leg to my left. Sunday chowed down on dog treats, not even feeling or turning his head to look at what she was doing as they injected him. Before he had finished the treats (although he got a damn good way through them!), he slumped down, passed out, and died. The assistant was crying and when I saw that I started crying too, but I am glad I didn't earlier as I know he hated that.

(Journal, December 2014)

Sunday Boy's euthanasia was performed in a back room with a door leading straight to a small carparking area. This meant that we were able to remove his body without walking through the reception area. No doubt better for the clinic's reputation too, there was a separation between spaces where live dogs wait for treatment, and where dead dogs go for the final part of the performance: the disposal of a dog's body. A number of options are available, including cremation, but we took Sunday's body for a last ride in the car, home to my parent's for burial.

I went to the car and Dad and the vet carried him out on his bed. We put him in the boot and drove home. I was crying. When we got back I left the body on his bed in the boot for a while and everyone came and said goodbye. Then Bruce [my brother] dug a hole with Neil [my partner] and Django's help. We carried his bed to the grave. It was a sunny day and we lowered him into the hole, then Django put the dogroll in, which landed on his head. Undignified, but really, it was the way he would have liked to go! I moved it to by his mouth and we all threw dog biscuits in before putting earth over him. Django left flowers on the site.

(Journal, December, 2014)



Figure 64: Sunday Boy's body in the boot of my car, on his final ride home from the vet



Figure 65: Burial ceremony for Sunday Boy, December 27th 2014.

Death is funny, and sweet, and permanent. In this case, Sunday Boy's status as family member was consolidated by his funeral service, which was an event attended by my wider family circle. However, the performance of mourning can also take place beyond the home. This is evident in the emergence of pet cemeteries and memorial parks. In Auckland, a new diversity of deathscapes (Maddrell, 2016) includes a pet Garden of Remembrance in Albany, where 1250 burials had been performed by 2016. Likewise, a qualified pet chaplain can help "ease the death of furry family members" (*Central Leader*, July 2016), conducting funerals usually held in owner's backyards, or

providers such as Pets@Rest offer funeral services, personalised headstones and grief counseling. These practices emerge not just as representations of consumption around animals, but also recognition of dogs' place in the family, as loved family members who deserve a 'home' even after death. Although the affects of grief are often sidelined as irrelevant for research, following Butler's elaboration of 'precariousness' (2004), mourning is increasingly treated as a political act. Stanescu (2012), for example, takes seriously the performance of grief as including humanimal interrelationships, recognising that to not do so (or not be socially permitted to do so) is to forswear not only the sanctity of animal life, but also our own animality.



Figure 66: 'A Good Dog': Sunday Boy's headstone.

At the park I walked in with Sunday Boy, and where I now walk King, a man tells me that it took him five years to get over the death of his elderly bitch. The Gap was now filled with another dog, but he says his grief had been so profound that he had suffered severe depression. "You just love them", he tells me, with unexpected softness and emotion.

8.7.2 Geographies of memory

The materiality of memory (see Edensor, 2005; DeSilvey, 2006; Jones & Garde-Hansen, 2012) means that even as dog's bodies rot, buried in our back gardens, their presence remains tangible. Memory is sensuous, it has a "mossy, crumbly, rusty feel and smell and taste" (Wylie, 2009), and through memory the dead can re-materialise. For example, in yet another conversation, my neighbour told me that it took her three or four years to get over the death of Bobby. Her grief

manifested in ways neither real nor symbolic, as she told me: "I saw that dog everywhere for a year or so, running down the street and everywhere - I thought I was going mad" (Marina, May 2018). Even the boundaries of death are transgressed by memory. Therefore it is apparent that affectual interspecies relationships are salvaged through a *bringing-to-presence* of dead dogs.

In this final section I will share one last storying. After a day of sessions at a conference in Dunedin, I went to a tiny bar in the University precinct. There were few revellers, and I ended up chatting with the bartender and a small group of regular patrons. Seated on stools in the near darkness, conversation turned to our dead dogs. The man next to me described to me his mongrel dog's last hours, hospiced at the vet's clinic. There, he told me, his wife and child spent several hours until the time was right for the final injection. They were exhausted, shattered by the experience of death, but glad to have been by his side for his final hours. Another woman tells me how she held her old spaniel in her arms when she died, how her dog had looked at her with trust and love as she lifted her onto the vet's table. The bartender leaned over, and with tears in her eyes revealed how she always felt guilty about her dog's death from cancer of the spleen, wishing that she had noticed the illness earlier. Like myself, these people were yet to care for an elderly or dying relative, our dogs being the first members of our families for whom we had responsibility with respect for their deaths.

At this point, we reached for our mobile phones and produced photos. Photographs of dead dogs. As we muttered our appreciation for the others' precious pooches of the past, I realised how we literally carry our grief with us: trauma that lasts, remembrances we actually carry. Deleuze rejects the idea that life and creation are opposed to death and non-creation. He instead conceives of a plane of immanence that already includes life and death. The creation of emptiness - the Dog Gap - then, is part of a set of interplaying forces and affects. This space includes elements that are unformed, or *used* to have form, and the memory of form. Thus, the *affect* of the emptiness is what makes it real: geographies of emotion are mobile, they come with us, and we create them.

Geographies are not just the spaces in which these dogs lived or the spaces that they died in, whether the vet's office, or the armchair in the lounge. Nor are they where they were buried or their ashes spread. Rather, geographies are inside us, carried person-by-person as memories, stories and pictures. Spaces are created through lives that are no longer there, transient and fleeting, as we recreated an imaginary dog-space there in the tiny bar in Dunedin. It only lasted half an hour, but a space existed that included us, dogs living and dead, vets, family members. Like Lifton's (1973) 'symbolic immortality', our photographs of dead dogs made space possible because there is a gap left behind.

8.8 Putting the dog back in: Conclusions

[T]he Deleuzian space, of affect ... is an ontological space and the psychoanalytic space is an empirical space.

Grossberg, 2010:311)

Rejecting a singular ideological construction of 'dog', I have focused this chapter not on biological characteristics of *canis familiaris* nor in ethological understandings of dog behaviours. Rather, like Ian Wedde, I have used this space to put the dogs back in. An assemblage of stories, this chapter addresses the capacities enacted between human and dog kin and the home spaces that these relationships are performed in. In this sense, the Dogs of Auckland are understood as a social sub-group (Philo, 1995) who populate interspecies spaces.

The home thus emerges as a site where new dog identities are created through processes of deterritorialisation. Often, this process results in the (re)construction of dogs as children (substitute or otherwise), who are subsequently referred to as fur-babies. However, like Haraway, I resist being called the 'mom' to my dogs (Haraway, 2003:95). Rather, I reframe home space as a sit(e)uation of responsibility, in which we perform modalities of care for dogs who we class as family members. In this feminised, domestic space, opportunities for product development and consumption abound, particularly through petpreneurial services that absolve owners of guilt that pets are not getting the lifestyles that human children enjoy. The desire for quality pet services, then, reflects both expanded notions of kinship to include animal family members, and new sets of responsibility that come with such reframings.

Of course, our responsibilities are not just for life, but also for death. Most explicitly, this manifested in my care of an aging dog and for making the decision to end a life. Yet death is not a conclusion. For me, I put the dog back in literally. I filled the Dog Gap with King, a dog's body full of life and love. We perform together and affectively: participating in processes of fostering and adoption, familiarising ourselves with a new family structure, going to agility class (then quitting when it became evident that King hated being leashed between runs), learning (dog) sign language, and sleeping together in bed. In this way humanimal encounters are co-constructed, reflecting mutual response-ability both inside and outside the home.

Regarding (as in Grossberg's quote above) spaces of affect to be ontological rather than empirical, I re-turn now towards haecceities. Rather than being constituted of finite understandings of dog-ness, *being* dog is to be part of collective assemblages of control, kinship and wider forces of

consumption. Given that these states (or elements) are constantly in flux, canine identities become hybridised and mongrelised. Boundaries surrounding animal identities are therefore blurred, as dogs become more-than-pet, and take on multiple and shifting roles that are at once human and canine.

Dogs are thus hybridised not only through emotional connections, but also through mutual performances, whether on agility courses, grooming salons, or pet shows, or through practices such as bed sharing, kissing, or dressing animals in human clothes. Engagement with dog bodies, even through memory, are sit(e)uations. It is these moments of unpredictability, of deliberate or unintentional, permanent or fleeting destabilisations of order that are transgressive and boundary breaking.

Part VI

Conclusions

CHAPTER 9 | CONCLUSIONS

9.1 Conclusions: Naming and Specie-fic Spaces

As I stated in my introduction: namings are serious business. Names create identities and constitute spaces (see Berg & Kearns, 1996), and they reflect and reinforce territorialisations. Throughout this thesis I have assembled a menagerie of different animal names that describe the roles animals play in Auckland: farm animals, zoo inmates, stray cats and pet dogs.

Each subgroup has performed within relational territories of encounter with humans. In turn, further sets of subsidiary identities emerged as I explored animal spaces and collected my beastly data. These include ‘fur-babies’, the family dog, pet, pest, educator, entertainer, national icon and product. Yet these namings are, to employ Nietzsche’s famous axiom: ‘human, all too human’. It is unlikely that the cheetah in the zoo sees himself as an ambassador for his cousins in South Africa, that the ewe in Cornwall Park identifies as a symbol of New Zealand’s past, or that the cats I fed understood themselves as stray (although Sunday Boy or King may well have positioned themselves as family dogs). Thus, animal identities are constructed through territorialising processes which articulate the types of encounter they have with humans.

Lines that relate to spaces of inhabitation and encounter emerge from these identities; these lines entwine places, people and other animals. In Deleuzian language, this can be conceptualised as a naming-machine, a meshwork of rhizomic connections which are sinuous and tangled. Ingold (2008; 2009) goes on to stress the importance of these lines as mesh rather than a Latourian interconnection of nodes, concluding that “the organism (animal or human) should be understood not as a bounded entity surrounded by an environment but as an *unbounded* entanglement of lines in fluid space” (Ingold 2008:1806, my italics).

Building on the strong foundations established in animal geography since the late 1990s (see Wolch & Emel, 1995, 1998; Philo & Wilbert, 2000; Whatmore & Thorne, 2000), my goal has been to (re)animate Auckland’s animalscape through storying. To return to the research questions, this thesis has addressed the **relationship between embodied human-animal encounters and the identity construction of non-humans**. Given that both names and spaces reinforce non-human identities, my research has accentuated the ontological distinctions that define, categorise and place species. Through my empirical studies I have unpacked encounter as both driven by and responsible for the formation of animal identities. These are composed ontologically, comprising boundaries, territories and transgressions at individual levels as well as between species.

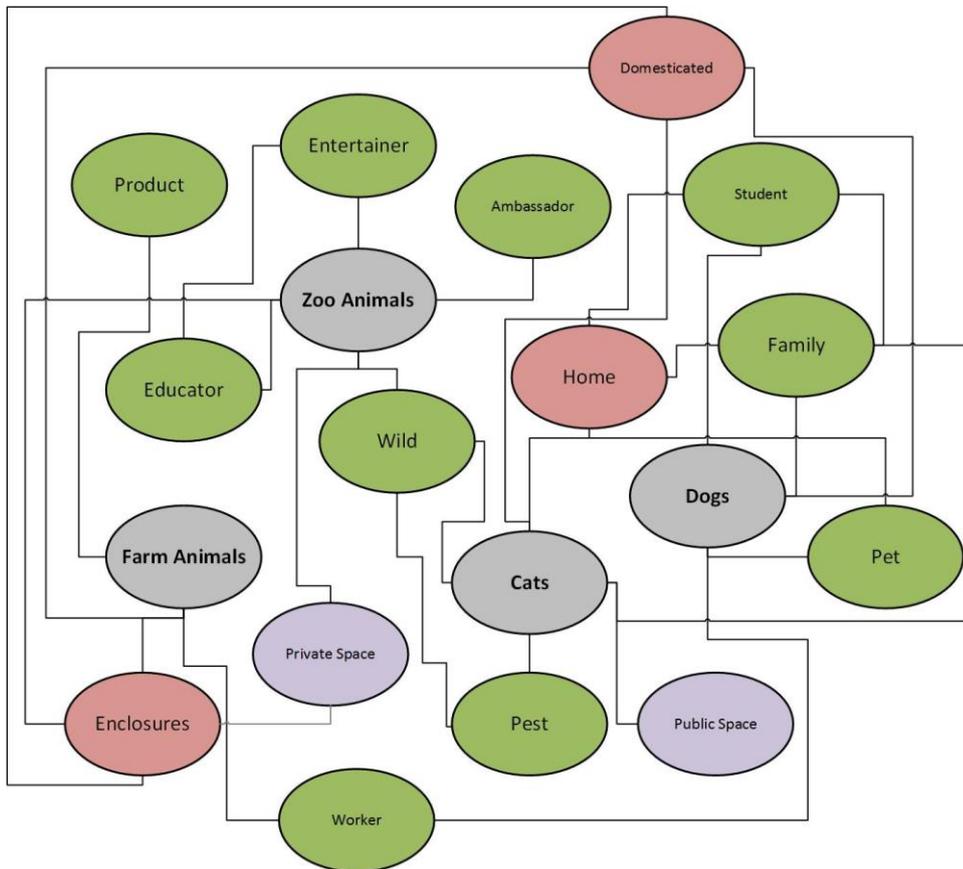


Figure 67: Lines in a naming-machine

Although not included in the simplified diagram above (figure 67), I have also collected individual names. We met Rosie, Anjalee, Brian, Merli, King and Sunday Boy and many others. Each has become part of entanglements that have resulted in the materialised assemblages of individual identities, the relational identities of encounter and the metanarratives of spatial classification. To allow these individual identities to *become*, I employed Koro-Ljungberg’s (2016) framework of ‘fluid methodologies’. In turn, my methods were allowed to emerge alongside and in response to emergent animal identities *as the research progressed*. In some cases individual animals were direct provocations: Sunday Boy’s death, for example was the impetus behind my chapter on dogs, and a chance encounter with Merli instigated new ways of thinking about stray cats. However, most of the encounters I had with animals were not situated within preconceived theories or methodological approaches. Instead, knots formed where lines of theory crossed lines of practice, allowing new assemblages of research to surface in an organic way. For example, I included King’s story of fostering and adoption as a direct response to a new sit(e)uation of encounter. Had my methodology been pre-determined, I would have missed the opportunity to look deeper the ways that ‘family’ can formalise new non-human inclusions.

I also asked ‘**what types of assemblages constitute these encounters?**’ I consider assemblages as not just including material objects and beings, but also processes of social formation (Anderson & McFarlane, 2011; Anderson *et al*, 2012). Assemblage geographies have the space, then, to engage in multiple ways with spaces and actants, becoming a process-based ethos of engagement able to attend to the messiness and complexity of phenomena (Anderson *et al*, 2012). Auckland’s humanimal assemblages therefore include both structural and affective aspects. As described in Chapter 4, Auckland’s animal spaces function within assemblages of governance and classification as well as having a relationship to/with colonial history and geographic situation. The apparently contradictory nature of structure and affect are able to be reconciled using assemblage theory, as the concept itself recognises the heterogeneity and relational nature of agents, space and processes (see Marcus and Saka, 2006).

Founded on the discussed theoretical vantage points, this thesis has two key contributions to the field of animal geographies. First, it has supplied a set of original case studies to the growing repertoire of empirical literature articulating animal place in the city. Second, my field research has been devised to include a wide range of methods that question the tools, perceptions, and thought processes that construct knowledge, prompting new ways to open up research space in animal geographies and beyond. I therefore structure my conclusions as both ontological and epistemological, and (at risk of again creating a false boundary) I discuss each in turn in this final chapter.

9.2 Ontologies: Emergent themes

Through my materialist investigations of the way that animals are classified according to spaces and processes, a set of themes has emerged: boundaries, territories and transgressions. Each sits firmly within the framework of my original research questions, and I will briefly reflect on them in turn.

9.2.1 Boundaries

Non-human identities reflect, reinforce and resist boundaries. This is most overt in what is commonly referred to as the ‘animal-human divide’ (see Hepburn & Anderson, 1995; Elder *et al*, 1998; Wolch & Emel, 1998; Fox, 2006). Whether implicitly or overtly, this boundary positions ‘nature’ on the one side and ‘culture’ on the other. My research has identified several types of boundary that inhibit or invalidate humanimal encounter.

While primarily ontological, boundaries were reinforced through the presence of physical structures designed to constrain animal movement and ensure they remain ‘in place’ (Cresswell, 1996; 2014).

For example, on Auckland's urban farms, animal movement is restricted by fences, cattle-stops and walls. Such constraints ensure that animal identities are fixed as products that belong within commercial spaces, or as tokens of farm animals that exist(ed) as part of a wider national identity. Limited to visual encounters, park-goers experience animals collectively rather than as individuals. Likewise, in Auckland Zoo, animals are gazed upon, segregated from visitors in enclosures. As part of a hierarchised and structured system, zoo animal performance is constructed to promote animal identities as ambassadors or educators. Boundaries include not only walls, viewing platforms and moats, but also systems of payment, opening hours and coded gatekeepers through whom humanimal encounter is mediated.

In contrast, Auckland's stray cat population is subject to less rigid physical boundaries. While physical boundaries are established to protect them from interventions such as forced removal from the park, relocation into 'rescue' homes, or possible euthanasia, the cats are capable of mobility and fluid social relations. Nevertheless, cat-bodies were observed to be subject to the apparatuses of control. Kitten-catching, for example, involved the temporary enclosure of cats within cages, and rescue homes (such as Anne Batley-Burton's 'Pussy Palace'), which are completely bounded environments. On the other hand, microchipping and ear clipping are embodied body modifications that allowed felines to move more freely and to evade future (re)capture. Finally, new sets of physical boundaries were evident in Chapter 8. Here, dogs are expected to remain within the confines of the domestic, restricted by property boundaries unless otherwise restricted by leashes, harnesses or muzzles. However, due to their placement as family members, these boundaries were deemed inappropriate within (real or replicated) home environments. Rather, the *freedom* of the dog was valued, reflected in the cageless Dog Hotels or practices such as sharing a bed.

Boundaries can therefore be realised as existing between public and private spaces. Often articulated as a division between 'wild' and 'domestic', this distinction manifests in the prioritisation of some species over others. The (re)construction of wilderness described in Chapter 6 demonstrated how 'wild' beasts are constructed as totems of nature, imbuing zoo animals with characteristics such as the noble lion, cheeky monkey or powerful elephant. In this narrative, wildness is integral to the construction of animal identities as victims of an anthropogenic apocalypse, and subsequent conservation discourse fuels spatial divisions by siting the 'wild' as a bestial place that humans must be excluded from lest we debase it (or lose our own humanity through our engagement with it).

Whatmore and Thorne (1998) recognised that particular animal species are situated as wild, and that this identity categorically places them "outside the ambit of 'human society'" (Whatmore &

Thorne, 1998:435). Recognising the marginality of certain species in urban studies, I have unpacked in detail the way that this boundary manifests in complex value judgments surrounding the value of one species over another. In particular, feline performance in public parks demonstrated how cats were framed as ‘pests’ unless conforming to de/re-territorialising processes (such as the reproduction of domestic space through the establishment of cat-houses) which re-situated them as ‘pets’. Indeed, legal access to public space is actively restricted species granted protection, indicating a moral distinction between indigenous and introduced species.

Finally, all my case studies link to ownership. Given that land mammals are almost exclusively introduced species, the primary identity marker has proved to be either as animals who are independent of humans (often considered ‘pests’) and those who are regulated through relations of ownership. In the latter case, restricted access to publics may be granted provided it is with the endorsement (like Merli) or accompaniment (like my dogs) of their human owners. Fundamentally, ownership binds animals within identities as property that can be bought, sold or traded. In the case of farm parks or the zoo, this is a given, and (as with Anjalee) animals are frequently obtained or relocated to fulfil expectations of farm or zoo-performances. The cats considered in Chapter 7 are non-owned, but interspecies bonds with humans were shown to grant feline legitimacy to remain in place. Nevertheless, as evident in my field studies, conflicts surround claims-to-place, as the machinery of State is unable (or refuses) to recognise new articulations of interactions between disparate social groups. In Chapter 8, all the dogs I referred to are owned, and are ontologically situated as pets. However, owners themselves are not always comfortable with such classification, as the intense emotional bond between dog and human places us as kin rather than proprietors/possessions.

9.2.2 Territorialisations

It is impossible to disconnect boundaries from the territories they contain. However, I extend my use of ‘territories’ to encompass the Deleuzioguattarian concept of territorialisation. As such, territories become processes, and have proved to be a crucial concept, bridging both identity and space. Chapter 4 demonstrated how historical processes of territorialisation categorise animal identities and bind animal mobilities so that beasts become imprisoned where they were deemed to belong. For example, the ‘vermin’ species who stowed away on settler’s boats, or those whose purpose changed or fell out of favour (like rabbits, stoats, ferrets or hedgehogs) have been re-categorised as pests, whilst dogs and cats are situated as pets. As a result, some creatures are not bound by the same restrictions in movement as farm or zoo animals, but are instead targeted for eradication to ensure the conservation of other species.

With regard to pet-names, this thesis has demonstrated how animals are territorialised at both individual and collective levels. At Auckland's farm-parks or within the zoo, animal identities correspond with structural and historical ideas about what it is (and should be) to be animal. While Rosie the cow was given some level of individual identity (through naming, and through the sensory connection of touch, sight and smell that occurred between her and farm visitors), the structures and practice of milking ensured that interactions between her and the children reinforced sets of territorialising boundaries. In a clear example of striation, a categorical distinction was therefore made between Rosie-as-livestock and Rosie-as-pet (see Philo, 1995; Holloway, 2007).

Likewise, Auckland Zoo remains a territorialised and striated space. Changing attitudes to conservation and animal welfare have resulted in new territories of animal identity. Individual animal inmates are given 'pet-names' (such as Jin, Anjalee or Osiris), yet they serve as representatives of their species as a whole. Furthermore, the risk of disease or domestication governs animal-human relations in Auckland Zoo, and the danger of humanising animals is considered one of the worst crimes a modern zoo can commit. The creation of conservation-based zoo-territories then, is likely to be less as a response to animal agencies (seen as natural behaviours), and more for the benefit of human visitors' sensibilities regarding animals' needs (Beardsworth & Bryman, 2001)⁸⁶ as well as the continuing demand for animalised entertainment.

On the other hand, Chapter 7 demonstrated how territories can be destabilised through animal agency. Here, the cats were understood as acceptable within urban spaces perceived as being 'wild' (such as the marginal space at the perimeter of the Parnell Rose Garden) and yet were 'out of place' in more ordered environments (see Griffith *et al.*, 2000). The occupation of space by animals is therefore conditional on differing understandings of the validity of animal presence(s). Animal freedom can thus be seen as standing in relation to the landscape in which they move. Nevertheless, as demonstrated in my analysis of Gareth Morgan's *Cats To Go* campaign, media discourse plays a large part in re-territorialising animal space, and feline identity is situated as relative to animal place as domestic or 'pet'.

Unlike cats, dog identity is firmly fixed within domestic territories. Subsequently, different relationships emerged between human and canine household members. The process of adoption, for example revealed how placement in the home relies on territories of socialisation and kinship. In this case, space can be mutually negotiated, and dog-agency is recognised as influencing both the

⁸⁶ Of course, an emphasis on conservation does not always fulfill the desires of those who have paid for experiences. One couple I toured with made constant disgruntled comments about how they had been able to hand feed a giant panda in the Adelaide Zoo and paint with an elephant in Melbourne, and were dissatisfied with their 'hands-off' focus of *Zoo Experience* in Auckland. Their reaction revealed that a strong public desire to be entertained remains in spite of the focus on conservation (Carr & Cohen, 2011).

construction of what it means to be part of a family, including participating in consumer decision-making and rituals of death and grieving. This chapter thus demonstrated the transgressive nature of deterritorialised relationships, as human- animal boundaries broke down.

9.2.3 Transgressions

To answer '**what types of transgressions take place that re-shape boundaries?**', I addressed the ways in which animal agency destabilised assemblages. In Auckland's farm-parks, few examples of transgression occurred. When they did, it was generally through the contravention of physical boundaries, and usually ended with premature animal death for transgressors. In the zoo, stories of animal transgression centred on the escape of animals like Jin, or examples of human infiltration into animal space (constructed as misdemeanours). Within the zoo, disruptions to order are generally kept invisible, sometimes actively hidden or disguised so as to maintain zoo integrity. However, transgression can also include examples of re-articulations of identity. This was evident in the transition of cats from stray to pet or vice versa.

While these modalities have been variously framed – as in Whatmore's (1999) hybrid geographies, Haraway's (2006) 'naturecultures' and White & Wilbert's (2009) 'technonature' - all have in common the increased awareness of alternative, more-than-human subjectivities, agencies and interrelationships. As evident in Chapter 8, hybridity also opens up an interspecies 'duty of care'. I have, for example, an obligation to King to drive to spaces where he can run freely, just as I had obligations to Sunday Boy to engage in wider assemblages of veterinary care, pharmaceuticals, and afterhours clinics. Likewise, the hybridised geographies of retail and consumption transgress species boundaries and deterritorialise human-animal boundaries. The exploration of these geographies, then, has proved a revealing lens through which to explore the ways in which humans and animals cross, and make new, paths. Hybrid relations can therefore unlock a space through which to analyse the emotional repercussions of humanimal encounters, as demonstrated through my autoethnographic analysis of the geographies of canine aging and grief.

This thesis has thus argued that animal-human relationships have the capacity to reframe boundaries, practiced as deterritorialisations. For example, boundaries can be transgressed through lines of flight, moments of escape or evasions, 'nomadic' movements, emotional engagements, and hybrid relations. Of course, research too can be transgressive. At its core, my research has been an experiment in new ways of assembling knowledge that grant animals a voice within academic study as well as an exploration of ways to break boundaries that dictate how (and why) we do research itself.

9.3 Epistemologies: Assembling knowledge

When I began to consider my methodological tactics for this project, the problematic nature of engaging with animals as research subjects became increasingly evident. Realising I needed to think outside language to find other ways of researching that credited non-humans with active participation in the research process, my original research questions included a final line of inquiry: **‘How can trans-species intersubjectivity be effectively (or *affectively*) documented in academic research?’** To meet this end, I first presented a critical assessment of the methodological paradigms reflected in animal geographies, and reviewed how this has evolved to encompass a more intersubjective, hybridised approach. Then, through my empirical research, I aimed to assemble knowledge in new ways by experimenting more explicitly with a range of methods. This thesis thus functions as a reflexive exercise that signposts fresh platforms for practicing humanimal research.

As stated in my introduction, my case studies can be read in any order. However, they are assembled to fit a trajectory from the more distanced stance of observer to more physically and emotionally engaged researcher. In Chapter 5, I visited two inner city farms. Most of my observations were based on ‘readings’ of the landscape. I did not treat the landscape as static, and included anecdotes and vignettes from interactions with people and animals encountered both at Cornwall Park and on my school visits to Ambury Farm. Nevertheless, I was removed from animal goings-on, separated from animal bodies and the processes of farming that surrounded them. Reading the landscape then, remained a difficult method to step over boundaries, and I struggled to make connections with my animal research subjects. Instead, I sought recourse in tried and true methodologies - discourse analysis and observation – neither of which farm animals themselves participate in/with. These tactics (to return to De Certeau’s terminology) enabled me to reflect on Auckland’s animal spaces in several ways, particularly within historical social climates and changing spatial landscapes. Yet although the focus on encounter pushed my research beyond typical rural geographies, I felt the animals in my story remained bound within finite boundaries, fitting them within ontological constructions of production and symbolic identity markers.

In many ways, similar issues arose through my role of observer at the Auckland Zoo. Due to the structured, hierarchal nature of the zoo-territory, I was situated as an outsider. I sat, notebook in hand on one side of a boundary, looking *at* animals from behind barriers. Yet my position as observer forced me to experience the zoo in a way different from a normal visitor. At the otter enclosure, for example, if there were no animals present I did not move along in search of my next animal hit. I had to embrace the boredom, the empty enclosure, the hot sun or the rain as part of a researcher experience. In this way I became part of the zoo, distinct from other visitors, staff and

animals. Moreover, through my participation in *Zoo Experiences*, I gained (limited) access to ‘backstage’ zoo-doings. I was granted sensory access to animals forbidden to the regular visitor, going-beyond boundaries to feed and/or provide enrichment activities for the red pandas, spider monkeys, cheetahs, hippos and lions. Still, rather than being able to express the transgressive nature of animal agency through my account, my engagement with the animals was highly regulated and controlled. As observer, I felt that I too ‘played a part’ in a wider zoo-performance designed to promote sets of values, particularly regarding the conservation of ‘wild’ life and spaces.

My next two case studies moved towards methods with greater potential for connections between myself and my animal subjects. Through my role as participant observer with the Rose Garden Cats, I was engaged over a prolonged period in a set environment. This enabled me to gain far greater depth of knowledge about the way that the cats themselves utilised space, as well as seeing first-hand the transgressions and transformative processes that shifted feline identities. I also documented my encounters with several other stray(ish) cats throughout the research period, engagements that were able to emerge in response to my progression through the research. These examples enabled me to better explore the nuances of individual cat identities, especially those who perform outside of collectives. Through the variety of human-animal encounters articulated in this chapter, I feel I could better demonstrate the fluid, transgressive agency cats have that allows them to *become* more-than singularly stray or homed.

This experience with the cats, and my subsequent chapter on ‘making fur-babies’ foreground Butler’s ontology of vulnerability (and precariousness) as political affects. In other words, interspecies capacity to be-together is heightened by our shared physical and emotional vulnerability to systemic discrimination (in the case of the stray cats) and to pain and death (as in my tale of Sunday Boy). Chapter 8 addressed the fuzzy boundaries of multispecies kinship, exploring the transgressive properties of domestic life with our pets. Situated as an emotional geography, I drew on my own experiences of pet-ownership to describe the blurring of lines that result from shared construction of identities between humans and canine companions. While I spent time elaborating on the physical manifestations of hybridity evident in canine-ised consumer practices, I concluded with an account of less tangible spaces: spaces of memory and of grief. My focus was therefore highly affectual, and opened up the thesis to ‘put the animals back in’.

Attending to emotion is phenomenological. As Thrift stated, developing descriptions of everyday emotional lives can be understood as becomings that are “chiefly provided by bodily states and processes” (Thrift, 2004:60). They are also affectual, and I follow Rose’s (2016) assertion that emotions ought not be ‘objectified’, but instead, they must be allowed to cross boundaries,

rendering them unstable and uncertain. It should be noted, though, that this type of research remains risky. By placing my personal, emotional and affectual account within the home (as opposed to public or commercial spaces, for example), I risk (re)affirming animal place as domestic and emotion as feminised. However, I believe that affectual geographies provide authentic and valid boundary breaking purposes, and that by recognising the deep emotional responses between humans and pets - including joy, excitement, pleasure, remorse, co-dependence and grief - a research space has been established that can be made public. I hope that animal-human relationships can emerge from the closet to be recognised as meaningful cultural exchanges.

I have argued that methodology influences the treatment of the subject within assemblages that include researchers: research territorialises, and it has the capacity to deterritorialise. In a final analysis of epistemology, I return to my schematic diagram of emergent research. By applying a fluid methodological approach, I was able to respond to sit(e)uations (such as the incorporation of later data collection surrounding the adoption of King), as well as new theory and literature, intellectual exchanges with colleagues and seminar audiences, and personal moments of illumination (or despair). This collection of moments aligns with what St. Pierre (1997) calls “response data”, a transgressive method whereby I was able to move towards the ‘unthought’, and move away from the binary of researcher-audience (see Spivac, 1993). Including ‘response’ into my research has enfolded activities, encounters and feelings within the thesis to better articulate shared interspecies experiences. By including other actants as storytellers and co-creators, this process can be understood as a going-beyond of traditional qualitative methods.

9.4 Opportunities for further research

Animal geography is a rapidly developing field. Since the conception of my project, animated geographies have leaped forwards, and there is now a breadth of work that covers ever-expanding conceptualisations of what it means to ‘be’ animal. As Urbanik noted, the “once-key markers of human superiority and uniqueness – tool use, language, abstract thought, even culture itself as the ability to pass down behaviours – are being debunked by species as diverse as chimpanzees, elephants and crows” (Urbanik, 2012:5). Further research is well placed then, to take account of animals as active research participants, who *co-construct* academic work.

As my introduction outlines, this thesis has been itself bound within sets of boundaries. Future research must address what lies beyond these demarcations. New Zealand remains a ripe field for animal studies, and this thesis barely scratches the surface. First, it would be valuable to expand on this research to include animals that do not fit the confines of land-based mammals, especially as

there have been many encounters documented in local media of seals and sea-lions transgressing urban space. Likewise, I have omitted storying bats, in spite of their presence as New Zealand's only land-based mammal. While it proved too difficult to fit their tale within urban narratives (as they rarely encounter humans), their absent-presence remains a missing piece of Auckland's animalised landscape that warrants further investigation.

Second, I realise that my own positionality (as white, educated, middle class and vegetarian) means that I fit particular profiles in terms of my attitude towards and relationships with animals. Given the diverse socio-spatial demographic meshwork of Auckland City (or New Zealand as a whole), further research must address the diversity of humanimal relationships within a wider range of cultural and socio-economic contexts. It would be of great benefit to trace the connections between Aotearoa New Zealand and the wider Pacific region, especially with regard to pet-keeping and attitudes towards stray animals.

My research addressed the complexities surrounding research methodologies. I believe that greater care ought to be taken to insert the *personal* within impersonalised animal spaces. This is most pertinent in relation to the dehumanising processes of slaughter, but could also be applied to wider fields of farming such as artificial insemination of cattle, battery (or free range) chicken farming or sheep shearing. Although some authors have articulated these processes elsewhere (for example, Narayanan's 2018 work in India) research in the New Zealand environment is absent. I urge future researchers to have the courage and tenacity to 'grasp the bull by the horns', and find ways to articulate the connections between animal production and agency. Likewise, greater academic attention ought to be paid to networks of animal rescue, both as anarcho-political action and as aspects of State apparatus.

Finally, I wonder what might have happened if I had not linked my methods so directly to physical sites. Perhaps new ways of doing research might mix emotional affectual methods with structured environments. For example, what might happen if we examined the structured zoo through a methodology of pathos or vulnerability? Through my research I was made acutely aware that within academia, definitions of culture reinforce the animal-human divide even when attempting to explore non-human social contexts. It is possible that mixing affectual and structural methodologies is a way to stretch the idea of 'culture' to include animals as part of social communities, reconceptualising 'human' geography as a *cultural geography* that is inclusive of more-than human agency and participation.

9.5 The Tail: Wrapping up the research

Essentially, this work falls within the poststructuralist banner, as is evident in my opposition to objective methods and refusal to ‘test’ or essentialise animals. My epistemological stance is relativist, subjective, performative and experiential: all attributes common in poststructural theory. Nevertheless, my empirical chapters reveal tensions within animated assemblages. In all the case studies, boundaries are formed and animal identities are absorbed within wider meta-narratives and materialities of control, subject to structural ontological positionings of animals in Auckland’s cultural make-up. Sit(e)uations, then, include symbolic imaginaries that go beyond the phenomenology of physical animal bodies.

Methodologically, becomings can manifest in an academic context too. In this project, ontology and epistemology entangle, blurring lines of researcher-subject, human-animal and space-identity. I have found that the humanimal encounters I spoke of do not have a singular ‘how’ or ‘why’, but that their framing actively creates them as part of unfixed assemblages of research-doing. For this reason, assemblage is a useful geographic tool. Lines are not just connections between points that “pass forever amidst and between” (Ingold, 2009), but rather moments and processes that connect beings - regardless of their species - within a single biopolitical space. In this model the organic and inorganic intersect, connect, reassemble and co-define space and place, as affect is transmitted (and redistributed) between bodies and things that are not exclusively human.

Entanglements and rhizomic meshworks, then, are pertinent in animal studies as they provide (academic) spaces to reconfigure actors in terms of places of encounter as well as in relation to one another. Likewise, articulating humanimal worlds as entanglements removes obligations of objectivity, siting the research within webs that can include processes, literature, subjects, artifacts, discourse and response. As a result, using entangled assemblages to ‘do’ research is a way to de-territorialise academic space.

Pet-names therefore spring from encounters - both bounded and transgressive - that can be simultaneously physical, semiotic and ideological. To return to the metaphorical tour that began this thesis-assemblage, I hope that my fieldwork has brought the animals encountered there to life. Whether in urban farmland, a visit to the zoo, petting a stray cat or sharing photographs of dead dogs, this research has recognised assemblages of humans, animals, places, objects, symbols and events. What emerges is a tangled, often messy, enmeshed constellation of lives, and ‘pet-names’ reflect the diversity of animal identities within it.

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Auckland City Council: <https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/dogs-animals/Pages/default.aspx>

Auckland Zoo: <https://www.aucklandzoo.co.nz/>

Bark Avenue Luxury Pet Hotel: <https://www.barkavenue.co.nz/>

Barkley Manor: <http://barkleymanor.co.nz/>

Coastal Pest Control: <http://www.coastalpestsolutions.co.nz/>

Dog Zen: <https://dogzen.com/>

K9 Heaven The country club for dogs: <http://www.k9heaven.co.nz/>

Pets in the City Pet Hotel and Doggie Daycare: <http://petsinthecity.co.nz/>

Pets@Rest Animal funerals and cremations: <http://www.petsatrest.co.nz/>

Yelp reviews, Parnell Rose Gardens: <https://www.yelp.co.nz/biz/parnell-rose-gardens-auckland>

APPENDIX I



When complete please scan and email to ARAN at
 aran.rescue.nz@gmail.com or arrange to post.
 Thank you for caring for ARAN's animals.

FOSTERERS PRE-ADOPTION FORM

Please fill in as much of this form as possible before your Foster dog leaves your property on trial:

Name of Dog:

Description of Dog:

Age of Dog: Sex of Dog: Male / Female Desexed: Yes/No

Vaccinated: Yes / No Chip Number if Known:

Full Name of Prospective Adopter:

Address:

Telephone Number: Mobile Number:

Email Address:

Has a discussion taken place re other pets, children, is partner agreeable etc? Yes / No

Previous dog owner – Yes / No. If yes, what happened to previous dog(s)?

Is the property owned / rented? (please delete one). If rented, is the Landlord agreeable to a dog? Yes / No

Is the property fenced? Yes / No Do they have a current Vet? Yes / No

If yes, what is their name and telephone number?

Vet phoned for Reference? Yes/No

Has the property been checked by SPCA or similar? Yes/No

Is the Prospective Owner aware they will have to sign ARAN's contract? Yes / No

Please write any other notes on the back of this form if deemed appropriate to this adoption.

Adoptive Parent's Agreement

I, _____ agree to provide care from this day forward to my new dog. This includes adequate food, water, exercise, shelter, veterinary care, and lots of love. The dog will live in the house as part of the family and will not be tethered outside.

Unless the dog has already been desexed, I agree to have the dog, _____ desexed before the age of 6 months (if aged under 5 months) or within 4 weeks from the adoption date (if aged over 5 months) by my Veterinarian.

I agree never to give away, sell, trade, or surrender the dog to any person or agency and that, in the event of my being unable to keep the dog, will surrender the dog back to ARAN Animal Rescue.

I agree that, after a trial period of 2 weeks, the adoption fee is non-refundable and there is no reimbursement if the adoption does not work out after this trial period unless agreed upon by Aran Animal Rescue in terms listed below:

I agree that all expenses incurred after I take possession of pet will be my sole responsibility and that ARAN Animal Rescue is released from any and all liabilities whether financial or other.

I understand that ARAN Animal Rescue has rescued this animal from the Pound stated above and may have no prior information of age, breed, health issues, training, registration or other. Any information shared by ARAN Animal Rescue is of their own experience with the dog and ARAN Animal Rescue makes no warranties of any kind concerning the dog.

Adoptive Parent(s) signature(s): _____

Date: _____

ARAN Animal Rescue representative: _____

Date: _____

ARAN thanks you for choosing to adopt one of our Pound dogs

18/12/2013